



KFW



FONDS FRANÇAIS POUR  
L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL

PAUL M. ANGELL  
FAMILY FOUNDATION



## 17<sup>th</sup> REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS – September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MAR Fund) is delighted to announce its annual request for proposals (RfP) with two available financial windows:

### 1. Traditional Small Grants:

*Supporting Coastal and Marine resources management and protection in the Mesoamerican Reef (MAR).*

This RfP will support: 1) Sustainable ventures/businesses that can demonstrate a positive impact on the natural resources of the MAR, 2) Resilience of protected areas, coastal communities, and NGOs, 3) Wastewater and solid waste management and 4) Effective conservation of fish spawning aggregations (FSA).

### 2. Reef Rescue Initiative:

*Supporting and strengthening science-based restoration, repopulation, and rehabilitation of coral reefs in the MAR region.*

On its eighth RfP, the Reef Rescue Initiative will promote: 1) Activities that target and respond to coral bleaching, 2) Strategies to prevent and address the Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD), 3) New techniques for coral reef restoration, repopulation, and rehabilitation, and 4) Coral restoration projects that promote productive activities or new markets. This RfP is not restricted to specific protected areas.

## 1. Traditional Small Grants:

### Supporting Coastal and Marine resources management and protection in the Mesoamerican Reef (MAR)

The French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM), the German Cooperation through KfW, the Paul M. Angell Family Foundation and the Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MAR Fund) are pleased to announce the 17<sup>th</sup> joint request for proposals. Please find below detailed information on the objectives, eligible applicants, proposal format, deadline, and instructions for proposal presentation.

#### General Objective

Contribute to the conservation of the ecosystem functions of the Mesoamerican Reef System and its resilience.

#### Specific Objectives

A. Support the design and/or implementation of sustainable ventures/businesses that can demonstrate a positive impact on the natural resources of the MAR (market innovations related to untreated wastewaters, solid waste management and women or indigenous communities led ventures/businesses will be prioritized).

B. Support actions to strengthen the resilience of protected areas, coastal communities, and NGOs.

C. Support and strengthen efforts for wastewater and solid waste management.

D. Support activities related to effective conservation of fish spawning aggregation (FSA) sites in the region.

Legally recognized/registered women's and community groups are welcome to submit proposals directly.

#### Eligible Priority Investments

The following table provides examples of possible eligible investments. However, activities that are not included in the table may be funded. If you have questions about a particular activity, please contact Elisa Blanda ([eblanda@marfund.org](mailto:eblanda@marfund.org)).

COMPONENT	EXAMPLES OF ELIGIBLE INVESTMENTS
Sustainable ventures/businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Innovation and alternative technologies related to regenerative economy (e.g., transforming waste (plastic and others) into products, biofuel production, production of non-plastic utensils and containers, among others).</li><li>• Creation and strengthening of women's, indigenous people's and community ventures/businesses (e.g., sustainable tourism, tour guide training, scientific diving, educational diving, bird watching, adventure expeditions, women's/community restaurants, among others).</li><li>• Promotion of new products (women's/indigenous people's/community artisanal products, products from beekeeping, among others).</li><li>• Implementation of strategies to generate added value to products from fisheries, beekeeping, aquaculture, and agriculture, among others.</li><li>• Sustainable aquaculture/mariculture (e.g., seaweed, crabs, etc.) to improve the economic conditions of coastal communities and reduce fishing pressure.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promotion of investments to mitigate climate change (reforestation, renewable and sustainable energy, energy/water storage).</li> <li>● Development of economic alternatives for fishing communities.</li> </ul>
Strengthening Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strengthening food security (e.g., family gardens, chicken farms, and access to potable water).</li> <li>● Establishment of savings funds for protected areas, NGOs and communities to cover operation costs during a crisis.</li> <li>● Improvement of financial sustainability of MPAs to strengthen their capacity to respond to, cope with and bounce back from natural or anthropogenic events.</li> <li>● Financial inclusion: creating savings habits, financial education.</li> <li>● Strengthening the role of women in the community through market activities / adaptation to climate change.</li> <li>● Promotion and strengthening of strategic alliances and community networks to maximize resources, capacities and skills and promote collective resilience.</li> <li>● Projects to develop subsistence and community contingency plans.</li> </ul>
Wastewater and solid waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development of strategies to develop/improve water and sanitation services in rural areas (rainwater collecting systems, eco filters, other ecotechnologies).</li> <li>● Development of sanitation strategies for urban areas and development of master plans for the collection and treatment of wastewater and solid waste.</li> <li>● Development of studies to quantify water sources, demand, uses and wastewater production (Water Information System).</li> <li>● Promotion of water quality monitoring networks.</li> <li>● Creation of Watershed Committees or Councils (with the participation of federal, state, and municipal governments, civil society organizations and private sector).</li> <li>● Communication of wastewater and solid waste legislation, international conventions; for example, the ratification of the Cartagena Convention and its Protocols, or any other legislation applied nationally.</li> <li>● Environmental education campaigns on wastewater and solid waste for the public, fishers, and tourism providers, to transmit the impact of water pollution on their economies in the short, medium, and long terms due to degradation of the marine-coastal environment.</li> <li>● Technical assistance for decision makers regarding wastewater and solid waste treatment.</li> <li>● Technical assistance for monitoring (sampling and analysis) water quality.</li> <li>● Economic valuation studies of hydrological services of the MAR watersheds as a tool for integrated watershed management (e.g., quantification of the economic losses for the reef, tourism, and fisheries due to water pollution).</li> <li>● Development of diagnoses (applied research) to provide concrete answers to specific, localized problems.</li> <li>● Upgrade of existing wastewater treatment plants, implementation of other wastewater treatment technologies.</li> </ul>
Fish Spawning Aggregation sites (FSAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protection and/or increased protection of FSA sites.</li> <li>● Development or update of management plans for FSA.</li> <li>● Development or update of coordinated management, monitoring, and protection programs for FSA.</li> <li>● Community participation and community empowerment in monitoring and patrolling (e.g. community surveillance actions and citizen complaints). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Acoustic FSA monitoring capacity building and data analysis.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Validation of FSA sites through visual monitoring.</li> <li>● Protection and monitoring of deep water FSA sites.</li> <li>● Development of cartography and bathymetry for FSA.</li> <li>● Ecological characterization of areas in which FSA occurs.</li> <li>● Development and implementation of communication strategies to promote and raise awareness on the critical importance of FSA and their conservation.</li> </ul>

## Eligible geographic areas

The objectives: A. “Support the design and/or implementation of sustainable ventures/businesses that can demonstrate a positive impact on the natural resources of the MAR”, B. “Support actions to strengthen the resilience of protected areas, coastal communities, and NGOs” and C. “Support and strengthen efforts for wastewater and solid waste management”, apply to the following 18 prioritized coastal and marine protected areas, as well as their areas of influence.

COUNTRY	PROTECTED AREAS
Belize	Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary
	Port Honduras Marine Reserve
	South Water Caye Marine Reserve
	Payne’s Creek National Park
	Gladden Spit & Silk Cayes Marine Reserve
Guatemala	Punta de Manabique Wildlife Refuge
	Río Sarstún Multiple Use Area
	Bocas del Polochic Wildlife Refuge
Honduras	Sandy Bay West End Special Marine Protection Zone
	Turtle Harbour / Rock Harbour Special Marine Protection Zone
	Cuyamel Wildlife Refuge / Omoa National Park
	Capiro y Calentura National Park / Laguna de Guaimoreto Wildlife Refuge
	Archipelago of Cayos Cochinos Marine Natural Monument
Mexico	Yum Balam Flora and Fauna Protection Area
	Banco Chinchorro Biosphere Reserve
	Arrecifes de Xcalak National Park
	Manatee Sanctuary State Reserve Chetumal Bay
	Cozumel Island: Arrecifes de Cozumel National Park / La porción norte y la franja costera oriental, terrestres y marinas de la Isla de Cozumel Flora and Fauna Protection Area / Selva y Humedales de Cozumel State Reserve / Laguna Colombia State Ecological Park

The fourth objective, D. “Support activities related to effective conservation and monitoring of fish spawning aggregation sites (FSA) in the region” is not restricted to protected areas.

## Grant amounts and project period

The proposals to be presented may have a duration of up to two years. Proposals with a duration of up to 17 months may request a maximum amount of **US\$30,000**, while proposals between 18 and 24 months may request a maximum amount of **US\$50,000**, based on project needs and capacity of the implementing institution. For two-year projects, funding is approved for both years, but disbursement for the second year will depend on performance in the first year.

## Two-year Projects

For proposals with a duration of 2 years (with a maximum amount of US\$50,000), the applicant may allocate between US\$8,000 to US\$10,000 to subgrants (on-granting). For example, this amount may be used as seed funding for different women’s, indigenous people’s, and/or community projects if on-granting aligns with the objectives of the overall proposal. The methodology to be carried out for selecting and assigning the subgrants and the application of safeguards must be clearly explained in the proposal.

## 2. Reef Rescue Initiative (RRI):

### **Supporting and strengthening science-based restoration, repopulation and rehabilitation of coral reefs in the MAR region**

The German Cooperation through KfW, the Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MAR Fund) and the Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD) are pleased to announce the eighth request for proposals of the Reef Rescue Initiative (RRI). This RfP focuses on coral reefs in the region and is not restricted to specific protected areas.

#### **Objectives**

- A. Develop activities that target and respond to coral bleaching, for example, monitoring/mapping to determine bleaching impact and/or resilience to bleaching, mitigation measures for bleaching, design and implementation of coral restoration plans, among others.
- B. Promote strategies to prevent and address the Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease (SCTLD).
- C. Promote and contribute new techniques for restoration, repopulation, and rehabilitation of coral reefs in the MAR region in areas that are simultaneously working to address threats to coral reefs.
- D. Support coral restoration projects that promote productive activities or new markets.

#### **Eligible geographic areas**

This request for proposals is not restricted to protected areas. All coral reefs within the MAR region are eligible. Proposals must clearly justify the site where activities will take place for the benefit of the Mesoamerican Reef system.

#### **Grant amounts and project period**

The proposals to be presented may have a duration of up to 24 months. The maximum grant amount is **US\$34,500**, based on project needs and capacity of the implementing institution.

## ***Additional information for the Traditional and the Reef Rescue Initiative windows:***

### **Eligible applicants**

The following list includes eligible applicants for this request for proposals:

- Community-based organizations, including women's and indigenous people's organizations,
- Governmental institutions,
- Non-governmental organizations (NGO), and
- Academia and individuals (both must have administrative support from an NGO, who shall be responsible for the grant).

Potential grantee organizations must be:

- Legally recognized or registered in their country;
- In compliance and good standing with all requirements for operation as a legal local entity;
- Guided by an operational Board of Directors;
- Have a sound financial management system and structure in place (accounting, annual audits, etc.);
- Have a good history as a grantee (i.e., effective grant/project implementation); and
- Have experience in the field of coastal and marine resources management.

Organizations must have their headquarters established in any one of the four countries of the MAR region (Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras) to be eligible.

Community organizations –including women's and indigenous people's organizations– may be supported directly or indirectly through an NGO, as long as a signed agreement exists and is shared between the two that demonstrates that the community organization is an active participant in the project.

To maximize available resources, proposals involving duplication of funds/efforts funded by other MAR Fund initiatives or programs will not be considered.

All supported organizations must implement and monitor the compliance of MAR Fund's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) throughout project execution. If the organization already has its own policies or procedures, these may be applied if they fulfill the requirements of the MAR Fund ESMS.

In addition to finding the information related to the ESMS on [our website](#), revision of **Appendix B** is recommended. It includes other requirements to apply to this RfP. For questions about the ESMS, please contact the following people: Elisa Blanda ([eblanda@marfund.org](mailto:eblanda@marfund.org)) and Karla Zaldaña ([kzaldana@marfund.org](mailto:kzaldana@marfund.org)).

### **Criteria for the Traditional and the Reef Rescue Initiative windows:**

The following criteria will be applied in the revision and selection of proposals. Some projects may not necessarily comply with all the conditions. Projects should:

- Demonstrate **measurable results** on progress of at least one of the stated RfP objectives;
- Coordinate their implementation across multiple stakeholders;

- Have transferable or replicable outcomes for other communities/protected areas;
- Strengthen local management capacity of professionals and institutions;
- Contribute to strengthening local capacities;
- Engage the MPAs of interest, and be aligned with their management plans and with the institutional priorities of the protected area managers;
- Create a new source of financing to reduce the financial gap of the protected area in which you will work (if applicable);
- Align with national, regional or global strategies, plans or policies;
- Align with ridge-to-reef strategies;
- Have activities that are closely aligned with the applicant organization's mission;
- Propose activities that are sustainable beyond the project period;
- Build on current work in the area or successful model projects in the region;
- Demonstrate community participation and empowerment in the proposed activities (community/NGO/GO endorsement letters as backup document);
- For collaborations with other local entities (women's group, indigenous people's, community, NGO and OG), please provide collaboration letters for the project;
- Promote collective and/or community resilience; and
- Clearly identify and assess the environmental and social risks and impacts of the proposed activities.

**Specific criteria for the Reef Rescue Initiative window (in addition to the above listed):**

- Create a new source of funding for coral reef restoration in the region (if applicable); and
- Generate transferable results to sites with potential for coral reef restoration.

**Budget**

For this RfP, at least 25% of the total budget must come from other sources, as a match to the requested funds. The match may be both cash and in-kind. Salaries/partial salaries of people directly involved in the development of the project may be included. The maximum amount allowed for administration expenses cannot exceed 10% of the total amount requested. Administration expenses (overhead) refer exclusively to the fixed operating costs of the organization.

The costs of implementing and complying with the Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) may be included in the budget. Eligible costs are, for example, the purchase of safety equipment, first aid kits, diving insurance, among others, to be detailed in the proposal budget. Information related to the ESMS can be found on [our website](#).

**Continuation**

If your proposal is the continuation of a project supported by the small grants program that ended a maximum of 3 months ago or is about to end (in a maximum of 6 months), you may submit a new proposal by selecting the "CONTINUATION" option in the on-line proposal format. Applicants may use the information from the previous proposal or adjust the information as needed. Please include a brief update on the results to date of the previous project and a brief summary of the new specific objectives and new activities to be implemented in the **Additional information** section (on-line proposal format). You should also attach the due diligence documents that have been modified/updated, the new Project Development Table, the Project Budget, and the Environmental and Social Screening Questionnaire. This proposal will undergo evaluation like the others. If the

proposal is approved, a modification to the last grant agreement will be made to expedite the donation process.

### **Proposal format and submission of proposals**

Complete proposals and the due diligence documentation, including the signed **Appendix B**, must be submitted through the **on-line format** on the MAR Fund webpage. Applicants submitting a proposal on the implementation of sustainable ventures/businesses that can demonstrate a positive impact on the resources of the MAR must also fill out the **business form**. Proposals that do not present complete documentation will not be evaluated and will be discarded.

In addition to the proposal, a video of maximum three minutes may be submitted, in which the implementers, the objective, the activities, the expected results, the proposed impacts of the project and any relevant context information not mentioned in the proposal are presented in a summarized and engaging way. This does not have to be a professional video, but rather an informal –but informative– one prepared by the applicants (e.g. with mobile phones). Alternatively, the applicant may request a brief call with Elisa Blanda ([eblanda@marfund.org](mailto:eblanda@marfund.org)) and Karla Zaldaña ([kzaldana@marfund.org](mailto:kzaldana@marfund.org)), **at least two weeks before the deadline, by October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024**, to present in no more than three minutes the same information that is required for the video. This call will be recorded and shared with the evaluation committee.

Attached you will find the proposal format and annexes in Word/Excel. For community organizations or groups that can demonstrate the unavailability of an Internet connection, proposals can be sent to the following addresses of the member funds or the MAR Fund central office, depending on the country in which the proposal will be submitted:

#### **FOR MEXICO**

**Fondo Mexicano para la  
Conservación de la Naturaleza, A. C.  
(FMCN)**

c/o Cintia Landa

email address:

[cintia.landa@fmcn.org](mailto:cintia.landa@fmcn.org)

#### **FOR BELIZE**

**Protected Areas Conservation Trust  
(PACT)**

c/o Robbin Burns

2 Mango Street, Belmopan City, Cayo,  
Belize

email address:

[cimanager@pactbelize.org](mailto:cimanager@pactbelize.org)

#### **FOR GUATEMALA**

**The Mesoamerican Reef Fund  
(MAR Fund)**

c/o Elisa Blanda

22 Av. 0-59, Zona 15, Vista Hermosa II,  
Guatemala, Guatemala, 01015

email address:

[eblanda@marfund.org](mailto:eblanda@marfund.org)

#### **FOR HONDURAS**

**Fundación Biosfera (FB)**

c/o María Arteaga

Colonia Bella Oriente, Bloque B, Casa  
4503, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

email address:

[fbpcoordinacion@gmail.com](mailto:fbpcoordinacion@gmail.com)

### **Deadline**

The deadline for the submission of proposals is **November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024**. All proposals must be received no later than 11:59 p. m. in each country on that date. If technical assistance is required, it will be given until the same day at 5:00 p. m. (CST).



MAR Fund can answer specific questions in relation to the project idea, coherence and structure of the proposal and elements included in the documents or annexes. For this, the applicants must contact the corresponding member funds or the MAR Fund central office with ample time (**no later than four weeks after the launch of the call, by October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024**) to be attended. The guidance provided does not imply approval of the proposal; final approval of proposals is the exclusive responsibility of the Board of Directors.

To request a call to make a brief presentation on the objective, the activities, the expected results, the proposed impacts of the project and any relevant context information not mentioned in the proposal instead of developing a short video, the deadline is **October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024**.

### **Financial support for proposal development**

Applicants interested in receiving financial support of up to US\$1,000 for the preparation of a proposal may request it through the “**Request for support for proposal preparation form**” (**Annex 1**) and send it to the MAR Fund central office **no later than four weeks after the launch of the call (October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024)**. Support applications will be evaluated and those selected will be notified one week later (**October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024**).

The applicant organization may use the funds to, for example, hire a consultant of their choice to prepare the proposal and/or to organize consultations with local stakeholders. The consultant providing the support will schedule one or more Skype/Zoom calls with the applicants to guide and work with them on the proposal if they cannot meet in person. The support or assistance process for the development of proposals does not imply commitment for financing the resulting proposal.

The amount of up to US\$1,000 will be transferred to the selected organization only until MAR Fund receives the complete proposal in a timely manner. This transfer will be a reimbursement, therefore, the organization must hire and pay the consultant in advance, and present the corresponding expense receipts to MAR Fund for reimbursement.

### **Language of the proposal**

Proposals may be submitted in English or Spanish.

### **Considerations:**

- Applicants are responsible for all costs associated with the preparation and presentation of proposals submitted to MAR Fund for evaluation, and therefore there is no obligation on behalf of MAR Fund to cover such costs – either in whole or in part – or to provide any advance payments or compensation if their proposal(s) is not selected.
- Applicants acknowledge and accept that the preparation of the proposal(s) does not constitute a financial obligation on behalf of MAR Fund, and therefore the economic and financial responsibility for the preparation of the proposal(s) is exclusive of the applicant(s), regardless of the selection process outcome.
- The selection process will be carried out in accordance with MAR Fund's internal evaluation guidelines and the result will be final.

### **Proposal selection process**

Project proposals will be reviewed by the Grants and Evaluation Committee, which will make recommendations to the MAR Fund Board of Directors. The Board is responsible for the final decision on the proposals to be supported.

Applicants will be notified of the selection process results in **May 2025**, through the on-line platform and by email.

For questions on this request for proposals and the grant process, please contact, the following person:

Elisa Blanda  
Small Grants Program Officer  
Central Office  
[eblanda@marfund.org](mailto:eblanda@marfund.org)

## Partners of the two financial windows

### **German Development Bank (KfW)**

The KfW is the German Development Bank based in Frankfurt. Its name originally comes from “Reconstruction Credit Institute”. It was established in 1948 after World War II as part of the Marshall Plan. The purpose of the institution is to support the economy, society and ecology worldwide. It supports the sustainable improvement of economic and living conditions of the middle-class population, protection of natural resources, housing economy, infrastructure, education, financing of projects and exports and development cooperation. As of 2018, it is Germany’s third largest bank by balance sheet. It covers over 90% of its borrowing needs in the capital markets, mainly through bonds that are guaranteed by the federal government. This allows KfW to raise funds at advantageous conditions. Its exemption from having to pay corporate taxes due to its legal status as a public agency and unremunerated equity provided by its public shareholders allow KfW to provide loans for purposes prescribed by the KfW law at lower rates than commercial banks. KfW has been involved in the conservation of the Mesoamerican Reef (MAR), supporting the strengthening of coastal and marine protected areas, protecting natural resources, and promoting their sustainable use.

### **French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM)**

The French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) was established to promote a sustainable global environment and works across Latin America, Africa and Asia in the protection of ecosystems. Their work primarily involves dealing with climate change and protecting the ozone layer, biodiversity, marine protection, and soil degradation. FFEM has worked in various national parks in these continents together with other global environmental groups such as the World Wide Fund for Nature, funding the protection of areas of ecological vulnerability. It has also done much work in the Indian Ocean islands such as the Seychelles. In the Mesoamerican Reef (MAR), FFEM also supports the recovery of fish populations by strengthening the protection and monitoring of a regional network of fish spawning aggregation sites.

### **Paul M. Angell Family Foundation**

In 1996, David and Lynn Angell created a family foundation to administer their philanthropic efforts. For them, philanthropy was an extension of their natural inclination to help people, knowing that sometimes people need a hand. Helping others was a principle they took seriously and enjoyed immensely, and their motivations sprang from a deep, spiritual desire to make a difference in the world. The Foundation promotes high-impact programs that help people achieve self-sufficiency and well-being by providing them with basic necessities and economic stability. The Foundation has been involved in the conservation of the Mesoamerican Reef (MAR), addressing one of the main threats to the region: untreated wastewater effluents and solid waste, supporting the construction and/or improvement of infrastructure for the management of solid and liquid waste, changing the behavior of communities through education, the implementation of good environmental practices and the creation of new alliances for the protection of water resources, among others.

## **Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD)**

The Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD) is the organ of the Central American Integration System (SICA) responsible for the environmental agenda. Its objective is "to contribute to the sustainable development of the Central American region, strengthening the cooperation and integration regime for environmental management". The CCAD seeks the appropriate way to make national policy and legislation guidelines compatible with regional strategies for the conservation and restoration of coral reefs, in order to establish collaboration among the countries of the region to jointly seek the adoption of sustainable development practices, promoting projects with a ridge-to-reef vision.

## **Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MAR Fund)**

The Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MAR Fund) is a private regional environmental fund established to support conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in the Mesoamerican Reef (MAR) as a single ecosystem and ecoregion. Its mission is to seek, secure and facilitate regional funding, foster partnerships and drive capacity building for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of marine and coastal ecosystems in the Mesoamerican Reef region. It was established by four pre-existing environmental funds, one from each MAR country: Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT) in Belize, Fundación para la Conservación de los Recursos Naturales y Ambiente en Guatemala (FCG) in Guatemala, Fundación Biosfera (FB) in Honduras, and Fondo Mexicano para la Conservación de la Naturaleza (FMCN) in Mexico ([www.marfund.org](http://www.marfund.org)).