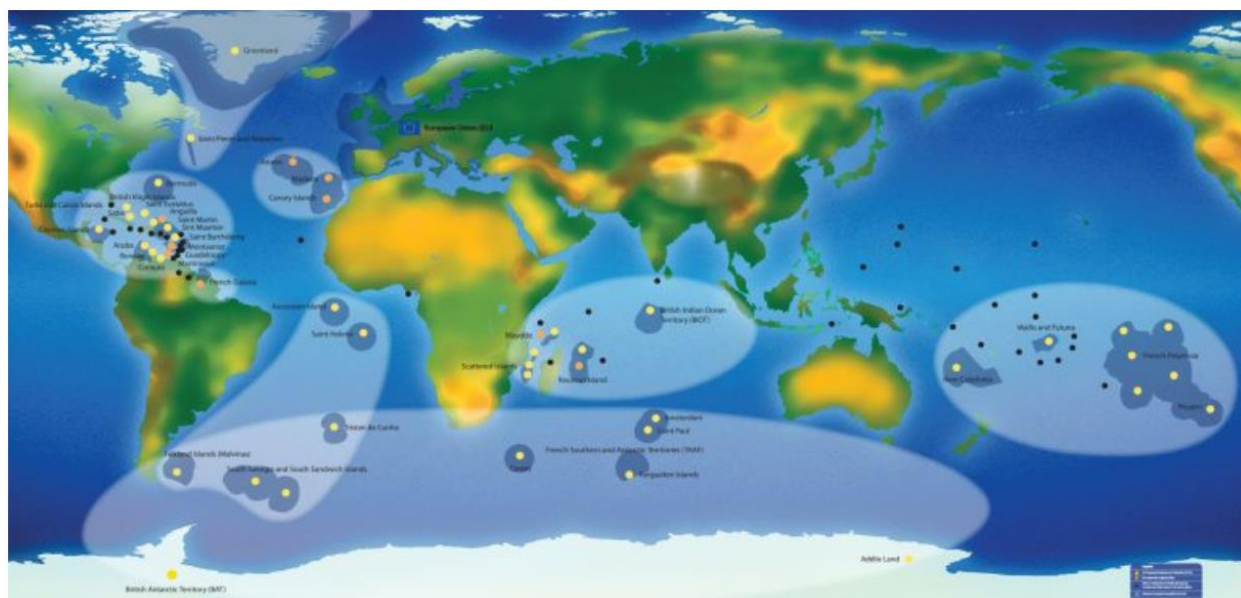


New funding opportunities for environmental projects in the South Atlantic: BEST 2.0

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The European Commission has announced that in order to address the need for facilitated access to funding in the European Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), it is allocating new resources for concrete projects in the OCTs through a 5 year programme; BEST 2.0 (**B**iodiversity and **E**cosystem **S**ervices in European Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and **T**erritories). This will mean a new source of funding that can be accessed for environmental projects within the South Atlantic Overseas Territories (OTs). The European Commission's Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (EuropeAid) has two calls for proposals organised in the coming two years, with a total budget of over €6 million for this initiative



BEST 2.0 has been born from a recognised need for current support of projects on the ground whilst a long term financial mechanism is created from the existing BEST III initiative, which began last year. The aim of the BEST III project is to support and maintain biodiversity and sustainable use of ecosystem services, including looking at ecosystem-based approaches to



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climate change adaption and mitigation methods. This is taking place simultaneously across all European OCTs. The South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute (SAERI) is the coordinator for the South Atlantic Hub, which includes Ascension Island, St Helena and Tristan da Cunha, the Falkland Islands and South Georgia & South Sandwich Isles.

Five of the existing BEST III knowledge hubs (Caribbean, Indian Ocean, Pacific, Polar/Sub-Polar, and South Atlantic) will help assure the calls are adapted to the varying conditions and situations encountered in OCTs and will provide support to local organisations for submission of proposals. Independent regional advisory committees, with experts in the relevant fields, will assess the proposals and advise a decision board.

The objective of BEST 2.0 is to empower local actors, authorities and civil society organisations in OCTs. Within the South Atlantic OTs this will involve organisations who are committed to local development, maintaining biodiversity and the sustainable use of ecosystem services. This will particularly apply to the key biodiversity areas identified through the participative Ecosystem profiles process led by the BEST knowledge hub for the region. Eligible beneficiaries will be local authorities and services, civil society organisations and stakeholders working within the South Atlantic OTs.

The first call for proposals will take place in June this year. Please regularly check this website or the [BEST webpage](#) for further information.

For more information please contact SAERI.