



Fisheries  
Transparency  
Initiative

# 4th meeting of the FiTI International Board

12 June 2018, Conference Call

## Meeting Minutes

ID: BM-04\_2018\_MM

**Provided by:** FiTI International Secretariat

**Date:** 06.07.2018

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<b>Time</b>	11.00-13.00 (GMT)
<b>Venue</b>	Conference Call
<b>Hosted by</b>	-
<b>Inputs</b>	- <b>Preparatory Paper for 4th International Board (EN/FR)</b> [ID: FiTI_BM-04_2018_PP]

## Outcomes of meeting

### 1. Welcome and Administration

The Chair of the FiTI International Board, Peter EIGEN, opened the meeting by welcoming the Board Members to the 4th meeting of the Board.

Apologies were noted from Gunilla GREIG (Countries Stakeholder Group) and Barthélémy BATIENO (Civil Society Stakeholder Group – Alternate). Gunilla delegated her voting power to Philippe MICHAUD (Countries Stakeholder Group).

After all participants joined the call, the Chair identified that a Quorum was reached<sup>1</sup> and confirmed that the Board was able to make decisions during the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Francisco LEOTTE as a new Board Member representing the Business Stakeholder Group. The invitation had been extended to Francisco after the 3rd FiTI International Board meeting [BM-03\_2018\_D-02]. Francisco thanked the Chair for being part of the Board and being able to contribute to the FiTI.

The Board agreed on the Agenda.

The Chair asked Sven BIERMANN, Director of the FiTI International Secretariat, to present the status of action tasks identified at the previous meeting:

**[BM-02\_2017\_AI-01] Reach out to participants to the Western Indian Ocean Regional Workshop to inform them about the possibility of regional funding from the BADEA:** Sven stated that as long as funding from BADEA does not materialise, no further information should be communicated to countries. This action item was therefore closed.

**[BM-02\_2017\_AI-03] Provide guidance on how to promote the FiTI further with the European Commission and EU Member States:** Sven indicated that this item was still open as the FiTI International Secretariat is still expecting Board Members to send their recommendations and/or guidance on that aspect. Board Members who want to share input were kindly invited to send it to the Secretariat after the meeting.

**[BM-03\_2018\_AI-01] Establish contacts with retailers and seafood associations:** Sven stated that contacts have been established with the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI). More details were shared during the meeting (see below agenda item #3). This action item was therefore closed.

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<sup>1</sup> “At least two-thirds of the total number of Board Members, with at least two Board Members from each constituency, establish a quorum.” Terms of Reference of the FiTI International Board, para. 3

**[BM-03\_2018\_AI-02] Send comments on indicators used to identify a New Chair to Working Group “New Chair”:** Given the current funding challenges, Alfred SCHUMM indicated that the search for a New Chair had been put on hold.

**[BM-03\_2018\_AI-03] Prepare a brief background paper on potential membership fees for the FiTI:** Background information on this topic has been provided in the preparatory document for this Board meeting. This action item was therefore closed.

**[BM-03\_2018\_AI-04] Provide an updated version of the FiTI Global Code of Conduct to the International Board:** Sven stated that this action item is currently on hold.

**[BM-03\_2018\_AI-05] Prepare a brief overview paper of different legal forms and governance structures from similar global, multi-stakeholder initiatives:** Sven informed the Board that this topic should be the major agenda item for the next, 5<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting and that the FiTI International Secretariat will start working on this shortly. He emphasised the importance to define a legal form for the FiTI as this is, inter alia, a key assessment criterion for donors. Sven indicated that some donors have already been enquiring about the initiative’s legal status. Also, the Seychelles reemphasised their commitment to welcome the FiTI International Secretariat in the first quarter of 2019, as H.E. Vincent Meriton, Vice President of the Republic of the Seychelles stated in a letter to the FiTI Chair. The HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA Governance Platform, currently acting as the fiscal host for the FiTI, will then no longer serve as the fiscal host for the FiTI.

**[BM-03\_2018\_AI-06] Discuss approaches for engaging with donors regarding a “call for FiTI funding”:** Sven reported that so far, the FiTI International Secretariat had not received any feedback from the Civil Society Stakeholder Group. This item therefore remains open until the next Board meeting and the Civil Society representatives are kindly asked to send any input to the Secretariat.

**[BM-03\_2018\_AI-07] Extend a formal invitation to Mr. Leotte, Thai Union Group, to join the FiTI International Board:** This action item has been completed and was therefore closed.

**[BM-03\_2018\_AI-08] Determine date for 4<sup>th</sup> International Board meeting (global conference call):** This action item has been completed and was therefore closed.

## 2. Update on current funding situation

The Chair invited Sven to provide an update on the current funding situation. Sven summarised that the immediate situation for funding international activities remains very difficult, which is in particular worrisome as more and more countries express concrete interest in the initiative – especially in West Africa – and other countries are already in the final stages of the sign-up step process.

- **Request for technical assistance by the Government of Seychelles at Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA)**

Sven and Philippe MICHAUD informed the Board that it is now unlikely that the request for technical assistance from the Government of the Seychelles will be processed at all by BADEA. This request did not only include Seychelles' FiTI-related activities, but also a significant contribution to the FiTI International Secretariat. As a direct result, the FiTI International Secretariat had to reduce its operations significantly (in particular for work done out of Berlin), starting 1 April 2018.

Sven thanked Alfred SCHUMM and the World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) for the financial support provided to Andréa DURIGHELLO to enable her to continue promoting the FiTI in West Africa. However, Sven stated that this funding support also runs out at the end of June 2018 and therefore urged all Board Members again to come forward with additional funding ideas, in particular for short-term financing.

- **World Bank Group Programme Proposal to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) for support to the World Bank Group Programme on Fisheries (PROFISH) to Advance Transparency in the Fisheries Sector**

Sven outlined that the World Bank Group recently submitted a proposal to Sida for support to the Multi-Donor Trust Fund PROFISH in order to advance transparency in the fisheries sector. Under this proposal national FiTI outreach and implementation activities as well as international administration and governance would be supported. A first Technical Assessment meeting by Sida indicated a positive response to this proposal, which will now be further discussed until the final decision making will take place, expected for September 2018. Given this promising outlook, Sven emphasised that the next six months are therefore crucial for the entire initiative.

- **Discussions with UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)**

The Chair reported on recent discussions with Vera SONGWE, Secretary General of the UNECA, who has been engaged with the FiTI since its early stages (in different roles). He explained that the UNECA is very active on the aspect of natural resource governance and that opportunities for joint collaborations may arise, for example in Kenya. The Chair indicated however that such collaborations would have to be considered in the long term.

### 3. Report from the FiTI International Secretariat

- **Major outreach activities**

The Chair invited the FiTI International Secretariat to provide a brief update of its concluded and planned activities.

Andréa reported on major activities in **West Africa**.

#### *Past Activities*

- 6-9 March 2018, Banjul/Gambia: The FiTI was presented at an event organised at the occasion of the International Women's Day by the CAOPA on the topic "Transformative Action: The Role of Women in promoting environmentally and socially sustainable fishing practices in fisheries". This event was also used to explore possible FiTI implementation in Gambia with different stakeholders, including representatives of the Fisheries Ministry. Gambian stakeholders have already started looking for partners to organise a national sensitisation workshop on the FiTI.
- 25-26 April 2018, Abidjan/Côte d'Ivoire: The FiTI was presented at a workshop organised by the Federation of artisanal fisheries actors in Côte d'Ivoire (FENASCOOP-CI) on the role of artisanal fisheries actors in ensuring sustainable fisheries. The goal was also to explain the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the EU and Côte d'Ivoire. It was agreed to organise further information sessions with representatives of the federation.
- 11-12 May 2018, Kamsar/Guinea: The FiTI was presented at the occasion of an information and sensitisation workshop on transparency in Guinea's fisheries management. This workshop, organised in local language, reached out to stakeholders outside of Conakry and ensured that these actors understand their role in their own language, as some of them do not speak French. Given the success of this workshop, it is planned to replicate it in the South of Guinea. The FiTI team in Guinea is currently looking for partners to organise such a workshop.

Besides this, Andréa indicated that discussions are ongoing with Ghana, where local actors are currently trying to mobilise funds to support FiTI promotion activities in the country. Further activities/meetings could be organised at the first visit of the FiTI International Secretariat.

#### *Upcoming activities*

- 2-3 July 2018, Conakry/Guinea. Andréa indicated that the West African Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine Conservation (PRCM) will be organising a regional workshop on transparency in fisheries management. This event, which targets mainly participants from the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission region, has the objective to foster discussions amongst participants on transparency in the West African context and enable all country

representatives (government, civil society, and business) to take ownership of the FiTI and understand the value of the initiative in their respective countries. Combined with experience-sharing contributions from Mauritania and Guinea, the goal is to build the capacity of participants to promote the FiTI back in their respective countries.

Alexander BIRYUKOV proposed to make his facilities and relations in West Africa available to the FiTI International Secretariat to further support FiTI activities in West Africa.

Francisco LEOTTE proposed to provide contacts to the FiTI International Secretariat in Ghana.

Sven reported that the FiTI International Secretariat participated in the FAO Expert Consultation on “Trade in Fisheries Services” (20-22 March 2018, Gothenburg/Sweden). The meeting was a good opportunity to highlight the trade-related aspects of the FiTI Standard to this expert group.

- **Collaboration opportunities with Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI), Global Fishing Watch (GFW)**

Based on a recommendation by Marcio CASTRO DE SOUZA, the FiTI International Secretariat reached out to the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) to explore collaboration opportunities. Sven informed the Board that a proposal for a more formalised collaboration is currently being drafted.

Sven also informed the Board that discussions with Global Fishing Watch are currently ongoing regarding a joint side event at the upcoming “Our Ocean” conference in Bali (October 2018). Board Member María José CORNAX has been included in these discussions. Sven informed the Board that a concept note is currently being drafted to approach donors to fund such a side event.

- **Provision of Candidate Application template**

Sven informed the Board that the Secretariat released the first FiTI Candidate Application template. Countries that wish to be recognised as an official FiTI Candidate country must use this template to submit their application to the Board, after completing the six sign-up steps. This template is available in French and English on the FiTI Website.

Sven explained that the release of this Candidate Application template had been accelerated due to the rapid progress made by Mauritania in fulfilling the sign-up steps. He stated that the FiTI International Secretariat is expecting Mauritania to submit its Candidate Application within the next few months.

#### 4. Participating country contributions

The Chair introduced the core topic of this 4<sup>th</sup> International Board meeting: determining whether annual financial contributions should be requested from countries to support the financial requirements for the international administration and governance of the FiTI. The Chair thanked the FiTI International Secretariat for providing background information as part of the Preparatory Document, allowing the Board to discuss advantages, disadvantages and practical requirements of such contributions.

The Chair further explained that the goal of the meeting was to make decisions on six key questions:

- (1) Should financial contributions from participating countries be introduced in general?
- (2) How should financial contributions be determined and structured?
- (3) When should contributions from participating countries become effective?
- (4) At what stage in the FiTI process are countries required to make a contribution?
- (5) Should participating country contributions be mandatory or voluntary?
- (6) Should there be any usage restrictions on such contributions?

The Chair invited Sven to highlight key information and decision requirements on each of the six questions.

Sven emphasised that there is an increasing demand from FiTI's stakeholders, in particular countries' governments, for the services that the FiTI International Secretariat provides, for example awareness raising and information workshops, technical guidance on the FiTI Standard, opportunities for peer exchange, global recognition for successes, and (future) validations. To ensure the Secretariat's ability to provide such services to all interested countries, and to build a diversified funding model that encourages collective ownership of the FiTI by various stakeholder groups, annual financial contributions from countries should be considered. Furthermore, a number of countries indicated already a general willingness to provide a modest, annual financial contribution to the FiTI in return for the increased value a strong international FiTI administration and governance can provide to their domestic reform efforts.

Sven explained further that the financial requirements for the FiTI can be split into two major categories: financial requirements for national implementations and financial requirements for the international administration and governance. The latter refers primarily to the activities of the FiTI International Secretariat to assure the operational management of the FiTI as well as other costs, e.g., board meetings, external validations. Sven explained that it is envisioned that financing for the international administration and governance will come from a variety of funding



sources, including, but not limited to, participating country contributions, donor support (e.g., through PROFISH), International Development Association (IDA) grants and other stakeholder contributions (e.g., from the private sector).

Sven also mentioned that the often-used term “membership fees” is inadequate, as the term “member” is not a defined term in the FiTI Standard, and – even more important – the term „membership“ could suggest legal implications for countries. The term “participating country contribution” is therefore used.

### **(1) Should financial contributions from participating countries be introduced in general?**

Sven highlighted that financial contributions from participating countries will only be used to contribute to the overall financing of international administration and governance activities.

After carefully discussing advantages and disadvantages, no major interventions were raised by Board Members.

The Board reached the following decision by consensus:

#### **Decision [BM-04\_2018\_D-01]:**

**The Board approved that annual financial contributions from participating countries will be introduced in general.**

It was also specified that at this stage, the question of contributions was only applied to countries and not to companies/professional organisations involved in the process, although this could be further explored at a later stage.

### **(2) How should financial contributions be determined and structured?**

Sven explained that a financial contribution model should be mindful of the diversity of countries that engage in the FiTI, as countries vary in terms of income level, size and complexity.

It was therefore proposed to set contribution levels based on each country’s Gross National Income level (according to World Bank classifications<sup>2</sup>) as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> The World Bank assigns the world's economies into four income groups — high, upper-middle, lower-middle, and low. This assignment is based on the Gross National Income (GNI) per capita calculated using the Atlas method. The units for this measure and for the thresholds is current US Dollars. As of July 1st, 2017, the thresholds for classification by income are as follows: Low-income < 1,005 GNI/Capita (current US\$); Lower-middle income 1,006 - 3,955 GNI/Capita (current US\$); Upper-middle income 3,956 - 12,235 GNI/Capita (current US\$); High-income > 12,236 GNI/Capita (current US\$).

Income level categories	Annual contribution
Low income	10.000 USD
Lower-Middle income	20.000 USD
Upper-Middle income	35.000 USD
High income	50.000 USD

Major interventions from Board Members included:

- The proposed annual financial contributions are seen as too low;
- The proposed annual financial contributions are seen as too high, in particular for Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
- In-kind contributions from countries should not be accounted against financial contributions;
- The proposed annual financial contributions should be seen as minimum contributions and countries should be encouraged to increase their contributions based on their national context.

The Board reached the following decision by consensus:

**Decision [BM-04\_2018\_D-02]:**

**The Board agreed that minimum annual financial contributions will be determined based on the country's Gross National Income and aligned to four income level categories (i.e. low, low-middle, upper-middle, high).**

**Minimum annual financial contribution will be set as follows: Low income: 10.000 USD; Lower-Middle income: 20.000 USD; Upper-Middle income: 35.000 USD; High income: 50.000 USD.**

**Minimum annual financial contributions from countries that are officially categorised as a Small Island Developing State<sup>3</sup> will also be determined according to their Gross National Income, but reduced by 50%.**

**In-kind contributions from countries are not accounted against their minimum annual financial contribution.**

**Countries are encouraged to exceed the minimum annual financial contributions.**

<sup>3</sup> According to <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sids/list>

### (3) When should contributions from participating countries become effective?

Sven reemphasised that the increasing interest for the FiTI, in particular among countries, must be met with an increasing resource base of the FiTI International Secretariat in order to continue providing value-adding services. He therefore proposed that the minimum annual financial contributions become effective 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019. This would also allow governments to ensure the inclusion of these contributions in their national budget for 2019.

One intervention was made that, given the fact that some countries have already engaged in the sign-up steps and received significant support from the FiTI International Secretariat, such countries should be encouraged to make contributions on a voluntary basis already in 2018.

The Board reached the following decision by consensus:

#### **Decision [BM-04\_2018\_D-03]:**

**The Board agreed that minimum annual financial contributions will become effective on 1 January 2019.**

**Countries are encouraged to make contributions in 2018 on a voluntary basis.**

### (4) At what stage in the FiTI process are countries required to make a contribution?

Sven reminded that the FiTI Standard comprises two official status for implementing countries: FiTI Candidate country and FiTI Compliant country. One option for determining the due date of annual financial contributions could be these two statuses. However, Sven emphasised that the process before becoming a Candidate country (the sign-up steps) already requires a large amount of support from the FiTI International Secretariat. To support the overall administration and governance budget of the FiTI, he therefore proposed to request financial contributions from countries before they reach this first official status. As there is no obvious milestone within the process for countries intending to implement the FiTI, he proposed to set the due date either after the public commitment (FiTI Standard, Part I, A.1) or after the designation of a FiTI Lead Ministry and FiTI National Lead (FiTI Standard, Part I, A.3).

Major interventions from Board Members included:

- Linking the due date for financial contributions to the country's public commitment could ensure strong political will and seriousness;
- Linking the due date for financial contributions to the country's public commitment is justified as countries immediately benefit from the positive image of the FiTI and from the support of the FiTI International Secretariat;

- Linking the due date for financial contributions with the country's public commitment towards the FiTI may delay the overall process for countries signing-up to the FiTI.

The Board reached the following decision by consensus:

**Decision [BM-04\_2018\_D-04]:**

**The Board approved that minimum annual financial contributions from countries become due after the public commitment of the country's government to implement the FiTI (FiTI Standard, Part I, A.1).**

**(5) Should participating country contributions be mandatory or voluntary?**

In order to refute the argument that financial contributions may discourage new countries from joining the FiTI, it was discussed whether country contributions should be made fully mandatory, fully voluntary or develop overtime from voluntary to mandatory. It was specified that the proposals were based on the principle that the provision of contributions should not interfere with the implementation process of the FiTI in the country.

In summary, Sven outlined three major options for the FiTI International Board to consider:

- *Option 1:* Participating countries are required to provide the annual contribution. Failure to provide the contribution will not impact the country's ability to implement the FiTI process, but the lack of contributions will be made transparent on the FiTI website.
- *Option 2:* Participating countries are merely encouraged to make an annual contribution to the FiTI. Failure to do so will not result in any consequences (i.e. only countries that made a financial contribution will be shown on the FiTI website).
- *Option 3:* Participating countries are allowed to make voluntary contributions to the FiTI within their national sign-up step process; once the country becomes an official FiTI Candidate country, annual financial contributions becomes mandatory. Consequences of failure are similar to Option 1.

Major interventions from Board Members included:

- Financial contributions should be flexible (i.e., fully voluntary), as this is seen as the most realistic option to attract a maximum number of countries;
- Countries with low political will could use the financial burden of mandatory contributions as an excuse to withdraw from the initiative;
- Ensuring a sustainable financial basis for the international administration and governance requires predictability regarding financial contributions. Simply publishing the names of

countries not providing financial contributions (“naming and shaming”) was not seen as an effective sanction;

- Contributions should be mandatory, but different sanctions should apply, depending on the implementation process. For example, the process of starting FiTI is often somewhat fragile and it might be difficult to secure budget for their annual contributions right from the start.

The Board reached the following decision by consensus:

**Decision [BM-04\_2018\_D-05]:**

**The Board agreed that minimum annual financial contributions are mandatory.**

**For countries that have not reached the official status of an FiTI Candidate country, failure to provide such contributions will be made transparent, e.g., on the FiTI website.**

**For countries that have reach the official status of an FiTI Candidate country or FiTI Compliant country, failure to provide such contributions will restrict their ability to undergo regular validations in accordance with the FiTI Standard.**

**(6) Should there be any usage restrictions on such contributions?**

Sven explained that contributions from participating countries could either be classified as unrestricted (e.g., the contributions are allocated to a pool of resources that can be used to fund any activity falling within the Workplan of the FiTI International Secretariat, as approved by the FiTI International Board) or classified as restricted (e.g., contributions can only be used for a certain, pre-determined activities, such as validations).

In order to reduce the administrative effort on both sides, Sven recommended to use participating country contributions in an unrestricted way.

No major interventions were raised by Board Members.

The Board reached the following decision by consensus:

**Decision [BM-04\_2018\_D-06]:**

**The Board agreed that minimum annual financial contributions from countries will be used in an unrestricted way within the overall budget of the FiTI International Secretariat.**

## 5. Date and mode of the 5<sup>th</sup> International Board meeting

Sven proposed to the Board that the next meeting of the FiTI International Board should focus on the FiTI's legal status and corresponding governance implications. The Chair asked the FiTI International Secretariat to provide relevant background information on this topic as part of the regular preparatory document.

The 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the FiTI International Board will be conducted as a conference call either on:

- Monday, 27 August 2018 (2 p.m. Berlin time), or
- Monday, 10 September 2018 (2 p.m. Berlin time)

The Board reached the following decision by consensus:

### Decision [BM-04\_2018\_D-07]:

**The Board agreed to conduct the 5<sup>th</sup> International Board meeting as a conference call on Monday, 10 September 2018 (2 p.m. Berlin time). The key focus of this meeting will be the FiTI's legal status and corresponding governance implications**

## 6. Closing

The Chair thanked the Members of the Board for their participation in the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the FiTI International Board and expressed his satisfaction for the progress achieved during the meeting.

## 4<sup>th</sup> International Board Meeting ended

## APPENDIX I: Action items

ID	Pending actions	Responsibility
BM-02_2017_AI-03	<b>Provide guidance on how to promote the FiTI further with the European Commission and EU Member States</b>	FiTI International Board Members
BM-03_2018_AI-02	<b>Send comments on indicators used to identify a New Chair to Working Group “New Chair”</b>	All Board Members
BM-03_2018_AI-04	<b>Provide an updated version of the FiTI Global Code of Conduct to the International Board</b>	FiTI International Secretariat
BM-03_2018_AI-05	<b>Prepare a brief overview paper of different legal forms and governance structures from similar global, multi-stakeholder initiatives</b>	FiTI International Secretariat
BM-03_2018_AI-06	<b>Discuss approaches for engaging with donors regarding a “call for FiTI funding”</b>	Board Members of Civil Society group
BM-04_2018_AI-01	<b>Finalise concept note for future collaboration with Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI)</b>	FiTI International Secretariat
BM-04_2018_AI-02	<b>Draft concept note for a joint side event with Global Fishing Watch at the upcoming “Our Ocean” Conference and seek funding support</b>	FiTI International Secretariat

## APPENDIX II: List of Participants

### Chair

**Peter EIGEN**

### Stakeholder Group of Countries

**Philippe MICHAUD**

Excused:

**Gunilla TEGELSKÄR GREIG** (Voting Power delegated to Philippe Michaud)

Not excused:

**Abass SYLLA**

**Mas Achmad SANTOSA**

### Stakeholder Group of Business

**Alexander BIRYUKOV**

**Ricardo BERNALES**

**Francisco LEOTTE**

Not excused:

**Gaoussou GUEYE**

**Marthin HADIWINATA**

### Stakeholder Group of Civil Society

**María José CORNAX**

**Sebastián LOSADA**

**Francisco MARI**

**Nedwa NECH**

**Eduardo ROLÓN**



**Alfred SCHUMM**

Excused:

**Barthélémy Jean Auguste BATIENO (Alternate)**

### Observers

**Marcio CASTRO DE SOUZA (FAO)**

**Claire DELPEUCH (OECD)**

### FiTI International Secretariat

**Sven BIERMANN**

**Andréa DURIGHELLO**

**André STANDING**

## APPENDIX III: Initial Agenda

Agenda item	Type <sup>4</sup>	Time (GMT)
1. Welcome and Administration	ⓘ / ☑	1.00 – 1.10 p.m.
2. Update on current funding situation	ⓘ	1.10 – 1.30 p.m.
3. Report from the FiTI International Secretariat	ⓘ	1.30 – 1.50 p.m.
4. Participating country contribution	☑	1.50 – 2.50 p.m.
5. Date and mode of the 5 <sup>th</sup> International Board meeting	ⓘ	2.50 – 2.55 p.m.
6. Closing	ⓘ	2.55 – 3.00 p.m.

<sup>4</sup> ⓘ Agenda item is primarily for information; ☑ Agenda item requires decision