

WEST AFRICA SUSTAINABLE OCEAN PROGRAMME

- Ocean governance
- Sustainable blue economy
- Ecosystem preservation

Terms of reference
Regional blue finance expert
12/11/2025

Implemented by:



COMMISSION SOUS-RÉGIONALE DES PÊCHES
SUB-REGIONAL FISHERIES COMMISSION



FCWC
Fisheries Committee for
the West Central Gulf of Guinea



In partnership with:

The West African Sustainable Ocean Program (**WASOP**), funded by the European Union to the tune of €59 million, aims to promote the integrated and sustainable management of marine and coastal resources in West Africa by supporting inclusive and competitive economic growth. Aligned with the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the European Union's Ocean Pact, the program promotes a sustainable blue economy as an engine for Africa's future. It adopts an integrated "Seascape Approach" centered on three complementary pillars: (i) ocean governance, (ii) the development of a sustainable blue economy, and (iii) the preservation of marine and coastal ecosystems.



Mis en œuvre par :

PILIER 1 : GOUVERNANCE DES OCÉANS



PILIER 2 : ÉCONOMIE BLEUE DURABLE



PILIER 3 : PRÉSERVATION DES ÉCOSYSTÈMES



Coordination WASOP :



En partenariat avec :



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Definition
CFP	Call for Projects
TA	Technical assistance
AfDB	African Development Bank
BF	Blue Facility
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
PN	Practitioner Network
SBE	Sustainable Blue Economy (Pillar II of the WASOP program)
EU	European Union
WASOP	West African Sustainable Ocean Program

I. Background

A. WASOP

The WASOP program, funded by the European Union to the tune of €59 million, aims to support integrated and sustainable management of marine and coastal resources in West Africa, while promoting inclusive and competitive economic growth. It is in line with major international priorities, notably the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the European Union's Ocean Pact, which recognize the blue economy as a strategic lever for sustainable development.

Structured around three complementary pillars, based on an integrated "Seascape" approach, WASOP aims to:

1. Strengthen ocean governance, particularly for sustainable fisheries;
2. Promote a sustainable and inclusive blue economy;
3. Strengthen the preservation of marine and coastal ecosystems, in conjunction with local populations.

The program is being implemented in 13 coastal countries in West Africa: Benin, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo, in partnership with ECOWAS and in collaboration with regional organizations. Its implementation is based on a strategic partnership between several actors:

- Expertise France, responsible for overall coordination via the Blue Hub and implementation of pillar 2;
- FAO, ICCAT, EFCA, and subregional fisheries commissions (CSRP and CPCO) for pillar 1;
- IUCN for pillar 3 related to ecosystem conservation.

WASOP is part of *the Global Gateway's* objective to support public-private partnerships for sustainable natural resource management and nature-based solutions. At the heart of the "Global Gateway 360°" approach—based on the priorities of connectivity, sustainability, and infrastructure development—WASOP mobilizes all sectors related to oceans, seas, and coastlines. This encompasses both offshore and onshore activities to ensure coherent and comprehensive action.

The WASOP program was launched in 2025 for a period of five years. At the launch workshop held in Mindelo, Cape Verde, from November 4 to 6, 2025, **two memoranda of understanding were signed with the region's two public investment and development banks, BOAD and BIDC, to strengthen financing for the sustainable blue economy. This major milestone was reinforced by the launch of the West African group of the Finance en Commun (FiCS) network's ocean coalition, led by BOAD, including BIDC as strategic members as well as national banks and with the support of WASOP.** The operational deployment of these partnerships will be carried out in particular through the **WASOP Blue Facility**.

B. THE BLUE FACILITY

The [Blue Facility](#) of the Sustainable Blue Economy pillar of [WASOP](#) (West Africa Sustainable Ocean Program) aims to support the development of a sustainable and inclusive blue economy in West Africa. The Blue Facility provides technical assistance to regional organizations and, in a complementary manner, to WASOP beneficiary countries to help (i) establish a regional institutional, regulatory, and financial framework conducive to the growth of the sustainable blue economy and (ii) support sustainable blue economy operations in the region.

The Blue Facility provides responsive and flexible technical assistance to meet the needs of WASOP countries, taking into account their progress in developing a sustainable and inclusive blue economy and the challenges they face, particularly in terms of governance and financing.

This support can cover a variety of areas, such as the development of regulatory frameworks, public policy planning, financing tools, investment project preparation, and the integration of environmental and social standards into national strategies.

Improving access to financing for the sustainable blue economy in West Africa is a major objective of the Blue Facility. The Facility intends to act as an interface between project developers and investors, supporting the structuring of bankable projects, assisting stakeholders in mobilizing financial resources, and mobilizing innovative instruments, including blended finance, in conjunction with West African national and regional banks (BOAD, BIDC). In particular, it will be able to help bring projects closer to international donors, Global Gateway partners, international funding sources (such as the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility), and multilateral development banks.

In this context, the development of a harmonized regional financial framework and a credible pipeline of bankable blue projects are two major challenges that will be addressed by the Blue Facility.

To meet these needs, the Blue Facility is **setting up a small team of leading experts in blue finance. These TORs outline the regional expert's mission.**

II. Objectives, expected results of the mission, and organization

A. OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of this mission is to structurally strengthen access to sustainable blue finance in the West African region.

The regional blue finance position has two specific objectives:

1. At the "macro" level: to develop frameworks and instruments with regional financial institutions and international partners.
2. At the "micro" level: to support project structuring by developing and piloting a common methodological framework. He or she provides cross-functional and ongoing support to

strengthen the quality, consistency, and credibility of the pipeline of bankable blue projects in the 13 countries covered by WASOP.

The regional blue finance expert has in-depth knowledge of the region and carries out this mission in close collaboration with an international expert who provides technical supervision of the mission in conjunction with the regional expert. Throughout the mission and across the board, the regional blue finance expert ensures the effective mobilization of West African stakeholders, the alignment of the proposed methods with regional best practices, and the anchoring of this mission within the institutional framework and regional agenda.

B. MAIN ACTIVITIES

The mission of the regional blue finance expert is closely complementary to that of the international expert, with the latter providing strategic guidance and overall technical supervision, while the regional expert ensures operationalization, institutional anchoring, and effective mobilization of stakeholders at the regional and national levels in West Africa.

At the regional level

- Work with regional investment banks to develop their sustainable blue economy financing strategy/framework, integrating the private/public sector and associated tools, including safeguard measures.
- Develop a sustainable blue economy taxonomy for West Africa and conduct training sessions.
- Create a regional pipeline of bankable blue projects that meet international mechanism standards (FVC, GEF, etc.).
- Design and structure financial instruments dedicated to ocean sustainability (blue credit lines, regional guarantee mechanisms, blue carbon, blended finance) for the private and public sectors.
- Support BOAD's leadership in the FiCS Ocean Coalition and the IDFC network as a catalyst for blue finance in Africa.

At the multi-country level

- Develop a simple and harmonized reference framework for the analysis, structuring, and monitoring of blue projects, applicable in all 13 countries.
- Ensure quality control of diagnostics, support plans, and deliverables produced by national/thematic pipeline experts, and propose methodological adjustments if necessary.
- Contribute to defining and updating the blue project pipeline development strategy by identifying bottlenecks and support priorities.
- Identify capacity-building needs and support the development of tools, guides, and training formats for national/thematic experts and, where appropriate, for national teams.
- Support the definition and, if necessary, revision of national/thematic pipeline expert profiles, as well as the structuring of their work plans.
- Provide ad hoc support to EUD and national authorities when reviewing projects or preparing technical missions.

At the cross-cutting level

- Monitor existing approaches to blue finance (including, where applicable, BlueInvest Africa) and identify opportunities for complementarity where relevant to WASOP.
- Advocate for the challenges, opportunities, and financing needs of the sustainable blue economy in West Africa at regional and international events (such as COP, CBD, UNOC, etc.), and in particular strengthen advocacy for the ocean-climate nexus.
- Contribute to the technical framing and advocacy of events to strengthen blue finance, such as the West African forum of the FICS ocean coalition.
- Promote technical synergies between the various tools of WASOP Pillar 2: between the Blue Facility, the Practitioner Network, and the Call for Projects, in order to ensure consistency in the project leaders' journey.

C. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

Below is a non-exhaustive list of deliverables. Deliverables will be specified in dedicated purchase orders.

Type of outputs at regional level

- **Diagnosis of the BOAD/BIDC portfolio** to identify projects with "ocean and climate" co-benefits.
- **Sustainable blue economy financing strategy documents** co-developed with BOAD and BIDC, including a **regional investment framework for the sustainable blue economy (Blue Investment Framework)**, **action plans**, and **associated tools, including safeguard measures**.
- **Definition of a sustainable blue economy taxonomy** adapted to the AFO and aligned with EU, FICS, and ECOWAS standards.
- **Portfolio of bankable blue projects**
- **Training modules** on the various frameworks and tools developed
- **Strategic contributions to the framing and implementation of regional/multi-country project concept notes** (e.g., FVC, GEF)

Multi-country product types

- A **common methodological framework** for project analysis and structuring, including easy-to-use tools, formats, and criteria for national experts.
- **Regular quality reviews** of diagnostics, support plans, and deliverables produced by national/thematic pipeline experts, with recommendations for adjustments.
- **Ad hoc technical notes** on macro (instruments, financial frameworks) and micro (project structuring) aspects of blue finance.
- A **consolidated analysis of the regional pipeline**, including support priorities, bottlenecks, and capacity-building needs.
- A **structured contribution** to coordination between the Blue Facility, the CFP, and the Practitioner Network to ensure consistency in the support provided to project leaders.
- **Analysis of challenges/opportunities** for West Africa in terms of innovative instruments/meetings for blue finance, in line with current blue finance developments at the pan-African and international levels.
- **Advocacy document** on sustainable blue finance/ocean-climate nexus

- **Technical framework note for event** (e.g., FICS ocean coalition summit forum in AFO)

D. ORGANIZATION

The Blue Facility is a small team of leading experts on blue finance.

The regional finance expert carries out this mission through live productions, in collaboration with an international expert who provides technical supervision.

The regional blue finance expert reports to the Blue Facility Manager and the "Regional Action - Sustainable Blue Economy" expert for the deployment of regional activities.

Estimated mobilization: approximately 40% over the period 2026–2027

III. Required profiles and practical information

A. RESEARCH PROFILE

1. Key skills

The Regional Expert must have the following skills:

- **Master's degree or equivalent** in a relevant discipline (finance, economics, public policy, environment, or sustainable development).
- Solid expertise in **blue finance/climate finance**, applied to the institutional, economic, and sectoral realities of West Africa.
- **Excellent knowledge of West African regional and national frameworks**, including ECOWAS, UEMOA, regional banks, national climate strategies, biodiversity, and the blue economy.
- Very good understanding of **climate/blue finance networks and mechanisms** active in West Africa (including access to facilities such as GCF, GEF, etc.).
- Ability to **mobilize and engage regional and national stakeholders** (administrations, financial institutions, donors, private sector, civil society) to facilitate the operational implementation of frameworks and tools defined at the regional level.
- Ability to adapt and operationalize at the regional and national levels the **methodological frameworks, tools, and strategic guidelines** defined with the support of the international expert.
- Ability to contribute **to the development and structuring of blue project pipelines**, in line with regional and national priorities and donor requirements, according to the harmonized framework defined with the international expert.
- Excellent analytical, synthesis and writing skills to produce technical notes, operational contributions and field feedback.

- Excellent command of **French**; good command of **English**; command of **Portuguese** is an asset.

2. Professional experience

- Minimum **10 years of professional experience** in development finance, climate/blue finance, international cooperation, or project structuring, with **extensive experience in West Africa**.
- Proven experience in:
 - **mobilizing and coordinating regional and national stakeholders** around climate/blue projects and initiatives;
 - **the operationalization of financing strategies and frameworks** at the regional and national levels;
 - **structuring and supporting project pipelines**, including financial analysis, economic models, and investment preparation.
- Proven experience in **regional or multi-country roles in West Africa**, with **in-depth knowledge of actors, networks, and institutional dynamics**.
- Proven experience in **coordinating national experts** or technical service providers, including operational monitoring and quality control.
- Knowledge of **climate and blue finance instruments** (climate funds, Global Gateway, EFSD+, regional and multilateral banks) is a significant asset.

B. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

To apply, please send the following documents **before January 15 at 9:00 a.m. UTC**.

- A **resume** demonstrating the relevance of your profile to the position;
- A **technical proposal** of no more than 4 pages including
 - An understanding of the challenges of blue finance in West Africa;
 - International instruments/approaches that may be useful/suitable for West Africa;
 - Your approach and factors for success envisaged to address the activities presented (including your areas of expertise if you wish to position yourself on some of the activities/themes).
- A **financial offer**: stating your daily rate;
- Three relevant professional references, including email addresses and phone numbers;
- Any relevant documents or technical reports produced;
- Subject of the application: **"WASOP Regional Blue Finance Expert"**
- Applications received will be reviewed as soon as they are received, and Expertise France may contact candidates before the deadline.