Global EbA Fund

Grants Procedure Manual

Supported by:

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

based on a decision of the German Bundestag

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About this Manual

This Grants Procedure Manual details the requirements and procedures for each step of the grant-making process of the Global EbA Fund.

Section 1 introduces the Global EbA Fund;
Section 2 provides details on grant selection criteria and eligibility requirement;
Section 3 provides details on the application submission, selection of grantees and grant award process;
Section 4 details the administrative and legal requirements for applicant organisations;

The Manual will be reviewed and amended to reflect any new requirements, criteria or practices of the Global EbA Fund. The most up to date version will be the one available on the Global EbA Fund website at www.GlobalEbAFund.org.

For any questions, please reach out to: Contact.EbAFund@iucn.org.

DISCLAIMER: The document provides general information only and may not be completely accurate in every circumstance, does not purport to be legal advice, and is not intended to be legally binding on the Global EbA Fund in a particular case.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BMUKN	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CfP	Call for Proposals
EbA	Ecosystem-based Adaptation
FEBA	Friends of Ecosystem-based Adaptation
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
Fund	Global EbA Fund
GAN	Global Adaptation Network
GCA	Global Commission on Adaptation
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
IKI	International Climate Initiative
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
NBSAPs	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NAPs	National Adaptation Plans
NbS	Nature-based Solutions
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
ODA	Official Development Assistance
SC	Steering Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
ZUG	Zukunft - Umwelt - Gesellschaft GmbH

1. About the Global EbA Fund

1.1. Introduction and focus of the Fund

Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) to the impacts of climate change is a nature-based solution[1] that harnesses biodiversity and ecosystem services to reduce vulnerability and build resilience of human communities to climate change. EbA is defined as the use of biodiversity and ecosystem services as part of an overall adaptation strategy to help people to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change (CBD, 2009 & 2010).

EbA encompasses a broad set of approaches that include the management of ecosystems and their services to **reduce the vulnerability of communities to the impacts of climate change** – such as the conservation, sustainable management and restoration of ecosystems, such as forests, grasslands, wetlands, mangroves or coral reefs to reduce the harmful impacts of climate hazards including shifting patterns or levels of rainfall, changes in maximum and minimum temperatures, stronger storms, and increasingly variable climatic conditions.

Globally, there is more appetite for scaling the use of EbA than ever before. Not only is there increasing recognition of the importance of adaptation, as evidenced by the adoption of the Global Goal on Adaptation in the Paris Agreement and subsequent initiatives such as the Global Commission on Adaptation (GCA), but there is also unprecedented attention to the fundamental role of natural ecosystems in supporting climate change adaptation.

The role of nature-based solutions (NbS) for the world's pressing issues, including climate change, are increasingly gaining attention. NbS can be defined as actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems, which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services and resilience and biodiversity benefits. In 2019, the IPBES *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* demonstrated that nature is declining at unprecedented rates and species extinctions continue to accelerate, threatening the functioning of ecosystems as the foundations of human livelihoods, economies, food security and more. The report also highlighted the fundamental role of natural ecosystems in reducing vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters. In parallel, the findings of the IPCC Special Reports *Climate Change and Land* and *The Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate* both addressed the need to ramp up climate action overall as well as the role of ecosystems and biodiversity in building climate resilience. The leaders of governments, communities, corporations and other coalitions increasingly acknowledge that healthy, resilient ecosystems lay the foundation for sustainable economic development, food and water security, disaster risk reduction and climate action.

1 Nature-based Solutions (NbS) – defined as actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems to address societal challenges, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefit – are crucial for sustainable development (IUCN Global Standard for NbS, 2020).

Identifying, implementing and scaling these solutions and maximising their co-benefits will be key to solving the climate crisis.

Despite the powerful case for working with nature to reduce climate risks, few governments have adopted these approaches widely, and only 3 percent of nearly 2,000 companies reported using natural ecosystems as part of their climate adaptation strategies.

As highlighted in the Adaptation Gap Report 2022 published by UNEP, the annual public and private finance flows to NbS are USD 154 billion. Hence the annual rate of growth of investments into NbS needs to grow by a factor of 5 in real terms. The Adaptation Gap Report 2022 also highlighted that the adaptation finance gap in developing countries is likely five to 10 times greater than current international adaptation finance flows and continues to widen. International adaptation finance flows to developing countries are rising slowly. They reached USD 29 billion in 2020, as reported by donor countries, an increase of 4 per cent from 2019, representing 34 per cent of total climate finance. Combined adaptation and mitigation finance flows in 2020 fell at least USD 17 billion short of the USD 100 billion pledged to developing countries. Significant acceleration is needed if a doubling of 2019 finance flows by 2025 is to be met, as urged by the Glasgow Climate Pact, adopted at COP26 in 2021. Estimated annual adaptation needs are USD 160-340 billion by 2030 and USD 315- 565 billion by 2050.

In addition, an analysis found that only about 15% of the Adaptation Fund's[2] allocated funding since 2016 has gone to ecosystem-related activities[3]. Only USD 15 million, or 4% of the total Adaptation Fund portfolio, is designed primarily for ecosystem resilience. The relatively low proportion of Adaptation Fund activities which focus on ecosystem resilience is emblematic of the wider gaps in understanding, planning and investment that hinder the wider uptake of nature-based solutions.

According to "*Harnessing Nature to Build Climate Resilience*" report issued by UNEP in 2022, barriers to the use of EbA can be summarised as follows:

- **Lack of awareness and understanding** of the role of ecosystem conservation, restoration and sustainable management in fostering climate resilience (especially among policymakers, private sector actors and the local authorities and technicians who are tasked with implementing EbA on the ground);
- **Lack of sufficient knowledge and information for scaling up EbA**. Despite a rapidly growing evidence base, many policymakers, donors and practitioners lack the necessary information to design and implement EbA;
- **Technical capacity constraints.** Policymakers and local authorities often lack staff with the necessary technical skills to effectively design, implement and mainstream EbA into relevant policies, plans and investments;
- **Insufficient political and public support**. Without strong political leadership and public support, it is difficult to raise the profile of EbA, secure funding, mainstream EbA

[2] The Adaptation Fund was established under the Kyoto Protocol of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. https://www.adaptation-fund.org/

[3] Atteridge, A. and Tenggren, S. (2019). Finance for the adaptation of ecosystems to climate change: a review of the Adaptation Fund portfolio. SEI working paper. Stockholm Environment Institute, Stockholm, Sweden. https://www.weadapt.org/knowledge-base/climate-finance/finance-for-the-adaptation-of-ecosystems-to-climate-change Accessed 24/10/2019

into policies, regulations and budgets, and mobilize action and collaboration across diverse institutions, governance levels and stakeholders;

- **Governance challenges**. EbA implementation is often constrained by the lack of clear institutional arrangements and collaboration among the multiple government departments, institutions and sectors that are involved in ecosystem conservation, restoration and sustainable management. In addition, building effective, cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder partnerships that address the diverse vulnerability and adaptation needs of different stakeholder groups (including Indigenous Peoples, local communities and women) is often challenging. The lack of supportive policies and regulations can also slow EbA implementation;
- **Finance challenges**. The main challenge is the lack of sufficient funding from both the public sector and the private sector to support EbA at scale;
- **Limited space for ecosystem-based adaptation**. Most EbA interventions require that space be set aside for the conservation, restoration and sustainable management of ecosystems for climate adaptation. In places where land is already built upon or used for livelihood activities or where land is prohibitively expensive, finding space for EbA implementation can be difficult.

Implemented by IUCN and UNEP with funding from the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety (BMUKN), the **Global EbA Fund is a catalytic funding mechanism for supporting innovative approaches to EbA to create enabling environment for its mainstreaming and scaling.**

By supporting catalytic climate change adaptation initiatives, the Fund helps overcome barriers to scaling EbA, address knowledge gaps, pilot innovative EbA approaches, engage in strategic EbA policy mainstreaming, and incentivise innovative finance mechanisms and private sector EbA investment.

1.2. Objectives and Action Pillars of the Fund

All proposed projects requesting funding must clearly contribute to one of the Global EbA Fund Strategic Objectives as well as fall under maximum two of the three Action Pillars described below.

Projects must not focus primarily on field implementation in the scope of the proposal. Field interventions are allowed if clearly justified.

Overall, while the Fund's **strategic objectives** define the overarching aim and direction for the projects – **the "What"** – the **action pillars** focus on **"How"** these can be reached within the scope of the Fund.

Global EbA Fund Strategic Objectives

The Strategic Objectives of the Fund have been defined as follows:

Strategic Objective 1: To build awareness and understanding of the critical role of natural assets in underpinning resilience, expand the knowledge and evidence base to help make the case for working with people and nature, and enhance institutional capacities for mainstreaming EbA into national plans and policy frameworks and vertical integration and alignment of EbA across sectors.

Strategic Objective 2: To address planning and other governance gaps in policy and regulatory environments to increase the attractiveness and feasibility of using and scaling ecosystem-based approaches for climate change adaptation.

Strategic Objective 3: To expand access to sustainable short- and long-term finance mechanisms for applying and scaling ecosystem-based approaches for climate change adaptation, including the incentivisation of private sector investment in EbA and reducing EbA's dependence on high management capacity and continuous financial input.

Global EbA Fund Action Pillars

The Action Pillars of the Fund are:

Pillar 1: Levers for catalytic change:

Definitions**:**

- A **catalytic intervention** is defined as "**a targeted intervention that leads to a transformative shift at a systemic level at either global, regional, national, or sub-national scale**".

- **Lever for change** is defined as "**an area of work that has the potential to deliver wide-ranging positive change beyond its immediate focus**"

Examples of levers for catalytic change that projects could focus on include but are not limited to:

- ***Policy and policy instruments*:**
    - support the inclusion and/or mainstreaming of EbA into national, sub-national and sectoral policies, as well as NDCs, NAPs[4], NBSAPs and related policy frameworks;
    - support the establishment of green public procurement practices to include EbA;
    - encourage the use of natural capital accounting;
    - inclusion of EbA considerations in Payment for Ecosystem Services schemes;

[4] Information on gaps and needs related to the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans is available here (UNFCCC)

- use building codes and zoning regulations to support EbA;
- insurance and risk sharing, environmental markets and pricing, and public private partnerships, tax incentives, etc.

- ***Education, capacity building and skills development***:
  - inclusion of EbA into the curricula of formal, informal education, technical and vocational education and training, as well as life-long learning/capacity building activities targeting groups of practitioners that are directly involved in shaping policy and practice, such as architects, engineers, public servants, city planners, agriculturists, etc.

- ***Financing***:
  - de-risking lending for EbA approaches
  - innovative finance mechanisms for EbA (e.g. community incentive schemes, green, blue and resilience bonds for EbA);
  - incentivising Public-Private Partnerships and investment in EbA;
  - innovative insurance mechanisms;
  - integration of the values of ecosystem goods and services and their economic benefits into public and private financial planning, etc.

- ***Working through the value chain[5] perspective*** of a sector or commodity to identify hotspots and entry points for change to ensure the adoption of EbA, diversify business models and incentivise private sector collaboration.
  Some examples of working through the value chain perspective and shifting business models:
  - food processing company that changes its business model to collaborate with and/or support producers who adopt ecosystem-sensitive practices;
  - a tourism destination that adopts ecosystem-sensitive practices as a result of project activities;
  - an existing eco-label improved to include criteria on EbA considerations or new eco-label developed
  - trade or farmer association that promotes EbA considerations to its members.

Field implementation to support this work could be considered under this pillar when clearly justified.

Pillar 2: Functional Data and Science

[5] The value chain is comprised of all the activities that provide or receive value from designing, making, distributing, retailing and consuming a product (or providing the service that a product renders), including the extraction and provision of raw materials, as well as the activities that are involved after its useful service life. In this sense, the value chain covers all stages in a product's life, from supply of raw materials through to disposal after use, and encompasses the activities linked to value creation such as business models, investments and regulation. At all stages in the value chain, and in the transport of intermediate and finished products between the value chain stages, raw materials and energy are required and emissions to the environment are produced. In addition, the value chain is also comprised of the actors undertaking the activities and the stakeholders that can influence the activities. **The value chain thus incorporates not only the physical processes, such as farms and factories, but also the business models and the way products are designed, promoted and offered to consumers**." (UNEP, 2020a). More on the Value-Chain approach here (*developed by One Planet network and International Resource Panel (initiatives hosted by UNEP) in response to a request in the UNEA 4 resolution*).

This involves taking an evidence or science-driven approach to promote EbA action. It may involve extracting information and insights from data to make a case for mainstreaming EbA and to inform decision making.

Some examples of projects include, but are not limited to:

- climate risk and vulnerability assessments, including considerations on One Health;
- future scenario modelling;
- cost-benefit and multi-criteria analysis and making an economic case for EbA;
- job generation potential;
- improvements to monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks;
- transboundary nature of adaptation and trade-offs;
- traditional knowledge and technologies; etc.

It is important to note that projects under this pillar are also requested to develop means/operational plans for the application, use and adoption of the information/knowledge generated in order to influence decision-making and prompt EbA action.

Field implementation to support this work could be considered under this pillar when clearly justified.

Pillar 3: Innovation for Adaptation

Definitions**:**

- **Innovative projects** on EbA are the ones that are yet to be proven, are at the initial stages of development, or are yet to be tested in a different context and can take the shape of an approach, a process, a practical tool or an application. It is based on horizontal and collaborative working practices that consider a diverse range of views and the context in which the innovation is taking place.

As an example, projects under this pillar could focus on developing unconventional partnerships; support the integration of EbA in novel sectors; develop an innovative tool for EbA implementation; strategic pilot or demonstration actions, specifically where the Fund identifies high potential for scaling through public budgeting, private sector investment, philanthropy, and multilateral funds (e.g. GCF, GEF, Adaptation Fund).

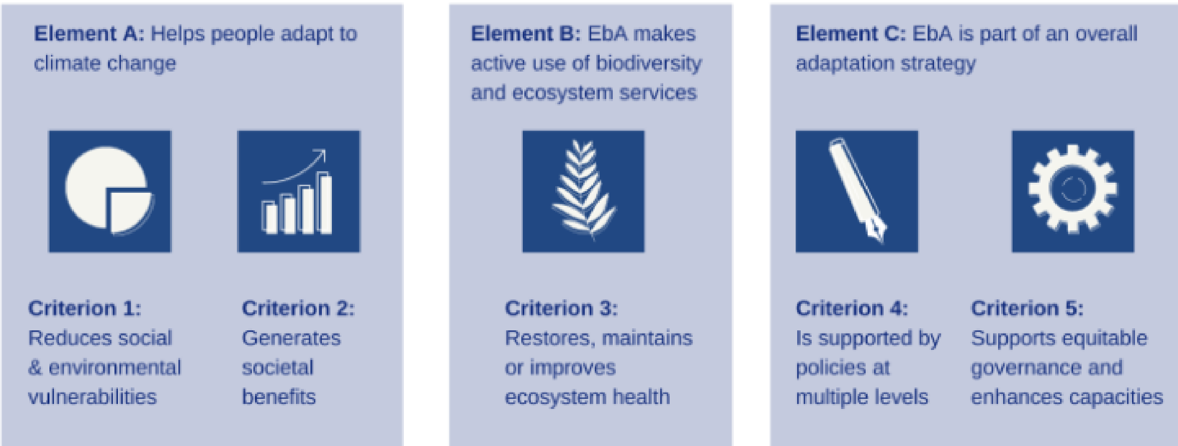
Field implementation to pilot an innovative approach could be considered under this pillar when clearly justified.

2. Global EbA Fund Grant Selection Criteria and Eligibility Requirements

2.1. What we fund

In summary, the Global EbA Fund **supports projects that:**

- **Contribute to an enabling environment for the implementation of ecosystem-based adaptation** to climate change and ultimately aligns with the Friends of EBA EbA Qualification Criteria & Quality Standards.



- **Result in catalytic impact and/or are innovative**[6], such as by piloting innovative approaches for EbA, removing barriers from scaling EbA interventions at the policy or landscape levels, strategic and focused EbA policy mainstreaming, supporting innovative finance mechanisms for EbA, incentivising private sector investment in EbA, and supporting unlikely matches between partners; shifting business models.

- **Add value to or scale existing work**. Projects should fill a gap in existing work, address a knowledge gap, contribute to policy upscaling, enhance the impact of an investment in EbA, and/or serve to develop a larger proposal to another funding mechanism. Projects should leverage existing knowledge, standards, partnerships, experiences, and best practices or filling gaps therein to facilitate the creation of enabling environment for increased uptake and/or impact of EbA. Global EbA Fund projects should not be standalone interventions. As such, projects must not focus primarily on field implementation in the scope of the proposal, though field implementation may be a component if clearly justified.

- **Prioritise project sustainability and financial continuity.** The project should have a clear plan for how results will be maintained and developed past the end of the

[6] Please refer to the definitions of catalytic and innovative under the description of Action Pillar 1.

funding period. This should include environmental, infrastructural, institutional, social and financial sustainability considerations as applicable**.** If follow-up(s) to the proposed project will require a budget and/or time frame outside of that offered by the Fund – for instance, if the project will develop a larger project proposal to a different funding mechanism – the applicant should clearly articulate anticipated funding options, including any market-based, private sector, or public sector funding opportunities. Exit strategy for the project is a requirement and planned actions are to be initiated from the outset of project implementation.

- **Catalyse impact with a Global EbA Fund contribution up to USD 250,000 for Small-size Grants and up to USD 500,000 for Mid-size Grants**; **and are either global, thematic, or targeted to one or more countries which are eligible for Official Development Assistance (ODA).**

2.2. Grant Selection Criteria

The following 9 criteria will be considered when the decision on the award of a grant is being made:

1. Does the project contribute to **creating an enabling environment for the implementation of ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change** and ultimately aligns with the FEBA EbA Qualifications Criteria and Quality Standards (EN | FR | ES).
   The following 5 questions are considered to understand the alignment of the project with FEBA EbA Qualifications Criteria and Quality Standards:

   1.1 Does this intervention eventually contribute to the reduction of social and environmental vulnerabilities to climate change? Yes / No

   EbA must explicitly address current and future climate change and climate variability. It is based on assessments of climatic vulnerability, hazards and risks to people, as well as the adaptation benefits derived from ecosystem services. A combination of climate change information and projections (based on the best available scientific data and models and local knowledge) and vulnerability and risk assessments should form the basis for design and implementation[7]. EbA measures need to reduce climate vulnerability for people at an appropriate scale (e.g. at least local scale but ideally ecosystem or landscape/seascape scale).

   Projects should:

   - *Make clear use of climate risk and vulnerability assessments*. Projects should draw on existing local, national and/or regional climate risk and vulnerability assessments including drawing from IPCC assessments. Projects should

[7] As a reference, review the GIZ, EURAC & UNU-EHS (2018) Climate Risk Assessment for Ecosystem-based Adaptation – A guidebook for planners and practitioners: https://www.adaptationcommunity.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/giz-eurac-unu-2018-en-guidebook-climate-risk-asessment-eba.pdf

incorporate best available baseline information and studies, when available, covering the proposed project location(s).

- *Draw on the best available science and use of traditional and local knowledge.* Projects should draw on the best available science where applicable and financially feasible. Examples of tools to be used include: analytical models and related tools (e.g. vulnerability assessments, climate risk screening including projections of climate change impacts, natural capital assessments), inclusive community participation methodologies, gender analyses, and prioritisation techniques. In addition, projects should draw on and use relevant traditional knowledge, when applicable.
- *Follow a clear adaptation chain.* EbA measures must be grounded in a detailed impact chain analysis that identifies current and future climate hazards and risks, addresses socioeconomic and ecological sensitivity (including maintaining or enhancing ecosystem services), and builds adaptive capacity to reduce vulnerability, and overall, climate risks.

1.2 Does this intervention eventually contribute to generation of societal benefits in the context of climate change adaptation? Yes / No

EbA reduces vulnerabilities of people through the use of biodiversity and ecosystem services and by producing societal benefits in a fair and equitable manner. It addresses the needs of people, especially those who directly depend on or use natural resources and who are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts. EbA delivers direct or indirect benefits that increase peoples' resilience to climate change, including enhanced food security, shelter, risk reduction, provision of fresh water and medicine, and local climate regulation. It also often generates additional benefits essential for sustainable development including carbon sequestration, habitat provision or medicinal resource provision. In order for EbA to support adaptive capacities it needs to distribute short-, medium- and long-term benefits. Comparative analyses on the extent and scale of adaptive capacity and resilience benefits should clarify whether EbA measures are economically feasible and can complement or substitute other adaptation options. Benefits should be distributed fairly among a representative percentage of the target group.

Projects should:

- *Clearly describe tangible climate adaptation benefits.*
- *Consider how the project affects stakeholders across scales*, including outside of the targeted intervention area, communities, and/or organisations, and considering direct and indirect costs and benefits.
- *Demonstrate gender responsiveness and social inclusion* by considering how climate risks, project impacts, costs, and benefits may differ across gender and social groups

1.3 Does this intervention eventually contribute to restoration, sustainable management and/or improvement of ecosystem health? Yes / No

EbA restores, maintains and improves ecosystems, land- and seascapes in line with the Ecosystem Approach. It is applied at a scale that addresses the challenge of, and integrates the trade-offs resulting from climate change, meaning it supports the stability, resilience, connectivity, and multiple roles of ecosystems as part of larger land- and seascapes. EbA encompasses measures such as ecosystem management, reinforcement and restoration of natural infrastructure, as well as the management of threats associated with the effects of climate change or anthropogenic activities. Because climate change can force changes in ecosystem composition and structure, it is important that the health and stability of ecosystem services are maintained, improved, and monitored. EbA fosters appropriate land and water management practices that support climate change adaptation, prioritise the management of key ecosystem services, and foster the sustainable use of land and coastal and marine resources (e.g. by conservation and climate-smart agriculture, soil conservation, use of water retention areas, low impact fishing). It supports the diversification of land and marine use and livelihood options such as multi-cropping, agroforestry, and the use of appropriate species and varieties. For example, this can include the introduction of species that are better adapted to climate change, as long as they do not endanger the existence of native species or become invasive. Co-management approaches that involve stakeholders from communities, government and private sector should be supported.

Projects should:

- *Clearly define the ecosystem-based approach it aims to promote, aligned with the FEBA EbA Qualification Criteria and Quality Standards*

1.4 Is this intervention supported by policies at multiple levels? Yes / No

As part of a larger adaptation strategy, EbA operates at one or more levels (i.e. local, national, regional, landscape, and sectoral levels), and can involve supporting sectoral adaptation and multi-sectoral approaches at multiple geographic scales. It is, or becomes, an integral part of key policies and implementation frameworks targeted towards sustainable development, agriculture, land use, poverty reduction, natural resource management, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction. EbA should be integrated into existing policy frameworks so that interventions can be sustainable and scalable, rather than short-term and stand-alone.

Projects should:

- *Have clear policy linkages to national, sub-national, regional, and/or global policies and strategies.* Projects should be supportive of national policies and strategies to the extent possible (e.g., national adaptation plans (NAPs), nationally determined contributions (NDCs), National Communications under UNFCCC, national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), voluntary national Land Degradation Neutrality targets under UNCCD etc.)

including actions planned in regional, national or local level documents with a climate change adaptation focus. In addition to these, projects should also include links to other global and national policy priorities including but not limited to Sendai Framework, drought plans and social development targets (such as gender, poverty, health). Projects should align with and support local or subnational climate action (or relevant development) plans and policies, fostering vertical integration across governance levels. Further, proposals should identify the potential to influence these policies or, where possible, include a plan to influence these policies.

- *Have clear replicability to other areas and communities;* scaling potential of the model or practice to support ecosystem-based adaptation. Projects should consider the prospect of replicability in other communities, countries, ecosystems, and/or other sectors with context-specific adaptations/modifications as necessary, thereby enabling successful effects to be achieved beyond the framework of the individual project.

1.5 Does this intervention support equitable governance and enhance capacities? Yes / No

EbA enhances governance of natural resources with respect to the use of biodiversity and ecosystem services, by following a community-centred, participatory and gender-sensitive approach; it embraces transparency, empowerment, accountability, non-discrimination and active, meaningful and free participation at the local level. It should support fair and equitable sharing of user access, rights and responsibilities. The ability to adapt to climate change hinges on the ability of local people (comprising different groups, genders, customary bodies, etc.) to take on their rights and responsibilities and to be represented by officials who are accountable to them. Ownership by the people responsible for ecosystem management and by people who are using and benefiting from biodiversity can ensure that benefits emerge and are sustainable. Strong local governance needs to be embedded in higher level governance structures, which can facilitate and stimulate local action through the right policies and enabling environment.

Projects should:

- *Mainstream a gender responsive approach to project design and implementation.* The project should conduct gender analyses and apply key issues and recommendations identified to inform gender-responsive project design, budgeting, staffing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and to analyse the risks that the project may experience or pose, put measures in place to ensure activities do not exacerbate existing gender-related inequalities, including gender-based violence; and seize opportunities to address gender gaps and support empowerment of women.
- *Be participatory and inclusive.* Diverse stakeholders should be effectively consulted and involved in decision-making processes, including marginalised/disadvantaged groups (especially women, youth, Indigenous Peoples) and people who may be adversely affected by the project, where

applicable. Overall, projects should ensure that benefits are equitably distributed. Projects with direct and indirect impact on Indigenous Peoples must uphold the right of Indigenous Peoples to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)[8].

2. Does the project align with one or more of the Global EbA Fund's Strategic Objectives? Yes / No **<u>Please select only one.</u>**

   ☐ ***Strategic Objective 1****: To build awareness and understanding of the critical role of natural assets in underpinning resilience, expand the knowledge and evidence base to help make the case for working with nature, and enhance institutional capacities for mainstreaming EbA into national plans and policy frameworks and vertical integration and alignment of EbA across sectors.*

   ☐ ***Strategic Objective 2****: To address planning and other governance gaps in policy and regulatory environments to increase the attractiveness and feasibility of using and upscaling ecosystem-based approaches for climate change adaptation.*

   ☐ ***Strategic Objective 3****: To expand access to sustainable short- and long-term finance mechanisms for applying and scaling ecosystem-based approaches for climate change adaptation, including the incentivisation of private sector investment in EbA and reducing EbA's dependence on high management capacity and continuous financial input.*

3. What action pillar does the project fall under? **Please select maximum two options**.

Please note that if you are selecting Pillar 2 or Pillar 3, then only one option under Pillar 1 can be selected in addition.

If you are selecting two options under Pillar 1, Pillar 2 or 3 cannot be selected in addition.

Pillar 1: **Levers for catalytic change:**

☐ ***Policy and policy instruments***
☐ ***Education, capacity building and skills development***
☐ ***Financing***
☐ ***Working through the value chain perspective*** of a sector or commodity to identify hotspots and entry points for change to ensure the adoption of EbA and incentivise private sector collaboration.
☐ ***Other*****,** please indicate**:**

☐ **Pillar 2: Functional Data and Science**

☐ **Pillar 3: Innovation for Adaptation**

4. Grant Amounts:

[8] Learn more about Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) from FAO at this website, including a *Manual for Project Practitioners*, a toolkit and e-learning materials: http://www.fao.org/indigenous-peoples/our-pillars/fpic/en/

Is the requested funding up to USD 250,000 for small grant calls? Yes / No

Is the requested funding amount up to USD 500,000 for medium grant calls? Yes / No

5. Is the project duration 24 months or less? Yes / No

6. If the intervention has a regional or country-specific focus, is it targeted to one or more countries eligible for [Official Development Assistance (ODA)](), as defined by the OECD? Yes / No

7. Will government partner(s), if any, receive any funding through the proposed project? Yes / No

   The Fund will not grant directly to government partners. Sub-granting to governments at any level is also not permitted.

8. If a UNEP or IUCN global/regional/country office is involved in the project, will they receive any funding through the proposed project? Yes / No

   The Fund will not grant directly to UNEP and IUCN global/regional/country offices. Sub-granting to such offices is also not permitted.

9. Is the applicant legally able to operate in the country/-ies of the project and provide supporting documentation (if available, applicants may provide MoU or letter of endorsement from a relevant government agency)? Yes / No

2.3. Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS)

The Global EbA Fund's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) is developed based on IUCN's Environmental and Social Management System. The most up to date version of the Global EbA Fund ESMS is available on the website.

The Fund has established the procedures for screening future grants on environmental and social risks and their respective risk categories (including the tool to be employed for screening) as well as additional procedures for managing and monitoring such risks. The Global EbA Fund ESMS follows this systematic procedure to screen projects for potential adverse environmental and social impacts to ensure that negative impacts are avoided or minimised while positive impacts are stimulated. The ESMS also ensures that the implementation and effectiveness of mitigation measures are monitored and that any impacts arising during execution of grantee projects are addressed.

The Fund Secretariat will be screening these risks based on the Fund's ESMS. Depending on the overall risk category of the proposed activities, targeted risk assessments for grant proposals may be required (social assessment, targeted environmental studies etc.). Where necessary, the Fund Secretariat may request grantees to develop targeted plans of actions such as Environmental and Social Management Plan, Indigenous Peoples Plan, Access

Restrictions Mitigation Process Framework, specific stakeholder consultations, disclosure requirements and grievance mechanisms.

Overall, the procedures will be specific to the geographic context, objectives and proposed activities of the applicant and be designed proportional to the expected risks. The Fund's ESMS Screening Questionnaire includes a list of excluded activities and questions to assess and control the risk level of the grants. Projects that are determined as High-Risk will not be eligible to receive funding.

2.4. Applicant Eligibility

The Global EbA Fund seeks to catalyse new partnerships and collaborations and ***unlikely matches*** between new and non-traditional partners. The Fund seeks to reach out beyond the traditional conservation actors and constituencies to attract all actors and constituencies relevant to EbA and climate change adaptation who support gaps in technical knowledge and understanding among government actors

As the common public interest will be a top priority, the Fund will consider private sector applicants under certain conditions. No funding can be provided for sector-specific obligations nor compensatory or replacement measures, and for-profit activities. While not required, co-financing from the applicant would demonstrate an institutional investment in the project.

Categories of eligible recipients are:

A. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
B. International non-governmental organisations (INGOs)
C. Intergovernmental organisations (IGOs)
D. Community-based organisations (CBOs)
E. Indigenous People's Organisations
F. Universities and other academic institutions
G. Research institutes and think tanks
H. Private sector companies
I. Consortia of organisations that promote collaboration and greater impact around EbA. Government entities can be a part of the consortia as long as they do not receive funding from the Global EbA Fund. However, applications submitted on behalf of a consortium should clearly define the lead agency, the "Applicant Organisation", as detailed in the application template. This organisation, if successful, would be the responsible contract party.

Applications from and partnerships with local/community organisations are strongly encouraged.

UNEP and IUCN global, regional or country offices are **not currently eligible to apply** for funding from the Global EbA Fund, but are encouraged to collaborate with potential applicants in support of knowledge transfer on EbA and other relevant activities where in-kind support is available.

In line with current IKI policies, the **Fund will not grant directly to government partners**. Sub-granting to governments at any level is also not permitted. However, collaboration with national, sub-national and local governments is encouraged with the aim to create an enabling environment for EbA and support the establishment of strategic partnerships.

Eligible recipients must have sufficient capacity to allow for professional and timely implementation of proposed projects. Applicants will be asked to complete IUCN's Due Diligence Questionnaire and to cover the following topics as part of their application package.

- Basis for legal establishment or recognition and legal right to work in targeted country/countries, if any
- Governance structure, including names of governing body members, officers and key personnel
- Description of at least five recent relevant programs/projects/activities
- Annual budget (last completed year, current year)
- Sources of revenues
- Audited financial statements for most recently completed fiscal year
- Administration, accounting and control procedures
- Current auditing arrangements or equivalent (tax documents)
- Procurement practices for purchasing goods, works and services
- Environmental and social safeguard policies
- Past EbA-related experience
- Presence or local partnerships in targeted geographic region, if any.

2.5. Geographic Eligibility

Projects may have a country-specific, regional or global focus.

If the project has a country-specific focus, it must be targeted to one or more countries which are eligible for Official Development Assistance (ODA) based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) list at the time of application.

Regional/multi-country projects, particularly projects designed to foster regional exchange and achieve regional-scale impacts, are eligible. For multi-country projects, which are projects involving activities in more than one country, all of the countries must be ODA-eligible.

It is strongly advised that country-level projects include partners that are based in the country and in the area of project activities where possible.

Projects with a global focus, not targeted to a specific region or country, are also eligible.

3. Application Submission, Selection of Grantees and Award Process

3.1. Application Submission process

New calls for proposals along with their cut-off dates are published on the Global EbA Fund website. The focus of the calls is announced together with each application cycle.

Applications are submitted through an online platform. The application material is accessible on the Global EbA Fund Website for a designated submission period. Click on **Apply** tab to learn about the different funding windows.

All the templates and necessary guidance are provided in the next section (3.2). **Please start your application well in advance and do not wait till the deadline to finalise your application**.

3.2. Application documents

In the online application platform, you will be asked to fill out relevant sections as well as attach supporting documents.

Eligibility Screening

This is the template of **Eligibility screening questionnaire**

The questionnaire allows for the initial screening of the eligibility of your proposal. You will be asked to answer multiple choice questions and provide additional explanation where applicable.

No supporting documents are foreseen to be attached in this section.

Due Diligence and Financial Capacity Questionnaire

This is the template of **Due Diligence and Financial Capacity Questionnaire**.

The completed Questionnaire, along with **Annex 1(c)(i)**: Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, Statutes, Government Decree, as appropriate; and **Annex: 1(c)(ii)**: Organisation in-country registration certificate (if applicable), must be uploaded when submitting the online application. Shortlisted projects will be requested to provide the remaining supporting documentation.

Application Form

For small-size proposal submission, please use this Application Form.

For medium-size proposal, please use this Application Form.

Detailed Budget
Using the **Detailed budget template**, the project should develop offline and included as an Excel attachment in the application portal. Please pay special attention to the information provided in the Guidance tab.

Application Declaration Form
It is compulsory to attach a signed Applicant Declaration Form when filling in your application. If you are submitting a proposal on behalf of project consortia, Co-Applicant mandate form should also be signed in the application portal.

Further considerations for applications
In addition to any other supporting documents that you would like to attach to your application form, you will also be asked to provide the CVs of main personnel assigned to the project.

Documents in all the sections must be submitted in English. All supporting documents that are not in English must be accompanied by an English translation.

3.3. Guidance on the logical framework

This section provides guidance[9] on structuring the intervention logic, which should guide the overall design of the project and is specifically needed to develop the project's theory of change, logical framework and detailed activity table.

The theory of change functions as a results chain of hypotheses or assumptions that link various levels and forms the basis for the logical framework and the monitoring and evaluation plan. The project activities contribute to the outputs, which in turn contribute to the outcome, which result in the long-term impact. In order to demonstrate how the project will achieve results, the intervention logic must be sound and coherent throughout these various levels. Applicants should also consider and identify under what conditions and assumptions the results chain is correct.

Level	**Description**	**Key Questions**
Impact	The intended long-term contribution of the project that arises from the interaction of various factors and stakeholders, with the project being just one of them.	What long-term environmental and social change can the project contribute to?
Outcome	It is the central overarching goal of the project, i.e. the positive changes in terms of new or improved policies, plans and practices implemented by target groups that the project contributes to against the backdrop of longer-term, higher-level impacts.	What will be different by end of the project? How will the project address the problem or gap it has identified?
Output	They are concrete products and services delivered by the project in line with partners' and target groups' needs. Projects are responsible for delivering on outputs, which in turn are expected to make a verifiable contribution to the outcome	What will the project deliver? How will the outputs inform and support achievement of the project's outcome?
Activities	They encompass what will be done to deliver the outputs. Typically, several activities correspond to each distinctive output.	What actions need to be taken to deliver a service or product?
Milestone	It is an interim result on the basis of which it can be traced whether intended effects will occur on schedule and in adequate quality or whether additional intervention is needed in order to achieve the goals in due time.	How can the project track results along the way? How can the project ensure it meets the timeline and maintain quality?
Indicator	They measure achievement using the SMART criteria. Indicators must include gender-disaggregation, were relevant. Effective project monitoring is key to evaluate the project's progress and to course correct when needed.	How will the project team know whether progress has been achieved?

Note: A proposed project should have one outcome and maximum of four outputs and identify at least three indicators of the Fund's Core Indicator Framework. However, **it is strongly**

[9] This guidance is adapted from the Guidelines on Project Planning and Monitoring in the International Climate Initiative. Updated version available as of January 2026.

advised to limit the number of outputs (1-2 is encouraged) to ensure a focused and strategic project within the amount of funding provided. Each **output** can have a **maximum of five activities.** Furthermore, a baseline must be established for all indicators. A baseline describes an initial situation at the beginning of the project which would persist without project implementation, or the expected conditions that would prevail in the absence of the project ("business-as-usual").

Criteria for SMART Indicators

Indicators for the outcome and outputs must be:

- ***S****pecific* – defined unambiguously and precisely.
- ***M****easurable* – provide measurement constructs (quantitative measures or descriptions of qualitative conditions) and methods of data collection / sources of verification.
- ***A****chievable* – it should be possible to reach the target value of the indicator with the available resources and under the prevailing conditions.
- ***R****elevant* – the information provided by the indicator should be of relevance to describe the outcome and outputs.
- ***T****ime-bound* – equipped with a timeframe and achieved no later than by the end of the project.

Note*: Changes to defined goals (outcome and outputs) and project-specific indicators after the grant agreement has been signed require prior approval by the Global EbA Fund Secretariat.*

3.4. Core Indicator Framework

The Global EbA Fund *Core Indicator Framework* aims to support the tracking and communication of the joint achievements of the projects under the Fund and the delivery of its objectives. This Framework enables the Fund as a whole to (i) report and demonstrate progress to show accountability and performance towards all actors and donors, communicate results to the wider public, and mobilise political and financial support; and (ii) help assess and improve performance to inform the planning of calls for proposals and subsequent allocation of funds.

When developing a project logical framework, applicants are required to identify at least three relevant indicators from the Core Indicator Framework of the Fund and incorporate them in the individual project's logical framework. Global EbA Fund Secretariat reserves the right to suggest additional indicators from the Framework for the applications considered for granting and during project implementation, where feasible to monitor.

3.5. Guidance on gender

A gender-responsive approach requires that implementing organisations recognise and address unequal gender roles, relations and norms as part of their project. In the application form, applicants are requested to explain how the project will use existing gender analyses or conduct gender analyses, where necessary, to apply the key issues and recommendations identified to inform gender-responsive project design, budgeting, staffing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Project budgets should include relevant allocations to enhance gender equality and social inclusion, while also addressing systemic barriers throughout the project activities, identifying budget lines where additional allocations may be needed to ensure equitable participation, engagement and inclusion.

Projects must ensure that gender-related inequalities, including gender-based violence, are not exacerbated by project activities – relevant mitigation measures need to be included in the project's ESMS questionnaire.[10]

3.6. Guidance on project sustainability and exit strategies

Each project *must include an exit strategy outlining how project results will be maintained and advanced beyond the funding period, clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of each partner.* An exit strategy helps ensure that the impact of an EbA project does not end when the funding ends. Instead, it prepares institutions, communities, and partners to continue maintaining, financing, and scaling activities independently.

[10] For further guidance on gender, applicants may refer to: IUCN's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy; UNEP's Policy and Strategy for Gender Equality and the Environment; and IKI's Gender Strategy.

A strong exit strategy:

- Ensures continuity of ecosystem-based adaptation actions.
- Prevents stranded assets, including digital platforms, equipment, models, or datasets.
- Reduces reliance on external funding by planning for local uptake and institutional integration.
- Ensures that roles, responsibilities, and resources are clearly identified for the post-project phase.
- Strengthens the business case for continued action.
- Clarifies how project benefits will remain sustainable, locally owned, and impactful.

Projects are encouraged to include relevant allocations for the development and implementation of the exit strategy within the budget.

3.7. Grant Award Process

Duly submitted project proposals will be reviewed by expert reviewers and the decision on the award of a grant will be communicated to all applicants once it has been made.

Applicants selected for funding will be asked to sign the [Global EbA Fund Grantee Agreement.] Applicants should familiarise themselves with the Grantee Agreement and ensure their compliance and acceptance of the terms of the agreement, to avoid contracting delays.

Project start date is considered to be the date of the final signature of the grant agreement unless otherwise stated in the agreement. Upon necessary reviews, IUCN signs the agreement first which is then sent to the grantee for counter-signature.

Only shortlisted applicants will be requested to submit:

- An Environmental and Social Management Safeguards (ESMS) questionnaire. This is the **ESMS questionnaire template**. The Questionnaire needs to be developed offline and uploaded as a Word attachment in the online platform.
- Provide the remaining supporting documentation of the Due Diligence and Financial Capacity Questionnaire.

3.8. Funds disbursement and Grantee reporting

First disbursement following the signature of the agreement equals to 30% of the total project budget requested from the Global EbA Fund.

Subsequent disbursements are done twice a year following the submission of interim financial reports due by 15 January and 15 July and given that 80% of the previous disbursement has been spent. The amount of each disbursement is based on expenditure projections of each project for the following 6 months.

A final Instalment that equals to no less than ten percent (10%) of the budget shall be withheld until the Grantee's delivery and IUCN's written acceptance of the final financial and audit report due within 90 days following the end of the project, unless otherwise stated in the agreement.

Grantees are required to report on the progress of their respective projects on a 6-months basis. Aligned with interim financial reporting, narrative progress reports are due by 15 January and 15 July.

Final project narrative report is due within 30 days following the end of the project and is a cumulative report covering the entire project duration.

Narrative and financial reporting templates will be provided to the grantees by the Fund Secretariat.

In addition, reporting against identified Core Indicators (see 3.4) will be done on an annual basis by the 15th of January and templates will be provided by the Fund's Secretariat.

3.9. Data protection

The Global EbA Fund Secretariat takes data protection and management seriously and is committed to safeguarding and protecting Personal Data of private individuals. The Fund Secretariat is aware of the risks involved, and of the importance of having appropriate data protection standards in place.

In the scope of the mission of the Global EbA Fund, the Fund Secretariat will need to gather and use certain information about individuals.

Safeguarding the personal data of all these persons is an essential aspect of protecting people's lives, integrity and dignity. The Processing of Personal Data touches all areas of the Fund's activity, whether operational or administrative.

As such, the Global EbA Fund process, which includes the application submission process, is governed by the IUCN Data Protection Policy. You may read more about the Fund's privacy policy on the website: https://globalebafund.org/resources/privacy-policy/.

4. Administrative and Legal Requirements

Grant recipients are required to adhere to administrative and legal requirements, including completion of the Due Diligence questionnaire, which encompasses the following topics, and adherence to the Procurement Policy and Procedure for Grant Recipients.

4.1. Legal Entity / Judicial Person Status

The direct beneficiary of the grant must be a recognised legal entity. The recipient must have the legal capacity to conclude contracts in its own name. Individuals and partnerships or associations that do not have legal capacity cannot be taken into consideration as direct recipients of financing, even if they sometimes act as executing agencies for public-benefit projects. This requirement applies to both the lead applicant organisation and any consortium partners who will receive funding from the Global EbA Fund are subject to these requirements.

Register extracts, statutes, or articles of association, but also other proofs according to the respective requirements of the relevant legal regulations of the country of registration can serve as evidence of legal status. For example, laws, foundation deeds, registration information, decrees and tax numbers may be submitted. In these cases, which differ from country to country, it may be necessary for IUCN to obtain an extract from the relevant statutory regulation.

Applicants must also indicate in the relevant section of the Due Diligence Questionnaire if they are a non-profit organisation. The Fund classifies a non-profit organisation (NPO, generally also known as a not-for-profit organisation, charitable institution, or non-business entity), as an organisation dedicated to the promotion of a particular social cause. Economically, it is an organisation which uses the surplus of its income to promote its objective, rather than distributing its income to the shareholders, managers or members of the organisation.

The Fund will consider private sector/ for-profit applicants only under certain conditions, and for-profit organisations must clearly demonstrate that the proposed project pursues strictly non-profit objectives and does not generate any income.

Finally, we ask applicants to specify through which law(s) their organisation has been registered. This information can be found in most cases in the founding/registration documents themselves.

4.2. Accounting

All recipients must keep accounting records. Their bookkeeping must enable a third-party expert to gain an overview of the company's business transactions and financial situation within a reasonable amount of time.

Organisations must use a software-based accounting system that meets their respective national standards. In addition, dedicated accounting staff should be employed by the organisation. Alternatively, the accounting tasks can be outsourced. In this case, the requirements for accounting would have to be met by the contracted company.

One requirement for organisations applying for a grant is the ability to clearly assign employee working hours to respective projects. Therefore, an electronic or manual staff time recording system is required. If no traceable time recording exists, the recipient must sign and submit a self-commitment to create one before the grant agreement can be signed.

4.3. Eligibility of expenditures

Expenditures must be indispensable for project performance and achievement of project results. All expenditures must be incurred with the eligibility period of the project, as defined in the grant agreement.

Expenditures must be identifiable and verifiable; grant recipients, including sub-grantees, should be prepared to present documentation in the case of a financial audit. Expenditures must be detailed in accounting records, backed by supporting evidence (e.g. invoices, receipts, contracts, time sheets, etc.) and in accordance with the accounting standards of the country of registration of the recipient and its usual accounting practices. Expenditures must be reasonable, justified and in line with the principle of sound financial management.

The actual eligibility of expenditures will only be determined by the Global EbA Fund at the liquidation stage (winding down phase) of the project. All expenditures that do not meet the eligibility conditions will be declared ineligible and disallowed accordingly. The grant recipient will need to reimburse the overpaid amount.

The following are examples of expenditures are not eligible:

- Expenditures that cannot be supported by original supporting evidence,
- Expenses without proof of payment,
- Unused discounts and rebates,
- Expenditures incurred outside the period covered by the grant,
- Insurance not required by law,
- Expenditures that cannot be clearly attributed to the project,
- Expenses that result in later refunds (e.g. rent deposit),
- Expenses for business and first-class flights.

This list of ineligible expenditures is not exhaustive.

4.4. Internal and External Controls

Internal controls are processes that ensure the achievement of an organisation's objectives in terms of operational effectiveness and efficiency, reliable financial reporting, and compliance with laws, regulations, and policies. As a broad concept, internal control involves everything that minimises risks for an organisation. It serves to avert damage that might be caused by the organisation's own staff or malicious third parties. Measures may be undertaken independently of the internal control process in the form of retrospective controls, for example by an internal auditing unit. Alternatively, they may take the form of preventive rules as an integral part of the internal control process. More information on the specific requirements is included in Section 6 of the Due Diligence and Financial Capacity Questionnaire.

External controls describe an auditing procedure in which external auditing firms examine the quality assurance systems of auditees. External control is not performed by an internal staff member, i.e., one who works at the organisation to be audited, but by an external third party.

It is required to undertake an external audit for the project funded by the Global EbA Fund. The costs for such audit should be included in the project budget.

The overall objective of the audit is to provide independent and objective assurance that the project funds were used for the purposes intended and in accordance with the project objectives and the Funding Contract.

The specific objective of the audit is to audit the assigned Beneficiary's Project documents and express an opinion as to whether all project funds were legitimately spent on approved project activities and in accordance with the terms of the Funding Contract including reasonableness of expenses.

4.5. Compliance with the law and anti-corruption

Compliance with the law means that the potential recipient has not violated any laws (as far as is known) for example, by evading tax payments or encouraging undeclared work.

Corruption is the misuse of public or private sector positions of power or influence for private benefit. This may take the form of bribery, dispatch money, embezzlement, nepotism, blackmail, fraud, kickbacks, the exertion of unlawful influence, secret arrangements, and insider dealing. Anti-corruption covers all activities designed to prevent and combat corruption wherever and whenever it occurs.

All grantees will adhere to the following IUCN policies and procedures as part of their contractual obligation to the Fund:

- IUCN's Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics
- IUCN's Anti-fraud and Anti-corruption Policy
- IUCN Safeguarding Policy for a Respectful Workplace
- Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics for the Secretariat
- Whistleblowing and Anti-Retaliation Policy

These policies and procedures are available here.

Once the grant agreement has been concluded, IUCN reserves the right to audit or evaluate a project at any time (at IUCN's own expense). Regular financial and technical reporting during project implementation is mandatory. The Global EbA Fund promotes the transparent handling of funding-relevant project information, including financial information, will be published on the Global EbA Fund website.

The Global EbA Fund operates an ESMS Grievance Mechanism which can be used to submit information on corruption and bribery along with any other concerns about the executing entity's failure to respect IUCN ESMS principles, standards or procedures: Environmental and Social Management System | Global EbA Fund.

4.6. Contract Award Procedure for supplies and services

If the beneficiary of a grant agreement contracts external staff or purchases supplies and/or services financed in whole or in part by the grant agreement, the grantee must comply with the specific terms outlined in the grantee contract and with IUCN's Policy and Procedure on Procurement of Goods and Services.