

**Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
Call for Proposals
Evaluation of Lessons Learned to Inform Reinvestment in the
Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot**

Opening date: Friday, 8 December 2017

Closing date: Monday, 8 January 2018, 4:00 PM (U.S. EST)

Questions due date: Friday, 15 December 2017

Submission: Applications should be sent to Nina Marshall at nmarshall@cepf.net by the closing date.

Location: CEPF, 2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 500, Crystal City, VA 22202, USA

1. Invitation

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International (CI), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank. CEPF is a global program that provides grants to civil society to safeguard the world's biodiversity hotspots. As one of the founding partners, CI administers the global program through a CEPF Secretariat. CEPF's purpose is to strengthen the involvement and effectiveness of civil society in the conservation and management of globally important biodiversity.

The CEPF Secretariat intends to conduct an evaluation of lessons learned in relation to the Caribbean Islands Regional Implementation Team (RIT), to inform future reinvestment in the hotspot. Interested parties should submit a proposal by the closing date listed above, in compliance with this call for proposals and the scope of work described herein.

2. Background

In each of the biodiversity hotspots where it invests, CEPF selects an RIT to provide strategic leadership for the program. Each RIT consists of one or more civil society organizations active in conservation in the hotspot. The objective of the RIT is to convert the plans in the ecosystem profile into a cohesive portfolio of grants that contributes to CEPF's long-term goals for the hotspot. As the number of eligible hotspots that have not been the focus of CEPF investment decreases, most future CEPF programs will be reinvestments in hotspots with an incumbent RIT. To inform potential future reinvestments, CEPF will commission an independent evaluation of the incumbent RIT toward the end of the investment phase. This will comprise a review of the performance of the incumbent RIT and challenges, opportunities and lessons learned associated with the RIT role. In combination with the final assessment of the results of the hotspot investment (conducted as a separate exercise), this evaluation will enable applicants for the RIT role to be better informed about the experience of the incumbent RIT and the results achieved, and create a more competitive environment for all applicants.

3. Submission Requirements

The proposal shall comprise of the following parts:

- Part 1: Technical Approach, Methodology and Detailed Work Plan. This part shall be between 3 and 5 pages long, but may not exceed 5 pages.

The technical proposal should describe in detail how the offeror intends to carry out the requirement described in the scope of work. The technical proposal should demonstrate a clear understanding of the work to be undertaken and the responsibilities of all parties involved. The offeror should include details on personnel, equipment and contractors who will be used to carry out the required services, and a detail work plan including a timeline and organization set-up with roles and responsibilities.

- Part 2: Consultant. The consultant team should have the following or equivalent of the following experience and educational background:
 - a) Experience in relevant technical areas, e.g., monitoring and evaluation (at least 3 years)
 - b) Experience in the Caribbean region (at least 2 years)
 - c) Master's degree in relevant natural resources-related field, e.g., monitoring and evaluation, with 3 years of experience, or Bachelor's degree with 5 years of experience
 - d) Experience working with CEPF programs; or equivalent
 - e) Proficiency in English, and either Spanish or French; proficiency in all three languages preferred
- Part 3: Cost Proposal. The cost is used to determine which proposals represent the most advantageous and serves as a basis of negotiation for award of a contract. The price of the contract to be awarded will be an all-inclusive fixed price. No profit, fees, taxes or additional costs can be added after award. The cost shall also include a budget narrative that explains the basis for the estimate of every cost element or line item. Supporting information must be provided in sufficient detail to allow for a complete analysis of each cost element or line item. CI reserves the right to request additional cost information if the evaluation committee has concerns of the reasonableness, realism, or completeness of an offeror's proposed cost. Under no circumstances may cost information be changed after the submission of the proposal.

4. Process and Basis for Award

The evaluation of the incumbent RIT will be undertaken by an independent consultant, selected through a competitive procurement process. Selection of consultants will be overseen by the Monitoring, Evaluation and Outreach Unit within the CEPF Secretariat.

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Sub-criteria	Weigh Points
Technical Approach, Methodology and Detailed Work Plan		
	Technical know-how – Does the proposal clearly explain, understand and respond to the objectives of the project as stated in the terms of reference or scope of work?	15
	Approach and Methodology – Does the proposed program approach and detailed activities and timeline fulfill the requirements of executing the scope of work effectively and efficiently?	20
Management, Key Personnel and Staffing Plan		
	Consultant’s Qualifications – Does the proposed consultant have necessary experience and capabilities to carry out the scope of work?	20
Cost – Includes (Travel, Fee, Charges, any other expenses)		
	Lowest Cost Proposals	45

Scope of Work

Evaluation of Lessons Learned to Inform Reinvestment in the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot

1) Background

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank designed to help safeguard the world's biodiversity hotspots. As one of the founding partners, Conservation International administers the global program through the CEPF Secretariat.

The Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot is an archipelago of habitat-rich tropical and semi-tropical islands, comprises 30 nations and territories, and stretches across nearly 4 million square kilometers of ocean. It is one of the world's greatest centers of endemic biodiversity due to the region's geography and climate, and is one of the world's 36 biodiversity hotspots—Earth's most biologically rich yet threatened areas. The hotspot's ecosystem profile can be found [here](#). CEPF investment in the Caribbean Islands Hotspot began in 2010 and came to a close in 2015. Results of the investment are summarized [here](#).

In each of the biodiversity hotspots where it invests, CEPF selects a regional implementation team (RIT) to provide strategic leadership for the program. Each RIT consists of one or more civil society organization active in conservation in the hotspot. The objective of the RIT is to convert the plans in the ecosystem profile into a cohesive portfolio of grants that contributes to CEPF's long-term goals for the hotspot.

For the recently completed phase of CEPF investment in the Caribbean Islands Hotspot, the role of RIT was performed by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI). CANARI is a highly regarded, regional technical institute with more than 30 years of experience in research, policy influence and capacity building for participatory natural resource governance in the Caribbean. The institute was established under its present name in 1989. It facilitates and promotes participatory approaches to natural resource governance to conserve biodiversity, enhance ecosystem goods and services, and enhance livelihood benefits and wellbeing of the poor in the Caribbean. It places strong emphasis on multidisciplinary research, capacity building, partnerships and communication to build awareness and influence policy. CANARI's geographic focus is the islands of the Caribbean, including all 13 independent countries as well as the departments of France, autonomous countries and special municipalities within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the dependent territories of the United

Kingdom, and the associated commonwealth and territory of the United States.

The CEPF donors have selected the Caribbean Islands Hotspot for reinvestment. To this end, an ecosystem profile is currently being prepared, which presents an overview of the hotspot in terms of its biological importance; its socioeconomic, policy and civil society contexts; and the major direct threats to biodiversity and their root causes. This situational analysis is complemented by assessments of current conservation investment and the implications of climate change for biodiversity conservation. Informed by these analyses, the ecosystem profile articulates an overarching strategy for investing in conservation efforts led by civil society over a five-year period. It is anticipated that the ecosystem profile will be presented to the CEPF donors for their review in late February 2018.

If the ecosystem profile is approved by the CEPF donors, a process to select the RIT for the next phase of investment will be initiated. This process will be informed by an evaluation of lessons learned in relation to the incumbent RIT for the hotspot. This evaluation will consider the performance of the incumbent RIT in relation to the geography of the hotspot, the capacity of civil society there, the budget allocated to the RIT and its achievement of individual deliverables as defined in its grant agreement with CEPF. It is entirely distinct and separate from the formal “Final Assessment” of the portfolio, which is undertaken at the end of an investment phase to evaluate the overall impacts of CEPF investment in a hotspot.

2) Objective of the Evaluation

The objective of the evaluation is to inform investment decisions for the next phase of CEPF investment in the Caribbean Islands Hotspot, in the following ways. First, the evaluation will inform decision-making by the CEPF donors regarding selection of an RIT for the next phase of investment by evaluating the performance of the incumbent RIT and reviewing the institutional landscape for potential competitors. Second, the evaluation will enable the design of RIT proposals that incorporate lessons learned regarding the programmatic and management approaches adopted by the incumbent RIT. Third, the evaluation will inform the preparation of the ecosystem profile for reinvestment in the hotspot by documenting challenges and opportunities encountered by the RIT while implementing a grants program to engage and strengthen civil society in conserving globally important biodiversity in the social, political and institutional context of the hotspot.

3) Criteria for Evaluation

The evaluation will look closely at the components and functions of the RIT, as set out in the Terms of Reference, and evaluate the RIT’s performance against the following criteria:

- i) Relevance**
Were the activities undertaken relevant to the RIT terms of reference, the geography of the hotspot, the capacity of civil society there and the global results framework of CEPF?
- ii) Efficiency**
How efficiently was the budget allocated to the RIT converted into results?
- iii) Effectiveness**
What were the strengths and weaknesses of the RIT structure and capacities with regard to effective delivery of results?

In addition to directly evaluating the performance of the RIT, lessons learned from the CEPF grants portfolio with regard to the RIT role will be collated and evaluated against the following criteria:

- iv) Coverage**
To what extent does the portfolio of grants awarded to date cover the strategic directions and investment priorities set out in the investment strategy for the hotspot?
- v) Impact**
To what extent have the targets set in the ecosystem profile for impacts on biodiversity conservation, human wellbeing, civil society capacity and enabling conditions been met?
- vi) Accessibility**
Does the grants portfolio involve an appropriate balance of international and local grantees, taking into account the relative strengths of different organizations with regard to delivery of the investment strategy and considering the priority given by CEPF to building the capacity of local civil society?
- vii) Adaptive management**
In what ways has the development of the grants portfolio been constrained by risks (political/institutional/security) or taken advantage of unanticipated opportunities?

4) Terms of Reference of the Caribbean Islands RIT Grant

1. Coordinate and communicate CEPF investment, build partnerships and promote information exchange in the hotspot.

1.1. Serve as the lead point of contact for CEPF in relation to international donors, host country governments and agencies, and other potential partners within the hotspot.

1.2. Facilitate information exchange among stakeholders.

1.2.1. Provide lessons learned and other information to the Secretariat to be communicated via the CEPF website.

1.2.2. Disseminate results via multiple and appropriate media.

1.3. Facilitate partnerships between stakeholders in order to achieve the objectives of the ecosystem profile.

- 1.3.1. Build partnerships between and among grantees and other stakeholders.
- 1.3.2. Promote collaboration and coordination among local or international donors.
- 1.3.3. In coordination with CEPF's Secretariat, ensure communication and collaboration with the six CEPF donors, as appropriate in the hotspot.

1.4. Promote opportunities to leverage CEPF funds with donors and governments investing in the region.

1.5. Visit stakeholders, and attend meetings and events to ensure collaboration, coordination and outreach.

2. Build the capacity of grantees.

2.1. Assist civil society groups in designing projects that contribute to the achievement of objectives specified in the ecosystem profile and a coherent portfolio of mutually supportive grants.

2.2. Build institutional capacity of grantees to ensure efficient and effective project implementation.

2.3. Provide guidance to grantees for the effective design and implementation of safeguard policies (http://www.cepf.net/grants/Pages/safeguard_policies.aspx).

3. Establish and coordinate a process for proposal solicitation and review.

3.1. Establish and coordinate a process for solicitation of applications.

3.1.1. Announce the availability of CEPF grants.

3.1.2. Publicize the contents of the ecosystem profile and information about the application process.

3.1.3. With the CEPF Secretariat, establish schedules for the consideration of proposals at pre-determined intervals, including decision dates.

3.2. Establish and coordinate a process for evaluation of applications.

3.2.1. Evaluate all Letters of Inquiry.

3.2.2. Evaluate all proposals.

3.2.2.1. Facilitate technical advisory committee review, where appropriate.

3.2.2.2. Obtain external reviews of all applications over \$250,000.

3.2.3. Decide jointly with the CEPF Secretariat on the award of all grant applications of \$20,000 and above.

4. Manage a program of small grants; that is, grants of less than \$20,000.

4.1. Announce the availability of CEPF small grants.

4.2. Conduct due diligence to ensure sub-grantee applicant eligibility and capacity to comply with CEPF funding terms.

4.3. Manage the contracting of these awards.

- 4.4. Ensure sub-grantee compliance with CEPF funding terms.
- 4.5. Monitor, track, and document grantee technical and financial performance.
- 4.6. Assist the Secretariat in maintaining the accuracy of the CEPF grants management database.

5. Reporting and Monitoring.

- 5.1. Collect and report on data for portfolio-level indicators.
 - 5.1.1. Ensure quality of performance data submitted by grantees.
- 5.2. Support the CEPF Secretariat to monitor programmatic performance of grantees.
 - 5.2.1. Verify completion of products, deliverables, and short-term impacts by grantees.
 - 5.2.2. Review grantee financial reports in relation to programmatic performance.
 - 5.2.3. Support grantees to comply with requirements for completion of GEF tracking tools, including the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool.
- 5.3. Support a mid-term and final assessment of the CEPF portfolio.
- 5.4. Visit grantees to monitor their progress and ensure outreach, verify compliance and support capacity building.

5) Duties

A consultancy firm (hereafter “the consultant”) is required to undertake an evaluation of lessons learned in relation to the incumbent RIT for the Caribbean Islands Hotspot, in the context of the abovementioned objective (Section 2). The consultant is required to field a team with experience of evaluating biodiversity conservation programs, and with adequate knowledge of the Caribbean Islands Hotspot.

The evaluation will consider the performance of the incumbent RIT in relation to the geography of the hotspot, the capacity of civil society there, the budget allocated to the RIT, and the RIT’s achievement of individual deliverables as defined in its grant agreement with CEPF. It will also consider the impacts of the investment to date (in terms of biodiversity, human wellbeing, civil society capacity and enabling conditions for conservation), based on the findings of the mid-term assessment and report on achievement of portfolio targets.

Finally, the consultant will review the institutional landscape in the hotspot and identify potential competitor organizations that could perform the RIT role (either alone or as part of a consortium).

The following tasks are expected to form part of the evaluation.

The evaluation will begin with a desk review, based on the following documentation:

- The ecosystem profile for the hotspot.
- The final proposal for the RIT grant.
- The RIT grant agreement plus any amendments.
- Semi-annual supervision mission reports prepared by the CEPF Secretariat.
- Semi-annual performance reports prepared by the RIT.
- Annual portfolio overviews prepared by the CEPF Secretariat.
- Mid-term assessment report prepared by the CEPF Secretariat.
- Report on achievement of portfolio targets prepared by the CEPF Secretariat.
- Report an independent evaluation of CEPF implementation in island hotspots (undertaken by GLISPA).
- Summary data on the grant portfolio in the hotspot, exported from CEPF's grant management system.

The desk review will be complemented by interviews with relevant CEPF Secretariat staff, and a field visit to the hotspot. During the field visit, the consultant will have an opportunity to interview RIT staff, staff of the host organization, a selection of CEPF grantees and applicants, and other relevant stakeholders (e.g., representatives of other donors, government agencies, etc.). The consultant will be expected to make their own travel arrangements for the field visit and to organize all necessary meetings with stakeholders.

6) Deliverables

There will be two main deliverables from the consultancy. The consultant will be responsible for preparing a chapter on lessons learned regarding the RIT role, suitable for inclusion in the ecosystem profile for the hotspot as a stand-alone annex. The consultant will also be responsible for preparing a confidential report on the programmatic and financial performance of the RIT, and the identification of potential competitor organizations. This confidential report will not be included in the ecosystem profile. The chapter and the accompanying confidential report will inform investment decisions by CEPF and its donors, particularly regarding selection of the RIT for the reinvestment phase.

7) Timeframe

The evaluation will be conducted during January/February 2018. Draft deliverables will be prepared by 15 February 2018 and submitted to the CEPF Secretariat for review. Final deliverables, incorporating comments from the CEPF Secretariat, will be completed by 28 February 2018.

The consultant shall also provide the CEPF Secretariat with periodic verbal briefings and meet with Secretariat staff, as requested.

The total amount of time for the assignment is 25 days, comprising seven days for the literature review and interviews with CEPF Secretariat staff, eight days for the field visit, five days for preparation of the draft deliverables, one day to prepare and deliver a briefing for the CEPF Secretariat on the findings, and four days for incorporation of comments and finalization of deliverables.

8) Reporting

The consultant will work under the close supervision and direction of the Senior Director for Monitoring, Evaluation and Outreach, or such other individual that the CEPF Secretariat may designate.