**Call for Proposals for Strategic Partners.**

**GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP)**

Implemented by United Nations Development Programme

**November 2023**

Guidelines for Strategic Partner applicants

NOTE: This Call for Proposals forms the basis for applying for GEF SGP grants. It must neither be construed as a grant agreement nor be regarded as a confirmation of a grant awarded by the GEF Small Grants Programme to any entity. This Call for Proposals is not for sale and neither does the GEF Small Grants Programme charge a fee for any stage of the proposal development and submission process.

Deadline for receipt of applications: November 26 2023

## GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

### Background

The **Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP)** implemented by UNDP, provides grants for initiatives of communities and civil society organizations, to enable them implement projects in the focal areas of biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and sustainable land management. The community-based projects are designed to result in positive change in the environment while at the same time supporting poverty reduction and local empowerment objectives. In Kenya, the GEF is coordinated by the Ministry of Environment, Climate change and Forestry, and the GEF SGP is one of the GEF projects in the current phase of GEF 7.

In the current phase of the Programme titled “Seven Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Kenya”, the objective of the project is to enhance the socio-ecological resilience of ecologically sensitive landscapes and seascapes of global and national significance, through community-based initiatives. The three sites selected are the production landscapes of the Lake Bogoria and lake Baringo National Reserves, the Samburu-Isiolo Conservation Area **(SICA)**, and the biodiversity-rich marine ecosystem of Shimoni-Vanga seascape + Bodo-Mwandamu seascape of southern Kenya.

Building on prior experience and lessons, SGP has been creating synergies between individual grants by adopting a landscape/seascape approach to enhance overall program impact. In addition, SGP through the selected strategic partners will promote the establishment/strengthening of an effective, multi-stakeholder platform at each landscape/seascape and encourage local governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector to partner with local communities for the implementation of participatory landscape/seascape strategies.

Recognizing that local institutions and communities may not have experience in strategy development and planning, and that integrated land/seascape management is a complex approach, SGP requests for proposals from highly qualified national NGOs, three of which will be allocated a strategic grant **(up to USD 150,000)** to operate as strategic partners at one of the land/seascapes, i.e. one strategic partner for Lake Bogoria Production Landscapes with replication in the Lk. Baringo landscape; one strategic partner for Shimoni-Vanga seascape with replication in the Bodo-Mwandamu Co-Management Areas and two strategic partners for the the Samburu-Isiolo Conservation Area **(SICA);** one for Samburu County and another for Isiolo county. The selection of the strategic partners will be a competitive process, conducted by the National Steering Committee (NSC) of the GEF Small Grants Programme. A thorough induction of the Strategic Partners on expected roles, responsibilities and expected deliverables will be undertaken for the selected strategic partners during the inception workshop.

All proposals must be developed using the GEF SGP proposal guidelines template. It is available under the section **“Application Procedure”** on page 9.

Proposals are to be sent by e-mail to sgpinfo.ke@undp.org by **November 26th 2023.**

### Objectives

The **objective** of the project is to enhance and maintain socio-ecological resilience of selected landscapes and seascapes through community-based initiatives in selected ecologically sensitive areas of Kenya for global environmental benefits and sustainable development.

**1.3 Geographic Focus of the project**

**The three selected sites for project implementation by SGP in GEF VII**

* + 1. **Lake Bogoria Production landscapes**

Lake Bogoria landscape, the focus of this project, is rich in biodiversity and supports livelihoods of thousands of local communities. Close to 210 plant species and 373 species of birds have been recorded. Plant species are distributed in six broad vegetation types, these are; riverine forests, wooded bush land, bushed thicket, bush land, bushed grassland and swamps[[1]](#footnote-1). In the upper parts of the catchment, montane forests are found. These areas are the catchment for River Sandai/Waseges, important for maintaining rich biodiversity and community livelihoods. There are other riverine forests along rivers courses, seasonal water flow channels and freshwater springs. Outside reserve, and the forest areas the vegetation comprises of grasslands, bushlands, shrublands, scrublands and woodlands. These are the community areas, which communally graze and where community conservancies are being established for livestock and wildlife management. The lake system is one of the richest birdlife areas (IBA) in Kenya. The zoogeographical location of the reserve between the Ethiopian and the Masai zoo-regions contributes to the area’s high species diversity. The lake holds huge congregations of lesser flamingo that feed on the high production of blue green algae dominated by *Spirulina* *platensis*. The lake shore configuration and freshwater points provide favourable environment for these assemblages and at times more than 1.5 million flamingos can be counted.

Continuation of SGP-7 in this landscape will pave the way for replication of successful community initiatives in the Lake. Bogoria landscape as well as the Samburu –Isiolo conservation Area (SICA) in the northern rangelands of Kenya. Surrounded by an area of rapidly growing population, the lake is under considerable threat from surrounding pressures. These include siltation from soil erosion, increased abstraction of water in the catchment, degradation of land, deforestation, growth in human settlements, overgrazing, uncontrolled tourism expansion and pollution from agricultural activities and human settlements, as well as climate change impacts.

Some of the key interventions in this landscape under GEF 6 have been (i) strengthening community wildlife conservancies, (ii) establishing lucrative bioenterprises, such as a honey value chains and (iii) rehabilitating degraded river catchments (iv) improved farming practises. These fledgling initiatives will be strengthened in GEF 7 and also replicated in the nearby production landscapes of the northern rangelands (SICA).

* + 1. **The Samburu-Isiolo Conservation Area (SICA)**

In the lower edges of the northern rangelands, in the counties of Samburu and Isiolo, three contiguous national reserves form one ecologically connected ecosystem of 525 km2,  rich in flora and fauna biodiversity, known as Samburu-Isiolo Conservation Area (SICA) which will be the focus of SGP-07.

The Samburu National Reserve, managed by the county government of Samburu, covers a total of 165 km2 and is separated in the south from the Buffalo Springs National Reserve by the Ewaso Nyiro river. To the Northeast of Buffalo Springs lies the Shaba National Reserve, both of which are administered by the Isiolo county government. This functional ecosystem includes three reserves as well as the neighbouring community lands which form critical wildlife dispersal areas. Four organised community wildlife conservancies are adjacent to the reserves; these are West Gate and Kalama Community Wildlife Conservancies in Samburu and Nasuulu and Nakuprat Gotu community conservancies in Isiolo. With so much open protected land available, wildlife traverses safely between the reserves and the community wildlife conservancies including rare northern species of reticulated giraffes, vulturine guineafowls and Grevy’s zebras, all of which are unique to the region. These animals are joined by other rare species, including Somali ostriches, beisa oryx and gerenuks. Also available is wildlife that is present in many of Kenya’s other protected areas: foragers and grazers include elephants, hippos, olive baboons, buffalos, Grant’s gazelles, to name a few. And large predators, such as the lion, leopard and cheetah also make their home in the reserves.

Pastoralism, conservation and biodiversity are intimately linked. More than 70% of Kenya’s wildlife is found outside protected areas on land occupied by pastoralists. With the right incentives in place, research shows that wildlife numbers and diversity can be higher in areas adjacent to national parks than within the parks themselves.

* + 1. **Shimoni-Vanga fisheries co-management area**

One of the most distinctive features of the Kenyan coastline is its almost continuous fringing coral reef that runs parallel to the coast. The relatively narrow continental shelf, which suddenly drops up to 4,000 metres, a depth only allowing for limited abundance of corals, while coral growth is best supported at depths from sea surface to about 20–25 m deep where light is able to penetrate (Obura, *et. al*, 2000). Coral reefs support a wide variety of reef dependent fish, which include important demersal finfishes such as emperors, snappers, rock cods and surgeonfish amongst others. They are also important habitats for crustaceans and invertebrates such as crabs, molluscs, lobsters, prawns, shells, sea-cucumbers, squids and octopus. These fisheries are important to the artisanal fishery mostly using low technology gear such as gillnets, shark nets, hook and line, beach seines, spear guns and basket and fence traps and propelled by simple fishing vessels such as out-rigger canoes, sail boats and low-powered engines. The artisanal sector is estimated to employ over 10,000 fishers directly and indirectly providing a livelihood to another 60,000 (Ochiewo, 2004).

Another distinction of the Kenya coastline are the mangrove forests scattered along the coastal belt in the inter-tidal zones in estuaries and along creeks. They are mainly concentrated on the northern coast around the Lamu archipelago, Tana delta and Mida Creek in Malindi. Smaller mangrove forest patches are found in the mouths of semi-perennial and seasonal coastal rivers on the south coast in Shimoni-Vanga, Funzi and Gazi Bays, and Port-Reitz, Tudor, Mtwapa and Kilifi. Despite their importance, these fragile ecosystems have been subjected to enormous pressures and threats over the last few decades leading to degradation manifested by permanent habitat alteration and loss; shortage of building materials and firewood. Key threats to causing degradation of mangroves in the country are: encroachment by settlements mainly in urban centres; over-exploitation for wood products by local communities; clearance for alternative land use especially salt mining in Malindi; pollution in the form of oil spills, and solid and effluent discharges; weak enforcement of laws to protect mangrove areas; aquaculture development mainly by community based groups; siltation; potential threats from negative impacts of climate change; and lack of mangrove management plans.

The Kenya State of the Coast Report (GoK, 2017) identified destructive fishing, overfishing, pollution, shoreline change and erosion, habitat alteration and destruction, invasive species and climate change as major threats to marine ecosystems in Kenya. Major human activities contributing to these threats are fishing, farming, shipping, coastal mining (including salt mining), coastal developments and tourism. Unsustainable exploitation of fisheries and other living resources has been identified by Payet and Obura (2004) as a major environmental concern in East Africa. Fishers along the coast continue using destructive gear, mainly seine net and ring net (in shallow waters) resulting in degradation of benthic habitats such as corals and seagrasses. Shimoni Vanga area is also earmarked for large scale development projects, as part of Kenya vision 2030 development blue print. Already, large scale sugar plantation has been established on areas adjacent to the seascape, while plans to contract international fishing port at Shimoni are at advanced stage. Such developments, if not implemented and managed responsibly, often come at a high cost to the environment and affected communities.

The Shimoni Vanga seascape of the southern coastal area of Kenya has been the focus of SGP marine conservation in GEF 6. Although there have been a range of local initiatives supported by SGP within the marine ecosystem of the Shimoni-Vanga seascape, the main thrust has been on strenthening the Beach Management Units (BMUs) to conduct monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) of locally managed marine areas, referred to locally as *tengefus.* Tengefus, which are ecologically sensitive and harbour the highest concentration of biodiversity, recognize the power and rights of fishing communities to manage their marine resources primarily to conserve fisheries and secure sustainable sources of income. The progress in GEF 6 of building the capacity of BMUs to effectively conduct MCS and other relevant tasks is noteworthy but requires additioanl input to enahnce resileince.  In SGP-07, the project will be about conducting mentorship and follow up sessions for the BMUs/CSOs to put into direct practice  the skills, knowledge and attitudes acquired during SGP-06; internal policies on good leadership and governance such as program strategies, finance, resource mobilization, human resources, conflict management and social inclusion particularly on gender equality  will be developed and operationalized for each BMU/ CSO; -the main goal in GEF 7 is therefore to deepen and institutionalize organizational culture transformation, whose impacts will be manifested in the form of;

* Demonstrable knowledge and skills in the application of best practices of leadership and governance in the BMUs/CSOs for their long-term sustainability
* Practical changes in social inclusion dynamics within the BMU/CBO leadership in terms of representation and roles (women, youth PLWDs and the elderly)
* Notable shifts in power and  relational dynamics (between and among) women vs men, youth vs the elderly, members vs leaders, within the BMU/CSOs
* Visible changes in membership participation dynamics in shaping the BMUs/ CSOs leadership agenda and decision-making process.
* Distinguishable shifts in attitudes and perceptions between and among the membership and leadership, women and men, youth and the elderly.
* Demonstrable changes in leadership practices and behaviors towards embracing transparency and accountability within the organization and to the general membership
* Enhance the socio-ecological resilience of the landscape/seascape, using the socio-ecological landscape and seascape production indicators (SEPLS) of the Satoyama initiative.

In GEF 7, SGP will therefore continue supporting BMUs and other local communities to effectively co-manage the Shimoni-Vanga seascape in partnership with the county government. In addition, SGP will support BMUs in the neighbouring Bodo-Mwandamu seascape

* 1. **Requirements of the Strategic Partners**[[2]](#footnote-2)

**(a) Proposed key activities for the strategic partner**

* Facilitate the establishment or strengthening of a multi-stakeholder platform (MSP) that is focused on governance, leadership, effectiveness and sustainability. The MSP will bring together key stakeholders engaged in the conservation of the relevant site, and stakeholders will identify and agree on strategic priorities, set goals, cooperate in the implementation of actions, monitor progress and resolve conflicts at the site.
* Liaise with the respective County Government to align SGP-funded activities with County priorities and as stipulated in the pro-doc.
* Keep the County Government abreast of the project implementation progress through reports and regular meetings with relevant focal points.
* Guided by the project document of the *Seventh Operational phase of the GEF SGP in Kenya* and the *Satoyama* Initiative[[3]](#footnote-3), develop/strengthen a land/seascape strategy designed to promote sound biodiversity management and support sustainable livelihood activities within the targeted socio-ecological production land/seascape. Among the activities to be undertaken is a baseline assessment, which will be used for identifying key threats and opportunities, prioritizing goals, selecting appropriate activities and defining desired outcomes. For lake Bogoria landscape and Shimoni-Vanga seascape, a baseline was conducted, and a landscape/seascape strategy developed during the previous phase. These will be reviewed and enriched to include pertinent information that is currently missing.
* Conduct regular monitoring exercises using agreed-upon tools to ensure (grantee) community-driven projects are implemented to achieve expected outputs, outcomes, and results.
* Provide support to CSO and CBOs grantees during proposal development and project implementation.
* Ensure CBOs and CSOs proposals are developed as per the SGP format.
* Promote inclusivity at the landscape/seascape by supporting proposal development and implementation by Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), Youth, Indigenous Peoples and women. Employ relevant strategies to ensure inclusivity in line with the government’s AGPO of 30%.
* Coordinate GEF SGP activities at the landscape/seascape among CSOs and other stakeholders working in the area as well as with County Government.
* Where feasible develop a cluster-based approach to project implementation for greater impact
* Tap into opportunities for synergy and leverage with other Development Partners, ongoing County Government and National Government projects and programs and multi-stakeholder platform (MSP) members in the land/seascape
* Working closely with a capacity-building partner supported by SGP, develop and or review and update a participatory community-based monitoring tool that will include socio-economic production landscape (SEPL) indicators, and borrow from already existing relevant systems such as the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (NIMES) for Kenya and guide community members in using it effectively and follow up with regular monitoring and evaluation actions.
* Participate in the development and or review and update the SGP capacity-building training manual for CBOs and CSOs and in its implementation.
* Prepare and submit narrative and financial reports on a quarterly basis for respective landscape/seascape with input from stakeholders as per agreed-upon reporting frameworks and tools.
* Liaise with SGP grantees, members of the multi-stakeholder platform, and the SGP Secretariat to produce, manage, store, and share knowledge management materials and on a regular basis and with Government and SGP agreed-upon branding.
* Organize regular visibility events such as eco-fairs and exhibitions and develop, use, and share widely communication material, such as brochures, newsletters and short but high impact videos throughout the life of the projects ensuring agreed upon branding.

**(b) Expected Outputs/Deliverables**

* A functional multi-stakeholder platform composed of county government representatives, relevant line ministries, civil society organizations, community representatives and leaders, partners and other interested stakeholders, that develops and executes an adaptive management plan to enhance socio-ecological resilience and result in both local and global environmental benefits.
* An adaptive management plan for the production landscape that will be used by the GEF SGP to inform decision-making and actions with the aim to improve effectiveness and efficiency in the projects. The management plan will also be used by the multi-stakeholder platform for planning and managing the target landscape, with a focus on community-driven actions to address environmental and socio-economic challenges for increased ecosystem and community resilience.
* Regular monitoring reports highlighting progress of implementation, project performance, challenges and ways to overcome them, lessons to facilitate learning..
* A set of well-developed proposals from CSOs, including CBOs, designed to improve the livelihood of local communities as well as meet SGP environmental targets that meet the set criteria.
* An updated community-based monitoring tool that includes socio-ecological production landscape (SEPL) indicators designed to help assess a community’s capacity to build resilience and harness ecosystem services through innovation, adaptation, and through local institutions that regulate the sustainable use of biodiversity.
* Follow-up reports on Capacity Building Training rollout and follow-up actions by all CBOs/CSOs working in the area and suggested inputs to further review the manual.
* High-quality knowledge management products such as case studies, and an analysis of best practices for adaptive landscape resilience among others.
* A range of high-quality communication material and wide sharing and distribution, relevant PR events including a landscape-wide brochure, quarterly newsletters, short videos with focused but different messages and stories, and eco-fair/exhibitions among others.
* Regular Multistakeholder platform meetings with clear minutes and actions for follow-up
* An effective landscape and community-based monitoring and evaluation system
* All funded projects at land/seascape level completed successfully as per proposals and signed documents.
* An effective final evaluation report involving all stakeholders at the land/seascape level for the culmination of SGP-funded GEF OP 7 projects and charting the way forward.

**(c) Eligibility Criteria**

* A well-established local NGO, registered in Kenya with the National Council of NGOs, and with over 5 (five) years of experience in environmental management and sustainable development.
* The NGO is currently based at the landscape/seascape of interest. If the NGO has been implementing projects at one of the sites, but does not have a local presence, then it shall be required to set up an office at the site.
* Has supported local communities to implement environmental conservation activities including climate change adaptation and mitigation, and sustainable land management for at least 3 (three years) years, preferably at one of the identified production land/seascapes.
* Has strong experience in monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of projects and programs at various levels from community level to landscape/seascape to higher strategic levels.
* Has experience in developing, managing, storing, and sharing Knowledge Management materials such as case studies, research documents, process and management tools, and relevant publications, and in organizing publicity events with relevant and agreed-upon branding with SGP.
* Is recognized by the respective county government for contribution towards environmental conservation and community development in the land/seascape areas of focus.
* Has demonstrated experience in convening, facilitating, and leading strong sustainable multi-stakeholder platforms, preferably in the field of environmental conservation and sustainable development.

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### Geographical scope

* Lake Bogoria landscape with extension to Lake Baringo
* Shimoni-Vanga seascape with extension to Bodo-Mwandamu seascape
* Samburu-Isiolo Conservation Area (SICA)

### Duration

The Strategic Partner will implement activities during the length of the GEF phase 7 SGP project which started in June 2023 and is scheduled to end in June 2027.

### Award amounts

The total amount per strategic partner is **USD 150,000.**

## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applicants are to submit a full project proposal, using the GEFSGP proposal template. The template is available below.



### Documents to be submitted for application.

The following documents must be submitted as part of the application:

* Project proposal application form (template provided);
* Project budget (template provided);
* Registration certificate as evidence for legal credentials of the organization.
* Letter of support from a Government office or a development partner.
* Audited financial statements for the last two fiscal years (in the absence of audited statements, any other official document demonstrating the annual income of the previous years will be accepted)

Further documentation may be required. These may be communicated to provisionally selected applicants.

Documents may be checked for truthfulness and accuracy of representation through various means, including but not limited to internet searches, formally official confirmation from responsible offices, letters of recommendation, etc.

### Where and how to send the application

The completed application form and the budget document must be submitted in Word, Excel or PDF.

Applications must be submitted by email to sgpinfo.ke@undp.org. The subject heading should read: **SGP strategic partner application**. If you have any questions regarding this application process, kindly send your query to sgpinfo.ke@undp.org.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax) or delivered to other addresses will not be considered under this Call for Proposals.

Incomplete applications will be rejected.

### Deadline for submission of applications

The deadline for the submission of full project proposals is **26th November 2023** mid-night as evidenced by the date of receipt of submission email. Any application submitted after the deadline will be automatically rejected.

## EVALUATION PROCEDURE

### Steps and criteria

Applications will be evaluated by the technical evaluation team according to the following steps and criteria:

### Step one: Eligibility evaluation

The following will be evaluated:

* The submission deadline has been respected:
* The application form including the budget table is duly filled;
* Requested documents are attached to the application;
* The proposal meets the rest of the eligibility criteria as mentioned in section 2 above.

### Step two: Technical assessment of full project proposals

The technical assessment will be done by the National Steering Committee.

The NSC reviews the proposal and either accepts it conditionally, or rejects it. Proposals that are conditionally accepted are subjected to a due diligence process, which includes a field visit.

After the due diligence is conducted, the NSC recommends revisions to the proposals to enhance suitability and robustness. Upon receipt of the revised proposal, the NSC makes a final decision on the organizations to be awarded a strategic grant. Approved proposals enter the national SGP work programme.

## APPROVAL AND AWARD

Only successful applicants will be informed in writing of the grant award.

The successful applicant signs a Grant Agreement based on the standard SGP MOA.

1. Lake Bogoria integrated management plan 2007-2012 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Three strategic partners will be selected and awarded grants to operate at one of the 3 sites (Lake Bogoria national reserve and expanding into the Lk. Baringo landscape; the Samburu-Isiolo Conservation Area (SICA) landscape, or the Shimoni-Vanga seascape, expanding into the Bodo-Mwandamu seascape), i.e. one strategic partner per site. Each NGO submitting a proposal as a Strategic partner is to select the one site that they are most qualified to work in. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The *Satoyama* Initiative – advancing socio-ecological production landscapes for the benefit of biodiversity and human well-being. This Initiative was established by Ministry of Environment of Japan and the United Nations University of Advanced Studies. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)