

Applicant: **Arrowood, Heather**
Organisation: **Organisation Ecologique des Lacs et de l'Ogooué (OELO)**
Funding Sought: **£258,280.00**

DIR31S2\1023

Strengthening and replicating the "Our Lake, Our Future" initiative, Gabon

This project will address unsustainable fishing on lakes in the Bas-Ogooué region and strengthen the livelihoods of people dependent on fisheries for income and food. By empowering communities to organise and better manage lake fisheries while reducing human-elephant conflict, they will generate more income and food from fishing and farming while protecting biodiversity. This will be accomplished by establishing fisher cooperatives, collecting fisheries data, developing fisheries management plans, establishing electric elephant fences and organizing environmental education programs for youth.

CONTACT DETAILS

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DIR31S2\1023

Strengthening and replicating the "Our Lake, Our Future" initiative, Gabon

Section 1 - Contact Details

CONTACT DETAILS

Title	Mr
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CONTACT DETAILS

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GMS ORGANISATION

Type	Organisation
Name	Organisation Ecologique des Lacs et de l'Ogooué (OELO)
Phone	
Email (Work)	
Website (Work)	
Address	

Section 2 - Title, Ecosystems, Approaches & Summary

Q3. Project title

Strengthening and replicating the "Our Lake, Our Future" initiative, Gabon

Please upload a cover letter as a PDF document.

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What was your Stage 1 reference number? e.g. DIR31S1\1123

DIR31S1\1335

Q4. Response to Stage 1 feedback

You must explicitly set out how and where you have addressed all the comments/feedback in the application form: briefly restating the feedback point, then clearly setting out how you have responded to it in the application.

Feedback: The application does not clearly and explicitly make the case for support of an UpperMiddle Income Country (UMIC). This must be clearly addressed at Stage 2;

This has been addressed under Q7, where we provided further detail on the economic context in the regions of Gabon where we work as well as the broader significance related to this work and the implications for other countries regionally and globally.

Feedback: it is not clear how this will link into local government/policy and what structures will recognise the work nationally;

We have provided further clarification regarding what government structures and departments will recognise this work nationally, specifically in Q15, Q16 and Q18. Here we have provided details regarding how the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock & Fisheries is the government entity that legalises the fishery management plans and has a formal co-management mandate for enforcement of the management plan and relevant laws and regulations. The Ministry has expressed interest in replicating the Oguemoué model throughout Gabon.

Feedback: Outline the geographical scale of the work and how logistically feasible this will be;

In the logframe we have provided more detail regarding the geographical scale of this work, including the estimated hectares of the four lakes. In Q28 we have also explained how OELO's office in Lambarene as well as our ecotourism site on Lake Oguemoue ensure this work is logistically feasible. Given our office in Lambarene, we are well situated to be working on all four lakes.

Feedback: how are elephant events enumerated if they are avoided?

Prevented elephant events are monitored through a methodology developed with Space for Giants. Elephant fences are monitored daily by cooperative members recording 'conflict events prevented' as instances where elephant tracks were seen to approach the fences and were identified as attempting to bypass the fences, but did not successfully raid the crops. This has been clarified in the logframe, by providing more detail in the means of verification section.

Feedback: will data collectors be paid during/beyond the project?

Data collectors will be paid during the project and we anticipate continued long-term support of community data collectors. This has been clarified in Q15 on the methodology.

Feedback: the policy section could be stronger on the CBD and SDG targets;

We have strengthened the language around the alignment of this work with CBD and SDG targets, including

mentioning specific targets that this work aligns with. This can be found in Q14b.

Feedback: while the pathway to change is convincing, it could be more clearly articulated (e.g. using "IF ... THEN ..." framing);

The pathway to change section (Q19) was updated using the "if" "then" framing.

Feedback: in the logframe, please include specific metrics (in addition to % change) where possible to help understand the actual benefits;

The logframe was updated to include specific metrics for all SMART indicators that were based on % change.

Feedback: more Output indicators would provide more detail.

An output indicator was added to output 1 and output 4 to provide more detail on how the work establishing and strengthening fisher cooperatives and the work around elephant fences would look like.

Q5. Key Ecosystems, Approaches and Threats

Select up to 3 biomes that are of focus, up to 3 conservation actions that characterise your approach, and up to 3 threats to biodiversity you intend to address, from dropdown lists.

Biome 1

Freshwater Realm (Lakes)

Biome 2

Freshwater Realm (Rivers and streams)

Biome 3

No Response

Conservation Action 1

Land / Water Management

Conservation Action2

Livelihood, Economic & Moral Incentives

Conservation Action 3

Education & Training

Threat 1

Biological resource use (hunting, gathering, logging, fishing)

Threat 2

No Response

Threat 3

No Response

Q6. Summary of project

Please provide a brief non-technical summary of your project: the problem/need it is trying to address, its aims, and the key activities you plan on undertaking.

This project will address unsustainable fishing on lakes in the Bas-Ogooué region and strengthen the livelihoods of people dependent on fisheries for income and food. By empowering communities to organise and better manage lake fisheries while reducing human-elephant conflict, they will generate more income and food from fishing and farming while protecting biodiversity. This will be accomplished by establishing fisher cooperatives, collecting fisheries data, developing fisheries management plans, establishing electric elephant fences and organizing environmental education programs for youth.

Section 3 - Countries, Dates & Budget Summary

Q7. Country(ies)

Which eligible host country(ies) will your project be working in?

Country 1	Gabon	Country 2	No Response
Country 3	No Response	Country 4	No Response

Do you require more fields?

☒ No

If you are proposing to work in an Upper Middle Income Country (see Annex A), please demonstrate your case for support with reference to one or more of the criteria in Section 2.8.

Whereas Gabon is a UMIC, this region has a clear poverty reduction need. Baseline assessments showed that mean household income was below national benchmarks (AES 2023). Ecologically, this area is of high significance for global biodiversity, as Gabon plays a vital role in mitigating global climate change with its high degree of forest cover.

This project has demonstrated a viable model for community-based management of freshwater lakes and ecosystems, which don't receive the global attention that forestry and marine ecosystems do. This project therefore offers greater understanding and a knowledge base regarding holistic approaches to community-based management of freshwater ecosystems.

Q8. Project dates

Start date:	End date:	Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months):
01 April 2025	31 March 2029	4 years

Q9. Budget summary

Year:	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total request £
Amount:	£62,890.00	£64,190.00	£65,850.00	£65,350.00	£0.00	£ 258,280.00

Q10. Do you have matched funding arrangements?

☒ Yes

Please ensure you clearly outline your matched funding arrangement in the budget.

Q11. If you have a significant amount of unconfirmed matched funding, please clarify how you will deliver the project if you don't manage to secure this?

We would seek funding from national partners who have supported us in the past with 1 year grants. We will also use core unrestricted funding to cover any gaps in the event any fundraising proposals are not successful. We are confident that with our partnerships with Maliasili, Well Grounded & other regional partners and influential organizations, we can get the funding support we need. Unconfirmed matched funding for Y4 will be fundraised for in Y1 & Y2.

Q12. Have you received, applied for, or plan to apply for any other UK Government funding for your proposed project or similar project?

☒ No

Section 4 - Problem statement

Q13. Problem the project is trying to address

Please describe the problem your project is trying to address in terms of biodiversity and its relationship with multi-dimensional poverty.

With 88% forest cover, Gabon plays a vital global role in addressing climate change and biodiversity loss: its forests and wetlands sequester more carbon than the country emits. Gabon's largest Ramsar Site, the Bas Ogooué, has exceptional biodiversity, with a large number of endemic and emblematic species including the Critically Endangered African forest elephant, central African slender snouted crocodile, Vulnerable African manatees, hippos, Critically Endangered thorny whiplay, as well as indigenous freshwater fish (Paradis et al 2023; Key Biodiversity Areas Partnership 2024). However, unsustainable logging, overfishing, and wildlife poaching still pose significant threats to biodiversity as most residents rely heavily on fishing, hunting, small-scale agriculture, and short-term employment in extractive industries for their livelihoods. Additionally, increasing tensions between communities and forest elephants has contributed to the dependency of Bas Ogooué lake communities on fishing as a year-round source of food and income and led to reprisal attacks on forest elephants. Frequent elephant raids on community plantations mean that communities have reported not having large cassava harvests in decades (OELO 2012).

OELO conducts focus group discussions with all the communities we work with to first understand local issues, identify community priorities and solutions and foster local ownership of conservation initiatives. Additionally many of our staff are from the region where we work so they have an in-depth understanding of local politics, contextual challenges as well as opportunities.

The dependency of communities on lake fisheries for livelihoods makes them especially vulnerable as on lake Oguemoué fishers have observed declines over the years in the quality and quantity of landings (OELO 2012). Several unsustainable fishing practices continue to be used including monofilament nets and tappage, a fishing technique whereby fishers chase fish into their nets by hitting the water with wooden sticks. This technique is

particularly disruptive to mouth brooders (*Oreochromis schwebischii*) and is also known as the primary cause of manatee calf bycatch in *Heterotis niloticus* fishing nets (AES 2023). Despite trying for many years to coordinate and agree on best fishing practices on the lake (OELO 2012) (AES 2019), local politics, logistical constraints and family disagreements inhibited them from successfully organising. This changed following OELO's support for the development of Gabon's first sustainable fishing cooperatives, a lake wide association, and the development of Gabon's first freshwater fisheries management plan in 2018, which created a new framework for freshwater resources management in Gabon.

Gabon's historically top-down approaches to natural resources management have made it difficult for local communities to organise themselves and created a governance vacuum that enables unsustainable resource exploitation. In this vacuum, there is a need to organize fishers through cooperatives and support cooperatives to develop lake-wide management associations and fisheries management plans. This builds on the needs and motivations of local fishers and cooperatives while integrating and strengthening the mandate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries to create and enforce fisheries management plans. This results in good governance and co-management of these ecosystems in ways that provide livelihood benefits as well.

Section 5 - Darwin Objectives and Conventions

Q14. Biodiversity Conventions, Treaties and Agreements

Q14a. Your project must support the commitments of one or more of the agreements listed below. Please indicate which agreement(s) will be supported.

- ☒ Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- ☒ Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar)
- ☒ Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs)

Q14b. National and International Policy Alignment

Using evidence where available, please detail how your project will contribute to national policy (including NBSAPs, NDCs, NAP etc.) and in turn international biodiversity and development conventions, treaties and agreements that the country is a signatory of.

The Bas Ogooué lake region encompasses Gabon's largest Ramsar Site: a wetland of international importance covering 1,370,000 hectares of flooded forests and waterways. The forests and lakes of the Bas Ogooué support some of the largest remaining populations of forest elephants, western gorillas, slender-snouted crocodiles, hippos, chimpanzees, African manatees, giant pangolins, leopards, red-capped mangabeys and other Congo Basin forest wildlife.

In 2022, the government of Gabon pledged to protect 30 percent of terrestrial, marine, and freshwater areas in the country by 2030. This work therefore supports co-management efforts within Gabon's largest Ramsar site, ensuring effective management and equitable governance of this internationally important wetland. Additionally, community agreements for the management of freshwater fisheries have included the development of no-take zone areas, directly contributing to the government's ambitions to protect 30% of freshwater areas in Gabon by 2030.

Our work also aligns closely with national interests as evidenced by the fact that in 2022 OELO was designated by the Aquatic Ecosystems Direction (DGEA) of the Ministry of Water, Forests, Sea and the Environment, to be the national non-governmental correspondent for the Ramsar Convention in Gabon. We are the NGO correspondent for the Convention on Wetlands' communication, capacity building, education, participation and awareness programme (CEPA). The Fisheries directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (DGPA) and the DGEA have also both indicated that they want to replicate the "Our Lake, Our Future" model on lakes and waterways around Gabon, signifying the alignment of this model to national policy priorities.

Through our focus on supporting area based management, reducing bycatch of endangered species, minimising human-wildlife conflict, the conservation of freshwater lakes and the development of freshwater fisheries management plan, this project contributes in multiple ways to the CBD targets of reducing threats to biodiversity and meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit sharing. More specifically, this project contributes directly to Targets #1, 3, 4, 5, 9 and 10 of the CBD framework, which Gabon has ratified since 1997. Through advancing the management and conservation of freshwater ecosystems, reducing human-elephant wildlife conflicts, improving community livelihoods, increasing fisher income and increasing gender equality through women's fisher cooperative, this project contributes to multiple SDG goals. Specifically, this project contributes towards Goal 1; No Poverty, Goal 5 Gender Equality, Goal 14 Life Below Water and Goal 15 Life on Land.

Section 6 - Method, Change Expected, GESI & Exit Strategy

Q15. Methodology

Describe the methods and approach you will use to achieve your intended Outcome and contribute towards your Impact. Provide information on:

- how you have reflected on and incorporated **evidence and lessons learnt** from past and present similar activities and projects in the design of this project.
- the specific approach you are using, supported by **evidence** that it will be effective, and **justifying why you expect it will be successful** in this context.
- how you will undertake the work (activities, materials and methods)
- what will be the **main activities** and where will these take place.
- how you will **manage the work** (governance, roles and responsibilities, project management tools, risks etc.).

This project expands the "Our Lake, Our Future" initiative that OELO developed on Lake Oguemoué in 2012 and led to the establishment of Gabon's first freshwater fisheries management plan, signed into law in 2018. By 2023, the Oguemoué fisheries management plan doubled catch per unit effort on the lake, eliminated African manatee calf bycatch from fishing nets and marked the return of certain migratory fish including thorny whipsnakes to the lake (AES 2019). Two trial single-strand electric barriers have kept elephants out of Oguemoué community plantations for three years, preventing 30 human-wildlife conflict events on the lake with a 100% success rate. Lake residents reported substantial harvests of cassava for the first time in decades (OELO 2022). Children from hunting families who participate in our nature clubs are half as likely to hunt protected species than their classmates and 80% of children in our environmental education program report that the experience has changed their desire to eat protected species.

As a result of these multi-faceted and tangible impacts, dozens of communities have since reached out to us to replicate this initiative on their lakes. The 'Our Lake, Our Future' initiative also led to OELO being the first Gabonese organisation to be awarded the UNDP Equator Prize in 2022.

Additionally recent surveys identified the possibility for management 'clusters', based on socially, geographically and ecologically connected lakes that could encourage synchronised data collection and reporting within clusters (AES 2023). Lake Oguemoué and Ezanga are in one cluster, while Lake Gome and Adolet are in another cluster. This project draws on our evidence and learnings to date and is built around five outputs which were the core of the 'Our Lake, our Future' model piloted on Lake Oguemoué. As the new lakes where we are scaling this are in similar contexts, in neighboring lakes and part of these emergent clusters, we are confident this model will be successful.

1. Developing cooperatives

Existing fisher cooperatives on Lake Oguemoué will be strengthened and new cooperatives will be established on Adolet, Ezanga, and Gome lakes. Training will be given to cooperatives on governance, sustainable fishing

practices, conflict resolution, accounting and outreach. Pre-existing and newly established cooperatives will participate in exchanges to facilitate knowledge exchange and peer to peer learning.

2. Developing fisheries management plans

Focus groups will be organised in each of the villages to discuss with all resource users their ideas and suggestions for how to manage their fishery. This will then be used to draft community fishing agreements following which OELO will support the process of formalising these into multi-stakeholder fishery management plans, which are legally recognised co-management plans with involvement from government. Lake-wide fisheries management plans are co-developed with the Fisheries Department from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock & Fisheries, who have shared responsibility for enforcement of relevant laws.

3. Establishing catch monitoring data

In each of the lakes, with support from our consultant AES and expertise of Oguemoué data collectors, we will identify and train two community-based data collectors who will be paid to collect fisheries dependent data. This data will be used to monitor landings and evaluate the fisheries management plans. Data collection will be based on our model on Lake Oguemoué where we have supported local fishers in collecting data since 2014.

4. Establishing electric elephant fences

Solar powered elephant fences will be established to mitigate elephant conflicts and protect community crops from elephants. Electric fences will be established in collaboration with Space for Giants, and communities will be trained in ongoing maintenance and monitoring of the fences and conflict events. Oguemoué cooperative members, who maintain two fences on Lake Oguemoué, will support these trainings and exchanges.

5. Environmental education programs.

OELO will organise environmental education classes in schools around Lambaréné, where children from the lakes attend school during the year. OELO will also organise summer clubs for children on Oguemoué. Our environmental education material includes modules on key lake species that are protected by Gabonese law, including forest elephants, African manatees, central African slender-snouted crocodiles, hippos and thorny whiprays.

All activities will be managed and implemented by OELO in collaboration with local stakeholders such as the Oguemoué fishing cooperatives (Amven, Efoulatchi, Ewughe-Angome) as well as the lake association (ACLO) for the organisation of meetings and development of the lake management plans. A consultant and a project partner (Aquatic Ecosystem Services and Space for Giants) are providing technical support and training on the design of fisheries monitoring methods and the installation of electric elephant fences respectively.

Q16. Capability and Capacity

How will the project support the strengthening of capability and capacity of identified local and national partners, and stakeholders during its lifetime at organisational or individual levels? Please provide details of what form this will take, who will benefit (noting GESI considerations), and the post-project value to the country.

This project takes a bottom-up approach to capability and capacity building. Through strengthening the capabilities of fisher cooperatives on conflict resolution, accounting, governance, fisheries monitoring and mitigating human-wildlife conflicts, cooperatives will have diverse capabilities required to govern and operate. These capabilities will be developed through workshops and training delivered by our field staff, many of whom are from the areas where we work. Additionally, pre-existing cooperatives from Lake Oguemoué will be invited to share their local knowledge and experience with newly established cooperatives, to support knowledge transfer and peer-supported capability building. Once capabilities have been built, through routine support and mentoring of the cooperatives, their capacity will be strengthened.

The formation of cooperatives will pay particular attention to GESI considerations, including the formation of women fisher cooperatives, as well as ensuring that cooperative membership is inclusive and accessible to all

fishers, irrespective of age, class or ethnicity.

Additionally, lake-wide associations will be established to unite different fisher cooperatives in the management of lake fisheries. These lake associations, and the legal fisheries management plans they co-manage, will have a formal mandate from the Ministry of Water and Forests for their role. The Fisheries Department from the Ministry of Water and Forests are involved in the drafting of the management plans and share responsibility for enforcement and application of relevant laws regarding destructive gears and illegal activities on the lakes. This ensures that beyond the project, institutional mechanisms are in place for ongoing management without OELO involvement.

Post project value to the country of Gabon will include established fisher cooperatives that have the capability and capacity to perform their functions, lake-wide associations with the capacity to manage freshwater fisheries management plans, and established governance frameworks including the Ministry of Water and Forests.

Q17. Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

All applicants must consider whether and how their project will contribute to promoting equality between persons of different gender and social characteristics. Please include reference to the GESI context in which your project seeks to work. Explain your understanding of how individuals may be disadvantaged or excluded from equal participation within the context of your project, and how you seek to address this. You should consider how your project will proactively contribute to ensuring individuals achieve equitable outcomes and how you will ensure meaningful participation for all those engaged.

Fishing on Bas Ogooue lakes is done by both men and women. On Oguemoue and Ezanga lakes, 40-60% of women report fishing as a livelihood activity, while this is 78-100% of women on Adolet and Gome lakes (AES 2023). Nevertheless, gender norms mean women are often not well represented or included in decision making forums. In 2020, OELO supported the establishment of the first women's fisher cooperative on Lake Oguemoue, as a means of providing women fishers agency and representation. When it comes to organising community meetings, whether for the women's fisher cooperative or general community meetings, we work with communities to find solutions for childcare and meal preparation. This ensures that women can fully participate in meetings and training when they are organised, and don't have to miss out due to childcare duties or having to provide catering for the meeting.

Women and youth spend a large part of the year away from the lakes in the town of Lambaréné, due to the lack of schools and health infrastructure in the lakes. As a result, our environmental education programs specifically target youth in Lambarene schools during the school year. Summer clubs are run in the villages, to coincide with their return to the communities and the main fishing season.

A powerful few elites control resources in the Bas Ogooué region, and have divided lake communities for generations to maintain personal economic interests and political power. By developing cooperatives and associations, communities are empowered to work together and resist manipulation and division by some local elites who control resource exploitation activities. For example on Oguemoué the lake association ACLO has successfully collaborated with partner NGO Conservation Justice to hold a local strongman accountable for illegal logging and poaching on their ancestral lands.

Q18. Change expected

Detail the expected changes and benefits to both biodiversity and multi-dimensional poverty reduction, and links between them, that this work will deliver. You should identify what will change and who exactly will benefit a) in the short-term (i.e. during the life of the project) and b) in the long-term (after the project has ended).

When talking about how people will benefit, please remember to give details of who will benefit, differences in benefits by gender or other layers of diversity within stakeholders, and the number of beneficiaries expected. The number of communities is insufficient detail – number of households should be the largest unit used.

Short term changes include the establishment of community-led fishery management plans with permanent no-take zones and a reduction in the use of illegal and destructive fishing techniques such as tappage and the use of monofilament nets. This ensures key habitats are protected and fisheries are well managed, which should increase catch per unit effort for 230 fishing households (928 people total; 475 men, 453 women) across the four lakes (AES 2023).

Electric elephant fences will reduce human-elephant conflicts and protect the plantations of 165 households across the four lakes, ensuring communities can increase harvests from farming and reduce reliance on fishing as the sole source of food and income. Reduced elephant conflicts will also benefit elephant populations as it will ensure there is no retaliation from communities and hunting of elephants. In total, benefits will reach some estimated 928 lake residents, of which 475 are men and 453 are women.

Finally, our environmental education programs will increase knowledge and awareness of 4000 school children annually, in relation to freshwater biodiversity, Gabonese environmental laws and influence attitudes to consuming bushmeat from protected species like the African Manatee and slender snouted crocodile. 100 kids will be organised into summer clubs on lake Oguemoué and receive environmental scholarships, in the form of gift certificates for school supplies.

In the long term, lake biodiversity will be conserved while community livelihoods are strengthened. Through effective management of lake fisheries, catches of 230 households will increase and provide food security and income benefits. Lake biodiversity will also be conserved through the reduced bycatch of protected species like the African Manatee and the return of large migratory fish species to the lake. Meanwhile, improved farming harvests as a result of the elephant fences will reduce the year-long dependency of fishers on fishing as the main livelihood, increasing long-term resilience of fishers and their families.

In the long run this will also establish a replicable blueprint for co-management of freshwater lakes in the Bas Ogooue Ramsar site, other regions of Gabon, as well as the West African region. Through the establishment of fisher cooperatives and fisheries management plans, all of which are legally recognized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries in Gabon, this project establishes an institutional framework for co-management of freshwater lakes and fisheries in Gabon. Fisheries management plans are co-created with local fishers and the Fisheries Department (DGPA) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, so that institutional memory and capacity will live on beyond the lifetime of the project.

This approach has already been successful on Lake Oguemoué and will now be replicated to three new lakes following community requests as well as requests from the Ministry to replicate this approach across lakes and waterways of Gabon. This will validate the replicability of this approach and enable future scaling up across other freshwater lakes in Gabon and lakes and waterways in the region.

Q19. Pathway to change

Please outline your project's expected pathway to change.

Fisher cooperatives will be established to develop community fishing agreements leading to lake-wide management plans. If fishers collect catch data, then cooperatives will be equipped with the data needed to adaptively manage lake fisheries. Simultaneously, if cooperatives establish electric elephant fences around farms, then human-elephant conflicts will be minimised and farms protected. If the children of fishers are engaged through environmental education programs in Lambaréné, then environmental stewardship and awareness of conservation issues will be increased in children who return to their villages on the lakes in the summer during peak fishing season.

These outputs will establish the institutional foundation for good governance of freshwater resources as well as strengthen institutional capacity. If management measures such as no-take zones and the prohibition of destructive gear types are effective, then this will ensure the conservation of lake biodiversity while improving

fisher landings. If elephant fences are highly effective at reducing conflicts, then cooperative members will have increased crop harvests and be less reliant on fishing as a primary livelihood. Finally, if environmental stewardship and conservation awareness of children increases, then this will reduce demand for and consumption of protected species such as the African Manatee, slender-snouted crocodile, hippo and thorny whiplash.

Q20. Sustainable benefits and scaling potential

Q20a. How will the project reach a point where benefits can be sustained post-funding? How will the required knowledge and skills remain available to sustain the benefits? How will you ensure your data and evidence will be accessible to others?

This project will establish the institutional governance framework, fisheries management plans and capabilities and capacity for effective management of freshwater lakes. Our previous work on Lake Oguemoué already demonstrated that fisher CPUE increases in response to the fisheries management plan, and electric elephant fences are highly effective at increasing crop harvests, by preventing elephant raids. Therefore the community management of destructive fishing techniques and low maintenance electric fences provide sustained benefits during and beyond the project.

The fisheries management plans are also developed and implemented in collaboration with the Fisheries Department from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries who have shared responsibility for enforcement of laws and regulations. Fisheries data is also routinely shared with the lake associations and the Fisheries Department in the form of raw data and annual reports and an online webportal will be established to enable real-time access to data during and beyond the project.

Q20b. If your approach works, what potential is there for scaling the approach further? Refer to Scalable Approaches (Landscape, Replication, System Change, Capacitation) in the guidance. What might prevent scaling, and how could this be addressed?

The Bas Ogooué RAMSAR site encompasses 1,370,000 hectares. Our work to date covers roughly 9,000 hectares of Lake Oguemoué. This work aims to scale this approach at the landscape level, to three new lakes which will cover around 25,000 hectares total. If this project can demonstrate that the Our Lake, Our Future model is replicable to these three new lakes, it has strong potential to be scaled further across the Bas Ogooué landscape and other regions of Gabon. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries has expressed interest in scaling OELO's model to all lakes and waterways in Gabon.

Some barriers that could prevent further landscape scaling is if the institutional and governance framework of "Our Lake, Our Future" is too complex and resource intensive. Additionally, understanding the enabling conditions to the success of this work in-situ will be key to identifying suitable context and regions for landscape scaling.

If necessary, please provide supporting documentation e.g. maps, diagrams, references etc., as a PDF using the File Upload below.

 [2411 OELO Darwin supporting evidence](#)

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Section 7 - Risk Management

Q21. Risk Management

Please outline the 7 key risks to achievement of your Project Outcome and how these risks will be managed and mitigated, referring to the Risk Guidance. This should include at least one Fiduciary, two Safeguarding, and one Delivery Chain Risk.

Risk Description	Impact	Prob.	Gross Risk	Mitigation Header	Residual Risk
Fiduciary (financial): funds not used for intended purposes or not accounted for (fraud, corruption, mishandling or misappropriated). Project funds are misused by staff	minor	possible	moderate	Reinforce standards and practices for financial management and accounting, ensure all staff are aware of standards, and increase month-end spot checks of expenses and receipts.	moderate
Safeguarding: risk of sexual exploitation abuse and harassment (SEAH), or unintended harm to beneficiaries, the public, implementing partners, and staff. Project personnel have a sexual relationship with an underaged person in the communities where we work.	major	possible	major	Organize a refresher training on OELO standards and policies, ensure all staff understand OELO zero tolerance approach, revisit safeguarding quarterly.	major
Safeguarding: risks to health, safety and security (HSS) of beneficiaries, the public. Implementing partners, and staff. Project partners and governmental counterparts act inappropriately towards our members of staff, including verbal and sexual harassment, abuses of power	moderate	unlikely	moderate	Ensure all OELO safeguarding policies are included in our partnership agreements, ensure proper briefings on our policies and standards before any partner personnel visit and ensure partner and OELO personnel are well informed of our grievance mechanisms and safeguarding reporting channels	moderate
Delivery Chain: the overall risk associated with your delivery model Project partners or consultants fall behind on their responsibilities, having a knock on effect on activities and programs OELO is supposed to deliver	moderate	possible	major	Once the project is confirmed, have a project launch meeting with all partner, where we codevelop a collective workplan. Have regular coordination meetings to ensure on time delivery of project activities	moderate

Risk 5					
Extreme weather events including floods and outbreaks of TiLV affect the region, affecting the local fisheries, agriculture and community livelihoods.	major	unlikely	major	No mitigating action to be taken, prepare the team for disruptions and encourage dynamism.	major
Risk 6					
Our work to reduce bushmeat consumption and trade leads to a negative sentiment around OELOs work to organize community coops and environmental leadership.	moderate	possible	major	All educational messaging and language is focus grouped before use, and ensure messaging is contextually appropriate and sensitive. Community work is proposed and led by community members, at their request, rather than imposed by OELO.	major
Risk 7					
The recent regime change makes the political context very difficult to work in and reduces environmental protections that were recently established, enabling local elites to continue illegal logging, poaching and fishing activities for personal gain.	major	possible	major	Ensure all fisheries management plans are legally recognized by the Ministry. Coordinate with national partners to anticipate any radical changes in environmental legislation. Coordinate with partner Conservation Justice. Support local community coops and associations to organize and resist illegal actors.	major

Q22. Project sensitivities

Please indicate whether there are sensitivities associated with this project that need to be considered if details are published (detailed species location data that would increase threats, political sensitivities, prosecutions for illegal activities, security of staff etc.).

☒ No

Section 8 - Workplan

Q23. Workplan

Provide a project implementation timetable that shows the key milestones in project activities.

 [BCF workplan OELO FINAL.docx](#)

 02/12/2024

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 pdf 58.15 KB

Section 9 - Monitoring and Evaluation

Q24. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

Describe how the performance of the project will be monitored and evaluated, making reference to who is responsible for the project’s M&E.

Darwin Initiative projects are expected to be adaptive and you should detail how the monitoring and evaluation will feed into the delivery of the project including its management. M&E is expected to be built into the project and not an ‘add’ on. It is as important to measure for negative impacts as it is for positive impact. Additionally, please indicate an approximate budget and level of effort (person days) to be spent on M&E.

OELO integrates monitoring and evaluation into its program management and planning processes. Our Head of Programs is responsible for project monitoring and evaluation and coordinates with the rest of the team to organize internal evaluation processes. The head of programs works closely with the executive director, program advisor and program partners/consultants, on project monitoring, data analysis and interpretation, to ensure timely monitoring and evaluation of project progress and results. This includes programmatic monitoring and evaluation of logframe M&E, as well as operational monitoring and evaluation, including project timelines, budget and safeguarding.

OELO works on the basis of an annual work plan, with monthly planning and evaluation meetings to coordinate work and set monthly priorities based on annual objectives. This ensures that on a monthly basis, priorities can be discussed and the project can be adaptively managed based on evolving situations and conditions in the field. All the while keeping annual objectives and plans in mind. The fisheries consultants provide quarterly reports on the fisheries data as well as their work, so this is evaluated and discussed on a quarterly basis. The environmental education work as well as the electric elephant fences are evaluated monthly, but also more in-depth annually, when annual reports are developed. This ensures we can evaluate specific strategies and outputs separately and adapt the approach as needed.

Operationally, we monitor our spending monthly and do more in-depth evaluations of each project budget quarterly, to ensure project spending is on track and program activities can be adjusted in a timely manner.

Total project budget for M&E (£)	
(this may include Staff and Travel and Subsistence Costs)	
Total project budget for M&E (%)	
(this may include Staff and Travel and Subsistence Costs)	
Number of days planned for M&E	88

Section 10 - Logical Framework & Standard Indicators

Q25a. Logical Framework (logframe)

Darwin Initiative projects will be required to monitor and report against their progress towards their Outputs and Outcome. This section sets out the expected Outputs and Outcome of your project, how you will measure progress against these and how we can verify this.

 BCE_St2_Logframe_OELO DIR31S1_1335 .docx

(1)

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 pdf 89.74 KB

Impact:

Freshwater biodiversity is conserved and community resilience is increased on four lakes of the Bas Ogooué Ramsar Site, Gabon.

Outcome:

Freshwater fisheries are sustainably managed, key lake species are protected and community livelihoods are strengthened through improved farming and fishing harvests across Oguemoué, Adolet, Gomé and Ezanga lakes, Gabon.

Project Outputs

Output 1:

18 fishing cooperatives are established and capability around fisheries management and governance is developed.

Output 2:

Four community fishery management plans are in implementation across four lakes in Bas Ogooue covering ~25,000 hectares.

Output 3:

Fisher led monitoring systems are established for the lakes to evaluate management effectiveness.

Output 4:

14 elephant fences are established to reduce human elephant conflict and improve small-scale farming.

Output 5:

Environmental education programs and clubs are organised in lake communities and in Lambarene town.

Do you require more Output fields?

☒ No

Activities

Each activity is numbered according to the Output that it will contribute towards, for example, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 are contributing to Output 1.

- 1.1 Forming coops
- 1.2 Learning exchanges between new coops and Oguemooue coops
- 1.3 Training for new coops
- 1.4 Regular coop meetings

- 2.1 Focus groups to compile ideas and plans for fishing agreements
- 2.2 Draft fishing agreements
- 2.3 Develop fishery management plans

- 2.4 Management plan ratification by government
- 2.5 Community patrols and implementation of management plan
- 3.1 Identify and recruit community data collectors
- 3.2 Develop data methods & pilot them
- 3.3 Implement data collection
- 4.1 Improved M&E of Oguemoué barriers
- 4.2 Installation barriers Adolet
- 4.3 Installation barriers Ezanga
- 4.4 Installation barriers Gome
- 5.1 Town-based work in classrooms
- 5.2 Oguemoué summer clubs
- 5.3 Town-based clubs and data collection

Q25b. Standard Indicators

Standard Indicator Ref & Wording	Project Output or Outcome this links to	Target number by project end	Provide disaggregated targets here
DI-B03: Number of new or improved community management plans available and endorsed	Output 2	3	Baseline=0; Y3=3
DI-A01: Number of people in eligible countries who have completed structured and relevant training	Output 1 & Output 4	130	130 cooperative members trained
DI-D03: Number of people with enhanced livelihoods	Outcome 0.1	928	928 people (475 men, 453 women)
DI-D03b: Number of people with improved income	Outcome 0.1	928	928 people (475 men, 453 women)
DI-D01a: Area under Sustainable Management Practices	Output 2	14,000	Lake Adolet: 1000 hectares, Ezanga; 9000 ha, Gome: 4000
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response

No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response
No Response	No Response	No Response	No Response

If you cannot identify three Standard Indicators you can report against, please justify this here.

No Response

Section 11 - Budget and Funding

Q26. Budget

Please complete the appropriate Excel spreadsheet, which provides the Budget for this application and ensure the Summary page is fully completed. Some of the questions earlier and below refer to the information in this spreadsheet.


[BCF Budget_OELO DIR31S1_1335](#)

 02/12/2024

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Q27. Alignment with other funding and activities

This question aims to help us understand how familiar you are with other work in the geographic/thematic area, and how this proposed project will build on or align with this to avoid any risks of duplicating or conflicting activities.

Q27a. Is this new work or does it build on existing/past activities (delivered by anyone and funded through any source)?

- ☒ Development of existing/past activities

Please provide details:

This project builds on OELO’s previous work on Lake Oguemoue, but expands our work to new lakes where only preliminary work has occurred. Our previous work on Lake Oguemoue has focussed on establishing fisher cooperatives, identifying local priorities and creating a community fishing agreement, setting up fisheries monitoring with local fishers, developing a fisheries management plan, piloting electric elephant fences and supporting livelihood projects.

This project is focussed on strengthening the “Our Lake, our Future’ model on Lake Oguemoue while replicating it in Lakes Adolet, Gomé and Ezanga. OELO has only begun initial community consultations on these lakes with limited and short term funding from UNDP (ended Nov 2024), Tusk (ends Dec 2024) and TNC (ends May 2025).

Q27b. Are you aware of any current or future plans for work in the geographic/thematic area to the proposed project that may duplicate or cut across this proposed project?

- ☒ Yes

Please give details explaining similarities and differences, and explaining how your work will be additional, avoiding duplicating and conflicting activities and what attempts have been/will be made to co-operate with and share lessons learnt for mutual benefit.

We hope that international NGO, TNC will continue to support the Gabonese administration to advance the legalization process for fisheries management plans, help the Ministry to advance co-management and strengthen monitoring & enforcement strategies with communities. This can create a stronger framework of enforcement that discourages rule breakers and saboteurs and builds support within the administration for community based or collaboratively managed freshwater and fisheries management. TNC have been a key and complementary big NGO partner in the creation of the Oguemoué fisheries management plan and we hope that their support can be extended to our work on other lakes. They are based in the capital Libreville and could play an important complementary role in engaging national government and building governmental capacity.

Q28. Value for Money

Please demonstrate why your project is good value for money in terms of impact and cost-effectiveness of each pound spend (economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity). Why is it the best feasible project for the amount of money to be spent?

OELO is a Gabonese NGO that has its office and HQ in Lambaréné, Gabon's seventh largest town and a strategic location for working in the Bas Ogooue region. Being based in Lamberene enables OELO to engage with women and youth who relocate to the town during the school year, while also ensuring we are logistically close to the lakes and communities we work with. This reduces operational costs compared to if we were based in Gabon's capital city. Additionally, OELO has an ecotourism operation called Tsam Tsam, based on Lake Oguemoué, which provides OELO with supplementary income but also operational benefits to our conservation work. The Tsam Tsam site is used as a camp to host partners, community meetings and our environmental leadership program. The Tsam Tsam boats used to transport guests are also shared with OELO's conservation teams, enabling efficiency in our operations. Finally, the Tsam Tsam site has partnership agreements with Oguemoué cooperatives to supply food, guides, boat transfers and other help, providing additional livelihood benefits to the cooperatives and ensuring OELO operations use local suppliers and locally sourced products.

There are several conservation organisations working in the Bas Ogooue area, but none with the field based presence that OELO has. This ensures that we can play complementary roles and build on our respective strengths, as seen in the example where the Lake Association got support from NGO Conservation Justice to hold a local business owner accountable for illegal logging around the Lake.

Q29. Capital items

If you plan to purchase capital items with Darwin Initiative funding, please indicate what you anticipate will happen to the items following project end. If you are requesting more than 10% capital costs, please provide your justification here.

No capital items will be purchased with Darwin initiative funding.

Section 12 - Safeguarding and Ethics

Q30. Safeguarding

All projects funded under the Biodiversity Challenge Funds must ensure proactive action is taken to promote the welfare and protect all individuals involved in the project (staff, implementing partners, the public and beneficiaries) from harm. In order to provide assurance of this, projects are required to have specific procedures and policies in operation.

Please outline how your project will ensure:

(a) beneficiaries, the public, implementing partners, and staff are made aware of your safeguarding commitment and how they can confidentially raise a concern,

(b) safeguarding issues are investigated, recorded and what disciplinary procedures are in place when allegations and complaints are upheld,

(c) you will ensure project partners also meet these standards and policies.

Indicate which minimum standard protocol your project follows and how you meet those minimum standards, i.e. CAPSEAH, CHS, IASC MOS-PSEA. If your approach is currently limited or in the early stages of development, please clearly set out your plans to address this.

In its approach to safeguarding, OELO upholds the 9 commitments of the Core Humanitarian Standards and OELO takes a zero tolerance approach to inaction on bullying, harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse.

All staff, personnel and partners are required to sign our code of conduct and are given briefings on our Safeguarding and Whistleblowing policies. Reference to these policies, and the standards set out in them, is embedded in our partnership agreements to ensure all project partners uphold and reinforce our standards and approach to safeguarding. Safeguarding as a discussion point is also included in our annual evaluation meetings with each project partner, to ensure this is a point for reflection and further development each time we meet. The reporting mechanisms are clearly shared in the policy documents and shared as a separate one-page pdf with each project partner and printed & posted in the OELO office as well as our Tsam Tsam ecotourism site. This ensures anybody visiting and spending time in our offices or the field has access to the reporting channel and is reminded of the standards and practises we uphold.

Beneficiaries and the public are made aware of our zero commitment approach as well as the standards we expect of our staff, personnel and partners, to ensure they know what standards and practices to hold us accountable to. Early in our engagements with new communities we share these standards and the reporting channels with our community partners, as well as during routine evaluations. Many of our staff are from these areas and are therefore closely known to many, so communities know that they can raise grievances and concerns with our team through various channels that they may be most comfortable with.

Defra recommend you appoint a safeguarding focal point to ensure the project's PSEAH work is taken forward. This can be a separate member of staff or a current member of staff who spends a proportionate amount of time for safeguarding and PSEAH activities. Please name this individual here - this person should also be included in your overall staff list at Q33 and in your budget.

[REDACTED]

Q31. Ethics

Outline your approach to meeting the key principles of good ethical practice, as outlined in the guidance.

Free, Prior and Informed Consent of communities is fundamental to our approach. We design our approach with FPIC at the heart, only working with communities who approach us. FPIC is reinforced at every step of our work, as this is not a one-off process, and is something rights holders and resource users retain indefinitely.

Health & Safety and Safeguarding is also embedded in our operational practices, borne out of our experiences with running a commercial ecotourism site. This ensures health & safety considerations are forefront and we avoid subjecting anybody to any unacceptable levels of risk or harm, as a result of our programs or operations.

The traditional ecological knowledge of fishers and resource users on the lakes is central to the effective design and development of community fishing agreements. Fisheries data is used to complement and support traditional knowledge and management planning, not overrule it. Our community centred approach to fisheries management ensures access rights of resource users around the lakes are preserved and benefits are equally shared between all rights holders and resource users. Fishing cooperatives can be established by anybody and are not exclusive in membership, ensuring OELO works with all subsets of these heterogeneous communities.

Section 13 - British Embassy or High Commission Engagement

Q32. British embassy or high commission engagement

It is important for UK Government representatives to understand if UK funding might be spent in the project country/ies.

Please indicate if you have contacted the relevant British embassy or high commission to discuss the project and attach details of any advice you have received from them. Please note that some embassies or high commissions may not be able to respond to you but your project will not be penalised for a lack of response.

☒ Yes

Please attach evidence of request or advice if received.

 [British High Commission & OELO email exchange \(1\)](#)
 28/11/2024
 04:36:44
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 [Screenshot 2024-11-28 123249](#)
 28/11/2024
 04:36:07
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Section 14 - Project Staff

Q33. Project staff

Please identify the core staff (identified in the budget), their role and what % of their time they will be working on the project.

Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
Heather Arrowood	Project Leader	50	Checked
Cyrille Mvele	Strategic Advisor	50	Checked
Rebecca Djanivenda	Head of Programs	50	Checked
Lercide Nguele	Environmental Ed Coordinator	25	Checked

Do you require more fields?

☒ Yes

Name (First name, Surname)	Role	% time on project	1 page CV or job description attached?
Line Ziza	Environmental Ed Assistant	25	Checked
Clauvis Mendome	Freshwater Program Assistant	100	Checked

Blanchard Mondjo	Freshwater Program Coordinator	100	Checked
No Response	No Response	No Response	Unchecked
No Response	No Response	No Response	Unchecked
No Response	No Response	No Response	Unchecked
No Response	No Response	No Response	Unchecked
No Response	No Response	No Response	Unchecked

Please provide 1 page CVs (or job description if yet to be recruited) for the project staff listed above as a combined PDF.

 2412 OELO Darwin Main merged CVs

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 pdf 820.1 KB

Have you attached all project staff CVs?

☒ Yes

Section 15 - Project Partners

Q34. Project Partners

Please list all the Project Partners (including the Lead Organisation who will administer the grant and coordinate delivery of the project), clearly setting out their roles and responsibilities in the project including the extent of their engagement so far.

This section should demonstrate the capability and capacity of the Project Partners to successfully deliver the project. Please provide Letters of Support for all project partners or explain why this has not been included. The order of the letters must be the same as the order they are presented in below.

Lead Organisation name:	OELO
Website address:	https://oelogabon.org/
Why is this organisation the Lead Organisation, and what value to they bring to the project? (including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	OELO is a gabonese NGO based in Lambarene, the seventh largest town in Gabon and closest to the Bas Ogooue lake region. OELO has been working in this region since 2010 and has had substantial impact over the years. Many of our team are from the region, bringing in contextual expertise and understanding, while also having significant expertise in research, monitoring, governance and community facilitation techniques. OELO brings our successful track record of supporting communities to establish fisher cooperatives to this project, which aims to replicate and scale this model further.
International/In-country Partner:	☒ In-country

Allocated budget (proportion or value):	
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure):	☒ Yes
Have you included a Letter of Support from the Lead Organisation?	☒ No
If no, please provide details	The lead organization is also the lead applicant, hence we already provided a cover letter.

Do you have partners involved in the Project?

☒ Yes

1. Partner Name:	Space for Giants
Website address:	https://www.spaceforgiants.org/whatwedo
What value does this Partner bring to the project? (including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	Space for Giants work across Africa's iconic landscapes to unlock the full value of nature by protecting biodiversity and remaining populations of megafauna, while expanding economic, cultural, and social value for local communities and national governments for generations to come. In collaboration with the Government of the Gabonese Republic, Space for Giants introduced an innovative solution designed for Gabonese subsistence farmers: the mobile electric fence. Space For Giants is actively addressing the challenges linked to human-elephant crisis, which negatively impacts subsistence farmers' livelihood and the preservation of forest elephants. 857 fences have been installed, positively impacting over 10,000 people. Fencing is part of long-term solutions that promote coexistence and community development. Space for Giants will be responsible for training and monitoring support of the electric elephant fences. They will work with OELO to support the fisher cooperatives in monitoring and maintaining the fences.
International/In-country Partner:	☒ In-country
Allocated budget:	
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure):	☒ Yes
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	☒ Yes

2. Partner Name:	<i>No Response</i>
Website address:	<i>No Response</i>
What value does this Partner bring to the project? (including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	<i>No Response</i>
International/In-country Partner:	☐ International ☐ In-country
Allocated budget:	<i>No Response</i>
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure):	☐ Yes ☐ No
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Partner Name:	<i>No Response</i>
Website address:	<i>No Response</i>
What value does this Partner bring to the project? (including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	<i>No Response</i>
International/In-country Partner:	☐ International ☐ In-country
Allocated budget:	<i>No Response</i>
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure)	☐ Yes ☐ No
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Partner Name:	<i>No Response</i>
Website address:	<i>No Response</i>
What value does this Partner bring to the project? (including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	<i>No Response</i>
International/In-country Partner:	☐ International ☐ In-country

Allocated budget:	<i>No Response</i>
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure):	☐ Yes ☐ No
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Partner Name:	<i>No Response</i>
Website address:	<i>No Response</i>
What value does this Partner bring to the project? (including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	<i>No Response</i>
International/In-country Partner:	☐ International ☐ In-country
Allocated budget:	<i>No Response</i>
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure):	☐ Yes ☐ No
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Partner Name:	<i>No Response</i>
Website address:	<i>No Response</i>
What value does this Partner bring to the project? (including roles, responsibilities and capabilities and capacity):	<i>No Response</i>
International/In-country Partner:	☐ International ☐ In-country
Allocated budget:	<i>No Response</i>
Representation on the Project Board (or other management structure):	☐ Yes ☐ No
Have you included a Letter of Support from this partner?	☐ Yes ☐ No

If you require more space to enter details regarding Partners involved in the project, please use the text field below.

No Response

Please provide a combined PDF of all letters of support.

-  [OELO Letter stamped](#)
-  02/12/2024
-  02:18:50
-  pdf 323.66 KB

Section 16 - Lead Partner Capability and Capacity

Q35. Lead Organisation Capability and Capacity

Has your organisation been awarded Biodiversity Challenge Funds (Darwin Initiative, Darwin Plus or Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund) funding before (for the purposes of this question, being a partner does not count)?

☒ No

If no, please provide the below information on the Lead Organisation.

What year was your organisation established/ incorporated/ registered?	01 January 2010
What is the legal status of your organisation?	☒ NGO
How is your organisation currently funded?	OELO is currently funded from various funding sources, including funding from US government agencies, international NGOs, Philanthropic Foundations and our own ecotourism operation. OELO has a combination of restricted, project-based and unrestricted funding. Unrestricted funding comes from our own ecotourism operation as well as a recent three-year unrestricted grant from a family foundation.

Describe briefly the aims, activities and achievements of your organisation. Large organisations please note that this should describe your unit or department.

Aims	Biodiversity is conserved and ecosystem services are ensured by putting local communities at the heart of decision-making and sustainable resources, for the wellbeing of future generations.
Activities	OELO works to support community based management of freshwater ecosystems and forests while also combatting illegal bushmeat consumption and trade through outreach and education. OELO lead youth leadership and education programs while also operating a successful ecotourism site.

Achievements	Set up a successful ecotourism operation, established Gabon's first sustainable fishing cooperative, the first women's fisher cooperative and Gabon's first lake fisheries management plan. This has reduced bycatch of Manatees, increased fisher CPUE and increased community income and harvests. OELO was also awarded the Equator Prize in 2022.
---------------------	---

Provide details of 3 contracts/projects held by the lead partner that demonstrate your credibility as an organisation and provide track record relevant to the project proposed.

These contracts/awards should have been held in the last 5 years and be of a similar size to the grant requested in your application.

Contract/Project 1 Title	Our forest, our future: Community conservation of the African forest elephant (<i>Loxodonta cyclotis</i>) in Bas Ogooué in Gabon
Contract Value/Project budget (include currency)	
Duration (e.g. 2 years 3 months)	2 years
Role of organisation in project	Lead organisation implementing the project.
Brief summary of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the project	The testing of Gabon's first single-wire electric barriers, with the Oguemoué cooperatives, helped avert more than 24 human-elephant conflicts with a 100% success rate, resulting in the first substantial cassava harvest on the lake in twenty-five years. Collaboration agreements were drawn up with 3 cooperatives in Oguemoué (Efoulatchi, Ewughe-Angome, Amven) supporting beekeeping, ecotourism and agriculture micro-projects. Long-term monitoring since 2013 in schools has shown a 50% decline in reports of elephant hunting by club members and non-members of our program and a 68% decline in reported consumption of elephants as well as declines for other species fully protected in Gabon.
Client/independent reference contact details (Name, e-mail)	USFWS Matthew Luizza,
Contract/Project 2 Title	"Changing consumer preferences and reduced availability of illegal bushmeat in the Bas Ogooué Ramsar site in Gabon"
Contract Value/Project budget (include currency)	
Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months)	2 years

Role of organisation in project	OELO was the lead organization implementing and overseeing the project.
Brief summary of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the project	98% reduction in illegal bushmeat recorded in the Isaac market, the largest market in Bas Ogooué, compared to the previous decade. 3-fold increase in the hippopotamus population recorded in Ogooué (pelican shore), compared to the previous decade (from 10 to 30 individuals). First manatee mating recorded by video on Lake Oguemoué. The mayor of Lambaréné signs an order to apply the laws on protected species in the Lambaréné markets. Children in our clubs are 76% less likely to eat illegal bushmeat than their peers.
Client/independent reference contact details (Name, e-mail)	USFWS Nancy Gelamn [REDACTED]

Contract/Project 3 Title	"Our lake, our future: Strengthen the management of community resources and the conservation of biodiversity on Lake Oguemoué.
Contract Value/Project budget (include currency)	[REDACTED]
Duration (e.g. 2 years, 3 months)	2 years
Role of organisation in project	Lead organisation implementing and leading the project
Brief summary of the aims, objectives and outcomes of the project	Catches per unit of effort have doubled on Lake Oguemoué since the implementation of the Oguemoué fisheries development plan (2018-2023) Manatee bycatch has been eliminated on Lake Oguemoué since the implementation of the fisheries management plan Migratory species return to Lake Oguemoué and are recorded through community data collection organized by OELO since 2014. Community data collector, Arsène Etsughe (Efoulatchi) is selected for the annual congress of the International Society of Primatology in August (IPS-MPS Congress 2023)
Client/independent reference contact details (Name, e-mail)	Tusk Ivy Warimu [REDACTED]

Have you provided the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts?

☒ No

If no, please provide details.

OELO only has one full financial year of independently examined accounts by our accounting consultants (CECA). These have been uploaded along with OELO balance sheets.

Section 17 - Certification

Certification

If this section is incomplete the entire application will be rejected.

Please note if you do not upload the relevant materials below your application may be made ineligible.

On behalf of the

Company

of

OELO

I apply for a grant of

£258,280.00

I certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the statements made by us in this application are true and the information provided is correct. I am aware that this application form will form the basis of the project schedule should this application be successful.

(This form should be signed by an individual authorised by the applicant institution to submit applications and sign contracts on their behalf.)

- I have enclosed CVs for key project personnel, cover letter, letters of support, a budget, logframe, Safeguarding and associated policies, and project workplan.
- Our last two sets of signed audited/independently verified accounts and annual report (covering three years) are also enclosed.

Checked

Name	Heather
Position in the organisation	Arrowood
Signature (please upload e-signature)	 Signature (1)  02/12/2024  03:58:23  pdf 558.26 KB
Date	02 December 2024

Please attach the requested signed audited/independently examined accounts.

 [2024 OELO accounts_CECA](#)

 02/12/2024

 03:57:24

 pdf 3.55 MB

 [2023BalanceSheetEnglish2023](#)

 02/12/2024

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 pdf 127.29 KB

 [2023 OELO accounts_CECA](#)

 02/12/2024

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 pdf 661.66 KB

 [2022BalanceSheetEnglish2022](#)

 02/12/2024

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 pdf 125.7 KB

Please upload the Lead Partner's Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Code of Conduct as a PDF. Optionally you can also upload your Health, Safety and/or Security policy or Security Plan here.

 [OELO Code de Conduite.docx](#)

 29/11/2024

 07:36:27

 pdf 306.69 KB

 [OELO_safeguarding_safeguarding_policy.docx](#)

 29/11/2024

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 pdf 267.69 KB

 [_OELO Whistleblowing Policy](#)

 29/11/2024

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 pdf 252.86 KB

Section 18 - Submission Checklist

Checklist for submission

	Check
I have read the Guidance, including the "Darwin Initiative Guidance", "Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Guidance", "Standard Indicator Guidance", "Risk Guidance", and "Finance Guidance".	Checked
I have read, and can meet, the current Terms and Conditions for this fund.	Checked
I have provided actual start and end dates for the project.	Checked
I have provided the budget based on UK government financial years i.e. 1 April – 31 March and in GBP.	Checked
I have checked that our budget is complete, correctly adds up and I have included the correct final total at the start of the application.	Checked
The application been signed by a suitably authorised individual (clear electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable).	Checked
I have attached the below documents to my application: • a cover letter from the Lead Organisation	Checked
• a completed logframe as a PDF using the template provided and using "Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Guidance" and "Standard Indicator Guidance".	Checked

• a budget (which meets the requirements above) using the template provided.	Checked
• a signed copy of the last 2 annual report and accounts (covering three years) for the Lead Organisation, or provided an explanation if not.	Checked
• a completed workplan as a PDF using the template provided.	Checked
• a copy of the Lead Organisation's Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Code of Conduct (Question 30).	Checked
• a copy of the Lead Organisation's Health, Safety and/or Security policy or Security Plan (Question 30)	Unchecked
• 1 page CV or job description for all the Project Staff identified at Question 33, including the Project Leader, or provided an explanation of why not, combined into a single PDF.	Checked
• a letter of support from the Lead Organisation and partner(s) identified at Question 34, or an explanation of why not, as a single PDF.	Checked
I have been in contact with the FCDO in the project country/ies and have included any evidence of this. If not, I have provided an explanation of why not.	Checked
The additional supporting evidence is in line with the requested evidence, amounts to a maximum of 5 sides of A4, and is combined as a single PDF.	Checked
(If copying and pasting into Flexi-Grant) I have checked that all my responses have been successfully copied into the online application form.	Checked
I have checked the Darwin Initiative website immediately prior to submission to ensure there are no late updates.	Checked
I have read and understood the Privacy Notice on the Darwin Initiative website.	Checked

We would like to keep in touch!

Please check this box if you would be happy for the lead applicant (Flexi-Grant Account Holder) and project leader (if different) to be added to our mailing list. Through our mailing list we share updates on upcoming and current application rounds under the Biodiversity Challenge Funds. We also provide occasional updates on other UK Government activities related to biodiversity conservation and share our regular newsletter. You are free to unsubscribe at any time.

Checked

Data protection and use of personal data

Information supplied in the application form, including personal data, will be used by Defra as set out in the **Privacy Notice**, available from the [Forms and Guidance Portal](#).

This **Privacy Notice must be provided to all individuals** whose personal data is supplied in the application form. Some information may be used when publicising the Darwin Initiative including project details (usually title, lead organisation, project leader, location, and total grant value).

Project Title: Strengthening and Replicating the "Our Lake, Our Future" initiative, Gabon

Project Summary	SMART Indicators (including disaggregated targets)	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
Impact: Freshwater biodiversity is conserved and community resilience is increased on four lakes of the Bas Ogooué Ramsar Site, Gabon. (Max 30 words)			
<i>Freshwater fisheries are sustainably managed, key lake species are protected and community livelihoods are strengthened through improved farming and fishing harvests across Oguemoué, Adolet, Gomé and Ezanga lakes, Gabon.</i>	0.1 Catch per unit effort stabilizes on Lake Oguemoué and increases by 25% on three new lakes by 2029 benefitting 928 people (475 men, 453 women). (baseline=30kg per km of net per night in 2023 on Lake Oguemoué; Y2=baseline for new lakes, Y4= 25% increase on new lakes, stable at 30 kg per km/night on Oguemoué) 0.2 75% reduction in use of destructive fishing practices and illegal gears by fishers from 191 households on three new lakes by 2029 and 25% reduction in use of destructive fishing practices and illegal gears by fishers from 39 households on Lake Oguemoué. (Baseline for Lake Adolet, Gome and Ezanga=45% of fishers using destructive or illegal gears, Baseline for Oguemoué=20%	0.1 Monthly catch assessment surveys by community data collectors 0.2 Monthly catch assessment surveys by community data collectors include observational recordings of gear types on fishing boats 0.3 Endline evaluation interviews by OELO staff with <i>Heterotis niloticus</i> fishers asking about incidences of manatee bycatch 0.4 Daily monitoring of elephant fences by cooperative members recording 'conflict events prevented' as instances where elephant tracks were seen to approach the fences and were identified as attempting to bypass the fences, but did not successfully raid the crops	Lake no-take zones are well placed and large enough to benefit fish populations There are no further outbreaks of Tilapia Lake Virus that affect fisher catches and CPUE A majority of community members respect fisheries management plans Climate, soil conditions and farming practises ensure good harvests in the absence of elephant crop raids This region doesn't experience unexpected drought or dry periods, which could negatively affect fisher catch per unit effort Coop members maintain electric fences which can fail due to negligence.

Project Title: Strengthening and Replicating the "Our Lake, Our Future" initiative, Gabon

	of fishers. Y4=75% reduction on 3 new lakes, 25% reduction on Oguemoué). 0.3 75% reduction by 2029 of reported bycatch events of African Manatees on Lakes Oguemoué Adolet, Gomé, and Ezanga by <i>Heterotis niloticus</i> fishers, (Baseline=75% of <i>Heterotis niloticus</i> fishers from lake region (n=50) reported catching manatee calves as bycatch in their nets, Y4=75% reduction) 0.4 200 elephant conflict events prevented across four lakes by 2029 (baseline=10/year with 2 fences on Oguemoué; Y1=6 fences prevent 30 attempts, Y2=8 fences prevent 40 attempts, Y3=12 fences prevent 60 attempts, Y4= 14 fences prevent 70 attempts; Total = 200 conflict events prevented) 0.5 75% of 234 cooperative members from 18 cooperatives across four lakes report improved harvests in plantations protected by elephant fences by 2029 (Baseline: n/a; Y4=75% of 234	0.5 Endline evaluation interviews by OELO staff with cooperative members	Elephants don't learn to bypass fences.
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	members report improved harvests)		
Outputs: 1. 18 Fishing cooperatives are established and capability around fisheries management and governance is developed.	1.1. 10 new fishing cooperatives formally registered by 2028 with 130 new members (baseline= 8 coops, 104 members; Y4=18 coops with 234 members). 1.2. 15 learning exchange visits organised between 150 people 1.3. 20 trainings, workshops, and presentations provided to 10 cooperatives with 130 members	1.1. Fishing cooperative articles of association and members lists provided upon registration 1.2 Learning exchange visit reports completed by OELO staff, including signed attendance lists 1.3 Training reports completed by OELO staff with signed attendance lists.	There is no political opposition or obstruction to cooperatives being established
2. Four community fishery management plans are in implementation across four lakes in Bas Ogooue covering ~25,000 hectares	2.1. 2 new community fishing agreements developed by 2027, signed by a majority of fishers on Lakes Gome and Ezanga (baseline=2 (Oguemoué and Adolet); Y2=4 total) 2.2. 3 new Fishery management plans covering approximately 12,000 hectares on Lakes Adolet, Gome and Ezanga legalised by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries by 2028 (baseline=0, Y3=3) 2.3. 9 no take zones established by 2028	2.1 Copies of the written community fishing agreements signed by the fishing cooperatives 2.2 Copies of the fishery management plan documents signed and ratified by the Ministry 2.3 Spatial maps of fishery management plans including the designated no take zones	Community interest in establishing no take zones and fishing rules is maintained The DGPA Fisheries Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries continues to support the establishment of the fishery management plans

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	(baseline=3, Oguemoué, Y3=9 total)		
3. Fisher led monitoring systems are established for the lakes to evaluate management effectiveness	3.1. 6 new community data collectors trained in 3 lakes by 2026 (baseline: 2, Y1=2 Y2=2, Y3=2: 8 total) 3.2. Baseline fisheries dependent data reports are produced for Adolet, Gomé, Ezanga by 2028	3.1 Training reports prepared by AES 3.2 Fisheries dependent data reports prepared by AES consultants 3.3 Webportal to be created with AES and available for partners	There are community members with the motivation and capacity to become data collectors Fishers agree to share landings data with data collectors
4. 14 Elephant fences are established to reduce human elephant conflict and improve small-scale farming	4.1. 14 new electric fences established to mitigate elephant conflict events by 2028 (baseline: 2, Y1= 6, Y2=2, Y3=4, Y4= 2, total 14) 4.2. 3 trainings organised for community members around electric fence maintenance and data collection (Y1=1, Y2=1, Y3=1) 4.3. Community logs of elephant attempts recorded and shared monthly for each of the 12 fences	4.1 Photos of electric fences in place 4.2 Installation/training reports by OELO team 4.3 Elephant attempt data is shared monthly by cooperative members to OELO team members who input it into a shared database	Elephants continue to be deterred by electric fences Coop members continue to collect and share data. Coop members maintain fences.
5. Environmental education programs and clubs are organised in lake communities and in Lambarene town.	5.1. 2 annual summer clubs involves 100 students every year on Lake Oguemoué (Y1=2, Y2=2, Y3=2, Y4=2)	5.1 Activity reports prepared by OELO staff every year 5.2 Internship reports	Students are interested to join annual summer clubs and internships

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	5.2. 8 summer interns collect fisheries data at landings sites in Lambaréné every year		
Activities (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1. Each activity should start on a new line and be no more than approximately 25 words.) 1.1 Forming coops 1.2 Learning exchanges between new coops and Oguemooue coops 1.3 Training for new coops 1.4 Regular coop meetings 2.1 Focus groups to compile ideas and plans for fishing agreements 2.2 Draft fishing agreements 2.3 Develop fishery management plans 2.4 Management plan ratification by government 2.5 Community patrols and implementation of management plan 3.1 Identify and recruit community data collectors 3.2 Develop data methods & pilot them 3.3 Implement data collection 4.1 Improved M&E of Oguemoué barriers 4.2 Installation barriers Adolet 4.3 Installation barriers Ezanga 4.4 Installation barriers Gome 5.1 Town-based work in classrooms 5.2 Oguemoué summer clubs 5.3 Town-based clubs and data collection			