

FIRST CALL FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR CONSERVATION IN THE ECUADORIAN AMAZON BASIN

1. About the Amazon Biocorridor Fund (BCA Fund)

The Amazon Biocorridor Fund is a conservation trust fund established to receive and manage financial resources from the debt-for-nature swap carried out by the Republic of Ecuador in partnership with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); aimed at contributing to the fulfillment of Ecuador's national commitments to conservation, biodiversity, and climate change in the Ecuadorian Amazon basin. The Fund channels resources to support initiatives that generate verifiable environmental and social outcomes, guided by principles of transparency, accountability, impact, and territorial sustainability.

In this context, the BCA Fund is launching its **First Call for Grants** as a tool to finance projects aligned with the strategic objectives of the Amazon Biocorridor Program and the conservation commitments undertaken by the Republic of Ecuador within the framework of the debt-for-nature swap transaction for the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Sections of this call:

- Objective of the call
- Geographic scope of funding
- Funding priorities for this call
- Eligible applicants
- Grant categories, co-funding, and exclusions
- Eligibility criteria
- Application process and proposal evaluation
- Call for Proposals (timeline)
- Attachments

More information on our website: [Amazon Biocorridor Fund](#).

2. Objective of the Call for Proposals

To fund projects that contribute effectively and verifiably to the conservation of biodiversity, ecological connectivity, and sustainable development in the Ecuadorian Amazon basin, in alignment with the Conservation Commitments undertaken by the Republic of Ecuador for the Amazon Biocorridor.

3. Geographic scope of funding

The geographic scope is limited to the Amazon Biocorridor, which encompasses the Ecuadorian Amazon basin, understood as the hydrographic and ecological system comprising the vast network of rivers that drain into the Amazon, including not only the Amazonian lowlands but also the mountainous areas and foothills of the Eastern Andes. This area encompasses interconnected ecosystems that regulate the water cycle, biodiversity, and the regional climate.

In the [Geovisor](#), you can view the geographic extent of the Ecuadorian Amazon basin:

Also available in [Appendix 6 of the Grant Manual](#).

4. Funding Priorities for This Call for Proposals

In accordance with the Conservation Commitments undertaken by the Republic of Ecuador for the Amazon Biocorridor, the BCA Fund will prioritize funding for proposals that contribute, in a direct and verifiable manner, to the following areas, in this order of priority:

- (a) Support compliance with the Conservation Commitments undertaken by the Republic of Ecuador for the Amazon Biocorridor. ([Annex 7](#))
- (b) Support the implementation of activities related to the Amazon Biocorridor.
- (c) Support the sustainable development of the indigenous communes, communities, peoples, and nationalities inhabiting the Ecuadorian Amazon;
- (d) Support the management of Ecuador's National System of Protected Areas, as well as other conservation or protected areas located in the Ecuadorian Amazon, duly recognized by the National Environmental Authority; and
- (e) Contribute to sustainable development, conservation, and climate change mitigation or adaptation in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

Across the board, all proposals must incorporate a gender and human rights approach, promoting effective participation, equity, and respect for individuals and communities, with special attention to those in vulnerable situations.

5. Eligible Applicants

The following public and private sector entities are eligible to apply for a grant from the BCA Fund:

Public sector entities:

- Agencies and departments of the Executive Branch.
- Entities that are part of the decentralized autonomous system¹.
- Agencies and entities created to provide public services or to carry out economic activities undertaken by the State.
- Legal entities established by legislative act of the decentralized autonomous governments for the provision of public services².
- Universities, Academic Institutes, and Research Centers.

Private-sector entities:

- Civil society organizations (CSOs) legally incorporated in the country³.
- For-profit legal entities.

¹ Article 28 of the Organic Code on Territorial Organization, Autonomy, and Decentralization (COOTAD) establishes that **the entities comprising the decentralized autonomous system** are public-law entities with legal personality and political, administrative, and financial autonomy, and include: a) provincial governments; b) metropolitan governments; c) municipal governments; and d) rural parish governments.

² For the purposes of this document, **public legal entities created by Decentralized Autonomous Governments** shall be understood to be those established by a legislative act in accordance with the COOTAD, with legal personality under public law, intended for the provision of public services or the management of their own competencies, such as public enterprises, associations of municipalities, and consortia.

³ This includes organizations of indigenous peoples and nationalities.

- Universities, academic institutes, and research centers.

Proposals submitted by public and private sector applicants must comply with the guiding principles and technical eligibility criteria for projects.

6. Grant Categories, Co-financing, and Exclusions

To address the diversity of initiatives and actors contributing to the achievement of the BCA Fund's strategic objectives, three grant categories are established, differentiated by the maximum funding amount and the duration of implementation.

Table 1: Grant Categories

| Category | Amount | Duration | Co-financing ⁴ |
|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|---|
| Small | Up to US\$100,000 | Up to 24 months | Not required (but at least 5% in-kind is encouraged). |
| Medium | From \$100,001 to \$500,000 | Up to 36 months | Minimum co-financing equivalent to 10% in kind or cash. |
| Large Grant | Over US\$500,000 | Up to 48 months | Minimum co-financing equivalent to 25% in kind or cash. |

6.1 Exclusions (Ineligible Activities)

The BCA Fund will not consider proposals that are intended to be used, directly or indirectly, for any of the following purposes:

- Operating or administrative expenses of ministries, departments, or agencies of the Republic of Ecuador or the government of any other country, unless the beneficiaries of the government agencies or the direct or indirect costs of project implementation are in addition to existing government budgets;
- Activities on the exclusion list of the BCA Fund's Environmental and Social Management System; ([for more details, see Tool 1 of the ESMS](#))
- Debts and provisions for losses;
- Projects related to political campaigns and/or political propaganda;
- Activities that contradict the objectives of the BCA Program and Fund, specifically those that undermine efforts toward the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, ecosystem resilience, and a sustainable bioeconomy within the BCA management model⁵.
- Activities prohibited by the Constitution of the Republic, international instruments to which Ecuador is a signatory, and national laws (in force);
- Any other use that is inconsistent with the purpose, vision, mission, and/or values of the BCA Fund, as determined by the BCA Fund's Board of Directors.

⁴ The BCA Fund promotes **co-financing** as a strategy to amplify the impact of resources allocated to grants; this allows the BCA Fund's contributions to be complemented by financial or in-kind contributions from applicants and strategic partners, ensuring the sustainability of grants awarded by the BCA Fund.

⁵ The Amazon Biocorridor (BCA) is a **conservation management model with an impact on the Ecuadorian Amazon**, whose vision for 2035 seeks to achieve a connected and resilient Amazon where nature contributes to the prosperity of society, sustaining the livelihoods of local communities and their culture, and contributing to climate regulation.

7. Eligibility Criteria

The criteria to be taken into consideration for the evaluation and selection of concept notes and full project proposals shall include at least the following:

- a) **Relevance and strategic alignment (15% weighting):** Assesses the extent to which the project aligns with the BCA Fund’s objectives, principles, and priority areas; it also evaluates the project’s direct contribution to fulfilling the Conservation Commitments undertaken by the Republic of Ecuador.
- b) **Expected impact / results (20% weighting):** Assesses the project’s contribution to the conservation, restoration, and sustainable development of the Amazon, considering relevant, measurable, and sustainable results. It evaluates the adequate management of environmental and social impacts and risks, including the participation of indigenous peoples and communities, a gender perspective, and sustainable livelihoods, as well as SMART indicators and clear verification methods.
- c) **Technical Feasibility (20% weighting):** Assesses the project’s feasibility by considering the soundness of the methodological approach, its suitability to the local and cultural context, and available capacities. Analyzes the coherence between the problem, objectives, activities, results, and indicators, as well as the clarity of the implementation plan, timeline, and the adequate identification of risks and mitigation measures.
- d) **Implementation Capacity (10% weighting):** Assesses the experience of the organization and the proposed team in similar projects, as well as their technical, administrative, and financial capacity to manage the grant. It considers compliance with legal and statutory requirements, the existence of accountability and transparency mechanisms, and the capacity for monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of results.
- e) **Risk Management (10% weighting):** Evaluates the appropriate identification of the environmental and social risks of the activities; in the Concept Note, Tools 1 and 2 of the Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) must be completed, and if the project advances to Phase II (Full Proposal), Tool 3 of the ESMS must be submitted, which will assess the definition of clear and relevant measures to address/manage/mitigate identified risks ([Link to ESMS](#) and [tools](#)).
- f) **Sustainability (5%):** Assesses the project’s capacity to maintain its results over time through financial, technical, and institutional strategies, as well as the strengthening of local capacities. It also considers co-financing commitments or complementary contributions, whether in cash or in kind.
- g) **Replicability and scalability (5%):** Assesses how sustainable the proposed projects are and whether they can be scaled up or replicated.
- h) **Budget (15%):** Assesses the consistency and technical and financial justification of project costs, taking into account market prices and the efficient use of resources.

For more information, please refer to [the Grants Manual](#), Section 7 “Technical Eligibility Criteria for Projects”.

8. Application Process and Proposal Evaluation

Each lead applicant may submit up to one application per grant category. The submission of proposals will take place in two phases:

Phase 1 - Concept Note: All proposals, whether submitted by public or private sector applicants and regardless of the grant category, must first submit a concept note that complies with the established format and procedure.

Applicants must complete Tool 1: “Exclusion Checklist” of the Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) to confirm that the proposed activities are not included in the BCA Fund’s exclusion list or list of ineligible activities.

The documentation to be submitted to the BCA Fund during this phase is as follows:

- Administrative and financial documentation—see [Annex 1A](#)
- Concept Note Template, see [Annex 2 of the Grant Manual](#)
- Tool 1 of the ESMS; see [Tool 1 ESMS](#)⁶

Phase 2 - Full Proposal: Following the review and approval of the concept notes from Phase 1, the BCA Fund will request that shortlisted applicants submit a full proposal.

Additionally, applicants advancing to this phase must complete [Tool 2: “Environmental and Social Assessment Questionnaire and Risk Categorization”](#) and [Tool 3: “Environmental and Social Action Plan – ESAP”](#) of the Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS); depending on the applicability of the identified risk, additional supporting documentation may be requested.

The documentation to be submitted to the BCA Fund in this phase is as follows:

- Administrative and financial documentation—see [Annex 1B](#)
- Complete Proposal Template; see [Annex 3 of the Grant Manual](#).
- Tools 2 and 3 of the ESMS; see [Tools 2 and 3 of the ESMS](#)
- Appendix 3: [Declaration of Conflict of Interest](#)

Proposals **submitted** to the BCA Fund will be evaluated in the following sequential stages:

- **Administrative and Compliance Review:** The BCA Fund team will verify that the proposal aligns with the call’s priorities, comes from an eligible applicant, does not include ineligible activities, has been submitted in full and on time, and meets the established budgetary criteria. If necessary, the Fund may request corrections or disqualify the proposal for justified reasons⁷. At this stage, the procedures of **the Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS)** apply (For more information on the [ESMS](#)).
- **Technical Evaluation:** Proposals that pass the administrative phase will be evaluated individually by the members of the BCA Technical Committee ([Annex 1](#)), based on technical, strategic, and impact criteria.
- **Due Diligence and Final Decision:** Proposals will undergo a process of legal, financial, and administrative due diligence. Based on these inputs, the BCA Fund’s Board of Directors will make the final approval decision.
- The BCA Fund will inform both selected and non-selected applicants, in writing, of the resolutions adopted by the BCA Fund’s Board of Directors.

Please note that project administrative expenses **may not exceed 15% of the total grant amount**, in order to ensure that the majority of resources are allocated to results and impacts on the ground. Eligible categories are detailed in [Annexes 2](#)⁸ and [3](#) of the Grant Manual.

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⁶ The issues identified by the BCA Fund that organizations must address must be resolved within 15 business days of being notified of the Concept Note’s preselection.

⁷ The issues identified by the BCA Fund for the organizations must be addressed within 15 business days of being notified of the selection of the full proposal.

⁸ Review Annex 2 “Concept Note Template, Section C. Project Budget”

Public and private sector entities are invited to submit a concept note using the template provided [here](#).

Applications must be submitted through **one of the following channels (it is not necessary to use both)**

1. Submission via the online form (preferred channel):

Via the system: [Proposal Evaluation — BCA Fund](#)

2. Submission via email:

- Public sector proposals: convocatoriapublico@fondobca.org
- Private sector proposals: convocatoriaprivado@fondobca.org

If submitting via email, the subject line must include the **name of the applicant organization and the general topic of the concept note proposal**, as shown in the following example:
Subject: Fundación SELVA – Forest restoration.

Concept notes **must be submitted no later than May 26, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. (Ecuador time)**. No hard copies are required. The submission of a concept note does not create any rights, legitimate expectations, or funding commitments on the part of the BCA Fund.

Applicant organizations are requested to carefully read the terms and conditions of this call for proposals before beginning to draft their proposals, as set forth in this document and detailed in the Grant Award Procedures Manual and its seven (7) Annexes (find the documentation [here](#)).

Applications for the BCA Fund's call for proposals must be submitted in Spanish. Proposals must be typed in Times New Roman, 11-point font, single-spaced, and submitted in PDF format.

Grants will be awarded approximately seven months after the call for proposals is launched, once the selected applicants have completed all evaluation phases and signed the corresponding grant agreement with the BCA Fund.

For more information about the Amazon Biocorridor Fund (BCA) and the call for proposals, please visit the Amazon Biocorridor Fund website:

[Calls for Proposals – Amazon Biocorridor Fund](#)

For specific questions, applicants may contact the Amazon Biocorridor Fund team via the following email address: consultasconvocatoria@fondobca.org

To ensure transparency, equal treatment, and equitable access to information, the BCA Fund will publish all questions received from applicants and the corresponding answers on its website, so that the information is available to all applicants.

9.1 Call for Proposals Timeline

The following timeline sets out the key dates for this Call for Proposals. The Amazon Biocorridor Fund may adjust the timeline, when necessary, through official communication via its institutional channels, ensuring the principle of equal treatment among applicants:

TIMELINE

| ACTIVITIES | DATES |
|---|--|
| Launch of Call for Proposals | April 10, 2026 |
| Virtual Information Sessions – Phase I (Concept Note) | April 21, 23, 28, 30, 2026 May 5, 7, 12, 14, 19, 2026 Link: Capacity assessment Time: 10:00 a.m. |
| Deadline for submitting concept notes | May 26, 2026 11:59 p.m. (Ecuador Time) |
| Notification to shortlisted applicants (Email) | July 27, 2026 |
| Virtual information sessions - Phase II (Full Proposal) | July 30, 2026 August 6, 13, 20, 27, 2026 |
| Deadline for submission of full proposals | August 27, 2026 11:59 p.m. (Ecuador Time) |
| Final project selection and notification | October 2026 * |
| Start of grant disbursement | November 2026** |

* Estimated date, subject to confirmation by the BCA Fund Board of Directors.

** Tentative date, subject to the signing of the grant agreement and compliance with the prerequisites established by the BCA Fund

10. Appendices

For the purposes of this Call for Proposals, the annexes are organized as follows:

10.1 Documents to be reviewed by the applicant to access BCA Fund Grants

Applicants must review and comply with the following documents, which form an integral part of the regulatory and operational framework of this Call for Proposals, and whose content must be known and observed:

- **[PROCEDURAL MANUAL FOR THE AWARD OF GRANTS](#)**
 - [Annex 1: Guidelines of the Amazon Biocorridor Technical Committee](#)
 - [Annex 2: Phase 1 Form: Concept Note Template](#)
 - [Annex 3: Phase 2 Form: Complete Proposal Template](#)
 - [Appendix 4: Template for Basic Technical and Financial Reports](#)
 - [Appendix 5: Standard Grant Agreement Template](#)
 - [Appendix 6: Geographic Distribution of the Amazon Biocorridor in the Amazon Basin at the Provincial, Cantonal, and Parish Levels](#)
 - [Appendix 7: Technical elements included in the conservation commitments](#)
- **[Environmental and Social Management System for the BCA Fund](#)**
 - [ESMS tools](#), which must be completed and submitted by applicants in accordance with the corresponding phase of the evaluation and application process.

Failure to comply with the ESMS requirements will constitute grounds for disqualification of the proposal or suspension of the grant award process, as applicable.