WTO-IMF-CEF Regional Workshop on Fisheries Subsidies  
for Arab and Middle East Countries

Kuwait City, Kuwait

25 to 27 November 2025

The Secretariat of the World Trade Organization and the IMF-CEF are jointly organizing a regional workshop on fisheries subsidies for Arab and Middle East countries. The workshop will be held in‑person in Kuwait City, Kuwait, from 25 to 27 November 2025.

The WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (AFS) is the first WTO agreement to focus on the environment and marks a major step forward for ocean sustainability by prohibiting certain forms of harmful fisheries subsidies, which are a key factor in the widespread depletion of the world's fish stocks.

The workshop will provide a detailed understanding of the AFS with a view to facilitating ratification/deposit of instrument of acceptance and implementation of the AFS. It will allow for an exchange among participants on challenges and technical assistance needs to facilitate such ratification and implementation.

The target audience of the workshop is middle to senior level government officials involved in (i) domestic process of ratification of the AFS; and (ii) fisheries subsidies and/or fisheries management.

The workshop will be delivered in English (including the materials) with simultaneous interpretation to Arabic (both ways). A detailed draft programme is below.

**draft Programme**

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|  | **Day 1 – 25 November 2025** |  |
| **Session** | **Outline** | **Delivered by** |
| 08:00 - 08:30 | Welcome and registration |  |
| 08:30 – 09:00 | Openining session | IMF/WTO |
| 09:00 – 09:45 | * Introductions and tour de table * Expectations * Pre-test | Participants |
| 09:45 – 10:15 | Group photo & coffee break |  |
| 10:15 - 11:00 | Introduction   * Global and regional state of fisheries resources and international fisheries governance * Global state of fisheries subsidies and impact | Khusrav Rasulov and João Nunes |
| 11:00 – 12:00 | * History of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies – From Doha to MC12 * The Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies – scope and definitions   + Subsidies rules at the WTO - The Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures * Open discussion | Khusrav Rasulov and João Nunes |
| *12:00 - 12:15* | *Noon Prayer Break* |  |
| *12:15 – 13:15* | * Key disciplines: subsidies to IUU fishing, fishing in overfished stocks, and other subsidies * Open discussion | Khusrav Rasulov and João Nunes |
| *13:15 – 14:00* | Lunch Break |  |
| 14:00 - 15:30 | * Key disciplines: subsidies to IUU fishing, fishing in overfished stocks, and other subsidies (cont') * Open discussion | Khusrav Rasulov and João Nunes |
|  | **Day 2 – 26 November 2025** |  |
| **Session** | **Outline** | **Delivered by** |
| 08:30 – 09:00 | * Review of day 1 (Menti) | Khusrav Rasulov and João Nunes |
| 09:00 - 10:00 | * Key disciplines: subsidies to IUU fishing, fishing in overfished stocks, and other subsidies (cont') * Open discussion | Khusrav Rasulov and João Nunes |
| *10:00 - 10:15* | * *Coffee break* |  |
| 10:15 – 12:00 | * Cross-cutting issues: notification and transparency, institutional arrangements, dispute settlement, final provisions * Open discussion | Khusrav Rasulov and João Nunes |
| *12:00 - 12:15* | * *Noon Prayer Break* |  |
| 12:15 - 13:15 | * Technical assistance and the WTO Fisheries Funding Mechanism * Open discussion | Jonathan Werner (virtual) |
| 13:15 – 14:00 | * *Lunch Break* |  |
| 14:00- 15:30 | * Group exercise on technical assistance | Khusrav Rasulov and João Nunes |
|  | **Day 3 – 27 November 2025** |  |
| **Session** | **Outline** | **Delivered by** |
| 08:30 – 09:00 | * Review of day 2 (Menti) | Khusrav Rasulov and João Nunes |
| 09:00 - 10:00 | * Ratification and acceptance of the Agreement * Open discussion | Khusrav Rasulov and João Nunes |
| *10:00 - 10:15* | * *Coffee break* |  |
| 10:15 - 12:00 | * Experience sharing on ratifications: cases of Kuwait, [3 or 4 others] * Open discussion | Selected participants |
| *12:00 - 12:15* | * *Noon Prayer Break* |  |
| 12:15 – 13:15 | * Post-test |  |
| 13:15 – 14:00 | * *Lunch Break* |  |
| *14:00 - 14:30* | * Wrap up and evaluation of the workshop * Certificates | IMF/WTO |