Global Gateway

IUCN

Funded by the European Union

WASOP Programme – Pillar 3

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Support for the operationalization of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) established between 2020 and 2026.

(Mauritania, Cape Verde, Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria)

1. Background

The ocean plays a vital role in climate regulation, biodiversity conservation and the livelihoods of coastal communities. In West Africa, marine and coastal ecosystems support food security, employment and local economies, whilst facing increasing pressures. Against this backdrop, the West Africa Sustainable Ocean Programme (WASOP 3), funded by the European Union and implemented by IUCN, supports the sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems and the strengthening of marine protected areas in the region.

The WASOP 3 project aims to protect and restore coastal and offshore marine ecosystems by expanding the geographical coverage of the network of marine protected areas in West Africa, enhancing the effectiveness of their management and promoting their sustainable use for the benefit of coastal communities.

The specific objective covered by this call is to support the establishment of a representative, coherent and functional regional network of marine protected areas, in support of West African countries' efforts to achieve the 30x30 targets.

The list below, taken from the WASOP 3 project document, sets out potential sites on an indicative and provisional basis. It will be up to each country to confirm the proposed sites or to submit new ones, provided that the proposed changes and their relevance are justified.

Country	**Newly established MPAs (between 2020 and 2026)**
Mauritania	Bay of the Star MPA
Cape Verde	Reserves on Sall Island (3) and Boa Vista Island (2)
Senegal	Ufoyal-Kassa-Bandial MPA
Gambia	Possible proposal
Guinea-Bissau	Possible proposal
Guinea	Possible proposal
Sierra Leone	Possible proposal
Liberia	Possible proposal
Ivory Coast	Grand Bereby MPA
Ghana	Cape Three Points MPA
Togo	Possible proposal
Benin	Donaten MPA Bouche du Roy MPA
Nigeria	Possible proposal

Proposals may be submitted individually by national directorates responsible for protected areas, fisheries or the blue economy; research organisations (oceanographic centres, universities); and associations of non-governmental stakeholders with proven experience in the management of MPAs (NGOs and associations). Partnerships for the im implementation of the proposal, involving public authorities, NGOs, research institutes and community organisations, are encouraged.

2. General objective

To contribute to the effective operationalisation of marine protected areas newly established between 2020 and 2026, with a view to improving the conservation of marine biodiversity and the sustainable management of natural resources in West Africa.

3. Eligible entities

Proposals may be submitted, either individually or in partnership, by the following categories of stakeholders:

- national directorates or public institutions responsible for protected areas, fisheries, the environment or the blue economy;
- research and higher education institutions, in particular oceanographic centres and universities;
- non-governmental organisations and legally constituted associations with proven experience in the management, support for the management or governance of marine protected areas.

Partnerships between public authorities, research institutes, civil society organisations and community-based organisations are strongly encouraged. The roles and responsibilities of each organisation involved must be clearly described in the proposal.

4. Priorities of the call

Proposals must address one or more of the following priorities:

1. establishing the institutional and organisational mechanisms necessary for the functioning of MPAs;
2. strengthening the capacities of national bodies, management teams and local stakeholders involved in the operationalisation of MPAs;
3. developing, updating and/or implementing planning and management tools for MPAs, in particular management and development plans;
4. promoting participatory governance involving local communities and other stakeholders;
5. to strengthen sustainable value chains that help generate income for local communities and encourage their involvement in ecosystem conservation.

5. Expected outcomes

- the supported MPAs have the institutional and governance mechanisms necessary for their operation;
- the technical and management teams of the MPAs have enhanced capacities to improve the operationalisation of the sites;
- key management tools are developed, updated and/or strengthened, in particular management and development plans, monitoring mechanisms and ecological monitoring systems;

- the management effectiveness of MPAs, as well as the conservation status of priority habitats and species, are assessed;
- local communities benefit from capacity-building and are more closely involved in mechanisms for governance, conservation and the sustainable use of resources;
- income-generating activities or sustainable utilisation mechanisms compatible with conservation objectives are identified, tested or strengthened, where relevant.

6. Eligibility criteria

To be eligible, proposals must meet the following conditions:

- be submitted by a legally constituted entity or one with recognised accreditation;
- demonstrate an effective presence in the country concerned or an operational base relevant to the implementation of the project;
- demonstrate relevant experience in the field of marine conservation, natural resource governance, protected area management or institutional support;
- submit a proposal that is consistent with the priorities and expected outcomes of this call;
- submit a coherent, realistic and sufficiently detailed budget;
- secure co-funding in accordance with the provisions of this call.

Co-funding is mandatory and must amount to at least 5 per cent of the requested budget. It may be provided in cash, in kind and/or in the form of human resources or working time, provided that it is clearly described, valued and incorporated into the total budget. A complete lack of co-funding renders the proposal ineligible.

7. Evaluation criteria

Eligible proposals will be assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

7.1 Relevance of the proposal

- alignment with the objectives and priorities of the call;
- consistency with the needs of the site and the national context;
- consideration of governance, conservation and sustainability issues**.**

7.2 Technical quality

- clarity of the intervention rationale;
- feasibility of the proposed activities;
- consistency between activities, expected outcomes and the timetable;
- consideration of risks and mitigation measures;
- quality of the monitoring and evaluation framework.

7.3 Quality of the partnership and implementation

- complementarity of the partners involved;
- clarity of roles and responsibilities;
- relevance of institutional and territorial anchoring;
- involvement of local and national stakeholders.

7.4 Budget and co-financing

- consistency and realism of the budget;
- cost-effectiveness of the proposed activities;
- the quality, level and credibility of the proposed co-financing, including contributions in cash, in kind and/or in human resources, provided that these are clearly documented, valued and consistent with the project's activities.

7.5 Technical capacity of the coordinating and implementing institution

- Technical expertise in supporting MPAs;
- Financial and administrative management capacity and reporting;
- Actual presence in the area or operational capacity
- Relevance of partners and their roles

Criteria	**Maximum points**
Relevance and justification of the intervention - alignment with the objectives and priorities of the call; - consistency with the needs of the site and the national context; - taking into account issues of governance, conservation and sustainability**.** -	15
Technical quality of the proposal in terms of the effective implementation of the MPA and the sustainable management of resources within the MPA - clarity of the intervention rationale; - feasibility of the proposed activities; - consistency between activities, expected outcomes and the timetable; - consideration of risks and mitigation measures; - quality of the monitoring and evaluation framework.	40
Quality and social equity - Civil society engagement and role - the principles of social inclusion, gender equality and community participation;	10
Quality of the partnership - If the proposed site relates to a national MPA: 5 points - If the proposed site relates to a cross-border MPA: 10 points - If, in addition, the proposal involves several categories of stakeholders whose roles and expertise are complementary: + 10 points; -	20
Capacity for coordination and implementation - Technical expertise in supporting MPAs; - Financial and administrative management capacity, including reporting; - Actual presence in the area or operational capacity - Relevance of partners and their roles	20

Quality of the budget - Consistency and realism of the budget; - cost-effectiveness of the proposed activities; -	20
Co-funding - If co-funding in kind (human resources) (+5 points) - If co-funding in cash amounting to 5 per cent of the budget (+10 points) - If co-funding in cash amounting to 10 per cent (+15 points) - Cash co-funding of more than 15 per cent (+20 points)	25
Total	150

8. Eligibility criteria

Interested organisations must meet the following conditions:

- Meet the eligibility requirements
- Submit the technical and financial proposal in accordance with the template set out in paragraph 12
- Comply with the submission deadline set for **15 November 2026 at 23:59 GMT. No extension to this deadline will be granted.**
- Submit proposals by email with the following details:
    - **Subject** line: Call for proposals – AMP Management – WASOP3
    - **Email** address:paco@iucn.org and copy to barthelemy.batieno@iucn.org
- If you require further information, please contact , kuessi.togbe@iucn.org, , with a copy to , paul.tendeng@iucn.org, . No requests for information will be processed after **20 October 2026**.

N.B.: Each organisation may submit only one proposal. However, a proposal may relate to one or more sites.

9. Indicative duration

The projected duration of projects is between **12 and 18** months, depending on the type of intervention proposed.

10. Indicative budget

- The **maximum contribution from WASOP is 200,000 euros**.
- Co-funding in cash (minimum 5 per cent) and/or in kind is encouraged and must be included in the total budget.
- The proposed budget must be realistic, detailed and consistent with the planned activities. The costs presented must be directly related to the implementation of the project.
- Co-funding is mandatory and must amount to at least 5 per cent of the requested budget. It may be provided in cash, in kind and/or in the form of human resources or working time, provided

that it is clearly described, valued and included in the total budget. A complete lack of co-funding renders the proposal ineligible.

- Co-financing contributions must be explicitly shown in the budget, with a sufficiently detailed breakdown to enable an assessment of their nature, valuation and allocation to the relevant activities.

11. Specific provisions

The proposed interventions must be implemented under the supervision of the competent national authorities, except where the competent national authority is itself the implementing entity.

Proposals must demonstrate consistency with national MPA management frameworks and, where relevant, incorporate a participatory, inclusive and rights-based approach.

Particular attention will be paid to the sustainability of achievements, institutional strengthening and the ownership of results by national and local stakeholders

12. Proposal template and annexes

Proposals must be structured as follows:

a. Recommended outline for the technical proposal

1. Summary of the proposal;
2. Background and rationale for the intervention;
3. Description of the site or sites concerned;
4. General objective and specific objectives;
5. Expected outcomes;
6. Detailed description of activities;
7. Implementation methodology;
8. Governance and coordination arrangements;
9. Implementing partners and their respective roles;
10. Indicative timetable;
11. Risk analysis and mitigation measures;
12. Monitoring and evaluation framework and indicators;
13. Measures planned to ensure the sustainability of results;
14. Detailed budget, including the requested contribution, co-financing and their breakdown.

b. Recommended budget template

The budget must clearly show:

- The cost of each activity and the expected outputs
- the contribution requested;
- the co-funding provided by the applicant and/or their partners;
- the nature of the co-funding (cash, in kind, human resources, working time);
- the valuation of the co-funding;
- the allocation of the co-funding to the relevant activities.

Human resources valued as part of the co-funding must be presented in sufficient detail to enable an assessment of the basis for calculation, the duration of deployment and the link with the proposed activities.

c. Annexes

- the organisation's legal status;
- technical references detailing the organisation's main relevant experience in the fields of marine conservation, governance or ecological monitoring;
- the CVs of the team members the organisation will deploy. This will depend on the nature of the proposed intervention.
- a clearance certificate for intervention at the site(s) issued by the national institution responsible for the management of MPAs;
- any documents attesting to its technical and financial capacity (certificate of satisfactory completion, grant agreements, financial report, tax clearance certificate, etc.).

-