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Dated: 15 September 2026

REQUEST FOR PARTNERSHIP (RFP)

Building a Portfolio for Blue Carbon and Mangroves in India

The UN Global Compact Network India (UNGCNI), through its Centre of Excellence for Business Action on Sustainable Blue Economy, invites Expressions of Interest from organisations - non-governmental organisations, technical and scientific institutions, corporates, financial institutions, and multilateral agencies - to partner in building a portfolio of high-integrity blue carbon and mangroves initiatives across India.

Issued by:

UN Global Compact Network India — Centre of Excellence for Business Action on Sustainable Blue Economy

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15 September 2026

Submission Deadline:

30 September 2026

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1. About the UN Global Compact Network India

United Nations Global Compact is World's largest corporate sustainability initiative – a call to companies based on CEO commitments to align strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and take actions that advance sustainable development goals. UN Global Compact Network India (UN GCNI) is the Indian Local Network of the United Nations Global Compact, the first Local Network globally to be established with full legal recognition. It serves as a country-level platform bringing together businesses, civil society organisations, and public and private sector actors around the UN Global Compact's Ten Principles. Today, the largest corporate sustainability initiative in India, UN GCNI runs programmatic interventions, capacity-building, and flagship convenings across the country, including through local chapters in several Indian cities and states. Some of the key initiatives by UNGCNI in Blue Economy sphere are:

- **Ocean Stewardship Coalition**: UNGCNI led the India Chapter of the Ocean Stewardship Coalition and convened ocean-related industries, academic institutions, financial actors, and governments to advance the Paris Agreement and the SDGs.
- **Research on Blue Economy**: UNGCNI ran a Research project on India's Blue Economy to understand the challenges and opportunities of India's ocean economy and support ocean-infrastructure capacity building.
- **Multi-stakeholder Platform**: Supported by the Lloyd's Register Foundation, the Ocean Centres convened multi-stakeholder consultations in 9 coastal states across shipping & ports, fisheries & aquaculture, offshore renewables, and blue finance & investment.
- **Sustainable Ocean Principles**: A global UN Global Compact framework offering practical guidance for responsible business conduct across ocean-based sectors. UN GCNI's blue economy work in India operates in line with these principles.
- **Ocean Investment Protocol**: Developed jointly by the UN Global Compact and UNEP FI, this provides guidance for financial institutions, investors, and insurers to align capital flows with a sustainable ocean economy.
- **Ocean-based Climate Solutions**: UN GCNI's work in India feeds into and draws from UNGC's action areas on zero-emission maritime transport, low-carbon blue food, offshore renewable energy, and nature-based solutions.

Centre of Excellence for Business Action on Sustainable Blue Economy
UN GCNI has established a Centre of Excellence for Business Action on Sustainable Blue Economy as a platform for policy engagement, stakeholder convening, capacity building, and knowledge development in support of sustainable blue economy growth in India. Key objectives of the Centre are:

- Convene government, industry, and civil society around a shared agenda for sustainable blue economy development in India.
- Serve as a policy engagement and knowledge platform, producing research, sector recommendations, and best-practice guidance across priority blue economy areas.
- Channel corporate CSR and ESG commitments into structured partnerships with measurable, blue economy-focused outcomes.
- Build sector capacity and skills through targeted and open training and capacity-building programmes.
- Position India as a credible voice in global blue economy platforms, advancing business contribution to the SDGs by 2030.

The Centre initially focuses around priority areas of Shipping & Ports; Fisheries & Aquaculture; Offshore Renewable Energy; Blue Finance & Investment; Blue Carbon & Coastal Ecosystem Restoration; Marine Biotechnology & Bioeconomy; Coastal & Marine Tourism; Ocean Governance & Data; Maritime Skilling & Green Jobs.

2. Context & Rationale

India holds one of the most significant mangrove endowments in the world, spanning the Sundarbans in West Bengal, the Krishna-Godavari delta and Bhitarkanika in the Andhra Pradesh–Odisha coastal belt, the Gujarat coast, and other estuarine systems. These ecosystems provide critical coastal protection, biodiversity, and livelihood value, and represent a substantial opportunity for high-integrity blue carbon crediting aligned with national and global commitments - including India's blue economy priorities and the global 30x30 conservation target. At the same time, the blue carbon and mangroves sub-sector in India is still evolving relative to its potential. Project development is at an early stage across much of the country, community livelihood linkages could be strengthened, and financing and benefit-sharing mechanisms are still being developed. UNGCNI's Centre sees an opportunity to convene a coordinated portfolio of initiatives, rather than isolated, one-off projects - that collectively build institutional capacity, credibility, and scale in this sub-sector.

3. Purpose of this Call

UNGCNI's Centre of Excellence for Business Action on Sustainable Blue Economy is building a portfolio of initiatives in the blue carbon and mangroves sub-sector in India. Through this Request for Partnership, the Centre invites Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from organisations that can contribute to this portfolio in one or more of the following capacities:

- **Implementation Partners:** organisations with on-ground experience in mangrove conservation, restoration, and community-based natural resource management, capable of anchoring project delivery in specific geographies.
- **Technical Partners:** institutions with expertise in blue carbon measurement, reporting and verification (MRV), carbon methodology development, remote sensing, and carbon registry processes.
- **Funders and Co-financiers:** grant-making foundations, corporate CSR programmes, financial institutions, and bilateral or multilateral agencies willing to provide grant, blended, or concessional finance.
- **Other Strategic Partners:** organisations offering complementary capabilities not captured above - including policy, legal, community mobilisation, or market-linkage expertise - relevant to the portfolio's success.

This is a general, open call: organisations are invited to self-identify the capacity or capacities in which they wish to engage. UNGCNI does not expect any single respondent to address the full scope of the portfolio.

4. Scope of Collaboration

4.1 Candidate Geographies

The Centre has identified the following priority geographies for the initial phase of the portfolio, while remaining open to proposals for other high-potential sites:

- Sundarbans, West Bengal — primary candidate geography, given its scale and existing restoration precedent.
- Krishna-Godavari delta and Bhitarkanika, Andhra Pradesh–Odisha coast - secondary candidate geography.
- Other coastal and estuarine mangrove systems, where a respondent can demonstrate a credible opportunity.

4.2 Thematic Tracks

The portfolio is organised around four thematic tracks. Respondents should indicate which track(s) their proposed contribution aligns with:

- **Track I — Area-Based Conservation and OECM:** conservation and restoration of mangrove and associated coastal ecosystems, including support for Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECM) recognition.

- **Track II — Blue Carbon Project Development and Crediting:** development of high-integrity blue carbon projects, including baseline assessment, methodology selection, MRV systems, and registry engagement.

- **Track III — Livelihoods and Green Jobs:** community-anchored livelihood programmes linked to restoration activity, including MRV workforce training, nursery-to-restoration green jobs pipelines, diversification into silvofishery, ecotourism and fisheries processing, and women-led blue carbon enterprises.

- **Track IV — Blue Finance and Benefit-Sharing:** structuring of financing instruments and benefit-sharing mechanisms for blue carbon initiatives, drawing on and contributing to the Centre's Sudarshan Model of Sustainable Finance and Theory of Financial Revolution.

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5. What UNGCNI Offers Partners

UNGCNI's Centre brings the following to the partnership:

- An institutional platform under the UN Global Compact, with the convening credibility that affords.
- Established relationships with key regulatory and market institutions, relevant to policy alignment and market access.
- Partnerships and experience in maritime sustainability relevant to the broader blue economy agenda.
- Proprietary frameworks for structuring blue finance and benefit-sharing arrangements.
- A convening and coordination role across the portfolio, enabling partners to benefit from shared learning, visibility, and cross-project synergies rather than operating in isolation.

6. Eligibility

This call is open to a broad range of organisations, including but not limited to:

- Non-governmental and civil society organisations with a track record in mangrove conservation, coastal ecosystem restoration, or community livelihoods.
- Scientific and technical institutions, including research institutes and universities, with relevant technical capability.
- Corporates and financial institutions able to provide funding, co-financing, or in-kind technical support.
- Bilateral and multilateral agencies and foundations with an interest in blue carbon and coastal ecosystem programming in India.

Respondents should be able to demonstrate relevant prior experience or capability, organisational credibility, and a genuine interest in a sustained, multi-year partnership rather than a single transactional engagement.

7. Submission Requirements

Interested organisations are requested to submit a concise Expression of Interest, not exceeding 12 pages, covering the following:

- Organisational profile: mandate, relevant track record, and current geographic footprint.
- Area(s) of interest: the track(s) and geography/geographies the organisation wishes to engage on.
- Relevant experience: prior or ongoing work in mangrove restoration, blue carbon, community livelihoods, blue finance, or related fields, with illustrative examples.
- Proposed contribution — the nature of the partnership sought (implementation, technical, financial, or other) and indicative scale, where applicable.
- Documentation – submit relevant documents as annexures (project proposal, research studies already done, research publications, etc.) *(there is no page limit for Annexures)*
- Key contact details — name, designation, email, and phone number of the primary point of contact.

A summary of submission requirements is set out below:

Element	Requirement
Format	PDF or Word document, submitted by email
Length	Not exceeding 12 pages (*Please provide supporting documents in Annexures)*
Language	English
Submission channel	Email: ceba-sbe@globalcompact.in
Deadline	30 September 2026

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Please note that no financial proposals are to be submitted alongwith this RFP. Interests submitted with Financial Proposals will be outrightly rejected.

8. Timeline & Process

The indicative process and timeline for this call are set out below. UNGCNI reserves the right to adjust this timeline and will communicate any changes to respondents.

Stage	Indicative Timing
Issue of RFP	15 September 2026
Submission deadline	30 September 2026
Shortlisting and follow-up discussions	30 October 2026

Shortlisted organisations may be invited to a follow-up discussion with the Centre to clarify their submission and explore the shape of a prospective partnership in more detail. UNGCNI does not commit to entering into a partnership with any respondent solely by virtue of this call, and reserves the right to accept, reject, or hold over any submission at its discretion. In such case organization/s who submit their interests against this RFP will not be entitled to any reimbursements against preparing the Response to this RFP.

9. Contact & Submission Details

Expressions of interest, and any clarification queries, should be directed to:

Centre of Excellence for Business Action on Sustainable Blue Economy
UN Global Compact Network India (UNGCNI)
Email: ceba-sbe@globalcompact.in
Website: http://globalcompact.in

UNGCNI thanks all respondents in advance for their interest in partnering with the Centre of Excellence for Business Action on Sustainable Blue Economy to build a resilient, high-integrity blue carbon and mangroves portfolio for India.