

# WEST AFRICA SUSTAINABLE OCEAN PROGRAMME

- Ocean governance
- Sustainable blue economy
- Ecosystem preservation

## TERMS OF REFERENCE NATIONAL/THEMATIC EXPERTS IN BLUE ECONOMY PROJECT PIPELINE 12/16/2025

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.

Financé par :  

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

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
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 WASOP's Sustainable Blue Economy pillar aims to support the development of a sustainable and inclusive blue economy in West Africa. The Blue Facility deploys a technical assistance

mechanism for regional organizations and, in a complementary manner, for WASOP beneficiary countries to contribute to (i) establishing a regional institutional, regulatory, and financial framework conducive to the growth of the sustainable blue economy and (ii) supporting 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 aims 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 funds (such as the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility), and multilateral development banks.

In this context, developing a credible pipeline of bankable blue projects is a key challenge for WASOP in the 13 countries covered by the program. This involves identifying, structuring, and supporting initiatives led by a variety of public and private actors in very different national contexts.

To meet these needs, the Blue Facility is **putting together a team of experts specializing in national/thematic blue economy projects.**

## 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 specific objective of the national/thematic blue economy project pipeline experts' mission is to directly support project leaders by applying the methodological framework defined at the regional level in order to improve the quality, maturity, and bankability of blue projects. The national/thematic experts will work closely with local realities to identify projects, carry out diagnostics, identify support needs, structure projects, and prepare the necessary elements for the possible mobilization of the Blue Facility, the CFP, or external investments.

### B. MAIN ACTIVITIES

The mission of the national/thematic blue economy project pipeline experts is closely complementary to that of (i) the international expert (strategic guidance and overall technical supervision) and (ii) the regional expert (operationalization, institutional anchoring, and mobilization of stakeholders at the regional level (BOAD, BIDC, etc.).

National/thematic blue economy project pipeline experts will be required to:

- Conduct initial assessments of projects identified in the country, using the tools and criteria provided by the regional expert. The expert may also be called upon to identify bankable sustainable blue economy projects.
- Support project leaders (SMEs, cooperatives, CSOs, local authorities, public institutions) in the technical, organizational, financial, and ESG structuring of their projects.
- Work with project leaders to develop support plans detailing priority actions to improve the maturity and bankability of the project.
- Prepare or contribute to pre-feasibility and pre-bankability elements, such as project sheets, simplified economic models, risk analyses, and other required deliverables.
- Ensure the implementation of the regional framework, maintaining methodological alignment with the requirements defined by the regional blue finance expert.
- Provide regular feedback to the WASOP team and the regional expert on project progress, difficulties encountered, and additional support needs.
- Provide ad hoc support to the DUE and national authorities in reviewing projects or preparing technical missions.
- Contribute to the visibility of national initiatives, in conjunction with the Practitioner's Network, in particular by identifying projects with potential for integration into the regional pipeline.
- Facilitate dialogue with local stakeholders (administrations, private sector, financial institutions, communities) in order to remove practical or institutional obstacles to project development.
- Document national feedback to inform the continuous improvement of the regional framework.

## C. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

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

- Project assessments carried out in accordance with the regional methodological framework, including technical, organizational, financial, and ESG analysis.
- Support plans developed jointly with project leaders, specifying priority actions to improve project maturity and bankability.
- Project sheets and pre-bankability elements (simplified economic model, risk analysis, financing needs, structuring options).
- Regular summary notes presenting the progress of the national pipeline, obstacles encountered, and additional support needs.
- Contributions to the consolidation of the regional pipeline through the provision of reliable and structured information.
- Capitalization of national feedback to fuel the continuous improvement of the framework put in place by the regional blue finance expert.

- Ad hoc support for mission preparation and exchanges with EUDs or national authorities when required.

## D. ORGANIZATION

The Blue Facility is putting together a team of experts to develop national/thematic blue economy projects.

The experts carry out these missions through live productions, in collaboration with an international expert who provides technical supervision for the mission.

The experts report to the Blue Facility Manager and the International Blue Finance Expert.

Estimated time commitment: to be determined.

## E. WORK STRUCTURE

The national/thematic pipeline experts will work with an international blue finance expert who will ensure the methodological steering and overall consistency of the work, developing the common reference framework, guaranteeing the quality of the outputs, and liaising with the Blue Facility, the Practitioners Network (WASOP), the Call for Projects (WASOP), and donors. National/thematic experts work closely with project leaders to apply this framework, carry out assessments, structure projects, and support their development. This coordination allows for a harmonized approach at the regional level with operational implementation tailored to the contexts and sectors of each country.

# III. Required profiles and practical information s

## A. PROFILES SOUGHT

### 1. Key skills

- Master's degree or equivalent in private sector development, economics, finance, management, entrepreneurship, public policy, development, or a related discipline.
- Excellent command of SME support approaches, project structuring, and the basics of economic and financial analysis.
- Knowledge of public finance instruments (bonds), including green/blue bonds.
- Proven ability to work with project owners at various stages of maturity, including informal SMEs, cooperatives, start-ups, and local authorities.
- Ability to translate initial ideas into structured projects, clarifying the business model, costs, revenues, risks, and financing needs.

- Ability to apply a common regional methodological framework while taking into account country and sector specificities.
- Familiarity or experience in at least one or two sectors of the blue economy, such as:
  - fishing and aquaculture,
  - logistics and port infrastructure,
  - sustainable tourism,
  - circular economy and waste management,
  - nature-based solutions and ecosystem restoration,
  - coastal and marine renewable energy,
  - maritime technologies, surveillance, data.
  - ports
- Excellent listening, facilitation, and working skills with a variety of stakeholders (SMEs, cooperatives, administrations, financial institutions, CSOs).
- Knowledge of the Blue Economy context of one or more coastal countries in West Africa;
- Very good command of written and spoken English; French is an asset.
- Proficiency in common office software (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and ease with reporting tools.
- Being based in one of the 13 WASOP program countries is an asset.

## 2. Professional experience

- Minimum 5 to 7 years of experience in private sector development, SME support, incubation/acceleration, strategy consulting, or economic development.
- Proven experience in structuring or evaluating projects involving SMEs, cooperatives, or local public actors.
- Professional experience in at least one or two of the blue sectors listed above, or participation in projects related to these sectors.
- In-depth knowledge of the national/regional institutional and economic context, including mapping of relevant public and private actors.
- Experience in programs supported by international donors, ideally the European Union or similar, is desirable.
- Experience in supporting actors unfamiliar with management or financial analysis tools is an important 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 indication of the country or countries in which you offer your project support services;

- Your understanding of the challenges of the mission (including challenges related to the blue economy, blue finance, and the creation of a pipeline of bankable projects in West Africa);
  - Your approach and anticipated success factors for addressing the activities presented (including your areas of expertise if you wish to position yourself on some of the activities/themes)
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- A **financial offer**: presenting your daily rate;
  - Three relevant professional references, including email addresses and phone numbers
  - Any relevant documents or technical reports produced;
  - Subject of the application: "**Blue Economy Project Pipeline Expert**"
  - Applications received will be reviewed as soon as they are received, and Expertise France may contact candidates before the deadline.