Highly Protected Mediterranean Initiative

Call for Interest Dedicated to
Highly Protected Marine Areas in the Mediterranean

Phase 1
December 2021 - January 2022

1. PRESENTATION OF THE CALL FOR INTEREST

The MedFund is an environmental trust fund which aims to mobilize public and private actors to promote the development and efficiency of marine protected areas in the Mediterranean.

Guided by science and encouraged by the commitments of several countries to increase the number of highly protected MPAs in the Mediterranean, The MedFund Board of Directors decided in July 2021 to create a new funding window dedicated to MPAs with a high level of protection, called the Highly Protected Mediterranean Initiative.

With the support of the MAVA Foundation, The MedFund is launching a Call for interest dedicated specifically to marine protected areas (MPAs) with a high level of protection.

Highly protected MPAs are MPAs that have in their management plan one or more zones under high protection (no-take zones, no-go zones, fully protected areas). The MedFund’s mission is to provide a long-term support to the operational costs of these MPAs.

This Call is open to priority countries designated in the 2020-2025 Strategy of The MedFund: Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Greece, Lebanon, Morocco, Montenegro, Tunisia, Turkey.
2. **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

1. To be an MPA officially established or in an advanced phase towards official establishment;

2. To have a management guidance document or a management plan specifying the high protection zones and the related management activities;

3. To have a dedicated management body and team in place.

It should be noted that an MPA already receiving financial support from The MedFund can not be funded again.

3. **ORGANIZATION AND PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE OF THE CALL**

This Call for interest runs in 2 phases:

- **Phase 1:** Applicants are invited to submit a **concept note** - see attached document accompanied by the following documents:
  - A map and zoning plan of the MPA (specifying the high protection zones)
  - The updated management document or plan
  - Letter of commitment or support signed by the national organization in charge of MPAs

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The concept note as well as the additional documents should be sent by email to **contact@themedfund.org** no later than January 31, 2022.

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A Q&A session will be proposed to candidates on December 14 at 10:00 CEST in English, and at 11:00 CEST in French. To receive connection details, please register by email at **contact@themedfund.org**.

- **Phase 2:** Candidates that are shortlisted at the end of phase 1 will receive by email the necessary information to submit the full application. Details of the activities and requested budget will be asked in phase 2 of the call for interest.
## Provisional Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Launch of the Call for interest</td>
<td>December 2, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q&amp;A session (upon registration)</td>
<td>December 14, 2021</td>
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<td><strong>Deadline for submission of concept notes</strong></td>
<td>January 31, 2022</td>
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<td>Announcement of candidates selected to submit a full application</td>
<td>March 2022</td>
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<td><strong>Deadline to submit full applications</strong></td>
<td>May 2022</td>
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<td>Agreement and start of activities</td>
<td>September 2022</td>
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### 4. Modalities of the MEDFUND Support

For beneficiary MPAs, the financing agreements will be signed for a period of five years. The grant will be paid in annual instalments, subject to validation of the annual and financial reports and to compliance with the conditions of the financing agreement.

The support granted by The MedFund will be on average 50 to 60k € per year per AMP.

**Eligibility of activities**

The Fund helps cover the operational costs of MPAs over a maximum period of 5 years. It allows to cover the costs relating to:

- human resources (excluding administrative salaries),
- maintenance of equipment, infrastructure and purchase of minor equipment,
- surveillance and enforcement of regulations,
- active governance and stakeholder participation including co-management activities,
- raising awareness among different audiences and communications,
- scientific monitoring (on the impacts of the management of highly protected zones and on 3 conservation targets),
- management activities to improve the state of conservation targets,
- promotion/support to socio-economic activities,
- taking climate change into account,
- gender approach: how to promote gender equality,
- the sustainability of the MPA and especially its financial sustainability.
The activities below are not eligible for funding from The MedFund:

- New infrastructure investments and works;
- The purchase of large equipment, except in exceptional cases, if it is an essential element for the launch or continuation of the project and cannot be financed otherwise. For any equipment request (vehicles, boats, IT equipment and software for example) over 10,000 €, a specific resolution from The MedFund Board of Directors will be required;
- Costs related to research.

The MedFund applies the environmental and social procedures established by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as well as the exclusion list of the French Development Agency. Consequently, all activities deemed not to comply with these two documents will not be eligible for funding from the Fund.

5. EXAMINATION OF APPLICATIONS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Any application submitted to The MedFund as part of this Call for interest is part of a competitive selection process, and does not necessarily imply the award of the grant.

The MedFund has set up a Grant Award Committee made up of experts in marine conservation that is responsible for evaluating the proposals received and making recommendations to the Fund’s Board of Directors which ultimately decides on the allocation of grants.

The Grant Award Committee examines the eligible applications received in terms of the quality and relevance of the proposals made, on conventional assessment bases, such as the relevance of the scheduled activities in relation to the management plans, the relevance of the budget compared to scheduled activities.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

1. **Relevance of the high protection zone**
   Candidate MPAs must have one or more significant high protection zones. The evaluation of the applications will focus on the surface, distribution, habitats concerned by the high protection zones, but also on the regulations and the management proposed in these zones.

2. **Commitment of the national authority**
   Candidate MPAs must have a confirmed commitment from the national authority to pursue a policy favourable to MPAs, which would result, for example, in
strengthening their legal status and the human/financial resources made available to them.

3. **Co-financing**

Candidate MPAs must prove that:
- co-financing is provided, either at national level (financial or in kind), or at international level (cooperation projects);
- the financial needs covered by The MedFund are not covered by another party;
- any funding for conservation obtained through The MedFund does not replace pre-existing public funding.

The implementation of self-financing strategies and mechanisms to sustainably support the MPA is encouraged.

4. **Co-management**

The MedFund encourages co-management methods associating local NGOs and national agencies/institutions for the management of MPAs. In the case of co-management, the application will be made jointly by the NGO and the national authority.

5. **Scientific monitoring**

Scientific monitoring will be set up over the duration of the agreement to assess the impacts of management, in particular:
- Monitoring the recovery of fish stocks and monitoring the socio-economic impacts resulting from the efficient management of high protection zones
- The monitoring will also have to include 3 conservation targets (habitats or species) to be determined according to the specificities of the site.

The initial state will be established for each beneficiary MPA.

6. **Coherence of management activities**

Each activity proposed to be funded by The MedFund must be included in a management plan for the protected area and in the work plan and annual budget of the managing institution(s).

Any application deemed non-compliant for one of the following reasons will not be examined:
- Non-eligibility of the organization leading the project;
- Incomplete application;
- Application sent after the deadline set in the Call for interest.

Candidates selected at the end of phase 1 will be invited by The MedFund to submit a detailed application.
The applications selected at the end of phase 2 will lead to a partnership, formalized by a multi-year agreement.

6. CONTACT

The MedFund applies a grievance management mechanism, which allows any natural or legal person - or group of people - affected by the environmental and/or social aspects of the activities financed by the Fund, to file a claim with the Executive Management.

Any claim or complaint arising from a applicant must be sent via the contact page of The MedFund: https://themedfund.org/contact/

For any information request, please contact us at contact@themedfund.org.

With the support of:

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Fondation pour la nature