

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
No Objection Approval Pursuant to Section 4.2 of the Operational Manual

15 November 2022

**Selection of Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano as the Ecuador Regional
Implementation Team for the Tropical Andes Biodiversity Hotspot**

1. Recommended Action Items

Pursuant to Section 4.2 of the Operational Manual, the Donor Council is asked to approve on a no-objection basis:

The selection of Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano (FFLA) as the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) for the Ecuadorian part of the Tropical Andes Biodiversity Hotspot.

The deadline for no-objection approval is **29 November 2022**.

2. Background

On 28 July 2021, CEPF issued a request that organizations interested in serving as the RIT in Ecuador submit an Expression of Interest by 27 August 2021, in order to pre-qualify to submit a formal proposal. Six organizations submitted an Expression of Interest to serve as the Ecuador RIT, of which five subsequently confirmed their interest in May 2022. These five organizations were placed on a shortlist to submit a full proposal, which the Ecuadorian Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition (MAATE) approved on 10 June 2022. CEPF issued a Request for Proposals (RfP) on 16 June 2022 inviting the five shortlisted organizations to submit full proposals. The RfP set the maximum value of proposals at \$700,000.

Three applicants submitted proposals by the closing date of 20 July 2022: (1) Corporación ECOPAR; (2) Fundación Ecológica Arcoiris; and (3) Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano (FFLA) in alliance with Environmental Incentives (EI). All three proposals were determined to be responsive. A CEPF evaluation committee met on 27 July 2022 and determined that clarifications were required to finalize their assessments. The Secretariat sent clarification questions to each applicant on 30 July and received all responses by the deadline of 10 August. The evaluation team met again on 17 August to finalize its assessment and to identify its recommendation of the organization(s) to serve as the Ecuador RIT.

The CEPF Secretariat's assessment was presented to the Working Group on 12 September 2022 for its review. The Working Group agreed with the recommendation made by the Secretariat to select FFLA (in alliance with EI) as the RIT for Ecuador.

3. Assessment Summary

The three proposals were ranked in the following order, from highest to lowest: FFLA then ECOPAR then Fundación Arcoiris. FFLA distinguished itself from the other applicants based on its well-written, detailed, and systematic proposal. It included detailed descriptions of how it would fulfill core RIT functions to implement the Ecuador investment strategy and achieve the portfolio targets. The proposal also demonstrated FFLA's extensive administrative, financial management and technical experience in projects of similar and more complex scope and breadth, including serving as the RIT for Ecuador in the previous CEPF investment phase in the hotspot. The proposed seven-member team possesses well-aligned skills and experience for the job. The budget was highly detailed and included a generous allocation for stakeholder consultations and travel to project sites. The proposal included innovations based on performance-driven conservation and incentives and adaptive management and learning at the conservation corridor level to support local alliance and capacity building. The CEPF Secretariat also noted that the proposal would support the implementation plan presented in the Tropical Andes Long-Term Vision.

The CEPF Secretariat intends to negotiate a number of key issues with FFLA, should it receive approval. Specifically, the Secretariat will ask FFLA to: (1) include a dedicated level of effort to portfolio M&E; (2) confirm that funding for the Communications Focal Point is fully secured, to enable the RIT to perform its communications functions; and (3) confirm that the Technical Coordinator will provide expertise on biodiversity conservation expertise to the RIT, to complement the expertise of the Team Leader. The Secretariat is confident that these pending issues can be resolved, and that FFLA is best placed to fulfill the role of the RIT for Ecuador.

Funding for the new CEPF investment in Ecuador will come from KfW under the *Protection of Biodiversity in the Tropical Andes in Ecuador Project*. In accordance with the financing agreement, CEPF was required to seek KfW's no-objection approval for the selection of the RIT. On 7 October 2022, KfW confirmed that they had no objection to the selection of FFLA as the RIT.

4. Next Steps

The CEPF Secretariat will award a \$700,000 grant to FFLA to serve as the RIT for the new phase of CEPF investment in the Ecuadorian part of the Tropical Andes Biodiversity Hotspot. It is anticipated that the RIT grant agreement will be signed in late November 2022.

5. Attachments (a link to access these documents will be sent by email)

- Attachment 1: Proposal from Corporación ECOPAR
- Attachment 2: Proposal from Fundación Ecológica Arcoiris
- Attachment 3: Proposal from Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano
- Attachment 4: Clarification questions from the CEPF Secretariat
- Attachment 5: Response to clarification questions from shortlisted applicants
- Attachment 6: Request for Proposals for the Ecuador RIT