



MEDITERRANEAN BASIN BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

December 2011

This call is open to regional projects that are focused in two or more of the following countries:

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Tunisia

This call is also open to single-country projects based in the following countries: Albania, Bosnia

and Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Tunisia

For Large Grants: Call period starts: 1st December 2011

Letters of Inquiry are due: 31st January 2012

Letters of Inquiry (LoI) can be submitted in English or French using the template that can be downloaded from:

<http://www.cepf.net/Documents/cepf.loi.doc> for English or

http://www.cepf.net/Documents/cepf_french_loi_REV2.doc for French.

Applications cannot exceed US\$ 1 million.

A separate call for Small Grant proposals (up to US\$20,000) will be made in the first quarter of 2012. Announcements will be made on the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) website.

¹ CEPF approval for investing in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Jordan and Tunisia is the result of having received the endorsements of these countries' GEF Operational Focal Points. The remaining countries including Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria and Turkey will become eligible with the endorsement of the Ecosystem Profile by the respective GEF Operational Focal Points.

CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM PARTNERSHIP FUND MEDITERRANEAN BASIN GRANT PROGRAM

Introduction

The Mediterranean Basin is one of 34 biodiversity hotspots, Earth's most biologically rich yet threatened areas. The hotspot covers 2,085,292 square kilometers and stretches west to east from Portugal to Jordan and north to south from Italy to Tunisia. It includes parts of Spain, France, the Balkan States, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Algeria, as well as around 5,000 islands scattered around the Mediterranean Sea. West of the mainland, the hotspot includes a number of Atlantic islands: the Canaries, Madeira, the Selvages (Selvagens), the Azores and Cape Verde. This is the third richest biodiversity hotspot in the world, containing approximately 13,000 endemic plant species and is remarkable for both its high level of biological diversity and its spectacular scenery. Its location at the intersection of two major landmasses, Eurasia and Africa, and the huge topographical variety and altitudinal differences ranging from sea level to 4,165 meters in the west (Morocco) and 3,756 meters in the east (Turkey), are major contributing factors to its biodiversity. Its climate is unique, characterized by cool, wet winters and hot, dry summers. Nevertheless, rainfall ranges between 100 millimeters and 3,000 millimeters, making the region suitable for a wide range of vegetation types.

The Mediterranean Basin is one of the most popular tourism destinations of the world, with 220 million tourists nearly 32 percent of the world's tourists visiting each year. Species populations in the hotspot have become fragmented and isolated because of infrastructure development mainly triggered by the tourism industry. Damage to water resources resulting from major water investments and climate change has become the most important pressure on nature.

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund ([CEPF](#)) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation. To this end, CEPF provides strategic assistance to nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), community groups and other civil society partners to help safeguard biodiversity hotspots. This conservation investment is guided by region-specific investment strategies, developed with inputs and in consultation with diverse stakeholders. The Ecosystem Profile for the Mediterranean Basin was developed by conservation and scientific institutions, with inputs from civil society, to guide the strategic and catalytic conservation investment in the Mediterranean Basin.

The council of donors that governs CEPF approved a US\$ 10 million, 5-year investment strategy for the Mediterranean Basin in September 2010, based on this Ecosystem Profile. Subsequently CEPF is in the process of recruiting a Regional Implementation Team (RIT) which in partnership with CEPF will lead the implementation of the CEPF investment strategy for achieving conservation goals identified in the Investment Strategy, and provide assistance to civil society groups in designing, implementing, and replicating successful conservation activities.

The grants awarded to civil society organizations will to work towards safeguarding globally threatened species and critical sites in the Mediterranean Basin. These investments will promote innovative partnerships between NGOs, government, local communities and land-owners to enhance conservation and connectivity in five landscape corridors in the Mediterranean Basin, and improve the conservation of globally threatened species through systematic conservation planning and action. The grants program expects to achieve this by enhancing the capacity and participation of a wider group of civil society organizations through involving them in creative and innovative long-term conservation partnerships. All grants must address the Strategic Directions set out in the Ecosystem Profile and their nested Investment Priorities.

CEPF's Investment Strategy

The ecosystem profile contains a five-year investment strategy for CEPF in the Mediterranean Basin. This investment strategy comprises of a series of strategic funding opportunities, termed strategic directions, broken down into a number of investment priorities outlining the types of activities that will be eligible for CEPF funding.

It is critical that applicants review the Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot Ecosystem Profile, and particularly the written descriptions of the CEPF niche and investment strategy under the section 'CEPF Investment Strategy and Program Focus', to prepare a LOI that addresses the priorities identified for funding. The profile can be found on the CEPF website in English and French:

http://www.cepf.net/Documents/Mediterranean_EP_FINAL_82011.pdf in English and
http://www.cepf.net/Documents/Mediterranean_EP_FINAL%20FRENCH.pdf in French

Each proposal must support **only one** of the CEPF strategic directions to be approved for funding. Applicants can submit more than one letter of inquiry.

Table 1: Strategic Directions and Investment Priorities

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	INVESTMENT PRIORITIES
<p>1. Promote civil society involvement in Integrated Coastal Zone Management to minimize the negative effects of coastal development in three priority corridors (Southwest Balkans; Cyrenaican Peninsula; and Mountains, Plateaus and Wetlands of Algerian Tell and Tunisia), and in 20 coastal and marine priority key biodiversity areas in other corridors</p>	<p>1.1 Support civil society involvement in the development and implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and the advancement of best practices in integrating nature conservation with the tourism sector 1.2 Raise awareness and influence the choices of the European tourist market and tourism businesses in favor of tourism practices appropriate for nature 1.3 Support local stakeholders to advance and benefit from nature-based tourism through the diversification of tourism-related activities and generation of alternative livelihoods</p>
<p>2. Establish the sustainable management of water catchments and the wise use of water resources with a focus on the priority corridors of the (1) Atlas Mountains, (2) Taurus Mountains, (3) Orontes Valley and Lebanon Mountains and (4) Southwest Balkans</p>	<p>2.1. Contribute to and establish Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) initiatives for pilot basins and replicate best practices, to reduce the negative impacts of insufficiently planned water infrastructures 2.2. Support IRBM policy and legislation development and implementation through capacity building and advocacy at all appropriate levels 2.3. Support innovative financing mechanisms for conserving and restoring freshwater ecosystems and traditional water catchments 2.4. Facilitate and support adaptation to climate change via improving water use efficiency in agricultural landscapes and allowing environmental flows for key biodiversity areas 2.5 Share and replicate the lessons learned and best practices from and with other river basin management experiences elsewhere in the Mediterranean</p>

3. Improve the conservation and protection status of 44 priority key biodiversity areas

3.1. Establish new protected areas and promote improved management of existing protected areas by developing and implementing sustainable management plans
3.2. Develop financial mechanisms that support protected areas while enhancing sustainable livelihood and promoting community management of priority key biodiversity areas
3.3. Raise awareness of the importance of priority key biodiversity areas, including those that have irreplaceable plant and marine biodiversity

Eligibility

Nongovernmental organizations, community groups, universities, private enterprises and individuals may apply for funding. Applications from organizations that propose to build capacity of local civil society and community groups are particularly encouraged. Individuals can apply for grants but are encouraged to work with civil society organizations and communities to develop joint applications, rather than apply directly. Projects must be located in one or more of the following states of the Mediterranean Basin region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Tunisia. These are currently eligible to receive CEPF funds.

The other countries encompassed in the investment strategy including ~~Albania~~, Algeria, ~~Cape Verde~~, ~~Croatia~~, Egypt, ~~Lebanon~~, Libya, Morocco, ~~Syria~~ and Turkey will become eligible with the endorsement of the Ecosystem Profile by the respective GEF Operational Focal Points.

Government-owned enterprises or institutions are eligible only if they can demonstrate that the enterprise or institution has:

- i. a legal personality independent of any government agency or actor;
- ii. the authority to apply for and receive private funds; and
- iii. may not assert a claim of sovereign immunity.

Grants cannot be used for the purchase of land, involuntary resettlement of people, or activities that negatively affect physical cultural resources, including those important to local communities. Grants will not be used for activities adversely affecting Indigenous Peoples or where these communities have not provided their broad support to the project activities. Grants will not be used to remove or alter any physical cultural property (includes sites having archaeological, palaeontological, historical, religious, or unique natural values). Proposed activities should observe all other relevant safeguard and social policies as set out on the [CEPF website](#).

Application Procedure

Applicants for large grants are required to complete and submit before **5 pm Greenwich Mean Time on 31st January 2012**, a Letter of Inquiry (LoI), using the standard template attached here or downloaded from the CEPF website: http://www.cepf.net/Documents/cepf_loi.doc. Completed LoIs should be emailed to cepfgrants@conservation.org; receipt will be acknowledged via email. When completing their LoIs, applicants should pay particular attention to providing as much budgetary detail as possible, and to defining the project location(s) as precisely as possible.

Submission of the LoI initiates the application review process. Based on the information contained within the LoI, CEPF and the RIT will perform an initial screening. Applicants that meet all of the eligibility criteria and whose LoIs most closely respond to the Investment Priorities covered by the call will be invited to submit a Full Proposal, respond to a Financial Questionnaire (the necessary forms and guidance will be provided to these applicants), and, if needed, demonstrate the project's compliance with CEPF's safeguard policies. The RIT will be available to assist applicants complete the full proposal and provide the necessary supporting documents.

Applicants should expect to receive a decision on whether they have been invited to submit a full proposal within 2 months from the close of the period for the submission of the LoI. For successful

applicants, the whole process from submission of the full proposal to signing of the grant agreement typically requires a further 2 to 4 months.

Contacts: If there are any further question please contact cepfgrants@conservation.org