



**NBSAP Accelerator Partnership  
NBSAP Accelerator Action Account (AAA)  
for the MatchMaking Mechanism (MMM)**

**November 2024**

## Acronyms

AA – Administrative Agent

AAA – Accelerator Action Account

BMUV – Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und nukleare Sicherheit (Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection of Germany)

BPPS – Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (UNDP)

CBD – Convention on Biological Diversity

GCU – Global Coordination Unit

KMGBF – Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

GBFF – Global Biodiversity Framework Fund

GEF – Global Environment Facility

IKI – International Climate Initiative

IPBES – Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

KBF – Kunming Biodiversity Fund

MMM – MatchMaking Mechanism

MOU – Memorandum of Understanding

MPTF – Multi Partner Trust Fund

MPTFO – Multi Partner Trust Fund Office

NBSAP – National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans

NDC-P – National Determined Contributions Partnership

PAF – (NDC-P) Partnership Action Fund

NUNO – Non-UN Organizations

PUNO – Participating UN Organizations

SC – Steering Committee

SCBD – Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

SDG – Sustainable Development Goals

SSA – Standard Administrative Arrangements

TOR – Terms of Reference

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme

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# I/ INTRODUCTION

## Context

The conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and the restoration of ecosystems is essential if humanity is to continue to survive. Nature underpins all life on Earth: it provides food, medicine, energy, clean air and water, security from natural disasters as well as recreation and cultural inspiration. Across the world, some 44,000 animal and plant species are endangered. Around half of these are still suffering declining populations. Habitat destruction for agriculture, development, road building and even renewable energy are driving this, and the impacts of climate change, including changing rainfall patterns, flood and drought are exacerbating it.

According to recent studies on the state of nature, such as the Global Assessment Report of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services issued by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), we have only a short window to halt and reverse the “unprecedented” decline of biodiversity before the role it plays in providing ecosystem services is left unfulfilled, threatening all life on Earth. System-wide transformations are needed now more than ever before.

In December 2022, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) of the Convention on Biological Diversity was adopted by the 15th Conference of the Parties to the CBD (COP 15) to take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to put nature on a path to recovery by 2030 for the benefit of people and planet by conserving and sustainability using biodiversity and ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources, while providing the necessary means of implementation. Building on lessons learned from the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020) and its Aichi Targets, this framework recognizes that urgent social and economic transformation is needed to recover, conserve and sustainably use our natural ecosystems through four global goals for 2050, the GBF aims to A) Protect and restore, B) Prosper with Nature C) Share Benefits Fairly D) Invest and collaborate. In the adoption of the Framework, national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) were re-affirmed as the primary instrument for national implementation of the Convention and for the Framework.

The Parties noted that the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework will be supported by decisions on the monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (Decision 15/5); planning, monitoring, reporting and review (15/6), resource mobilization (15/7); capacity-building and development and technical and scientific cooperation (15/8); digital sequence information on genetic resources (15/9); and on cooperation with other Conventions and international organizations (15/13) and affirmed that these decisions are of equal standing to the Framework.

The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership was announced during COP15 as a mechanism to provide strategic and tangible support to countries to accelerate implementation of NBSAPs. Initial research by the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership indicates that governments face barriers with financial resource limitations, difficulties in financial planning and using the monitoring framework for planning and reporting, data accessibility issues, lack of effective mainstreaming and whole-of-society approaches, lack of technical capacity, and hurdles in implementing national frameworks at local levels.<sup>17</sup>

## NBSAP Accelerator Partnership

The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership is a country-led global initiative established to collectively achieve the goals and targets of the KMGBF and ultimately, the global vision of living in harmony with nature by 2050 by supporting the development and implementation of ambitious National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP). The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership was initially developed under the leadership of the governments of Colombia and Germany. The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership brings together countries with whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to strengthen global, regional and national ambition on biodiversity action aligned with GBF targets.

The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership provides a platform for countries as well as for institutions, non-state actors and other stakeholders to support accelerated national action. The Accelerator Partnership aims to do this through supporting innovative solutions, awareness building and capacity building in order to overcome weak implementation, financial constraints, lack of collaboration and other challenges. The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership acknowledges that improving political will and building capacities of countries to develop and implement their NBSAPs requires coordinated, coherent, and aligned support from all relevant stakeholders across sectors.

The overarching purpose of the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership is to ensure coherent support for the revision and implementation of NBSAPs and to promote increasing ambition over time through an enhanced process of country-specific support, coordination, collaboration and shared learning (see <https://nbsapaccelerator.org/about-us/the-accelerator>). It will promote the following mutually reinforcing and interrelated goals:

- 1 Enhance NBSAP Preparation, Implementation, and Review: Support NBSAP preparation, implementation, and review, complementing efforts with ongoing initiatives, GEF-7 Early Action Support project, implemented by UNDP and UNEP, GEF-8 , the GBF Fund, the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP); the Global Knowledge Support Service for Biodiversity (GKSSB) and the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People (HAC), among others.
- 2 Strengthen Technical and Institutional Capacity: Develop the technical and institutional capacity of government agencies and national organizations to implement NBSAPs and monitor and report on progress effectively.
- 3 Facilitate Biodiversity Finance and Innovative Solutions: Facilitate access to biodiversity finance and development of new financial solutions to accelerate the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework.
- 4 Align Financial Flows for Biodiversity Mainstreaming: Align financial flows and catalyse biodiversity mainstreaming across productive sectors.
- 5 Foster Peer-to-peer Learning and International Collaboration: Provide knowledge management support and facilitate north-south, south-south and triangular cooperation and peer-to-peer learning among countries to enhance implementation and collective upscaling of nature-positive actions.
- 6 Elevate NBSAPs in National Development Planning: Work with partners to raise the profile of NBSAPs and mainstream nature into national development planning to deliver the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement.

The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership will achieve its goals, in part, by acting as a neutral broker, connector, and advocate for the Partnership's guiding principles, and by providing targeted and context-specific support through two primary enablers — the Matchmaking Mechanism and the Facilitator Programme.

The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership supported by four governance structures: a Steering Committee, Global Coordination Unit (GCU), a Technical Advisory Group and the broader membership. Currently an interim Steering Committee is made up of 14 NBSAP Accelerator Partnership member states including two co-chairs with four permanent observers (GEF, SCBD, UNDP and UNEP) and four rotating observers selected from the membership. The Technical Advisory Group is currently being established to provide an independent voice on partnership activities. The broader membership brings together countries, institutional partners and non- state actors to inform and shape the direction of the partnership.

The GCU currently is staffed through SDCD, UNEP and UNDP; however, the long-term hosting of the GCU is still being determined (as per the terms of reference for the GCU, the long-term arrangements for the GCU were to be established after phase I of the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership, after COP-16. The GCU provides a secretariat function for the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership Steering Committee with tasks including partnership development, facilitating and coordinating key activities, measuring and communicating progress and supporting the Steering Committee.

### MatchMaking Mechanism

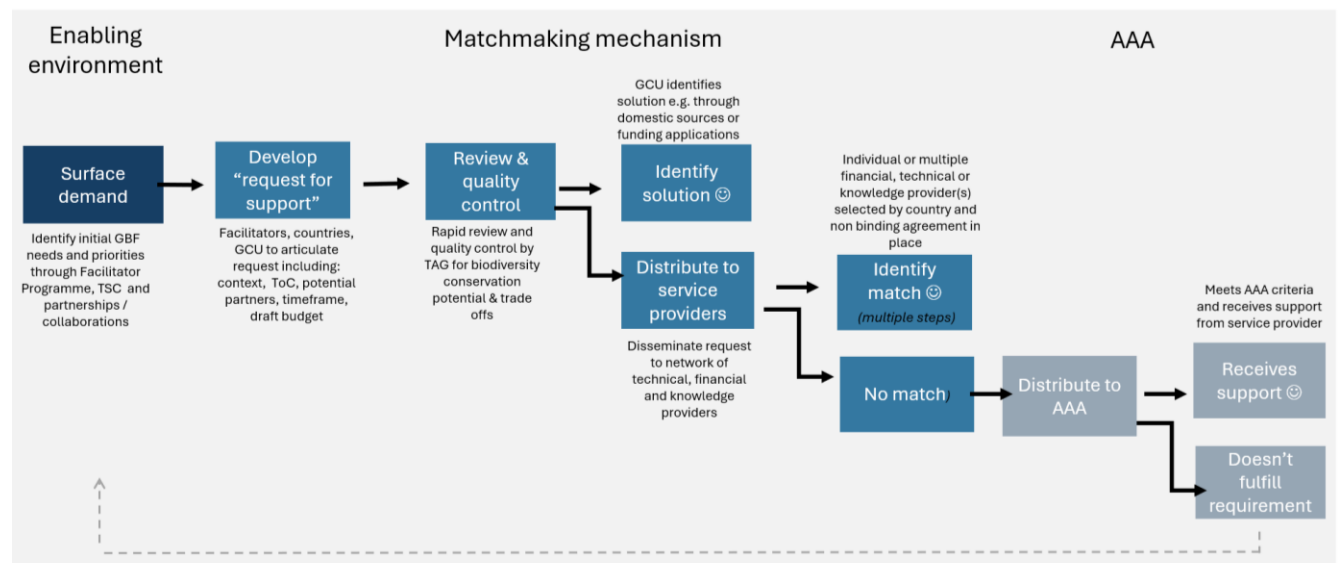
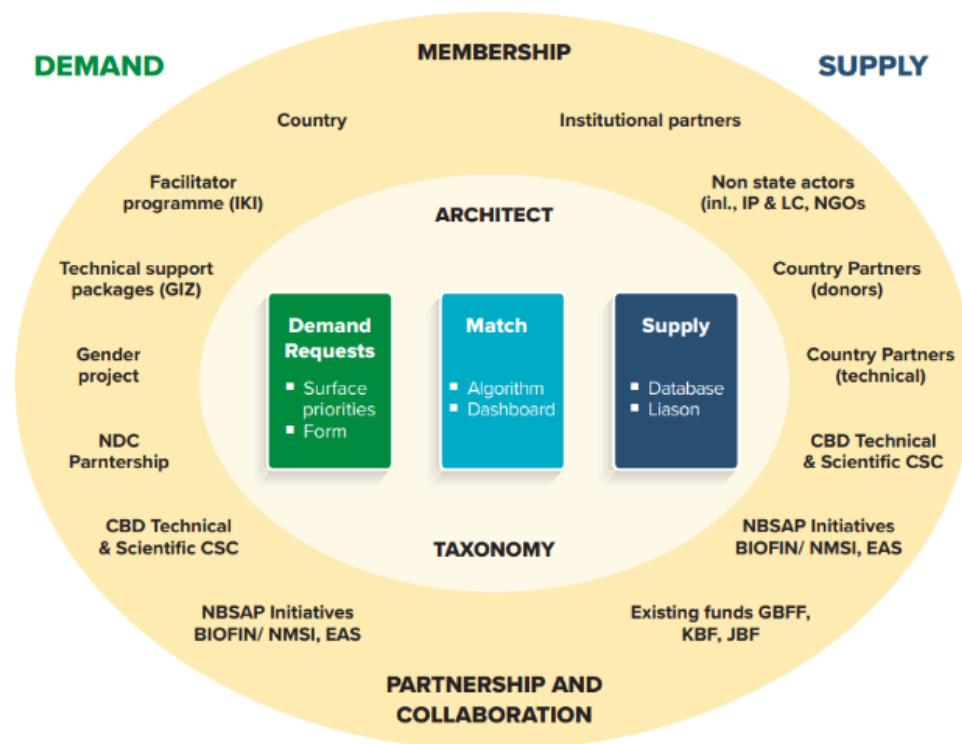
The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership's MatchMaking Mechanism (MMM) is designed to connect member countries with the available and high quality technical and financial support needed to accelerate NBSAP implementation. It connects country-led and demand-driven requests with institutional, non-state actors, and country member services, efficiently matching needs with existing and emerging solutions.

The MMM is coordinated by the GCU that draws on its membership to provide the direct implementation including tailored technical support, guidance and resources needed for achieving the 23 KMGBF targets. The MMM creates a neutral space to centralize member country requests, increase transparency and accessibility of information, and leverage human-centred machine-learning algorithmic matching services to streamline and accelerate the matchmaking processes. The MMM has five core objectives to ensure that the service is planned with scale, impact, and adaptability in mind:

- **Fast-track connections:** Ensure swift matches between country-identified NBSAP acceleration needs and available resources across all 23 GBF targets.
- **Addressing Obstacles:** Create an intuitive mechanism to overcome barriers, accelerating the implementation of GBF-aligned NBSAPs.
- **Enhancing Synergies:** Foster interlinkages between nature and climate actions, leveraging co-benefits across Multilateral Environmental Agreements, the SDGs, and the Rio Conventions.
- **Maximizing Impact:** Streamline the matchmaking process to empower countries and institutions, fostering collaboration for accelerated NBSAP implementation.
- **Providing Tailored Support:** Collaborate closely with country, institutional, and non-state actor members to streamline access to technical assistance, expertise, and financing for ambitious NBSAPs.

Access to the MMM is a free and exclusive service available to NBSAP Accelerator Partnership members, including countries, institutions, and non-state actors. The MMM is driven by a dedicated team of

experts within the GCU who serve as connectors and coordinators. Collaborating closely with technical staff of member countries, institutional and non-state actor members, they streamline matchmaking process and empower countries to accelerate NBSAP implementation.



However, there will be instances when there is no available match and countries' requests for support to NBSAP actions go unanswered due to the complexity of the problem, the level of ambition and lack of adequate resourcing or need for new or innovative solutions that are currently not available in the marketplace. Donors may find it difficult to provide rapid or agile responses to requests channelled through the MMM and prefer to allocate resources through more traditional funding structures. In addition, lack of availability of technical support for specific topics, mismatched partner, member and donor priorities, capacity limitations, and language barriers, among others may prevent an available match.

The NBSAP Accelerator Action Account (AAA) (working title) addresses this specific need, to help developing country Members in fast-tracking the implementation of their NBSAPs by bridging gaps in financial and technical support. The aim is to accelerate key actions for impactful biodiversity conservation that would otherwise not be provided with support, that will also have impact on accelerating momentum of the NBSAP implementation process. The criteria for addressing such cases and specifying procedures to reduce negative incentives to bypass the MMM will be spelled out in the Operations Manual.

## II/ FUNCTIONS OF THE MPTF

The NBSAP AAA provides dedicated resources for the partnership to operationalize the MMM. The resources will support immediate operationalisation and short- to medium-term functionality of the Matchmaking Mechanism by covering selected needs from countries participating in the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership's MMM.

These resources are deployed as a seed capital for projects at early stage, supplement existing support or respond to unsupported, high-quality requests only once members have responded with their own resources and programmes. Project proposals mobilising additional funding will be considered distinct and innovative. Finding additional donors will be essential to fully capitalize the AAA; the aim is to reach \$50 million by 2030 from a variety of donors, leveraging further \$100 million through the AAA support.

MPTF provides a strategic and coordinated channel for donors to allocate resources specifically for match requests that are under-resourced by more traditional means, but at the same time meet quality standards for efficient, impactful and sustainable biodiversity action. By pooling funds from multiple donors, and by making them more readily available, the AAA ensures that countries have better access to technical and financial resources and the widest possible range of members can respond rapidly to the needs of developing country Members. Selection process and criteria, as well as programming cycles will be described in detail in the AAA Operations Manual.

The AAA will be fully integrated into the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership and its Country Engagement Strategy. The aim is always for Members to provide support first through their existing programmes or resources, with these resources being deployed for activities that lack sufficient support, or to address critical gaps. Based on similar experiences in the NDC Partnership and other MMMs, we anticipate the types of requests directed to the fund will include: a) projects essential to achieving NBSAP objectives that lack adequate backing from traditional donors; b) specialized technical assistance requests or capacity-building initiatives for low-resource regions with limited donor interest or engagement; and/or c) support for cross-sectoral integration where conventional funding mechanisms are insufficient or



absent, or where the thematic area is too new or poorly understood by donors and technical support providers. Members can submit requests for support to the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership at any time. These requests are circulated to the members periodically, seeking fully funded offers of support. If no member responds, requests are then considered for technical assistance and scoping support under the AAA.

The MPTF will be characterized by several aspects, including:

- **Coherence:** The MPTF as pooled funds will support more coherent implementation of NBSAP actions by filling critical gaps and supporting underfinanced priorities within the NBSAP.
- **Consolidation:** The MPTF will help NBSAP Accelerator Partnership to reduce fragmentation with respect to national priorities by filling in essential but unsupported gaps, and ensuring that the sequence, prioritization and timing of key actions support a coherent and rationale implementation of NBSAP actions.
- **Specialized or thematic:** The MPTF will focus on countries' specific expertise and focus on specific thematic issues that need to be addressed across the 23 targets of the KMGBF.
- **Risk management:** The MPTF aims to reduce risks to governments and financial contributors through a comprehensive risk and results-based management system.
- **Strengthening national systems:** The MPTF funds will be used to strengthen national NBSAP implementation processes and capacity building efforts, not to replace them.
- **Innovation:** The MPTF will provide a mechanism for clear attribution and transparency from various sources of finance including governmental and non-governmental donors including private sector entities and philanthropies.
- **Long-term commitment:** structure to ensure the funds are invested according specific purposes and contribute to biodiversity conservation.

### Key Objective of the NBSAP AAA

The NBSAP Accelerator Action Account (AAA) will provide dedicated support for the MMM of the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership. The AAA will respond to member country requests channeled by the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership MatchMaking Mechanism. The support may relate to any of the 23 targets as identified in the MMM. Requests for support are submitted on a rolling basis and centralized within the MMM's digital platform managed by the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership GCU, and projects screened for potential AAA support will be identified by the GCU periodically. The GCU and AAA Secretariat (working title) may identify other modalities for submissions in the future for approval by the Board. The initial duration of the AAA will be until 2030.

The primary objective of the AAA is to ensure that the MMM of the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership is able to maximize the delivery of technical support and fulfilment of member country requests. This will build confidence among potential donors and partners and increase the relevance of the MMM for NBSAP Accelerator Partnership members. This initial investment aims to show immediate impact, thus serving as a "de-risking" strategy for the MMM to expand resources. The NBSAP AAA aims to leverage the MMM as a catalyst for accelerating NBSAP implementation by attracting additional funding, providing timely disbursements, and addressing unmet catalytic requests. Initial investments will be strategically distributed to NBSAP Accelerator Partnership members capable of delivering technical support and meeting country needs, showcasing proof-of-concept and building donor confidence. This dual approach—accelerating support for partner requests and providing a last-resort fund for critical, underserved activities—ensures sustained momentum for NBSAP actions, fosters trust in the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership, and strengthens its role as a trusted resource for high-quality, prompt funding

distribution. The GCU and AAA Secretariat will elaborate ways to ensure that the funding available in the AAA is used effectively and that all other funding opportunities are explored prior to utilization of the AAA.

### III/ THEORY OF CHANGE AND PROGRAMMATIC SCOPE

#### Expected Outcomes, Outputs, and Impacts

##### **IMPACT**

Advance the NBSAP AP in its goal of implementing the ambitious National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) to collectively achieve the goals and targets of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and, ultimately, the global vision of living in harmony with nature by 2050.

##### **OUTCOME**

Advance the overarching purpose of the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership to ensure coherent support for the implementation of NBSAPs and to promote increasing ambition over time through an enhanced process of country-specific support, coordination, collaboration and shared learning.

##### **OUTPUT**

- Technical and financial assistance provided to NBSAP AP members from developing countries, supporting implementation across all 23 GBF targets.
- Country-led decision-making processes with targeted support addressing existing gaps and focusing on under resourced or neglected issues.
- Fair, transparent, and efficient criteria established and implemented, maximizing positive impact on biodiversity conservation with robust accountability and effectiveness measures in place.

##### **ASSUMPTIONS**

- NBSAP AP members provide sustained commitment to providing technical and financial support independently of AAA financing. Requests for AAA funding will be additional to the support facilitated through the MMM.
- The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership MMM can incorporate a diverse range of funding sources, positioning the AAA as a supplementary rather than primary funding option for identified matches.
- The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership MMM will demonstrate effectiveness in facilitating matches, identifying available support, recognizing demand for AAA support.
- Members receiving support will have broad, cross-cutting government backing and commitment for the ongoing implementation of their NBSAPs.
- The Technical Advisory Group operates independently and effectively.
- The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership MMM is effective in identifying the supply of support, the demand for support and in creating matches which would be eligible for AAA funding.

- Members receiving support have wide-spread cross-cutting government support and commitment for ongoing implementation of their NBSAPs.

## Relevance to the SDGs

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development emphasizes the interdependence of social inclusion, economic prosperity, and environmental sustainability across its 17 SDGs, with progress in one area affecting all others. Biodiversity conservation, central to SDGs 14 and 15, is essential for achieving targets related to health, food security, climate resilience, and peace, as nature underpins at least 50% of all SDG targets. This interconnectedness drives the need for the AAA to enable countries to protect, restore, and sustainably manage biodiversity, crucial for advancing the global sustainable development agenda.

## Programming Cycle

The programming cycle, including the periodicity of review and disbursements, and duration of individual projects for the NBSAP AAA will be designed to ensure the swift, flexible, efficient, impactful, sustainable and responsive disbursement of funds through a structured timeline, with multiple distribution points throughout the year, aligning with the MMM. Member countries engage through the MMM and the Global Coordination Unit (GCU) identifies viable requests. The GCU then identifies different potential support options. If a request cannot be met by within a set period of time then the GCU, through the AAA Secretariat will propose to the AAA Board that a request is eligible for funding from the AAA. The specific selection criteria and process under which the AAA Board will review and approve the requests for funding through the AAA will be designed in the Operations Manual and approved by the AAA Board after the AAA fund is established. Additional details of the programming cycle will be developed as part of the Operations Manual.

## Fund Recipients

The match making service provided through the MMM is an exclusive service to members of the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership which currently includes countries, institutions, and non-state actors. Only country members of the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership will benefit from the AAA through Participating Organizations. The current membership list is available in Annex II. The membership list will be updated in writing on a rolling basis to expand the list of eligible grantees without amendment to the Terms of Reference of the fund.

The Operations Manual will elaborate how funding can be accessed, and it will provide specific modalities which align with the modalities of specific donors. Fund recipients are UN Organizations acting as Participating Organizations. It is anticipated that the operations manual will specify how Not for Profit Non UN Organizations that are NBSAP Accelerator Partnership members will be able to access the fund based on FMOG clearance of the Non UN Organization (NUNO) modality for the Fund, and with approval of the founding UN Organisations and donors, through revision of the Terms of Reference and amendment of both the MoU establishing the Fund and the Donor Agreement. Organisations that may not pass the capacity assessment necessary to receive grants directly from MPTF can access grants via a UN Organisation or another accredited entity.

In addition, if the AAA Board decides the operations manual can be periodically updated as required, including onboarding of other types of recipients which may be considered for direct access to the fund in future, provided the FMOG clearance is received, and the legal framework is updated as needed.

## Gender Equality, Human Rights and Social Inclusion

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) is a core priority within the United Nations, emphasizing equal conditions, treatment, and opportunities for all genders. UN Women leads efforts to coordinate gender mainstreaming across the UN system, supported by initiatives like the Gender Equality Marker (GEM) and the UN-SWAP. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda build on this commitment, representing the UN's most comprehensive framework for advancing GEWE since the Beijing Platform for Action. The AAA will thus ensure adequate attention to GEWE in all its efforts, appointing a dedicated gender focal point to support the Secretariat, initially targeting GEN1 with the intention to achieve GEM2<sup>1</sup> cross-functionally. The AAA recognizes that no development initiative is gender neutral, including in nature conservation and green economy, and that the needs and realities of women, men, boys and girls must be adequately addressed and included to avoid gender-blind interventions. Although attention and action towards GEWE is expected by all partners, it is the overall responsibility of the AAA Secretariat to support the development of gender sensitivity, expertise, knowledge and capacity at all levels of the AAA. This may include, *inter alia*:

- Ensuring gender parity among staff and representation at all governing levels of the AAA;
- Ensuring that gender mainstreaming is included in any operational guidelines;
- Ensuring that relevant actions are gender responsive, and that gender-responsive requests and projects are prioritized;
- Ensuring that a gender analysis is included in the development of thematic priorities and guidelines for MPTF;
- Ensuring that the funds governing principles promote equitable access and benefits for women and men, this includes promoting women-led or focused recipient organizations.

In addition to the gender perspective, projects supported by AAA will promote human rights, social inclusion and the protection of vulnerable groups, such as indigenous people, youth and people with disabilities.

### Other complementary initiatives

The AAA will ensure complementarity with relevant initiatives, which are also associated with the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership, in particular the following.

**Kunming Biodiversity Fund:** Announced by China at the 2021 UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15), the Kunming Biodiversity Fund supports biodiversity conservation initiatives, particularly in developing countries. It was created to enhance financing for global biodiversity efforts and aid in implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF).

**Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF):** Established in 2023 at COP15, the GBFF is a funding mechanism managed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). It is specifically dedicated to financing the implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework, supporting activities that conserve and sustainably use biodiversity, and meeting global biodiversity targets.

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<sup>1</sup> GEM 2: These are usually considered gender 'mainstreamed' initiatives that make a substantial contribution to gender equality /women's empowerment but it is not its primary objective. As opposed to GEM 1, gender equality is a main component of the theory of change.

**Japan Fund:** Initiated by the Japanese government in 2010, the Japan Biodiversity Fund provides financial support to help developing countries strengthen their biodiversity policies and implement the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The fund emphasizes capacity building, technical support, and knowledge sharing.

**NDC- Partnership Action Fund:** The NDC Partnership is a global initiative that supports countries in achieving their climate commitments and implementing their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement. It is designed to enhance climate action, offering quick-response grants for specific needs that arise during NDC implementation, such as technical assistance and capacity-building activities including a Partnership Action Fund and a Climate Action Enhancement Package.

**GEF support programme to NBSAPs:** Building on the success of the GEF 7 Early Action Support Project to countries, the GEF has granted a second round to GEF eligible countries to support the completion of NBSAPs that are aligned with the KMGBF. This work is ongoing in 139 countries, supported by UNDP and UNEP, and by a small global coordination unit.

The AAA will supplement these funds to help accelerate action on NBSAPs as a 'last resort' fund for key thematic areas.

**Value-add of the AAA:** The NBSAP AAA offers a critical value add as a dynamic and responsive financing mechanism. The AAA provides rapid, flexible funding that is country-driven, enabling nations to address urgent and emerging biodiversity priorities without delays. This aligns with what countries seek in a fund—accessibility, speed, and alignment with national priorities. The AAA's focus on bridging unmet needs through the MMM provides assurance that no biodiversity actions are left unsupported, even as it reinforces the proof-of-concept for mobilizing additional resources. By demonstrating immediate impact and maintaining accountability, the AAA is positioned to become a key instrument to support existing mechanisms described above and accelerate national implementation of the KMGBF.

## IV/ GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

As an MPTF, the NBSAP AAA's governance distinguishes financial resource governance and decision making by the AAA Board, (supported by the AAA Secretariat), Fund administration (by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office of the UN as the designated Administrative Agent of the MPTF) and the Fund Implementation (by the Participating Organizations assuming full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds entrusted to them).

### AAA Board

The AAA Board provides overarching, high-level strategic direction and cohesion for the AAA, and ensures effective decision-making and management oversight of all operational and technical aspects of the MPTF. The AAA Board will provide annual updates to the NBSAP AP Steering Committee (See Annex III) to ensure seamless and direct contribution of the AAA to the overall NBSAP AP objectives. Board members will need to recuse themselves from decision making if there is a conflict of interest.

The following are the roles and responsibilities of the AAA Board:

### Strategic Oversight:

Set the strategic direction of the AAA and exercise overall accountability for the achievement of AAA objectives in line with the overall strategy of the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership including the following;

- Approve the AAA investment strategy and eligibility criteria, including minimum and maximum allocation envelopes;
- Provide a platform for resource mobilization and dialogue to further partnerships and advocacy for transformative change;
- Provide high-level strategic guidance for the identification of priorities for investment;
- Oversee the annual review of the status of the AAA (including programmatic and financial) and of overall progress against expected results;
- Review mid-term and final evaluations and oversee the management response;
- Endorse revisions to the Terms of Reference of the fund;
- Review and approve the Terms of Reference of the AAA Board, the AAA policies and rules of procedure (the Standard Operations Manual) that complement the terms of reference. The rules of procedure may be amended as needed; and
- Lead resource mobilisation effort to attract donors and additional resources for AAA.

### 2. Programmatic Decisions & Oversight:

- Oversees the implementation of the AAA, reviews overall performance and approves any revision of the portfolio, as required;
- Approves direct costs budgets, specifically those related to the AAA Secretariat and any support operations, evaluations, and audits including those submitted by the Participating Organisations;
- Approves match allocations based on the AAA Secretariat recommendations and technical review;
- Reviews project audits
- Regularly reviews the risk-monitoring matrix and provides support for risk management strategy and actions;
- Reviews annual and final consolidated narratives and financial reports submitted by the AAA Secretariat; and
- Commissions, through the AAA Secretariat, evaluations/lessons learned exercises by an independent evaluator on the overall performance of the AAA.

The AAA Board meets twice a year at a minimum when the NBSAP AP Steering Committee meets and other times as needed, in person or virtually, or more frequently as required. It can take decisions in its meetings, or virtually via email correspondence.

The AAA Board includes a maximum of 12 Members, including 6 Permanent members. The 6 Permanent Members are SCBD, UNEP, UNDP, NBSAP AP Developed-country Co-chair, NBSAP AP Developing country Co-chair and Germany as donor. The AAA Board will initially start with the six permanent members. During the first 6 months, the AAA Secretariat will make a proposal for additional members from the NBSAP AP Steering Committee, in close consultation with the initial AAA Board members and the Steering Committee. UN MPTF office will be part of the AAA Board as Ex-officio. The GCU is a Permanent Observer with a dedicated role to ensure coordination between NBSAP AP (for which GCU is the Secretariat) and NBSAP AAA. Future donors to AAA can be added as rotational members. To keep balance, an equal number of countries from developing countries will be invited. GCU member(s) will

participate in the AAA Board meetings as observers, to provide progress on MMM delivery, and to present matchmaking projects that are submitted to the AAA. Donors can invite an observer to Board meetings with prior consent of the co-chairs.

AAA Board meetings will be organised, whenever possible, as part of the NBSAP AP Steering Committee meetings. A quorum is reached when two-thirds of its members are present, and its decisions are made by consensus. In case of non-consensus, the Chair will facilitate decisions in consultations with the Members.

The AAA Board will have a rotational chair on a 2-year basis between UNDP, UNEP and SCBD, with one other agency serving as co-chair. Responsibilities of the Chair of the AAA Board include:

- Convenes meetings of the AAA Board through the AAA Secretariat;
- Endorses the meeting minutes of the AAA Board; and
- Signs all Fund Transfer Requests (FTRs) and Project Documents, based on decisions taken by the AAA Board.

Any potential conflict of interest should be disclosed to the Chair and members of the AAA Board prior to decisions that are potentially affected. AAA Board members shall not have any direct personal interest or those of their family members or their direct supervisor/s, of private or professional nature, in any of the project proposals submitted for funding or under implementation. If a member(s) is affiliated with any of the Participating Organizations submitting a specific project proposal for approval under the AAA, such member(s) must declare immediately the potential conflict of interest and must not participate in the decision making for such specific fund allocation or project approval. If the UN Chair cannot participate on a specific agenda item due to a conflict of interest, an alternative UN agency signatory of the MoU will act as the Chair for that specific agenda item. Before each meeting, the Secretariat will circulate information to all participating members to clarify their potential conflicts.

### AAA Secretariat (Working title)

The AAA Secretariat will function as an independent secretariat administratively hosted by the UNDP. The Secretariat answers and acts upon instruction of the AAA Board, working closely with GCU as defined in the Operations Manual. The AAA Secretariat supports the AAA Board to implement its decisions, and facilitates the overall operation of the AAA, ensuring strict separation of oversight and implementation functions. The AAA Secretariat will maintain close coordination with the NBSAP AP GCU forming a seamlessly coordinated programmatic unit, ensuring joint annual work-planning, M&E and reporting, while operating under principles of neutrality and independence serving the AAA Board, ensuring direct coherence with the MMM, and contributing to the broader NBSAP AP as a whole.

Together the GCU and the AAA Secretariat hold both technical and operational expertise. A small number of staff will support programming of funding. The primary role of the AAA Secretariat is to facilitate the approval of matchmaking projects, identified by the GCU through MMM, by the AAA Board in accordance with the agreed investment strategy and the allocation envelopes as agreed by the AAA Board. The AAA Secretariat will ensure that the GCU has developed proposals in accordance with agreed-upon programme submission guidelines and criteria specified in the Operations Manual.

The Secretariat is responsible for the following, at the Direction of the Board:

#### 1. Programming



- Prepare the Operations Manual in close coordination with the NBSAP AP GCU;
- Work with the GCU to identify criteria and collaborate with the GCU in screening programme proposals in accordance with the funding priorities and allocations set by the AAA Board;
- Provide guidance to proponents for proposal development;
- Lead the monitoring of the AAA, including the AAA Standard indicators as defined and approved by the AAA Board; and
- Develop risk management strategy and monitor and update all risks.

## 2. Resource Mobilization and External Relations

- Support the GCU with specific information for fundraising and outreach related to the AAA;
- Developing and promoting investment plans aligned with AAA theory of change and financing models; and
- Support the GCU by providing information related to communications, advocacy, and engagement efforts. in close partnership with founding UN Agencies.

## 3. Funding Matches

- Manage grant making process for matches, based on criteria to be approved by the Board
- Providing information on global, regional and national developments in support of proposal design;
- Support the NBSAP AP GCU on knowledge management related to AAA financed projects; and
- Support NBSAP AP GCU's coordination efforts with any relevant global initiatives to avoid overlap or duplication.

## 4. Operations

- Ensure efficient and effective logistical and secretarial support to the AAA Board. This includes *inter alia*: planning and preparing meetings; ensuring records of decisions through meeting minutes and their timely circulation; and supporting the nominating and election of members;
- Consolidate the narrative reports submitted by Recipient Organizations; and
- Support the due diligence process for all prospective partners, in partnership with the Fund Administrative Agent.

The AAA Secretariat will be adequately financed and staffed to be able to perform the above functions. The budget required to perform the tasks dedicated to the functions of the Secretariat is agreed and approved annually by the AAA Board and charged to the AAA account as direct costs.

The NBSAP AP Technical Advisory Group will serve as the AAA Technical Advisory Group. The TAG Terms of Reference will be updated accordingly.

## **AAA Administrative Agent**

The Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO) acts as the Administrative Agent (AA) of the AAA, in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the MPTFO and the Participating UN Organizations. The Administrative Agent accepts this appointment on the understanding that the Participating Organizations assume full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to them by the Administrative Agent. The AA will guide the Secretariat in the design and operationalization steps of the AAA.



The Administrative Agent will be accountable for effective and impartial fiduciary management and financial reporting, and on behalf of the Participating UN Organizations, the Administrative Agent will:

- a. Receive contributions from donors that wish to provide financial support to the AAA;
- b. Administer such funds received, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding and the Administrative Arrangement
- c. Subject to availability of funds, disburse such funds to each of the Participating UN Organizations in accordance with decisions from the Steering Committee, taking into account the budget set out in the approved programmatic document;
- d. Ensure consolidation of statements and reports, based on submissions provided by each Participating UN Organization, as set forth in the TOR, and provide these to each donor, that has contributed to the Fund and to the Steering Committee;
- e. Provide final reporting, including notification that the AAA has been operationally completed; and
- f. Disburse funds to any Participating UN Organization for any additional costs of the tasks that the Steering Committee may decide to allocate in accordance with the TOR.

The Administrative Agent will be entitled to allocate an administrative fee of one percent (1%) of the amount deposited by each donor signing an Administrative Arrangement, to meet the Administrative Agent's costs of performing the Administrative Agent's functions described in the Memorandum of Understanding.

### Participating Organizations

AAA operations will be implemented by participating UN organizations (PUNOs) during the first year. In addition, during the first year of operationalization, direct access to the AAA will be provided to Non-UN Organizations (NUNOs), following a decision of the AAA Board and contingent on approval of the UN Fiduciary, Management and Oversight Group (FMOG). In addition, Non-UN entities not eligible for direct access once the modality is developed, can receive funds as a sub-contractor through a standard legal instrument signed with one of the PUNOs. UNDP-implemented Small Grants Programme and other similar mechanisms may be utilized to provide grants to organizations that do not meet fiduciary standards as needed.

Each Participating Organization assumes full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent. They are expected to establish a separate ledger account under their own financial regulations and rules for the receipt and administration of funds disbursed by the Administrative Agent. All Participating Organizations are to carry out activities outlined in the approved proposal in accordance with their rules, regulations, policies and procedures.

### Resource Mobilisation, Partnerships & Communications

The AAA can accept donations from Governments, private foundations, international financial institutions, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, private sector and individuals. Acceptance of funds by the MPTFO from the private sector will be guided by criteria stipulated in the UN system-wide guidelines on cooperation between the UN and Business Community (the UN Secretary General's) guidelines (available at: <https://www.un.org/en/ethics/assets/pdfs/Guidelines-on-Cooperation-with-the-Business-Sector.pdf>)

and subject to due diligence by the Secretariat and MPTFO as well as approval from the AAA Governing Board prior to acceptance.

The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership aims to secure at least \$500 million by 2030 to support the accelerated implementation of NBSAPs ultimately supporting the achievement of the KMGBF. With requests for support already totalling more than USD \$20 million, and with a rapidly expanding membership, with more than 88 additional members currently in the pipeline, a corresponding growth in requests for support is anticipated, driven by countries' commitment to ambitious biodiversity targets under the Global Biodiversity Framework and ambition to implement their NBSAPs. In support of the resource mobilisation target of the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership, the AAA will play a key role in mobilising \$ 50 million by 2030, as an integral part of the resource mobilisation efforts of the GCU for the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership, employing a diverse resource mobilization strategy, engaging governments, private foundations, international institutions, and private sector partners.

Donors are encouraged to provide un-earmarked funds; however, donors may earmark their allocations for a specific output(s). Donations can be accepted in any fully convertible currency as long as deposited into the bank account designated by the UN MPTF Office. The value of a contribution payment, if made in other than US dollars, will be determined by applying the operational UN rate of exchange for the date of payment. In addition to monetary donations, the AAA will engage key global leadership initiatives and networks to increase visibility of the AAA and the NBSAP AP and to garner support in high-level forums.

An outreach strategy will be developed in close collaboration with the NBSAP AP GCU to amplify the AAA and its partners' unique role in accelerating NBSAP implementation. The AAA Secretariat will support amplification of outreach efforts of the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership at the request of the AAA Board.

## Risk Management

A risk management strategy at the fund level will be developed (with an associated risk register maintained by the Secretariat) and will aim to facilitate the achievement of programme-related objectives of its interventions in the context of the risk in which it operates. The risk management strategy will take into account the nature of the risks, potential losses, and risk tolerance of the fund, and will develop policies for mitigation/management of the risks.

The risk management strategy of the AAA will identify risks at implementation level (by Participating Organizations), which will be carried out and consolidated in the fund level risk management dashboard.

The risk management strategy's main objectives are: accelerate AAA implementation and increase its impact; ensure that the interventions of AAA meet the "Do no harm" principles; verify that resources are used for foreseen purposes and improve risk management capacity of Participating Organizations.

The risks may be grouped into several categories, including contextual risks, programmatic risks and institutional risks. The Secretariat will develop sub-categories in the first few months, together with the risk dashboard. The AAA 's risk management strategy will encompass the following tasks:

- Identify & develop shared understanding of risks faced by the AAA;
- Define risk appetite or tolerance of the AAA (Fund's risk profile);
- Establish the AAA 's policies regarding identified risks (Fund's risk policies);

- Identify or clarify potential compensation from risk taking and seek consensus among stakeholders regarding its management;
- Determine risk treatment through measures of mitigation or adaptation;
- Identify risk holders, monitor and control its spreading and define follow-up measures; and
- Establish information strategies and common messages about the identified risks. Every programme or project approved by the AAA shall comply with the risk management strategy. The fulfilment of such a strategy will be one of the selection criteria during the process of project evaluation.

## V/REPORTING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### Reporting

The responsibilities related to reporting are gathered and detailed in the Memorandum of Understanding and Standard Administrative Arrangements.

#### **Narrative reports**

For each project, the PUNO will submit the following reports to the Secretariat for consolidation and further transmission to the Administrative Agent and donor/s:

- Annual narrative reports to be provided no more than three months (March 30<sup>th</sup>) after the end of the calendar year.
  - Final narrative reports after the end of activities contained in the programme-related approved document, including the final year of such activities, to be submitted no more than six months (April 30<sup>th</sup>) in the following year after the financial closure of the project.
- Annual and final narrative reports will exhibit results based on evidence. Annual and final narrative reports will compare actual results against estimated results in terms of outputs and outcomes and they will explain the reasons of higher or lower performance. The final narrative report will also include the analysis of how the outputs and outcomes have contributed to the AAA 's overall impact.

#### **Financial Reports**

For each project, the Participating UN Organizations will submit the following financial statements and reports to the Administrative Agent as:

- Certified annual financial statements and reports to December 31<sup>st</sup>, regarding released resources by the Fund to them; these shall be provided no more than four months (April 30<sup>th</sup>) after the ending of the calendar year.
- Final certified financial statements and financial reports after the completion of activities contained in the programme-related approved document, including the final year of such activities, to be submitted no more than five months (May 31<sup>st</sup>) in the following year after the financial closure of the project.
- Based on these reports, the Administrative Agent will prepare consolidated annual narrative and financial reports which will be submitted to each of the AAA 's donors.

## Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation system for the AAA will be an integral part of the GCU M&E and serve two functions: first, periodic assessment of project implementation and performance of projects (M&E of Project Performance); and second, evaluation of their results in terms of relevance, effectiveness, and impact of the AAA (M&E of fund Impact).

The AAA Secretariat will be responsible for monitoring progress in the AAA delivering its objectives and how funds are being used by the Participating Organizations. The AAA Secretariat will provide progress reports on a regular basis (minimum half-yearly) for submission to the AAA Board and donors, and the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership Steering Committee.

A mid-term evaluation will be conducted to assess whether the programme is on track to deliver expected outputs and outcomes with respect to the timeframe and budget. It will enable the AAA to make any changes in approach and/or reorientation needed to improve results. A final evaluation will be carried out for learning and impact assessment purposes. Results will be shared with the AAA Board, NBSAP Accelerator Partnership Steering Committee and donors.

## VI/ Audit, Transparency and Public Disclosure

### Audit

The Administrative Agent and the PUNOs will be audited according to their own financial rules and regulations, in line with Framework for [2014 Framework for Joint Internal Audit of UN Joint Activities](#) which has been agreed to by the Internal Audit Services of POs and endorsed by the UNDG in 2014. The details are included in the AAA MOU. The corresponding external and internal audit reports will be disclosed publicly unless the relevant policies and procedures of each of the relevant Participants provide otherwise.

The total costs of internal audit activities in relation to the AAA will be borne by the AAA.

The part of the contribution transferred by a Participating UN Organization to its implementing partners for activities towards the implementation of the AAA will be audited as provided under that Participating UN Organization's financial regulations and rules, as well as its policies and procedures.

### Transparency and Public Disclosure

The MPTFO website, Gateway (<http://mptf.undp.org>), is a web-based service portal that provides real-time financial data issued directly on contributions in and out of the fund account, from the UNDP accounting system. The AAA will have a dedicated page on the Gateway which will allow partners and the public at large to follow-up the AAA contributions, transfers and expenses, and access key documents and reports. The Secretariat and the MPTFO will ensure that the AAA's operations are posted on the Gateway. The AAA should specifically mention individual donors in all results reporting. The disclosure of the corresponding audit reports will be made according to the policies and procedures of that Participating UN Organization.

## Duration of the AAA

The present Terms of Reference, including its appendices, may be modified by the AAA Board. The operational end date of the Fund is 31 December 2030. The last date for contributions to the Fund is 31 December 2029 with the final allocation decision by 1 June 2030. Any remaining balance in the AAA's account and separate accounts of the implementing partners after the closure of the AAA will be used for a purpose established by the AAA Board and the Donor(s), or it will be reimbursed to the Donor(s) in proportion to their contribution to the AAA.

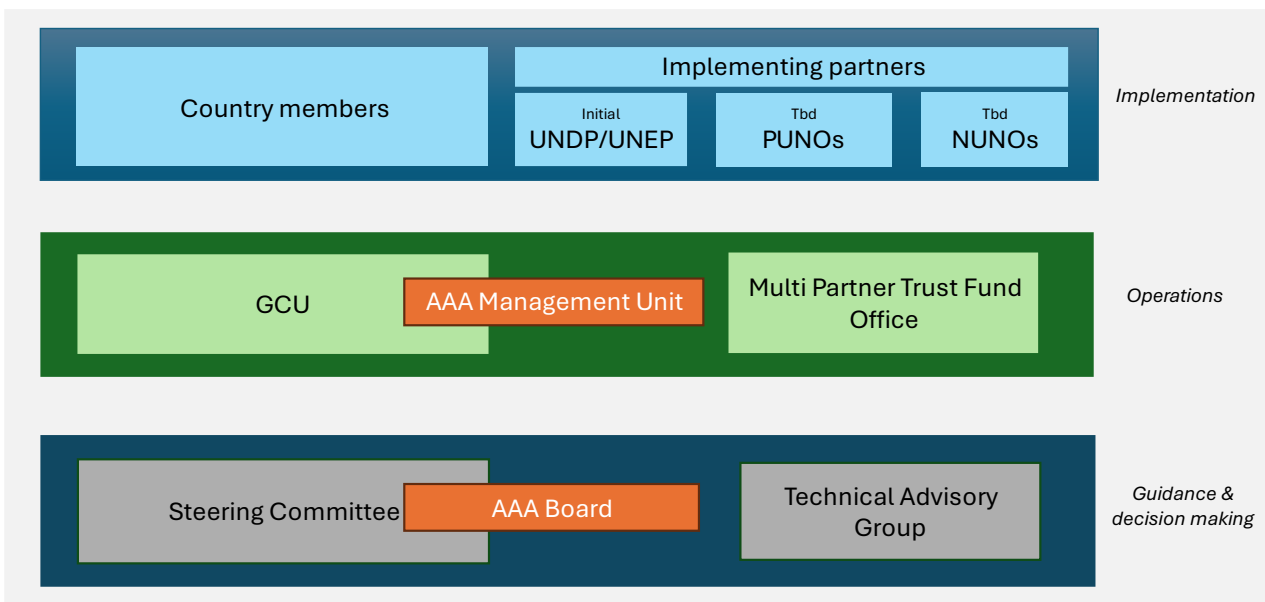
## Operations Manual

The AAA Secretariat will develop an Operations Manual, in close coordination with GCU and SCBD, UNEP, UNDP and the BMUV, by April 2025 which will be formally approved by the AAA Board. This Operations Manual will contain at least the following aspects:

- A results logic including specific outputs and standard indicators to monitor the outputs. Associated indicators shall be focused on the results.
- Programming cycle, minimum and maximum funding amount, grant selection process including clear roles of GCU and AAA Secretariat within the process.
- Project selection criteria in alignment with the AAA objectives. Criteria could include, inter alia, degree of contribution to at least one GBF target, ambition level, likelihood of sustainability of project results, clarity of definition of outcomes and outputs, SMARTness of indicators, clarity and inherent logic of the overall results framework, feasibility of activities and time plan, suitability of (proposed) implementing organization/consortium, risk assessment and appropriate risk avoiding measures, financial efficiency.
- Safeguard standards for project implementation of the funded requests, including serious incidence reporting, grievance mechanism, in line with UNDP and the Donor's Performance Standards.
- Adherence to the exclusion criteria of the UN and the Donor's exclusion criteria.
- Monitoring and Evaluation framework
- Risk Management strategy
- Operational details of the governance structure, including on the relationship with the broader NBSAP Accelerator Partnership. These details as well as all the Operations Manual will be approved by the AAA Board.

## VII/ Annexes

### Annex I – Governance Structure of the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership and NBSAP Accelerator Action Account



### Annex II – NBSAP Accelerator Partnership Membership as of 2024

The NBSAP Accelerator Partnership is open to countries, institutions, and non-state actors. Members gain access to a community of practice that facilitates the sharing of information, data, knowledge, lessons, and approaches for NBSAP implementation. Members benefit from opportunities for peer-to-peer exchanges and access to exclusive tailored services, including a MatchMaking Mechanism (MMM) and country-based facilitators (in selected countries) enabling to leverage global networks of learning, financial resources, capacity building and technical support for advancing NBSAPs worldwide. The NBSAP AP Steering Committee includes two co-chairs: Colombia and Germany, and representatives from the following countries: Antigua and Barbuda; Australia; Canada; China; Gabon; Georgia; Mexico; Norway; Slovenia; Spain; Uganda; Vanuatu

Country Members (in alphabetical order)	Institutional and Ex-Officio Members (in alphabetical order)	Non-State Actor Members (alphabetical order)
Antigua and Barbuda Australia Belize Canada Chile China Colombia Costa Rica	Biodiversity Law and Governance Initiative Commonwealth Secretariat ETH Zurich - Institute for Integrative Biology Department of Environmental Systems Science EU Commission European Commission	African Wildlife Foundation Alliance of Biodiversity International and CIAT Business for Nature CIFOR-ICRAF Conservation International Earth Law Center

DRC	GBIF (The Global Biodiversity Information Facility)	High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People - HAC
Ecuador	GEF Secretariat	International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity - IIFB
France	GIZ	Restor
Gabon	IUCN	The Nature Conservancy
Georgia	SCBD	UNSDSN
Germany	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)	WCS
Guatemala	Sahel and Sahara Observatory	WWF
Kazakhstan	UNDP	
Kenya	UNEP	
Liberia	United Nations University (institute for advanced study of sustainability)	
Mexico		
Mozambique		
Netherlands		
Norway		
Panama		
Peru		
Philippines		
Sierra Leone		
Slovenia		
Somalia		
Spain		
Sri Lanka		
Switzerland		
Togo		
Thailand		
Uganda		
United Arabs Emirates		
United Kingdom		
Vanuatu		
Zimbabwe		
In progress (co-chair sign off / final letter)		
Burkina Faso		
Cuba		
Comoros		
El Salvador		
Eswatini		
Nigeria		
Tajikistan		
Thailand		

## Annex III – Match Making Design Principles

The MatchMaking Mechanism (MMM) is central to the NBSAP Accelerator Partnership's theory of change. It is the process by which member countries submit request for support and the Global Coordination Unit (GCU) connects requests with the available financial resources, technical assistance, and knowledge they need to implement their NBSAPs. The MMM utilizes a digital platform to provide a centralized space for country needs<sup>5</sup>. The GCU ensures that the MMM is responsive to countries' needs and mobilizes potential service providers able to deliver on requests across the 23 targets. The GCU works to enhance personalized support available to facilitators and member countries, streamline the matchmaking process. The MMM will be based on the following design principles:

- Phased approach: step by step development process through a demand-driven and iterative approach.
- Efficiency and effectiveness: streamline and automate workflow processes wherever possible (intake, routing, notifications).
- User friendly: design with user in mind and develop an easy-to-use platform to ensure success.
- Inclusive approach: an online component with access to the database will be publicly available to all, for free.
- Differential member service: additional in person support for members, all data available to members, for free.
- Future-proof architecture: design with scalability, adaptability, human-centred, compatible.
- Demand led: countries to lead by translating their national biodiversity priority needs into well-articulated requests.
- Keep suppliers engaged: members and other potential providers of assistance will receive regular communication and list of requests.
- Prioritise financing: securing financial resources is key success factor.
- Go beyond the match: potential for the online platform to also serve as a critical knowledge and information hub.