

2025/26

Projects Cycle

Eswatini Environment Fund



ESWATINI ENVIRONMENT FUND: 2025/26 PROJECTS GRANTS APPLICATION GUIDELINES

1. ABOUT THE ESWATINI ENVIRONMENT FUND

The Eswatini Environment Fund was established by the Environment Management Act of 2002. It provides financial support for programmes, projects and activities aimed at the enhancement, protection and conservation of the environment, the sustainable management of natural resources and supporting community participation in these activities, as well as promoting environmental sustainability at grassroots level in the Kingdom of Eswatini. The Fund is managed by the Eswatini Environment Fund Board of Trustees (BoT) and the Eswatini Environment Authority performs the administrative function of the Fund. The BoT is responsible for approving projects that are to be awarded grants from the Fund, from shortlisted projects that have been identified by a technical proposal selection committee of experts from the pool of applications that have responded to the open national call for proposals.

2. ELIGIBILITY

2.1 Projects that are eligible for funding by the Fund must satisfy the following minimum requirements:

- Must have positive impact on community environmental protection and rehabilitations;
- Enhance community livelihoods;
- Must demonstrate sustainability beyond the funding period;
- Must demonstrate community ownership or stakeholder involvement;
- Must demonstrate youth participation;
- Must have the capacity to leverage additional resources.

2.2 The call for funding is open to:

- Communities (rural, peri-urban, and urban);
- Environmental groups within communities;
- Non-Governmental Organizations engaged in environmental protection initiatives;
- Individuals whose projects portray clear positive impacts to the environment and wider community;
- Educational and Research institutions.

3. PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE 2025/2026 CYCLE

The Eswatini Environment Fund seek to tackle emerging environmental risks facing the country in all four administrative regions of the country. In this year funding cycle, the focus is on five thematic areas:

3.1 Sustainable Land Management

Sustainable land management (SLM) refers to practices and technologies that aim to integrate the management of land, water and other environmental resources to meet

human needs while ensuring long-term sustainability, ecosystem services, biodiversity and livelihoods. SLM is crucial to minimizing land degradation, rehabilitating degraded areas and ensuring the optimal use of land resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

SLM enables farmers to intensify existing land more sustainably, enhancing productivity without degrading land resources. SLM is thus a key element in international goal of sustainable development.

Some areas of land are already seriously degraded in Eswatini, and some irreversibly so. This includes large areas of cropland, grassland, woodland and forest areas whose degradation reduces productivity, disrupts vital ecosystem functions, negatively affects biodiversity and water resources, and increases vulnerability to climate change. Land degradation is a widespread and growing problem that can only be tackled through coordinated and collaborative approaches and targeted programmes and action. SLM encompasses established approaches such as soil and water conservation, natural resource management and integrated landscape management. A number of projects that have been supported by the Fund in the past include:

- Land degradation projects.
- Run-off water management

3.2 Climate Change

Climate change refers to the long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Climate change has many local consequences such as intense droughts, water scarcity, severe fires, catastrophic storms and declining biodiversity. Climate change affects our health, ability to grow food, housing, safety and work.

Climate Change Adaptation supports interventions that respond directly to the needs of vulnerable communities and are most impacted by climate change. This year adaptation themes include;

- Climate-Smart Agriculture - These projects are expected to address the direct or indirect impacts of climate change on agricultural production and could target livestock and/or crop production.
- Climate-Resilient Livelihoods - These projects are anticipated to increase the resilience of income generating activities and associated assets in the face of a changing climate.
- Capacity building and Governance - These projects are expected to address the capacity building/skills development needs of communities to facilitate local adaptation action plans and disaster risk preparedness plans.

Given the scale of climate change and the urgency of climate action, the Fund is looking to support more projects under this theme.

3.3 Sustainable Water Management

Sustainable water management means the consumption of water in a way that meets current, ecological, social, and economic needs without compromising the ability to meet those needs in the future. The focus is here water sources like rivers, earth dams, springs, and wells to name but a few.

The frequency and severity of drought is increasing, making it harder for people to recover between shocks. Access to water is essential for socio-economic development and livelihoods of communities across the country. Farmers require better access to sustainable water sources if agricultural production is to be improved sufficiently to support likely population growth of both people and livestock. On the long term, securing their demand for water will require a shift on how water is harvested for livestock, farming, and domestic use. Increased demand and increased usage of water resources, deterioration of natural conditions as quantitatively and qualitatively because of these increased usages and demands, and changing climate affect the water resources negatively and remain to be pressure on them. The best way to use water resources sustainably is through effective and holistic management of waters resources.

A number of projects that have been supported by the Fund in the past include

- Management of water sources e.g. water springs.
- Water harvesting

3.4 Chemical and Waste Management

Chemicals play a key role in agriculture, health and almost every aspect of modern industries, while they also pose potentially great threats to a healthy ecosystem and human health. Illicit and improper use of hazardous chemicals is still on-going, and lack of awareness in handling pesticides and herbicides is an issue for many communities. Improper management of municipal and solid waste, incineration and uncontrolled dumping continues to release harmful chemicals into the environment with negative consequences for both people and the ecosystems they rely on. Chemicals and waste constitute a major threat to human health particularly in low to middle income countries like Eswatini, mainly due to the lack of waste management infrastructure and awareness. Communities empowered with knowledge, funding and technical support can identify and implement effective local activities to avoid, reduce and phase out the use of harmful substances and manage the resource flow to waste in a circular system.

The Eswatini Environment Fund (EEF) provides financial and technical support to communities and civil society organizations for addressing national environmental challenges, while also promoting poverty reduction and sustainable development. In the chemicals and waste priority area the following projects may be funded: supporting organic farming as an alternative to using harmful pesticides and herbicides, community recycling project, community waste management project, reduction of waste through segregation and compost production.

Projects in this sector that have been supported by the Fund in the past include

- Youth led waste recycling business
- Provision electronic waste sorting equipment for youth associations

3.5 Ecosystem, Habitat, Biodiversity Protection and Sustainable Use

Biodiversity is the variety of all forms of life and it is essential to the existence and proper functioning of all ecosystems. Biodiversity supports habitats for all species by providing many unique environments in which species can exist; these include ecosystems of all types and sizes, rare ecosystems, and corridors between habitats. Biodiversity promotes food security, clean air, water security, energy security, and provides raw materials economic development.

Many human activities can have a negative effect on biodiversity. Land developments for socioeconomic purposes can be especially detrimental because land conversion and subsequent loss of habitats can affect the stability or continued existence of species. People can also harm biodiversity by putting stress on environments and species through overuse of an environment and its resources. Habitat loss is a challenge for virtually all species, as humans convert natural habitats to other land uses.

An integrated landscape approach to conservation planning plays a key role in ensuring suitable habitats for species. However, many protected areas are not functioning as effectively as originally intended, due in part to limited resources to maintain these areas and/or enforce relevant legal frameworks. Efforts to preserve biodiversity must take into account not only the physical environment, but also social and economic systems that are well connected to biodiversity and ecosystem services.

A number of projects that have been supported by the Fund in the past include:

- Fencing of wetlands and water pans.
- Community ecosystem tourism developments

4. Size of Grants

The Fund will award small grants up to a maximum of **E300,000.00** for eligible projects. A minimum of 80% of this grant should go direct into the environmental action. *In-kind contributions from involved stakeholders and community members are encouraged.*

5. Checklist

A set of criteria has been established to judge a project's eligibility for financing. This is as laid down below:

- () Letter from local authority (Umphakatsi or Municipality) approving the project.
- () Detailed explanation of the concept.
- () If there are any other funders for the project, attach the award letter.
- () If technical assistance for implementing the project will be sourced externally, attach the commitment letter from the identified expert.
- () Project is inclusive, demonstrates youth and women involvement. Attach list of committee members and their signatures.
- () At least **80%** of the funding goes to the actual project other than into administration costs.
- () The number of beneficiaries is stated such as the number of households

6. Application Process

- i. Application forms are available at EEA website (www.eea.org.sz); can requested from EEA via email: reception@eea.org.sz or call: 2404 6960/ 7608 9222 or can be requested via WhatsApp: 76066175.
- ii. Applications should be submitted before or by **16 April 2026(16:00Hrs)**. Submissions should be made in person to Eswatini Environment Authority offices in Mbabane, Rhus Office Park or via email to: reception@eea.org.sz.
- iii. Incomplete applications or a lack of required attachments (i.e. Letter from local authority) may result to disqualification of proposal.
- iv. All applications will be assessed by a technical committee of experts that will make recommendations to the Eswatini Environment Fund Board of Trustees after doing field verification of shortlisted projects.
- v. Physical, telephone call or email enquiries by project applicants are welcome at any time during the application process until the application deadline and should be directed to the Fund Office via email: sisekelo@eea.org.sz / mmbuli@eea.org.sz
- vi. Applicants will be advised of the Board of Trustees' decision on their application in writing as soon as the selection process has been finalized.

7. General information

- (i) The office will be monitoring and evaluating the progress of all funded projects. Where possible the office may provide technical assistance and other services that will fast-track the completion of the project.
- (ii) To those projects that will require an Environmental Impact Assessment, the Environmental Assessment fees may be deducted from the award.