

BNCFF Phase III — Expression of Interest (EOI)

Context, priority areas and practical information

The Blue Natural Capital Financing Facility (BNCFF) is a global initiative managed by IUCN and supported by the Government of Luxembourg. Since its inception, BNCFF has supported the development of viable, self-sustainable and/or investable marine and coastal conservation initiatives by providing early-stage funding, technical assistance, and investment support to Nature-based Solutions (NbS). By helping projects move from concept to implementation stage, BNCFF contributes to the protection and restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems while supporting resilient livelihoods, sustainable economic development, and climate adaptation. BNCFF Phase III aims to support innovative and scalable projects that deliver environmental, social, and economic benefits while aligning with national priorities and local needs.

BNCFF in numbers (2018–2026)

2.6M ha Protected & restored, including mangroves, seagrass & coral reefs	60 MPAs Strengthened with secured long-term conservation financing and local livelihoods	\$9.3M Deployed in grants, funding high-impact projects across Africa, Asia, and Latin America	\$30M Enabled investments to empower local conservation actions since 2017	10,000+ Coastal community households benefited from BNC projects, with over 1000 jobs created and 16,000 trained individuals
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Purpose

BNCFF seeks innovative and locally led initiatives that contribute to the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of marine and coastal ecosystems, while generating social and economic benefits for coastal communities. BNCFF favours an ecosystem, overarching approach — a project can span multiple locations and activities contributing to a shared aim (for example, improving the life of coastal communities across 2-3 locations along an island's coast, through different communities and activities such as restoring and preserving degraded ecosystem, training, supporting small-scale businesses, livelihood diversification).

This Expression of Interest (EOI) identifies potential projects and partnerships for BNCFF Phase III. Project concepts should show contribution to climate change adaptation and mitigation, measurable biodiversity outcomes and a credible path towards financial sustainability, including the ability to attract follow-on financing (if relevant).

Process & Timeline

Project selection process is carried out in 3 phases:

- (1) Phase 1: Expression of Interest (EOI), submitted through this [Microsoft form](#).
- (2) Phase 2: Call for Proposals (CfP), selected EOI concepts are invited to submit all required documentation at the CfP stage.
- (3) Phase 3: Proposals are evaluated by an independent Grant Approval Committee (GAC) and, if considered suitable, result in a grant funding contract with IUCN.

Phase 1: EOI	→	Phase 2: CfP	→	Phase 3: Grant Funding Contract
*Sept-Oct 2026	Review & Selection	*Oct-Nov 2026	Review & Selection by GAC	*Jan-Feb 2027
Application & Submission		Full proposal submission		Announcement of the selected projects & grant contract signature

*Indicative timeline subject to changes that will be communicated in due time.

BNCFF Phase III priority areas

Projects should contribute to one or more of the following:

- **Protection and restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems**
Examples: Coral reef conservation/restoration · seagrass/seaweed protection · coastal habitat conservation/restoration · marine biodiversity conservation/restoration · dune ecosystem restoration
- **Sustainable tourism linked to marine conservation**
Examples: Community-based ecotourism (eco-camping, homestay) · marine tourism initiatives & enterprises · sustainable tourism generating income while protecting ecosystems
- **Sustainable fish and seafood activities**
Examples: Sustainable fisheries practices · seaweed farming · shellfish/aquaculture initiatives · improved fisheries management · sustainable seafood
- **Strengthening coastal livelihoods and small-scale fisheries**
Examples: Improving fisheries value and income · food processing/storage · access to markets · fisheries cooperatives · livelihood diversification for fishing communities.
- **Sustainable blue economy businesses and value chains**
Examples: Sustainable seafood processing · blue enterprises and start-ups · market access initiatives · circular economy approaches · ocean-based products and services
- **Climate mitigation and blue carbon**
Examples: Seagrass conservation/restoration · coastal protection for storms and erosion · carbon-storing projects that benefit communities
- **Sustainable management and financing of protected and conserved areas**
Examples: Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) · locally managed marine areas · community conserved areas · sustainable financing mechanisms for conservation areas
- **Nature-based solutions for coastal protection**
Examples: Coastal ecosystem restoration to reduce erosion · dune restoration · hybrid natural/engineered solutions · coastal resilience projects
- **Community-led conservation and livelihood diversification**
Examples: Community conservation initiatives · women's and youth enterprises · alternative livelihoods · local stewardship of marine and coastal resources

Practical information

Indicative grant size	The indicative budget range for projects is €50,000 – €200,000. This range is not binding and is provided only as guidance. Proposals outside this range may still be considered if well justified.
Indicative project duration	Maximum project duration: 18 months. In exceptional and well-justified cases, up to 3 additional months may be considered (max. 21 months).
Application information	An organisation can submit more than one EOI. Questions about the application process: bluenaturalcapital@iucn.org
Submission format	Microsoft Forms