



Assessing Five Years of CEPF Investment in the Mesoamerica Biodiversity Hotspot

Southern Mesoamerica

A Special Report
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OVERVIEW

The Mesoamerica Hotspot encompasses some of the most biologically diverse habitat in the world. While it consistently ranks among the top five hotspots for animal diversity and endemism, it also ranks among the most threatened. To address these threats, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) invested \$5.5 million from 2002 to 2006 in the three biologically richest corridors in the southern half of the hotspot:

- Cerro Silva – La Selva Corridor in Costa Rica and Nicaragua;
- Osa Corridor in Costa Rica; and
- Talamanca – Bocas del Toro Corridor in Costa Rica and Panama.

CEPF is a joint initiative of Conservation International, the Global Environment Facility, the government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to engage nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), community groups, and other sectors of civil society in biodiversity conservation.

Within the Mesoamerica Hotspot, the three CEPF focal corridors contain the most extensive and best protected cloud forests, the highest montane forests, and many of its globally threatened species. The Osa Peninsula on the Pacific coast is a true biological gem, containing one of the highest concentrations of species diversity and endemism in the Western Hemisphere.

Scientists estimate that between 2 to 3 percent of Osa's flora exists nowhere else on Earth. The Talamanca – Bocas del Toro Corridor is home to an estimated three percent of the planet's species. In addition, the corridor serves as the convergence point for 75 percent of the hemisphere's migratory birds.

Despite their global importance, the three corridors have been under heavy pressure for decades. Colonization and agricultural encroachment, road construction, illegal logging, uncontrolled hunting, and forest fires have led to habitat and species loss. Most of the region's 33 national parks and reserves, which cover more than 2 million hectares, lack funding to pay for basic operational needs. The three corridors also are located in some of the poorest, most remote, and most underserved areas of Central America. Along the Caribbean coast, agricultural encroachment has resulted in the displacement of indigenous communities, particularly in Nicaragua and Costa Rica. In the Osa Peninsula, migrants from other parts of Costa Rica have been responsible for fragmentation.

As CEPF's five-year funding window drew to a close, the program sought to assess its overall progress and performance in putting the region's conservation capacity on a steadier course for the future. In addition to the information gathered through the program's standard monitoring,



CEPF began conducting an assessment in November 2006, to determine how well it achieved the objectives set out in the Southern Mesoamerica Ecosystem Profile,¹ which guided grant decisionmaking. CEPF first sent questionnaires to all grant recipients to solicit information on their results and subsequently conducted focal group meetings with government partners and grantees to obtain first-hand information on the portfolio's results and impacts. In early February 2007, select grant recipients met in San Jose, Costa Rica to review and validate a draft of the final report. Therefore, the findings presented here are intended to reflect the views of CEPF staff, grantees, and governmental partners.

CEPF's Niche in Southern Mesoamerica

CEPF prepared the Southern Mesoamerica Ecosystem Profile in 2001 based on a series of regional consultations. These consultations created a strong sense of local ownership within the environmental community. The profile aimed to link existing priority-setting processes, to build on collaborative processes already underway, to strengthen cooperation among the diverse set of actors working in conservation, and to help build their capacities. The over-riding objective was to promote bottom-up conservation by empowering local stakeholders through four strategic directions:

Strategic Direction 1. Strengthen key conservation alliances and networks within integral corridors. To move beyond a history characterized by fragmented approaches to conservation, CEPF sought to strengthen existing alliances and to create new mechanisms for NGO and government coordination.

Strategic Direction 2. Connect critical areas through economic alternatives. CEPF encouraged the sustainable development of natural resources through community-based projects that promoted, among other activities, conservation coffee, ecotourism, and agroforestry in strategic locations in protected area buffer zones.

Strategic Direction 3. Promote awareness and conservation of flagship species. CEPF invested in environmental education and research on globally threatened species as a tool to build public support for conservation.

Strategic Direction 4. Support improved management of key protected areas. CEPF helped to address urgent priorities in the various protected areas that otherwise would go unfunded, including declaration of new areas, development of management plans, and strengthening of monitoring and patrolling of boundaries.

Once the profile was approved in December 2001 and CEPF launched the portfolio, it became apparent that the region's conservation infrastructure and biodiversity was in decline, and dramatically so, in some areas. Several major donors, notably the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the MacArthur Foundation, previously considered major patrons of conservation funding in Mesoamerica, had downsized their conservation funding significantly or completely eliminated their programs. While the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), Global Environment Facility (GEF), The World Bank, and U.N. Development Programmed (UNDP) channeled funding for conservation in Nicaragua and Panama through the Mesoamerica Biological Corridor project, implementation difficulties resulted in little money reaching the

¹ The full ecosystem profile is available online: English, www.cepf.net/xp/cepf/static/pdfs/Final.Mesoamerica.SouthernMesoamerica.EP.pdf (PDF, 747 KB) / Español, www.cepf.net/xp/cepf/static/pdfs/Final.Spanish.Mesoamerica.SouthernMesoamerica.EP.pdf (PDF, 753 KB)

ground and having tangible conservation impacts. Even the Government of Costa Rica, saddled with large international debt, could not adequately support its protected areas. Nicaragua's own conservation funding was minimal. The stock market decline of 2002 saw a retrenchment of funding from international NGOs. The Panamanian national conservation fund administered by Fundación Natura stopped awarding grants altogether after experiencing a major reduction in its assets following the decline.

Poor capacity in many protected areas in the region coupled with the significant funding declines in the early 2000s created a situation in which several important parks were degraded by colonization, fire, and hunting. Invasions by people using the land for agriculture, cattle ranching, and hunting, led to loss of habitat and wildlife in some of the most important protected areas.

Given this backdrop, CEPF started making grants to civil society groups in Southern Mesoamerica at a critical time. It was one of a very few conservation donors able to provide flexible resources to civil society. Several crises existed that required urgent attention. Over the medium term, the challenge was to fund projects that safeguarded biodiversity while empowering local people and improving their welfare. Grants needed to be allocated strategically to ensure that they addressed high-priority needs as articulated by local NGOs, communities, and governments. Past conservation initiatives had a history of taking a piecemeal, fractionalized approach that undermined their success. In response, CEPF placed a high premium on fostering partnerships and alliances across a cast of multiple stakeholders. CEPF also strongly encouraged partners to seek leveraging opportunities and to provide counterpart funding as a way of promoting sustainability. The overall goal was to address high-priority needs and to build a foundation to enhance the sustainability of results.

Implementing the Strategy

CEPF pursued a tri-national strategy to identify and target grants that met the region's priorities as identified by local partners. The team tailored its approach to suit the particular needs of each corridor and country. The bi-national nature of two of the three corridors added an additional layer of complexity. Each country has distinct cultural, historical, and economic characteristics, and coordination between countries on environmental issues was nascent. The CEPF program was sited in a large area, covering more than 3 million hectares, of which 2.2 million hectares were formally protected in 33 national parks and biological reserves, across 15 municipalities and 11 indigenous territories. Dozens of NGOs were dedicated to the environment and rural development. Furthermore, each corridor and country confronted different degrees of threats and varying capacities to deal with them. In southeast Nicaragua, the conservation movement and general capacity for environmental protection was incipient. The most basic elements required to create an effective conservation framework had yet to be put in place. Although Costa Rica had earned a reputation as a global leader in conservation, gaps in its protected areas system remained, and urgent threats to biodiversity persisted. Panama fell between Nicaragua and Costa Rica on the conservation continuum. Some basic elements required for conservation were in place, yet development pressures were considerable and protection was inconsistent. CEPF tailored distinct approaches in the three corridors to respond to this mosaic.

CEPF's grants were often clustered within a corridor, with an anchor project dedicated to strengthening a protected area, complemented by grants in the buffer zones designed to ameliorate a threat by encouraging the sustainable use of local resources and by promoting improved understanding of biodiversity through environmental education. This approach enabled grantees to build on their varied strengths while working within a corridor-level framework.

Coordinating CEPF Grant-Making on the Ground

To facilitate grantmaking, CEPF selected Conservation International’s Southern Mesoamerica office in San José to serve as its Coordination Unit. A three-person unit comprised of senior-level professionals – each with more than 20 years of experience in natural resource management, conservation, and project design and management – was responsible for advancing all aspects of the portfolio in the field. The unit identified grants and organizations of strategic value for CEPF consideration to achieve key objectives in the ecosystem profile. It worked closely with most grant recipients to build their capacity in project design, implementation, and monitoring. The Coordination Unit facilitated grantee-to-grantee exchanges and partnerships. Its active involvement in grant design and implementation and support of grantee exchange visits and general coordinating meetings aimed to ensure that CEPF-supported projects moved forward synergistically.

During this assessment, grantees and governmental partners alike gave the Coordination Unit high marks for providing strong technical assistance through its hands-on approach, viewing the unit’s role as an ally, mentor, and facilitator. They commented that the Coordination Unit’s value-added benefits were important and unique attributes of CEPF.

Grant-Making Allocations

CEPF awarded 74 grants valued at \$5.5 million (see Appendix A for a full list of approved grants). These grants ranged in size from \$5,000 to \$1.2 million, with the median equaling \$20,000 and the average totaling \$74,324. All projects were approved based on their ability to contribute in a direct and strategic way to the achievement of specific conservation outcomes.

Table 1 illustrates the distribution of grant amounts within the portfolio. More than half of all grants awarded were valued at \$20,000 or less. These small grants helped fill an important

Table 1. Allocation by Grant Amount

	<\$20,000	\$21,000 - \$99,000	\$100,000 - \$300,000	>\$300,000
Number of grants	40	18	15	1
Percent of grants	54.1%	24.3%	20.3%	1.4%
Total amount	\$534,451	\$1,240,328	\$2,471,166	\$1,254,055
Percent of total budget	9.7%	22.6%	44.9%	22.8%

niche by providing quick disbursing funds to support a wide variety of activities, such as funding for planning grants to prepare larger projects and environmental education activities. In addition, because the application process for small grants was streamlined, smaller NGOs and community-based groups with little capacity or experience in conservation were able to access CEPF funds through these grants. While the number of small grants was relatively large in the portfolio, the greatest share of funding in the region was channeled through medium-sized grants ranging from \$100,000 to \$300,000. These grants often served as anchor projects within a corridor that were specifically designed to achieve the investment priorities in the ecosystem profile. Only the five-year grant for the coordination unit totaled more than \$1 million.

Table 2 indicates that strategic directions 1, 2, and 4 received roughly similar funding allocations, while Strategic Direction 3 received substantially less funding. The relatively smaller funding allocation for Strategic Direction 3 arose from CEPF’s decision to integrate species-level awareness activities into broader protected area and economic alternative projects. Rather than supporting a large number of stand-alone species awareness projects, CEPF supported such

activities as key components within larger projects. As a result, the lower funding level for Strategic Direction 3 does not accurately reflect the number of species-related activities that CEPF supported.

Table 2. Resource Allocation by Strategic Direction

Resource Allocation	Strategic Direction 1. Improved Coordination	Strategic Direction 2. Economic Alternatives	Strategic Direction 3. Flagship Species	Strategic Direction 4. Protected Areas	Total
Number of grants	16	19	16	23	74
Percent distribution of grants	22%	26%	22%	31%	100%
Amount awarded	\$1,856,606	\$1,424,419	\$504,219	\$1,714,755	\$ 5,500,000
Percent distribution of award	34%	26%	9%	31%	100%

The CEPF team also made a concerted effort to ensure relative equity of funding allocations across the three countries. Efforts to ensure balance began early in grantmaking when the concern arose that Costa Rican NGOs could potentially receive a disproportionately large share of funding because of their capacity to submit large and well designed-proposals. As a result, the CEPF team worked closely with NGOs in Nicaragua and Panama to ensure that their proposals were well designed. As Table 3 indicates, the funding distribution still favors Costa Rica, but only slightly. The team attributes this trend to the fact that Costa Rica possesses the largest share of land area in the region.

Table 3. Resource Allocation by Country

Country	Total	Percent
Costa Rica	\$1,372,300	25%
Nicaragua	\$1,194,388	22%
Panama	\$892,403	16%
Regional	\$2,040,909	37%
Total	\$5,500,000	100%

Another major goal was to build the capacity of local and national civil society to effectively engage in

conservation. The team conducted extensive outreach in each corridor and various capacity-building exercises so that local organizations could access CEPF funding. As Table 4 illustrates, CEPF channeled 59 percent of funding to local organizations. Thirty four of the most respected community and national NGOs, universities, and research institutes in the region took the lead in managing and implementing grants. Within

Table 4. Resource Allocation by Type of Organization

Resource Allocation	International Organization	Local Organization	Total
Number of grants	17	57	74
Percent of grants	23%	77%	100%
Amount awarded	\$2,240,491	\$3,259,508	\$5,500,000
Percent distribution of award	41%	59%	100%

these numbers, CEPF supported six coalitions that are made up of an array of NGOs, local and

national governments, indigenous rights organizations, and universities. In addition, several grants to international NGOs contained sizable sub-grants to local NGOs. By funding these coalitions, CEPF reached dozens of diverse grassroots NGOs and communities that otherwise would have had difficulty accessing donor funding.

Portfolio Impact and Performance

Based on data collected from questionnaires, a review of grantee reporting, and consultations with government and community partners and grantees, the assessment finds that CEPF's performance in achieving the objectives in the ecosystem profile and logical framework developed for this region were, in the aggregate, achieved and even exceeded. Stakeholders report unequivocally and enthusiastically that CEPF made significant contributions to promoting conservation and sustainable development in all three corridors. Local groups noted that CEPF "listened" to local stakeholders to identify local priorities and approaches, and gave them the chance and the capacity required to address their problems.

These positive reviews are shared consistently by a broad cross section of grantees, governmental partners, and community representatives, including the former Costa Rican environment minister, directors of the La Amistad International Park in Panama, the director of the Bluefields Municipality Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Nicaragua, and the governor of the Ngobe-Bugle Indigenous Reserve in Panama.

Positive findings are buttressed by the independent evaluation of the CEPF global program conducted in 2005, in which an evaluation team member visited the region. The final report concluded that the region is a model of effective implementation of the CEPF portfolio. Among the strengths highlighted, the evaluation noted that the portfolio's multi-country approach toward conservation planning and implementation worked "extremely well;" the Southern Mesoamerica Coordination Unit was one of six units in CEPF characterized as "excellent," particularly with respect to maintaining regular contact with grantees and routinely visiting them in the field; the region's creation and strengthening of partnerships between NGOs, government and the private sector has demonstrated "promising progress;" and strong collaboration existed with other donors, particularly the UNDP small grants program in Costa Rica.

The following sections highlight the key accomplishments that CEPF partners achieved in improving the state of biodiversity, impacting human welfare, and strengthening the basic enabling conditions for conservation and sustainable development.

Biodiversity Results

Most areas that contain Southern Mesoamerica's globally significant terrestrial biodiversity are already under protection thanks to the region's enlightened policies of the 1970s and 1980s. La Amistad International Peace Park, for example, the world's first bi-national park and an UNESCO World Heritage Site, was officially protected in 1982. Only a limited number of sites existed for achieving new protection when CEPF started. Instead, the goal was to strengthen management in areas that are already formally protected but under threat.

Strengthening Existing Protected Areas

Through Strategic Direction 4, CEPF provided 23 grants valued at \$1,714,755 for civil society groups to help strengthen 22 existing protected areas covering 1.2 million hectares. CEPF supported a wide range of activities to address the priorities of individual areas, including strengthening planning and zoning for basic management, providing equipment and infrastructure, covering operational support, hiring and training park staff, conducting biological inventories and monitoring, and supporting community outreach and engagement. These

investments relied on close collaboration with local communities and park management agencies to ensure funding closely aligned with local priorities as Box 1 illustrates. Discussions with park directors during the assessment found that they regarded CEPF funding as critical in meeting their highest priorities that would otherwise have gone unfunded.

CEPF grants directly benefited 10 protected areas covering 924,736 hectares. Of these, four areas, which are considered to be the epicenters of the region's biodiversity, were the highest priority for funding. CEPF provided medium-sized anchor grants to local and national NGOs in these areas, which demonstrated significant management improvements and the reduction of threats:

- *Corcovado National Park* on the Osa Peninsula in Costa Rica once harbored the largest populations of mammals in the region. In the 1990s, steady budget cuts led to the park's abandonment to hunters and fishermen. By the time CEPF entered, hunting pressure had produced a crisis. Biologists feared that the viability of key species in the park was at stake. CEPF responded in 2003 with funding to Fundación Corcovado in support of a private – public partnership of the Fundación, the Costa Rican environment and security ministries, local hotel operators, and communities to improve park management. CEPF covered equipment, operational support, and community outreach, while the ministries provided personnel and vehicles. Local hotels paid for park guards. The number of patrols rose from 70 in 2002 to 152 in 2003. As a result, 25 hunter camps comprised of people from outside the region were destroyed, up from three camps the year before. The emergency effort paid off as hunting and illegal fishing was brought under control and the crisis subsided. Since CEPF's injection of funding, the Moore Foundation has invested \$8 million to strengthen park management, thus sustaining the important results originating with CEPF's investment.
- *Indio Maíz Biological Reserve* in southeast Nicaragua, a 263,980-hectare swath of intact lowland rain forest, lies at the core of the northern corridor. Despite its biological prominence, the reserve lacked a management plan, basic biological information for management, and adequate infrastructure and equipment to control entry and land use. The indigenous Rama people had lived harmoniously within the region now in the reserve for centuries, but recent colonists from other parts of the country were invading the heart of the corridor. CEPF began its assistance in 2003 with a grant to Fundación Amigos del Río San Juan (FUNDAR) to prepare a management plan. FUNDAR took a highly participatory approach that involved close consultation with migrants and indigenous communities,

Box 1. CEPF Support to Volunteer Park Guards is Replicated Throughout Southeast Nicaragua

In 2003, CEPF and Bluefields Indian and Caribbean University (BICU) never imagined that the results of a \$10,000 grant to strengthen the capacity of volunteer park guards caring for the Mahogany Ecological Park would serve as a model in just a few years. The initial grant helped the Association of Community Park Guards of Mahogany, comprised of 10 local guards who donate as much as two weeks each month without pay to patrol the Mahogany wetland. The area teems with wildlife. CEPF provided basic equipment, training, and infrastructure. As word spread of the project through Coordination Unit and BICU outreach, other groups adopted the model. In the last two years, the number of volunteer guards has grown from 10 to 150 throughout the corridor, many with support from other CEPF grants. They now receive formal training and certification from the park service MARENA, in addition to training supported by CEPF, to supplement the mere 18 paid guards responsible for managing nearly 1 million hectares. With a total of 168 guards now on patrol and enforcing environmental laws, partners report that colonization and deforestation conducted by people from outside the region have declined.

municipal officials, several national-level agencies and various donors working in the area. Agreement on zoning was highly challenging, as varied development interests vied for control over resources in the reserve and buffer zone. This participatory approach paid off when the Nicaraguan environment minister praised the management plan as the most consultative in the country's history that resulted in widespread local approval, including the endorsement of the Rama indigenous peoples. In addition, after lengthy local opposition, particularly by municipal governments, the government of Nicaragua cancelled a mining concession that would have negatively impacted local communities and the biological reserve. Since then, the management plan for Indio Maiz is the only such plan on the Nicaraguan side of the corridor to be approved by the Nicaragua Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources; management plans for Cerro Silva and Punta Gorda reserves still await approval after years of review. CEPF has since funded the execution of different components of the management plan, such as construction of new guard posts, environmental education, and sustainable development projects in buffer zone communities. It is the only protected area in Nicaragua that has established a coordinating committee of local municipalities, NGOs, and the national government to guide the reserve's management. Moreover, the Nicaraguan park service, DANIDA, GTZ, the Nicaragua Ministry of Agriculture, and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) are using the plan to design and coordinate their investments in the reserve and buffer zone.

- In *La Amistad International Park – Panama*, the Panama-based NGO, National Association for the Conservation of Nature (ANCON) works closely with the Panamanian National Environmental Authority (ANAM) to strengthen management inside the protected area. Efforts included collaborating with and organizing 25 cattle ranchers located inside the park to reduce their impact, strengthening patrolling by constructing guard stations and purchasing equipment, and conducting baseline studies on flora and fauna. As a result of these efforts, environmentalists and ANAM reached a historic agreement with the cattle ranchers who previously opposed the park and had an acrimonious relationship with environmentalists and the government. The agreement calls for engaging the ranchers in protection and development activities. The cattle ranchers and ANAM have for the first time created a platform for dialogue that has led to the rancher's agreement not to expand their plots further and to help monitor activities inside park limits, in exchange for development assistance that channels economic benefits from the conservation of La Amistad to local communities. Fifteen cattle ranchers recently founded the Association of Farmers for the Conservation of the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve. As a result of this agreement, ANAM and ANCON report that control of key sectors of the park has been regained, and that encroachment from people outside the area has diminished significantly.
- In *La Amistad International Park – Costa Rica*, Fundacion Parques Nacionales worked closely with the Environment Ministry to build local capacity to reduce key threats to the park, particularly on the Pacific sector, where logging, hunting, and forest fires are most acute. The grant helped to build capacity of the park agency and local communities in patrolling and controlling access to the park by providing equipment, infrastructure, and training. Local communities formed two fire brigades. As a result, the park service reports that it has a strengthened presence in the park, and that threats such as forest fires and hunting are declining.

Declaration of New Protected Areas

Although CEPF's focus was on strengthening existing protected areas, two important opportunities arose to create new areas to protect 78,089 hectares of high priority forest and wetlands. Most notably, the declaration in 2005 of the Maquenque National Wildlife Refuge was

a significant conservation victory. The refuge contains the last large remaining stand of unprotected forest with still abundant populations of the almendro tree, the primary food and nesting source for a few remaining individuals of the globally Endangered green macaw. Protecting the 54,000-hectare area was a high priority to ensure connectivity within the Cerro Silva – La Selva Corridor, as well as the larger Mesoamerica Biological Corridor. CEPF funded the Executive Committee of the San Juan - La Selva Biological Corridor, a partnership of 20 NGOs, communities, universities, and government agencies, which worked hand-in-hand with the Costa Rican environment minister. CEPF funds helped to secure local community support, conduct baseline technical studies, and complete a management plan. Local conservationists and government officials, who worked for 12 years to obtain protection status for Maquenque, believe the refuge will be the last large area to be protected in Costa Rica. During the assessment, the former Costa Rica environment minister remarked that CEPF's support was instrumental in securing legal protection of the refuge.

CEPF also supported Centro de Estudios y Acción Social Panameño and local environmentalists from the Ngobe-Buglé Indigenous Reserve in Panama to strengthen the status of the Damani wetlands, a 24,089-hectare swath of marsh along the Caribbean coast. With CEPF funding, the community organized a local environmental committee and patrol squadron of 20 volunteer park guards, developed baseline studies, and acquired equipment to patrol and manage the wetland. The park is the first protected area to be officially declared in the Ngobe –Bugle reserve, and the only one to be co-managed by local residents, whose support was critical for securing the area's legal status. CEPF's interest in integrating local beneficiaries into its grants is well illustrated by a small grant to Fundación para el Desarrollo Académico de la Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica at conducted a biological inventory of the wetland. The grant enabled local people to assist with logistics, invited students from the community to join scientists on their field work, and discussed the findings in a meeting with community. As a result of these efforts, ANAM declared the area a wetland of international importance and submitted Damani for RAMSAR designation.

Consolidation of Conservation Corridors

Under Strategic Direction 2, CEPF awarded 19 grants valued at \$1,424,419 to maintain and expand connectivity outside of formally declared protected areas. These projects contributed to promoting connectivity to consolidate four micro-corridors (Punta Gorda – Cerro Silva in Nicaragua; Talamanca – Tabasara and Corcovado – Piedras Blanca in Costa Rica; and Indio Maiz – Maquenque in between Nicaragua and Costa Rica) and key buffer zone areas (northern boundary of Indio Maiz in Nicaragua, and in critical sites along the entire Pacific and Caribbean sides of La Amistad International Park in Costa Rica and Panama). Grantees worked with communities in areas of high strategic value to promote economic activities and maintain forest cover by linking conservation with income generation.

Most grants promoted the sustainable use of productive land, particularly through conservation coffee, ecotourism, agroforestry, and reforestation, to demonstrate that communities could continue farming while increasing forest cover and avoiding expansion into protected zones. Several grants also supported training and equipping local volunteers for fire control and prevention. Additional detail on CEPF's grants that promoted the productive use of land can be found below in the section that describes CEPF's socioeconomic benefits.

Grants in Costa Rica also tapped into the country's payment for environmental services schemes. Projects implemented by Centro Científico Tropical (CCT), Asociación de Organizaciones del Corredor Biológico Talamanca Caribe, and Fundación Neotropica played instrumental roles in helping 177 farmers to access funds from Costa Rica's National Forestry Financing Fund (FONAFIO), which compensates farmers who set aside land for conservation in priority sites.

Grantees helped farmers through all facets of the FONAFIO application process, the administrative requirements for which proved very difficult to fulfill for most campesinos without technical assistance from project staff. These farmers agreed to put aside 1,924 hectares in exchange for \$566,000 in compensation over a five-year period.

CEPF also contributed to gathering and analyzing scientific information required to plan for and zone micro-corridors to ensure connectivity. In the Osa Peninsula, where Corcovado and Piedras Blancas national parks are separated by a corridor of 20,000 hectares, the Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad (InBio) worked with a network of scientists to gather ecological and biological data required to identify priorities for conservation, restoration, land purchase, and other management needs. The research identified areas eligible for future compensation through the FONAFIO payment of environmental services. It also supported management plans of the formally protected areas on the peninsula.

Species-level conservation

CEPF's approach to safeguarding globally threatened species relied on taking a multi-pronged approach. Sixteen grants totaling \$504,219 funded a gamut of activities: applied research on target species; direct conservation of key habitat; community awareness building; improved patrolling to reduce hunting pressure; and development of regional, species-specific management plans. These grants targeted a variety of globally threatened species, including the manatee, tapir, green macaw, quetzal, and great curassow.

Projects under Strategic Direction 3 adopted individual flagship species for environmental education. The RARE project targeted the municipality of San Carlos in Nicaragua, located in the western zone of the Indio Maiz reserve. The project adopted the great curassow as a flagship species and promoted community knowledge of the reserve with a series of radio segments, booklets, workshops, and events for children. A bi-national grant to FUNDAR in Nicaragua and the Fundación Salvemos al Manatí de Costa Rica entertained children and adults along coastal Nicaragua and Costa Rica with comic books, videos, and puppet shows on the importance of protecting the manatee. This project also erected signs in Tortuguero National Park along the river banks requesting boat operators to reduce their speed when passing manatee habitat. Since then, no manatees have been reported injured from boat propellers, unlike previous years.

In Costa Rica, CEPF funded Asociación Meralvis to conduct a baseline study of the tapir in La Amistad, and a small grant to Asociación de Amigos y Vecinos de la Costa y la Naturaleza for conserving manatees. This small grant to a community-based NGO with little previous funding blossomed into an additional \$84,000 in funding from such donors as the Ford Motor Company and USAID. CEPF's support for manatee conservation culminated in a grant awarded recently to work with local and US-based biologists to develop a regional strategy for conserving the manatee of Southern Mesoamerica.

In addition to these species-targeted grants, projects covered by other strategic directions also benefited individual species. The declaration of Maquenque Wildlife Refuge protected green macaw nesting sites. A grant to ANCON and Fundación para el Desarrollo Integral del Corregimiento de Cerro Punta on behalf of a community-based coalition of NGOs stopped road construction through the Volcán Barú National Park, which contains high densities of quetzal nesting sites. And efforts to reduce hunting pressure in Corcovado National Park saved jaguars, peccaries, and other mammals from local extinction.

Socioeconomic Benefits

CEPF's Southern Mesoamerica portfolio funded 45 projects that benefited local communities and biodiversity alike across the four strategic directions. The ecosystem profile emphasized this approach based on the recognition that the region's socioeconomic landscape is dominated by high indices of rural poverty that drive key threats to biodiversity. Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, after Haiti. CEPF's corridor in the southeast is among the country's most remote and underserved regions. Throughout Southern Mesoamerica, the entire Caribbean fringe is inhabited by indigenous and Afro-American people located in among the poorest regions of their countries. Given these circumstances, coupling conservation with poverty alleviation was at the front and center of grant making.

The current assessment finds that CEPF made inroads in its objective to identify and cultivate conservation projects that benefit communities. Several sources of data support this conclusion. A September 2005 report by CEPF on poverty in Southern Mesoamerica used census data to confirm that most sites receiving grant funding were located in areas of high rural poverty². In February 2007, CEPF completed an analysis of its portfolios in 10 regions and their impacts on poverty reduction³. The analysis found that the Southern Mesoamerica portfolio made one of the largest contributions to poverty reduction of the regions studied. The analysis determined that these contributions occurred at the level of individual people (through training and job creation) and at the level of civil society (through workshops, organizational development, and creation of networks or alliances), as presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Summary of CEPF Socioeconomic Benefits for Southern Mesoamerica, 2007

No. of projects analyzed	Total budget of grant analyzed	No. of projects offering training	No. of workshops offered	No. of Jobs created	No. of persons trained
37	\$3,581,000	33	79	385	15,375*

* includes results of one large information distribution campaign estimated to have reached 10,000 people.

While the analysis provides important data, the statistics reveal only one dimension of CEPF's socioeconomic impacts. Feedback from CEPF partners point to as many as 45 grants across all four strategic direction providing immediate and longer-term benefits to more than 150 communities. Many communities had never participated in conservation or development programs before CEPF, although they were located inside or near protected areas. Interviews with community members revealed that they often viewed CEPF grants as important opportunities to gain new skills and knowledge to increase their income and to protect the environment and resource base for future generations.

Twenty-two projects in particular worked closely with indigenous and Afro-Caribbean peoples to support land-use practices and livelihood projects that maintained forest cover as well as their cultural identity. Box 2 describes three such projects.

² *CEPF and Poverty Reduction: A Review of the Southern Mesoamerica CEPF Portfolio*, www.cepf.net/xp/cepf/static/pdfs/PovertyReduction_SouthernMesoamerica_Sept05.pdf

³ *CEPF and Poverty Reduction: An Overview with Summary Statistics from 10 Regions* www.cepf.net/xp/cepf/static/pdfs/PovertyReduction_aggregated10_Feb07.pdf

CEPF awarded grants totaling \$3 million that contained at least one component designed to provide communities with benefits from the sustainable use of their natural resources by building local capacity through training, technical assistance, and procurement. These projects aimed to demonstrate direct socioeconomic benefits, through income generation from increased agricultural productivity and ecotourism, increased security of land tenure, improved food security and childhood nutritional status, maintenance of cultural identity and traditional use of natural resources, and strengthening of local governance and democratic decisionmaking. In some cases, project staff helped remote and impoverished communities gain access to government services in health care, education, infrastructure, and disaster preparedness. For example, staff brought health workers to project sites for childhood vaccinations and health check-ups, and helped secure and train elementary school teachers in areas that lacked schools before. These development benefits helped gain community confidence and trust, and allowed biodiversity conservation to be viewed as an integral part of the broader sustainable development program.

Most socioeconomic benefits were achieved from grants designed to promote connectivity through the productive use of land, implemented by a diverse group of local NGOs or associations of NGOs. These projects aimed to help farmers and their families to diversify production, increase their income, and reduce production costs. Projects also engaged the participation of families in training, participation in organizations, and in farm development and conservation. Preventing and controlling fires inside protected areas and their buffer zones was an important component in many of these grants.

Several rural development projects demonstrated tangible benefits to communities. For example, a grant enabled Centro Científico Tropical (CCT) to work with 45 farmers on the Pacific frontier of La Amistad - Costa Rica, where the threat of agricultural encroachment is the most acute, to introduce new production techniques for growing conservation coffee and other crops. These families earned \$1,620 in additional income annually by diversifying their income with chickens, organic fertilizer, clean energy, and fruit-bearing trees. Under the same project, an estimated 23 farmers located in the Coto Brus Valley in Costa Rica will receive a \$2.50 premium for every *quintal* (a sac of coffee weighing approximately 49 kilograms) they sell of conservation coffee. In total, the project brought more than 300 hectares under improved management.

Along the Pacific border of La Amistad in Panama, farmers working with CEPF grantees sold their entire 2007 harvest of conservation coffee for \$270 per *quintal*, well above the \$130 per *quintal* that regular coffee fetches. The coffee is marketed as high quality boutique coffee for sale in Japan. Delicafe, the Costa Rican marketing firm facilitating the deal, donated a coffee roasting facility to the communities, and hopes to market the conservation coffee coming from Costa Rica in the near future.

CEPF's support to the Fundación Neotropical and its work with farmers within the Osa Biological Corridor demonstrated how agriculture projects contributed not only to income generation and connectivity, but also to food security. Since CEPF began funding the project in 2003, 11 farmers established organic gardens for celery, tomato, coriander, sweet peppers, cucumber, mustard, lettuce, radish, and squash. Such produce is used for household consumption and marketed for local sale. In addition, five schools established organic gardens as learning tools. The children eat and sell their crops, thereby improving their nutritional status. To add sustainability to this effort, Fundación Neotropical signed an agreement with the National Agricultural and Cattle Research Institute to expand on the sustainable agricultural techniques introduced. Fundación Neotropical is currently negotiating with the Development Micro Regional Agency to provide beneficiaries with micro-credit and trade facilities under a proposed second phase of the project.

Box 2. CEPF Benefits Traditional People in Southern Mesoamerica

Given the importance of working with indigenous and Afro-Caribbean communities in Southern Mesoamerica, CEPF channeled \$1.2 million through 22 grants that directly supported traditional peoples. These grants aimed to give the communities the wherewithal to manage their lands and earn a livelihood in accordance with their local customs. Leaders from the Rama and Ngobe – Bugle indigenous peoples praised CEPF for helping to empower their communities.

Grant to Naso indigenous community generates economic and health benefits from ecotourism and the traditional use of the forest. CEPF assistance to the Naso People located at the entrance of La Amistad International Park – Panama through two community-based groups – Organización para el Desarrollo Ecoturístico del Pueblo Naso (ODESEN) and La Asociación para la Medicina Tradicional Naso – is indicative of how CEPF grants achieved conservation and income generation while also supporting local traditions. In 2003, CEPF provided small grants to develop an indigenously managed lodge for ecological and cultural tourism and to resurrect the cultivation and traditional use of medicinal plants grown under the forest canopy. Since then, the grants have demonstrated multiple benefits to the Naso community, who now earn income from tourism by selling locally produced food to the lodge, serving as guides and lodge employees, and demonstrating cultural crafts, dances, foods, and medicines. The project has programmed scholarships for ten underprivileged children from the community to attend school. Visitation statistics show that the formula is working: the number of tourists grew from 35 visitors in 2003 to more than 1,000 visitors in 2006. In addition, ANAM praises the project because ODESEN helps the short-staffed park service to patrol the park and share their electricity and water. Indiscriminate hunting and fishing are reportedly down by as much as 90 percent. The ODESEN project is the first of its kind on the Caribbean coast of La Amistad – Panama to support a successful, small-scale, indigenously run tourism enterprise. Partners believe it is a good model for replication elsewhere in the corridor, which possesses good ecotourism potential.

Support to the Rama indigenous people helps to secure land tenure and reduce colonization. Through a medium-sized grant to Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense, CEPF is providing the Rama indigenous people of Southeast Nicaragua with the legal and management tools required to gain title and territorial demarcation of their land, which they claim extends more than 400,000 hectares. While their territory is among the best preserved in the corridor, disputes over their land with migrants from other parts of Nicaragua led to social tension as the Rama were unable to stop colonization and consequent deforestation. Until recently, the Rama had little capacity or legal recourse to constructively confront the problem. In recognition of the importance of helping the Rama to maintain control over their land, CEPF funded planning and field studies in 2005 as required by the government to demarcate the land. The grant also fostered institutional coordination of government agencies and NGOs, supported protection and control of the land, and provided general institutional strengthening for the new Rama governing council to develop and manage community projects. With this support, the Rama now are making strides in maintaining the integrity of their land and way of life. Partners report that increased vigilance and local awareness of the project has served as a deterrent to more colonization.

CEPF strengthens local governance structures. Under the Asociación de Profesionales y Técnicos Ngobe Buglé de Bocas del Toro project in Panama, CEPF sought to establish and build the capacity of the Environmental Commission within the governing council of Ño Kribo region within the Ngobe-Buglé Indigenous Reserve, which overlaps La Amistad Biosphere in several areas. The project responded to the need to strengthen indigenous capacity to manage their large territory, which is under severe pressure. To date, the project has worked with ten communities and five local groups to organize the communities and put the foundation in place for legalization of the environmental commission. For the first time, the project has provided the basic capacity for local communities to adopt development practices that are in concert with biodiversity conservation.

In Nicaragua, a grant to the Asociación de Desarrollo y Promoción Humana de la Costa Atlántica (ADEPHCA) fostered environmental and broader development benefits. ADEPHCA has worked with eight communities located along the northern border of Indio Maiz since 2004 to develop and implement community environmental management plans. ADEPHCA is the first and only NGO to work in many of these villages. The CEPF grant supported conventional conservation activities such as creation of micro-corridors through reforestation, environmental education (mainly for women and school-age children), and recruitment of volunteer park guards. In addition, the grant has put in place building blocks for broader development benefits and created unforeseen ripple effects. Villagers are more environmentally conscious and are now instituting rules against the use of poison for fishing and for maintaining vegetative cover along river banks. Communities also are forming stronger organizational structures led by local leaders who received training through the project. With assistance from ADEPHCA, community leaders recently secured support from the ministries of education and health to improve schooling and medical care in this remote area.

Strengthening the Enabling Conditions for Conservation

Central to CEPF's approach in Southern Mesoamerica was strengthening the enabling conditions and processes by which decisions are made on how land resources and biodiversity are used. CEPF's most notable contributions can be categorized under the four following results:

Support of democratic governance through community and civil society engagement in local, regional, and national decisionmaking. When CEPF began awarding grants, the ability of local people and NGOs to engage in decisionmaking regarding biodiversity and natural resources management varied considerably in the region. After five years of CEPF grantmaking, the assessment finds that local communities and environmentalists have built their knowledge base and skills on key conservation issues and have gained new experiences in participatory decisionmaking at the local, regional, and national levels. Throughout the region, CEPF provided opportunities for NGOs and local communities to meet with decisionmakers to discuss and agree on future uses of natural resources and biodiversity. Grantess worked closely even with those farmer and cattle ranchers that previously were considered as threats to conservation by finding opportunities for dialogue and cooperation.

Fostering Collaboration through Alliances. Central to CEPF's approach was support to six conservation alliances, made up of a wide variety of stakeholders: local and national environmental and development NGOs, municipal and national governments, other donors, and universities. In Costa Rica, CEPF assisted three well-established conservation alliances – the Osa Conservation Area Alliance, the San Juan-La Selva Biological Corridor, and the Association of Organizations of the Talamanca Caribbean Biological Corridor – by financing key elements of conservation strategies they had already developed prior to CEPF engagement that were in line with CEPF's investment strategy.

In Nicaragua and Panama, CEPF facilitated the establishment of new alliances. In Nicaragua, CEPF helped to establish a coalition of 14 NGOs working in the corridor to ensure that they pursue common environmental and development goals. In Panama, CEPF supported an association of community and national conservation groups organized to resist a controversial road project through Volcán Barú National Park (see Box 3). Once the campaign was over, CEPF continued to support this coalition, which has now secured funding from other donors for future activities to consolidate the national park.

Box 3. CEPF Partners Foster Government Responsive to Public Concerns

Baru Volcano National Park is one of Central America's most biodiverse montane forests, a 14,000-hectare sanctuary for rare wildlife and vegetation, like its native 200-foot oaks that quetzals favor most. In 2002, the park's premier tourist attraction, the Path of the Quetzals, a five-mile trail that meanders across a northern strip of forest along the border with La Amistad International Park, became the location of Panama's greatest environmental challenge in modern times. In that year, President Mireya Moscoso announced plans to build a road through the path in order to boost the local economy and tourism. To build the road, she changed Panama's environmental laws, putting into question the legitimacy of the country's protected areas system.

The threat was so brazen that it united Panama's previously fractious conservation community, galvanizing them into new alliances. They reached out to CEPF for support. CEPF provided small grants to FUNDICEPP on behalf of a coalition of 16 local NGOs, and to ANCON, a national NGO, to launch public education campaigns locally and in the capital about the potential impacts of the road.

The campaign relied on an economic and environmental valuation that showed the road would damage Baru's forests, tourism, and a crucial source of water. The study also suggested an alternate roadway south of Baru that not only avoided the park, but also benefited more communities. Backed by CEPF, ANCON produced more than 60,000 brochures for national distribution in Panama's premier newspaper to present both sides of the issue. At the same time, FUNDICEPP conducted an extensive outreach campaign to surrounding local communities. Overwhelming local and national opposition to the road emerged in combination to the rejection of the Environmental Impact Assessment for the road, resulted in the government cancelling the road. Since then, Panama's environmental laws have been restored and Path of the Quetzals remains unpaved.

Another focus of the CEPF portfolio is supporting innovative private - public alliances. As part of an agreement between Delicafe, S.A. (a coffee marketing firm in Costa Rica), Fundación Neotropica, and Conservation International, CEPF supported conservation coffee in key areas of the Talamanca – Bocas del Toro Corridor, allowing farmers to earn a premium on their coffee beans. On the Osa Peninsula, CEPF support helped Fundación Corcovado in its efforts to work with local hotel operators, communities, and the Costa Rica environment and security ministries. These groups collaborate on patrolling Corcovado National Park to protect its extraordinary wildlife.

Improved conservation understanding and planning through biological research, information gathering, analysis, and sharing. Given the dearth of basic information regarding biodiversity, CEPF helped several grantees to gather basic information on topics including species populations and ranges, park inventories, socioeconomic and opinion surveys, and inventories of planned infrastructure projects. The InBio project, for example, brought a multi-disciplinary team of biologists together to conduct field surveys and compile findings from previous biological work on the Osa Biological Corridor into a unified data base on the region. This information has led to a variety of results, including the identification of conservation priorities, revision of corridor borders, a baseline for future monitoring, and identification of areas that qualify for payments for environmental services. As one of the first corridors in Mesoamerica to rely on scientific data and methodologies to define priorities for corridor management, it serves as a model for other corridors in need of a similar planning exercise. Furthermore, InBio used this information as part of a broader effort throughout Costa Rica, which also has received CEPF funding, to conduct land-use planning for conservation throughout the country. With CEPF assistance, InBio has

worked with a variety of NGOs and government agencies to conduct a gap analysis to identified areas in the country that need further conservation action and to valid that entire land-use plan with local and national stakeholders.

With CEPF support, the Conservation Strategy Fund project conducted an inventory throughout the hotspot of infrastructure projects under planning in critical areas for biodiversity, then trained 30 NGO and government staff in conducting environmental and economic evaluation of these projects, and funded sub-grants to local organizations to conduct in-depth analysis of three projects of particular importance for conservation.

In addition, CEPF supported various information exchange opportunities. The Rainforest Alliance's Eco-Index became a vehicle for disseminating information on projects in the region and throughout the hemisphere. The average number of monthly visits to the Eco-Index grew from 2,600 visits in 2001, before CEPF began funding the project, to 70,000 monthly visits in 2006. The Eco-Index also helped several grantees to develop their own Web sites, which, in the case of the Naso ecotourism lodge run by ODESEN, brought in new business. The Coordination Unit also facilitated several opportunities for NGOs to learn from each other through site visits to projects, corridor-level information exchanges, and grantee meetings. Grantees remarked that these exchanges were very useful in learning new practices and forging new partnerships.

Leveraging new funding for conservation. CEPF's investment of \$5.5 million leveraged at least another \$15.9 million to date. This amount is expected to increase even more as the last final project completion reports are received from grantees and the leverage data added to the total (see Appendix B). This leveraging ratio reflects CEPF's expectation that grant recipients and the Coordination Unit seek matching contributions from other funding sources and from in-kind services. In addition, as explained in Box 4, grantees have pursued new funding opportunities. As a result, the majority of grants in Southern Mesoamerica contain counterpart funding or in-kind

Box 4. CEPF Grants Serve as Stepping Stones to New Funding for Small Groups

CEPF grants and technical assistance to community-based organizations and small environment groups have given them the experience and capacity required to secure funding from other donors. After years of struggle to secure even modest funding, several small grantees expressed their appreciation to CEPF for its willingness to take a chance on their projects when no other donor would fund them. Grantees report that CEPF assistance has given them a sense of legitimacy, confidence, and prestige, which has helped them to approach their own governments and other donors and secure new funding and partnerships.

For example, the small NGO based in Bluefields, Nicaragua, the Fundación para el Desarrollo Sostenible (FUNDESO) tried unsuccessfully for four years to access donor funding for its work with communities along the wetlands of Kukra River. Donors commented that the NGO lacked any experience. According to one community member, every rejection was as though someone threw a punch in the community's stomach. Members of the NGO commented that they were about to close their doors when they worked closely with the CEPF Coordination Unit to submit a proposal for a small grant to work in the wetlands. Upon reviewing the proposal, CEPF saw good potential to cultivate a grassroots group of young, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable environmentalists in an area of the corridor that lacked many NGOs dedicated to conservation. As a result, CEPF approved \$10,000 in January 2004. Since that time, FUNDESO has been able to access several hundreds of thousands of dollars from several other donors. FUNDESO gives thanks to CEPF for taking a chance on the group when no other donor would do so. The small grant gave FUNDESO the experience and legitimacy it needed to access funding from other sources and to promote sustainable developing along an important wetland.

contributions. Several projects also receive funds from major donors such as TNC, UNDP, the Costa Rica – US Foundation, and the government of Costa Rica. CEPF and the UNDP small grants facility sought out opportunities to work together, and co-financed five projects. In the Osa Peninsula, the Coordination Unit helped to secure a three-year, \$1.3 million commitment from Conservation International’s Global Conservation Fund to strengthen the payment for environmental services scheme in the Osa biological corridor. As a result, TNC contributed \$1.5 million and the FONAFIFO program contributed \$500,000. Also in the Osa, the Coordination Unit supported a long-term funding campaign that has generated \$17 million to date to conserve the peninsula’s rich biodiversity.

Lessons Learned

In the course of planning, implementing, and monitoring grants, five key lessons learned emerged that guided CEPF’s management of the portfolio:

- *The basis for project success is collaborative planning and the setting aside of funding for implementation.* Some of the most effective interventions occurred when NGOs, local and national governments, and communities worked together through a highly participatory planning process to reach consensus on common environmental and development objectives and on the strategies necessary to achieve those objectives. The CEPF team found that partners needed to take sufficient time for planning to ensure that project designs were well conceived. The planning process engaged key stakeholders in meaningful dialogue to arrive at consensus in order to foster collaboration during implementation. Equally important, grantees commented that CEPF’s ability to set aside funding to implement these plans was a departure from previous conservation projects, and one that gave credibility to the planning process. In addition, development of a financial sustainability plan from the outset encouraged continuity of project results beyond CEPF. For certain projects, CEPF strongly encouraged applicants to conduct required planning and even provided small grants for such planning exercises. In this way, CEPF and applicants were able to develop strong proposals for larger implementation grants that have proven to be successful.
- *Working through alliances of NGOs, government, private sector, and communities proved to be a highly effective vehicle for grantmaking.* CEPF found that the alliance approach to conservation was highly effective in ensuring that all parties involved in a project were well coordinated and pursued shared goals. It ensured that CEPF grants in a particular site or corridor operated under a general framework rather than as isolated projects lacking linkage or coherence. Funding reached a number of smaller organizations in the alliance through sub-grants, thus helping to further build grassroots capacity.
- *The Coordination Unit proved to be an effective vehicle for building local NGO capacity by providing technical expertise, facilitating the exchange of information, and helping to establish and strengthen partnerships.* The CU was comprised of seasoned conservationists with extensive experience in project design and management, strategic planning and monitoring, resources management, and biodiversity conservation. Its experience allowed the CU to provide expert assistance in a range of topics and to fulfill a mentoring function to most grantees. The team’s frequent field visits provided grantees with tailored advice and guidance to build each organization’s technical and administrative capacity. In addition, their knowledge helped grantees to work together

and build new partnerships. Grantees remarked that the Coordination Unit provided a critical service and were viewed as true allies and mentors.

- *Working across three countries brought unique challenges and opportunities.* Although the three countries that make up Southern Mesoamerica are relatively small, the portfolio's regional character created additional layers of complexity, as well as important opportunities for CEPF through its ability to fund regional projects. The logistics of crossing international borders frequently, of working with three distinct sets of partners that possess different capacities and goals, and of fostering cooperation across countries in bi-national corridors created additional layers of complexity not typically found in a portfolio located in just one country. It was necessary to ensure that portfolio and grant designs and budgets took into consideration the unique requirements of working across political boundaries. In addition, it was important to look for opportunities to take a regional approach to conservation, such as in the case of manatee conservation.
- *Conservation should take a two-track approach that involves addressing the underlying policy bottlenecks that contribute to the loss of biodiversity, while also strengthening site-level resource management and conservation.* CEPF found in certain cases that perverse policy incentives led to resource degradation. Therefore, to promote conservation, CEPF needed to take an integrated approach that coupled site-based and corridor-level conservation with policy review.

Conclusion

During its five years of implementation in Southern Mesoamerica, CEPF developed a reputation for supporting civil society at all levels to engage constructively in results-oriented conservation and sustainable development. With its flexible and accessible funds and network of partnerships, CEPF reached the grassroots to meet the realities of working in remote areas to address daunting challenges. Equally important, CEPF's partners engaged at higher political levels to ensure important conservation objectives and policies were achieved. Due to significant international funding reductions in the region, CEPF filled important conservation needs that otherwise would have remained unfunded.

This assessment finds that CEPF grants achieved several important results across the portfolio:

- Partners concur that key threats to biodiversity – particularly colonization, agricultural encroachment, and hunting – declined in CEPF target sites. In some sites, empirical data demonstrate concrete bio-physical improvement. Partners and local experts agree that CEPF grants played a pivotal role in directly strengthening 10 protected areas, protecting two new areas for conservation, improving land management within corridors, and ameliorating threats in the four most critical sites in Southern Mesoamerica. The crises of the early 2000s in such places as Osa and Indio Maiz no longer exist.
- CEPF's major beneficiaries are 150 communities and numerous community-based and indigenous-based groups and local and national NGOs, several of which would not have been able to access donor funding otherwise. CEPF contributed to their empowerment and self-determination and increased their ability to pursue a development path that allows for income to be generated based on the sustainable and culturally appropriate use of their local resources.

- Several key attributes for the sustainability of CEPF's investments are in place. NGOs, government partners, communities, and municipalities are working together through alliances that show good promise of continuing beyond CEPF. Stakeholders have a strong sense of ownership of their projects. Small NGOs that lacked access to donor funding previously have gained experience in conservation in new sites, developed confidence to promote their conservation missions into the future, and even succeed in attracting funding from other international donors. CEPF's investment of \$5.5 million has leveraged at least an additional \$15.9 million to date and has the potential to yield millions more.

While CEPF partner results are plentiful and impressive, much work remains in Southern Mesoamerica. CEPF has strengthened conservation capacity in areas that either had little previous capacity or whose capacity was waning. CEPF played an important role in stabilizing the region from threats of hunting, colonization, and forest fires, but it would be foolhardy to believe that Southern Mesoamerica's conservation capacity has been consolidated and that chronic threats have been permanently contained.

The task ahead for the conservation community is to consolidate these gains by ensuring that priorities required for a robust conservation sector are in place: cultivation and growth of successful sustainable development models started by CEPF, support for nascent alliances and emerging local NGOs, sustainable conservation funding in areas that currently lack adequate resources, addressing perverse policy incentives, and strengthening local government and community capacity as responsibility for conservation is further decentralized. If these priorities are not pursued vigorously, Southern Mesoamerica may return to where it was in the early 2000s, with weakened capacity to deal with emerging threats, such as global climate change and rapid population growth. Indeed, the hunting emergency at Corcovado National Park. Considered the crown jewel of Costa Rica's protected areas system and having sufficient capacity to manage the protected area in the 1990s, Corcovado's capacity was never consolidated. By the early 2000s, budget cuts for basic park management resulted in the park being vulnerable to hunting and the near decimation of its wildlife. The consolidation of CEPF's accomplishments is critical to avoid similar circumstances across the Southern Mesoamerica region.

CEPF 5-YEAR LOGICAL FRAMEWORK REPORTING

LONG-TERM GOAL STATEMENT	TARGET CONSERVATION OUTCOMES	RESULTS
<p>Improved management and increased connectivity of critical habitats under conservation in key areas of Southern Mesoamerica</p>	<p>1.1 Immediate Priorities</p> <p>La Amistad Biosphere Reserve - Costa Rica (422,655 hectares) under effective management and protection of indigenous lands (254,204 hectares)</p>	<p>1.1 Immediate Priorities</p> <p>CEPF grants have built local capacity to reduce key threats in the park, particularly on the Pacific sector, where logging, hunting, and forest fires are the most acute. The park service and local communities are patrolling and controlling access. Local communities have formed two fire brigades. Buffer zone projects along the border have strengthened local awareness of the importance of protecting and park, and introduced agroforestry and conservation coffee as conservation-friendly economic activities. As a result, the park service reports that it has strengthened presence in the park, and that threats such as forest fires and hunting are declining with the increased presence and community participation.</p> <p>On the Caribbean side of La Amistad, CEPF helped local indigenous groups to promote traditional uses of resources and build small-scale sustainable development projects for ecotourism and agroforestry.</p>
	<p>La Amistad Biosphere Reserve - Panama (389,851 hectares) under effective management and protection of indigenous lands (15,000 hectares).</p>	<p>CEPF grantees worked closely with the Panamanian National Environmental Authority (ANAM) to strengthen management within the protected area and its buffer zone. Efforts included enlisting cattle ranchers to reduce their impact on the park, strengthening patrolling, and conducting baseline studies on flora and fauna. As a result of these efforts, local cattle ranchers have agreed not to expand their plots and are now engaged in monitoring the park's boundaries. Buffer zone projects along the border strengthened local awareness of the importance of protecting and park, and introduced agroforestry and conservation coffee as conservation-friendly economic activities. ANAM</p>

		<p>reports that control of key sectors of the park has been regained and that encroachment has abated significantly.</p> <p>In addition, 16 Panamanian NGOs joined forces to successfully redirect the construction of a road through the Volcan Baru National Park, which forms part of La Amistad Biosphere Reserve. CEPF provided funding for public outreach and education regarding the road.</p>
	<p>Corcovado/Piedras Blanca National Parks (56,525 ha) under effective management and corridor created (80,000 ha)</p>	<p>CEPF worked with the government and local partners to bring widespread hunting and illegal fishing under control in Corcovado National Park. CEPF covered equipment, operational support, and community outreach, while the environment and security ministries provide personnel and vehicles. Local hotels paid for park guards. The number of patrols rose significantly, and contained the hunting crisis. Since CEPF's injection of funding, the Moore Foundation has invested \$8 million to strengthen park management, thus sustaining the important results originating with CEPF's investment.</p> <p>In the Osa Biological Corridor, CEPF partners worked together to strengthen local awareness of the importance of protecting the park; introduce sustainable agriculture projects; reforest degraded lands; and introduce sustainable energy practices. In addition, biological data was collected and analyzed to improve zoning of the Osa Biological Corridor.</p>
	<p>Indio Maiz (995,460 hectares) under effective management and corridor created (200,000 hectares).</p>	<p>CEPF strengthened protection of the Indio Maiz corridor in various ways. Local partners report that the rate of colonization and deforestation in the corridor is declining.</p> <p>In Indio Maiz Biological Reserve, CEPF supported a highly participatory management planning process that achieved consensus on zoning the park and its buffer zone, as well as laid out recommendations for future conservation actions. CEPF has since helped to implement components of the management plan, including the establishment of a coordinating committee of local municipalities, NGOs, and the national government; construction of new guard</p>

		<p>posts; environmental education; sustainable development projects in buffer zone communities, etc. The Nicaragua park service and donors are using the plan to design their investments in the reserve.</p> <p>In the corridor, CEPF introduced several projects to promote sustainable development. To the north of Indio Maiz, partners developed and are implementing local environmental action plans in eight strategically located communities, supporting sustainable agriculture, reforestation, community patrolling, and environmental education. CEPF also supported the Rama indigenous community in efforts to demarcate their ancestral territory.</p>
	Bocas del Toro (100,000 hectares)	<p>In the Naso Indigenous Territory, CEPF promoted conservation and income generation while also supporting the community's traditions. Small grants to local groups supported an indigenously managed lodge for ecological and cultural tourism and resurrect the cultivation and traditional use of medicinal plants grown under the forest canopy. The grants have demonstrated multiple benefits to the Naso, who now earn income from tourism; Visitations have grown from 35 visitors in 2003 to 900 visitors in 2006. In addition, ANAM praises the projects because grantees help patrol the park and share their electricity and water. In addition, partners believe it is a good model for replication in the corridor.</p>
	Maquenque-La Selva- Costa Rica (39,000 hectares) under protection.	<p>The Government of Costa Rica declared 54,000 hectares as Maquenque National Wildlife Refuge in 2005, thus exceeding the target. CEPF funded the Executive Committee of the San Juan - La Selva Biological Corridor, a partnership of 13 Nicaraguan and Costa Rican NGOs, universities, and government agencies, which worked hand-in-hand with the Costa Rica Environment Minister. CEPF funds helped secure local community support, conduct baseline technical studies, and complete a management plan. Local conservationists, who worked for 14 years to obtain protection status for Maquenque, believe the refuge will be the last large area to be protected in Costa Rica. During the assessment, the former Costa Rica Environment Minister remarked that CEPF's support was instrumental in securing legal</p>

		protection of the refuge.
	Talamanca-Osa Region-Costa Rica - (200,000 hectares) corridor created.	Sustainable development projects on the Pacific side of La Amistad and within the Osa Biological Corridor created stepping stones at each end of the Talamanca – Osa Region corridor to serve as a basis for consolidating the large corridor in the future.
	Atlantic Corridor Area- Panama- (80,000 hectares) under protection and protection of indigenous lands (400,000 hectares).	<p>CEPF supported various projects on the Atlantic side of La Amistad to improve environmental management. In the indigenous reserve of the Ngobe-Buglé, CEPF is helping the reserve’s indigenous council and local communities to increase their capacity to manage their land sustainably. In the Naso community, CEPF has strengthened a community-run ecotourism enterprise and medicinal plant garden in the forest in order to create economic incentives to preserve the environment. Several small grants have strengthened environmental education as well.</p> <p>CEPF supported local environmentalist from the Ngobe-Buglé Indigenous Reserve to strengthen the status of the Damani wetlands, a 24,089-hectare swath of marshland along the Caribbean coast. The community organized into an environmental committee and patrol squadron, developed baseline studies and inventories, and acquired equipment to patrol and manage the wetland. As a result of these efforts, the Panamanian park service declared the area a wetland of international importance, and the community has submitted the wetland for RAMSAR designation.</p> <p>In addition, CEPF supported a study of proposed hydroelectric dams in the area. The study collected information regarding the proposal dams, conducted an environmental and economic analysis, issued a formal report, and disseminated the findings. As a result, preliminary indications are that a dam in the Naso territory will not go forth.</p>

	Gualaca- Panama (270,000 hectares) under effective management.	Several projects on the Atlantic side of La Amistad put in place improved resources management in the Gualaca area of Panama. In addition, CEPF supported a small grant to improve land management in several areas degraded after the construction of the road.
	<p>Extinctions Avoided – 5 to 10 years</p> <p><i>1.2 Long-Term Priorities</i> Maintenance of genetically viable populations of key and endangered species such as: Great green macaw Scarlet macaw White lipped peccary Harpy eagle Jaguar Baird's tapir West Indian manatee</p>	CEPF projects targeted all identified species through applied research to improve management of these species; direct conservation of their habitat; community awareness building; improved patrolling to reduce hunting pressure; and development of regional, species-specific management plans. Because of these efforts, local populations of these endangered species are under less pressure. In some sites, such as Corcovado National Park, monitoring data is showing that population of some flagship species are on the rebound.
CEPF PURPOSE	IMPACT INDICATORS	RESULTS
NGOs, local organizations, communities, the private sector, and other key stakeholders increase their participation in conservation of the corridors.	1.1 Corridor-level planning and management of biodiversity conservation within the corridors is continued with active civil society participation. This includes continued and effective management of protected areas begun during CEPF implementation.	Management of all three corridors proceeded with active involvement of local and national civil society. CEPF supported participatory planning exercises in Indio Maiz Biological Reserve, Maquenque Wildlife Refuge, and La Amistad – Costa Rica and Panama, and Damani wetlands. The Indio Maiz management plan is regarded by the Nicaraguan government as a model because of the high degree of public consultation.

	<p>1.2 Increased number of NGOs and civil society, including the private sector, participating in conservation efforts under various co-management and partnership arrangements, and using the corridor approach as their framework. Examples could include private conservation areas, best practice coffee, cocoa, and tourism.</p>	<p>Nearly 30 NGOs are assuming co-management responsibilities to manage the region's protected areas. CEPF has helped bring NGOs and governments together to foster stronger collaboration. Local and national NGOs increased their capacity to design and manage projects and to access other donor funding. Throughout the corridors, CEPF supported numerous sustainable development projects to promote conservation coffee, ecotourism, organic and sustainable agriculture, traditional uses of natural resources, and reforestation.</p>
	<p>1.3 Conservation alliances such as Talamanca/Osa/Bocas regional alliance, Osa alliance, and the Northern Costa Rica working alliances supported and/or established during CEPF continue beyond the implementation years of CEPF.</p>	<p>CEPF supported bi-national, national, and local alliances, with special emphasis on private/public partnerships in Talamanca, Osa, and Northern Costa Rica. In addition, CEPF supported the establishment of a coalition of more than 30 conservation NGOs and public agencies in Southeast Nicaragua, and another coalition of 16 local NGOs in Panama.</p>
	<p>1.4 New funding toward corridor conservation efforts leveraged by NGOs and alliances benefiting from CEPF funding to reach a target of at least 50% of the total CEPF funding within the first 3 years, and 100% by the end of the 5-year CEPF funding cycle.</p>	<p>In addition to CEPF's \$5.5 million investment, grant recipients report that at least an additional \$15.9 million has been leveraged for conservation in the hotspot by CEPF-supported civil society groups. A high leveraging ratio reflects CEPF's expectation that grant recipients and the Coordination Unit seek matching contributions from other funding sources and from in-kind services. Grantees have pursued new funding opportunities as a direct result of CEPF support. As a result, the majority of grants in Southern Mesoamerica contain counterpart funding or in-kind contributions, and several grant recipients also received funds from major donors such as TNC, UNDP, the Costa Rica – US Alliance, and the government of Costa Rica. CEPF and the UNDP small grants facility sought out opportunities to work together, and co-financed five projects together.</p>

	<p>1.5 Connectivity between critical areas established in the following areas:</p> <p>Osa Peninsula-Talamanca: -Approx. 10,000 hectares joining Corcovado National Park with the Piedras Blancas National Park - Larger corridor joining the Piedras Blancas National Park to the highlands of Talamanca.</p> <p>Bocas del Toro-Talamanca: - Coastal and terrestrial connections between the Talamancas and the highlands and lowlands of the Tabasara Mountains in Panama</p> <p>Indio Maiz-La Selva: - Lowland forests of eastern Nicaragua with the middle-elevation forests of the central mountains of Costa Rica and La Selva -Creation of Maquenque National Park of Costa Rica</p>	<p>Osa Peninsula-Talamanca: Small-scale rural development projects involving the introduction of sustainable agriculture projects, adoption of improved use of wood-burning stoves, reforestation, and environmental education created a foundation for connectivity. Farmers also accessed payments for environmental services to maintain their lands under conservation. Grantees are now working with government agencies to continue support to farmers currently in the program and to expand efforts following CEPF support.</p> <p>Bocas del Toro-Talamanca: Grants to local NGOs and associations of NGOs worked to maintain existing forest cover through ecotourism and payment for environmental services, and to improve connectivity in highly fragmented areas reforestation and sustainable agricultural production. In addition, local organization capacity building and workshops to reducing indiscriminant hunting contributed to corridor consolidation.</p> <p>Indio Maiz-La Selva: The establishment of Maquenque National Park fulfills the goal of formalizing connectivity in northern Costa Rica and Southeast Nicaragua. In addition, projects surrounding environmental education and species protection support community support for connectivity.</p>
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	<p>1.6 Flagship species populations maintained and/or improved. Includes populations of the tapir, jaguar, white-lipped peccary, scarlet macaw, great green macaw, West Indian manatee, and harpy eagle.</p> <p>1.7 Habitats of flagship species maintained to a degree to adequately protect those species contained within.</p>	<p>CEPF projects targeted all identified species through applied research to develop guidelines and plans for conserving these species; direct conservation in key habitat; community awareness building; improved patrolling to reduce hunting pressure; and development of regional, species-specific management plans. Because of these efforts, several example exist that local populations of these endangered species have benefited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction of hunting pressure in Corcovado National Park saved the jaguars, peccary, and other mammals from local extinction. Workshops with local communities in the Talamanca region of La Amistad also helped to reduce hunting pressure on flagship species. - Site- and regional-level projects targeting the manatee helped to preserve their habitat in all three countries, reduce threats from boats, and raised community and national awareness of the importance of their conservation. - Applied research on the tapir provided information on population ranges and needs in La Amistad and supported development of a hotspot-wide strategy for their conservation. - Important nesting sites for quetzals and the green macaw were protected and saved from development threats. - Various other research and monitoring projects throughout the region also contributed basic data required to management these species. - Numerous environmental education projects used flagship species to increase conservation awareness locally and nationally.
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*As part of developing this report, CEPF also assessed results of its investments against the World Bank’s standard biodiversity indicators. The completed reporting against those indicators is included as Appendix C.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. List of CEPF Approved Grants

Appendix B. Leveraging Data for Southern Mesoamerica

Appendix C. Reporting Against Standard World Bank Biodiversity Indicators

Appendix A. List of CEPF Approved Grants

Mesoamerica

Southern Mesoamerica

Strategic Direction 1. Strengthen key conservation alliances and networks within integral corridors

Establishment of a Baseline for Species and Key Biodiversity Areas in Nicaragua

Contribute to the identification of globally significant sites for biodiversity in Nicaragua by collecting data on various aspects of species conservation, in partnership with the grant, "Refining and Monitoring Conservation Outcomes in Northern and Southern Mesoamerica." This information will support the development of site-based conservation strategies for Nicaragua and the Mesoamerica Hotspot.

Funding: \$10,000

Grant Term: 11/1/06 - 4/30/07

Grantee: Fundación Nicaragüense para la Conservación

Establishing a Monitoring Baseline for Species and Key Biodiversity Areas in Costa Rica

Contribute to the identification of globally significant sites for biodiversity by collecting data on various aspects of species conservation, in partnership with the CEPF-supported project "Refining and Monitoring Conservation Outcomes in Northern and Southern Mesoamerica." This information will be used to support the development of site-based conservation strategies for the hotspot.

Funding: \$10,000

Grant Term: 11/1/06- 4/30/07

Grantee: Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad

Establishing a Monitoring Baseline for Species and Key Biodiversity Areas in Panama

Contribute to the identification of globally significant sites for biodiversity by collecting data on various aspects of species conservation, in partnership with the project "Refining and Monitoring Conservation Outcomes in Northern and Southern Mesoamerica." This information will support the development of site-based conservation strategies for the Mesoamerica Hotspot.

Funding: \$11,593

Grant Term: 11/1/06 - 5/31/07

Grantee: Sociedad Audubon de Panamá

NGO Capacity Building for the Sustainable Development of Southeast Nicaragua

Support two workshops for local NGOs and stakeholders. One workshop will provide training on key concepts in project formulation and management, and the other workshop will explore the potential social, environmental, and economic impacts of proposed African Palm plantations in Southeast Nicaragua on the region's six protected areas.

Funding: \$6,000

Grant Term: 11/1/06 - 1/31/07

Grantee: Fundación para el Desarrollo Sostenible

Dissemination of the Final Report from the GRUAS II Conservation Zoning Exercise in Costa Rica

Disseminate final report of the GRUAS II process in Costa Rica, which supported a highly participatory, national-level conservation zoning exercise to better direct conservation efforts in protected areas, conservation corridors, and private lands.

Funding: \$15,300
Grant Term: 9/1/06 - 5/31/07
Grantee: Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad

Exchanging CEPF Grantee Experience and Lessons Learned in Protected Areas Management in Southern Mesoamerica at the Mesoamerican Protected Areas Congress

Support CEPF grantee participation in Mesoamerica's premier protected areas conference. Grantees will exchange their lessons learned from implementing conservation projects and improve their coordination, as well as disseminate information about CEPF and its conservation priorities to key conservation actors in the region.

Funding: \$16,654
Grant Term: 2/1/06 - 6/30/06
Grantee: Conservation International

Promoting Sustainable Development in the Buffer Zone of La Amistad Biosphere Reserve Through Ecotourism in the Naso Indigenous Community Territory – Phase II

Encourage the sustainable use of forests in the buffer zone of La Amistad International Park in Panama by assisting this indigenous group to grow an ecotourism business through improved marketing, business planning, and infrastructure development.

Funding: \$20,000
Grant Term: 11/1/05 - 12/31/06
Grantee: Organización para el Desarrollo Sostenible del Pueblo Naso

Defining and Monitoring Conservation Outcomes in Northern and Southern Mesoamerica

Establish a network of partners throughout Mesoamerica in order to define and monitor conservation outcomes and indicators for species conservation, protected areas, and corridors throughout the Mesoamerica hotspot. Build regional capacity for conservation monitoring, disseminate conservation information and findings, and establish a fundraising strategy for sustainability.

Funding: \$162,324
Grant Term: 9/1/05 - 4/30/07
Grantee: Conservation International

This is a multiregional project covering both Northern and Southern Mesoamerica; the total grant amount is \$324,647.

Strengthening Community Park Guards and Increasing Institutional Coordination in the Cerro Silva-Indio Maíz Corridor of Nicaragua

Support an association of leading institutions working in southeast Nicaragua to improve coordination of conservation and development initiatives in the region. Also, provide basic equipment, infrastructure, and training to community volunteers who patrol the Cano Negro wetlands, which is a RAMSAR site.

Funding: \$15,000
Grant Term: 8/1/05 - 3/31/06
Grantee: Fundación para el Desarrollo Sostenible

Capacity Building for Local Management of the Naso-Teribe Region

Increase the capacity of members of the Naso indigenous community, which is located in the buffer zone of La Amistad - Panama, to identify the potential impacts of a dam proposed in their territory. Grant supports the collection and analysis of baseline data, and dissemination of the findings.

Funding: \$5,000

Grant Term: 3/1/05 - 8/31/05

Grantee: Alianza para la Conservación y el Desarrollo

Consolidation of the Protected Area System of Costa Rica

Support initial studies and initiatives that will help Costa Rica consolidate its protected areas system in an administrative, economic and legal sense. The grant supports 11 activities, including studies for improving protected areas' administration, options for cost recovery within individual parks, land-use planning for conservation, designing corridors and building human resources for parks management.

Funding: \$55,000

Grant Term: 8/1/04 - 7/31/05

Grantee: The Leatherback Trust

Promoting Conservation for Regional Development and Unification: Scientific Research, Biological Monitoring and Capacity Building for Improved Management of Protected Areas

Support organization of the First Mesoamerican Congress on Protected Areas and fund the participation of key regional experts. Congress participants will develop a joint position paper on protected areas for presentation at the World Parks Congress, revise the Central American Convention on Biodiversity and Protected Areas and elaborate a document on the current state of Mesoamerican protected areas.

Funding: \$17,714

Grant Term: 3/1/03 - 5/31/03

Grantee: Conservation International

Indigenous Peoples and Biodiversity Conservation in the Northern and Southern Mesoamerican Hotspot

Participate in the preparation of a CEPF ecosystem profile for northern Mesoamerica by providing data and other information regarding indigenous communities and their land-use practices. Conduct exploratory work in southern Mesoamerica to determine the best opportunities for linking indigenous communities with the conservation community with the aim of realizing collaborative projects in key areas within the priority areas.

Funding: \$90,000

Grant Term: 12/1/02 - 9/30/03

Grantee: Environmental Law Institute

Supporting the Integration of Civil Society into Conservation and Development Decision-Making Processes at the Regional Level

Support the integration and participation of civil society in the decision-making processes for conservation and development addressed in the regional forums convened by the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor, the Plan Puebla Panamá (PPP) and the Central American Commission on Environment and Development. Conduct studies to determine priorities for conservation and to determine potential impacts of projects proposed by the PPP.

Funding: \$143,884
Grant Term: 7/22/02 - 9/30/04
Grantee: Conservation International

Building the Southern Mesoamerican Conservation Corridor

As the Coordinating Unit for CEPF, provide applicants with technical assistance to strengthen their project designs and develop logical frameworks to submit viable grant applications and assist grantees in their efforts to monitor project performance. The Coordination Unit will facilitate partnerships with other organizations, governmental agencies and other donors to develop the agenda for regional conservation.

Funding: \$1,254,055
Grant Term: 7/1/02 - 6/30/07
Grantee: Conservation International

Preparing Southern Mesoamerica's Nongovernmental Organizations for CEPF Projects

Conduct a series of workshops to provide guidance to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil society groups on the CEPF application process and investment strategy for Southern Mesoamerica.

Funding: \$24,083
Grant Term: 3/15/02 - 4/30/04
Grantee: Conservation International

Strategic Direction 2. Connect critical areas through economic alternatives

Conserving the Forests of La Amistad International Park Through the Promotion of Traditional Medicine in Three Communities of Naso Ethnicity – Phase II

Maintain traditional knowledge on the use of medicinal plants in Naso indigenous communities as a means of offering an incentive to maintain forest cover. The grant supports training of Naso youth by Shamans, and development of tourism packages to visit medicinal plots and demonstrate traditional dances and costumes.

Funding: \$19,635
Grant Term: 9/1/06 - 4/30/07
Grantee: Asociación de Practicantes de Medicina Tradicional Naso

Equator Ventures

Support the pilot phase of Equator Ventures, a partnership initiative with UNDP's Equator Initiative. Implement loan and technical assistance packages to small- to medium-sized enterprises benefiting biodiversity and local communities, and monitor biodiversity results.

Funding: \$11,109
Grant Term: 6/1/05 - 6/30/07
Grantee: Conservation International

This is a multiregional project covering eight hotspots; the total grant amount is \$99,986.

Establishing the Biological Boundaries of the Osa Biological Corridor through Data Compilation and Analysis - Phase II

Conduct biological studies and analysis to define the boundaries of the Osa Biological Corridor, which links the national parks of Corcovado and Piedras Blancas on the Osa Peninsula. Activities include biological studies on plants, mammals, and pollen dispersion; compilation and systemization of existing data; and definition and formal adoption of biologically based boundaries of the corridor.

Funding: \$100,000
Grant Term: 6/1/05 - 4/30/07
Grantee: Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad

Sustainable Alternatives and Environmental Restoration and Protection of the Three Hills Quetzal Biological Corridor

Strengthen capacity of the Tres Colinas community, which is strategically located in the La Amistad corridor, to ameliorate threats to biodiversity. This grant supports the local "Natural Resource Vigilance Committee" to reduce forest fires and hunting inside the park, reforestation and organic fertilizer production, and research on flora and fauna.

Funding: \$15,742
Grant Term: 3/1/05 - 2/28/07
Grantee: Asociación de Turismo de Tres Colinas

Conserving the Forests of La Amistad International Park through the Promotion of Traditional Medicine in Three Communities of Naso Ethnicity

Maintain traditional knowledge on the cultivation and use of medicinal plants within Naso indigenous communities located in the buffer zone of La Amistad International Park as a means of offering an incentive to maintain forest cover. The grant supports the establishment of three village training and storage facilities, development of medicinal gardens, and training of Naso youth by Shamans.

Funding: \$19,364
Grant Term: 10/1/04 - 7/31/05
Grantee: Asociación de Practicantes de Medicina Tradicional Naso

Infrastructure Integration and Biodiversity Conservation in Mesoamerica

Integrate conservation concerns into the planning of major infrastructure projects throughout Mesoamerica by bringing together NGOs and government agencies for capacity building and analysis of proposed projects. This grant supports an inventory of proposed major energy and transportation projects, their ranking according to economic and environmental criteria, a conservation economics and policy course, and three to five policy analyses of priority projects.

Funding: \$75,000
Grant Term: 10/1/04 - 3/31/07
Grantee: Conservation Strategy Fund

This is a multiregional project covering both Northern and Southern Mesoamerica; the total grant amount is \$310,286.

Preventing Agricultural Encroachment Into Indo Maíz Biological Reserve and Cerro Silva Nature Reserve Through the Introduction of Sustainable Agriculture in Their Buffer Zones

Promote sustainable agriculture and agroforestry to reduce deforestation and promote connectivity between forest fragments in the northern frontier region of the Indo Maiz Reserve, which is threatened by agricultural encroachment. Specifically, the project will promote improved resource management on select farms and the adoption of best practices in sustainable and organic agriculture on 500 farms.

Funding: \$72,549
Grant Term: 6/1/04 - 8/31/07
Grantee: Sano y Salvo

Promoting Connectivity in the Talamanca-Caribbean Biological Corridor for Biodiversity Conservation

Increase connectivity between forest fragments along the buffer zone of the Caribbean coast of La Amistad International Park through support to channel payments for environmental services to conserve forest fragments, restore degraded areas, promote community-based tourism and strengthen community participation in patrolling and biological monitoring.

Funding: \$99,727
Grant Term: 6/1/04 - 5/31/06
Grantee: Asociación de Organizaciones del Corredor Biológico Talamanca Caribe

Establishing the Biological Boundaries of the Osa Biological Corridor through Data Compilation and Analysis

Analyze biological information to establish a biological baseline for future ecological monitoring and identify priorities for future research.

Funding: \$15,752
Grant Term: 4/1/04 - 10/31/04
Grantee: Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad

Promoting Traditional Conservation Practices in the Cabecares Indigenous Communities of Bajo Chirripo and Nairi Awari, La Amistad Biosphere Reserve

Conserve the indigenous territories of Bajo Chirripo and Nairi Awari by fostering the adoption of traditional resource management practices. The grant supports the development of a strategy for conservation and ancestral resource management, capacity building within indigenous communities and recuperation of ecosystems and threatened species.

Funding: \$20,000
Grant Term: 4/1/04 - 2/28/06
Grantee: Asociación IXACAVAA de Desarrollo e Información Indígena

Development of a Conservation Strategy for the Coffee Landscapes within Key Biodiversity Areas of the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve in Costa Rica and Panama

Promote the adoption of sustainable agriculture and species conservation in coffee farms located around La Amistad Biosphere Reserve. Activities will include a multi-stakeholder strategy design process to integrate conservation coffee into regional conservation strategies, build partner alliances and adapt the program's approach to the local context. Starbucks Coffee Company and USAID will fund strategy implementation.

Funding: \$79,552
Grant Term: 3/1/04 - 2/28/07
Grantee: Conservation International

Pilot Project for Local Participatory Management and Conservation of Biodiversity in the Buffer Zone of Indio Maíz Biological Reserve

Build local capacity to develop environmental management plans for five communities in the northern buffer zone of the Indio Maíz-Punta Gorda reserve complex. Deliver technical assistance in biodiversity and natural resources inventory and analysis, facilitate local planning processes of management plans and disseminate results, provide training in organizational development and conservation and assist local participation in higher levels of planning and partnership building.

Funding: \$89,950

Grant Term: 3/1/04 - 8/31/05

Grantee: Asociación de Desarrollo y Promoción Humana de la Costa Atlántica

Mitigating Threats to the Bi-National Region of La Amistad International Park Through Community-Based Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Agriculture

Foster connectivity along the Costa Rica - Panamanian border region of La Amistad International Park through the protection of forest fragments and sustainable economic activities. Specific activities include identifying and protecting forest fragments, ecological restoration and agroforestry, environmental education and improved coordination among local organizations.

Funding: \$101,500

Grant Term: 2/1/04 - 12/31/05

Grantee: Fundación Agro Ecológica Cotobruseña – Costa Rica

Arresting Agricultural Encroachment into La Amistad Biosphere Reserve Through Community-Based Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Agriculture in the Buffer Zone

Reduce agricultural encroachment into La Amistad International Park through stabilization of the agriculture frontier along the Pacific boundary in Panama. Project supports technical assistance to farmers to disseminate best practices in sustainable agriculture and resource management, environmental education, organizational strengthening of local environmental organizations and a monitoring program to systematize performance information and lessons learned.

Funding: \$190,000

Grant Term: 1/1/04 - 12/31/06

Grantee: Fundación Para el Desarrollo Sostenible de Panamá

Ecotourism Development in the Inter-Municipal Park of the Mahogany Wetlands in Rama-Bluefields, Nicaragua

Support the development of ecotourism for communities living in the buffer zone of Mahogany Wetlands as part of a broader development program for the area. Specific activities include undertaking an environmental education program, biological assessments and development of tourism infrastructure, training and marketing.

Funding: \$69,765

Grant Term: 1/1/04 - 2/28/07

Grantee: Bluefields Indian & Caribbean University

Promoting Sustainable Development in the Buffer Zone of La Amistad Biosphere Reserve Through Ecotourism in the Naso Indigenous Community Territory

Promote the sustainable management of the Naso Indigenous Territory in the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve by promoting ecotourism and environmental education. The grant finances infrastructure improvement, marketing of services, and development of a business plan.

Funding: \$20,000

Grant Term: 12/1/03 - 10/30/04

Grantee: Organización para el Desarrollo Sostenible del Pueblo Naso

Natural Resource Conservation and Recovery of Degraded Areas of Palo Seco Reserve - Chiriqui Grande, Panama

Support ecological restoration in the Palo Seco Forest Reserve and its buffer zone following the construction of the Punta Peña Almirante road, through activities in reforestation, use of organic fertilizer and cleaner agricultural production systems.

Funding: \$10,000
Grant Term: 11/1/03 - 7/31/04
Grantee: Asociación Comercial y Agropecuaria de Chiriqui Grande

Promoting Biological Connectivity in the Osa Peninsula Through Sustainable Agriculture

Promote appropriate land-use regimes that contribute to maintaining connectivity in the Osa Biological Corridor. Working with local farmers in support of sustainable development projects in agriculture, ecotourism, reforestation, and biogas, this grant aims to increase forest under protection and restore degraded land, as well as to disseminate project techniques and lessons to new communities.

Funding: \$214,685
Grant Term: 9/1/03 - 3/31/07
Grantee: Fundación Neotropica

Promoting Conservation Coffee in the Buffer Zone of La Amistad Biosphere Reserve

Promote conservation coffee within 23 communities located in the buffer zone of La Amistad Biosphere Reserve as a means of reducing pressure on the park and promoting connectivity. Activities include assisting farmers in growing conservation coffee, promoting environmental education and building capacity of community groups and government agencies.

Funding: \$199,936
Grant Term: 7/1/03 - 12/31/06
Grantee: Centro Científico Tropical

Strategic Direction 3. Promote awareness and conservation of flagship species

Preparing a Regional Strategy to Conserve the Manatee of Southern Mesoamerica

Forge an alliance of local and U.S.-based scientists dedicated to the manatee conservation in order to develop a regional strategy to conserve this species. The grant will fund the establishment of a tri-national commission for manatee conservation, field work, stakeholder consultations, and development of a regional strategy.

Funding: \$10,000
Grant Term: 1/1/07 - 6/30/07
Grantee: Fundación Amigos del Río San Juan

Monitoring and Dissemination of Data on Threatened and Flagship Species in La Amistad International Park, Panama

Gather population data on Endangered and flagship species in La Amistad with a view toward improving park management, conducting outreach to local Latino and indigenous communities, and increasing local capacity for conserving species.

Funding: \$17,930
Grant Term: 12/1/06 - 6/30/07
Grantee: MERALVIS

Baird's Tapir Conservation Workshop

Support the development of Mesoamerica's first conservation strategy for the Endangered Baird's tapir by funding a workshop of experts and the printing and dissemination of the strategy.

Funding: \$5,000
Grant Term: 7/1/05 - 12/31/05
Grantee: The Houston Zoo, Inc.

This is a multiregional grant covering Northern and Southern Mesoamerica; the total grant amount is \$10,000.

Small Grants for Global Conservation of Amphibian Diversity Within Hotspots

Develop and implement the Amphibian Action Fund aimed at the long-term conservation of amphibian species, and their habitats, within biodiversity hotspots around the globe. This fund will make available small grants of up to \$10,000 to be awarded to individuals and groups working within the hotspots on targeted amphibian conservation activities.

Funding: \$33,000
Grant Term: 7/1/05 - 6/30/08
Grantee: Arizona State University

This is a multiregional project covering six hotspots; the total grant amount is \$200,000.

Sharing Experiences and Lessons Learned in Mesoamerica via the Eco-Index

Provide detailed information in English and Spanish on conservation projects and issues throughout Mesoamerica as the second phase of support to this online database. Activities include the entry and annual updating on the site of all CEPF-supported projects in Mesoamerica, creation of Web sites for partner organizations without existing sites, and organizing a stakeholder workshop in Southern Mesoamerica.

Funding: \$80,452
Grant Term: 5/1/05 - 5/31/07
Grantee: Rainforest Alliance

This is a multiregional project covering Northern and Southern Mesoamerica; the total grant amount is \$130,221.

Raising Awareness of Conservation of the Natural Ecosystems of Manatees (*Trichechus manatus*) through Environmental Monitoring in Local Communities

Launch a conservation project in the San San River and wetland to protect one of the largest populations of manatees in Panama. The grant will fund water quality analysis to identify pollutants and their sources, placement of signs in priority sites, and a public education campaign to increase awareness of manatee protection.

Funding: \$20,000
Grant Term: 11/1/04 – 4/30/07
Grantee: Asociación de Amigos y Vecinos de la Costa y la Naturaleza

Environmental Education to Conserve the Flagship Species of the Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica

Increase awareness of the importance of conserving the Osa Peninsula's flagship species through the development and implementation of an action plan and training modules geared toward environmental education in local institutions.

Funding: \$15,342
Grant Term: 6/1/04 – 10/31/06
Grantee: Fundación para el Desarrollo Académico de la Universidad Nacional

Rapid Ecological Evaluation and Inventory of Flora and Fauna in the Ngobe-Buglé Indigenous Reservation of Bocas del Toro, Panamá

Generate baseline ecological information, provide local training in inventorying, and present management recommendations with community participation of the Ngobe-Buglé Indigenous Reserve to conserve the Damani wetlands, Guariviara y Bisiria mangroves, la Valiente Península, and Veraguas Shield in Panama.

Funding: \$10,610
Grant Term: 4/1/04 - 5/31/04
Grantee: Fundación Universidad Nacional

Promoting Environmental Education in Selected Ngobe-Bugle Communities of the Palo Seco Forest Reserve, La Amistad International Park

Increase environmental awareness in indigenous and Mestizo communities located in the Palo Seco Forest Reserve as a pilot effort by developing the first environmental education program for Ngobe Bugle communities, training local communities and local park staff in environment education and improving local infrastructure for training.

Funding: \$20,000
Grant Term: 2/1/04 - 1/31/06
Grantee: Modelo de Comunidad Ecológica Los Valles

Conserving the West Indian Manatee as a Forest and Wetland Conservation Tool of the Tortuguero and Rio San Juan Binational Region (Costa Rica-Nicaragua)

Establish a binational vision for protecting the globally endangered manatee of Costa Rica and Nicaragua. The grant supports satellite tracking of manatees to identify key habitat for protection, environmental education to improve local understanding and appreciation of the species, integration of manatee protection in local conservation strategies and improved coordination between conservation organizations and agencies for manatee protection.

Funding: \$59,070
Grant Term: 1/1/04 - 10/31/05
Grantee: Fundación Amigos del Río San Juan

Conservation Research of the Central American Tapir (*Tapirus bairdii*) in the La Amistad International Park, Costa Rica

Strengthen the protection of the globally endangered Baird tapir in La Amistad International Park, Costa Rica through research into its distribution, habitat and nutrition; preparation of a map delineating its critical habitat; and dissemination of the results for its management.

Funding: \$17,150
Grant Term: 11/1/03 - 7/31/05
Grantee: Asociación Meralvis

Campaign to Increase Awareness about the Biological Importance of Baru Volcano National Park

Conduct an awareness-building campaign to heighten attention on the importance of conserving the Baru Volcano National Park, which is under threat from road construction. This grant will fund a series of meetings, outreach to media and production of literature.

Funding: \$10,000
Grant Term: 10/1/03 - 6/30/04
Grantee: Fundación para el Desarrollo Integral del Corregimiento de Cerro Punta

Promoting Environmental Education in the Schools of Bocas del Toro

Teaches basic ecological and conservation principles to school children in the Bocas del Toro area. During the duration of the grant, ITEC will spend five days at 21 schools conducting various environmental education activities.

Funding: \$9,960
Grant Term: 6/1/03 - 9/30/05
Grantee: Institute for Tropical Ecology and Conservation

Building a Global Constituency for Biodiversity Conservation

Implement a series of targeted public awareness and education campaigns in nine hotspots in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Campaign leaders participate in an intensive training course at the UK's Kent University or Mexico's Guadalajara University, prepare detailed plans to implement campaigns, link with a local organization in their region and commit to a minimum two years with that organization.

Funding: \$153,373
Grant Term: 12/1/02 - 12/31/06
Grantee: Conservation International (\$48,448), Rare (\$104,925)

This is a multiregional project covering nine hotspots; the total grant amount is \$1,993,855 (Rare \$1,364,030 and Conservation International \$629,825).

Using the Eco-Index to Allow Organizations Working in Neotropical Hotspots to Share Experiences and Glean Lessons from Colleagues

Facilitate the exchange of information about experiences, challenges and best practices developed through various conservation projects throughout Central and South America, including CEPF-funded projects in the Atlantic Forest, Chocó-Darién-Western Ecuador, Mesoamerica and Tropical Andes hotspots. Project goals, experiences and information will be disseminated through the Eco-Index in English, Spanish, and where relevant, Portuguese.

Funding: \$42,333
Grant Term: 10/21/02 - 3/31/04
Grantee: Rainforest Alliance

This is a multiregional project covering four hotspots; the total grant amount is \$189,727.

Strategic Direction 4. Support improved management of key protected areas

Developing an Action Plan to Prevent Environmental Degradation Caused by Migration in Cerro Silva and Punta Gorda Reserves

Stem the negative impacts of human migration in Southeast Nicaragua by gathering baseline data on its causes and growth rates, identifying areas of high vulnerability, proposing actions as a response, and encouraging local coordination by stakeholders on the topic.

Funding: \$16,000
Grant Term: 1/1/07 – 7/31/07
Grantee: Universidades de las Regiones de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense

Development of a Strategy to Foster Financial Sustainability of the Rio San Juan Biosphere Reserve in Nicaragua

Achieve sustainability of current and future conservation investments and management actions by producing designs and proposals to foster sustainable financing in the biosphere reserve. The project will produce an overall sustainable financing strategy for the reserve.

Funding: \$8,000
Grant Term: 1/1/07 - 6/30/07
Grantee: Fundación Amigos del Río San Juan

Strengthening Protection Along the Costa Rica–Panama Border of the La Amistad International Park

Strengthen local capacity to patrol the Pacific sector of the border region of La Amistad International Park through support for coordination meetings of the park service of both countries and local communities, operations and equipment, and training of local community guards.

Funding: \$10,000
Grant Term: 1/1/07 - 6/30/07
Grantee: Fundación Agroecológica Cotobruseña

Prevention and Control of Forest Fires in the Buffer Zone of the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve of the Pacific Sector, Panama

Build local capacity to prevent and control fires by organizing and training local fire brigades, disseminating public education materials, and patrolling vulnerable areas.

Funding: \$19,800
Grant Term: 9/1/06 - 6/30/07
Grantee: Fundación para el Desarrollo Integral del Corregimiento de Cerro Punta

Proposal to Declare the Wetlands of the Maquenque National Refuge a RAMSAR Site

Set the foundation for the declaration of Maquenque Wildlife Refuge as a Ramsar site. The grant supports field and threats assessments, water quality analysis, and presentation of a proposal for Ramsar designation.

Funding: \$5,000
Grant Term: 9/1/06 - 3/30/07
Grantee: Centro Científico Tropical

Implementing the Indio Maiz Biological Reserve Management Plan

Support a series of protected areas management activities to strengthen conservation in CEPF's core investment area. Activities include community outreach and capacity building; institutional coordination between government, community, and nongovernmental groups; and enhancing sustainable development in buffer zones.

Funding: \$288,632
Grant Term: 6/1/06 - 12/31/07
Grantee: Fundación Amigos del Río San Juan

Building Environmental Capacity in the No Kribo Region of the Ngobe Bugle Indigenous Reserve

Increase the capacity of the Ngobe Bugle indigenous people to manage their reserve in the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve for biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource management. The grant funds the establishment of an environmental commission in the Regional Kribo Congress, capacity building of key stakeholders and local communities, and establishment and legalization of a biological corridor.

Funding: \$95,000
Grant Term: 3/1/06 - 7/31/07
Grantee: Asociación de Profesionales y Técnicos Ngöbe Bugle

Institutional Strengthening of the Rama Indigenous People for Territorial Demarcation and Sustainable Development

Build local capacity and provide the legal and management tools to the Rama indigenous people to gain legal recognition of their territory and to conserve their natural resources. The grant funds participatory needs assessments and resource use maps, a protection and control program, training in development and management of community projects, and monitoring and evaluation.

Funding: \$139,840
Grant Term: 2/1/06 - 5/31/07
Grantee: Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense

Consolidation of CEPF's Protected Areas and Conservation Corridor Portfolio in Mesoamerica

Provide technical assistance to partners to help achieve CEPF's protected areas objectives in Mesoamerica. Assist partners in the declaration of new protected areas in Northern Mesoamerica, development of improved capacity for fire management and control of illegal timber and wildlife harvesting, and strengthening of existing protected areas.

Funding: \$75,000
Grant Term: 12/1/05 - 12/31/07
Grantee: Conservation International

This is a multiregional project covering Northern and Southern Mesoamerica; the total grant amount is \$237,360.

Biodiversity Conservation and Management in Southeastern Nicaragua with Participation from Local Communities (Phase II)

Promote community-based conservation and sustainable development north of the Indio Maiz Ecologic Reserve in Nicaragua by supporting activities to implement eight local environmental action plans; conduct environmental education; fund organizational development and training of community groups and leaders; disseminate information on protected areas and indigenous rights laws, and monitor environmental trends.

Funding: \$157,600
Grant Term: 10/1/05 - 10/31/07
Grantee: Asociación de Desarrollo y Promoción Humana de la Costa Atlántica

Support to the Volunteer Park Guards of Mahogany Ecological Wetlands Park, Nicaragua

As a second phase of an earlier CEPF project, provide equipment and infrastructure to a volunteer group of community park guards to patrol and protect the Mahogany Ecological Wetlands.

Funding: \$10,000
Grant Term: 5/1/05 - 9/30/05
Grantee: Bluefields Indian & Caribbean University

Institutional Support to the Osa Conservation Area

Support efforts to manage two protected areas on the Osa Peninsula in the Osa Conservation Area, participate in fund raising under the Osa Campaign, and review internal administrative structures.

Funding: \$18,933
Grant Term: 4/1/05 - 8/31/05
Grantee: Fundación Corcovado Lon Willing Ramsey Jr.

Mitigating Environmental Threats to La Amistad International Park (Costa Rica) by Strengthening Park Protection

Complement efforts by the Costa Rican park service to mitigate threats from forest fires and hunting in critical sectors of La Amistad International Park. Build local capacity for fire control and prevention, establish community park protection committees in indigenous and non-indigenous areas, and monitor key threats in the park.

Funding: \$159,656
Grant Term: 4/1/05 - 3/31/07
Grantee: Fundación de Parques Nacionales

Community Consultation and Institutional Strengthening for the Sustainable Management of the Rama Indigenous Territory Protected Area

Conduct a series of consultations involving Rama indigenous people, government officials in Bluefields and Managua, and other donors to coordinate actions for demarcating and managing Rama territories. Grant also supports strengthening the newly formed governing council of Rama communities.

Funding: \$5,000
Grant Term: 2/1/05 - 4/30/05
Grantee: Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaraguense, Recinto de Bluefields-Raas

Strengthening Biodiversity Conservation in Ecologically Sensitive Areas of La Amistad International Park - Panama

Curb encroachment of cattle ranchers in core areas of La Amistad in Panama by establishing and implementing agreements with them to refrain from expanding their operations into key areas, increasing the institutional capacity of Autoridad Nacional del Ambiente to guard vulnerable sectors, monitoring performance in threats mitigation, and conducting research on species of local, national, and global importance.

Funding: \$193,040
Grant Term: 2/1/05 - 12/31/06
Grantee: Asociación Nacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza

Conserving Biodiversity in Damani Wetlands Reserve, Ngobe Buglé Indigenous Territory

Increase local capacity to manage the Damani Wetlands Reserve, a 24,000-hectare area located within the Ngobe-Bugle indigenous territory along Panama's Caribbean coast. The grant supports the collection of baseline biological and resource use data, development of a zoning scheme, establishment of a community group of park guards, and increased environmental awareness within the Ngobe- Bugle territory of the importance of the wetlands.

Funding: \$80,000
Grant Term: 10/1/04 - 12/31/06
Grantee: Centro de Estudios y Acción Social Panameño

Environmental and Economic Needs Assessment to Conserve the Caño Negro Wetlands of the Kukra River, Nicaragua

Conduct a needs assessment for the network of Caño Negro Wetlands in close consultation with local communities to understand the ecological, environmental and socioeconomic dynamics of the wetlands and formulate recommendations for conservation action.

Funding: \$10,000
Grant Term: 12/1/03 - 4/30/04
Grantee: Fundación para el Desarrollo Sostenible

Support to Civil Society for the Protection of Volcan Baru National Park, Panama

Support a coalition of local organizations in efforts to conserve the Volcan Baru National Park through public outreach on the park's biodiversity (includes a study tour for journalists, publication of materials, and local meetings), and technical and legal assistance to maintain the area's legal protection status.

Funding: \$19,945
Grant Term: 12/1/03 - 8/31/06
Grantee: Asociación Nacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza

Park Guard Capacity Building - Mahogany Wetlands Intermunicipal Ecological Park, Nicaragua

Equip and train the Community Park Association of Mahogany Wetlands to control illegal hunting and fishing, logging, agricultural encroachment and forest fires. Grant provides basic equipment and infrastructure for conducting patrolling and environmental education.

Funding: \$10,000
Grant Term: 11/1/03 - 5/31/04
Grantee: Bluefields Indian & Caribbean University

Structure and Composition of a Fragmented Forest Landscape: A Tool for Strategy Design for Biodiversity Conservation

Generate baseline forest cover data and maps geared toward identifying a connectivity network within the San Juan - La Selva Corridor. The grant will produce a characterization of primary forest in the corridor and present scenarios at a landscape scale identifying critical sites for conservation and forest restoration.

Funding: \$6,917
Grant Term: 10/1/03 - 1/31/04
Grantee: Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza

Establishing Maquenque National Park to Achieve Connectivity Within the Cerro-Silva-La Selva Biological Corridor

Establish the Maquenque National Park as a means of achieving connectivity between Indio Maiz Biological Reserve in Nicaragua and the Central Volcanic Range in Costa Rica to total 1.2 million ha. of contiguous area under protection. Activities include a land tenure study, preparation of a management plan, a public outreach campaign and a fund raising strategy for protected area management.

Funding: \$212,000
Grant Term: 8/1/03 - 7/31/06
Grantee: Centro Científico Tropical

Preparation of the Management Plan for the Indio Maíz Biological Reserve

Prepare a management plan for the Indo Maiz Biological Reserve in Southeastern Nicaragua. The management plan will be developed through a series of meetings with communities to develop actions and guidelines for managing the reserve, including a zoning plan.

Funding: \$103,145
Grant Term: 6/1/03 - 11/30/06
Grantee: Fundación Amigos del Río San Juan

Plan for Control and Protection for the Corcovado and Piedras Blancas National Parks and Their Surrounding Areas

Coordinate with the government ministries of environment and security to conduct patrols of the Corcovado and Piedra Blancas national parks to reduce the incidence of illegal hunting, logging and fishing. Under this arrangement, CEPF will cover operating costs to conduct the park patrols, while the ministries will provide personnel and equipment.

Funding: \$71,247

Grant Term: 4/15/03 - 6/30/05

Grantee: Fundación Corcovado Lon Willing Ramsey Jr.

Appendix B. Leveraging Data for Southern Mesoamerica

Grantee	Project Title	CEPF Funds Agreed	Leveraged and Co-financing Funds
Asociación de Organizaciones del Corredor Biológico Talamanca Caribe	Promoting Connectivity in the Talamanca-Caribbean Biological Corridor for Biodiversity Conservation	\$99,727	\$17,838
Asociación de Practicantes de Medicina Tradicional Naso	Conserving the Forests of La Amistad International Park through the Promotion of Traditional Medicine in Three Communities of Naso Ethnicity	\$19,364	\$5,000
Asociación de Profesionales y Técnicos Ngöbe Bugle	Building Environmental Capacity in the No Kribo Region of the Ngobe Bugle Indigenous Reserve	\$95,000	\$25,000
Asociación Meralvis	Conservation Research of the Central American Tapir (<i>Tapirus bairdii</i>) in the La Amistad International Park, Costa Rica	\$17,150	\$13,100
Asociación Nacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza	Strengthening Biodiversity Conservation in Ecologically Sensitive Areas of La Amistad International Park - Panama	\$193,040	\$50,000
Asociación Nacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza	Support to Civil Society for the Protection of Volcan Baru National Park, Panama	\$19,945	\$22,000
Bluefields Indian & Caribbean University	Ecotourism Development in the Inter-Municipal Park of the Mahogany Wetlands in Rama-Bluefields, Nicaragua	\$69,765	\$8,568
Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza	Structure and Composition of a Fragmented Forest Landscape: A Tool for Strategy Design for Biodiversity Conservation	\$6,917	\$8,205
Centro Científico Tropical	Establishing Maquenque National Park to Achieve Connectivity Within the Cerro-Silva-La Selva Biological Corridor	\$212,000	\$125,381
Centro Científico Tropical	Promoting Conservation Coffee in the Buffer Zone of La Amistad Biosphere Reserve	\$199,936	\$240,967

Centro de Estudios y Acción Social Panameño	Conserving Biodiversity in Damani Wetlands Reserve, Ngobe Buglé Indigenous Territory	\$80,000	\$44,000
Conservation International	Building the Southern Mesoamerica Conservation Corridor	\$1,254,055	\$14,300,000
Conservation International	Development of a Conservation Strategy for the Coffee Landscapes Within Key Biodiversity Areas of the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve in Costa Rica and Panama	\$79,552	\$327,000
Conservation International	Supporting the Integration of Civil Society into Conservation and Development Decision-Making Processes at the Regional Level	\$143,884	\$54,000
Fundación Agro Ecológica Cotobruseña – Costa Rica	Mitigating Threats to the Bi-National Region of La Amistad International Park Through Community-Based Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Agriculture	\$101,500	\$33,400
Fundación Amigos del Río San Juan	Conserving the West Indian Manatee as a Forest and Wetland Conservation Tool of the Tortuguero and Rio San Juan Binational Region (Costa Rica-Nicaragua)	\$59,070	\$8,000
Fundación Amigos del Río San Juan	Preparation of the Management Plan for the Indio Maíz Biological Reserve	\$103,145	\$13,000
Fundación Corcovado Lon Willing Ramsey Jr.	Plan for Control and Protection for the Corcovado and Piedras Blancas National Parks and Their Surrounding Areas	\$71,247	\$16,400
Fundación de Parques Nacionales	Mitigating Environmental Threats to La Amistad International Park (Costa Rica) by Strengthening Park Protection	\$159,656	\$143,000
Fundación Neotropica	Promoting Biological Connectivity in the Osa Peninsula Through Sustainable Agriculture	\$214,685	\$37,440
Fundación para el Desarrollo Académico de la Universidad Nacional	Environmental Education to Conserve the Flagship Species of the Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica	\$15,342	\$7,500

Fundación para el Desarrollo Integral del Corregimiento de Cerro Punta	Campaign to Increase Awareness about the Biological Importance of Baru Volcano National Park	\$10,000	\$5,000
Fundación para el Desarrollo Integral del Corregimiento de Cerro Punta	Prevention and Control of Forest Fires in the Buffer Zone of the La Amistad Biosphere Reserve of the Pacific Sector, Panama	\$19,800	\$24,300
Fundación para el Desarrollo Sostenible	Environmental and Economic Needs Assessment to Conserve the Caño Negro Wetlands of the Kukra River, Nicaragua	\$10,000	\$3,000
Fundación Para el Desarrollo Sostenible de Panamá	Arresting Agricultural Encroachment into La Amistad Biosphere Reserve Through Community-Based Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Agriculture in the Buffer Zone	\$190,000	\$75,009
Fundación Universidad Nacional	Rapid Ecological Evaluation and Inventory of Flora and Fauna in the Ngobe-Buglé Indigenous Reservation of Bocas del Toro, Panamá	\$10,610	\$4,326
Institute for Tropical Ecology and Conservation	Promoting Environmental Education in the Schools of Bocas del Toro	\$9,960	\$800
Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad	Establishing the Biological Boundaries of the Osa Biological Corridor through Data Compilation and Analysis	\$15,752	\$10,650
Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad	Establishing the Biological Boundaries of the Osa Biological Corridor through Data Compilation and Analysis - Phase II	\$100,000	\$67,320
Modelo de Comunidad Ecológica Los Valles	Promoting Environmental Education in Selected Ngobe-Bugle Communities of the Palo Seco Forest Reserve, La Amistad International Park.	\$20,000	\$6,500

Organización para el Desarrollo Sostenible del Pueblo Naso	Promoting Sustainable Development in the Buffer Zone of La Amistad Biosphere Reserve Through Ecotourism in the Naso Indigenous Community Territory	\$20,000	\$2,000
Sano y Salvo	Preventing Agricultural Encroachment Into Indo Maíz Biological Reserve and Cerro Silva Nature Reserve Through the Introduction of Sustainable Agriculture in Their Buffer Zones	\$72,549	\$110,652
The Leatherback Trust	Consolidation of the Protected Area System of Costa Rica	\$55,000	\$64,600
	Additional CEPF Grants in Region	\$1,751,349	
	Total Funding	\$5,500,000	\$15,873,956*
*Data includes funding amounts provided by grantees in both proposals and in final project completion reports.			

Appendix C. Reporting Against Standard World Bank Biodiversity Indicators

Impacts on:	Has the project produced impacts? Yes No Not Applicable Planned	Quantitative Information of changes	Comments on changes, including qualitative information.
Expanding protected areas	Yes	<p>Damani Wetland, 24,089 hectares in Panama, protected as a wetland of international importance.</p> <p>Creation of the Maquenque Wildlife Refuge in Costa Rica, 54,000 hectares, in June 2005.</p>	<p>Currently consideration for RAMSAR designation.</p> <p>Managed locally by Ngobe-Bugle indigenous community.</p> <p>Contributes to connectivity within the Mesoamerica Biological Corridor</p>
Improving management effectiveness of protected areas	Yes	<p>CEPF helped strengthen 22 existing protected areas covering 1.2 million hectares, focusing on the highest priority protected areas</p> <p>Strengthened protection in PN Corcovado, La Amistad-CR, La Amistad-Panama.</p> <p>Management plans of Indio Maiz, Nicaragua completed and in process of implementation.</p>	<p>Demonstrable biological improvements in Corcovado; expert observations indicate improvements through strengthened patrolling, community outreach, fire control, biological research, sustainable development for communities.</p> <p>Indio Maiz's management plan regarded as a model in Nicaragua for its participatory approach. Impacts include improvements in patrolling, community outreach, biological research, sustainable development for</p>

		Management plan for Costa Rica's Maquenque Wildlife Refuge completed.	communities.
Hectares of production systems that involve improving sustainable use of biodiversity resources.	Yes	<p>Panama: 120 hectares on sustainable horticulture, 8 hectares under traditional medicine gardens</p> <p>Costa Rica: 450 hectares of agroforestry systems with coffee, 675 hectares of native species reforested, 2200 hectares under diversified systems on forest, cattle, agroforestry and sustainable crops, 1,800 hectares under PE Services on ecotourism</p> <p>Nicaragua: 2,500 hectares under sustainable systems of production.</p>	Projection of 655 hectares under Conservation coffee in CR and 500 hectares in Panama.
% of beneficiaries engaged in improved livelihoods based on sustainable NR management (or sustainable harvesting?) ⁴	Yes	% not tracked	385 jobs created; 15,375 people trained. Throughout the region, heavy emphasis on poverty alleviation through sustainable development projects promoting conservation coffee, sustainable agriculture, ecotourism, reforestation, use of traditional knowledge for resource management, land tenure security.
Changes in sectoral policies, laws and regulations and their application, changes in institutional	Yes	Establishment and application on land use management and regulations in the Corcovado-Piedras	

<p>arrangements, responsibilities and effectiveness, to improve biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.</p>		<p>Blancas corridor.</p> <p>Support of gap analysis process in Costa Rica for nation-wide identification of targets for future protection.</p> <p>Cancellation of road through Baru Volcano National Park, Panama.</p> <p>Strengthened local governance and institutional strengthening in Ngobe – Bulge Indigenous Reserve (Pma) and Rama Indigenous Territory (NI).</p>	
<p>Sharing of benefits between and/or in countries, arising from the use of genetic resources</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>		
<p>Other impacts⁵</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Establishment of community working coalitions and alliances among different groups in Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama for strengthen the conservation of natural resources.</p> <p>Habitat improvements and populations studies for the manatee, tapir, green macaw, jaguar, peccaries, resulting in more stable populations.</p> <p>22 environmental education programs operating in the Caribbean corridor of La Amistad, two in the Osa Peninsula.</p>	<p>These alliances have allowed the establishment of protection plans for Indio Maiz and Punta Gorda, creation of volunteer park-ranger groups.</p>

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