Bio-Bridge Initiative

Project selection criteria and process

Introduction

This document describes the criteria to be used in the assessment of project proposals submitted by government agencies, indigenous people and local communities, research and academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations from developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition for consideration for seed funding under the Bio-Bridge Initiative.

Seed funding support is aimed at project proposals that promote exemplary technical and scientific cooperation (TSC) approaches between **at least two countries**.

To be eligible, project proposals must, *inter alia*, promote innovative approaches, foster practical and technically sound solutions, and demonstrate potential to generate results with lasting or significant impact. They must be aligned with the vision and mission of the BBI and should, among other things, contribute to the following:

(i) Support countries in their efforts to achieve the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) targets, as indicated in relevant National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans;

(ii) Seek to establish long-term cooperation between two or more countries on technical and scientific matters, including joint research and development of technical and scientific innovative solutions,[1] to address the key drivers of biodiversity loss;[2] and

(iii) Facilitate the transfer of technologies and/or exchange of specialized knowledge and know-how through institutional collaboration.

Technical and scientific cooperation refers to a process whereby institutions in two or more countries pursue their individual or collective biodiversity-related goals through cooperative actions. This may include the creation and/or exchange of scientific knowledge, data, expertise, resources, technologies and technical know-how. It may also include human resource development, institution building, joint training of personnel, exchange of experts, joint research programmes, joint ventures for the development and diffusion of technologies (including indigenous and traditional technologies), and transfer of technology and know-how.

They should also demonstrate that technical and scientific cooperation is the most feasible and effective means to address identified needs in one or more GBF targets.[3] Please refer to Section I below for further information.

[1] For the purpose of the present document, "innovation" is described as a process that encompasses design, experimentation, application and scaling up of new ideas and solutions, resulting in transformative and more impactful change. Innovative solutions could cover scientific, technical, governance, finance or societal innovation.

[2] The main direct drivers of biodiversity loss are land/sea use change (primarily for large-scale food production), overexploitation, climate change, pollution, and invasive alien species.

The three layers of criteria described below are designed to help:

(i) Identify project proposals that are in line with the Bio-Bridge mission, objectives and principles, and thus eligible for consideration under the Initiative *(Eligibility Assessment Stage)*;

(ii) Assess the quality of proposals received and to prioritize those to be submitted to the Project Review Panel for the final evaluation *(Quality Assessment Phase)*; and

(iii) Identify proposals with the greatest potential to produce concrete output(s) and outcome(s) likely to have the highest impact *(Technical Assessment Phase)*.

Upon request and as appropriate, the Bio-Bridge helpdesk (bbiproposals@cbd.int) can assist prospective applicants and partners in their efforts to refine their project proposals.

I. Global Biodiversity Framework Targets

The project proposals should focus on technical, scientific, and traditional knowledge (where relevant) aspects that can support the implementation of one or more targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

The GBF consists of 23 global targets organised into three sets. The first set of targets (1 to 8) focuses on reducing threats to biodiversity. The second set of targets (9 to 13) focuses on meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing, and the final set of targets (14 to 23) focuses on tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming. The project proposals should clearly indicate which GBF target(s) they aim to contribute towards. For a full list of the targets, including guidance notes, please visit: https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/

II. Co-financing requirements and other considerations

Successful proposals will be required to secure co-financing commitments from the project partners and/or provide evidence of financial support from other relevant funding sources for an amount equivalent to at least 50 per cent of the requested BBI contribution.

Projects that foster synergies: projects that facilitate technical and scientific cooperation that contribute towards the goals of more than one of the biodiversity-related conventions[4] or the Rio Conventions[5] are encouraged.

Follow-on TSC projects*:* a limited number of projects previously supported once by the Bio-Bridge Initiative (projects supported twice would not be eligible), which have demonstrated impactful and

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[3] In past calls for proposals the following biodiversity related focal areas have been supported, among others: access to genetic resources and benefit sharing; agricultural biodiversity; sustainable use of wildlife and wildlife trade; biodiversity and climate change; biodiversity and health; biodiversity related technologies and innovations; biodiversity monitoring and assessment, including community-based monitoring; biosafety; ecosystem restoration; invasive alien species; marine biodiversity, pollution; protected areas; protection and recovery of threatened species; traditional and local knowledge.

[4] https://www.cbd.int/brc/

[5] https://www.cbd.int/rio/

innovative biodiversity solutions and that have the potential to be further supported or replicated in other countries, would also be considered.

III. Eligibility Assessment Stage

The following eligibility criteria will be used by the Bio-Bridge helpdesk to identify proposals that are aligned with Bio-Bridge's mission, objectives, and principles. A proposal must meet all the eligibility criteria for further consideration under the Initiative.

Table 1: Eligibility Assessment Criteria

No.	Criteria - *Extent to which the proposal:*	Checklist
1.	Seeks to promote technical and scientific cooperation on a long-term basis between two or more national institutions/organizations in at least two different countries.	☐
2.	Involves at least one developing country or a country with economy in transition[6].	☐
3.	Responds to need(s), problem(s) or gap(s) that can be addressed through technical and scientific cooperation, as well as through any associated transfer of technologies and exchange of specialized knowledge and know how, including traditional knowledge.	☐
4.	Contributes to the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework targets and is aligned with relevant national policy document(s) of the participating countries, including the national priorities identified in the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).	☐
5.	Promotes institutional development or strengthening through collaboration[7].	☐

IV. Quality Assessment Stage

The BBI helpdesk assesses eligible project proposals against the criteria in Table 2 below, assigning a score of 0 to 5 for each criterion. Only proposals with a final score of 80% or higher are submitted to the Project Review Panel for final evaluation.

[6] **Applicants from countries that have not received funding during the previous rounds of the Bio-Bridge Initiative are strongly encouraged to apply**, namely: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Cook Islands, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, DPR Korea, DR Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, , Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, , Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, , Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jamaica, , Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nauru, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Niue, North Macedonia, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Palestine, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russia, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Suriname, Syria, Tajikistan, , Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, , Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen and Zambia.

[7] The proposal should seek to build or strengthen the capacity of institutions and not focus *only* on building the capacity of individuals through training.

Table 2: Quality Assessment Criteria			
No.	Criteria – *Extent to which the proposal:*		Max Score
1.	Clearly articulates the problem/need/gap to be addressed through technical and scientific cooperation	Extent to which the proposal: • Effectively describes the problem/need/gap, including its root causes; • Communicates the significance of the need/problem/gap; • Provides empirical data regarding the need/problem/gap; • Provides an overview of relevant stakeholders to be engaged in the project.	5
2.	Includes SMART and clearly defined results-chain responding to the expressed need/problem/gap and includes appropriate performance indicators	Extent to which: • Project expected results (outcomes and outputs) are clearly defined; • Project objectives and expected results are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART); • Project objectives and expected results directly related to the expressed need/problem/gap; • Adequate baselines and performance indicators have been identified.	5
3.	Presents appropriate activities and methods that will logically achieve the expected results	Extent to which: • Project activities are specific/concrete and there is a causal link between activities and expected results; • The proposed activities and methods respond directly to the expressed need/problem/gap; • The delivery approaches and methods proposed are appropriate and effective in achieving the stated results; • Activities take into consideration the gender dimension (look at gender plan for wording).	5
4.	Identifies potential risks/challenges and describes strategies to mitigate them	Extent to which: • Potential risks to the project's success are well analyzed; • A risk management strategy with clear mitigation measures described; • Mitigation measures are pertinent.	5
5.	Includes a clear and realistic timeline, adequate budget and clearly identifies co-funding	Extent to which: • Project timelines and milestones are clear and realistic; • The proposed workflow is appropriate; • The budget is sufficiently detailed and reflects all the proposed activities requiring funding; • The budget requested is adequate, reasonable and demonstrates cost-effectiveness and value for money; • Sources and amount of co-financing are clearly identified and documented; • The project demonstrates ways to optimize resources (for	5

		example, by sharing and maximizing existing resources – equipment, facilities, and personnel) and achieve economies of scale.	
6.	Involves partners that have demonstrated commitment to the implementation of the project	Extent to which: • The project partners are clearly identified; • The proposal clearly describes the respective roles and responsibilities of partners; • The partners' commitment to the project is clearly demonstrated (e.g., through letters of engagement committing in-kind support and/or co-financing); • Has demonstrated ability to leverage resources from various sources and build partnerships and coalitions.	5
7.	Demonstrates adequate project management, coordination arrangements and administrative capacity	Extent to which the project: • Has sufficient institutional capacity (legal entity able to receive international funds, administrative systems and infrastructure to support implementation); • Has a clear project management and coordination plan; • Has adequate and qualified personnel assigned to carrying out the project.	5
8.	Is complementary and/or builds synergies with other multilateral agreements and or initiatives	Extent to which the project: • Takes into account other relevant multi-lateral agreements (MEAs) or initiatives and strives to build synergies; • Builds on the experiences and achievements of previous or ongoing efforts with similar objectives; • Complements (rather than duplicates) the efforts of other relevant MEAs or initiatives.	5

V. Technical Assessment Stage

An external Project Review Panel will evaluate the technical and scientific merit of the screened proposals using the criteria in Table 3 below. The Panel assigns a score for each criterion and the proposals with the highest scores are submitted to the Executive Secretary.

Table 3: Technical Assessment Criteria (to be used by the Project Review Panel)			
No.	Criteria – *Extent to which the proposal:*		Max Score
1.	Adds value to ongoing efforts towards the achievement of the Global Biodiversity Framework in line with the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Protocols	Extent to which the project: • Produces tangible results likely to lead to significant impact/change, complimenting and/or building upon previous efforts; • Is expected to generate multiple benefits (environmental, social and economic); • Seeks to maximize the use of best practices and lessons learned; • Has a catalytic and multiplier effect.	5

2.	Is likely to lead to long-term technical and scientific cooperation between project partners	Extent to which: • Longer-term cooperation is, or will be, formalized through agreements/ institutionalized mechanisms (e.g., Memorandum of Understanding); • Partners have committed their own human, technical and financial resources (co-financing) towards the project; • The project includes diverse ways through which the partners would cooperate (e.g., joint project planning and development, joint implementation, joint staffing); • The project and the partnership are supported by the executive level of the organizations involved.	5
3.	Contributes to institutional building or strengthening	Extent to which the project: • Strengthens organizational structures and processes of the project partners; • Enhances institutional capacity for resource mobilization (human, technical and financial resources); • Enhances human resources, e.g., through twinning, mentorship and fellowship programmes, exchange visits or study tours; • Creates or reinforces networks, communities of practice and knowledge-sharing mechanisms.	5
4.	Includes activities and delivery methods/ approaches that are feasible and effective in addressing the need/problem/gap identified	Extent to which the proposed activities and delivery methods/approaches: • Are likely to address the identified need/problem/gap in a timely and impactful manner; • Are suitable and appropriate to deliver the desired results; • Are likely to result in tangible benefits; • Make use of local capacities, knowledge and resources.	5
5.	Promotes one or more of the following technical and scientific cooperation modalities and approaches: a) development and/or transfer and diffusion of biodiversity-related technologies and specialized knowledge and know-how b) Cooperation in the training of personnel c) Exchange of experts d) Joint research and/or joint ventures for the development of relevant technologies /solutions e) Access to, exchange and/or use of relevant technical and	Extent to which the project is likely to: • Lead to technology development or transfer e.g., through cooperation in research and development, and innovation; • Facilitate access to and exchange of technical and scientific data and knowledge; • Promote access to specialized knowledge and know-how including traditional knowledge; • Contribute to the creation of a pool of experts with specialized technical and scientific skills; • Result in technologies that can be adapted and used by the intended beneficiaries in the medium and long-term ; • Involve the exchange of experts; • Advance joint research and cooperative ventures for the development of new knowledge or technologies; • Promote collaboration and networking between academic researchers and other stakeholders.	10

	scientific data		
6.	Is technically viable	Extent to which the project: • Is feasible and likely to generate results under the prevailing local conditions and realities; • Offers practical and appropriate solution(s) to addressing the need/problem/gap; • Offers solution(s) which are technically sound and well proven; • Proposes solution(s) that are easy to maintain and service; • Proposes solutions that are acceptable to the intended beneficiaries.	5
7.	Is sustainable	Extent to which: • The planned activities and expected results are likely to continue beyond the project's lifespan; • The expected benefits can be derived over a long period of time after the project's lifespan; • Additional financial resources and in-kind contributions have been secured; • The proposed interventions are environmentally sound and easily adaptable; • Clear mechanisms for follow-up coordination and communication among partners are in place.	5
8.	Is innovative	Extent to which: • The project adopts creative and unique methods and approaches for addressing the need/problem/gap; • The project proposes novel solutions that transcend existing practices; • The project seeks to employ state-of-the-art solutions that are likely to improve ways of doing things.	5
9.	Has potential to be scaled-up and/or replicated	Extent to which: • The project could be expanded or scaled-up; • The project could be adapted and replicated in other places (nationally, regionally, and internationally); • The project seeks to communicate and disseminate its results, best practices and lessons learned; • The proposed project's results are likely to be adapted and utilized in other cases.	5

VI. Final Selection

Final selection of successful proposals rests with the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity who reviews the shortlist provided by the Project Review Panel and makes a determination based on the available resources, regional and thematic balance, among other considerations.