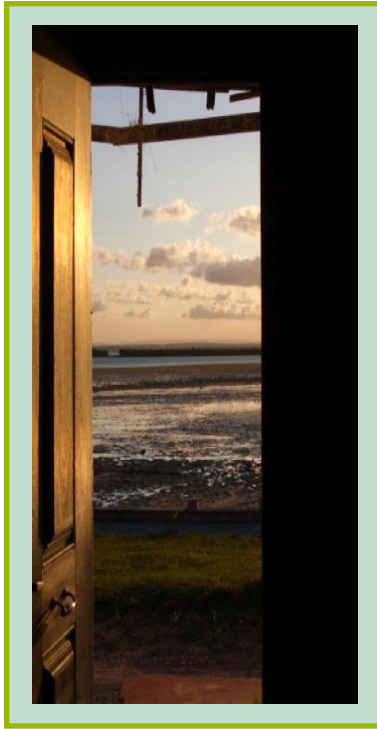


## Verde Ventures Fund

### Request for Proposals: Africa Open Call



Verde Ventures (VV), a program of Conservation International, invests in small businesses that contribute to conservation and communities in Conservation International's (CI) global priority areas. Building upon a shift in CI's mission, we have expanded our scope to incorporate critical issues which are focused on human wellbeing in the context of biodiversity conservation. A key component of this is an increasing focus on facilitating the development of sustainable and low carbon economies in Africa as one way of addressing the challenges of altering the typically carbon intensive development trajectory.

Lack of access to financing is consistently cited by Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as one of the main barriers to growth. With limited access to financing, SME owners struggle to make the investments they need to increase productivity and competitiveness of their business, develop new markets, and hire more people. This is particularly true in African countries.

VV is grateful to Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM) for their support of our program and our strategic expansion into Africa.

#### Pre-Selection Criteria

To be eligible for support from Verde Ventures, the enterprise must be a Small or Medium enterprise in Africa and involved in a business that benefits biodiversity conservation and human well-being.

#### Enterprise Eligibility:

All Enterprises must adhere to the following minimum criteria to be eligible for Verde Ventures' financing:

- Make a direct contribution to our priorities, particularly in addressing climate security, freshwater security and food security (see [www.conservation.org](http://www.conservation.org) for more information)
- Have a strong management team
- Demonstrate commitment to and participation of a local community
- Have total business assets less than \$5 million during the investment period
- Demonstrate sufficient cash flow or growth potential to repay the investment within three-five years
- Demonstrate capacity to repay the investment in US dollars, despite local currency fluctuations
- Be able and committed to monitor changes in biodiversity during the life of the investment

**Any small or medium , income-generating enterprise that provides direct benefits to people and biodiversity conservation is encouraged to apply.**

**Some examples of eligible enterprises include:**

- **Agroforestry:** Shade-grown and sustainable agriculture that buffers biologically important protected areas.
- **Ecotourism:** Ecotourism products and services that protect biodiversity and provide conservation-oriented employment and income for communities living near protected areas.
- **Wild-harvest products:** Businesses that develop and promote oils, nuts, fruit, plants, fibers and other natural materials sustainably harvested near protected areas.
- **Energy:** Businesses that develop and promote higher efficiency energy options and / or low-carbon energy options in rural Africa. Enterprises that address charcoal and fossil fuel efficiency and / or substitution are of particular interest.

**To apply, please complete our Letter of Interest and visit our website and at:**

[www.conservation.org/verdeventures](http://www.conservation.org/verdeventures)

**Submission Deadline**

- **June 30<sup>th</sup> 2010**

