

Small Grants Fund: approval of project proposals for 2002

Action requested: The Standing Committee is requested to make decisions on the allocation of SGF2002 funds to projects as appropriate.

Income and funds available for allocation

1. In an effort to raise funds for the 2002 round of the Ramsar Small Grants Fund (SGF), the Bureau wrote in early 2002 to all Ramsar Contracting Parties that are donor countries (as it has done in previous years) soliciting their support. The contributions received up to 16 October 2002 are shown in Annex 1, which indicates that the funds available for allocation to SGF projects in 2002 amount to SFR 323,859. At the 27th meeting of the Standing Committee the Bureau will provide an update on the funds available for allocation, should the situation have changed.
2. The total funds available for SGF 2002 includes SFR 74,133 carried forward from 2001. This total carried forward is a larger sum than in previous years, and has arisen for several different reasons. It includes SFR 4,351 carried over from previous years' available funding, which was insufficient to fund an additional project from the A2 reserve list approved by the 26th meeting of the Standing Committee; SFR 39,860 released from a project approved in 1999 for Sri Lanka, but for which in mid-2002 it was agreed with the Administrative Authority that it was not feasible for the project to go ahead owing to a changing situation at the project site; and SFR 25,536 surplus from the finalisation and closure during the second half of 2002 of long outstanding SGF projects from the 1990s, each at less than the original allocated budget.
3. The available surplus increased only recently to a total higher than that needed to fund a further SGF 2001 project. Since countries are able, and encouraged, to resubmit projects which did not receive funding in a previous year's allocation, and several such projects are indeed included in the SGF2002 A1/A2 lists, the Bureau has considered it most appropriate, given the considerable time-period elapsed since the 2001 allocations, to propose allocation of the full available funds to projects submitted to the SGF 2002 cycle, including those which have indicated by their resubmission that they are still seeking funds for implementation.

Project allocations

4. Following the established procedure, the Bureau has reviewed and ranked the SGF projects using the approved form for SFG project evaluations. The form has been designed to provide both structure and objectivity to the way in which the Bureau undertakes its assessment and preparation of recommendations for funding.
5. Owing to the workload related to COP8 preparations, the Bureau regrets that it has not been possible to prepare the SGF2002 assessment in advance for circulation to the Regional Representatives in the Standing Committee from regions from which project proposals have been received, for their consideration and comment.

6. For the 2002 SGF cycle, 35 proposals were received which were administratively complete:
 - 7 from Africa
 - 5 from Asia
 - 5 from Europe
 - 16 from the Neotropics
 - 2 from Oceania
7. It should be noted that, as is customary practice, in order to seek equity of allocations among the Ramsar regions, the Bureau has prepared its advice on a region by region basis and used this to formulate its overall recommendation by placing the top projects from each region into the first priority (Category A1) for immediate funding.
8. On the basis of the Bureau's assessment, as shown in the list of projects by region in Annex 2, the projects have been divided into five categories - A1 and A2; B; C; and D as follows:
 - (A1) Projects that are technically sound and of highest priority for funding with the funds on hand. This includes eight projects: 2 from Africa, 1 from Asia, 2 from Europe, 2 from the Neotropics, and 1 from Oceania.
 - (A2) Projects recommended for funding (in priority order based on the assessment score received by each project) if additional resources should become available for the 2002 SGF cycle. A further SFR 501,564 is required to fully fund all 13 of the A2 projects.
 - (B) Projects that are technically sound and are of medium priority for funding from the SGF.
 - (C) Projects that are technically sound but of lower priority for funding from the SGF.
 - (D) Projects that, on the basis of the information provided, are not considered technically sound or feasible.
9. The Standing Committee may wish to note that one country (Uruguay) has one project proposal rated A1 and two others rated A2, and one country (Mexico) has two project proposals rated A2. The Standing Committee may wish to consider whether to recommend that, should additional funds become available, only one project per Contracting Party should be funded from the A1/A2 list, so as to ensure maximum spread of benefit to the Parties from the allocation of available funding.
10. The Bureau also draws to the Standing Committee's attention the fact that the proposal from Mauritius (SGF/02/MUS/1) is for emergency funding to address an urgent management problem. The Standing Committee may wish to consider affording this proposal a high priority for A2 funding.

11. The Bureau recommends that the Standing Committee, as for previous years, consider establishing a reserve list of A2-rated projects for priority funding should sufficient additional funds become available from cancelled projects or from other sources, consisting of the following six projects in order of priority. This recommendation reflects the highest ranked A2 projects, taking into account a) that since only one project from an Asian and one from an Oceania country are recommended for immediate funding in the A1 list, priority should be given to the next highest rated project from Asia (Sri Lanka), and the next highest from Oceania (Fiji); b) the Bureau's suggestion that, so as to ensure maximum spread of benefit to the Parties from allocation of available funding, only one project per Contracting Party should be funded from the A1/A2 list; and c) the Bureau's suggestion that the proposal for emergency funding from Mauritius be afforded a high priority:

Mauritius (SGF/02/MUS/1)
 Sri Lanka (SGF/02/LKA/1)
 Fiji (SGF/02/FJI/1)
 Kenya (SGF/02/KEN/1)
 Gambia & Senegal (SGF/02/GMB/SEN/1)
 Mexico (SGF/02/MEX/2)

12. If they establish a reserve list of A2 projects, the Standing Committee members may wish to consider whether, as for the selection of A1 projects, projects should be included in the A2 list in a similar geographically equitable manner. If so, then the Bureau recommends that the following five projects in order of priority be placed on the reserve list:

Mauritius (SGF/02/MUS/1)
 Sri Lanka (SGF/02/LKA/1)
 Fiji (SGF/02/FJI/1)
 Mexico (SGF/02/MEX/2)
 Armenia (SGF/02/ARM/1)

DOC. SC27-2 Annex 1

SMALL GRANTS FUND - FUNDS AVAILABLE

SGF funds available for allocation in 2002 (in Swiss francs, at 16.10.2002)

CONFIRMED FUNDS

Surplus from previous year carried forward	74,133.00
CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED FOR THE 2002 SGF CYCLE:	
Austria, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Mgmt & Fisheries	12,206.00
Sweden, Sida	153,775.00
United States, Department of State, and Department of Interior, Fish & Wildlife Service	111,492.00
Minus 10% administration fee	(27,747.00)

TOTAL AVAILABLE FOR ALLOCATION	323,859.00
AMOUNT REQUIRED TO FUND THE PROJECTS IN CATEGORY A1	314,698.00

Annex 2

Bureau assessment of SGF projects and recommendations for funding

Category A1 projects, recommended for immediate funding page 6

**Category A2 projects, recommended for funding should
additional funds for the 2001 SGF cycle become available page 8**

List of projects submitted by countries in Africa page 12

List of projects submitted by countries in Asia page 15

List of projects submitted by countries in Europe page 17

List of projects submitted by countries in the Neotropics page 19

List of projects submitted by countries in Oceania page 24

**Note: Only the project proposals rated A1 and A2 by Bureau staff are included in this
public version of the document.**