



Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is developing A-PACT?

A-PACT is an initiative that arose out of discussions among the Africa Protected Area Directors (APAD) group, which comprises directors of protected areas and protected area systems from countries all around the continent. APAD is supported by the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the A-PACT development process is benefiting from the input and contributions of a wide range of stakeholders, notably including existing Conservation Trust Funds (CTFs) directly and through their African network, the Consortium of African Funds for the Environment (CAFÉ). The A-PACT approach reflects strong commitment to co-design principles to ensure that the ultimate mechanism reflects the needs and priorities of the full range of Africa's protected and conserved areas (P&CAs) and is well-aligned with ongoing conservation financing efforts as well as regional and national policies relating to conservation, sustainable natural resource management, and rural development.

2. Why did APAD initiate A-PACT?

APAD identified persistent budget shortfalls for P&CAs throughout Africa as a core management challenge, a challenge that in many places dramatically has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and attendant collapse of tourism revenue. Inadequate financing for P&CAs not only poses a threat to wildlife habitat and biodiversity, but undermines the role of P&CAs as a critical green infrastructure that drives sustainable development and is essential for human wellbeing. P&CAs serve as vital anchors for sustainable landscape management, protecting natural assets and ecosystem services that are crucial for green economies and resilience to climate change. Despite this importance, available P&CA budgets reflect severe underinvestment that compromises effective management. Therefore it is imperative that protected area authorities and their partners undertake this bold new initiative to address Africa's P&CA financing needs at a scale commensurate with the contributions of P&CAs to the economies of the continent.

3. Who is involved in developing A-PACT?

A-PACT is being designed through an open co-design process whereby interested parties are invited to join in. To date existing Conservation Trust Funds across Africa have contributed to the design and conceptualization, providing significant insights into the current design. Youth and indigenous peoples and local communities expressed an interest in participating in the design process at the inaugural African Protected Areas Congress in July 2022 in Kigali, Rwanda, and the process is open to engagement from these groups as well. The intention is for A-PACT to be African-led and designed, taking account the interests and requirements of partners from the development and philanthropic communities, who are also engaged in the design process.

4. What is meant by P&CAs, and which could be covered through A-PACT?

Although APAD members comprise representatives of national protected area estates, they recognize that a wide range of types of protected and conserved areas (P&CAs) collectively are needed to achieve

conservation and sustainable development goals. For instance, in addition to national parks and reserves, P&CAs include community conservation areas and communal as well as private conservancies. A-PACT will be an inclusive mechanism, with the goal of ensuring that financing challenges do not pose an obstacle to minimum effective management of any type of P&CA. The overarching principle in this regard is that no African P&CA will be left behind.

5. What is the timeline for establishing A-PACT?

The magnitude of this endeavor necessarily means that fully funding A-PACT is a long-term goal. However, the aim is to establish A-PACT by 2023 following a soft launch of the inaugural African Protected Area Congress (APAC) in March of 2022, and to begin building the endowment immediately upon its launch. While the capitalization campaign for the endowment proceeds, A-PACT will also work with APAD, CAFÉ and other partners to mobilize complementary resources through other financing mechanisms. In this way, A-PACT intends to make an immediate contribution to addressing Africa's P&CA financing needs.

6. What is the role of A-PACT in delivering on ambitious targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity?

The draft post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) described its Vision as: "By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people." One of its long-term goals is: "Closing the gap between available financial and other means of implementation, and those necessary to achieve the 2050 Vision." A-PACT will contribute directly to this long-term goal as well as the overall Vision, by addressing the financing gap faced by Africa's P&CAs. An essential element of this endeavor, closely aligned with priority actions under the GBF, will be demonstrating the full economic contributions of P&CAs; this will serve as a basis for innovative financing solutions, and counter perceptions that other land uses are more valuable.

7. Is there a need for an additional fund, or should existing financial institutions such as CAFÉ be strengthened to support the management of PAs?

A-PACT must be complementary to other ongoing efforts to identify and implement financing solutions for Africa's P&CAs. Existing institutions such as the CAFÉ members are natural partners in this overall endeavor, and A-PACT will support these institutions in their mission to advance P&CA finance. To this end, CAFÉ and its members are welcomed as key participants in the A-PACT design process. To ensure additional, complementary impact A-PACT will include support for establishment of new CTFs, and fundraising capacity to reinforce the efforts of new as well as existing CTFs, looking to CAFÉ to help coordinate this area of work. Distinguishing features that motivate the establishment of A-PACT as a new mechanism will include its focus on financing solutions at scale, seeking to tap into sources, solutions and investment services that otherwise are not available to existing institutions. In doing so, A-PACT seeks to benefit from efficiencies and economies of scale that maximize the amount of funding that reaches the ground, and thus the impact of conservation funds.⁶

8. Why are existing institutions not able to raise enough funds to support all ~8600 P&CAs in Africa?

A range of barriers confront efforts to secure conservation finance. Challenges facing existing institutions include technical capacity constraints with respect to financing options; misalignment between funding needs and donor priorities; and competition for funding from needs in other sectors. Although entities

such as CAFÉ and the Conservation Finance Alliance are important sources of support and guidance, the scale of unmet financing needs across the continent is vast relative to existing capacity. Therefore A-PACT intends to both advance financing at scale and support the strengthening of mission-aligned institutions.

9. Are there any guarantees that this new fund will not compete with existing institutions working on PA funding?

The aim of A-PACT is to increase the amount of funding directed to P&CAs across Africa. Competing with existing institutions would undermine that aim, and therefore is not compatible with the vision for A-PACT. Instead, A-PACT seeks additionality, synergy and complementarity, achieved through direct institutional support for existing institutions and participation in networks for alignment and coordination (such as CAFÉ). Moreover, by achieving savings through economies of scale with respect to investment management and related processes, A-PACT intends to provide opportunities to existing institutions to increase the yield on their secured funding.

10. What kinds of financing solutions will A-PACT pursue?

One of the main value-added propositions of A-PACT is to pursue mechanisms that require scale. Examples include a portfolio approach to carbon finance, in which A-PACT aggregates multiple smaller initiatives both to attract larger investments and to diversify risk. Aggregation of smaller interventions similarly is relevant to bundling impact investment opportunities. A-PACT also may be a suitable venue for dedicated capacity to help CTFs pursue debt-for-nature swaps, and leverage debt-for-nature-swap opportunities to set up new CTFs, in concert with CAFÉ and other organizations working in this arena. A third type of instrument that benefits from scale is bonds (i.e., green bonds, blue bonds, climate bonds, sustainability bonds, environmental impact bonds), which also may benefit from bundling and aggregation. These financing solutions do not preclude A-PACT pursuit of more conventional sources, noting that those will be pursued in coordination with existing institutions to avoid competition and maximize complementarity.

11. Is there a risk that A-PACT will promote private governance to the detriment of state and community governance of P&CAs?

Africa's protected and conserved areas take a wide and diverse variety of forms with respect to governance. A-PACT does not differentiate between these forms on the basis of whether they involve private, state or community governance. Rather, A-PACT is intended to help address funding gaps for all types of P&CAs. At the same time, A-PACT will be designed with an eye to ensuring that other stakeholders embrace their own roles and responsibilities with respect to P&CA financing, including private sector investment as well as government budget allocations. Finally, the disbursement framework for A-PACT will work with appropriate institutions in each country, such that programming reflects nationally recognized priorities, including the locally defined balance between private, state and community conservation.

12. How will A-PACT avoid the bureaucratic obstacles to funding flows that are encountered with other major funds?

This is a critical design question. The intent is to define streamlined, objective criteria and disbursement formulas for funding support from A-PACT. At the country level, important considerations will include the number and sizes of P&CAs in the system, and the size of persistent budget gaps. There also is a commitment to linking support to impact and performance, in conformity with the expectations of most

funding sources. Thus, while the design of these processes will seek to avoid an onerous proposal preparation and evaluation process, it will include a monitoring and evaluation framework that influences access to future support.

13. How is A-PACT securing country-level buy-in?

Country-level buy-in will be a critical factor in the success of A-PACT. To this end, the Africa Protected Area Directors (APAD) group plays a central role in the A-PACT design and development process, to ensure direct input from the protected area agencies in each country. APAD members also are committed to engaging their counterparts in other government agencies to cultivate buy-in. At the same time, the A-PACT design team is engaging the African Group of Negotiators (AGN) to pursue alignment between A-PACT and national positions in Conference of Parties processes for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Work with the AGN also helps link A-PACT to the CBD post-2020 global biodiversity framework. As the A-PACT design effort gathers momentum, it will include structured processes for cabinet-level engagement to further secure country-level buy-in. Finally, A-PACT explicitly will position itself to support national policies and objectives relating to P&CAs, as set out in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) for example, which will facilitate buy-in.

14. How will A-PACT be set up to ensure autonomy and avoid political interference?

Governance arrangements for A-PACT are a crucial design consideration. While each participating country and stakeholder group will be entitled to representation in the overall A-PACT governance structure, decision-making and day-to-day operations will fall to an independent Board and a Secretariat respectively. The specifics of the Governance structure are being developed through the co-design and stakeholder engagement process, with the current design elements involving a Membership, a Board of Directors and Advisory Committees. The vision is that Membership will be open to representation from national P&CA systems of all 54 African nations, existing CTFs, organisations representing IPLCs, organisations representing youth, and civil society organisations and non-governmental organisations. These groups will select individuals to represent their interests through Advisory Committee and bespoke advisory bodies, called Councils, will be created for Patrons and Partners. These Advisory Committees and Councils will guide decisions of the Board.

Board membership will comprise a diversity of representation, representatives from various interested constituencies and stakeholder groups. Board members together will offer a diverse range of skill sets and expertise relevant for effective and efficient management of A-PACT, such as finance, law, conservation, safeguards and risk management, and fundraising, among others. Individuals selected for the Board and the diversity of their respective backgrounds must assure potential investors that their funds will be managed and spent well and that their impact will be closely monitored and reported on. The Board also should represent key stakeholders. Board procedures and Secretariat operational processes will be articulated in documentation that will constitute the legal basis for A-PACT and will be formulated so as to insulate the Board and Secretariat from interference, also following best CTF practice.