

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund at 10

INVESTING IN LIFE





From the start, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) was designed to empower people to protect the natural resources around them and ensure their own long-term well-being. CEPF's partnership brought together major conservation supporters—l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank—who shared that vision. Through this collaboration, we have funneled crucial funding to initiatives of all sizes that focus on preserving the most biologically rich yet threatened ecosystems in developing countries around the world. In these places, the natural wealth holds the key to nurturing and sustaining thriving communities. As CEPF's executive director through its first nine years, and now, through my work with the MacArthur Foundation, I am proud of the achievements of those we have supported in CEPF's 10 years of operation—everyone from small farming cooperatives to women's community groups to regional, national and international NGOs. They all have an important role to play in securing the future of these communities, and the future of life on Earth. And I look forward to what CEPF and the visionary people driving such initiatives can achieve in the next 10 years, to the benefit of us all.

Jörgen Bent Thomsen, director, Conservation & Sustainable Development, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

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The pin-tailed whydah (*Vidua macroura*) is found in several biodiversity hotspots in Sub-Saharan Africa.

FOREWORD

It is always pleasing to be a part of a success story, and the incredible success of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is particularly exciting because it heralds a new way of undertaking the most challenging and important job of our time—protecting the future of this planet.

When the World Bank was approached to become one of the founders of CEPF 10 years ago, we knew this was a radically different approach to tackling conservation. The idea was to create a mechanism that would give communities in the world's most biologically important places the power and the capacity to protect the landscapes and biodiversity that surrounds them. And we needed it to be scientifically rigorous, cost-effective and able to respond rapidly to problems and to continue even when our funding ceased.

The results have been extraordinary.

According to a recent independent evaluation of the program, CEPF has improved the outlook for approximately 55,000 species through its support of nearly 1,600 partners working in Earth's most biologically rich yet threatened areas.

CEPF has established more than 10.8 million hectares of new or expanded protected areas and has improved management of an additional 21 million hectares. CEPF has also created more than 2,500 new "green" jobs in a range of industries, often in places where the only alternatives would be environmentally destructive. It has also allowed hundreds of civil society groups that it funds to become powerful fundraisers in their own right, generating for themselves more than twice the amount of CEPF's initial investment and demonstrating their long-term viability.

Like most successes, CEPF's clear strategic vision is what has made it so effective. With input from local civil society, scientists and donors, CEPF creates one coherent plan for conservation and human development across an entire region. Then, when possible, CEPF places the delivery of this plan primarily in the hands of local people rather than governments or large international organizations. This dramatically cuts overhead and bureaucracy, promotes speed and efficiency, and ensures that the people for whom these places are home are empowered to protect them.

It is humbling to consider what CEPF's grant recipients have done in just 10 years and inspiring to think what will be achieved in another 10. While it is certainly testament to the efficacy of the model we created back in 2000, the real testament is to the immense reserves of passion, intelligence, optimism and common sense that exist in the people who make up the groups that CEPF has funded and trained, and who have, without a doubt, changed the world for the better.

James D. Wolfensohn, chairman of Wolfensohn & Company, LLC
and chairperson of the CEPF Donor Council

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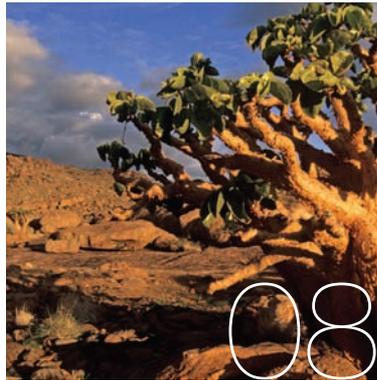
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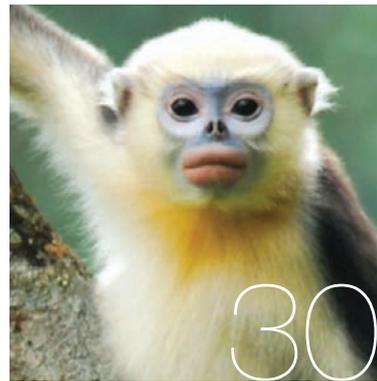
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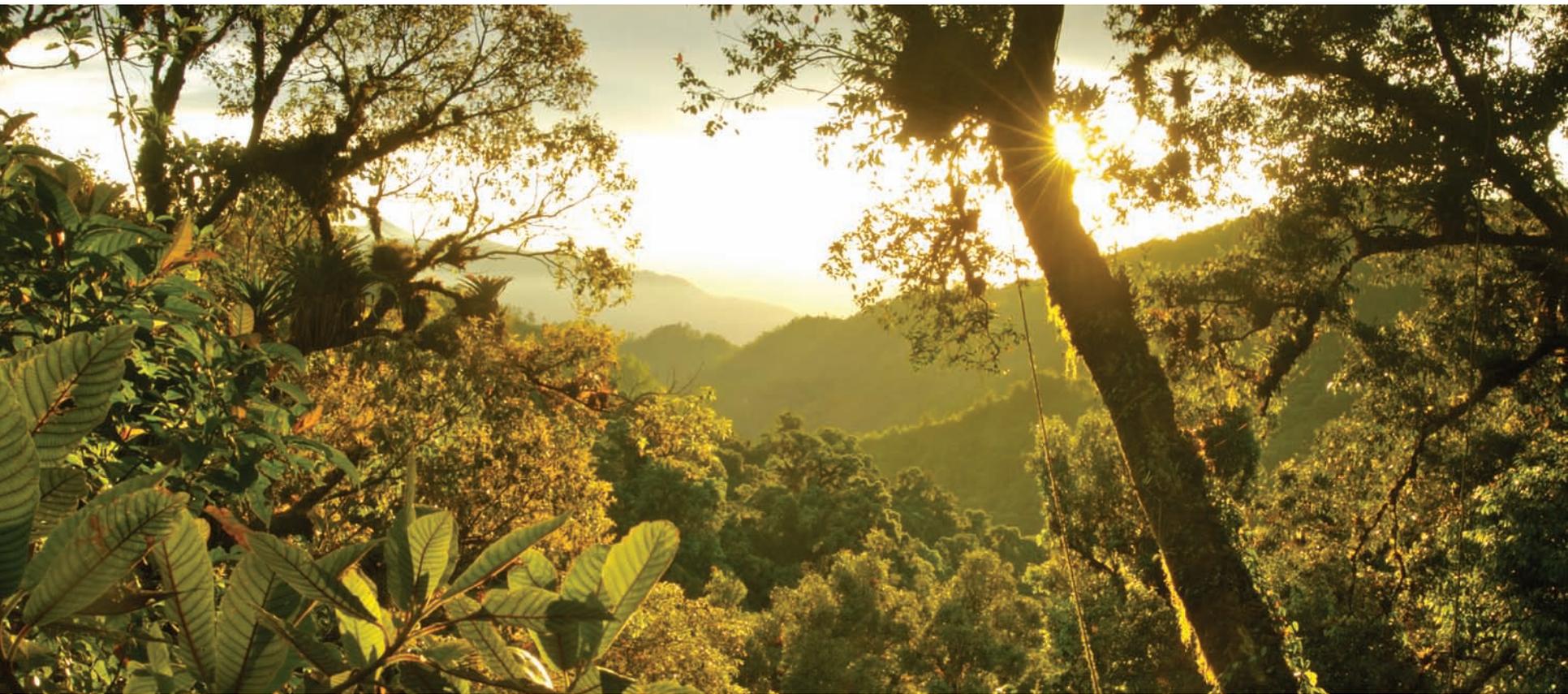
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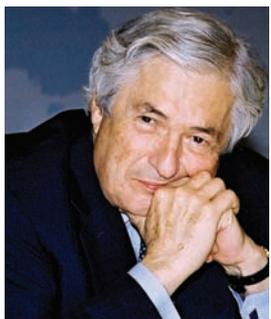
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Photos and Credits



In the Mesoamerica Hotspot, El Triunfo Reserve in Chiapas, Mexico, collects 10 percent of the nation's total rainfall, which then generates 30 percent of the country's hydroelectricity.

DEVELOPING CEPF



A conversation with James D. Wolfensohn, chairman of Wolfensohn & Company, LLC, and former president of the World Bank, and Peter A. Seligmann, chairman and CEO of Conservation International (CI)

Q: Where did the idea of CEPF come from?

Seligmann: At that time [1995], the World Bank was focusing on government-to-government engagements, and grants or loans were being made that were quite large. What we were thinking about at CI was how do we build the capability within civil society to value, understand and take care of rich ecological areas, ecological hotspots and biodiversity hotspots.

You and I met, Jim, at a dinner, and we became friends. And then I think you were offered the position as the president of the World Bank. We went fishing and were talking about ecological hotspots and about your role and what you were going to be able to do, the challenges before you, and we started talking about a way to build and engage civil society. We agreed that the Bank could play a bigger role in protecting biodiversity and building civil society, and so you asked me to put something down on paper about how that could work. And so I went back to D.C. and wrote something up and sent it to you.

Wolfensohn: I think the only thing I should add is that this was not the center of my attention at that time; the center of my attention was trying to build some sort of relationship at almost any level on almost any subject with civil society, because we were totally distrusted by just about everybody. What I recognized was that the Bank could not function effectively in the modern world without having proper links with civil society. You could disagree, but you had to have some degree of mutual trust and mutual activity. So I think you could say this was born at a time when the Bank and civil society had very bad relations, and one of the areas in which we could move forward—and this is a tribute to Pete—was that he was prepared to stand up there and say, “I am prepared to deal with the World Bank.” You remember, Pete, that there were a lot of people who were critical of you because you did it. So that was a very important step for the Bank, both in terms of relations with civil society and also in terms of the environment. But it was definitely both. It was not just an environmental issue.

Seligmann: Right. I remember that, because I was invited to a whole bunch of meetings by the NGO sector in that period, talking about 50 years [of the World Bank] is enough, and we should come together to have the Bank disband, and it wasn't value added. Of course I disagreed with that. And I was really attracted, Jim, to your personal interest and passion for doing the right thing and finding the right path. I thought, “Here's someone whom I could not only be a friend with, but someone whom I could really partner with.”

I suggested to you that the Bank put \$100 million into this. And you came back to me and said, “Let's create a partnership with a bunch of organizations.” That was when we decided that CI would put in \$25 million, and you said the Bank would match it. We began to talk about who were the other partners we should go to. And we agreed to go to a private



Many communities in the hotspots rely on their ecosystems for food, such as these fishermen in the Himalaya Hotspot.



A fawn-breasted brilliant (*Heliodoxa rubinades*) shares nectar with a butterfly in the Andean cloud forest of Ecuador.

group, the MacArthur Foundation. We talked about getting GEF [the Global Environment Facility] involved, and we did that, and then it was your outreach through which we engaged the government of Japan. That was the beginning of the concept of being a collaborative, multi-sector fund.

Q: What happened in 2000 that brought about the launch of CEPF?

Wolfensohn: Well, we eventually got people to agree to put up money. The situation at the Bank had changed a bit. I think it was becoming more trusted in the general community on issues like the environment, and I had had four years at that stage to work on it. The Bank had better projects, and it was no longer seen as just a project shop that didn't talk to civil society.

Seligmann: Yes. I would add that we had been trying to figure out how much money it would take to stimulate and build biodiversity capacity in these ecological hotspots, and that's how we came up with a number, of needing over \$100 million. When we began to talk to the Bank about lots of money being put into this, as you can imagine, there was distrust within civil society. Civil society groups that wanted to work with the Bank wanted the money to go to other things. So the process and the politics really kind of kicked into action, which took several years. As with all significant ventures, it takes persistence and determination and also being able to respond appropriately to legitimate intellectual challenges as to why this is important and what's the right structure and who should be engaged and all those other questions. So we worked hard, and Jim stood by us, and we were able to put in the structure and answer the questions and ended up with CEPF. There was a great celebration when we finally came together.

Wolfensohn: It was indeed an important moment.



Though entrenched issues such as human poverty and the loss of vital ecosystems are daunting and complex, we cannot turn away from them. We are, in fact, called upon to act—for this generation, certainly, but perhaps more importantly for future generations. There are many good people and powerful entities working today with conviction to address these problems on a local, regional, national, and international scale. Individually, they have laudable accomplishments. The one strategy, however, with the power to make lasting, fundamental differences is partnership. Our strengths lie in our collaboration. As those of us committed to human well-being and conservation work together and harness passion, experience, and resources, we provide the support communities need to reach sustainable growth with a healthy development of the planet's ecosystems. We owe this to ourselves, to our fellow citizens, and to the generations to come.

Inger Andersen, vice president, Sustainable Development, the World Bank



View of the Namib Desert, Namibia. CEPF support helped establish Sperrgebiet National Park in southwest Namibia, which, at 2.6 million hectares, is the second largest protected area in Africa, and home to more than 1,000 species of plants.

INTRODUCTION

In 2000, three organizations—Conservation International, Global Environment Facility and the World Bank—came together with a new approach to conserving Earth’s biological diversity. Their fundamental idea was to target the world’s recognized biodiversity hotspots and to involve civil society in managing and implementing programs for conservation. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund was born.

The CEPF system identified key areas of need, funded projects developed to address those areas, and assembled successful portfolios in support of large ecological landscapes. From the outset, aggregation was a hallmark of the CEPF approach. Not only did this increase effectiveness in safeguarding hotspots, but it also created a true community of actors across diverse sectors of civil society to enable the people of these regions to sustainably manage their natural wealth.

In 2001 the MacArthur Foundation joined CEPF, to be followed in 2002 by the government of Japan and in 2007 by l’Agence Française de Développement, each new donor-partner bringing assets and expertise in both conservation and development.

Much has changed since the start up of CEPF; the world seems a dramatically different place. War, peace, terrorist acts, political change, devastating natural disasters, extreme economic instability, technological and medical advances, and growing awareness of climate change—all of these contributed to a decade of fluidity and transformation.

Among the watershed events for the global environment was the establishment of the 2010 Biodiversity Target by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in April 2002. More than 190 nations agreed on the target: to achieve a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national levels by the end of 2010. It indicated the growing acknowledgement of the importance of biodiversity to a healthy planet and the future of humanity.

We know now that the target will not be reached. In fact, studies show the loss in varieties of life has not slowed at all in the years since the target was set. This does not mean, however, that the cause is lost.

Knowledge of critical ecosystems has been greatly expanded. Successful methods have been uncovered for enabling communities to commit to securing critical ecosystems for the future without diminishing their ability to make a living. Networks have developed that bring scientists, nongovernmental organizations, government leaders and communities together to share successful practices and lessons learned, and collaborate on conservation projects and sustainable development policies. And business and industry have, in some notable instances, found both monetary and reputational profit in embracing environmentally sound practices.

Through this book, we pay tribute to some of the crucial steps that CEPF’s partners have taken around the globe to stem the tide of biodiversity loss, ensure healthy communities, and lay the foundation for a rich, vital future. And we celebrate the wonder of the diversity of life.



Villagers cross a bridge in Assam, India, part of the Eastern Himalayas region.

WHO WE ARE

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund unites six global leaders who are committed to enabling nongovernmental and private sector organizations to help protect vital ecosystems.

L'Agence Française de Développement, the French Development Agency, is a financial institution that is at the heart of France's Development Assistance Policy. It supports a wide range of social and economic projects in more than 60 countries.

www.afd.fr

Conservation International is a leader and catalyst in biodiversity conservation, engaging partners in more than 40 countries on four continents to preserve threatened ecosystems. The organization administers CEPF.

www.conservation.org

The Global Environment Facility is the world's largest source of funding for the global environment. It brings 178 member governments together with leading development institutions and others in support of a common global environmental agenda.

www.thegef.org

The Government of Japan is one of the largest providers of development assistance for the environment. Japan seeks constructive measures and concrete programs to preserve unique ecosystems that provide people with important benefits and help reduce poverty.

www.env.go.jp/en/

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation supports creative people and effective institutions committed to building a more just, verdant and peaceful world. In addition to selecting the MacArthur Fellows, the foundation works to defend human rights, advance global conservation and security, make cities better places, and understand how technology is affecting children and society.

www.macfound.org

The World Bank is the world's largest source of development assistance. It works in more than 100 developing economies to fight poverty and to help people help themselves and their environment.

www.worldbank.org



One of the truths to emerge from the collective experience of the conservation movement is that the choice between human development and environmental protection is a false one. Healthy ecosystems and their biodiversity are among the most valuable resources in developing countries. They provide food, water and medicine. They support agriculture. They protect communities from storms, flooding and climate change. And many cultures' identities are intricately tied to their environments. By focusing on biodiversity hotspots—the world's most biologically rich yet threatened areas—CEPF provides technical and financial support to many communities who depend on their ecosystems for survival. Supporting them to sustainably use their natural resources—their true wealth—paves the way for a brighter, healthier future for us all.

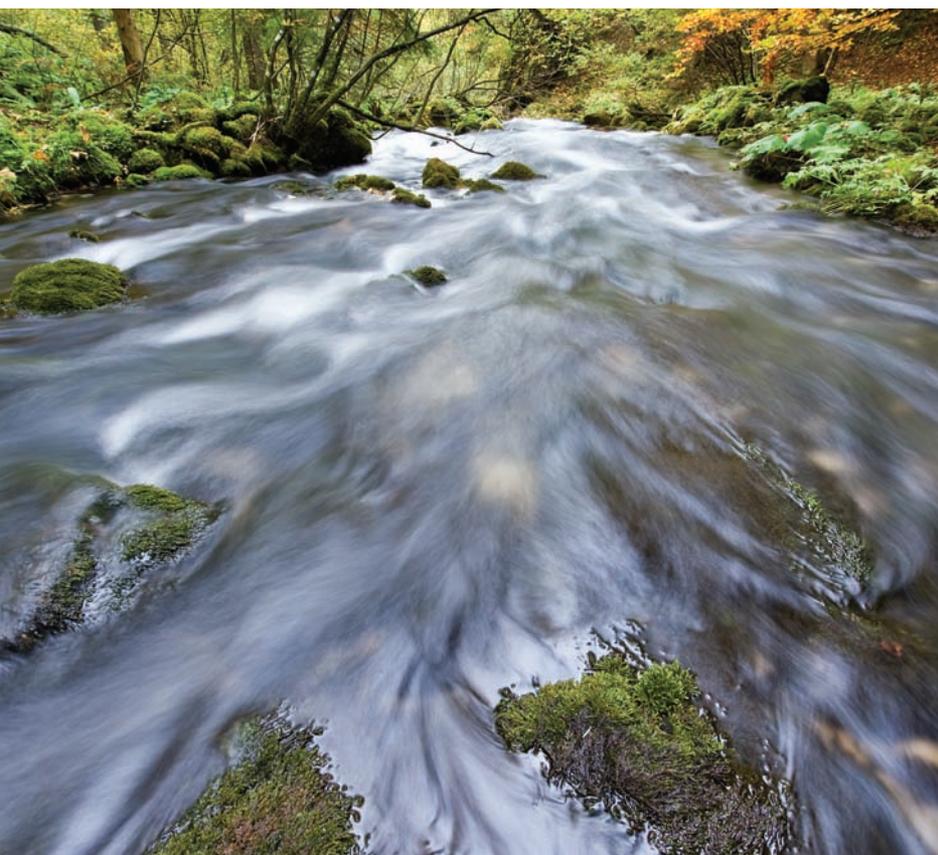
Monique Barbut, chairperson and CEO, The Global Environment Facility



Endangered Panay monitor lizard (*Varanus mabitang*) only found in remnant forest on Panay Island, Philippines Hotspot.

Chapter 1:

STRATEGY



The world's 34 biodiversity hotspots are the focus of CEPF's efforts. Although they harbor 90 percent of Earth's biological diversity, the combined area of these hotspots now covers only 2.3 percent of all the land on the planet. Many encompass priority areas in multiple countries. Each one faces extreme threats and has lost at least 70 percent of its original habitat. The degradation of these hotspots threatens the health and future of the estimated 2 billion people who live in them.

CEPF mobilizes local, regional and global actors to create and achieve a common conservation vision for the hotspots. When the fund prepares to invest in a region, it first assembles a team to develop an ecosystem profile. This process brings global and regional scientists together with representatives from local communities—often for the first time—and helps them develop an overview of the causes of biodiversity loss in a particular region. The teams then couple this assessment with an inventory of current conservation activities. They use this information to work with CEPF to identify the niche where the fund's investments can provide the greatest incremental value. The resulting profile not only guides CEPF's actions, but also provides a comprehensive road map for future conservation efforts and cooperation within the donor community.

Crna Rjeka Black River springs, Plitvice National Park, Croatia. In the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot, more than 90 civil society, government and donor organizations contributed to the development of CEPF's investment strategy, creating a common vision for achieving conservation goals across the region.



I don't think that the specific CEPF money will be able to solve all the conservation issues in the Caribbean. But if we have a good strategy, if we pick our investments where they are needed, then I think we have a good chance of success and the investment can be multiplied by 20, by 30, based on the results that we can achieve in the field. It's not so much the amount that is important but the strategy.

Jean Vilmond Hilaire, former executive director of Société Audubon Haïti, who participated in the development of the ecosystem profile for the Caribbean Islands Hotspot in 2009



Man herds ostriches in the Groenfontein Valley of South Africa, Succulent Karoo Hotspot. CEPF-backed projects have helped ranchers develop sustainable practices.



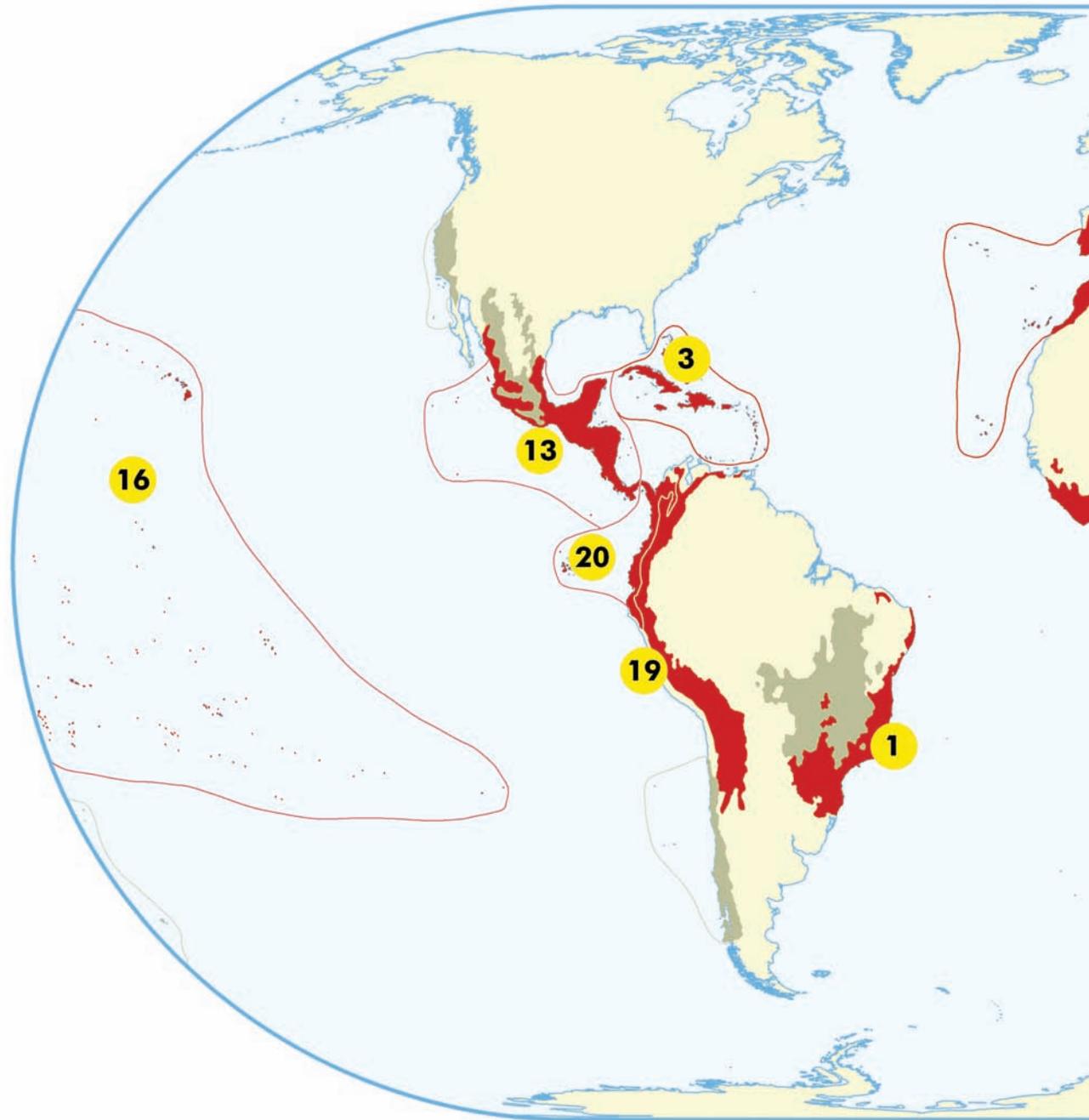
The Asian elephant is one of many species benefiting from efforts to restore and maintain habitat connectivity.

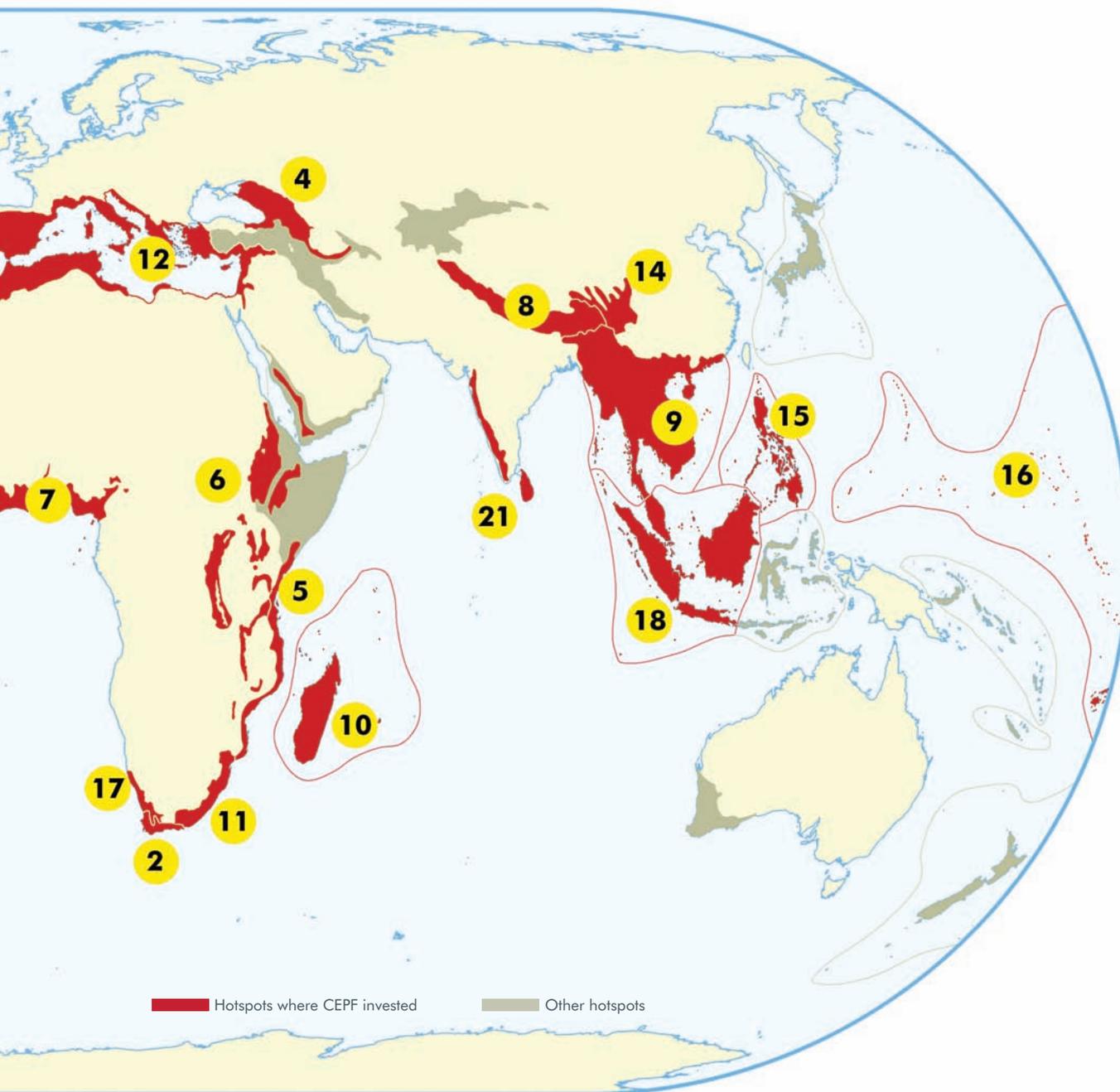
With a clear strategy in place, CEPF chooses a regional implementation team, which consists of one or more locally operating nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that represent the fund in each hotspot, providing local expertise, knowledge and presence. Then CEPF and the regional implementation team award grants to local community associations, NGOs, private businesses and other civil society groups, enabling them to take charge of conserving the hotspot.

HOTSPOTS WHERE CEPF HAS SUPPORTED CIVIL SOCIETY

Earth's 34 biodiversity hotspots hold especially high numbers of unique species and provide important services for human well-being, such as clean air and water, flood and climate control, and soil regeneration, as well as food, medicines and raw materials. The hotspots, which face extreme threats, cover only 2.3 percent of the planet's land surface, and have each lost at least 70 percent of their original natural vegetation.

CEPF has awarded grants to civil society partners in 18 hotspots to help protect vital ecosystems. CEPF is also preparing for new investments in three additional hotspots: Caribbean Islands, Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany in southeast Africa and the Mediterranean Basin.





- 01 Atlantic Forest
- 02 Cape Floristic Region
- 03 Caribbean Islands
- 04 Caucasus
- 05 Coastal Forests of Eastern Africa
- 06 Eastern Afrotropical
- 07 Guinean Forests of West Africa
- 08 Himalaya
- 09 Indo-Burma
- 10 Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands
- 11 Maputland-Pondoland-Albany
- 12 Mediterranean Basin
- 13 Mesoamerica
- 14 Mountains of Southwest China
- 15 The Philippines
- 16 Polynesia-Micronesia
- 17 Succulent Karoo
- 18 Sundaland
- 19 Tropical Andes
- 20 Tumbes-Chocó-Magdalena
- 21 Western Ghats and Sri Lanka

Because of a reclassification of hotspot boundaries in 2005, the originally defined investment areas now stretch across two hotspots in some cases.



Civil society has a critical role to play in the management and protection of biodiversity. Though many times their efforts are unrecognized, frustrated and undermined, the efforts of this sector continue on due to the deep commitment, sound work ethics and vision to make a better world. Over my 22 years of environmentalism, I am convinced that the civil society effort for the protection of the environment is honorable work. I am of the belief that every human being has a purpose on this planet. In this respect, environmentalists have a purpose of helping promote a better place to live in not only for humans but also for the species that share this planet. This sort of purpose is exemplified in the work of civil society groups that day to day are at the forefront of the ever-challenging endeavor to balance conservation and development.

Rafael Manzanero, executive director of Friends for Conservation and Development, CEPF grantee based in Belize



In the Osa Peninsula of Costa Rica, one of the most biologically diverse areas in the world, CEPF has promoted connectivity between Corcovado and Piedras Blancas national parks along the Pacific coast.

Chapter 2:

GLOBAL TO LOCAL



Civil society holds the key to conservation that lasts. It can bring innovative ideas and solutions, as well as participatory approaches, to solving local challenges. This perspective drives CEPF's unique partnership, which enables global donors to work with local communities, conservationists and other nongovernmental organizations to develop comprehensive, practical strategies for conserving the biodiversity hotspots.

These working relationships, in turn, facilitate dialogue, extend networks and foster collaboration, helping to nurture stability in societies often struggling with poverty. Our investment strategy is a method that civil society in hotspots can use to take responsibility for their natural resources in a way that benefits both local people and the global community.

CEPF grant recipients range from small farming cooperatives and community associations to private-sector partners and international organizations. All are striving to secure thriving ecosystems and communities.

CEPF grantee Balu Hegde holds his daughter in front of Aghanashini Valley, near his farm in Uttara Kannada District, southern India. This is one of three new conservation reserves he has worked with local communities, NGOs and the Forest Department to establish. This has helped create a patchwork of forest fragments, totaling more than 50,000 hectares, to protect critical habitat for tiger and other threatened species.



No one has more at stake in the fight to conserve ecosystems than the people who live in areas of high biodiversity. Their lives are woven in the fabric of their environment, they have an innate appreciation for the beauty and services provided by their rich ecosystems, and they see every day the results of their interaction with their surroundings. This knowledge makes them uniquely qualified for, and invested in, preserving these areas for the long run. By providing them with monetary and other resources, the CEPF partnership is making a prudent investment. We are providing tools with which the residents of these areas can assume or build on their natural leadership in conserving their environmental wealth. The dividend for us all is that we help strengthen vital links in the global environment, and the natural wonders therein.

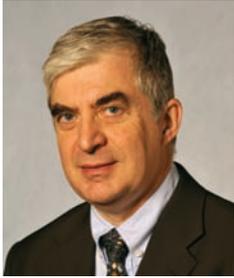
Jørgen B. Thomsen, director, Conservation & Sustainable Development, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation



The northern muriqui (*Brachyteles hypoxanthus*) is a Critically Endangered species in the Atlantic Forest Hotspot.



CEPF promotes biodiversity-friendly practices in production landscapes, such as conservation coffee farms that enhance livelihoods while protecting species.



Considering the importance of building capacity and ensuring that local organizations have the opportunity to act in favor of their environment, a key challenge that emerges from the perspective of overseas development agencies is the difficulty of reaching out to and funding small, local organizations. Collaborating with other donors in the visionary approach that the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund proposed 10 years ago allows development agencies such as l'Agence Française de Développement to provide that support cost-effectively. CEPF provides the mechanism for efficiently reaching local organizations, and, through its small grants program, supports capacity building of local NGOs, communities and cooperatives that have a key role in protecting their environment while building sustainable livelihoods. CEPF has proven yet again that strong civil society organizations are one of the key factors to engage in rapid and sustained environmental progress as part and parcel of improved living standards. CEPF's approach has reached out to nearly 1,600 civil society organizations throughout the world in the last 10 years.

Pierre Jacquet, chief economist of l'Agence Française de Développement



CEPF supports global efforts to protect animals, like this Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*), through local groups that resolve human-wildlife conflict.



Fresh water quality and quantity are closely linked to the protection of the surrounding environment of creeks, rivers and lakes.



The evergreen forest is very important both in terms of being a watershed as well as in holding back floods, a scourge that afflicts most of Assam for months during the rainy season. Most experts agree that floods have become an intractable problem because we have been steadily destroying our original hill and valley forests; nearly three-quarters of the Assam Valley forests have disappeared within the last several decades. Forests also act as local climate regulators, a key factor for the agriculture in this region—both of food crops and the world-famous Assam tea, which holds considerable acreage here and employs thousands. So whether we pick the carnivores or the gibbons, or maybe a particular orchid found only here, the argument would still be for the forest itself to be protected. The forest contains such amazing biodiversity in its green heart; that would be reason enough to protect it. But we have a more selfish reason to do so: our ecological security depends on it.

Kashmira Kakati, wildlife biologist working in her native Assam, India, and recipient of CEPF support





In Madagascar, a man carries raffia leaves for house construction. CEPF grantees work with communities on sustainable use of forest products.



CEPF is a unique partnership that brings together international NGOs and national governments, and focuses their resources and experience on biodiversity hotspots, the most biologically rich yet threatened areas of the world. The CEPF mechanism develops strategies that allow us to get those resources deep into these important places and to the people who live there. This support has enabled CEPF's grant recipients to make achievements in both the protection of biological diversity and human well-being. An independent evaluator of the program has estimated that 55,000 threatened species have directly benefited from CEPF investments over the 10 years of the Fund's operation. During that time, CEPF has also supported projects that have created more than 2,500 environment-friendly jobs in activities such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, ecotourism and manufacturing. CEPF's activities have much in common with the Satoyama Initiative, which the

Government of Japan has been promoting together with partner countries and organizations. We hope that CEPF and the Satoyama Initiative develop synergies, and contribute to implementing the new Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Because Japan itself is a hotspot, biodiversity loss is our grave concern. Japan takes pride in having become the first governmental donor to CEPF in 2002 and also pledged our additional contribution for the second phase of its activities. This year, which marks CEPF's 10th anniversary and the International Year of Biodiversity, provides an excellent opportunity to raise awareness among our citizens of the importance of biodiversity protection and sustainable livelihoods for people.

Ryu Matsumoto, minister of the environment, Japan



In the Tropical Andes Hotspot, CEPF supported projects that established 4 million hectares of new or expanded protected areas, safeguarding species like the Amazonian horned frog (*Ceratophrys cornuta*).

Chapter 3:

RESULTS



Our experience in the last 10 years has shown that focused investments that enable civil society to lead highly strategic conservation initiatives achieve results. These results include the following:

- Nearly 1,600 civil society groups have received CEPF support.
- CEPF has committed \$124 million in grants, while grant recipients have been able to leverage an additional \$261 million for hotspot conservation, matching CEPF investment at a ratio greater than 2-to-1.
- During the last 10 years, CEPF investments represented only 0.5 percent of total biodiversity-related aid to developing countries, but supported about 5 percent of the world's key biodiversity areas.
- The Fund has engaged more than 20 industries as partners in biodiversity conservation, including tourism, fisheries, cocoa, coffee, mining, rice, wine and forestry.

CEPF engages civil society at the grassroots, such as this women's group from the south coast of Kenya. Shared strategies like planted tree lots and fuel-efficient stoves reduce impact on remaining forests and the women's workload.

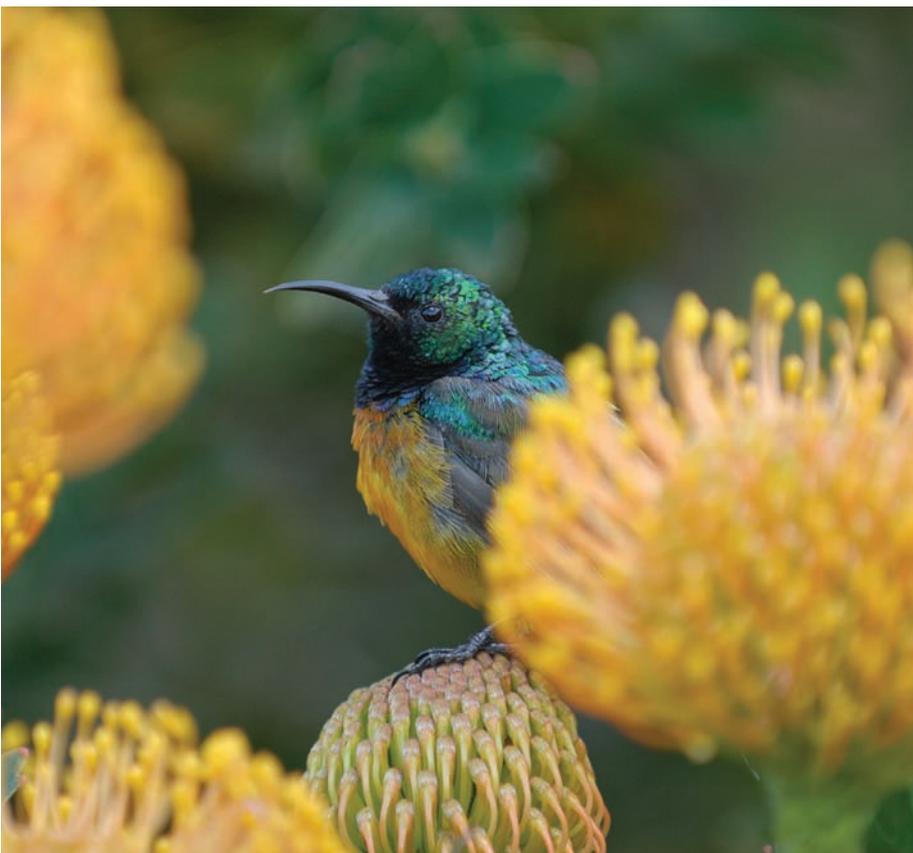


The challenge now is how we reconcile the need to conserve what little resources we have left with the growing challenges of providing for a growing population in a country coming out of conflict. These are tough decisions, tough choices. But they're tough choices that we have to make; otherwise our very survival is in jeopardy. The role of CEPF has been one of creating enabling conditions for people to begin to reflect very, very seriously on the tasks that lie ahead and realize some successes in the process. We learned of the CEPF grants for biodiversity hotspots, and July 2002 is when conservation work began. We [now] have a consolidation grant from CEPF that is helping to provide training for local people in local arts and crafts, and they're learning new skills and they can begin to see potential for earning an income. They have structures in their communities; some of these places even have solar electricity, all part of our involvement in that community. These are things they never had before, that they've never dreamt about before—it is happening. So they recognize now that this island [Tiwai Island in Sierra Leone] is valuable, and, as long as they leave it as is, good things will continue to happen to them.

Tommy Garnett, founder and director of regional programs, Environmental Foundation for Africa, based in Sierra Leone



Georgia's lush Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park was one of the first places that the Caucasus Protected Areas Fund protected, using a sustainable funding mechanism supported by CEPF.



The orange-breasted sunbird (*Nectarinia violacea*) is endemic to South Africa, which hosts the Cape Floristic Hotspot and portions of the Succulent Karoo and Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany hotspots.

- Grantees established more than 80 networks of civil society groups, creating new models for collaboration in some areas that had been characterized by isolated, fragmented approaches.
- CEPF enabled the adoption of at least 25 policies, laws and regulation in support of biodiversity conservation and mainstreaming conservation into development policy at local and national levels.

“The last decade of work by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) represents the most significant response of our species to date to stop the hemorrhaging of our planet’s biodiversity,” said David Olson of Conservation Earth in his 2010 independent evaluation of CEPF. The report found that the single most significant contribution of CEPF has been to provide much-needed conservation attention to many of the highest priority biodiversity regions around the world. Without CEPF’s intervention, the report states, it was highly unlikely that other programs operating a decade ago could or would have stepped into these largely neglected regions.



As the global population approaches 7 billion and as the ecological foundation for human well-being becomes increasingly imperiled, the vital importance of CEPF becomes ever more apparent. This year, 2010, is the International Year of Biodiversity. Now is the moment when the global community needs to invest in CEPF, the most impactful global partnership for building civil society's capacity and commitment to protect the underpinnings of human well-being, our global biodiversity.

Peter Seligmann, chairman and CEO, Conservation International



Tonkin snub-nosed monkey (*Rhinopithecus avunculus*), a Critically Endangered species endemic to the Indo-Burma Hotspot, is benefiting from community-based collaborative management of its remaining forest refuges.

CONCLUSION

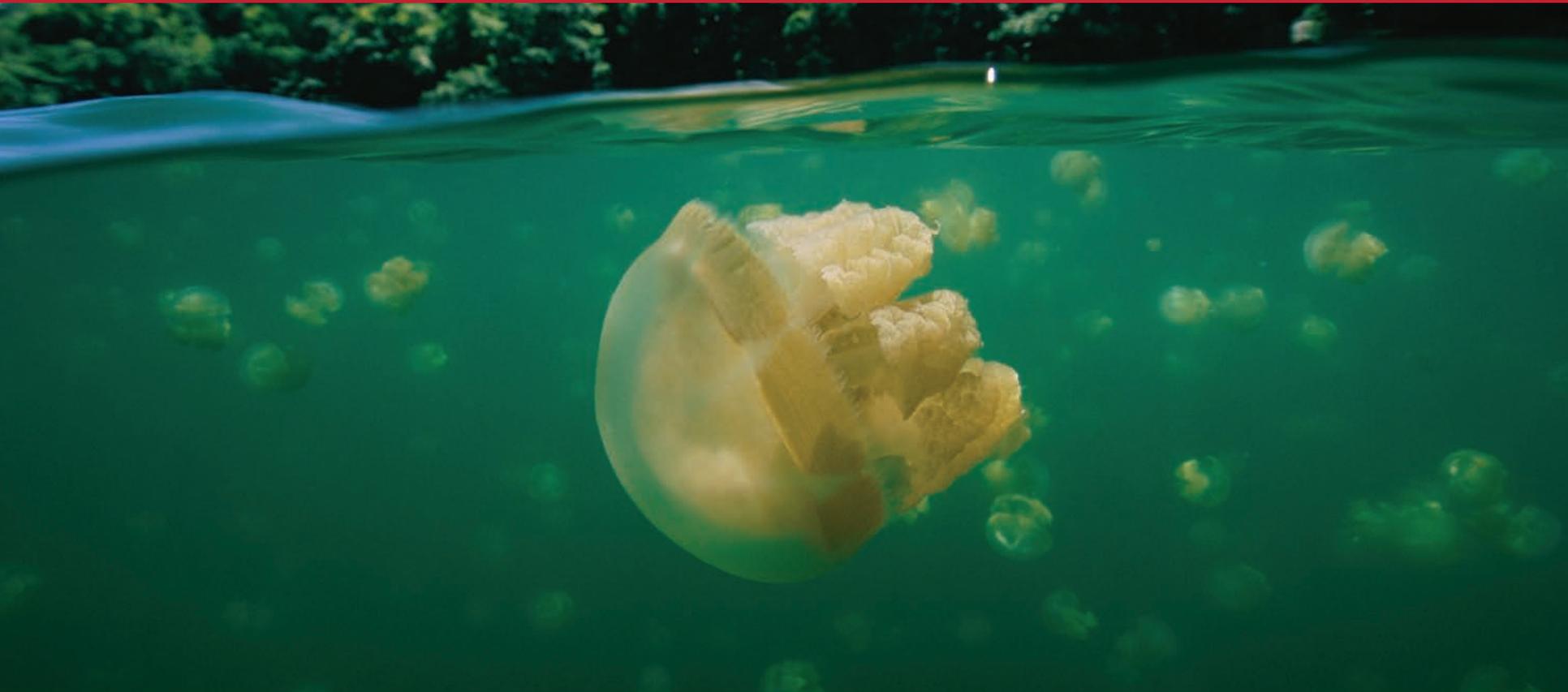
When you see images that capture the natural wonder of Earth's biodiversity hotspots—the stunning landscapes and the equally beautiful people and other living beings they support—it is hard not to feel inspired. The abundance and variety of life our ecosystems sustain are miracles of a breadth and depth that is nearly impossible to fathom.

We try, however, to understand these complex systems and the services they provide beyond beauty: food, water, medicines, crop pollination, flood and climate control. A large, diverse network of conservation leaders is operating at local, regional, national and global levels to gather data, develop and implement practical plans, and provide crucial financial and technical support to conserve these places.

CEPF and its partners have made important contributions to the conservation of global biological diversity. Our ecosystem profiles have synthesized what is known about hotspots, frequently adding to that body of knowledge and increasing our baseline awareness of the status of threatened and endangered species and ecosystems. Our grants have supported innovative land-use and resource-management mechanisms to solidify protected areas, create corridors and otherwise contribute to the integrity of evolutionary processes in diverse habitats. Our civil society partners have broken new ground in saving and even expanding reserves, using strategies old and new to construct truly viable places for nature's story to unfold.

This unique partnership has helped put people at the center of a new environmental attitude, one that values charismatic fauna, to be sure, but that also validates the place of humanity in any consideration of the planet's future. The model CEPF has created is highly effective primarily because it is flexible and ensures that the people who have the biggest stake in and impact on the areas it seeks to conserve—the communities who live and work there—are the central figures in planning and carrying out the strategies to conserve them.

While many of the broad achievements of the partnership have been outlined in this book—such as its impact on the global protected area network, job creation and strengthening thousands of small organizations around the world—the essence of CEPF's success is really the cumulative impact of the thousands of partners and essential, and often small-scale, projects taking place in biodiversity hotspots the world over that will continue even after CEPF ceases funding them.



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A snout beetle (*Brachyderinae*) rests on a bromeliad in the Ecuadorian rain forest.



In Kerala State in India, former hunters now hold jobs monitoring and guarding hornbill birds. People in Mexico's Sierra Madre de Chiapas are bringing in income from environmentally friendly coffee cultivation and carbon credits for reforestation. Conservationists in Namibia have gained protection for a 2.6-million-hectare stretch of the nation's coast, preserving nearly a quarter of the country's plant diversity and building potential for ecotourism jobs. In all of these instances, and many more, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) has provided groups implementing conservation projects with support needed to reach their goals and sustain the resulting gains into the future. The fund brings together powerful international donors and a wide range of partners in the most biologically diverse yet threatened areas of the planet to develop a common conservation vision. Working through, and helping to build up, civil society organizations operating in these areas, CEPF has proven in the last 10 years that its model is effective at protecting ecosystems that are crucial to both biological diversity and people. Looking forward to the next 10 years, CEPF is positioning itself as a mechanism that can capitalize on its gains, learn from its successes and failures, and expand a system that can truly contribute to turning the page in the history of conservation so we stop losing biodiversity and advance in securing the basis for human well-being, our critical ecosystems.

Patricia Zurita, executive director, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund

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