

Programme Manager ESMS (m/f/x)

Stellenanbieter: Blue Action Fund

BLUE ACTION FUND is searching for a:

Programme Manager ESMS

REPORTS TO: Executive Director

LOCATION: Berlin

SALARY: Competitive

CLOSING DATE: **4 January 2026**

START DATE: As soon as possible

CONTRACT: Full time preferred, part time arrangement of minimum 80% negotiable. Fixed term contract for 2 years. An extension of the contract may be considered subject to funding and operational requirements.

ABOUT BLUE ACTION FUND

Blue Action Fund (hereafter 'Blue Action') is a foundation financed with public funding from Germany, Sweden, France, Norway and Ireland as well as the Green Climate Fund that seeks to conserve marine biodiversity for future generations and to improve the lives of local people today. We pursue that mission by making targeted grants to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in the Global South. The projects we support work on marine protected areas (MPAs) and their buffer zones, targeting the most sensitive coastal waters of Africa, Latin America and Asia/Pacific, and focus on measurable outcomes in two areas:

- Newly established or better managed MPAs or networks of MPAs, as well as Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) which result in conservation of biodiversity;
- Enhanced livelihood conditions in coastal communities.

Our grant-awarding process is based on Calls for Proposals. Since Blue Action's creation in 2016, we have launched several Calls for Proposals and signed more than 30 grant agreements. Blue Action has developed an Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) which is mandatory for all its grantees.

THE ROLE

This position offers a unique opportunity to shape and lead Blue Action Fund's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS), while overseeing grants of a growing grant programme of marine conservation projects in developing countries within one of the leading organisations funding marine conservation globally. Based in Berlin, you will serve as the organisation's focal point for safeguards, providing high-level technical and strategic guidance

to ensure that Blue Action's investments deliver conservation and community benefits in a socially responsible and environmentally sustainable manner. You will manage a portfolio of grants and proposals, guide applicants and grantees through complex safeguard processes, and advise the Programme Team and Management Board on risk management and compliance. Beyond individual grants, you will strengthen institutional capacity by refining policies and systems, building team knowledge, and continue positioning Blue Action as a credible leader in safeguards in the international conservation finance landscape. Working closely with the Management Board, Programme Team, donors, and external partners, you will combine technical expertise with strategic vision and strong communication skills.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

At programme level (around 80% of your time):

- Ensure full compliance with Blue Action's donors' Environmental and Social requirements.
- Coordinate ESMS-related tasks across Programme Team, incl. colleagues with dedicated time for ESMS, ensuring effective workload distribution & quality assurance.
- Support grantees and applicants in need with tailored technical advice across the full safeguard cycle (screening, scoping, assessment, mitigation, monitoring).
- Lead grievance and serious incident management processes, ensuring accountability, transparency, and effective resolution.
- Lead regular reviews and updates of ESMS documents and systems, embedding lessons learned and international best practice.
- Oversee the integration of safeguards into internal systems, streamlining reporting and strengthening accountability.
- Oversee and monitor contracts with ESMS consultants, ensuring timely and high-quality deliverables.
- Design and deliver capacity-building activities for staff and grantees on ESMS principles, contributing to evolving standards into institutional practice and consistent application across the organisation.
- Maintain ESMS related coordination and information flows with donors, particularly KfW.
- Lead on external communication about Blue Action's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS), incl. as organisational spokesperson on safeguards.
- Undertake additional tasks as agreed with the Management Board.

At grant management level (around 20% of your time):

- Ensuring sound implementation of a number of grants in line with Blue Action requirements.
- Being main contact point for grantees and responding to individual questions.
- Review and assess reporting from grantees.
- Administer, verify, initiate and monitor payment requests.
- Ensure compliance with Blue Action Fund's procurement policy (no-objecting subcontract templates, assessing requests for procurement exemptions).

- Support grants' communications, e.g. through Grant Fact Sheets, filing of photos and videos and other communication-related tasks.
- Conduct due diligence checks on potential grantees (signature verification, exclusion of terrorism lists, financial due diligence etc.).
- Initiate and oversee external consultancies for reviews of grants.
- Assess potential revisions of grant agreements and elaborate proposals for consideration of the Management Board.
- Ensure grantees' compliance with Blue Action Fund's Environmental and Social Safeguard policies.
- Contribute to the appraisal and selection of grant applications.
- Other tasks as agreed with the Management Board

KEY QUALIFICATIONS

All candidates for the position must provide evidence of the following:

- At least 8 years' professional experience in programme management, environmental and social safeguards, or related fields in conservation or international development.
- Proven expertise and experiences of at least 3 years in the design, implementation, and monitoring of environmental and social safeguard systems, preferably within an international donor or NGO context.
- Master or higher university degree in environmental studies, social sciences, development studies, natural resource management, or related fields.
- Demonstrated ability to engage with senior-level stakeholders, donors, and partners, with strong diplomatic and influencing skills.
- Track record of developing organisational systems, guidelines, and tools that improve institutional effectiveness.
- Strong leadership and mentoring skills, with experience building staff capacity on complex technical topics.
- Excellent written and spoken English, with the ability to translate technical issues into clear, actionable advice.
- Ability and willingness to travel internationally, sometimes to remote locations.
- A valid work permit for Germany.

Desirable additional qualification:

- Work experience with public funders.
- Additional language skills (Spanish, Portuguese, French).
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office and experience with CRM or grant management platforms (ideally Salesforce).

ABOUT YOU

You are an energetic, self-starting individual who is able to work independently and within a small team. You are detail-oriented and process-minded but are also flexible enough to enjoy working on new topics. You may come from the NGO, foundation, public administration or

private sector, but you should have extensive experience with Environmental and Social Safeguards and management. You are comfortable working in a small organisation, in a diverse team and have a hands-on mentality. Your key partners are situated around the globe and require excellent skills of remote and intercultural communications. You are very well-rounded and have a passion for learning and doing new things. You are ambitious, creative, helpful, and have a good sense of humour. You have written and spoken fluency in English. You are able to travel nationally and internationally.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Expressions of interest should be submitted electronically, in English. Please include in a single pdf document:

- A letter of motivation (not more than one page) indicating your salary expectations, potential starting date and two references,
- Curriculum vitae.

Please send the entire application to jobs@blueactionfund.org, indicating in the **subject line** **[Your name] Programme Manager - ESMS**.

Deadline: 4 January 2026.

We anticipate having first virtual interviews with selected applicants between 26 January and 4 February and in-person interviews in Berlin on 11 and 13 February with final candidates. The timeline for interviews might be subject to change.

We kindly request all applicants to refrain from contacting Blue Action team members via LinkedIn or other social media channels.

Bewerbungsschluss: 04.01.2026

Einsatzort: 10179 Berlin, Deutschland

Stellenanbieter: Blue Action Fund
Friedrich-Ebert-Anlage 36
60325 Frankfurt am Main, Deutschland

WWW: <https://www.blueactionfund.org/>

E-Mail: jobs@blueactionfund.org

Online-Bewerbung: jobs@blueactionfund.org

Sonstiges: Subject Line: [Your name] Programme Manager - ESMS

Ursprünglich veröffentlicht: 08.12.2025

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