

RESILAO PROJECT

Call for projects for sustainable and resilient coastal ecosystems and a social and fair blue economy

Rules for the second call for projects - 2025



1. CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

The coastal areas of West Africa support people's livelihoods and a remarkable biodiversity. In a context of uncertainty linked to the effects of climate change, the development of the West African coastal area is accelerating, driven by various sectors such as urban development, infrastructure, fishing, tourism, international transport and the extractive sector. Each of these sectors generates significant environmental damage and contributes to the densification of human issues in already constrained areas.

In order to halt or even reverse this trend towards the degradation of coastal ecosystems, which are essential to the livelihoods of West African coastal communities, various conservation, scientific research and development players have been working together for almost 20 years within the Regional Partnership for Coastal and Marine Conservation in West Africa (PRCM). Despite their efforts, there is still a need to consolidate the resilience of coastal ecosystems and societies in the sub-region, by strengthening and scaling up successful experiences, disseminating best practice and supporting local dynamics so that a multitude of levers operated in a coordinated manner produce profound and lasting effects at regional level. This step must be taken by consolidating conservation efforts and encouraging the development of value chains associated with coastal ecosystem services, which respect a logic of social development and solidarity for the benefit of social organisations, promote know-how and cultural heritage as well as innovation in terms of collaboration and technological solutions. This approach to consolidating and broadening development dynamics requires coastal players to have access to appropriate funding and technical support.

It was with this in mind that the PRCM launched the RESILAO regional initiative, in collaboration with the

FFEM, as these two organisations share many objectives and have each experimented with innovative tools for financing and developing small local initiatives. The dual approach used in RESILAO is based on the one hand on the direct funding of small projects selected following calls for projects launched at regional level, and on the other hand on an effort to capitalise on and strengthen the project development capacities of local players, in order to increase their capacity to influence and the scope of their achievements in terms of resilience.

Objectives of the Call for Projects

The overall objective of the call for projects is to strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and communities in the face of the rapid changes taking place in the West African coastal area, by consolidating and scaling up conservation efforts and by stimulating a regional dynamic for mutually supportive development based on a sustainable blue economy.

In order to address the main issues identified by the PRCM where progress can be made through the involvement of coastal stakeholders, three action themes are proposed. Some projects may overlap several themes. However, applicants will be asked to focus on one of the three themes, choosing the main theme which corresponds most directly to the central objective and intervention strategy of the proposed project.

With a view to pooling environmental impacts at both local and global level, the RESILAO project and the initiatives it supports will work in synergy with current national and multilateral strategies, plans and policies. The project fits in with the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations Decade for Ecosystem Restoration, the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the IUCN Resolution WCC-2020-RES-030 on Coastal resilience.

Theme 1: Consolidating the network of sites for the conservation and restoration of coastal ecosystems

Through this first theme, the RESILAO project will seek to increase the density of the conservation network of natural coastal sites of significant ecological importance, as well as improving the management effectiveness of the MPAs already in place. Effective protection of threatened sites and the restoration of coastal ecosystems will be at the heart of the projects supported. Environmental education, awareness-raising, advocacy and the mobilisation of stakeholders in this endeavour should also be taken into account. Stakeholders seeking to conserve areas outside protected areas and seeking to promote other conservation and management tools such as OECMs (Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures) will also be taken into account. High-profile voluntary commitments by local communities to conserve natural ecosystems, such as those in Casamance and Guinea Bissau, show that they are aware of the risk of losing control of the areas in which they live and of weakening local economies. Experiments in habitat and natural resource management based on strong community commitments will therefore also be encouraged.

Theme 2: Development of value chains based on coastal ecosystem services for the emergence of a sustainable, social and fair blue economy

Most of West Africa's population lives in coastal areas, where dependence on local natural resources remains very high, not only in rural areas but also in towns and secondary cities. In many cases, in the absence of sufficient alternatives, poverty leads to the unsustainable exploitation of resources, such as the fishing of juveniles or deforestation, and contributes to the degradation of natural capital. In addition, the scarcity of financing solutions and the lack of professionalism among small producer organisations limit the opportunities for creating added value by processing natural resources and selling them on profitable markets.

Despite these growing pressures, we are seeing an increasing number of initiatives based on local knowledge, the valorisation of ecosystem services and nature-based solutions. New approaches to local development, combined with the professionalisation of grassroots organisations and national NGOs, are enabling profitable and sustainable economic activities to flourish, particularly in the peripheral areas of marine and coastal protected areas. This is why the second theme of the RESILAO call for projects (CFP) will focus on the development of sustainable value chains associated with the exploitation of the natural resources of the West African coast, by supporting the professionalisation of socio-professional organisations, producer groups and small-scale businesses and social enterprises supporting small producers with an ethical and fair approach. Particular attention will be paid to initiatives led by women's groups which structure the social fabric, especially in rural areas. Employment for young people is also one of the aims of this theme. From an economic standpoint, the aim will be to encourage the development of a social and fair economy based on the enhancement of natural capital, by increasing the volume of activities, modernising processing methods, securing and reinvesting the wealth produced locally,

structuring and professionalising sectors, developing quality labels and strengthening value chains that respect the principles of economic equity from producers to consumers.

On a global scale, this theme focuses on the concept of the blue economy, which encompasses the sustainable use and preservation of aquatic resources in coastal and marine environments. The blue economy represents activities that exploit aquatic environments (fishing, biotechnologies, coastal tourism, maritime transport, etc.), provided that they are carried out in an integrated, fair and circular manner. These activities help to improve the health of aquatic ecosystems through the implementation of protection and restoration measures.

Theme 3: Promoting innovative solutions to strengthen the resilience of coastal areas

In West Africa, coastal areas have been subject to significant artificial development and increasing urbanisation over the last thirty years. The concentration of populations on the coast, and the intensification and diversification of activities, have made the maritime periphery the main area of economic and social development. Faced with the dynamics of rapid development, inadequate land-use planning, insufficient control over land and occupation of the public maritime domain, and the development of problems in fragile areas exposed to the effects of climate change, communities and local authorities are struggling to find solutions to coastal risks and to structure their local adaptation strategies. These developments are more often than not accompanied by pollution and loss of landscape values, which can contribute to reducing the attractiveness of certain areas and the opportunities to develop them through local tourism or the development of recreational activities that would contribute to improving the living environment and well-being of local residents.

The RESILAO project aims to respond to this observation by supporting, through the third theme of the call for projects, experimentation with innovative solutions implemented by groups of local actors to improve the conservation, coherent development and enhancement of coastal areas. In particular, the aim will be to encourage collaboration in order to combine the efforts of civil society and the academic world with the initiatives of local authorities and, where appropriate, the private sector, with the aim of improving the management and enhancement of coastal areas for the benefit of local populations. The projects selected should therefore seek to demonstrate the possibility of reducing the degradation of coastal areas and limiting coastal risks through innovative actions and development, based on solutions that do not impact on the environment, while preserving open access to a common coastal heritage that is a source of development and social and solidarity-based values.

In addition to innovative techniques and ecological engineering, RESILAO will seek to strengthen new collaborative dynamics and synergies between stakeholders to promote and scale up best practice in coastal area development.

2. AREAS OF INTERVENTION

The RESILAO project will operate in the following countries: Mauritania, Senegal, Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau and the Republic of Guinea. It will focus on two types of sites:

- **Sites recognised throughout the region as being of high ecological interest and having priority issues**, which have already been classified by the national authorities and are receiving attention from funding bodies. The projects supported in these sites will aim to consolidate the conservation gains made and to strengthen the involvement of coastal stakeholders in the management of their heritage. The list of proposed sites below is not exhaustive.

Examples of sites proposed by RESILAO:

Mauritania: Cap Blanc Satellite Reserve / Banc d'Arguin National Park / Diawling National Park

Senegal: Kayar / La Somone / Joal Fadiouth / Sokone / Kawawana / Ufoyaal Kassa Bandial

Cabo Verde: Santa Luzia, Razo e Branco

Gambia: Jokadu National Park / Tanbi National Park / Bijol islands and Tanji birds Reserve

Guinea Bissau: Cacheu Mangrove Natural Park / Bijagos Archipelago

Guinea: Tristao MPA and rio Compuny / Rio Kapatchez / Loos Islands

- **Sites with no classification status or support from environmental funding bodies**, threatened by rapid urban, tourist, port or other development, whose ecological values deserve specific conservation measures that will act as buffers, green belts or urban and peri-urban parks for more resilient future towns. Examples of sites proposed by RESILAO (not exhaustive):

Mauritania: Baie de l'Etoile (Nouadhibou) / Imraguen villages south of the PNBA / Chott Boul

Senegal: Gandiolais / Popenguine / Mbaling / Pointe Sarène and Mbodiène / Kafountine and the mouth

of the Casamance river

Cabo Verde: São Vicente / Maio / Fogo and Brava

Gambia: Bintang, Sami and Brefet Bolong

Guinea Bissau: Río Cacheu estuary / Jeta and Pecixe islands & Biombo coastline / Rio Grande de Buba

Guinea: Cap Verga / Fatala and Konkouré estuaries / Kaback and Kakossa rice-growing islands / Mélaorée estuary

The sites mentioned are in no way imposed on applicants, who remain free to propose other areas of intervention, explaining the relevance of this choice, according to the two main criteria mentioned above. However, it should be noted that sites already benefiting from significant investment in coastal resilience issues will not be considered as priorities.

3. TYPES OF ELIGIBLE ACTORS AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Categories of actors according to the themes of the call for projects

Different categories of actors may apply for the call for projects, with preferred profiles depending on the theme, as proposed in the non-exhaustive list below. It is suggested that groups or consortia of actors be formed to respond to the call for projects, as the PRCM wishes to encourage coastal actors to commit to achieving common objectives, to work together in practical ways and to combine their skills in order to activate complementary levers in a coordinated way, to bring about change and to promote best practice.

If the RESILAO project encourages researchers to get involved, it must be as part of a synergistic approach with other actors and in support of an operational approach. Projects strictly dedicated to research will not be eligible.

The main actors called upon to submit proposals are :

- MSEs, cooperatives, social enterprises and small businesses directly involved in the sustainable use of natural resources or waste recycling, as well as small-scale tourism operators promoting nature tourism and helping to promote nature conservation initiatives.
- Community and socio-professional organisations for local socio-economic development, small businesses and social enterprises dedicated to supporting small producers, economic interest groups, cooperatives, producer groups, local MPA management committees, grassroots community organisations, etc.
- NGOs and national environmental and coastal protection associations, research centres.
- local media, tourism operators and local authorities.

Eligibility criteria

To qualify for funding under the RESILAO project, applicants must be able to prove that they meet the following criteria, which are designed to encourage the development of already committed and credible actors in the field relevant to their proposal, as well as compliance with the tax and social security obligations in force in the beneficiary countries:

- Have legal status recognised by the authorities;
- Have a bank account in the name of the beneficiary entity, enabling it to receive grants;
- For businesses, provide proof of non-bankruptcy. and documents proving that tax and social security obligations are up to date;
- Where possible, provide proof of backing from a public authority or protected area managers, particularly for projects implemented in protected areas ((optional).
- Be able to demonstrate experience in the field of the project submitted and have a recognised local presence;
- Be able to demonstrate experience in project management;
- Be able to demonstrate skills in the chosen subject area.

Note: Organizations funded during the first call for projects are no longer eligible for this second call.

4. PROCEDURE FOR THE CALL FOR PROJECTS

The call for projects will take place in two successive stages, as follows:

Call for project proposals :

In response to the call for projects, interested applicants must send a project concept to PRCM, prepared in accordance with the form provided, which must not exceed 6 pages and will enable members of the selection committee to assess the quality of the project idea and the main elements of its feasibility. This concept must be accompanied by an administrative file containing documents describing the applicant's organisation and that of any partners. The various administrative documents and reference details of the applicant and any partners must enable the selection committee to check that the eligibility criteria have been met.

Selection of concepts and invitation to submit full project documents:

After verification by the PRCM of the admissibility of the proposals (presence of the requested elements, eligibility of applicants, etc.), the selection committee will meet to analyse the quality of the concepts received. For concepts deemed admissible and interesting, the PRCM will send applicants an invitation to submit a full project document.

If the project concept application is incomplete at the time of submission, particularly in terms of administrative, legal or financial justification, a delay may be granted until the full version is submitted.

Selected concepts may not all be retained at the end of the process and will not necessarily receive funding. Only full projects selected at the end of the selection process will be funded (see next step).

As a reminder, a first call for projects has already been launched in 2023. This call, launched in 2025, concerns the second generation. Two calls for projects are planned: the first launched in 2023 and the second in 2025.

Applicants whose applications were not selected in the first call for projects will be encouraged to apply again in this second call and may receive methodological support from the PRCM.

Preparation period for full project documents:

Applicants selected in the first selection phase will have one month between the letter of invitation to submit a full proposal and the submission deadline to prepare their full project document. The PRCM will mobilise coaches who will be able to provide support to applicants to ensure that they are able to prepare their document and to support them in the preparation of their business plan, if applicable (theme 2). A project consolidation workshop could be organized if necessary to support project leaders in drafting the complete document. These coaches, who are both competent and independent, will be available on request for a maximum of one or two days. They will provide methodological advice. However, they are not authorised to provide any kind of support that might give candidates an advantage.

Selection of winners on the basis of full project documents:

The selection committee will meet a second time to analyse the documents received, on the basis of the scoring grid presented.

Funding decision :

The selection committee's report will be forwarded to the coordination committee and the steering committee, the latter being responsible for making the final decision to grant funding. The Steering Committee will retain a certain level of decision-making authority in order to promote a balance between the beneficiary countries. It shall not decide to reverse the order of ratings between applicants.

5. PROJECT SELECTION PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA

Project selection criteria

The analysis of the documents submitted, concepts and full project documents, will be based on the criteria set out below, with a view to selecting the best possible projects. These criteria are also indicated in the call for projects so that applicants can take them into account when drawing up their proposals.

- **General quality of the application:** The projects submitted must follow the structure of the template proposed in the CFP and contain all the information and compulsory elements of the application, as indicated in the CFP rules and the letter of invitation for the submission of a full proposal.
- **Relevance of the proposal:** The projects submitted must correspond to the guidelines of themes under which they fall, and must also demonstrate actual relevance by explaining how they fit into the context, how they address local issues and help to fuel local dynamics in favour of socio-economic development respectful of nature and local socio-cultural values.
- **Clarity of objectives and results:** Proposals must state precisely what objectives and results will be sought through the planned investments and activities.
- **Scaling up:** This criterion is in line with the overall objective of the RESILAO project, which is to facilitate the scaling up of instruments, approaches and experiences that contribute to strengthening the resilience of ecosystems and communities in the West African coastal area. Applicants should therefore demonstrate how their proposal addresses this dimension of promoting good practices, scaling up successful experiments, sustaining gains and replicating achievements.
- **Innovation:** Priority will be given to projects that are innovative in terms of the techniques used in the project, its organisation, its management, its partnership rationale or its capitalisation approach.
- **Environmental sustainability:** The methods used to exploit natural resources must be respectful of endangered species and conservation measures in force in the areas of activity. In addition, the natural resources exploited must be managed in a sustainable way. Treatment and packaging processes must not use hazardous products or single-use plastics. Zero waste initiatives that incorporate recycling will be encouraged.
- **Social impact:** Projects must demonstrate their impact on socio-economic well-being and support for vulnerable communities. Benefit sharing must be considered.
- **The gender approach:** The projects selected will target women's groups and initiatives led by women opinion leaders in rural coastal areas, as well as their contributions to value chains and the production of wealth reinvested locally. The projects supported will also focus on young people through their contribution to environmental education and their integration into local development projects and value chains.
- **Appropriateness of the proposed system of indicators:** the indicators chosen and the method for monitoring them must be perfectly feasible in order to ensure that the achievement of expected results can be assessed and to facilitate feedback. The indicators proposed in the proposals must align/integrate seamlessly into RESILAO's overall monitoring and evaluation system. The list of indicators selected for RESILAO will be communicated to applicants whose concepts have been selected by the selection committee.
- **Complementarity and synergy:** Although the calls for projects are individualised, complementarities and synergies between the proposed projects and existing initiatives and dynamics will be taken into consideration. However, an entity may only be leader/head of one project per round of call. However, the same entity may be involved in several projects or consortia of partners led by another entity within the same round.
More generally, projects should seek to show that they align with national objectives, and work with public authorities to help them meet their multilateral environmental commitments.

6. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SUPPORT FOR SELECTED PROJECTS

The projects selected will last between 18 and 24 months (with the possibility of being extended to 36 months if

necessary) and will be eligible for funding of up maximum of €50,000 to €100,000 (depending on the demonstrated relevance of the project, its intervention strategy, etc.). If your project is co-financed, please indicate the nature, amounts and source of funding. This could be an advantage at the selection stage.

The funding granted by PRCM will be made available in several instalments, with an initial payment upon signature and successive payments to be discussed during contract negotiations, depending on the investment plan and the project timetable.

Selection of the project does not imply systematic acceptance of the proposed budget, which may be discussed in a negotiation phase with PRCM before final approval by the steering committee.

7. HOW TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION

All application documents must be submitted in French, English or Portuguese in the following address : webgis@prcmarine.org

Composition of the application

- refer to the project concept form

Provisional timetable

Launch of the call for projects	April
Deadline for submission of concepts	Mid-May
1st meeting of the selection committee	June
Announcement of the selected concepts and invitation to applicants to develop a full project document (with methodological support from country coaches on request)	July
Deadline for submission of full project documents	End of July
2nd meeting of the selection committee	August
Announcement of results and signing of contracts	September

Project promoters are invited to submit their application online to write to us for any information to the following e-mail address webgis@prcmarine.org

No later than 16 may 2025