

Mountains of Southwest China

Mountains of Southwest China Hotspot

CEPF INVESTMENT PLANNED IN REGION

\$6 million

QUICK FACTS

The Mountains of Southwest China hotspot harbors 300 mammal and 686 bird species, including a large number of rare and endangered species.

The hotspot is the most biologically diverse temperate forest ecosystem in the world.

The hotspot covers only 10 percent of the geographical area of China but is home to about 50% of its birds and mammals and more than 30% of its higher plants.

In the last few decades forest cover has been reduced from 30% to 15% and the tributaries of the Yangtze have lost 85% of their original old-growth forest cover.

The region sees strong financial investments by the government, bilateral and multilateral aid agencies and international organizations but capacity building is urgently needed.

An area of extreme topography, the Mountains of Southwest China biodiversity hotspot is home to several of the world's best-known mammals, including the giant panda, the red panda, the golden monkey and the snow leopard. It is one of the 25 richest and most threatened reservoirs of plant and animal life on Earth.

The hotspot, which stretches from southeast Tibet through western Sichuan and extends into central and northern Yunnan, is also home to more than 12,000 species of higher plants, of which 29 percent are unique to this hotspot.

THREATS

Threats to biological diversity in this region are dynamic and subject to a fast-changing landscape of political and socioeconomic conditions. Direct threats to biodiversity include logging; illegal hunting and unsustainable harvest and trade of wildlife; construction of infrastructure such as roads, dams and power grids without adequate environmental mitigation plans; collection of fuel wood; mass tourism; and agricultural and population expansion. Rapid economic development represents a major cause of declining natural resources in this region.

CEPF STRATEGY

The Chinese Government is investing heavily in forest protection, including a national logging ban and a program to convert farmland to forest. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) strategy focuses on complementing this effort by providing resources to build the capacity of civil

CEPF supports hotspot-wide projects as well as those at local and regional levels in the Mountains of Southwest China biodiversity hotspot.



society to implement smaller, more localized conservation projects and to nurture leaders who will be capable of interjecting biodiversity aspects into the larger development efforts.

The CEPF investment strategy is a result of a comprehensive priority-setting process designed to integrate local and international expert knowledge, systematic conservation planning principles and previously unavailable information. Targeted CEPF investment aims to ensure that regional planning authorities are provided with suggestions and innovative approaches and applied models for best practices and recommendations on how to design and implement conservation-conscious development projects.

The CEPF investment strategy, called an ecosystem profile, will be funded over five years, beginning in 2002.

STRATEGIC FUNDING DIRECTIONS

The CEPF strategy for the Mountains of Southwest China ensures funding is directed where it is needed most and where it can do the most good.

CEPF investments in the region are guided by five strategic directions. Each project must be linked to one of these to be approved for funding:

1. develop and operationalize hotspot-wide monitoring and evaluation projects
2. support site-related projects led by civil society to mitigate key threats to natural areas and species populations
3. build capacity of civil society to implement conservation efforts at a site and regional level
4. integrate biodiversity conservation concerns and benefits into the implementation of policies and programs at local, regional and national levels
5. develop and operationalize a small grants program focusing on conservation capacity-building and research projects



© Noel Rowe

ABOUT US

CEPF is a joint initiative of Conservation International, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank.

The partnership aims to dramatically advance conservation of Earth's biodiversity hotspots—the biologically richest and most threatened areas. A fundamental goal is to ensure that civil society, such as community groups, nongovernmental organizations and private sector partners, is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

CEPF acts as a catalyst to create strategic working alliances among diverse groups, combining unique capacities and eliminating duplication of efforts for a coordinated, comprehensive approach to conservation challenges.

HOW TO LEARN MORE

For more information about CEPF and how to apply for grants, please visit www.cepf.net.