

Small Grant Fund for EAAFP Working Groups & Task Forces

2025 Application Form

A. Details of Applicant

Institution/ organisation:	Nature Conservation Society- Myanmar		
Contact Details Name:	Mr.	Aung	Pyae Phyo
	Mr./Ms./Dr.	Family Name	Given Name
Position:	Executive Officer		
Email Address:	pyaephyoang@ncsmm.org		

Brief Background of the Institution/ organisation	<p><i>Please include relevant experience in wetlands and waterbird conservation, local community engagement, etc. Add website and social media links if available.</i></p> <p>Nature Conservation Society-Myanmar (NCS), the recognized National Partner of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force(SBSTF), has extensive experience in waterbird monitoring, research, and capacity building for local communities. NCS conducts annual surveys of the wintering populations of migratory shorebirds at key wintering sites along Myanmar's coast. Additionally, NCS participated in international cooperative activities, such as the Spoon-billed Sandpipers census in Thailand in 2023 and South-China 2024.</p> <p>NCS supports to the national government in developing the CEPA national action plan, serving as a key partner in migratory bird and wetland conservation in Myanmar. Moreover, NCS is experienced in advocacy, local stakeholder engagement, and the development of Local Conservation Groups (LCGs) in the Gulf of Mottama and Nanthar Island for Ramsar Site designation and management.</p> <p>Website - https://www.ncsmm.org/ Youtube - https://www.youtube.com/@NatureConservationSociety Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/NCSMYANMAR</p>
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B. Prior Funding from EAAFP

Please indicate if you have received prior funding from the EAAFP via the Small Grant Fund for Working Groups and Task Forces and/or the World Migratory Bird Day Small Grant Fund. Please include the project title, type of Small Grant, and year of receiving the funding.

the Small Grant Fund for Working Groups and Task Forces

Monthly monitoring of the population and threats to Spoon-billed Sandpipers and other migratory shorebirds in the Gulf of Mottama Ramsar Site, SGF for WG and TF, 2024.

Conservation of Spoon-billed Sandpipers at the Gulf of Mottama, Myanmar in collaboration with local communities and promote eco-tourism, SGF for WG and TF, 2023.

Project Proposal:

Details of your entire project (not just the component for which EAAFP funds are sought)
(2.5 pages maximum)

- 1. Objectives:**
- 1. Conduct Shorebird Surveys** – Survey five coastal sites in Myanmar during the winter of 2025–2026 to estimate the wintering population of Spoon-billed Sandpipers and other shorebird species.
 - 2. Assess Hunting Pressure** – Evaluate the hunting status at these sites through rapid social surveys, including Key Informant Interviews (KIs).
 - 3. Promote Conservation Awareness** – Advocate for the protection of threatened shorebirds by distributing 500 informational pamphlets across 10 villages surrounding the five survey sites.

2. Background: Myanmar lies along the East Asian–Australasian Flyway (EAAF) and hosts numerous migratory bird species, with seven designated Ramsar Sites. The country’s coastline is divided into three regions: the Tanintharyi Coastal Region, the Ayeyarwady Coastal Region, and the Rakhine Coastal Region. Along this coastline, estuaries and associated wetlands—particularly intertidal mudflats—serve as critical wintering habitats for many migratory shorebirds, including threatened species such as the Critically Endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper (SBS), the Endangered Nordmann’s Greenshank, and the Endangered Great Knot. While the Gulf of Mottama (GoM) is recognized as a key wintering area where annual shorebird population monitoring is conducted, several other historically important sites have lacked regular surveys over the past decade. In the winter of 2023-2024, shorebird surveys at two sites along the Ayeyarwady Coastal Region confirmed their conservation significance, revealing substantial populations of threatened species. Notably, the coastline between the Toe and Thandi Rivers was found to support approximately 60 individuals of Nordmann’s Greenshank (3% of the global population) and at least one Spoon-billed Sandpiper. However, alarming evidence suggests that shorebird hunting has resumed in some areas, both for commercial and recreational purposes. Currently, there are five sites along the Ayeyarwady coast where wintering shorebird populations remain unmonitored. This project aims to rediscover and assess the wintering status of threatened shorebird species at five key sites:

1. Coastline between the Toe and Thandi Rivers (Daydaye Township, Ayeyarwaddy Region)
2. Letkhoke Kone area (Khun Chan Kone Township, Yangon Region)
3. Than Te village (Kyauk Tan Township, Yangon Region)
4. Aung Kan Thar village (Thaton township, Mon State)
5. Alatt and Khin Than villages (Paung Township, Mon State)

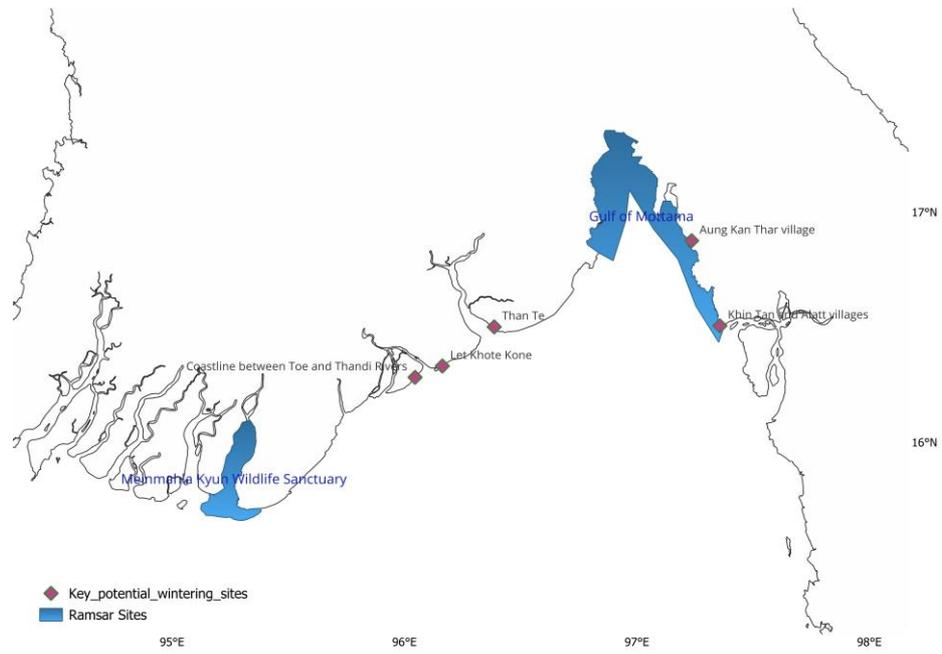


Figure 1: Map of SBS survey at Gulf of Mottama (Yangon Region and Mon State)

By conducting systematic shorebird surveys and assessing hunting threats at these sites, this project will provide crucial insights into the conservation needs of these imperiled species.

3. Expected Outputs and Outcomes:

Please indicate the expected outputs and outcomes of this proposal. Refer to the guidance below:

Outputs: Tangible and measurable products or deliverables as a direct result of the project activities such as the number of signages produced, number of consultations/workshops/meetings, reports and materials created, etc.

Outcomes: Long-term impact or benefits of the proposed activities such as up-to-date species population data, improved awareness of waterbird conservation, forged or strengthened relationships with indigenous and local communities, development of conservation actions, etc.

Outputs

- Shorebirds surveys at five unmonitored sites will produce five bird lists and 10 KILLS from 10 villages around five sites will provide information on bird hunting.
- Total of 500 pamphlets featuring SBS and its conservation importance will be disseminated.
- Our results will be shared through publishing an article in “Wader Study” or “SBSTF’s biannually Newsletter”

Outcomes

- This project will identify potential key wintering sites of migratory shorebirds along Ayeyarwaddy Coastal region.
- It will provide the population data of shorebirds species and will be integrated to estimate the total wintering population of SBS and its global population estimate.
- It will enhance local awareness by fostering appreciation for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper’s uniqueness and rarity, promoting conservation efforts within communities.

4. Project plan, timeline, and methods:

Please include the proposed timing of project implementation and completion, as well as the start and completion of fieldwork if applicable. Kindly also comment on the flexibility of the timeline of the project.

Shorebird Surveys (December 2025 - January 2026)

Wintering shorebird counts will be conducted at five sites across three states/regions along the Ayeyarwaddy Coastal Region during the peak wintering period. Surveys will be carried out around the spring tide when shorebirds are most active on exposed mudflats and roosting sites. Each site will be surveyed for at least two days to ensure thorough species identification and accurate population estimates.

Key Informant Interviews on Hunting Status (December 2025 – January 2026)

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with village heads and key informants from 10 villages near the survey sites to assess bird hunting practices. These interviews, carried out alongside the shorebird surveys, will focus on current hunting activities, local perceptions of shorebird conservation, and historical trends in bird use.

Conservation Awareness Activities (November 2025 – January 2026)

To promote awareness of shorebird conservation and wetland protection, 500 pamphlets featuring the Spoon-billed Sandpiper and other threatened species will be distributed in local communities. The pamphlets will also highlight Myanmar’s Biodiversity and Protected Areas Conservation Law (2018), emphasizing the legal protection status of these species.

<p>5. Expected benefit to the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitat / or key research outputs:</p>	<p><i>In addressing this question, please also identify which EAAFP Key Result Areas the project will contribute to (see the EAAFP Strategic Plan 2019 – 2028).</i></p> <p>KRA 3.1: Establishing and Enhancing National Monitoring Systems The project will contribute to estimate the annual wintering populations of migratory shorebirds in potential key wintering areas along Myanmar’s coastal region and provide insights into the wintering populations of threatened shorebird species. These surveys will be conducted by our well-experienced field ornithologists, with technical support from the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force.</p> <p>KRA 3.2: Producing and Updating Conservation Status Reviews The project will generate reports detailing estimates of the wintering populations of Spoon-billed Sandpipers and other threatened birds in potential key wintering areas. These reports will track the wintering population trends of Spoon-billed Sandpipers in Myanmar over the past decade, providing data for conservation efforts.</p> <p>KRA 3.3: Updating the List of Sites of International Importance The project will update the status of key potential habitat areas, highlighting their critical importance as the area with the significant population of threatened species. This update will aid in conservation management and prioritization efforts in flyway level.</p>
<p>6. Alignment with EAAFP Working Groups and Task Forces priorities:</p>	<p><i>Please indicate which of the EAAFP Working Groups and Task Forces objectives and priorities are addressed in this project.</i></p> <p>This project will align with the following recommendation for the SBS species protection mentioned in International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the SBS(2010) and will be contributed for new developing of International Action Plan 2025-2035 by the SBSTF; RECOMMENDATION 4: Identify Key areas for the species and improve its legal site protection and management using national legal mechanisms and collaborative international mechanisms (e.g. Ramsar and Waterbird Site Network)</p>
<p>7. Explain the part(s) of your project for which you are seeking EAAFP funds in this Application <i>(provide details in the Project Budget section below):</i></p>	<p>The cost for conducting shorebird population surveys at five potential sites, including expenses for transportation, accommodation, per diem fees for the field ornithologist and field assistant, and boat rental fees, is proposed to be funded by the Small Grant Fund (SGF) of the East Asian–Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP).</p>
<p>8. Confirm that the part(s) of the project for which EAAFP funds are requested can be undertaken even if no co-funding is available</p>	<p><i>Please indicate YES or NO.</i></p> <p>YES <i>If co-funding has been requested or confirmed from other sources, please state the details here. The actual amount should be reflected in the table below (C. Project Budget).</i></p>
<p>9. Continued project:</p>	<p><i>Please specify whether this proposed project is a continuation of a previous project funded by the EAAFP Small Grant Fund for Working Groups and Task Forces or the World Migratory Bird Day Small Grant Fund. If it is a continuation, identify which effort listed in part “B. Prior funding from the EAAFP” is being carried forward.</i></p> <p><i>Yes, this project could be said as the sequel of our previous two projects funded by the EAAFP Small Grant Fund for Working Groups and Task Forces in 2023 and 2024;</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monthly monitoring of the population and threats to Spoon-billed Sandpipers and other migratory shorebirds in the Gulf of Mottama Ramsar Site, SGF for WG and TF, 2024.

2. Conservation of Spoon-billed Sandpipers at the Gulf of Mottama, Myanmar in collaboration with local communities and promote eco-tourism, SGF for WG and TF, 2023.

10. Scientific references cited in the Application:

Aung, P.P., Moses, S., Clark, N.A., Anderson, G.Q., Hilton, G.M., Buchanan, G.M., Zöckler, C. and Green, R.E., 2020. **Recent changes in the number of spoon-billed sandpipers *Calidris pygmaea* wintering on the Upper Gulf of Mottama in Myanmar.** *Oryx*, 54(1), pp.23-29.

Aung et al. 2024. **MONITORING OF MIGRATORY SHOREBIRDS IN THE GULF OF MOTTAMA** . Unpublished NCS Myanmar report.

Clark, N.A., Anderson, G.Q., Li, J., Syroechkovskiy, E.E., Tomkovich, P.S., Zöckler, C., Lee, R. and Green, R.E., 2018. **First formal estimate of the world population of the Critically Endangered spoon-billed sandpiper *Calidris pygmaea*.** *Oryx*, 52(1), pp.137-146.

Zöckler, Christoph, Aung, Pyae Phy, Grindley, Mark, Aung, Cherry Momberg, Frank ., **Coastal Wetlands in Myanmar A directory of important sites. 2018**

Green, R., Syroechkovskiy, E.E., Anderson, G.Q., Chang, Q., Chowdhury, S., Clark, J.A., Foyosal, M., Gerasimov, Y., Hughes, B., Kelly, C. and Lappo, E., 2021. **New estimates of the size and trend of the world population of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper using three independent statistical models.**

Htike, T.S.M., Moses, S., Aung, Y.M. and Aung P. P. 2024. **Surveys of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper in the Southwest Gulf of Mottama and shorebird surveys in main markets.** Unpublished report to Oriental Bird Club(OBC),

Zoeckler, C., Syroechkovskiy, E.E. and Atkinson, P.W., 2010. **Rapid and continued population decline in the Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus* indicates imminent extinction unless conservation action is taken.** *Bird Conservation International*, 20(2), pp.95-111.

Zöckler, C., Syroechkovskiy, E. E., & Bunting, G. (2008). **International single species action plan for the conservation of the spoon-billed sandpiper *Calidris pygmeus*.** *On behalf of BirdLife International for the CMS.* 55pp+ annex.

F. Experience of Applicant Relevant to the Proposed Project

0.5 page maximum

The applicant has over 14 years of experience in nature conservation and is involved in other international conservation agencies (Ramsar Convention, EAAFP, IUCN) for migratory birds, flyway program, and wetlands conservation in the Asia region. He is a Country representative of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force, involved in developing the Action Plan (2014-2016) and (2017-2020) for Myanmar.

Please also include a recent maximum 2-page CV or list non-academic research experience and experience with migratory waterbird and wetland conservation e.g. work experience, volunteer experience, bird banding, birdwatching.

G. Project Budget

Please outline the costs of your entire project, not just the project component(s) for which funds are being sought from the EAAFP.

Item (Please list)	Total Project Budget (USD)	Co-funding confirmed from sources other than EAAFP (source and amount in USD)	Co-funding applied for from sources other than EAAFP (source and amount in USD)	Funding requested from EAAFP (USD)
Equipment: (details) Batteries for GPS, Cleaning kit for Telescope and tripods = 95 USD	95			95
Consumable items: (details) Shorebirds Surveys at five potential sites (Field Ornithologist, 5 sites x 3 days x 75 USD = 1125 USD) (Field Assistant, 5 sites x 3 days x 45 USD = 675 USD)	1800			1800
Travel and accommodation: (details) Travel expense to survey sites (5 sites x 250 USD = 1250 USD) Lodging fare during travel and surveys (5 sites x 3 nights x 45 USD = 945 USD) Meal for two surveyors during travel and surveys (5 sites x 2 surveyors x 5 days x 10 USD = 500 USD)	2695			2695
Computing & clerical: (details) Preparing financial report and project reporting	90			90
Others: (details) Pamphlets production (Design fee = 25 USD) (Printing cost – 0.5 USD x 500 = 250 USD) Bank charges = 45 USD	320			320
Total amount requested from EAAFP Small Grants Fund: (in USD)				5000

Budget justification: Please provide a brief description and justification of all major budgetary items requested, indicating any that are essential to the project and/or conference for which you are applying (250 words maximum):

The operation or implementation costs for shorebirds surveys at potential key wintering sites include travelling costs for NCS's bird senior ornithologists and junior ornithologists, daily meal supply allowance and daily payment for them for doing surveys. The cost of pamphlets production include cost for designer's work and production of 500 pamphlets. Other small costs are to buy field supplies as batteries, cleaning kits for binoculars and telescopes and notebooks etc.

H. Application Checklist

All relevant sections of this Application have been completed.	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full payment details have been provided in Section I Payment Details.	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Application is being submitted electronically as one single document.	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Application is being submitted in MS Word format.	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Applications that do not comply with these guidelines will be returned to the applicant.

I. Payment Details

To ensure prompt payment of successful applications please complete the following details:

J. Grand conditions

In accordance with the application criteria, the following conditions must be met:

1. Funds are to be strictly used for the purposes of implementation of the project as per the application form and budget provided.
2. Grants are awarded on the strict understanding that funds will be exempt from institutional administration charges unless a Partner government law so requires.
3. Lead investigators are responsible for obtaining all necessary permits from government authorities, indigenous communities, ethics committees etc., to undertake approved research or monitoring studies.
4. You are able to undertake and complete the project, with the funds received from the SGF. This should be possible even if you do not receive co-funding from other sources that you propose/may have applied for from other sources, as mentioned in Section F. budget table in the application.
5. Project completion is required within 18 months of the close of the application period, which would be 19 September 2026.
6. You are required to submit to the EAAFP Secretariat at secretariat@eaaflyway.net and copy the Programme Coordinator at godwit@eaaflyway.net and the Relevant Working Group or Task Force Chairs/Coordinators with the following:
 - a final report within 3 months of the completion of the project;
 - a short write-up with photos for the EAAFP newsletter and website as well as a report to the relevant Working Group or Task Force within 3 months of the completion of the project; and
 - a copy of any publications that result from your grant.
7. You are required to acknowledge the EAAFP and the Small Grant Fund in any presentations, publications, reports or promotional material arising from this work.
8. You are required to include a logo of the EAAFP on any display material you will be preparing. Please email the EAAFP Secretariat at secretariat@eaaflyway.net and copy the Programme Coordinator at godwit@eaaflyway.net to obtain an electronic copy of the EAAFP logo.

K. Declaration

Applicant's Full Name: *Pyae Phyo Aung*

I have discussed the contents of this Application with the relevant Chair/s and Coordinator/s of the Working Group and/or Task Force and they have been carbon copied (cc) to this application submission as evidence that they have seen and supported this application.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge, all documentation and information submitted or made available by me is true, accurate, and complete.

By ticking the box, you are agreeing to the above statements:

L. Application submission

Please email your application as a single document to the respective Working Group or Task Force Chair/Coordinator and **copy** the EAAFP Secretariat at secretariat@eaaflyway.net and the Programme Coordinator at godwit@eaaflyway.net.

The EAAFP Secretariat will acknowledge the receipt of your application.

Applications close at 5:00 pm (KST) on 19 March 2025

Results will be announced by 22 May 2025 on the EAAFP webpage and communicated via email