

Strategic Collaborative Fund Phase II

Building Climate Resiliency in Asia Through Inclusive Approaches

2023 Call for Concept Notes

About the Strategic Collaborative Fund

The Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), with support from the Government of Sweden, launched the Strategic Collaborative Fund Phase II (SCF2) programme in 2018 to enhance the current 2030 Agenda efforts in Asia and the Pacific. SCF2 aims to foster regional cooperation and policy dialogue for sustainable development, environmental sustainability, and climate adaptation and mitigation through capacity building, knowledge sharing and increased collaboration.

Human rights and gender equality are central to SCF2, as it champions regional and inter-regional collaboration for transboundary environmental policy development. To this end, the Guidance Note on [Integrating Gender and Human Rights-Based Approaches](#) in SCF2 supports the inclusion of gender equality and human rights into the SCF2 programme. We strongly encourage the potential partner organizations to apply the guidance note when developing the concept note and designing and implementing the programme.

Learn more about the SCF2 programme [here](#).

Specific Focus and Priority

The SCF2 team seeks to support four proposals under this call that aim to tackle environmental and climate challenges through innovative regional policy dialogues with diverse stakeholders. The four supported proposals will cover various streams that will lead to climate resilience building in Asia, namely (i) Bridging climate finance gaps through inclusive approaches; (ii) catalysing biodiversity conservation through nature-based solutions; (iii) regional policy initiatives for circular economy transition; and (iv) partnerships for climate actions. To this end, a bottom-up approach is encouraged to ensure participation from marginalized and vulnerable groups that are disproportionately affected by climate change and environmental degradation. The proposed activities should cover at least three countries in Southeast and/or South Asia with clear regional policy impact pathways.

Grant Details

SCF2 will support four proposals from consortiums that have at least three organizations, preferably from multiple countries in Southeast and South Asia. Each proposal should cover one of the four thematic areas. The budget for each proposal should not exceed **SEK 500,000** and the proposed activities should be concluded by August 2023.

Rationale

Working Group II of the Sixth Assessment Report for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported that climate change already adversely affects Asia across multiple sectors, including agricultural production, health and well-being as well as climate-induced disasters.¹ Adaptation and mitigation measures are needed to build resilience towards climate change in Asia, and these should be designed and implemented in an inclusive and equitable manner. However, many of the developing countries in Asia lack the capacity to implement policies, conduct monitoring and evaluation, mobilize financial resources, and provide information access to local communities.² At the regional and international level, climate and environmental policy processes are even more inaccessible by people who are most affected by climate change and environmental degradation.

To this end, evidence shows that inclusive climate and environmental policies could lead to positive outcomes,³ in which promoting democratic processes in the policy dialogues can be a crucial entry point. The inclusion of the most marginalized and vulnerable should, therefore, be key in climate and environmental policy processes, through the mainstreaming of gender equality and rights-based approaches from the agenda setting to the policy formulation stages, creating an opportunity for all policy stakeholders to contribute and collaborate.

Who are most affected?

Climate change impacts different groups of people disproportionately. Vulnerable groups tend to have limited access to financial support and limited means to adapt and cope with the adverse impacts of climate change. These may include, but are not limited to, low-income households, marginalized groups, grassroots communities, smallholder farmers, Indigenous Peoples, women, elderly and youth.

¹ IPCC. (2022). Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Pörtner, H.-O. et al. (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK and New York, NY, USA, pp. 3–33, DOI: [10.1017/9781009325844.001](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009325844.001).

² Dedicataria, R.M.M., Diomampo, C.B. (2019). Status of Climate Change Adaptation in Southeast Asia Region. In: Alam, M., Lee, J., Sawhney, P. (eds) Status of Climate Change Adaptation in Asia and the Pacific. Springer Climate. Springer, Cham. DOI: [10.1007/978-3-319-99347-8_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-99347-8_8).

³ Böhmelt, T., Böker, M. & Ward, H. (2016). Democratic inclusiveness, climate policy outputs, and climate policy outcomes, *Democratization*, 23:7, 1272-1291, DOI: [10.1080/13510347.2015.1094059](https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2015.1094059).

Existing social inequities and various forms of societal discrimination can further exacerbate the impacts of climate change and leave some people or groups even more vulnerable or marginalized. These groups tend to have fewer opportunities to participate in policy processes, and lower adaptive capacity, which weakens the climate resilience of the wider community.

An intersectional approach is thus needed in identifying and evaluating the affected populations, in which the cross-cutting lens of gender and equity is combined with a deeper understanding of the diversity of climate impacts in particular areas. This will allow us to consider in more detail how gender and social inequities or forms of discrimination exacerbate the adverse impacts of climate change. Such an inclusive and intersectional approach can facilitate meaningful participation in regional policy processes.

How can we address the gaps?

To ensure meaningful participation, a bottom-up approach should be applied to bring up voices from the marginalized and vulnerable groups into the policy dialogues. The event should be geared towards cross-cutting collaboration using a regional multi-stakeholder approach aimed at strengthening inclusive climate finance, biodiversity conservation, circular economy practices, or partnerships for climate actions.

The dialogues should facilitate knowledge sharing, partnership building and awareness raising to inform policy and decision-making processes. In doing so, the discussions should be designed to enable meaningful participation from marginalized groups along with civil society organizations, non-profit organizations, policymakers, academia, and the private sector.

The pathway should be clearly identified as a process to integrate grassroots perspectives into the policy design. This could be done through engaging with key relevant policy convenors, such as the UNFCCC regional hubs, relevant ASEAN working group(s), or other international and regional institutions that are most relevant to the proposed activities in each thematic area. Events such as Asia Climate Week or regional climate action forums could offer platforms for partnerships and networking. Additionally, the events should provide significant contributions to the specified Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) based on the respective thematic areas.

The Regional Strategic Collaboration

The call will support regional policy dialogues that aim to identify and scale up local and regional initiatives and policies that contribute to climate commitments. To do so, the proposals need to showcase how the activities are designed to address social inequities that are exacerbated by environmental degradation and climate change. The proposed projects should provide an exemplary approach on how to address common challenges in the region through partnerships, cross-sector collaboration, and influencing climate policies through multi-level governance. The regional event can serve as a platform to address transboundary climate challenges faced by the region. The event design should showcase innovative methods that allow cross-sectoral learning

and build up commitments among the policy stakeholders to more sustainable and inclusive policies for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Human rights, gender mainstreaming, and intersectionality approaches need to be part of the event design and should incorporate a clear pathway for their meaningful impact on the proposed policy agendas. This call will support four regional policy dialogue proposals that cover the following thematic areas:

1. Bridging Climate Finance Gaps through Inclusive Approaches

Asia is one of the world's most disaster-prone regions, and the population vulnerability has been exacerbated by the economic damage caused by climate change. The financial cost from natural hazard and climate change has grown and disproportionately affects marginalized people. A report from the UNFCCC estimated that additional investments and financial flows needed to address climate change in 2030 would amount to 0.3 – 0.5% of global GDP and 1.1 – 1.7% of global investment. Furthermore, the most vulnerable and marginalized people are not benefiting from current climate finance schemes, despite the numerous pledges by developed nations and private sectors. Hence, there is an urgent need to ensure the allocated and available funding is available and accessible for vulnerable people to improve their resilience in facing climate change impacts. Factors such as innovative funding sources, diverse investment and financing schemes, and supporting policies that take into account the social and economic considerations are needed in directing financial flows towards climate change mitigation and adaptation activities. The selected proposal under this theme will be required to discuss and propose collective actions to improve the mobilization, governance, and monitoring of climate finance to minimize the misalignment between the needs and the funding.

2. Catalysing Biodiversity Conservation through Nature-based Solutions

Home to over 30 biodiversity hotspots, Asia is one of the most biodiverse regions in the world. Yet, many of these resources are in a threatened state due to unsustainable land-use practices, overexploitation and habitat loss, and climate change, among other reasons. The unprecedented rate of biodiversity loss will have a significant impact on the well-being of people, the prosperity of the planet, and ecosystems services. Nature-based Solutions (NbS) have been acknowledged by international policies frameworks, such as UNFCCC and CBD, as having the potential as solutions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural ecosystems for human well-being and biodiversity conservation. However, there are various challenges in NbS governance when it comes to its implementation, especially in a region as diverse as Asia with different environmental governance strategies, national priorities, economic development, and socio-cultural context. The proposals under this theme will aim to unpack different anthropogenic drivers of biodiversity loss to identify effective ways to integrate NbS in climate governance. The proposed activity design needs to present how local actors from vulnerable and marginalised groups, Indigenous Peoples, or women from disadvantaged households could be key actors in and benefit from, NbS arrangements either in urban settings, in DRR, or any other relevant context. In addition, the event design should foster the alignment of NbS in broad terms with the

goals of the Paris Agreement, namely that they contribute to climate stabilization through mitigation measures or actions and/or support climate resilience and/or improved adaptive capacity.

3. Regional Policy Initiatives for Circular Economy Transitions

The concept of a circular economy has been gaining traction as policy makers, the private sector and international organizations are finding innovative ways to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth as well as climate resilience. Although various work has been done to support the transition from linear practices (i.e., those that do not aim to close the loop in lifecycle terms), regional commitments and initiatives remain limited.⁴ Furthermore, business and policy developments related to the circular economy should be linked and—synergized where possible—to other sustainability practices, to improve their effectiveness.⁵ In addition, numerous concepts and definitions of circular economy can complicate cross-country and cross-sectoral learning and coordination of efforts in the region. This is especially crucial considering that the implementation of such practices and policies depends on local context, skills and knowledge, as well as existing standards and regulations in specific sectors and countries. The transition should not be done in silos, since all aspects starting from upstream to downstream of products are connected. Life cycle and value chain approaches are important in assessing the potential of circularity concepts. Therefore, the call under this theme will focus on assessing and driving circular economy policies to advance climate mitigation and adaptation in the region. It is also important to assess how informal workers, small enterprises, and other marginalized groups will benefit from and be protected from changes to the existing systems. The activities could be designed to explore potential opportunities and scale up existing good practices that will drive the region's transition to a low-carbon economy.

4. Partnerships for Climate Actions

In 2020, the United Nations launched the 'Decade of Action' as a call to accelerate sustainable solutions to the world's biggest challenges, including climate change. However, limited progress has been made and we are at a risk of not achieving the SDGs especially on efforts to combat climate change and its impacts. The failure in doing so will affect billions of people, leaving them in vulnerable states. One of the main challenges is the lack of policy coherence and lack of coordination across different stakeholders, which makes it more difficult to integrate the progress, especially integrating local actors into the policy processes. This theme aims to delve deeper into event design and activities that initiate and/or promote partnerships to achieve climate actions. Series of sessions, fieldworks and/or discussions related to policy formulation, stakeholder engagement and consolidation of the integrated approaches to contribute to the Agenda 2030, particularly SDG 13 on Climate Action and SDG17 on Partnerships for the Goals are

⁴Arthur, L., Hondo, D. and Kohonen, R., 2022. Prospects for Transitioning from a Linear to Circular Economy in Developing Asia. ADBInstitute.

⁵Lindah, M. and Dalhammar, C. (2022). *The Circular Economy: Towards a new business paradigm with support from public policy*. Stockholm+50 background paper series. Stockholm Environment Institute, Stockholm.

encouraged. More generally, the SDG 13 should not be treated in silos. As such, the integration of policy coherence that looks at the interconnectedness and trade-offs with the other goals and targets is required.

Expected Results and Outcomes

Ultimately, the proposed regional policy dialogues will contribute to regional policy processes that build resilience against the adverse impacts of climate change in Southeast and South Asia through inclusive adaptation and mitigation measures, such as inclusive climate finance, application of nature-based solutions, circular economy, and partnerships for climate actions. This is in line with the Government of Sweden’s Asia-Pacific Regional Strategy that advances environmentally and climate resilient sustainable development with the focus on human rights, gender equality and poverty reduction. Similarly, the proposals should also be aligned and synergised with SEI’s strategy to reduce climate risks, promote sustainable resource use, and improve health and well-being.

Apart from the organization of the regional policy dialogues, the selected partners need to plan and produce communications and policy products that will disseminate key lessons and messages from the projects to a wider audience, policy makers and key stakeholders. A final partner report is expected from each project which lays out project results and identifies the next steps required to achieve the intended impacts. To achieve the intended outcomes and impact, SEI will provide capacity building support to the partners, particularly on the mainstreaming of gender and rights-based approaches and policy impact pathways. SEI provides the access to [Massive Online Open Courses \(MOOCs\)](#) and a [guidance note](#) to support our partners in integrating rights-based approaches and gender equality in the design and implementation of regional policy dialogues.

Simplified Theory of Change			
Outputs	Regional-scale events or series of events with multiple and diverse stakeholders that cover climate finance, nature-based solutions and circularity, and inclusive climate regional policy processes.	Communications and policy products in various formats with clear targeted stakeholders (e.g., local and sign language translation, infographics, podcasts, policy briefs, blogs, declarations).	Partner reports outlining key messages of the event, results and next steps for policy influence.
Potential Target Beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassroots communities • Local and national governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassroots communities • Children and youth • Policy makers • Civil society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Embassy of Sweden • SEI • Partners

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Societies, non-governmental orgs. • Private sector and small enterprises • Regional and international organizations e.g., ASEAN, MRC, etc. 		
Outcomes	Enhancement of regional policy processes that build resilience against the adverse impacts of climate change in Southeast and South Asia through inclusive adaptation and mitigation measures		
Relevant Policy Framework(s)	<p>The submitted proposals should identify and aim to influence regional environmental and/or climate policy processes such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Climate Conference • UNFCCC Asia-Pacific Climate Week • Relevant ASEAN Working Group(s) 		
Impacts	Countries in Southeast and South Asia are resilient to climate change due to the inclusive adaptation and mitigation policies		

Selection Criteria

Criteria on grantees and consortium characteristics

- The application must be submitted in the form of the consortium of 3-4 organizations (including the lead institution).
- The consortium must comprise of at least one local/national grassroots organization representing marginalized and/or vulnerable groups.
- Multi-country partnerships are strongly encouraged for diversity, equal opportunities and regional collaboration.

Criteria of event design

- Provide evidence of regional-level outreach and scope in the Asia region (South and Southeast Asia), as opposed to a country-level event.
- Address one of the four thematic focus and its relevance to climate resilience and environmentally sustainable and inclusive development.
- Demonstrate how the event leads to positive impacts on gender equality, rights-based approaches and poverty reduction throughout the event's rationale, design, implementation, and follow-up.
- Demonstrate how the event would target and benefit the citizens of the region, with particular attention to the poor, women and other marginalized groups.

- Ensure diverse participation including the public sector, private sector, civil society organizations, research and academic institutions, development partners and grassroots organizations.
- The event or series of events can be arranged either in-person format or hybrid mode with live streaming.
- Demonstrate proponents’ institutional capacity for organizing regional events.
- The event must convene diverse participation and gender balance of relevant stakeholders in the panels and participants.
- The proposed event must ensure regional outreach through popular media coverage.
- Demonstrate the linkage between the regional event’s expected outcomes and regional policy engagement (i.e., [SEI Asia’s strategy](#) and [Sida’s regional strategy](#)).

Criteria on event’s outcomes and impacts

- Focus on practical policy actions with concrete regional policy pathway and outcomes.
- Indicate which are the primary SDGs in focus, preferably limiting to two other SDGs, in addition to Climate Actions (SDG 13).
- Explicitly describe the assessment of relevant regional policy processes along with its significance and targeting approach.
- Showcase the linkage between the proposed event and your organizations’ mission and operations.
- Apply innovative approaches to enhance meaningful and active participation from policy makers and people with marginalized identities and/or in a position of vulnerability.
- Indicate strong potential to build partnerships across diverse stakeholders to tackle environmental and climate change issues in Asia.

Timeline

Timeline	Note
4 January 2023	Launch of the call
24 January 2023	SCF2 Webinar and Online Networking
15 February 2023	Call’s deadline
13 March 2023	Announcement of successful proposals
March 2023	Paperwork for contract and proposal revision
March – August 2023	Event planning and implementation periods
30 September 2023	Final report submission due

Submissions

All concept notes must be submitted via [this online form](#) by **Wednesday, 15th February 2023**. Please use our [concept note template](#) to make the submission.

To assist you in designing the proposed event, please refer to our guidance notes on [Integrating Gender Equality and Human Rights in SCF2 Events](#) and [Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning](#).

To learn more about the grants and connect with like-minded organizations, a Q&A Webinar will be held on the **24th January 2023**. [Register here to join](#).

All queries regarding this call shall be addressed to scf@sei.org.