



Small-Scale Initiatives Programme (PPI 7)

RULES & CRITERIA OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS “NEW PARTNERS”

The Small-Scale Initiatives Programme (PPI) is a programme launched in 2006 by the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) and managed by the French Committee of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN FC). It is currently funded by the FFEM, the Hans Wilsdorf Foundation, the Audemars-Watkins Foundation, and the Audemars Piguet Foundation for Trees.

Its main objective is to strengthen the contribution of civil society in Sub-Saharan African countries to **biodiversity conservation** while promoting the improvement of local populations' living conditions through the funding of concrete, **locally-based projects**. The program also has a strong component dedicated to the organizational development of **Civil Society Organizations** (CSOs).

The PPI is currently in its seventh phase, running from 2025 to 2030. This new phase of the programme aims to support the implementation of approximately 80 projects across 26 countries in Central and West Africa through 8 calls for proposals.

This first call for proposals, aimed at new PPI partners, is intended to fund and implement approximately 13 new projects. A total of 23 countries in West and Central Africa are eligible for this call.

2. A PROGRAMME FOR NATURE PROTECTION AND STRENGTHENING INITIATIVE LEADERS

The PPI 7 pursues the following objectives:

- Supporting the implementation of field projects for the conservation of remarkable biodiversity, restoration, and nature-based solutions by civil society actors in West and Central Africa;
- Strengthening CSOs both technically and organizationally;
- Supporting networking and collaboration between CSOs;
- Enhancing the advocacy capacity of civil society organizations regarding environmental policies in intervention countries;
- Sharing and valorizing experiences among civil society actors.



PPI

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

3.1 Eligible countries

Central Africa	West Africa
Angola Burundi Cameroon Gabon Equatorial Guinea Republic of Congo Democratic Republic of Congo Rwanda Sao Tome & Principe Chad	Benin Cape Verde Côte d'Ivoire Gambia Ghana Guinea Guinea Bissau Liberia Mauritania Nigeria Senegal Sierra Leone Togo





3.2 Eligible Project Holders

Eligible project holders for this “New Partners” call for proposals under PPI7 are African **CSOs that have never received PPI funding, working towards nature conservation in a fair and equitable manner. While not an exclusive criterion, this call aims to support emerging young organizations seeking their first structured funding.**

According to the PPI, the term Civil Society Organization (CSO) includes non-profit non-governmental organizations as well as other associative structures (associations, local committees, groups, etc.) whose main activity concerns biodiversity conservation and sustainable natural resource management. The CSO must have its own governance, independent from national governments, the private sector, and any international organization.

A CSO may submit only one grant application per call.

The organizations must have:

- A nationally recognized legal status allowing them to receive international grants;
- Experience in project management and field implementation;
- Expertise in biodiversity conservation, including an inclusive approach.

IMPORTANT: Associations and redistributive foundations that fund initiatives without directly implementing field actions, corporate foundations, hospital, university, partnership or scientific cooperation foundations, endowment funds, as well as cooperatives, local authorities, or other public administrations are not eligible for this call.

3.3 Eligible Themes

The central theme for funded projects is **biodiversity conservation**.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Creation or improvement of management of protected and “conserved” areas ;
- Conservation of threatened species (according to the [IUCN Red List](#)) ;
- Ecosystem restoration ;



- Sustainable use of natural resources and sharing of conservation benefits ;
- Anti-poaching efforts ;
- Improving human-wildlife coexistence ;
- Etc.

Projects must have an **inclusive conservation dimension**, rooted in the territories of intervention. This may include:

- Engagement and involvement of local citizens and communities concerned by the projects ;
- Integration of Indigenous Peoples and local communities ;
- Promotion of livelihoods and improvement of local living conditions ;
- Implementation of fair decision-making and governance systems ;
- Inclusion of ethnic, gender, and youth minorities.

Proposed projects must include concrete field actions with proven, measurable, and sustainable impacts on one of the eligible themes.

Special attention will be given to projects explicitly integrating sustainable financing mechanisms for conservation (economic value chains, diversification of conservation actors' income, partnerships with the private sector, etc.).

It is possible to include team salaries, office costs, and management fees if relevant for implementing conservation actions.

3.4 Non-eligible Themes

PPI does not fund:

- Capacity-building or scientific research programs not linked to development projects, or whose main activities are seminars and training sessions;
- Projects exclusively targeting ordinary biodiversity¹;
- Microcredit activities unless conducted in partnership with specialized institutions;
- National lobbying campaigns not linked to field protection actions;
- Agricultural or development projects without documented significant effects on rare and/or threatened biodiversity;
- Reforestation projects (alien and/or fruit tree plantations) without documented significant effects on rare and/or threatened biodiversity;
- Rural development or soil erosion projects not directly related to the protection of rare

¹ A biodiversity that is neither rare nor threatened.



and/or threatened biodiversity;

- Bushmeat production or livestock projects, unless operators have proven prior success;
- Improved stoves and grants for solar, wind, or hydroelectric equipment;
- Projects involving involuntary population displacement;
- Purchase of weapons;
- Activities on Indigenous lands without prior free, informed consent;
- Activities on lands contested by local communities or Indigenous peoples;
- Activities involving acquisition, handling, storage, or use of illegal pesticides.

3.5 Financial Eligibility Criteria

The maximum contribution for these grants is €30,000, representing up to 75% of the total project budget.

Any application requesting more than €30,000 or requesting PPI co-financing exceeding **75% will not be considered.**

Announced co-financing contributions must correspond to:

- Monetary contributions from the CSO or other financial partners, justified at the time of contracting;
- In-kind contributions (volunteering, equipment donations, office space, etc.), provided the CSO can:
 - i) Clearly explain how these in-kind contributions are calculated;
 - ii) Indicate how the CSO will track actual mobilization of these contributions.

The IUCN FC may verify and monitor effective mobilization of co-financing throughout project implementation.

Mobilizing co-financing strengthens project impact and sustainability while minimizing financial risks. It also demonstrates the organization's ability to unite partners around a common vision and ensure continuity after PPI funding ends.

3.6 Project Duration

The maximum project duration is 24 months.



4. PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

Projects will be selected through a competitive process. Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Ineligibility criteria:
 - Country and organization eligibility (see sections 3.1 and 3.2);
 - Theme and activity eligibility (see 3.3);
 - Financial eligibility and co-financing reality (see 3.5);
 - Project duration exceeding 24 months (see 3.6).
- Selection criteria:

1) Contribution to biodiversity conservation

- Issues, status, and threats to the biodiversity targeted by the project.

2) Experience, expertise, and commitment of the project holder

- Technical experience and field experience ;
- Clear motivations and demonstrated commitment to fair and equitable conservation.

3) Feasibility, relevance, and risk management (including security)

- Technical, socio-economic, and institutional feasibility ;
- Realistic expected results and alignment of proposed resources with objectives ;
- Relevance of planned measures and risk management to ensure staff and beneficiary safety.

4) Inclusive dimension and local impacts

- Contribution to equitable socio-economic development ;
- Social acceptability: effective involvement of local populations and project accepted by the local authorities ;
- Territorial anchoring and respect for local knowledge and cultural values ;
- Integration of gender and youth considerations.

5) Strategic and political alignment

- Complementarity with relevant national/regional policies ;
- Coherence with other conservation and local development initiatives.

6) Organizational framework and governance

- Appropriate institutional and organizational structure for effective project implementation ;



- Equity in governance and decision-making processes.

7) Sustainability of actions and project benefits beyond PPI funding

8) Capacity and/or willingness to implement a monitoring and evaluation framework with clear data collection and analysis methods.

5. HOW TO SUBMIT A PROJECT

To apply, organizations must submit their proposal [here](#).

Deadline: 18 December 2025, 6 PM (Paris time, GMT+1).

A user account is required to submit an application.

For issues, contact via the platform: <https://help.wiin.io/portal/fr/kb/articles/la-messagerie-23-11-2023> or email ppi@etik.com.

Forms must be completed in French or English only.

A Q&A webinar is scheduled on Tuesday, 18 November at 11 AM (Paris time, GMT+1): [subscribe here](#) !

6. SELECTION PROCEDURE

The procedure has two steps:

1. Pre-selection based on a summary form submitted via the WIIN platform.
2. Selection of complete applications.

6.1 Pre-selection of Concept Notes

A pre-selection of the concept notes will be carried out according to the criteria outlined in Sections 3 and 4, and the CSOs leading the pre-selected projects will be invited to submit a full application.

A support mechanism for preparing full applications will then be offered to pre-selected CSOs who wish to benefit from it, to assist them in submitting a complete file. Under no circumstances does this support constitute a guarantee that the full application will be



approved by the PPI Selection Committee, which is composed of members independent from the PPI Executive Team.

The PPI team will send a response to each organization that submitted a concept note to inform them of the results of the pre-selection.

Only CSOs whose concept notes have been pre-selected will be invited to submit a full application.

6.2 Selection of Full Applications and Grant Award

Pre-selected applicant organizations will be invited to complete a new form on the WIIN platform.

During the selection process, additional information may be requested by the PPI team.

All full applications will be compiled by the IUCN CF, which will submit them to the PPI 7 Selection Committee responsible for selecting **13 winning projects in June 2026**.

The PPI Headquarters team (based in France) will send a response to each organization that submitted a full application to inform them of the competition results.

The grant will be disbursed provided that the PPI team and the CSO agree on the content of the agreement, and once the CSO has provided all the administrative documents² required by the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) under the procedures of the French Development Agency (AFD).

Applicants are reminded that completing these procedures may take time (approximately 1 to 3 months) and should be factored into project implementation schedules.

We recommend gathering these documents as soon as the invitation to submit a full application is received, i.e., before the final notification of approval, so that the project can start on time once approved.

It should also be noted that any significant changes in the organization (in terms of human or financial resources) or caused by a local blockage situation, occurring between the award notification and the signing of the agreement, may put the grant at risk.

² The list of administrative documents will be sent to the pre-selected CSOs



Key deadlines for this call for proposals:

- **Receipt of pre-selection form:** until 18 December 2025 at 6 pm (Paris time, GMT+1)
- **Q&A Webinar:** 18 November 2025 at 11 am (Paris time, GMT+1)
- **Communication of pre-selection results:** no later than 27 February 2026
- **Support for drafting full applications:** March – May 2026
- **Receipt of full applications** (only after invitation by the PPI team): 15 May 2026 at 6 pm (Paris time)
- **Final grant award decision:** 30 June 2026
- **Signing of agreements for selected projects and first disbursements for project start-up:** Not before mid-July 2026

Pre-selection forms and full applications must be submitted by 6 pm (Paris time, GMT+1) on the deadlines indicated above. Documents received after this time will not be considered.