

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund

Fifth Meeting of the Donor Council
World Bank Headquarters, Washington, DC
31 July 2003

Report on CEPF Monitoring

For Information and Discussion:

At the 12 February 2003 Council Meeting, the Council Members asked CEPF to provide an update on CEPF monitoring and evaluation. This subject was also discussed during the ninth CEPF Working Group Meeting held on May 19, 2003.

CEPF Monitoring and Evaluation

In response to a growing awareness of the importance of taking stock and lessons learned, CEPF has refined its monitoring and evaluation functions and methodologies.

The monitoring and evaluation function within CEPF has been strengthened through the creation of a team with a focus on gathering reliable documentation, designing tools and refining analytical methodologies to continue to improve CEPF's ability to learn and grow from monitoring and evaluation. The new Director for Portfolio Management will provide strategic direction for the grant portfolios and will lead the overall monitoring and evaluation strategy and analysis. The CEPF Finance Director will focus on ensuring that CEPF investments are tracked and measured. A monitoring and evaluation coordinator will support the team, providing support to the evaluation process as well as the creation of systems, tools and linkages between the M&E process and the partnership as a whole.

A primary focus during this stage of the fund is to conduct mid-term reviews of each of the 11 current CEPF portfolios. The overall goals of these reviews is to:

- Assess implementation progress of selected CEPF-funded projects that are representative of our portfolio;
- Assess project impact and progress towards CEPF strategic objectives outlined in the ecosystem profile;
- Identify gaps and critical needs for achieving strategic objectives;
- Develop recommendations for future CEPF funding decisions;
- Assess the efficiency of CEPF in processing and monitoring grants;
- Gather lessons learned for use in other CEPF-funded regions; and
- Assess the opportunities and limitations of different field-based mechanisms used by CEPF to coordinate programs in the field.

Although each evaluation will have unique characteristics, CEPF is developing a standard methodology that will be used for all CEPF mid-term reviews with the understanding that this methodology may grow as CEPF learns from completed reviews. The established methodology is as follows:

- Overall Portfolio Review
 - Review for consistency with ecosystem profile
- Grant selection - Discuss Guidelines
 - 5-6 projects selected with Grant Director
 - Projects selected must have begun at least six months prior
 - Key projects that build or link with others (ie: Coordination mechanisms, planning grants)
 - Representative sample of types of organizations
 - Capturing a good percentage of the funding
 - Sample across strategic directions

- Conduct Desk study – review application, reports and other background information.
- Discuss projects with grantees – status, challenges, adaptations
- Visit selected sites – meet with communities, view project sites
- Possible short survey of all grantees in region on CEPF performance
- Evaluate how CEPF funding is relating to other donor funding (donor coherence)

In addition to a standard methodology, CEPF portfolio reviews will present information in a consistent style and format.

The CEPF Management Team is currently in the process of defining how best to share the results of each review with CEPF donor partners, CEPF grantees and external audiences. The goal is for CEPF evaluations to provide guidance and frameworks for a broader context of conservation in the hotspots where CEPF operates, as well as to serve as a benchmark process for CEPF itself.

Madagascar Mid-term Review

In April 2003, CEPF launched a mid-term review of the Madagascar portfolio – the first of three mid-term reviews planned during the next year. CEPF has been active in each of the three regions selected (Madagascar, Vilcabamba-Amboro in the Tropical Andes and the Upper Guinean Forest in the Guinean Forests of West Africa hotspot) since 2000. Given that these regions are at their mid-point of a five-year cycle, it is an opportune time to review performance and assess progress toward objectives. In this way, CEPF will be able to make appropriate future funding decisions within the specific regions, as well as share lessons learned with other CEPF-funded regions.

The mid-term review does not attempt to review all projects within a given portfolio, but rather makes a selection of individual projects based on size, objectives, grantee and location. These projects are then reviewed first as a desk study – reviewing original project designs, periodic technical and financial reports and any deliverables submitted to date. This phase is then followed by a visit to the field in which the review team interviews each selected project team and visits as many project sites as logistically possible. As a final step, the review team prepares a report documenting its findings and subsequent recommendations.

In the case of the Madagascar mid-term review, the review team, together with the Africa Grant Director, reviewed the portfolio of approved projects and selected projects to be reviewed that represented the following:

- Large and small budgets;
- International, national and local NGOs;
- A variety of strategic directions; and
- Internal (CI) projects and external projects.

Ultimately, six projects were selected for detailed review out of more than 25 approved projects as of April 2003. Once the selection was complete, the review team had a two-week period to review the existing documentation on each project, prepare for grantee interviews and send any preliminary questions out to grantees. The team, consisting of three CEPF staff, then spent two weeks in Madagascar visiting each selected grantee and making field visits to three of the project sites.

Strategic Direction 1: Integrate local groups and individuals in the management of protected areas

Natural Resource Management Program Between Loky and Manambato Rivers

Establish programs to maintain healthy ecosystems between the rivers, empower communities in natural resource management and ensure long-term conservation of the golden-crowned sifaka.

Funding: \$369,636

Grant Term: 6/01-5/03

Association Fanamby. Partners: Government of Madagascar (Ministry of Water and Forests), local communities

Zahamena Protected Area Management

Develop, implement and transfer operation plans for Zahamena National Park to the National Association for the Management of Protected Areas (ANGAP) and involve communities in related training and ecotourism activities.

Funding: \$283,404

Grant Term: 1/01-12/03

Conservation International-Madagascar Program. Partner: Government of Madagascar (ANGAP)

Strategic Direction 2: Enhance private sector conservation initiatives

Communities and Zahamena Protected Area

Contribute to the management of biodiversity in the protected area by initiating and supporting small-scale enterprises and stimulating management plans for three adjacent regions.

Funding: \$161,500

Grant Term: 9/01-12/03

Malagasy teknisiana mivondrona ho Aro sy TEzan'ny Zahamena ary ny Ala atsinanana (MATEZA). Partners: Conservation International, Miray, Projet d'Appui à la Gestion de l'Environnement, Landscape Development Interventions

Small-scale Initiatives Support

Transfer implementation responsibility for involving local communities in the Zahamena Protected Area to NGOs and support local groups in involving local communities in corridor management.

Funding: \$174,924

Grant Term: 1/01-12/03

Conservation International-Madagascar Program. Partner: Malagasy teknisiana mivondrona ho Aro sy TEzan'ny Zahamena ary ny Ala atsinanana (MATEZA)

Sustainable Biodiversity Conservation in Key Areas of Madagascar Through Local Populations and Private Sector Implications

Protect endangered species and habitat in Anala and Manantantely by creating an awareness of the need for sustainable resource management among local communities and authorities, and by providing alternative income opportunities for local communities through the development of private sector initiatives.

Funding: \$132,750

Grant Term: 8/02-8/04

Man in the Environment (MATE). Partners: Label C.B.D., NAT, Rainforest Concern, LDI, Department of Water and Forests, ANGAP, ecotourism agencies, universities and local communities

Strategic Direction 3: Support biodiversity conservation and management training

Assessment of Priority Areas for Plant Conservation in Madagascar

Identify Madagascar's key floristic regions, set priority areas for plant conservation within these regions and offer training opportunities for Malagasy students and professionals in applied conservation research.

Funding: \$203,712

Grant Term: 1/02-12/04

Missouri Botanical Garden. Partners: Parc Botanique et Zoologique de Tsimbazaza, Centre National de la Recherche Appliquée au Développement Rural

Evaluation Results

The evaluation team is now preparing its report and recommendations and expects to have a draft report to share with donor partners for consultation within the next month.

Some preliminary observations include:

- Grantees, particularly the small, local NGOs, are using CEPF project design and progress reports as effective project management tools, showing success in the level of capacity at which these organizations are now functioning. In several cases, entire project teams are using the quarterly reporting formats to track progress, make adjustments and capture key results.
- It is clear from the review that CEPF needs to increase its presence in the field. All of the grantees visited expressed the desire to have more interaction with the Grant Director and see the possibility of field visits as great opportunities to show their successes, discuss concerns and uncertainties and help build confidence and enthusiasm among the project teams. An enhanced CEPF presence could also help link similar projects together as the Grant Director would be able to identify additional opportunities for grantees to share from one another's experiences and could help turn these opportunities into realized activities.
- While working with communities has been the approach of many projects and there are examples of success, many grantees seriously underestimated the level of effort required to successfully introduce new techniques to communities and truly change behavior. In particular, the communities are typically spread out over a large landscape where access is extremely difficult. The project teams were aware of these logistical issues going into the projects, but they under-estimated the amount of time they would have to spend with the communities and on multiple occasions. This lesson would be useful to take into account as CEPF reviews future applications proposing work with communities in remote places.
- The review found two important examples of strengthened civil society in new, improved local NGOs working in biodiversity conservation. The first is in the Zahamena National Park area where CEPF funding has led to the creation of a new NGO, Mateza, and this NGO has since been awarded CEPF funding and is actively working toward the effective management and protection of this area. A second example, following this theme, is the growth and success experienced by Association Fanamby as a result of CEPF funding. Fanamby has experienced a significant increase in grant funding and expanded into new conservation areas.
- CEPF will continue to strengthen the mechanism for assessing the relationship between individual projects and the strategic directions they support.