



Grant Procedures Manual

October 28, 2018

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This Grant Procedures Manual for Blue Action Fund sets out the key operating policies and procedures for each step of the grant-making process. Furthermore, it describes the key procedural guidelines for the grant-receiving NGOs with regards to project implementation and monitoring. The aim is to ensure a standard approach for each project and adherence to policies that safeguard Blue Action Fund's projects and comply with donor requirements.

The Manual is a "work-in-progress document" that will be reviewed regularly and amended to reflect new requirements and best practices. NGO users are invited to offer feedback on the appropriateness and usability of the policies, procedures and forms.

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List of Abbreviations/Definitions

BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CCRF	Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries
EBSA	Ecologically and Biologically Significant Marine Area
EHS	Environmental, Health and Safety
EUR	Euro
E&S	Environmental and Social
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FPIC	Free Prior and Informed Consent
IFC	International Finance Cooperation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
KfW	KfW Development Bank
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PS	Performance Standards
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound
UN	United Nations
VGGT	Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security
VGSSF	Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries
WB OP	World Bank Operating Procedures

1 About Blue Action Fund

Although our oceans are of immense value, presently only a marginal fraction is protected. Among several important international initiatives to respond to that deficiency is a Ten-point Plan of Action for Marine Conservation and Sustainable Fisheries developed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). As part of that plan, Blue Action Fund was founded by BMZ in conjunction with KfW Development Bank. Since its founding, Blue Action Fund has also been joined by the government of Sweden through the Swedish Foreign Ministry and France through the Agence Française de Développement (AFD).

Blue Action Fund supports national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in their efforts to conserve oceans and coastlines by promoting the safeguarding of marine biodiversity, namely the creation of new protected areas and improvements in the management of existing ones, as well as the sustainable use of marine biodiversity in fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.

Blue Action Fund will concentrate on the partner regions for international development cooperation in accordance with the policies of the donors of the funds. Interested organisations may submit their proposals in response to public tenders directly to the Blue Action Fund, which reviews them and ensures especially that they are consistent with national and international protection strategies. The proposals must also support the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Agenda 2030 and the Call for Action of the UN's The Ocean Conference 2017.

Blue Action Fund is a non-profit foundation established under German law.

1.1 Blue Action Fund's focus

Blue Action Fund's overall goal is to reduce the dramatic loss of marine biodiversity and improve incomes in coastal fishing communities. It is dedicated to supporting Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and the most sensitive coastal waters of Africa, Latin America and Asia/Pacific. The Blue Action Fund therefore focuses on projects that result in measurable outcomes, including:

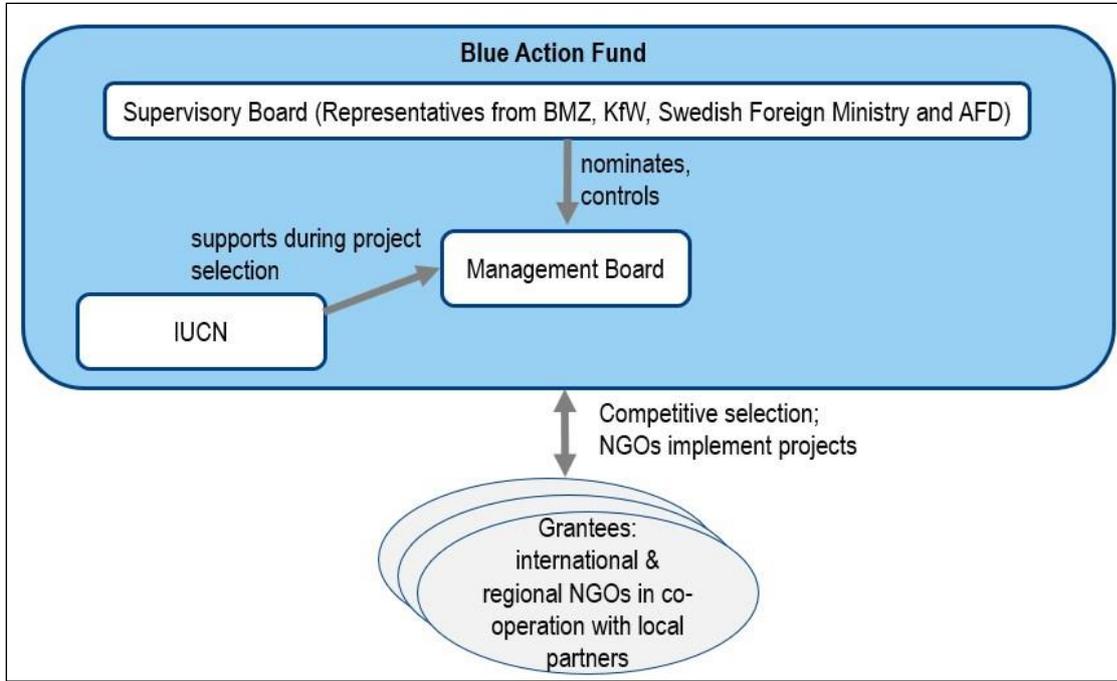
1. Newly established or better managed MPAs of regional importance or networks of MPAs;
2. Conservation of biodiversity and recovery of fish stocks;
3. Enhanced livelihood conditions and food security.

Blue Action Fund operates through a programme of grants to NGOs working (typically in partnerships with various local actors) on marine/coastal conservation. Blue Action Fund is hence primarily a grant-maker. It complements existing conservation initiatives through the provision of grants to organisations that will be responsible for financial and technical implementation of the grant projects. NGOs, beneficiaries and governments should solicit significant co-funding to the grants approved by Blue Action Fund.

1.2 Blue Action Fund governance and major stakeholders

As Blue Action Fund is set up as a non-profit foundation entrusted with public money, its organisational structure follows principles of good governance, effective control rights, and efficiency.

Figure 1: Blue Action Fund organisational structure



Blue Action Fund Boards: The two constituent bodies of Blue Action Fund are the Supervisory Board and the Management Board. The Supervisory Board reviews the Management Board recommendations and makes the final decision on funding awards. The Management Board through its Executive Director is responsible for the general representation and administration of Blue Action Fund and the implementation of its grant-making programme.

Blue Action Fund Service Providers: The Management Board uses the services of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to support the project selection. IUCN support involves: 1) review of Concept Notes and advice on pre-selection and 2) review of Full Proposals and due diligence of the participating NGOs.

Blue Action Fund Implementing Partners: International or regional NGOs take the role of executing agencies of the individual grant projects. They are invited to respond to the call for proposals. Once selected for the grant programme, they take on responsibility for implementing the programme according to the mutually agreed project requirements. The NGOs are to act as contracting partner for the implementation of the grant and are thus responsible and accountable for the proper delivery of funds and/or services, the financial and administrative management of the projects, reporting to Blue Action Fund and its donors, and monitoring at project level.

For more information on Blue Action Fund's organisational structure and the roles of its management and supervisory boards, please refer to its website: www.blueactionfund.org.

2 Blue Action Fund funding eligibility requirements

Blue Action Fund funding is geared towards the conservation of networks of globally significant MPAs

and their sustainable use zones. In line with this ambitious goal, Blue Action Fund eligibility requirements concern the project content (“what”), project approach (“how”) and the implementing organisation (“who”). Applicants should consider carefully if they fulfil the criteria and have the capacity to offer and implement projects of this nature.

What: projects that...

- have an integrated approach and contribute to marine protection as well as poverty reduction/sustainable use;
- support areas with significant biodiversity, such as Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs), Hope Spots or other internationally recognised classification systems for marine biodiversity;
- are realized in an area (including buffer zones) that is recognized as an MPA (including through community designation and management) or has the potential to get formal recognition as an MPA during the lifetime of the project;
- contribute to the Blue Action Fund Programme Results Matrix set forth in Annex 1;
- contribute to fulfilling SDG 14 and Aichi target 11;
- are embedded into regional planning processes, such as regional sea conventions, therefore having an impact on MPA networks or promoting regional approaches; and
- fulfil additional call-specific criteria and priorities announced with each call for proposals.

How: projects that...

- are located in the marine waters (territorial waters and/or exclusive economic zones) of countries eligible to receive official development assistance (ODA)¹;
- show a quick impact (within the project cycle);
- include a component to establish long-term financing mechanisms that support MPA management beyond the duration of the project itself, or foresee strong cooperation with existing financing mechanisms that can provide such support;
- contribute to capacity building of local NGOs and communities;
- are tested and scalable;
- include significant field investments (for sustainable livelihoods and infrastructure);
- demonstrate cooperation with relevant governmental organisations and civil society;²
- contemplate a Blue Action Fund contribution of EUR 1–3 million depending on the call (which may allow bigger project volumes);
- usually have a duration of three to five years; and
- demonstrate a sound implementation concept.

Who: international and regional NGOs³ that...

- have experience in the region and with the project type proposed;
- are willing to cooperate with local partners;
- have sufficient implementing capacity, necessary safeguards, especially with regard to Environmental and Social Safeguard Requirements (see Annex 3), and networks to allow for professional and timely project implementation;
- have a sufficiently large annual budget (the budget of the NGO proponent – or at least one from

¹ A list of ODA countries can be found here: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclist.htm>

² The project must have the endorsement of the appropriate authority/authorised body of the country or region. A signed letter of consent indicating such endorsement must be presented to Blue Action Fund by Full Proposal stage at the latest.

³ Intergovernmental organisations are not eligible for funding. In case of doubt about eligibility, please contact the Blue Action Fund.

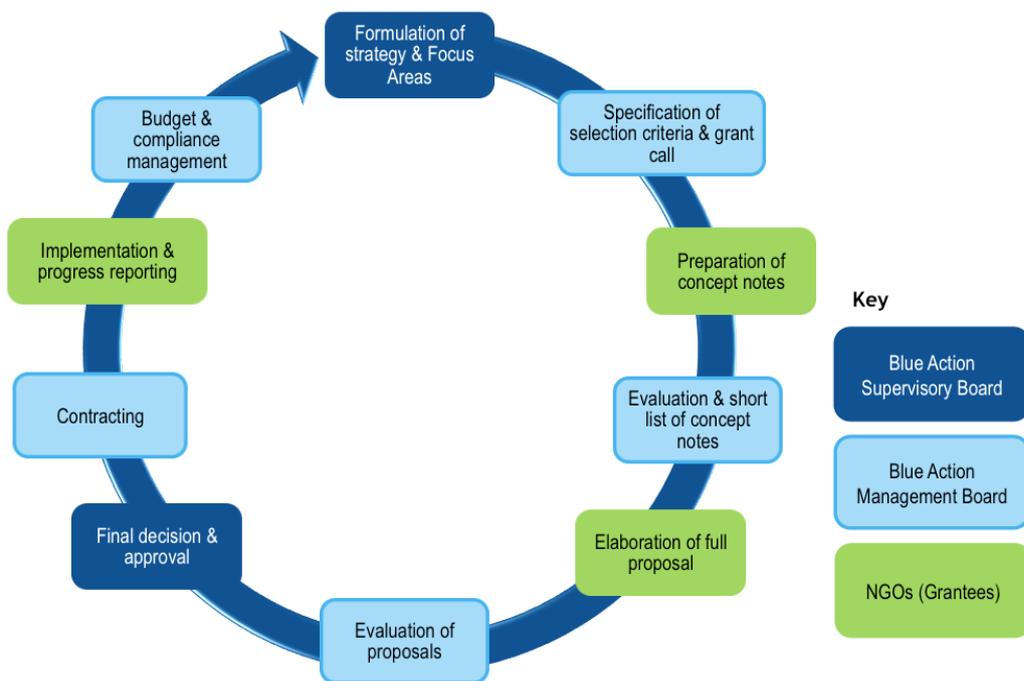
- an NGO consortium – should be about twice the proposed annual project budget or more); and
- are willing to fund at least 25%⁴ of the total project costs (“match funding”), including funds from their own resources (“own contribution”)⁵ and co-financing; co-financing can be sourced from other public donors, but may not include any resources from the funders of the Blue Action Fund.

Blue Action Fund welcomes applications from consortia of international and regional NGOs that demonstrate clearly the task sharing and synergies between the applicants. Consortia have to submit a signed letter of intent of collaboration that designates the Consortium lead which assumes full responsibility for the project implementation. It will be a positive consideration when evaluating a proposal if it contains clearly defined investment packages for Blue Action Fund and for other donors’ funding.

3 Grant-making procedure

Blue Action Fund’s grant-making process is based in principle on an open call for proposals. As more fully described below, each call for proposals may set a strategic and geographic focus that will need to be considered in addition to the general requirements of this Manual. The grant-making procedure involves the steps set out in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Grant-making cycle and responsibilities



3.1 Formulation of strategy and focus areas

The Management Board presents the strategy and focus area(s) of each call for proposals to the Supervisory Board for approval. The Supervisory Board determines the budget foreseen for the call.

⁴ Should the project concern a country affected by conflicts (list of concerned countries to be made available by Blue Action Fund upon request) the required contribution to the total project costs is reduced to 10%.

⁵ “Own contributions” include cash and in-kind contributions from headquarters and regional/local offices such as direct financial co-funding and/or no-cost contributions through human resources seconded to the project and/or no-cost provision of operational facilities such as office/vehicles, etc. They can, for example, be provided by local offices, through private donations, including foundations, or through sponsorship.

3.2 Specification of selection criteria

The strategy, focus area(s) and other relevant criteria of a particular call for proposals may be further defined in the call document. The Management Board will publicly announce each call by publishing the call document on Blue Action Fund's website as well as on relevant websites for conservation NGOs. Each call will also refer to the latest version of this Grant Procedures Manual.

3.3 Preparation of Concept Notes

International and regional NGOs can submit Concept Notes using the Concept Note Template (Annex 4) until the deadline specified in the call document.

3.4 Evaluation and shortlist of Concept Notes

Concept Notes and applicant organisations are evaluated by the Management Board with the help of IUCN using standardised evaluation tools. Projects proposed in the Concept Notes are screened for basic eligibility, and subsequently evaluated. The evaluation includes, among other things, the assessment of Theory of Change, underlying assumptions, the expected outcomes and the capacities of the proponents to deliver the project's results. Ultimately, the Management Board prepares a shortlist of Concept Notes for approval by the Supervisory Board. Upon the Supervisory Board's decision about which projects to pursue, the Management Board informs all organisations of the results and invites⁶ the proponent(s) of any selected projects to elaborate Full Proposals.

3.5 Elaboration of Full Proposal

The proponents of shortlisted projects are asked to elaborate Full Proposals using the annotated template in Annex 5. Among other actions, NGOs need to submit an environmental and social safeguards report (see Annex 3). At this point, the project must have the endorsement of the appropriate authority/authorised body of the country or region, with a signed letter of consent indicating such endorsement and with the agreed cooperation and co-funding modalities presented.

The timeframe for elaborating the Full Proposals is a minimum of six weeks. During the elaboration process, NGOs can submit questions, and the answers are sent to all parties invited to submit Full Proposals. NGOs have the opportunity to request a grant of up to EUR 10,000 to support the elaboration of Full Proposals, e.g. to cover travel costs of smaller or local NGOs participating in preparation meetings or to commission studies to identify benchmarks.

3.6 Evaluation

The Full Proposals will be evaluated by the Management Board with support from IUCN. The evaluation includes the enhanced assessment of the partner and governance structure of the project, as well as the assessment of the project concept, the project logframe, its contribution to the Blue Action Fund Programme Results Matrix, the mechanisms to reach the promised impacts, and the suitability of the proposed budget.

3.7 Final selection and approval

The Management Board agrees which project proposals to recommend for funding and presents them to the Supervisory Board. Taking the Management Board's recommendations into account, the Supervisory Board makes the final funding decisions.

⁶ The following information of NGOs invited to pursue full proposals will be shared with all NGOs that submitted concept notes: Name of NGO and partners, project title and countries of the proposed project.

4 Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the projects

4.1 Due Diligence

Between Supervisory Board's funding decision and contracting, Blue Action Fund will implement a light due diligence process. Among others, Blue Action Fund will ask for copies of IDs of the project leader and the leader of the grantee. Blue Action Fund will also ask for a list of board members as well as private contributors exceeding 15% of the annual resources of the implementing partner or the Blue Action Fund supported project, verify the absence of respective persons from the relevant financial sanctions lists. Blue Action will also request relevant documents concerning the organisation (registration certificate, statutes) and financial documents from the last three years.

4.2 Contracting

Blue Action Fund will contract the Implementing Partner using a standard-format Grant Agreement. The Full Proposal will serve as an attachment to the Agreement. Subsequent significant changes altering the project proposal (e.g. due to changing circumstances after approval) need to be approved by Blue Action Fund.

4.3 Grant opening and work plans

Blue Action Fund shall supervise and provide support to the Implementing Partners, as required. Within Blue Action Fund, a designated staff member will coordinate the work and be the main point of contact for Implementing Partners.

Once the Grant Agreement enters into force, Implementing Partners may begin to work on the grant project and payments can be made as outlined in the Agreement. At the beginning of the project, Implementing Partners are required to submit a detailed project work plan covering the term of the project and dividing workstreams into quarterly actions and deliverables. Every six months the Implementing Partner shall update the project work plan to reflect actions and deliverables achieved and important changes, and shall submit the updated work plan to Blue Action Fund. The work plan and its updated versions will be the basis for Funding Advance Requests (see next section).

4.4 Finance and funding requests

Implementing Partners are required to have strong financial management and internal control systems. This includes adequate provisions for planning and budgeting, internal control and accounting, as well as funds, cash flow and assets management. Blue Action Fund may review Implementing Partners' financial management systems, for instance by conducting site visits.

Implementing Partners must open a separate bank account for the project or dispose of a sub-account, or a separate and internally tracked and traceable bookkeeping entry in the financial management system. This ensures transparency regarding financial transactions and renders audits more efficient. In any case, all grant funds are to be kept, as far as possible, in Euro in the country of the Implementing Partner in order to avoid losses from currency devaluation and to allow retransfer at all times. Local currencies can only be paid according to a three-monthly requirement (in order to minimise currency exchange risks).

On a six-monthly basis grantees are expected to submit Funding Advance Requests in relation to the upcoming work. Such funding requests will include: a budget and detailed activity plan for the upcoming work period; the initial or updated project work plan; and, for all periods after the first work period, a progress report that references the work plan, the most recent detailed activity plan, and the budget for the previous work period (including amounts spent, any unspent funds and a comparison/reconciliation).

The first progress report covers the inception phase (usually the first 6 months of the project).

At the end of each year, Implementing Partners must issue a Charitable Donation Certificate to Blue Action Fund (see Annex 6).

4.5 Procurement policy

Procurement of goods, works and related services and other consulting services shall be based on strict ethical principles and best international procurement practices for NGOs, and shall conform to Blue Action Fund's procurement policy as described in this section and related guidelines.⁷ The contracting party must ensure that all Implementing Partners (including all consortia members, sub-grantees or sub-contractors) comply with Blue Action Fund's procurement policy as described in this section.⁸

The following thresholds apply to all types of procurement for *consulting* services:

Contract value ⁹	Procurement method
< EUR 10,000	Discretionary award (= direct award)
EUR 10,000 to EUR 99,999	Limited competitive bidding/price quotation (at least 3 qualified bidders)
≥ EUR 100,000	Open competitive bidding

The following thresholds apply all types of procurement for *goods and services other than consulting*:

Contract value	Procurement method
< EUR 5,000	Discretionary award (= direct award)
EUR 5,000 to EUR 99,999	Limited competitive bidding/price quotation (at least 3 qualified bidders)
≥ EUR 100,000	Open competitive bidding

Discretionary award: Prior to the first direct award, the contracting party will obtain Blue Action Fund's no-objection to a standard request for proposal and standard contracts for this type of procurement to be used by the Implementing Partners in the project (which shall include an agreed declaration of undertaking).¹⁰

Limited competitive bidding: Prior to the first tender, the contracting party will obtain Blue Action Fund's no-objection for the standard tender documents and standard contracts for this type of procurement (which shall include an agreed declaration of undertaking). The suitability of the shortlisted bidders must be documented by the Implementing Partners – exceptions to this rule require a special explanatory statement by the specific grant recipient for Blue Action Fund and subsequent approval by Blue Action Fund.

Open competitive bidding: Implementing Partners will inform Blue Action Fund as early as possible about their intention to implement open competitive bidding, and are required to provide Blue Action Fund with the tender documents prior to invitation to tender and the tender evaluation reports for no-objection. Tenders must be advertised in recognised national, regional and international newspapers as well as on the website of German Trade and Invest (GTAI). Prior to the conclusion of contracts,

⁷ Blue Action Fund will make its no-objection determinations according to KfW's "Guidelines for the Assignment of Consultants in Financial Cooperation with Partner Countries" and "Guidelines for the Assignment of Procurement of Goods, Works and associated Services".

⁸ If the standards and procedures of Implementing Partners foresee stricter thresholds, stricter procurement methods may also be used.

⁹ Contract value per consultant over the entire project period.

¹⁰ Relating, among other things, to free, fair and competitive contracting procedures.

Implementing Partners are required to submit to Blue Action Fund the negotiated draft contract for no-objection. The same applies to any subsequent contract amendments. Exemptions from international bidding (i.e. national bidding) must be agreed by Blue Action Fund.

For all procurement methods relevant documentation to demonstrate compliance must be stored, complying with the relevant legislation of the country. Documentation shall be forwarded to Blue Action Fund or the auditor upon request and is subject to review for compliance by the auditor. All selection processes must be confidential. While the tender procedure is ongoing neither the Implementing Partner nor Blue Action Fund will release any information on the assessment of the bids or the recommendations on the award of contracts to bidders or to any other persons who are not officially involved in the selection procedure.

4.6 Management Effectiveness Tracking Tools

Blue Action Fund asks its Implementing Partners to measure MPA management effectiveness through Management Effectiveness Tracking Tools (METTs) (see Programme Results Matrix Annex 1). Blue Action requires its Implementing Partners to use a specific tool, but proposes using a METT adaptation currently developed by KfW (available upon request). In addition, efforts to promote the protected area to make it eligible for the IUCN Green List¹¹ are strongly welcomed.

4.7 Environmental and social policy

An Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) will ensure compliance with international and national safeguards (see Annex 3).

4.8 Communications policy

The Implementing Partners should acknowledge Blue Action Fund on all publications, reports, banners, press materials and all other products that the grants help produce (including its [logo](#) and full name). If appropriate, Blue Action Fund should also be acknowledged on the Implementing Partners' social media posts and website. In addition, Implementing Partners need to ensure that easily legible signage displaying Blue Action Fund's logo and full name is erected on the project site. The Blue Action Fund logo and name can only be used after approval from Blue Action Fund.

The Implementing Partner shall provide Blue Action Fund with electronic copies of any articles, reports, media interviews or other publication directly relating to activities covered under the Grant Agreement.

In addition, Implementing Partners are asked to grant Blue Action Fund the rights to copy, distribute and publish derivatives of the work, in particular photos, for non-commercial use.

4.9 Annual report

In addition to the work & activity plans and progress reports submitted in connection with funding advances, Implementing Partners shall submit a comprehensive Annual report (the first and last such reports may cover a period more or less than one year, depending on project commencement and termination). The Annual Report shall, among other things, include information and data to assess progress towards the agreed project logframe and the Blue Action Fund Programme Results Matrix. In addition, the financial portion of the report shall detail expenses actually incurred during the reporting period, total project expenses to date and the remaining grant balance.

4.10 Monitoring, evaluation and project auditing

¹¹ <https://www.iucn.org/theme/protected-areas/our-work/iucn-green-list/3-green-list-areas>

Blue Action Fund regards monitoring of the grant activities as essential to effective grant-making. Implementing Partners have the main responsibility for monitoring at project-level. Monitoring, internal evaluation and reporting will mainly be done through the annual reports. Blue Action Fund may conduct monitoring missions on-site and at Implementing Partners' offices. The goal of the missions is to review project progress (similar to mid-term reviews) and to learn from project successes and challenges for Blue Action Fund's own portfolio. In addition, each grant project requires a Mid-term Financial Audit and Technical Review and a Final Financial Audit and Technical Review (together the "Project Audits"), for which exact dates will be agreed at the beginning of the project. The project Financial Audits will be conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing as published by the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board of the International Federation of Accountants. The Technical Review will follow a monitoring concept still to be defined. The Technical Review will be commissioned and funded by Blue Action Fund outside the grant budget.

4.11 Grant completion

The grant can only be closed once all required documents have been submitted and verified. Implementing Partners are required to submit a final narrative and a final financial report at the end of their project. Blue Action Fund will verify that all deliverables have been completed and all progress, financial, and audit reports have been reviewed and approved, and that the total grant amount has been reconciled. Reconciliation includes verification that all advances have been accounted for, the final payment has been issued, and any unspent funds have been returned and credited back to the portfolio for future grants. Blue Action Fund will notify the Implementing Partner without undue delay about the approval of all deliverables and completion of the grant.

4.12 Sharing lessons learned

Implementing Partners are expected to feed information about the MPAs they are working on as well as lessons learned into relevant websites, such as [Blue solutions](#).

4.13 Feedback and complaints

At project level, each Implementation Partner shall have a process for handling feedback and complaints, which will consist of effective, accessible and transparent procedures to receive and resolve complaints. Feedback/complaints shall be encouraged among all stakeholders throughout the project and resolved without undue delay. Any stakeholder of the project (project staff, beneficiaries, partners) can file a feedback or complaint. As a rule, the submitter needs to be directly concerned with the project, however, exceptionally he/she can also act as the representative of a concerned group if its members are not able to file the complaint on their own.

Feedback should be reported on in progress reports to the Blue Action Fund. In addition, Implementing Partners are encouraged to provide constructive feedback and complaints to the Blue Action Fund, which can be submitted at any time. Only if issues cannot be solved at project level stakeholders have the opportunity to file a complaint to info@blueactionfund.org. Anonymous complaints will not be considered; however, complainants' identities will be kept confidential upon their written request.

Annexes

Annex 1: Blue Action Fund – Programme Results Matrix

	Indicators
<p>Goal (Impact / Overall Objective) Networks of globally significant marine protected areas and their sustainable use zones are conserved.</p>	<p>Indicators for Sector Goal: <i>Indicator 1.1: By 2025, the biomass of one or more relevant umbrella/ indicator species is maintained or increasing in the project areas.</i></p> <p><u>Base value (2018 or at project start):</u> x tons of relevant umbrella species in the project areas (umbrella/ indicator species will be determined by grantee in collaboration with IUCN or another competent scientific advisor, x to be defined in inception phase of the projects). <u>Target value (2025):</u> The biomass of umbrella species in the project areas is maintained or increased in at least 75% of all project areas.</p> <p><i>Indicator 1.2: By 2025, improved livelihood conditions of affected households in project areas.</i></p> <p><u>Base value (2018 or at project start):</u> Average household income in affected project villages (to be reported during project inception phase). <u>Target value (2025):</u> Average household income in affected project villages increased (to be reported at project end), targets to be defined during the inception phase of the projects.</p> <p><i>Indicator 1.3: By 2025, substantially more households affected in project areas have a positive attitude towards protection of marine biodiversity</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> --- <u>Target value (2025):</u> On average, >75% of households affected in project areas have a positive attitude towards protection of marine biodiversity (reported at project end).</p>
<p>Outcome NGOs improve the management of globally significant marine protected areas and their sustainable use zones in close cooperation with relevant stakeholders.</p>	<p><i>Indicator 2.1: Creation of new MPAs or substantial expansion of existing MPAs.</i></p> <p><u>Base value (2018ff.):</u> to be defined in project proposals (km² per IUCN MPA category) <u>Target value (2025):</u> to be defined in project proposals</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.2: Management effectiveness of supported marine protected areas has improved.</i></p> <p><u>Base value (2018ff.):</u> Average METT or similar instrument at beginning of projects <u>Target value (2025):</u> Average METT or similar instrument + 10%.</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.3: By 2025, in at least 75% of the project areas key fisheries are operated within the maximum sustainable yield.</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> to be determined during inception phase of projects. <u>Target value:</u> at least 75% of project areas</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.4: Adoption of alternative employment opportunities and initiatives for improved value chains by project target groups</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> to be defined in project proposals <u>Target value:</u> to be defined in project proposals</p> <p><i>Indicator 2.5: By 2025, in at least in 75% of the project areas new effective instruments to reduce key direct threats to marine biodiversity are under implementation</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> --- <u>Target value:</u> 75%</p>
<p>Outputs</p>	
<p>Output 1: MPA management plans and new protected areas are established</p>	<p><i>Indicator 3.1.1: Maximum of three years after project inception, 80% of marine protected areas targeted by Blue Action Fund projects do dispose of effective planning documents, such as updated MPA-management plans, multi-year MPA-budgets, MPA-communication plans, MPA-monitoring plans, fisheries management plan in accordance with the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Small Scale Fisheries & FAO code of conduct for responsible fisheries</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> --- <u>Target value:</u> 80% of No. of MPA</p> <p><i>Indicator 3.1.2: > 80% of all supported MPA management plans will incorporate climate change mitigation and adaption; among the projects with supported management plans, 1/3 will document</i></p>

	Indicators
	<p><i>mitigation and at least 1/3 climate change adaptation outputs or impacts.</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> --- <u>Target value:</u> 80% of No. of supported MPA management plans (1/3 document mitigation and adaptation outputs/ impacts)</p>
<p><i>Output 2: Resources, instruments, and capacities for the implementation of management plans of marine protected areas and sustainable use zones are improved</i></p>	<p><u>Indicator 3.2.1:</u> <i>Maximum of three years after inception of individual projects, at least 50% of measures planned in management or operational plans have started implementation.</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> --- <u>Target value:</u> in > 75% of supported MPAs, 50% of measures have started implementation at end of projects</p>
	<p><u>Indicator 3.2.2:</u> <i>Demarcation of protected areas and sustainable use zones where the designation is supported by Blue Action Fund is documented in relevant legal form</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> --- <u>Target value:</u> Documentation of designation is finalized in > 75% of all areas supported by Blue Action Fund for designation at end of projects</p>
	<p><u>Indicator 3.2.3:</u> <i>Cost-effective monitoring, control and enforcement techniques to prevent illegal fishing / use of unsustainable practices are successfully adopted in > 75% of supported projects with participation of local communities</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> --- <u>Target value:</u> > 75% at end of projects</p>
	<p><u>Indicator 3.2.4:</u> <i>Innovative and low cost data collection relevant for marine conservation adopted in > 75% of supported projects</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> --- <u>Target value:</u> > 75% at end of projects</p>
	<p><u>Indicator 3.2.5:</u> <i>Realistic strategies for sustainable financing of MPAs are developed for at least 75% of all supported MPAs and first mechanism to their end have started implementation.</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> --- <u>Target value:</u> at least 75% of projects</p>
<p><i>Output 3: Sustainable Livelihoods are promoted</i></p>	<p><u>Indicator 3.3.1:</u> <i>Number of initiatives to create alternative employment opportunities.</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> --- <u>Target value:</u> to be defined in inception phase of all projects.</p>
	<p><u>Indicator 3.3.2:</u> <i>Number of initiatives to increase value added in supply chains of marine related activities (e.g. certification).</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> --- <u>Target value:</u> to be defined in inception phase of all projects.</p>
	<p><u>Indicator 3.3.3:</u> <i>Increase in number and proportion of women in leadership positions of fisheries or MPA management and number of woman with increased economic empowerment</i></p> <p><u>Base value:</u> --- <u>Target value:</u> to be defined in inception phase</p>

Annex 2: Eligible and ineligible measures

The following table presents examples of eligible measures as well as examples. This list will be further developed as proposals are made. Questions as to the eligibility of a measure should be discussed with Blue Action Fund during the development of the Concept Note or at latest as part of the development of the Full Proposal.

Eligible measures	Examples
Equipment	Procurement of boats for surveillance, surveillance equipment.
Infrastructure	Park administration buildings or visitor facilities; rehabilitation of mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass beds, community-based infrastructure to support value chain upgrading of fishery resources, etc.
Mapping	Development/Establishment of MPAs, sustainable use zones and community access rights.
Planning & Advisory services	Preparation of MPA and MPA network Development Plans, business plans, tourism development plans and their implementation. Elaboration and support to implement business models for pro-poor livelihood diversification based on sustainable marine biodiversity use.
Training and capacity building measures	Support to implement management plans, investment programmes, monitoring agreements on local, national and transboundary level. Capacity building of local NGOs and communities to ensure project outcomes will be sustained once the project ends.
Communication and Awareness	Communication, sensitisation, awareness creation and multi-stakeholder coordination, peer reviews.
Co-funding of operation & maintenance costs	Temporary support for operating costs such as salary supplements for MPA personnel, operating and maintenance costs of facilities and equipment, but only if sustainable impact can be demonstrated.
Hard- and software for monitoring and information management	Development and testing of low-cost monitoring and surveillance approaches.
Reporting, monitoring and evaluation, auditing	Costs for sound reporting, monitoring and verification (internal and by 3 rd party), financial auditing as well as required consultancy services may be included in the full proposals.

The following will NOT be considered appropriate for funding through Blue Action Fund:

- Salary or travel costs of Government officials;
- Import duties. Import duties, if part of the contract value, shall be stated separately in the contracts for the goods and services, and in the invoices;
- Capacity development independent from infrastructure or equipment management or from the implementation of MPAs and sustainable use zones planning documents, e.g. measures such as capacity building for national and regional coordinating structures;
- Infrastructure, equipment and training for *national* and *regional* organisations *unless* there is a direct linkage with establishment, surveillance, protection, monitoring or sustainability of MPAs;
- Research other than for the establishment of baselines or pilots for innovation testing;
- Education and acquisition of formal qualifications in marine protection and management;
- Project involving or requiring the destruction of critical habitats¹²,
- Measures for the promotion of commercial value chains based on marine biodiversity unless they directly contribute to improved sustainable use or protection of a specific MPA or a network of MPAs;

¹² •Critical habitats include (i) areas of high value in terms of biodiversity as defined by the IUCN classification criteria, including the habitats necessary for the survival of endangered species defined by the IUCN Red List, endangered species or any national legislation; (ii) areas of particular importance for endemic or restricted-area species; (iii) critical sites for the survival of migratory species; (iv) areas hosting a significant number of gregarious species; (v) areas with unique assemblages of species or species that are associated with key evolutionary processes or that fulfil key ecosystem services; (vi) and territories with biodiversity of significant social, economic or cultural significance to local communities. Primary forests or high conservation value forests should also be considered as critical habitat.

- Transboundary interventions to protect specific habitats (e.g. mangroves) without reference to several specific MPAs and sustainable use zones;
- Global/regional interventions on commercial and non-commercial trade barriers and quota to protect specific species through application of international conventions;
- Measures to combat the trade in illegally acquired fish and fish products at global or regional level, for example capacity building for customs control, strengthening of the legal prosecution system, legal improvements, etc.;
- Demand reduction for illegally acquired fish and fish products in the consumer countries, for example through awareness building;
- International conferences, workshops, study tours as stand-alone activities, i.e. if they are not part of a project concept in which they are necessary to achieve the project's objective;

If, however one of the above-mentioned measures is considered indispensable for the project the applicant shall propose it with due justification.

Annex 3: Environmental and Social Safeguard Requirements

Blue Action Fund's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) is based on an approach of IUCN but integrates as well the requirements of KfW's Sustainability Guideline¹³. All projects have to comply with KfW's Sustainability Guideline and with the Guidelines on Incorporating Human Rights Standards and Principles, Including Gender, in Programme Proposals for Bilateral German Technical and Financial Cooperation (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)¹⁴.

KfW's Sustainability Guideline requires that all applicable national environmental, occupational health & safety and social laws and regulations as well as International Law including conventions and treaties adopted by the respective host country of the Project and applicable to the Project must be respected.

In addition, compliance with International Environmental and Social Safeguards is required, i.e. those of the World Bank Group (WB ESS, IFC PS), the WB IFC EHS Guidelines and the ILO Core Labour Standards.

For resettlement aspects, the UN Basic Principles and Guidelines on Development-based Evictions and Displacement, namely §§ 42, 49, 52, 54 and 60, have to be complied with (in addition to national legislation international safeguard requirements For displacement impacts due to the establishment/management of protected areas (loss/limitation of access to natural resources), WB OP 4.12/WB ESS 5, (Process Framework) has to be applied

It is the Proponent's responsibility to assess at the very outset of a Project if indigenous communities are present in the wider project area. Careful probing of on-site communities' qualification will be undertaken, in order to establish if WB ESS 7 or IFC Performance Standard (PS) 7 (Indigenous Peoples) respectively would be triggered.

In case WB ESS 5/IFC PS 7 would be triggered, the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) has to be applied by the Proponent. In line with WB ESS / IFC PS 7, FPIC refers to the process whereby an affected community of indigenous peoples arrives at a decision in accordance with their legal provisions, cultural traditions and practices.

The FPIC process should produce a clear endorsement or rejection of the proposed project and a statement of accompanying mitigating measures and/or benefit-sharing agreements. As such, it is the main instrument ensuring to the Proponent and to the Blue Action Fund that at the project level, the indigenous peoples' priorities for economic, social and cultural development and environmental protection are promoted, informed by their traditional cultures, knowledge and practices, and the implementation of their inherent right to self-determination.

FPIC is expected to be established through good faith negotiation between the NGO and the participating indigenous communities and to be fully documented as a mutually accepted process between the parties, carrying evidence of agreement between them as the outcome of the negotiations and clearly outlining benefit- and risk-sharing provisions.

In addition, Projects will respect the [Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security](#) (FAO 2012) known as the VGGT. The VGGT promote secure tenure rights and equitable access to land, fisheries and forests as a means of eradicating hunger and poverty, supporting sustainable development and enhancing the environment. The VGGT promote responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests, with respect to all forms of tenure: public, private, communal, indigenous, customary, and informal.

¹³ https://www.kfw-entwicklungsbank.de/PDF/Entwicklungsfinanzierung/Themen-NEU/Nachhaltigkeitsrichtlinie_EN.pdf

¹⁴ http://www.bmz.de/en/zentrales_downloadarchiv/themen_und_schwerpunkte/menschenrechte/Leitfaden_PV_2013_en.pdf

Furthermore, Projects will respect the [Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries](#) (FAO 1995) known as the CCRF. The CCRF sets out principles and international standards of behaviour for responsible practices with a view to ensuring the effective conservation, management and development of living aquatic resources, with due respect for the ecosystem and biodiversity. It recognizes the nutritional, economic, social, environmental and cultural importance of fisheries and the interests of all stakeholders of the fishing and aquaculture industries. The CCRF takes into account the biological characteristics of the resources and their environment and the interests of consumers and other users.

Finally, Projects will respect the [Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries](#) (FAO 2015) known as VGSSF. These were developed to provide complementary guidance with respect to small-scale fisheries in support of the overall principles and provisions of the CCRF. Accordingly, the Guidelines are intended to support the visibility, recognition and enhancement of the already important role of small-scale fisheries and to contribute to global and national efforts towards the eradication of hunger and poverty. The Guidelines support responsible fisheries and sustainable social and economic development for the benefit of current and future generations, with an emphasis on small-scale fishers and fish workers and related activities and including vulnerable and marginalized people, promoting a human rights-based approach.

The application of the standards listed above shall correspond to the nature of the proposed project, to the environmental and social risks that are identified and to the anticipated environmental and social impacts. The requirements regarding the application are as follows throughout the grant making procedure:

1. Preparation of Concept Notes

Through an ESMS Questionnaire and Screening Report NGOs shall undertake an initial E&S risk screening in order to identify the key environmental and social issues of the proposed Project and to determine how these will be addressed within further project development, in line with national legislation and the applicable standards as listed above. If required NGOs shall outline further environmental and social studies/activities to be undertaken prior to the implementation of the Project.

In addition, NGOs shall submit information regarding its own practices/policies/guidelines for E&S management of Projects, e.g. E&S Policy, Environmental and Social Management Standards/Guidelines/Processes), Stakeholder Engagement Framework, examples from Projects implemented, etc.

2. Elaboration of Full Proposal

In line with its ESMS, Blue Action Fund will assess the E&S risk screening, determine the risk level of the project and – depending on the outcome - request a partial or full Environmental or Social Impact Assessment or other relevant information/documentation/management plan. The required documentation will be reviewed by the Blue Action Fund and comments provided as appropriate. The final versions of the documentation are subject to no-objection from the Blue Action Fund. The NGO will then diligently implement the provisions as per the project's environmental and social safeguard documentation during further project preparation and project implementation and will monitor the E&S performance of the project, including regular reporting.

Annex 4: Concept Note Template

1 Project summary (maximum 1 page)

Project summary	
Project title	
Implementing organisation(s)	
Country(ies) of implementation	
Project start and end	<i>dd/mm/yyyy to dd/mm/yyyy</i>
Total project volume (EUR)	
Blue Action Fund funding	<i>In Euro (percentage of total project volume)</i>
Matching funding	<i>In Euro (percentage of total project volume)</i>
Project summary	

2 Project concept (maximum 6 pages)

Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are the impetus and background that give rise to the project?</i> • <i>What is the scope of the problem, and how urgent is it?</i> • <i>On which existing MPA's or protected area's potential for protection does the project focus. and what is its relevance to ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas?</i> • <i>How does the project fit into and contribute to regional conservation plans and policies?</i> • <i>What will change look like?</i>
Theory of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What are the local challenges that you want the project to address? What are the main drivers of these challenges?</i> • <i>What opportunities do you want to seize through the project? What are the enabling factors that need to be promoted?</i> • <i>What is your strategy to achieve the desired effect? Why is the chosen approach the best solution to the problem? What evidence supports this? What assumptions is your strategy based on?</i>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How many km² of MPA will be newly established or benefit from enhanced management by the project – and which IUCN category does it fall into (see also overview table in full proposal template)? Will any MPA participate in the IUCN Green List process? (If you work on several sites you might want to add an overview table.)</i> • <i>How will the project contribute to establishing ecologically representative and well-connected networks of protected areas?</i> • <i>How many households/people will benefit from the project? How will the project impact on livelihood conditions and food security?</i> • <i>Specifically, to which indicators of the Blue Action Fund Programme Results Matrix (see Annex 1) is the project contributing, what are baselines and targets?</i> • <i>Does the project impact on climate mitigation: yes/no. If yes on: mangroves; seabed; other?</i> • <i>Does the project impact on climate adaption: yes/ no. If yes, on: ecosystem adaptation; decreased vulnerability of target groups; conservation of coral reef; other? How is the project contributing to Nationally Determined Contributions?</i>
Community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How will you approach engaging local communities to participate in the project?</i> • <i>How will you deal with any conflicts that might arise?</i>
Activities and implementation modality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How will the project support the capacity development of local NGO partners?</i> • <i>Please describe the planned field investments funded through the project.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will you hire new staff to implement the project? • Which measures will not be implemented by own staff, but by a local/inter-national contractor?
Governmental partner structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please describe partners, national and regional institutions and people who are involved in the project. • What will be their role and responsibilities? What activities will they have to provide? • How have you ensured/will you ensure the necessary government support to make the creation of an MPA successful?
Initial environmental and social risk screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the environmental and social (E&S) risks linked to the project? • What steps are being taken within the project preparation and impact to comply with standards as listed in Annex 3:. • What are the major risks to the project's success? How likely are these to occur, and what consequences would they have? What measures are you taking to manage these risks and mitigate their impact?
Data, monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data are available to support the case for the project and which of these can be used for establishing baselines? • What baseline information is missing and when and how will that information be collected? • To what extent will the project contribute to long-term data collection for effective MPA and fisheries management? • Describe how you will monitor and evaluate the project and its progression in order to determine what is going well and what needs improvement. How will you use this information to modify the project?
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the project ensure the maintenance of created infrastructure and procured equipment? • Is there scope for upscaling, e.g. by increasing the project area?

3 Costs and financing

#	Line	Examples	Total costs	Grant	Match funding
1	Direct Costs				
1.1	Field implementation investments			60%	
	Field investments (livelihood and/or infrastructure investments, equipment and transport facilities)	<u>Examples of livelihood activities</u> : support to find legal alternative livelihoods in coastal communities; algae farming; women's group saving and credit schemes; formation of cooperatives to gain better selling prices of fish; establishing cross-sector transfer payments to fishers for their MPA surveillance (e.g. dive bases collect a dollar-a-day from tourists); house gardening for improved vegetable supply; plastic and garbage collection, as well as waste separation and recycling programmes; setting-up a livelihood-support fund to finance future activities in favour of the community. During the initial 3–4 years of a set-up of a no-take zone, financial support to the community is possible until higher income due to spill over kicks in (e.g. cash-for-work programmes for local infrastructure improvement [e.g. road repairs] or coverage of school fees for the community). <u>Examples of investments in infrastructure/ equipment, etc.</u> : equipment for monitoring, control and surveillance; surveillance posts and huts along the coastline; stationary data collection devices; sanitary measures for the handling of fish along the value chain (including plastic trays on the boat, improvements to the transport capacity and at the fish market); investments into cold chains (incl. small-scale storage facilities and durable insulation boxes); exchange programmes for sustainable fishing gear (larger mesh sizes, more selective methods); by-catch prevention measures; fishers meeting house improvements to promote participatory co-management; restoration of reefs; cell phones; IT; motorcycles.		25%	
	Training and capacity development measures	Training on participatory fisheries management ("co-management") and site-specific possible surveillance measures; joint zonation of the MPA by all user groups; set up of sustainable finance mechanisms for MPA management; catch data handling and compilation; traceability and certification; licensing and access restriction (with local administration and fisheries officers as primary target group).			
	Consulting services*	Advisory services to develop MPA management plans; cost-benefit analysis of coral reef restoration to support community decision-making; business case development (price comparison for different markets, fisheries products, quantities and qualities) as decision-making basis for fisheries value chain improvements; scientific estimation of the level of overfishing and marine resource degradation; certification pre-assessment.			
	Awareness and communications	Handbook on sustainable fisheries and MPA management for user groups; poster campaigns with jointly agreed user rules and MPA zonation; radio-shows on marine resource overutilisation and benefits of MPAs; environmental education curricula development in local schools.			
	Other marine conservation activities	Anti-poaching or beach clean-up measures.			
	Contingency				
1.2	Project management			30%	
	Project staff	Staff implementing the project (i.e. implementing staff based in the country and devoting ≥50% of their time to the project**).			
	Travel staff	Travel of project staff.			
	Additional operating costs of project	Costs directly related to ensuring sound field implementation (salary for local/regional admin. staff, office rental, telecommunication, office services, electricity).			
	Auditing	Third party financial auditing.			
2	Indirect Costs			≤10%	
2.1	International support staff, project-related overheads/administration costs	Project-related overheads admin., support staff from outside the target countries, financial audit, etc.	≤15%	≤10%	
	Total				≥ 25%

- There are no determined allocations for the different budget lines, but it is expected that the majority of the grant contribution is dedicated to field implementation and that a significant share of total grant contribution (e.g. 25%) is used for field investments.
- * If technical expertise can be demonstrated, Implementation Partner staff can be budgeted to deliver specific work packages that would otherwise be outsourced to consulting companies. Please add relevant information on staff, expertise, tasks and costs.
- ** In selected cases (e.g. one Monitoring and Evaluation specialist working on four different projects in the region), the costs of staff working less than 50% of their time on the project can be considered for match funding.
- Indirect costs need to be limited to 15% of total project costs and 10% of Blue Action Fund contribution. Lower indirect costs will be positively evaluated.
- Please provide in a separate table an assessment of contributions by beneficiaries.

4 Applicant(s) Information

4.1 Information on key project partners (maximum 1 page)

Explain if you will form a consortium or work with external project partners. Briefly describe all relevant partners involved in the project, the respective roles and contributions and how responsibilities are divided among them. You must also provide information on how the overall budget will be divided among the different partners. Please note the relevant procurement rules in the Grant Procedures Manual (see Section 4.5 Procurement policy).

4.2 Information on individual partners (maximum 2 pages per partner)

Please fill in the following three tables for each partner.

Partner organisation	
Name of organisation	
Project management	Briefly describe the structure of the organisation, indicate the department under which the project falls and describe the project's organisational structure (i.e. who in the organisation is responsible for the project and how are responsibilities divided among the project team?).
Start of operations in the proposed country(ies)	dd/mm/yyyy
Total number of staff in the organisation	Total staff number (% staff in non-ODA countries; % staff in ODA countries; % of administrative staff).
Number and location of offices in the country(ies)	
Staff number in the proposed country(ies) (national/international)	
Annual budget in EUR for each of the last three years	Total budget and % of budget implemented in the project region for each of the last three years.
Financial management	Briefly describe who is responsible for financial management and if there is a document detailing regulations regarding financial management. Is the country office externally audited? How frequently are such audits carried out?
Environmental and Social Policy and/or provisions/guidelines/standards for E&S management of projects including Stakeholder Engagement Plans (for lead organisation)	Does the organisation have an E&S policy and/or provisions/guidelines/standards for E&S management of projects, including Stakeholder Engagement Plans? Does it comply with the IUCN ESMS Guidelines , or are there gaps?
Is the organisation legally authorised to receive charitable funds?	
Contact person	Name: Telephone: Mobile: Email:
Website	

Key Staff

Please use the following table to provide information on key staff members of the organisation implementing the project. At the very least, please provide information on the Country Director, the Project Manager, key sector experts (only for sectors relevant to the project, including the technical expert for construction and experts for E&S Impact Assessments) and key support staff (e.g. Head of Support, Head of Finance, Head of Procurement).

Name of key staff	Relevant expertise	Years of relevant professional experience	Number of years with the organisation	Type of contract	Location where based	% of time working on the project

Key Experiences

Please use the following table to summarise up to five projects the organisation has implemented within the last five years, which are relevant to the project at hand. In particular, it should become apparent how far infrastructure/equipment/investment measures have been implemented by the project (e.g. rough budget share).

Name of project	Start and end date	Donor	Country, specific location and MPA	Budget (million EUR)	Activities relevant for the proposed intervention (max. 100 words per project)
	dd/mm/yyyy y to dd/mm/yyyy y				

5 Map of the area(s) concerned

Please add relevant maps of the intervention area(s).

6 Workplan

Please add workplan for the project using excel template provided.

7 Environmental and Social Management System questionnaire and screening report

Please fill out and attach ESMS questionnaire and screening report.¹⁵

¹⁵ Available at <https://www.blueactionfund.org/documents-and-publications>.

Annex 5: Full Proposal Template

Please limit the number of pages of the overall full proposal (without Annex) to a maximum of 30 pages.

1 Project summary

Project summary	
Project title	
Implementing organisation(s)	
Country(ies) of implementation	
Project start and end	<i>dd/mm/yyyy to dd/mm/yyyy</i>
Total project volume (EUR)	
Blue Action Fund funding	<i>In Euro (percentage of total project volume)</i>
Matching funding	<i>In Euro (percentage of total project volume)</i>
Project summary	<i>Background; Theory of Change; objectives (including, among other things, amount of km² that will be newly established or benefit from enhanced management through the project – and which IUCN category it falls into; data and information; activities; community engagement; monitoring and evaluation; risks and sustainability).</i>

2 Background

Please describe the starting situation in the country of implementation/target region, concentrating on problems and potentials and the project context as a reference scenario:

- What are the impetus and background that give rise to the project?
- What is the scope of the problem, and how urgent is it?
- On which existing MPA's or protected area's potential for protection does the project focus on and what is its relevance to ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas?
- How does the project fit into and contribute to regional conservation plans and policies?
- What will change look like? What is at stake if there is no project? Which opportunities will be foregone?

3 Theory of Change

Please describe your Theory of Change and underlying assumptions. If available, add results chain or other:

- What are the local challenges that you want the project to address? What are the main drivers of these challenges?
- What opportunities do you want to seize through the project?
- What are the enabling factors that need to be promoted?
- What is your strategy to achieve the desired effect?
- Why is the chosen approach the best solution to the problem? What evidence supports this?
- What assumptions is your strategy based on?
- How will you evaluate the technical, financial and organisational feasibility of your project to sustainably reduce drivers of challenges and enhance enabling factors of opportunities?

4 Objectives

Please describe carefully and in detail the objectives of the project. Please link your narrative closely to the project logframe and explain how the project contributes to the Blue Action Fund Programme Results Matrix (see Annex 1).

- How many km² of MPA will be newly established or benefit from enhanced management through the project – and which IUCN category does it fall into? Will any MPA participate in the IUCN Green List process? Please fill out the following table:

Area	New	Better managed	Project contribution*
MPAs IUCN categories			
I Strict Nature Reserve / Wilderness Area	Km ²	Km ²	Important
II National Park			Significant
III Natural Monument or Feature			
IV Habitat/Species management Area			
V Protected Seascape/Landscape			
VI Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources			
Other areas			
Buffer zones			

* Important = one of several actors making important contributions. Significant = Leading role among several actors.

- How will the project contribute to establishing ecologically representative and well-connected networks of protected areas? How will this impact on key species and habitat?
- How many households/people will benefit from the project (if possible differentiate by gender)?
- Who are the communities and actors benefitting from the project? Please describe as concretely as possible in terms of location, administrative designation (which district, county, province, etc.), area, administrative location.
- How will the project impact on livelihood conditions and food security? To what extent do communities depend on marine resources for their livelihoods and to what extent do they have the potential for alternative income?
- What contribution will you make to the relevant strategies and policies of the partner country and the region?
- How does the project contribute to gender equality?
- Specifically, to which indicators of the Blue Action Fund Programme Results Matrix is the project contributing? Please indicate baselines and targets in your project logframe.
- If available/applicable: How will the expected outputs/results contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation? What are the concrete expected impacts in terms of sequestered tonnes of CO₂ equivalent or mitigation capacities? What are the exact impacts with regard to reduction of vulnerability and improved adaptive capacities? How many households will benefit from reduced vulnerability and adaptive capacity?

5 Community engagement

- How do you ensure that relevant institutions, groups and local communities are involved in planning and implementation? To what extent will community members participate in data collection or monitoring activities to prevent illegal fishing?
- What will stakeholders be able to change through successful implementation of the project and how will you monitor this?
- What is the role of the municipalities/local administrations in the implementation of the project (i.e selection of projects, supervision of works, operation and maintenance, etc.)? What role will local development plans play?
- What role will local NGOs play in the project?
- What Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool will be used and when?

6 Activities and implementation modalities

- How will you manage and coordinate the project? Which entities will be involved in the project and how? How do you intend to divide the responsibilities for implementation within your organisation(s)? How will you ensure smooth implementation of the project, and where might challenges arise (see Annex C in this template: Information on Implementing Partners)

- Which measures will not be implemented by your own staff, but by a local/international contractor? Will you hire new staff to implement the project?
- Describe delineation to and coordination with measures financed from other, external sources.
- How will the project support the capacity development of local partners, including local NGOs, universities, research institutes, administrations, etc.?
- Please describe planned activities as well as planned field investments funded through the project. How will you ensure adequate technical preparation of infrastructure construction (technical preparatory studies, definition of technical details, tender documents, timetable of construction steps, etc.) and supervision when external contractors implement construction work?
- Who are the other relevant NGOs and funders working in the region? How will you seek possible synergies? How will you coordinate and potentially cooperate with them?
- Please list the sources of your match funding.
- Please indicate closer co-operations with IUCN you might have in the region or on the theme that is the subject of the grant that might create conflict of interests for IUCN when reviewing your proposal.

7 Governmental partner structures

- Who are the governmental partners that will have to cooperate with the project? What will be their role and responsibilities? Which activities will they have to provide?
- What options are there to strengthen the responsibilities of governmental authorities in order to ensure sustainability of the project measures beyond the end of project?

8 Environmental and social risk screening

- Does your ESMS comply with IUCN ESMS Guidelines? If not, where do you see gaps? (Please summarise based on your elaborations in the Environmental and Social Scoping Report in Annex B of this template.)
- How will you ensure that national guidelines are adhered to? How will the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (VGSSF), and other relevant E&S policies and safeguards, be taken into account? How will you assess what effects measures might have and which mitigation measures are appropriate?
- What are the major risks to the project’s success, how likely are these to occur, and what consequences would they have? What measures are you taking to manage these risks and mitigate their impact? (Please summarise based on your elaborations in the Environmental and Social Scoping Report in Annex B of this template.)
- Please use the following summary table to indicate risks to the project:
 - Column 1: Please list all major risks. It may be useful to reflect on the following risk categories: contextual risks (e.g. governmental restrictions on NGOs); programmatic risks or risks to staff (e.g. car accidents, security risks); implementation risk (e.g. climatic risks); risks for sustainable operations after project completion.
 - Column 2: Please rate the probability of each risk (high/medium/low).
 - Column 3: Please rate the possibility of influencing the risk or mitigating it, if it occurs.
 - Column 4: Please describe the mitigation measures for each risk.

Risk	Likelihood	Possibility to influence	Mitigation measures

9 Data, monitoring and evaluation

- Please indicate which measures the project will take in order to: (1) monitor project progress and output; (2) establish baselines; (3) monitor project outcome; and (4) guarantee the monitoring of project impact.
- What data are available to support the case for the project and which of these can be used for establishing baselines?
- What baseline information is missing and when, where and how will that information be collected?
- How will the project contribute to long-term data collection for effective MPA and fisheries management?

10 Sustainability

- Please provide details on the exit strategy of the project, i.e. how the sustainable operations of all assets created and processes initiated by/under the project will be ensured upon completion of the project, detailing how and by whom the project measures will be continued after the end of the project and who will fund them.
- How will the funding gap for effective MPA management have been reduced?

- If applicable: how is local capacity built in the context of the project i.e. to be retained in the local community?
- How will you ensure the replication of good practices and dissemination of project experiences? Is there scope for upscaling, e.g. by increasing the project area?

11 Budget

Please provide detailed information on the budget in a separate Excel file (template will be sent).

#	Line	Total costs (all outputs)	Blue Action Grant	Match funding	Output 1	Output 2	Output 3	Output 4
1	Direct Cost							
1.1	Field implementation	= sum output 1–4						
	Field investments (livelihood and/or infrastructure investments, equipment and transport facilities, see examples in concept note template)	= sum output 1–4						
	Training and capacity development measures	= sum output 1–4						
	Consulting services	= sum output 1–4						
	Awareness and communications	= sum output 1–4						
	Other marine conservation activities	= sum output 1–4						
	Contingency							
1.2	Project management							
	Project staff	= sum output 1–4						
	Travel staff	= sum output 1–4						
	Additional operating costs of the project							
	External auditing							
2	Indirect Costs							
2.1	International support staff, project-related overheads/ administration costs							
	Total							

- There are no determined allocations for the different budget lines, but it is expected that the majority of the grant contribution is dedicated to field implementation and that a significant share of the total grant contribution (e.g. 25%) is used for field investments.
- * If technical expertise can be demonstrated, Implementing Partner staff can be budgeted to deliver specific work packages that would otherwise be outsourced to consulting companies.
- ** In selected cases (e.g. one Monitoring and Evaluation specialist working on four different projects in the region), the costs of staff working less than 50% of their time on the project can be considered for match funding.
- Indirect costs need to be limited to 15% of total project costs and 10% of Blue Action Fund contribution. Lower indirect costs will be positively evaluated.
- Please provide in a separate table an assessment of contribution by beneficiaries.

- Please note that “dish-outs” (100% project grant contributions without own contribution by beneficiaries) are not acceptable for procurement of productive assets (such as market infrastructure, cold storage equipment, fishing gear, etc.), since it will result in a lack of ownership and, hence, sustainable operation of procured assets.

Annexes to the Full Proposal Template

Annex A Project Results Matrix

The Project Results Matrix explains at a glance how the project's development goals and its contribution to the Blue Action Fund Programme Results Matrix can be achieved, taking into account causal effects and assumptions. It:

- identifies relevant cause–effect relationships;
- plans and defines precise and verifiable goals;
- identifies relevant context, assumptions and risks;
- clarifies responsibilities;
- creates a basis for monitoring and evaluation; and
- defines verification sources.

To the greatest extent possible, please use indicators from the Blue Action Fund Programme Results Matrix (see Annex 1) to clearly demonstrate how the project will contribute to Blue Action Fund's stated goals and objectives. Blue Action Fund will only fund projects that clearly contribute to its Programme Results Matrix.

All indicators should be "SMART":

- **Specific:** should be a single factual statement, precisely formulated and one-dimensional.
- **Measurable:** should have baseline and target indicators; change should be expressed through absolute numbers or percentages; the effort-to-control indicator should correspond to its relevance and the total project volume.
- **Achievable:** the changes captured by the indicator can be achieved and require reasonable resources.
- **Relevant:** should measure the central dimension of the project objective/result.
- **Time-bound:** a specific point in time for achieving the target should be indicated (usually end of project duration).

The structure of the Project Results Matrix must be aligned with the Blue Action Fund Programme Results Matrix:

- Level 1 – overall objective (impact): Higher objective to which this project, along with others, will contribute.
- Level 2 – (one) module objective (outcome): The outcome level describes the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of the project's outputs. It describes the desirable future behaviour of the target groups and how they will utilise the created capacities. Example: "Indicator 2.3: By 2025, in at least 75% of the project areas key fisheries are operated within the maximum sustainable yield."
- Level 3 – (a few) outputs: The output level describes the infrastructure and capacities that will be provided by the project. It is possible to have several outputs per project. Example: "10 monitoring platforms constructed. 30Km² of MPA demarcated by buoys".
- Level 4 – inputs: The input level describes your organisation's main activities that are necessary to reach the defined output.

Assumptions are typically formulated as "positive risks" (e.g. "Government of Madagascar does not worsen fishery regulations"). Please do not include assumptions that should be achieved by the project (e.g. "project staff is in place").

Project Results Matrix

Summary	Success indicators	Verification sources	Assumptions/Risks
Overall objective (impact)	Indicator name/description: Baseline value: Target value end of project: Target value mid-term:		Not to be filled in.
Module objective (outcome) X:	Indicator name/description: Baseline value: Target value end of project: Target value mid-term:	Verification sources	Assumptions/risks regarding programme objective:
Output 1:	Indicator name/description: Baseline value: Target value end of project: Target value mid-term:	Verification sources	Assumptions/risks regarding programme outputs:
Output 2:	Indicator name/description: Baseline value: Target value end of project: Target value mid-term:	Verification sources	Assumptions/risks regarding programme outputs:
Output 3:	Indicator name/description: Baseline value: Target value end of project: Target value mid-term:	Verification sources	Assumptions/risks regarding programme outputs:
Key activities List key activities and indicate to which outputs they contribute. (If helpful you can append a separate list explaining each activity in more detail.	Not to be filled in		

Annex B Environmental and Social Management System

Please add relevant information and plans. Among others, please describe the key environmental and social issues of the proposed project and how these will be addressed within further project development, in line with national legislation and the applicable standards listed in Annex 3.

Please include an initial Access Restriction Mitigation Process Framework in line with IUCN standard on [Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restrictions](#).

Please check carefully if [IUCN standard on indigenous people](#) will be triggered by the project and – if needed – prepare requested analysis, frameworks and plans.

Please include a work plan and terms of reference for any future environmental and social studies/activities to be undertaken prior to the implementation of the project or finalised during the project's inception phase.

Annex C Information on Implementing Partners

Co-ordination, roles and responsibilities

Explain if you will form a consortium or work with external project partners. Briefly describe all relevant partners involved in the project, their respective roles and contributions, and how responsibilities are divided among them.

Please add a staff deployment plan illustrating which staff Blue Action Fund will be financing to carry out the project. If available, add an organisational chart for the project.

Please explain how efficient and effective co-ordination will be ensured. Please provide information on how the overall budget (grant and matching funding) will be divided among the different partners.

Please fill in the following three tables for each partner

The organisation	
Name of organisation	
Project management	Briefly describe the structure of the organisation, indicate the location of the headquarters, and under which department the project falls, and describe the project's organisational structure (i.e. who in the organisation is responsible for the project and how are responsibilities divided among the project team?). If available, please include a recent chart outlining the structure of the organisation.
Start of operations in the proposed country(ies)	
Total number of staff in the organisation	Total staff number (% staff in non-ODA countries; % staff in ODA countries; % of administrative staff).
Number and location of offices in the country(ies)	
Staff numbers in the proposed country(ies) (national/international)	
Annual budget in EUR for each of the last three years	Total budget and % of budget implemented in the project region for each of the last three years.
Financial management	Briefly describe who is responsible for financial management and which rules are applied (e.g. standards for the whole organisation or local processes?). Is there a document detailing regulations regarding financial management? Is the country office externally audited? How frequently are such audits carried out? How is it assured that project expenses can be tracked to a particular donor? What kind of internal and external control mechanisms are in place? How is the "four-eyes principle" applied in the organisation?
E&S Policy and/or provisions/guidelines/standards for E&S management of projects including Stakeholder Engagement Plans (for lead organisation)	Does the organisation have an E&S Policy and/or provisions/guidelines/standards for E&S management of projects including Stakeholder Engagement Plans? Do the E&S guidelines reflect the respective national legislation E&S Impact Assessment and occupational health and safety and labour and working conditions? Please describe the process by which national legislation was integrated into guidelines. Does that comply with the IUCN ESMS Guidelines , or are there gaps? Who is responsible for E&S Impact Assessments? Are they done internally or by external contractors?
Is the organisation legally authorised to receive charitable funds?	
Contact person	Name: Telephone:

	Mobile: Email:
Website	

Key Staff

Please use the following table to provide information on key staff members of the organisation implementing the project. At the very least, please provide information for the Country Director, Project Manager, key sector experts (only for sectors relevant to the project, including the technical expert for construction and experts for E&S Impact Assessments), and key support staff (e.g. Head of Support, Head of Finance, Head of Procurement).

Name of key staff	Relevant expertise	Years of relevant professional experience	Number of years with the organisation	Type of contract	Location where based	% of time working on the project

Key Experiences

Please use the following table to summarise up to five projects the organisation has implemented within the last five years, which are relevant to the project at hand. In particular, it should become apparent how far infrastructure/equipment/investment measures have been implemented within the project (e.g. rough budget share).

Name of project	Start and end date	Donor	Country, specific location and MPA	Budget (million EUR)	Activities relevant for the proposed intervention (max. 100 words per project)
	<i>dd/mm/yyyy y to dd/mm/yyyy y</i>				

Annex D Maps

Please add relevant maps of the intervention area(s).

Annex E Workplan

Please add workplan for the project using excel provided separately.

Annex 6: Charitable Donation Certificate Template

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

Recipient

[Name of organisation]

[Address of registered office]

We confirm that the organisation

- is a registered non-profit organisation under [_____] law;
- has been granted tax-exempt status by the local tax authorities – the latest ruling stating the tax-exempt status dates from [_____] (please attach); and
- exclusively pursues charitable objectives, namely
 - protection of the environment,
 - development cooperation,
 - promotion of science and research related to protection of the environment and development cooperation.

We confirm that we have received the following grant(s) from Blue Action Fund, Frankfurt/Germany:

- [grant amount (EUR)]
- [date of reception]
- [name and short description of the funded project].

We confirm that the grant will be used exclusively for the named project.

Date

Name and function of the signatory