



Call for interest dedicated to Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean

Phase 1 (until July 31st, 2026) and Phase 2 (August 1st to October 2nd, 2026)

This call is open to the following countries:

Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, Morocco, Montenegro, Tunisia, Türkiye

1. PRESENTATION OF THE CALL FOR INTEREST

The MedFund is a Conservation Trust Fund that mobilizes public and private stakeholders to promote the development and the effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) in the Mediterranean.

The MedFund supports 23 MPA in 9 Mediterranean countries: Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Greece, Lebanon, Morocco, Montenegro, Tunisia, Türkiye.

The Trust Fund provides technical and financial support by awarding grants to the managing and co-managing bodies of Mediterranean MPAs.

The MedFund provides a framework for collaboration among Mediterranean MPAs that can last up to 15 years, depending on the results achieved, in three successive phases :

1. Start-up phase (5 years) to structure the team, set up co-management and scientific monitoring, and acquire small-scale equipment;
2. Consolidation phase (5 years) focused on priority costs and support for diversification of revenue sources;
3. Self-sufficiency phase (5 years) to provide ongoing support for efficient management.

Between each phase, the MedFund executive direction evaluates on-site the improvements made in the management of the beneficiary MPA, and beneficiaries must submit an application for the next phase. **Renewal between phases is not automatic.**

This call only concerns the start-up phase and is intended solely for MPA in the following 10 countries: Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, Morocco, Montenegro, Tunisia, and Türkiye.

To carry out its activities, The MedFund receives financial support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM), the French Development Agency (AFD), the Government of Monaco, the Government of Spain, the MAVA Foundation, the Pew Bertarelli Foundation, the Hans Wilsdorf Foundation, the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, the Oceanographic Institute of Monaco, the Seaquarium Marine Institute, and Sorbonne University–Biodiversarium.

The aim of this call is to support:

1. The initiation of management for newly created MPAs or those in advanced stages of creation,
2. The strengthening of the management effectiveness of existing MPAs,
3. The establishment or extension of highly protected areas within MPAs.

2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. Be an officially established MPA or one that is in the process of being established in one of the following countries: Albania, Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, Morocco, Montenegro, Tunisia and Türkiye.
2. Have a management plan approved by national authorities or, in the absence of one, a management orientation document.
3. Have a dedicated operational management unit/team.

A MPA that is already a beneficiary of The MedFund is not eligible for this call for interest. The list of current beneficiaries of The MedFund is available on our website: <https://themedfund.org/en/actions/>.

Any application from a non-governmental organization must be accompanied by a letter of approval or support from the national authorities responsible for marine protected areas management. Any application submitted by an NGO without the letter of approval or support will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed by The MedFund Grant Award Committee.

3. ORGANIZATION AND TIMELINE OF THE CALL FOR INTEREST

This call for interest is carried out in 2 phases:

(1) Phase 1: Expression of interest, until July 31st, 2026

(2) Phase 2: Preparation and submission of the application folder, from August 1st to October 2nd, 2026. The details of each phase and the required documents are outlined in the following two sections.

3.1. PHASE 1: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

During **the expression of interest phase**, interested applicants—managers or co-managers of MPAs who meet the eligibility criteria detailed in Section 2 Eligibility Criteria—may express their interest in applying by sending an email to contact@themedfund.org, with the subject line **“Application 2026-phase1-name of the MPA.”** Applicants must complete and submit the **expression of interest form** available on our website (<https://themedfund.org/en/become-a-beneficiary/>). **The MedFund may provide support to applicants who have expressed their interest in preparing their full application files.**

3.1. Phase 2: Submission of Applications

Applicants must submit a complete application folder by email, including all documents available for download on the website for phase 2: <https://themedfund.org/en/become-a-beneficiary/>:

1. **The application form**, that describes the MPA details, conservation issues, and details on the managers.
2. **The activities description**, that presents the description of the planned and budgeted activities for the next 5 years.
3. **The funding request**, that details the financial needs in euros by expense item and the mobilized co-financing. The funding request should be consistent with the activity description.

The activity description should reflect the management activities and their detailed expenses over 5 years, considering the following **eligible activities**:

- Co-management activities between a local NGO and the national MPA management authorities,
- Human resources¹ (excluding salaries of public administration staff),
- Maintenance of equipment, infrastructure, and small equipment purchases,
- Monitoring and enforcement of regulations,

¹ The coverage of salary costs must be justified by a description of tasks for each proposed position. It is reminded that The MedFund only finances the portion of the staff's working time dedicated to the effective management of the MPA.

- Active governance and stakeholder participation,
- Awareness raising for different audiences and communication,
- Scientific monitoring (3 conservation targets² including fish assemblage),
- Management and protection activities for conservation targets,
- Promotion/support of socio-economic activities,
- Consideration of mitigation measures or monitoring of climate change effects,
- Gender approach: how to promote gender equality and the role of women in management committees/teams,
- Implementation of income-generating activities for the MPA in the long term.

The following activities are **not eligible** for The MedFund funding:

- Investments and new infrastructure works,
- Purchase of major equipment, except in exceptional cases where such equipment is essential for the launch or continuation of the project and cannot be financed otherwise. For any equipment request (vehicles, boats, equipment, etc.) exceeding €10,000, a specific motion from The MedFund Board of Directors will be required.
- Costs associated with research that are relevant for the MPA.

The funding granted by the MedFund will range from 45 K€ to 55 K€ annually over 5 years per MPA, depending on the context, planned activities, and characteristics of the MPA. The MedFund encourages managers to implement activities aimed at mitigating and/or adapting to the effects of climate change.

The MedFund promotes a **gender-sensitive and inclusiveness approach** that encourages the **participation and leadership of women** in conservation and management activities, as well as in decision-making bodies (such as MPA management committees).

The MedFund applies the environmental and social procedures established by [the Global Environment Facility \(GEF\)](#) and the exclusion list of the [French Development Agency \(FDA\)](#). Therefore, all activities deemed non-compliant with these three documents will not be eligible for funding from the Fund.

² The candidate MPA must specify 3 priority conservation targets (habitats or species). Scientific monitoring activities and management actions must be proposed with the aim of improving and monitoring the conservation status of these 3 targets throughout the duration of the agreement. If the MPA does not have an initial conservation status of the targets, it is recommended to include the evaluation of the initial status at the beginning of the agreement.

COMPOSITION AND SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

MPAs applying for The MedFund funding must complete their application package with the following elements: (to be downloaded from <https://themedfund.org/en/become-a-beneficiary/>):

- 1. The application form** that describes in detail the MPA, conservation issues, and details on the managers.
- 2. A description of the activities** planned and budgeted for the next 5 years.
- 3. A detailed funding request** specifying the financial needs in euros by expense item and the mobilized co-financing.

The funding request must be accompanied by the following annexes:

4. A zoning map,
5. The legal status of the MPA (if officially established),
6. A letter of approval or support signed by the national authority responsible for MPA management. **Any application submitted by an NGO without the letter of approval or support will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed by The MedFund Grant Award Committee.**
7. An updated management plan or document,
8. The legal registration documents of the beneficiary NGO (statutes, certificates, etc.),
9. A photo of the MPA with associated photo credits,
10. A copy of the passport of the President and the director of the management organization,
11. A copy of the passport of the President and the director of the beneficiary NGO,
12. The latest financial report (2025) of the beneficiary NGO,
13. The latest activity report (2025) of the beneficiary NGO,
14. The list of the members of the Board of Directors of the beneficiary NGO.

The application form, activity description, funding request, and all supporting documents must be submitted by email to contact@themedfund.org with the email subject: "Application 2026-phase2-name of the MPA" before October 2nd, 2026 (midnight, CEST).



4. ANALYSIS OF APPLICATIONS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

All applications submitted to The MedFund under this call for interest are part of a competitive selection process and do not necessarily result in the awarding of a grant.

The MedFund has established a **Grant Awarding Committee (GAC)** composed of marine conservation experts and representatives of The MedFund's Board of Directors. This committee is responsible for evaluating the submitted proposals and making recommendations to the Fund's Board of Directors, who will ultimately decide on the allocation of the grants.

The Grant Awarding Committee evaluates the eligible applications based on the quality and relevance of the proposed activities, particularly the relevance of the planned activities in relation to the management plans, and the appropriateness of the budget in relation to the planned activities and the characteristics of the MPA.

Any application deemed non-compliant for any of the following reasons will not be considered:

- Ineligibility of the project implementing organization,
- Absence of a letter of support from the national authorities responsible for MPA management,
- Incomplete application,
- Application submitted after the deadline specified in the call for interest.

5. TRANSPARENCY AND DISCLOSURE

At the time of their request, project leaders must disclose any familial, organizational, or financial ties with a board member, staff, or the Grant Awarding Committee of The MedFund.

6. CONTACT

The MedFund is available to assist and advise interested applicants in submitting their application files.

The MedFund follows the grievance management mechanism, which allows any person or group of people, whether individuals or legal entities, affected by the environmental and/or social aspects of the activities funded by the Fund, to submit a grievance to the Executive Direction.

Any complaints or grievances from applicants must be submitted through the contact page of The MedFund: <https://themedfund.org/contact/>.

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