

CALL FOR LETTERS OF INQUIRY CEPF INVESTMENT IN THE MAPUTALAND-PONDOLAND-ALBANY HOTSPOT

The Wildlands Conservation Trust (www.wildlands.co.za), in its role as the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) in the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany Hotspot, invites Letters of Inquiry (LOIs) for potential grants from non-government organisations, community groups, and other civil society organisations.

CEPF is designed to safeguard Earth's biologically richest and most threatened regions, known as biodiversity hotspots. 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.

In 2009 CEPF contracted the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and Conservation International-South Africa (CI-SA) to develop an investment strategy for the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany Hotspot. This region, identified as a global biodiversity hotspot in 2005, spans an area of nearly 275,000 km² and includes portions of South Africa, Swaziland, and Mozambique. The investment strategy (Ecosystem Profile) was developed through a combination of expert consultations and broad stakeholder participation. Based on the outcomes of this study, CEPF has made available a total of \$6.65 million in grant funds to support conservation in 22 key biodiversity areas and two priority corridors in the region. Within those sites, the CEPF investment will address the following themes, also known as strategic directions:

1. Strengthen protection and management in under-capacitated and emerging protected areas in three priority key biodiversity areas.
2. Expand conservation areas and improve land use in 22 key biodiversity areas through innovative approaches.
3. Maintain and restore ecosystem function and integrity in the Highland Grasslands and Pondoland Corridors.
4. Create an enabling environment to improve conservation and management of Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany priority sites.
5. Provide strategic leadership and effective coordination of CEPF investment through a regional implementation team.

In order to achieve the 5th strategic direction, CEPF appointed the Wildlands Conservation Trust to serve as the regional implementation team in September 2010, following a call for proposals for that role that was first advertised in March 2010. As a first step in this new role, the Wildlands Conservation Trust is announcing a first call for proposals for projects that fall within the first four strategic directions.

The deadline for receipt of LOIs is 18:00 (CAT) on 1 October 2010. This is the first of several anticipated calls for proposals and consequently has a relatively short deadline for submission of LOIs. Interested parties who may not be ready to submit a LOI may still contact the Wildlands Conservation Trust to discuss potential future grant applications. It is important that applicants familiarise themselves with the investment strategy and strategic directions for the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany Hotspot, available in full in English at [http://www.cepf.net/where we work/regions/africa/maputaland/ecosystem_profile/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.cepf.net/where_we_work/regions/africa/maputaland/ecosystem_profile/Pages/default.aspx)

(This Ecosystem Profile will be available in Portuguese later in 2010.)

Non-governmental organisations, community groups, private enterprises, and other civil society applicants may apply for funding. Organisations must have their own bank account and be authorised under relevant national laws to receive charitable contributions. Government-affiliated enterprises or institutions are eligible only if they can demonstrate that the enterprise or institution (i) has a legal personality independent of any government agency or actor; (ii) has the authority to apply for and receive private funds; and (iii) may not assert a claim of sovereign immunity. Among the many eligible entities, as described above, those that most exemplify civil society and can build civil society capacity are particularly encouraged to apply. Applications that include civil society actors with limited capacity that may not otherwise be eligible or able to apply (for example, community groups) are also encouraged. Further, individuals are encouraged to work with civil society organisations to develop applications, rather than to apply directly. Anyone who is uncertain of their eligibility or likelihood of receiving funding from CEPF should contact the Wildlands Conservation Trust RIT at cepf-rit@wildlands.co.za

Grants cannot be used for: (i) purchase of land, involuntary resettlement of people (including displacement of land uses), or activities that negatively affect physical cultural resources, including those important to local communities; (ii) activities adversely affecting Indigenous Peoples or where these communities have not provided their broad support to the project activities; or (iii) removal or alteration of any physical cultural property (including sites having archaeological, palaeontological, historical, religious, or unique natural values). Proposed activities must observe all other World Bank safeguard and social policies at:

- <http://go.worldbank.org/WTA1ODE7T0>

CEPF supports biodiversity conservation through two types of grants, core grants of over US \$20,000 and small grants of US\$ 20,000 or less. This call is for core grants. A call for small grants will be released later in 2010.

All applicants must submit a LOI. The LOI form is available at

- <http://www.cepf.net/grants/apply/Pages/default.aspx>

Before submitting formal LOIs, applicants are encouraged to discuss proposal ideas and eligibility with the Wildlands Conservation Trust RIT at cepf-rit@wildlands.co.za.

Completed LOIs should be sent as an e-mail attachment to cepfgrants@conservation.org. Receipt will be acknowledged by e-mail, and applicants will be contacted thereafter as to how to proceed. Questions or concerns during this process can be sent to cepf-rit@wildlands.co.za

Please note that hard copy LOIs are not acceptable during the first round of calls for proposals. Further information and assistance can be obtained from:

Dr. Roelie Kloppers, Project Leader, CEPF-RIT, Wildlands Conservation Trust, Suite 7, Tower Block B, 57 Hilton Road, Hilton, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa.

Email: cepf-rit@wildlands.co.za; Website: www.wildlands.co.za; Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany-Hotspot/140666379298133?>

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