

Helping Conservation Leaders Turn Madagascar's Protected Area into Agents of Positive Change

THE MALAGASY CONSERVATION LEADERS ACCELERATOR FUND

Call to action

Invest in Malagasy conservation professionals, and community leaders, who protect and manage protected areas of Madagascar and their critical ecosystem services through a unique set of competencies and skills, so that these special places serve a bright future for Madagascar's people, wise economic development, and our planet.

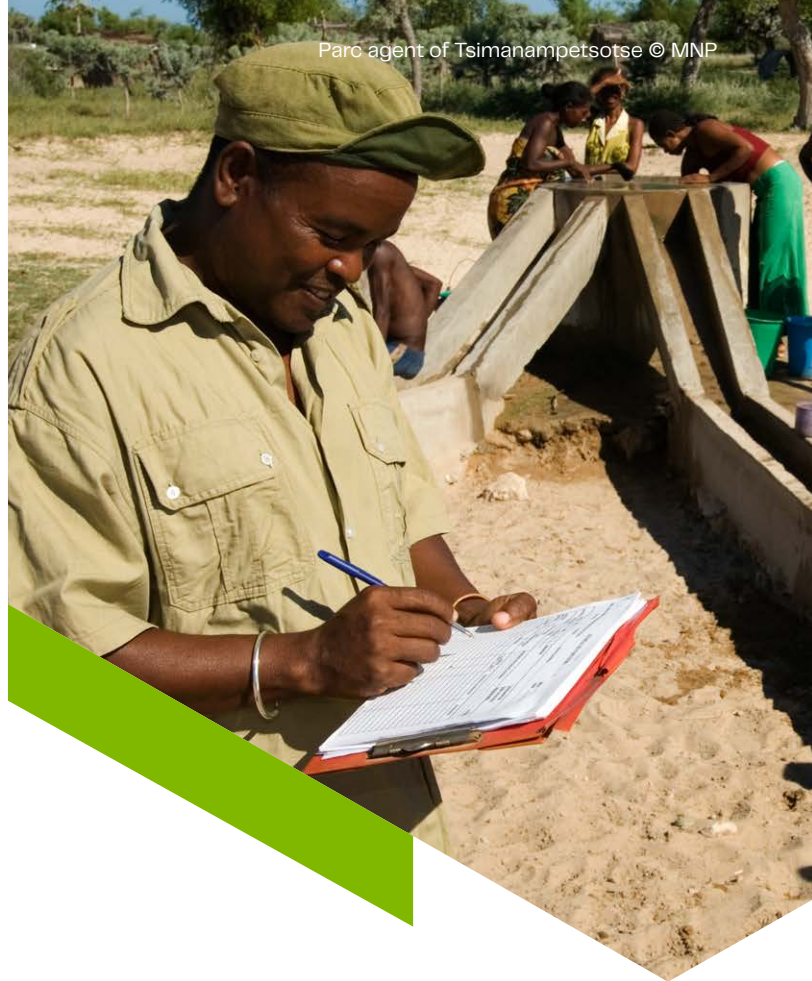
Objective

Together with partners, Madagascar Protected Areas and Biodiversity Fund (FAPBM) and Madagascar National Parks (MNP) will be setting up a professional training for **Conservation Professionals and Community Conservation Leaders in Madagascar**. Trained professionals and community leaders will apply new knowledge to accelerate readiness of Protected Areas to receive sustainable finance and serve as Agents-of-Change for rural communities in the Madagascar.

Through the fund, the managers of Madagascar's protected areas and community conservation areas will receive the requisite competencies for maintaining biodiversity and essential ecosystem services together in collaboration with local communities.

A competency development program for community conservation leaders as well as junior and senior level protected area managers will be available by the end of 2024.

In addition, a simple, cost effective, and an innovative low-cost environmental education program for schools will be developed within the **Madagascar Coalition for Protected Areas** for integration into the funding contracts of FAPBM funded protected areas by the end of 2024.



Within this Coalition, a sustainable and cost-effective competency development program is used to assist a diversity of institutions and NGOs that the FAPBM can fund in the long-term for effective management of Madagascar's **123 Protected Areas**. This Coalition competency development program will be certified by Madagascar's Ministry for Technical and Professional Training.

Investment strategy

FAPBM has created a special fund to complement and institutionalise training efforts already underway by Malagasy experts of the Madagascar Coalition for Protected Areas.

The investment will support communities and their local government to manage their tropical forest landscapes and accelerate readiness of these important conservation areas to receive sustainable finance from the FAPBM to secure these critical places into perpetuity.

To fulfil its global responsibility, Madagascar must urgently improve the management of its National System of Protected Areas. In particular, protected Area managers and conservation leaders could benefit from developing:

Enhanced social skills for nurturing co-management with local communities;

Developing conservation friendly agricultural and pastoral livelihoods that are also more resilient to Climate change together with actors in the private sector ;

Addressing ongoing economic challenges created by the pandemic, notably the loss of tourism revenues;

Developing participatory ecological and social monitoring processes that feed directly into local conservation planning.

By investing in competency of communities and managers to increase **effective sustainable management** over natural assets at local, regional, and national levels, the critical ecosystem services upon which many livelihoods and local economies depend will be secured.

Integrating community conservation stewardship with protected area management and sustainable rural development, will significantly enhance conditions for durable economies and sustainable rural livelihoods.

This way, barriers to effective co-management will be eradicated, paving the way to self-reliant rural communities, and Protected Areas that contribute to development of a sustainable Madagascar Economy.

Performance

Coalition members have implemented efforts to ensure performance at several of the **123 Protected Areas** and the **surrounding land or seascapes**. Supported by international donor partners, previous efforts to secure these protected areas, though successful, remain at risk with the current economic context and have not yet resulted in durable change at the scale required. To date, there remain several protected areas which do not have any conservation management partners or management plans.

While there are many successes stories coming from members of the **Madagascar Coalition for Protected Areas**, acceleration of community development and alignment with private sector interests towards more sustainable economic development around these conservation sites is urgently needed. This will require development of special competencies, additional knowledge, and new skills.

FAPBM plays an important role for many of Madagascar's protected areas, providing a trusted legal mechanism for the sustainable financing of operating costs of protected areas in the country.

Funds for operating costs are not the whole solution. In order to improve the impact of the effort made by conservation actors working around Madagascar's protected areas, targeted competency development and leadership training support for managers and community conservation leaders is urgently required.

Distribution of the investment

Funds will be used to accelerate critical enabling conditions required for effective application of a durable co-management model for protected areas.

Specifically, this includes:

1 **Support managers of Protected Areas to:**

Support sustainable agricultural related livelihoods near PAs;

Implement locally relevant monitoring and control systems; and

Develop adequate partnerships with the private sector to ensure durable access to the market of sustainable products.

2 **Support community conservation leaders to:**

Participate and implement collaborative management, and participate in sustainable rural development.

Implementing team/organization

FAPBM will manage and invest the funds as a trusted Malagasy national sustainable finance institution and measure performance and impacts for communication to investors.



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