

First five CEPF projects granted in the Eastern Afromontane hotspot!

- By Venancia.Ndoo



Butterflies on Mount Mabu, Mozambique (Julian Bayliss)

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund has signed the first contracts with Civil Society Organisations in the Eastern Afromontane hotspot:

1. Albertine Rift Conservation Society, Albertine Rift

ARCOS was the first official grantee (with only a few minutes difference!) in the Eastern Afromontane hotspot. Their project will enhance the capacities of civil society organizations throughout the Albertine Rift Region to improve the transparency of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) policies and ensure that the legal participatory processes are well respected.

2. BirdLife Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe

Hot on ARCOS' heels was BirdLife Zimbabwe with their project to improve biodiversity and increase areas under effective management in the priority Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) of the Chimanimani-Nyanga mountains corridor in Zimbabwe. The KBA sites involved include the Chimanimani Mountains National Park, Nyanga Mountains National Park, Chirinda Forest Reserve, Stapleford Forest Reserve and Vumba Highlands.

3. MICAIA and Royal Botanical Gardens of Kew, Mozambique

On the other side of the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border, MICAIA and RBG Kew will conduct a baseline botanical survey for the Mozambican highland areas of the Chimanimani Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA), inform local stakeholders so that they are better able to act on

biodiversity conservation priorities, and facilitate improved communication and collaboration between civil society organizations and formal governmental bodies in Mozambique and Zimbabwe in the context of the Chimanimani TFCA.

4. Fauna & Flora International, Mozambique

Also in Mozambique, Fauna & Flora International (FFI) and the Mozambican organization Justica Ambiental! will work to register Mt Mabu, one of the last Afromontane remnant forests and a priority KBA, as land for conservation use and nature-based tourism only, guided by a community based conservation management plan. Work will entail strengthening of a community based organization and collaboration with a derelict tea estate that is being rehabilitated and brought back online by Mozambique Holdings.

5. MELCA, Ethiopia

MELCA has been working in the Sheka Forest area, a priority KBA in Ethiopia, since 2005, and has supported the local communities in the establishment of a Man and Biosphere Reserve, approved by the Ethiopian government and endorsed by UNESCO in 2012. In this CEPF-funded project, MELCA will support local community and local leaders to enforce the approved land use plan, and to develop economic activities compatible with the long-term conservation of the forest, such as bee-keeping, spice gardens or sustainable animal husbandry. Follow these, and other Eastern Afromontane projects in the future, on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/CEPF.EAM and on Twitter: www.twitter.com/EAM_Hotspot. You can also subscribe to the Eastern Afromontane e-bulletin 'SASA' here: eepurl.com/wXWKn SASA 1, circulated in March 2013, can be found here: eepurl.com/wXVeH.

BirdLife International, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society (EWNHS) are the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) investment in the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity hotspot, enabling civil society participation in biodiversity conservation where it matters most. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Government of Japan, the MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.