



Global EbA Fund

Call for Proposals for Medium-Size Grants



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Background

The Global EbA Fund aims to create an enabling environment for the implementation of Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) to enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change.

The Global EbA Fund has been operational since 2020 and supports innovative initiatives that create enabling environments for the uptake, scaling, and mainstreaming of the EbA approach. As of June 2026, the Fund has supported 75 projects across 41 countries, with 29 projects completed and 46 currently at various stages of implementation. Funded projects address a wide range of barriers to EbA –including financial, governance, knowledge, and awareness-related gaps. The current portfolio spans diverse ecosystems and landscapes, including coastal and marine areas, drylands, grasslands, forests, mountains, urban areas, river basins, and wetlands, demonstrating the broad applicability of EbA approaches across different environmental and socio-economic contexts.

The Fund aims to finance innovative approaches to overcome systemic barriers to upscaling EbA through three strategic objectives and three action pillars (Fig 1).

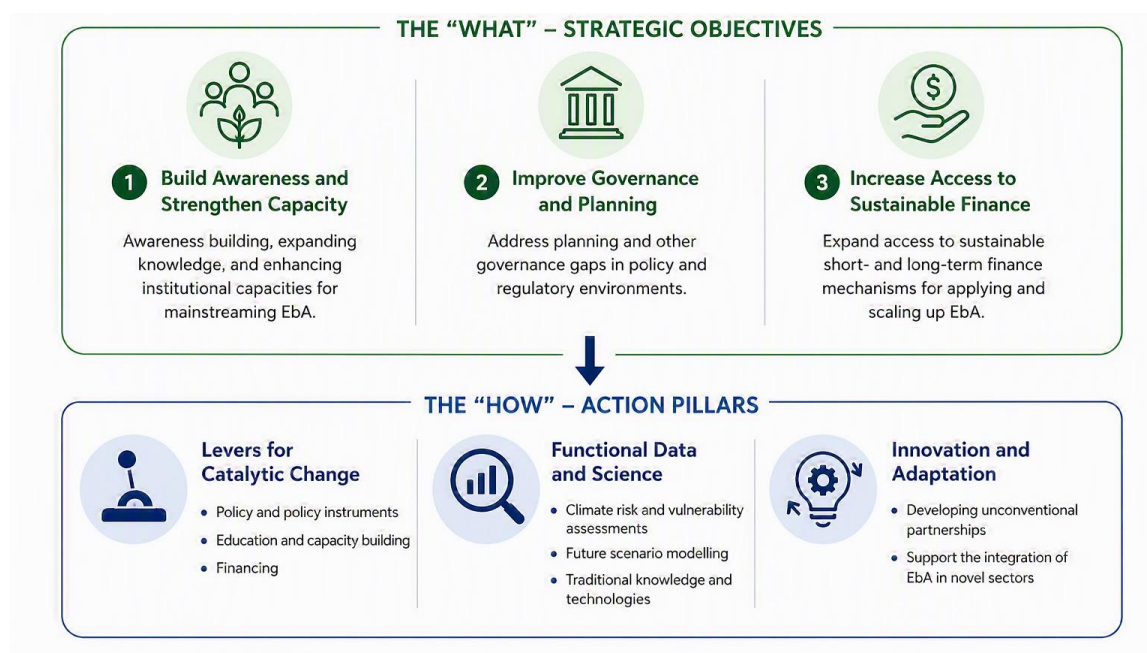


Figure 1. Global EbA Fund Strategic Objectives and Action Pillars

Medium-size grants call for proposals

Funding and duration

- **Grant Size:** 10 grants up to USD 500,000.
- **Project Duration:** up to 24 months.

General Track: Strategic Scaling and Global Influence

The Global EbA Fund invites proposals that demonstrate collaborative and innovative approaches to advancing EbA by addressing systemic barriers to scalability and contributing to global learning and policy dialogue. Aligned with the IKI Strategy up to 2030ⁱ, we prioritize initiatives that strengthen enabling environments and embed EbA into national frameworks (NAPs, NDCs, NBSAPs, LDN targets, among others) to unify strategic climate, biodiversity, land and development priorities; the Fund does not support business-as-usual activities or stand-alone field implementation projects. Furthermore, successful projects must foster innovation by piloting transferable adaptation models and establish investment incentives through innovative financing mechanisms that leverage public and private capital for long-term, ecosystem-based resilience.

The Fund encourages proposals that extend the reach of the [Fund's portfolio](#) by engaging geographical regions that have not previously benefited from Global EbA Fund support. Applications focused on targeted analyses and knowledge products from research institutions and universities tailored for policymakers, national authorities, and field practitioners are also



welcome. In this context, medium-size grants should generate practical implementation evidence that can travel across policy, finance and action communities, demonstrating how relatively **small, strategic investments can unlock wider institutional change, mobilize partners, and make EbA more visible in global decision-making spaces.**

All proposals must align with the Fund's strategic objectives and action pillars, as outlined above. In addition, applicants may choose to focus their proposals on one of the following thematic areas, which have been identified to help overcome critical barriers to scaling EbA and that are central to global climate discussions and country commitments. Alignment with one of these topics is welcomed but not required.

1. Innovative Finance Solutions for EbA

Global finance for climate and biodiversity is increasing but remains critically insufficient (UNEP, 2022)ⁱⁱ, with adaptation funding –especially for EbA– lagging furthest behind (UNEP, 2025)ⁱⁱⁱ. Beyond the broader systemic challenges of equitable access and distribution, EbA initiatives specifically struggle to scale due to a stark deficit in both public and private investment (UNEP, 2022). EbA faces steep financial barriers within the global finance architecture, which routinely favours large-scale, capital-intensive infrastructure over nature-based solutions. Because EbA projects often generate non-market public goods –such as biodiversity, climate resilience, and community well-being– they struggle to demonstrate immediate, commercial revenue streams (Sheikh et al., 2025^{iv}).

This priority topic supports innovative partnerships with private sector actors –engaging also financiers, adaptors, innovators, and local champions– to unlock private capital and blended finance for EbA. Recognising substantial financing gaps for adaptation, this theme builds on the premise that EbA practices must evolve beyond subsistence into profitable, scalable business models that incentivise conservation through commercial viability.

The Global EbA Fund invites proposals that strengthen the climate finance value chain, unlock market-ready pathways for sustainable livelihoods and income generation, build a business case for the bankability of existing EbA approaches, developing economic models to balance the short- and long-term benefits from EbA, and/or secure investments to scale the trade and export of EbA-derived products. The Fund also highly encourages proposals focused on building technical capacities to design and deliver bankable, fundable project pipelines to facilitate access to global climate funds and multilateral development banks.

Finally, the Fund welcome initiatives designed to position EbA as a top priority for international donors and consortia, demonstrating how small, catalytic investments can effectively de-risk and unlock much larger national and international capital flows. Proposals will be especially compelling where they show how EbA-derived value chains and financing models can deliver measurable climate, biodiversity, land and livelihood dividends, thereby improving the investment case for nature-based resilience rather than treating conservation benefits as secondary co-benefits.

2. EbA for Human Development and Security

As climate change progresses, currently effective adaptation measures threaten to become less effective and escalate losses and damages in fragile or conflict-affected regions (IKI, 2023). EbA offers a proven mechanism to stabilize livelihoods and ecosystems before environmental stress cascades into resource competition and conflict (IBRD/World Bank,

2022^v; HCSS, 2022^{vi}). However, critical barriers remain: EbA is heavily underutilized in international security frameworks and lacks strategic integration across security, humanitarian, and development planning, as well as missing vital paths to align community-driven resilience with evolving national defence mandates (UN, 2025^{vii}).

Given that climate change is one of multiple interacting drivers of insecurity, proposals should adopt cross-sectoral approaches that integrate climate adaptation with humanitarian, development, governance, and peacebuilding efforts. This ensures that interventions do not overlook other sources of vulnerability or inadvertently contribute to maladaptation. This priority topic aims to address the interplay of climate, resilience, and security (IKI, 2023), recognising that climate action can also contribute to insecurity by changing power dynamics, particularly in fragile contexts, if not implemented in a conflict sensitive manner. To support this, the Global EbA Fund invites projects that proactively identify and address specific policy, regulatory, financial, or awareness barriers preventing EbA investment in these high-risk zones.

This priority topic addresses the critical intersection of climate, resilience, and security, driving the integration of EbA into national and international security frameworks to secure sustainable development outcomes in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. Projects should proactively identify and address specific policy, regulatory, financial, or awareness barriers preventing EbA investment in high-risk zones. While acknowledging that EbA is a targeted approach for climate resilience, applicants are challenged to deploy preventive, community co-designed interventions that directly protect vulnerable populations and support broader humanitarian and development strategies. Proposals must demonstrate a clear, measurable pathway showing how overcoming localized investment barriers will systematically mitigate natural resource-related tensions and reduce climate-induced fragility. The strongest proposals will translate this complex risk landscape into practical entry points for action, showing how targeted EbA investments can reduce exposure, strengthen social cohesion around shared natural resources, and create credible bridges between adaptation, humanitarian, development and peacebuilding agendas.

3. Interlinkages for people-nature-climate-land synergies: From Policy Alignment to Investable Action

EbA faces implementation gaps stemming from structural fragmentation across climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation, land degradation neutrality (LDN), and disaster risk reduction (DRR) (UNEP, 2025^{viii}). Persistent institutional barriers and siloed planning processes limit necessary interlinkages across global conventions, while a lack of vertical coherence decouples local-level actions from national policies –such as NAPs, NBSAPs, LDN targets, and DRR strategies– and global commitments (GIZ, 2024^{ix}; NAP Global Network, 2021^x).

The global policy conversation on Rio Convention synergies is increasingly moving from the question of why integration matters to the practical question of how countries, communities and partners can implement it. This priority topic offers the Fund a timely and credible way to contribute to that shift by supporting demonstrations of synergy in practice: locally grounded EbA approaches that simultaneously advance adaptation, biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management, disaster risk reduction and inclusive development outcomes, while remaining anchored in existing national mandates and planning processes.

The Global EbA Fund invites proposals led by organizations actively collaborating with national governments to strengthen operational interlinkages across the Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD) and other global environmental agreements such as the Sendai Framework on DRR. This topic seeks to deploy non-governmental leadership to scale approaches where EbA serves as the central anchor bridging biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction. The emphasis is on operational coherence: connecting existing commitments, tools, actors and financing opportunities so that countries and communities can reduce duplication, lower transaction costs, and use the same interventions, evidence base and investments to deliver multiple convention-relevant outcomes.

Rather than creating parallel processes or new institutional structures, applicants should demonstrate how non-governmental, academic, private-sector or civil-society leadership can complement government mandates by convening partners, testing practical tools, documenting lessons, and translating ground-level evidence into policy and investment choices. This directly reinforces the Fund's catalytic, non-government-led role, while ensuring strategic engagement with the national policy processes where uptake, financing and scale are ultimately shaped.

Projects must demonstrate how EbA can build practical and functional synergies aligning policy, investment and action across multilateral environmental agreements. Recognising the role of pilots as proofs of concept –this thematic area focuses on generating evidence-based pathways to translate the synergies jargon into concrete, targeted, context-specific action. Moving from pilots to large-scale investments and action on the ground, the projects may work through i.e. unified national policies and cross-sectoral frameworks or through mechanisms such as joint planning processes, cross-ministerial coordination, integrated decision-support tools, harmonised monitoring systems, or policy guidance to align investments for concrete action at different governance levels. The Fund welcomes robust research on integrated, functional, and scalable approaches that can directly inform and influence the alignment of policies, investment and action on the ground.

Applicants are encouraged to show how policy-investment-action synergies can be made operational through concise national or subnational action pathways, economic valuation of ecosystem services, investment-readiness approaches, interoperable monitoring and learning systems, and practical guidance that helps align NAPs, NDCs, NBSAPs, LDN targets and DRR priorities without overburdening institutions.

Successful proposals should make the added value of synergies visible in concrete terms: clearer institutional coordination, stronger investment cases, reduced fragmentation, improved reporting and learning, and scalable examples that can inform future COP-to-COP discussions across the UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD. Where relevant, projects may also use strategic communication moments linked to the Rio Convention COP cycles to share evidence and lessons, positioning Fund-supported work as a practical contribution to the emerging implementation agenda while avoiding any duplication of Convention-led processes.

Scope of the call

The Global EbA Fund invites innovative and catalytic proposals that address systemic barriers for EbA scaling¹ by enhancing institutional and technical capacities, quality data and evidence generation, learning networks, and investment readiness.

Aligned with the [IKI Strategy up to 2030](#) –specifically its focus on socio-ecological transformation through technologies, business models, or climate friendly infrastructure– the Fund invites proposals that address critical EbA gaps.

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.

Expected outcomes

A successful project will facilitate strengthening the enabling environment to make changes towards EbA uptake and investment

- Facilitate the scaling of EbA implementation, particularly with the focus of the three aforementioned key topics.
- Strengthened locally led EbA interventions and documented replication pathways through targeted knowledge management and exchange.
- Improved technical and institutional capacity to support policy uptake, investment-ready concepts and financing strategies.

Target grantees

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 traditional conservation actors and constituencies to attract all actors and constituencies relevant to EbA and climate change adaptation. The Fund seeks diverse applicants with relevant experience and presence to support addressing specific gaps in EbA implementation and uptake. Categories of eligible recipients include:

- International non-governmental organisations (INGOs)
- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- Community-based organisations (CBOs)
- Indigenous People's Organisations
- Universities and other academic institutions

¹ **Scaling** refers to expanding successfully tested EbA solutions, replicating proven approaches across new sectors, geographic regions, or country settings, as well as integrating them across administrative levels. It encompasses driving systemic impact through institutionalization, increased financing, and the introduction of new implementation pathways or financial instruments.

- Research institutes and think tanks
- Private sector companies and specialized organizations working on climate change adaptation.

For projects with country-level activities a consortium with one or more local organizations is required with at least 25% of the budget allocated to local partners, subject to full compliance with all standards and due diligence requirements. These partnerships should demonstrate clear mechanisms for capacity transfer, shared decision-making, and long-term institutional strengthening to foster local ownership, sustainability, and effective knowledge transfer. Government entities, as well as IUCN and UNEP offices can be a part of the consortia as long as they do not receive funding from the Global EbA Fund.

Important dates and information

Official Launch of the Call for Proposal: **24 August 2026**

- Application forms and details are available on the Global EbA Fund website.

Submissions accepted through the online platform: 12 October to 16 November, **2026**

- The application form is for drafting purposes only – all applications must be submitted on the online platform.
- We strongly encourage applicants to work on the application form offline before transferring the application to the online platform for submission.

Please read through the **Grants Procedures Manual** before applying.

Endnotes

ⁱ International Climate Initiative (IKI). (2023, November). **The strategy of the International Climate Initiative up to 2030**. Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK); Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV); Federal Foreign Office (AA). https://www.international-climate-initiative.com/fileadmin/iki/Dokumente/Publikationen/IKI-Strategie/IKI_Strategie_EN_202311.pdf

ⁱⁱ United Nations Environment Programme (2022). **Harnessing Nature to Build Climate Resilience: Scaling Up the Use of Ecosystem-based Adaptation**. Nairobi. <https://globalebafund.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Harnessing-nature-for-climate-resilience-Full-Report-V7-Web.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ United Nations Environment Programme (2025). **Adaptation Gap Report 2025: Running on empty. The world is gearing up for climate resilience — without the money to get there** [Neufeldt, H., Hammill, A., Leiter, T., Magnan, A., Watkiss, P., Bakhtiari, F., Bueno Rubial, P., Butera, B., Canales, N., Chapagain, D., Christiansen, L., Dale, T., Milford, F., Niles, K., Njuguna, L., Pauw, P., Singh, C. and Yang, G.]. Nairobi. <https://wedocs.unep.org/20.500.11822/48798>.

^{iv} Sheikh, H. A., Narain, D., Bartlett, C., & Christiaen, C. (2025). **Unlocking private finance for nature: Addressing barriers and reframing risk-return dynamics**. iScience, 28(11), 113669. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.isci.2025.113669>.

^v Ahmadnia, S. J., Christien, A. M., Spencer, P. G., Hart, T., & De Araujo Barbosa, C. C. (2022). **Defueling conflict: Environment and natural resource management as a pathway to peace**. World Bank Group.

<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099520010272224660/pdf/P177151-b38fdab5-7e24-4e1e-afec-1edd810d8cde.pdf>

^{vi} Sweijjs, T., de Haan, M., & van Manen, H. (2022, March). ***Unpacking the climate security nexus: Seven pathologies linking climate change to violent conflict***. The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies. <https://hcass.nl/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Unpacking-the-Climate-Security-Nexus-HCSS-2022-1.pdf>

^{vii} United Nations. (2025, September). ***The security we need: Rebalancing military spending for a sustainable and peaceful future*** (Report of the Secretary-General). https://front.un-arm.org/Milex-SDG-Study/SG_Report_TheSecurityWeNeed.pdf

^{viii} United Nations Environment Programme (2025). ***From Silos to Synergies Linking Planning, Finance, and Monitoring for Coherent Action on Climate, Biodiversity, and Land*** [Atallah, M., de Kock, M., Kopetzky, L., Olsen, N., Rizzo, A., Smith, J., & Stiem-Bhatia, L.]. Supported by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. <https://www.bundesumweltministerium.de/en/download/from-silos-to-synergies>

^{ix} Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). (2025). ***Effectively delivering on climate and nature: NDCs, NAPs and NBSAPs synergies — A checklist for national policymakers***. https://www.adaptationcommunity.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Effectively_Delivering_Climate_Nature_Country_cases.pdf

^x NAP Global Network. (2021, September). ***Progress and challenges in achieving vertical integration in adaptation processes*** [By D. Morchain] (Briefing Note). International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://napglobalnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/napgn-en-2021-vertical-integration-in-adaptation-processes.pdf>