

Call for Letters of Inquiry Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot

Large Grants

Eligible Countries:	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Morocco, North Macedonia, Tunisia
Opening Date:	Monday, 10 June 2019
Closing Date:	Friday, 9 August 2019
Budget:	US\$20,000 to US\$150,000
Project Timeframe:	Projects are expected to start on 1 February 2020, at the earliest, and must be completed by 30 May 2022.

CEPF is inviting proposals in the form of letters of inquiry (LOIs) for large grants from non-governmental organizations, community groups, private enterprises, universities and other civil society organizations (CSOs). Applicants are advised to read this call for proposals document in full and submit LOIs under the scope of this call.

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 and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

The Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot is the second largest hotspot in the world and the largest of the world's five Mediterranean-climate regions. CEPF's niche for investment in the Mediterranean was formulated through a participatory process that engaged civil society, donor and governmental stakeholders throughout the region. The resulting investment strategy (2017-2022) is documented within the [ecosystem profile](#) (PDF – 16 MB). This investment strategy is comprised of a series of strategic directions, broken down into investment priorities outlining the types of activities that are eligible for CEPF funding.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Non-governmental organizations, community groups, universities and private enterprises may apply for funding. Individuals must work with civil society organizations to develop applications rather than apply directly.

Organizations must have their own bank account and be authorized under relevant national laws to receive charitable contributions.

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

- a legal personality independent of any government agency or actor;
- the authority to apply for and receive private funds; and
- 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.
- activities adversely affecting Indigenous Peoples or where these communities have not provided their broad support to the project activities.
- removal or alteration of any physical cultural property (includes sites having archaeological, paleontological, historical, religious or unique natural values). Proposed activities should observe all other relevant safeguard and social policies as set out on the [CEPF website](#).

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The scope of this call is limited to the types of activities and locations described below.

LOIs will only be accepted for the following strategic direction and countries:

- **Strategic Direction 2: Sustainable management of water catchments**
- **Countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Morocco, North Macedonia, Tunisia**

i) Strategic Direction 2: Sustainable management of water catchments

Nearly one-third of the Critically Endangered species found in the hotspot are freshwater animals and plants. The need for freshwater for agriculture and human consumption is one of the most persuasive reasons for the sustainable management of natural resources.

Nevertheless, the hotspot's freshwater ecosystems are poorly represented in national protected areas networks. They are under pressure from over-use and pollution, and the

species that live in them suffer from over-exploitation and disturbance. Climate change is likely to make these problems worse.

There have been significant improvements in the identification and definition of freshwater Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in the hotspot, and of the threatened species they support. A number of catchment management zones (CMZs) have also been identified that take into account hydrological connectivity and the threats outside KBA borders to better inform management actions. Some freshwater KBAs are identical to CMZs while other KBAs are contained within CMZs.

Specific CMZs were identified as priorities for CEPF support and only the CMZs listed in Table 2 are eligible for funding, alongside 2 additional freshwater KBAs which fall outside of these areas. The activities proposed in LOIs should focus on the conservation of biodiversity in one or more of these CMZs.

CEPF is looking for:

- LOIs which **address Strategic Direction 2 through one or more of the investment priorities** (see Table 1).
- LOIs which only **focus on one or more of the CMZs and KBAs** (see Table 2).
- LOIs which clearly **demonstrate how project activities will benefit threatened species**.

Table 1: Strategic Direction 2 and Investment Priorities

Strategic Direction	Investment Priorities
2: Support the sustainable management of water catchments through integrated approaches for the conservation of threatened freshwater biodiversity.	2.1: Enhance the knowledge base on freshwater biodiversity and the importance of freshwater ecosystem services.
	2.2: Take action to reduce threats and improve management of selected sites in priority freshwater catchments with the participation of local stakeholders.
	2.3: Engage with government, private sector and other stakeholders to support integrated river basin management practices that reduce threats to biodiversity in priority Catchment Management Zones (CMZs).

Details on Investment Priorities under Strategic Direction 2

- **Investment Priority 2.1** *Enhance the knowledge base on freshwater biodiversity and the importance of freshwater ecosystem services.*

Information on the distribution, population and threat status of freshwater biodiversity within priority CMZs is, in many cases, inadequate to allow identification of the most urgent sites for conservation action, or to act as a baseline against which to judge improvements. In addition, the biological, social and economic values of ecosystem services from intact water catchments are poorly understood and not widely appreciated by decision makers. CEPF will support grantees to collect this information as a first step toward taking conservation action.

- **Investment Priority 2.2** *Take action to reduce threats and improve management of selected sites in priority freshwater catchments with the participation of local stakeholders.*

CSOs supported by CEPF grants are most likely to be able to take direct conservation action at specific sites, where working with management agencies or local stakeholders can change behavior and reduce the impact of specific threats.

- **Investment Priority 2.3** *Engage with government, private sector and other stakeholders to support integrated river basin management practices that reduce threats to biodiversity in priority CMZs.*

Although the most appropriate level for direct action by CSOs is at clearly defined sites, the connectivity of freshwater systems makes it highly likely that action will also be needed at the river basin level to address problems with water quality, water volume, and flow and disturbance to habitat. This will involve influencing those actors from government and/or the private sector who are involved with, or have the authority to influence, these issues.

Table 2: Eligible Areas for this Call for Proposal

Country	Area Type	Area Name
North Macedonia	Catchment Management Zone	Prespa Lake catchment
North Macedonia	Catchment Management Zone	Lake Ohrid catchment
North Macedonia	Catchment Management Zone	Dojran Lake catchment
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Catchment Management Zone	Trebizat drainage including Imotsko polje
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Catchment Management Zone	Popovo polje and Trebišnjica
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Catchment Management Zone	Neretva delta and associated springs/lakes including Hutovo Blato
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Key Biodiversity Area	Livanjsko polje and Busko Lake
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Key Biodiversity Area	Mostarsko Blato
Morocco	Catchment Management Zone	Abid River
Morocco	Catchment Management Zone	Arhreme River
Morocco	Catchment Management Zone	Middle Oum Er Rbia - Beni Mellal
Morocco	Catchment Management Zone	Oued Bouregreg
Morocco	Catchment Management Zone	Sehb El Majnounge
Morocco	Catchment Management Zone	Tifnout basin
Morocco	Catchment Management Zone	Upper Oum Er Rbia
Tunisia	Catchment Management Zone	Cap Serrat - Cap Blanc - Parc national de l'Ichkeul
Tunisia	Catchment Management Zone	Maden River

An interactive map of the hotspot can be accessed [here](#); use the top right-hand "layer list" icon to select the layer you need (e.g., CMZ).

Figure 1. Map of CMZs in North Macedonia

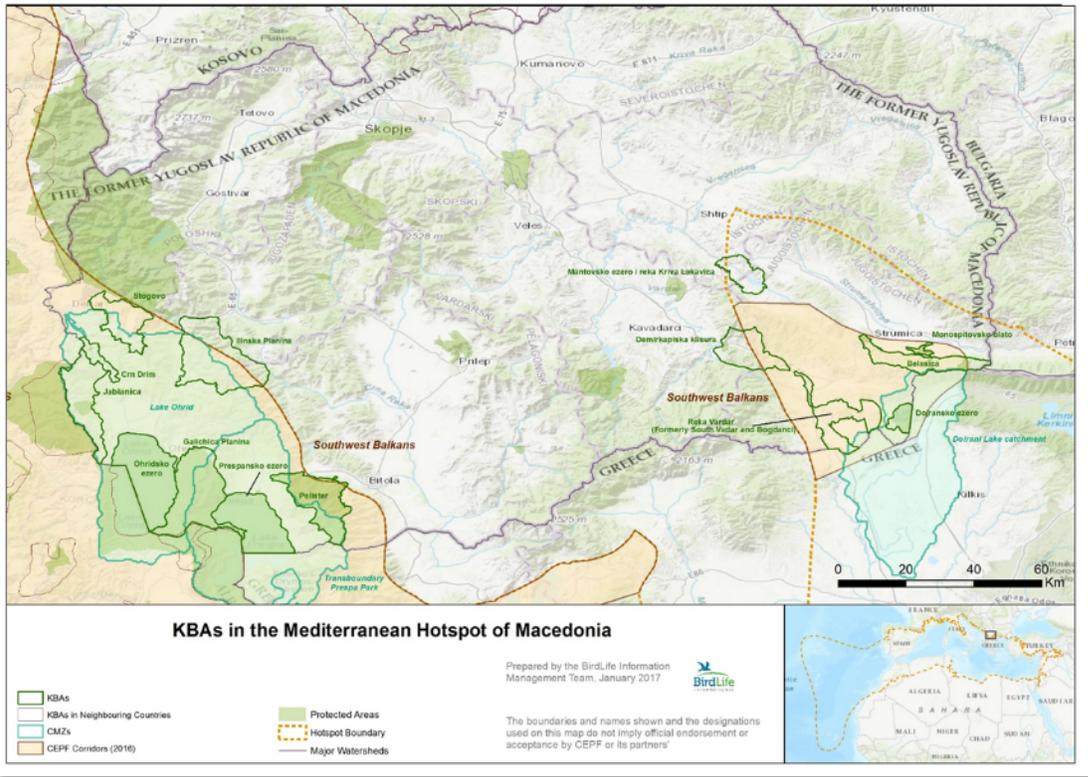


Figure 2. Map of CMZs in Bosnia and Herzegovina



Figure 3. Map of CMZs in Morocco

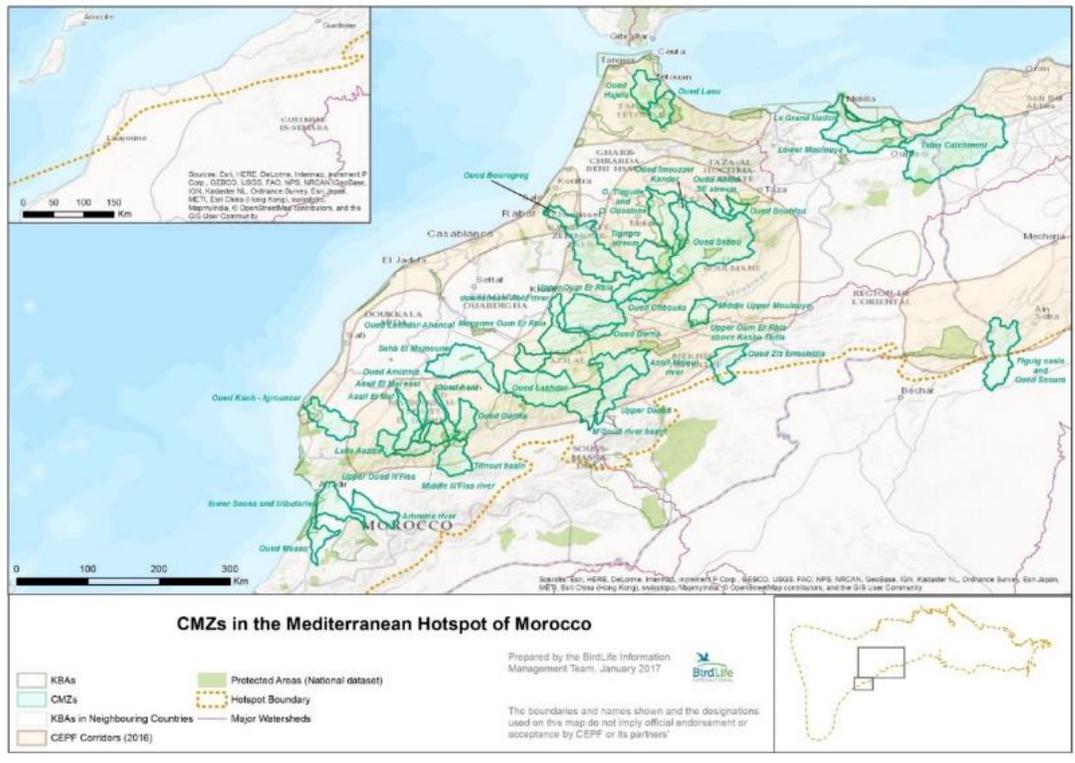
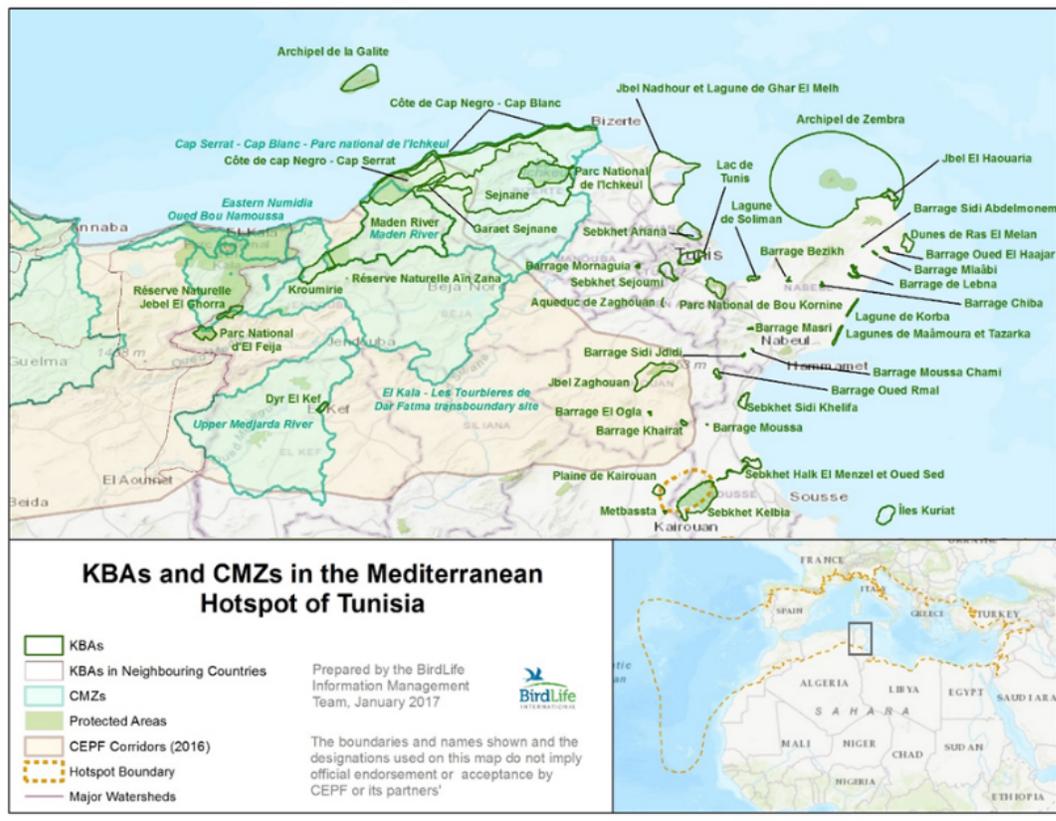


Figure 4. Map of CMZs in Tunisia



ii) General Guidance

Project proposals should be built on **biodiversity conservation as a fundamental component** and should demonstrate positive impacts on the conservation status of biodiversity.

Where relevant, applicants are encouraged to submit LOIs that **harmonize with existing national or regional initiatives**. Synergies with other organizations are also eligible, with one lead organization submitting the application alongside sub-grantee project partners.

Applicants based outside of eligible countries may submit an LOI as long as the project deliverables are focused on the conservation need within an eligible country/countries.

International organizations are encouraged to involve local organizations or communities as project partners, or explain how local stakeholders will be engaged as part of project implementation.

Applicants are advised to **read the investment strategy chapter of the ecosystem profile** to ensure full understanding of the strategic directions and investment priorities.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications (LOIs) can be submitted in **English or French**.

All applications must be submitted through the ConservationGrants website using [this link](#).

CEPF will not accept LOIs via email or any other mechanism. You will receive an automated acknowledgement from CEPF confirming that your submission through ConservationGrants has been received.

Note that ConservationGrants is a new online system, so for CEPF applicants or grantees who applied in Phase 1 (2012-2017), please note that the Grant Writer/GEM system is no longer in use, and you will need to [register a new ConservationGrants account](#). Existing ConservationGrants users can use the same login information and create a new LOI.

Questions regarding account creation or issues using ConservationGrants should be emailed to conservationgrants@conservation.org.

The LOI review process will take approximately eight weeks from the 9 August deadline date. The review committee will select the strongest LOIs that meet the eligibility criteria. All applicants will receive a response from CEPF following the review of their project.

Applications selected for the second stage will be developed into a full proposal through ConservationGrants. Full proposals that receive a positive review will lead to the award of a

grant between Conservation International, as the host of the CEPF Secretariat, and the applicant's institution (the "grantee"). Grants will be denominated in United States dollars and grant agreements will be in English.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

All applicants are advised to review the CEPF Investment Strategy for the Mediterranean Basin within the Ecosystem Profile (Chapter 13). This provides more detail on the types of activities CEPF will fund under each investment priority:

- Ecosystem Profile: [English](#) (PDF – 16 MB)
- Ecosystem Profile Technical Summary:
 - [English](#) (PDF – 2.2 MB)
 - [Arabic](#) (PDF – 2.6 MB)
 - [French](#) (PDF – 2.9 MB)

An interactive map of the Mediterranean Hotspot can be accessed [here](#), use the top right-hand "layer list" icon to select the layer you need.

Helpful resources:

- [Eligibility and How To Apply](#)
- [ConservationGrants Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Safeguard Policies](#)
- [CEPF and Gender](#)
- [12 Tips for Getting Your Grant Idea Funded](#)
- [CEPF Project Database](#)

CONTACT

Before applying, applicants are encouraged to discuss project ideas and eligibility with the programme officer for your region:

- Balkans Programme Officer Borut Rubinič: borut.rubinic@dopps.si
- North Africa Programme Officer Awatef Abiadh: awatef.abiadh@lpo.fr

Questions regarding ConservationGrants should be emailed to conservationgrants@conservation.org.

For general queries about the CEPF Mediterranean Basin Hotspot programme, please contact the Regional Implementation Team Manager Liz Smith at liz.smith@birdlife.org, or visit the regional implementation team's [website](#).