



Fisheries
Transparency
Initiative

FiTI Global Travel Policy

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FiTI International Secretariat

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Fisheriest Transparency Initiative (FiTI)

Preamble

The Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI) is a global multi-stakeholder initiative, which seeks to increase transparency and participation in fisheries governance for the benefit of a more sustainable management of marine fisheries.

As a global voluntary initiative which relies significantly on third-party funding, the FiTI has a responsibility to ensure that expenditures incurred in carrying out its mission are reasonable and justifiable, balancing the need to attend meetings/events with its commitment to a reasonable use of resources.

The purpose of this FiTI Global Travel Policy (further referred to as the “Policy”) is to describe the types of expenditures that are reimbursable by applicable travellers and to outline adequate instructions and procedures for those seeking reimbursement of their travel costs for FiTI-related travels.

While this Policy is intended to be comprehensive, it is impossible to anticipate every situation encountered by a traveller. The traveller is expected to apply this Policy on a conservative basis, consistent with normal living standards. In case where the Policy does not provide the necessary information, the traveller should exercise good judgment.

1. Applicability

The Policy applies to the following persons, in the following referred to as “travellers”, when seeking reimbursement for FiTI-related travels:

- FiTI Chair;
- Members of the FiTI International Board representing Small-Scale Fisheries as well as Civil Society from organisations with
 - a staff headcount¹ of fewer than 25, and
 - an annual income² not exceeding EUR 10 million.

Alternates of these Board Members may only be eligible for travel reimbursement if he/she is replacing a Member at a Board meeting in case of absence of this Member.

In case funding support is available for all members of the FiTI International Board, this Policy applies to all other Members of the FiTI International Board as well.

¹ The staff headcount criterion covers full-time, part-time, temporary and seasonal staff (e.g. employees, secondments, owner-managers). Staff headcount does not include apprentices or students, employees on maternity or parental leave and pro-bono partners or advisors.

² The annual income (also referred to as budget) is used for funding projects, operations, salaries and other overhead costs and typically constitutes membership dues, the sale of goods and services, grants, donations etc.

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- Employees, advisors and sub-contractors of the FiTI International Secretariat;
- Other individuals acting on behalf of the FiTI International Board or the FiTI International Secretariat.

For major FiTI events/meetings, such as FiTI International Conferences or FiTI Members' Meetings, separate travel policies will be provided.

2. Pre-approval of travel

According to the FiTI Global Code of Conduct, the FiTI is dedicated to use its resources in a cost-efficient and environmental-friendly way, while balancing the necessities to fulfil its mission. Before booking any travel, it is therefore essential that travellers consider video/teleconferencing options as a means of reducing costs and carbon emissions.

Reimbursement of travel costs is subject to the availability of funding. All applicable travellers seeking reimbursement must therefore obtain an approval prior to their travel as follows:

- Travel by members of the FiTI International Board, including Alternates, must be approved by the Director of the FiTI International Secretariat;
- Travel by employees of the FiTI International Secretariat (except its Director) as well as advisors and sub-contractors of the FiTI International Secretariat must be approved by the Director of the FiTI International Secretariat;
- Travel by other individuals acting on behalf of the FiTI International Board or the FiTI International Secretariat must be approved by the Director of the FiTI International Secretariat;
- Travel by the Director of the FiTI International Secretariat must be approved by the FiTI Chair.

Travellers seeking reimbursement may be requested to submit estimates for travel-related expenses prior to approval.

3. Travel expenses eligible for reimbursement

The FiTI appreciates efforts by travellers to seek the best fares possible and make use of public transportation whenever possible. All travel must be carried out via the most economical route. Furthermore, travellers must seek to combine FiTI-related travels with other travels.

The FiTI International Secretariat will reimburse only the following three expense categories, unless otherwise approved:

a) Travel (air, rail, car)

Travel arrangements for airfare and train tickets will be made by the FiTI International Secretariat. Only the actual expenses for airfare and train tickets will be reimbursed. Travellers should seek to depart from and return to the same location.

Airfares must be economy class tickets and train fares must be second/coach class tickets. The FiTI Chair has the option of business class airfares and first-class train tickets for long-distance travel.

Last minute airline or train cancellations reimbursements due to unforeseen natural or personal circumstances will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Travel by personal car must only be used in exceptional cases and requires prior approval by the FiTI International Secretariat. If travelling by car, the traveller will be reimbursed on a basis of 19 EURO cents/km. Expenses for car rentals will not be reimbursed.

b) Accommodation, meals and public transportation on a per diem basis

Per diems to cover accommodation, meals and public transportation expenses depend on the meeting/event destination of the travel and will be reimbursed based on internationally applied per diem rates³.

Expense items covered by the FiTI International Secretariat (e.g. central hotel booking, meals provided) or covered by other external sources (e.g. conference organiser) must be deducted from the available per diem.

Travellers are expected to arrange their own accommodation in line with the per diem allowance. In the event that hotel reservations are arranged by the FiTI International Secretariat, travellers will be informed prior to the meeting/event. In case the FiTI International Secretariat makes hotel arrangements, yet travellers prefer to stay in a different hotel, the standard per diem rate will not be adjusted.

In the event that participants decide not to join a group-lunch and/or a group-dinner, these meals will not be reimbursed.

³ The FiTI is using official per diem rates from the European Commission (EC) in their framework of EC-funded external aid contracts. A link to the most recent applicable rates is available on the FiTI website (www.fisheriestransparency.org).

Dependent on the participants flight schedule additional night stays may be reimbursed, subject to approval by the FiTI International Secretariat.

Should travellers wish to extend their stay in the place of the venue, all hotel costs beyond the dates of the meeting will be at the expense of the traveller.

Public transportation that is safe, reliable and practical should be used within the traveller's home city as well as the meeting/event location. The FiTI International Secretariat seeks to provide instructions as to which means of public transport can be used at the meeting/event location. If public transportation is not available, the use of taxis is permitted. A car service can be used when taxis are not readily available or practical.

The FiTI International Secretariat seeks to indicate the estimated per diem allowance to the travel, before travel arrangements are made.

c) Visa costs and travel insurance

Visa processing fees and travel insurance cost and will be reimbursed in cases where it is necessary to attend a meeting/event. Only the actual expenses incurred will be reimbursed.

The following expenses will not be reimbursed, unless otherwise agree upon prior to the travel:

- Service agency fees and other related expenses (e.g. photo service, travel to third country) for visa applications;
- Telecommunications expenses (long distance/local calls) as well as internet access fees);
- Airline Ancillary Fees⁴;
- Lounge access with costs;
- Excess luggage charges or lost luggage and contents⁵;
- Laundry service;
- Credit card or banking fees;
- Souvenirs and personal gifts;
- Tips.

⁴ Any additional cost for booking a seat on board of a plane, upgrading to economy comfort, speedy boarding, in-flight entertainment, phone, or alcoholic beverages, is out of policy and will not be reimbursed.

⁵ Travellers should work directly with the airline carrier to recover damages.

4. Reimbursement of travel

Travellers may request an advance on the expected travel expenses, subject to the availability of funding.

Within 30 days of completion of a trip, the traveller must submit their request by using the standardised FiTI Travel Reimbursement Form⁶ to in order to receive reimbursement of expenses.

The FiTI International Secretariat will cover the costs corresponding the per diem allowance (for cost category b) and include the correspondent exchange rate⁷, if applicable.

For a reimbursement request of expense categories a) and c), all receipts of expenses related to travel must be provided, including but not limited to:

- Original itemised receipts/tickets for train⁸;
- Original receipts of airline tickets issued by travel agents/airlines;
- Printouts of electronically issued receipts, including boarding pass;
- Ticket stubs and passengers' receipts;
- Other expense receipts, e.g. travel insurance or visa fees.

As accommodation, meals and public transportation are reimbursed on a per diem basis, they do not require a submission of receipts and/or other evidence.

The reimbursement request as well as all accompanying original documents must be send as a PDF document to the FiTI International Secretariat at info@fisheriestransparency.org. Original documents do not need to be sent via regular mail. However, all travellers must retain the original documents for 2 years after the submission of their reimbursement request.

Reimbursement of costs will take place within 30 days after receipt of the reimbursement claim, subject to the complete provision of supporting receipts.

Reimbursement will be delivered either in cash (in particular to avoid high banking fees) or through wire transfer to the traveller's bank account⁹ in either US Dollars or EURO.

Travellers must deduct advances as well as reimbursements obtained from other sources (e.g. conference organisers) from their reimbursement claims.

⁶ The FiTI Travel Reimbursement Form is available at www.fisheriestransparency.org

⁷ The applicable exchange rate between US Dollars or EURO and the requested currency will be the correspondent exchange inter-bank rate of the last day in which the meeting/event took place, using Oanda's Currency Converter (<https://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>).

⁸ The documents must clearly indicate the travel class, the time of travel and the amount paid.

⁹ All reimbursements of travel expenses will be made to one account only.

Change history

<u>Version</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>
1.0	01 March 2018	Approval of FiTI Global Travel Policy by FiTI International Board during the 3 rd FiTI International Board meeting (Decision ID: BM-03_2018_D-05)