

**Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
29th Meeting of the CEPF Donor Council
Arlington, Virginia
10 June 2016
8:00-11:00 a.m. EST**

Executive Director's Report

At a Glance

• Hotspot strategies implemented	23
• Countries and territories covered	92
• Partners supported	2,061
• Grants committed	\$196 million
• Amount leveraged by those grants	\$350 million
• Protected areas created [hectares]	13 million
• Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) with strengthened management and protection [hectares]	37 million
• IUCN Red-Listed species included	1,200

CEPF Upcoming Travel Schedule

Please join CEPF during any of our upcoming field visits, which provide good opportunities to meet our grantees and learn about CEPF in the field. Contact Olivier Langrand (olangrand@cepf.net) if you are interested in attending any of the following:

June

Mediterranean Basin

Launch of re-profiling process
Brussels, Belgium (17 June)

Indo-Burma

Supervision mission
Hanoi, Vietnam (11 July – 5 August)

July

Cerrado

RIT Training
Brasilia, Brazil (Late July)

August

Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands

Supervision mission
Seychelles, Madagascar (Second half of August)

Guinean Forests

RIT training
Accra, Ghana (Late August)

September

Mountains of Central Asia

Ecosystem profile stakeholder workshop
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; Tashkent, Uzbekistan
(Dates TBD)

East Melanesian Islands

RIT training
Hawaii, U.S. (Dates TBD)

October

East Melanesian Islands

Supervision mission
Vanuatu, Solomon Islands (Dates TBD)

Wallacea

Supervision mission
Flores, Indonesia, Timor-Leste (29 Oct. – 12 Nov.)

November

Mediterranean Basin

Regional workshop for profile update
Turkey (Second half of November)

Brasilia, Brazil (Dates TBD)

Eastern Afromontane

Supervision mission
Kenya, Ethiopia (28 Nov. – 10 Dec.)

December

Guinean Forests

Supervision mission
Accra, Ghana; Sierra Leone/Cameroon
(Dates TBD)

Partnership Highlights



A jaguar (*Panthera onca*) patrols the Brazilian Cerrado. © O. Langrand

Donor Council Meeting Results

The CEPF Donor Council met in Brussels on 20 January 2016, and made important decisions about new investments, governance and fundraising activities.

Donor Council members decided that a reinvestment in the Mediterranean Basin and a first-time investment in the Mountains of Central Asia biodiversity hotspot would be next on CEPF's agenda. The decision signaled the start of the ecosystem profile process for these regions. Read more below, in the Update on Profiling section.

Donors also approved the ecosystem profile for the Cerrado biodiversity hotspot, with an investment of US\$ 8 million, and for the Guinean Forests of West Africa biodiversity hotspot, with US\$ 9 million for implementation. Read more about preparation for these investments under Update on New Investments.

Also at the meeting, Donor Council members approved the fundraising plan for Phase III and made decisions on several points related to governance, including that the Donor Council Chair should be independent of any of CEPF donors and renewal of the three-year term is permissible if term is consecutive; the length of the phase for global donors contributing funds for a single CEPF phase is seven years; Donor Council membership ends three years after the end of the commitment period; and if the number of donors increases beyond 10, decision-making should remain on a consensus basis.

Draft minutes from the meeting can be found [here](#).



Olivier Langrand introduces CEPF in a presentation focusing on investment in the Guinean Forests of West Africa at the European Commission's InfoPoint.
© CEPF/Photo by Mandy Devine

CEPF Presentations Held in Brussels

Members of the CEPF team participated in presentations in Brussels in January during the week of the Donor Council meeting. Participation in these events was designed to raise awareness about CEPF, its results, and its Phase III approach.

On 20 January, after the Donor Council meeting, Executive Director Olivier Langrand and Grant Director Pierre Carret participated in a session hosted by European Commission Director General for Environment Daniel Calleja-Crespo focused on CEPF's "long-term vision" for the protection of biodiversity and the role of civil society in the Western Balkans.

The Directorates-General of Environment and Development Cooperation organized the mini-seminar in close cooperation with CEPF. Mojmir Mrak, co-author of the long-term vision, provided an overview of the plan.

On 19 January, Olivier Langrand and CEPF Managing Director Jack Tordoff participated in a lunchtime program at DEVCO's InfoPoint, a conference room in Brussels where DEVCO regularly hosts programs for the public to encourage dialogue and exchange of ideas.

The topic of the program was "Conserving Critical Ecosystems in Africa," and Veronique Lorenzo Head of DEVCO's Environment, Ecosystems, Biodiversity and Wildlife Unit, introduced the session.

Also presenting during the program was Kenneth Angu Angu, Regional Forest Program Coordinator for IUCN's Central and West Africa Programme, who was part of the team that developed CEPF's new ecosystem profile and conservation strategy for the Guinean Forests of West Africa.

Following this session, Jack Tordoff and Philippe Mayaux, head of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for DEVCO, were interviewed on video for an article DEVCO recently posted on "Wildlife Conservation for Development."

[Read the article](#)

Impala lily (*Adenium multiflorum*) in the Ponto do Ouro KBA in Mozambique. © CI/photo by Dan Rothberg

Key Biodiversity Area Partnership Established

During the past year CEPF has participated in the design of the Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) Partnership together with NGO partners including BirdLife International, IUCN, Wildlife Conservation Society and WWF, among others.

The vision of the KBA Partnership is to promote a comprehensive network of sites that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity, and are effectively managed, sufficiently resourced, and adequately safeguarded. The goal of the partnership is to develop and maintain an up-to-date, fully documented list of sites identified against the KBA standard and to communicate, promote and position this information to enable achievement of the KBA vision.

To become a member of the KBA Partnership, an organization must:

- Be science-based.
- Coordinate or support a process to identify, document, update and/or monitor KBAs in at least 20 countries over five years and invest US \$200,000 per year for five years or US\$ 1 million over five years.
- Contribute to supporting the KBA Secretariat.

The KBA Partnership will be signed in September 2016 during the IUCN World Conservation Congress held in Hawaii. CEPF will sign the memorandum of understanding in September together with a few other proto-partners, in particular BirdLife International and IUCN. These two organizations form the KBA Secretariat that will have the following functions:

- Centralized coordination of activities supporting the KBA Partnership, the KBA Committee, and coordination of joint fundraising and communications activities.
- Development and management of the KBA database and website.
- Confirmation of sites as KBAs.

CEPF will submit its candidature to have one out of the seven voting positions on the KBA Committee.

Since 2003 CEPF, through ecosystem profiling, has contributed to the identification of 5,902 KBAs, and this work will continue as identification of KBAs in ecosystem profiles constitutes the backbone for the investment of CEPF in the biodiversity hotspots and guides investment of other donors.

Advisory Committee Convenes

Members of the Advisory Committee for the Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands biodiversity hotspot held their first meeting in Antananarivo on 4 February. Participants included Giovanni Ruta, representing the World Bank office in Madagascar. The committee is comprised of representatives from civil society, national governments, regional bodies (the Indian Ocean Commission) and the private sector. Discussions focused on mechanisms to foster the emergence of a new generation of conservation professionals; strengthening partnership between civil society and private sector; and the needs of national administration in regard to supporting civil society.



Ohrid Lake in Albania. © Thomais Vlachogianni

Act4Drin NGO Alliance Launched on World Wetlands Day

On 2 February, World Wetlands Day, 13 NGOs joined forces to form the Act4Drin Alliance aiming to protect and conserve freshwater ecosystems in the Drin River Basin in Albania.

The Alliance aims to act as a forum for coordinating and strengthening NGO participation in the policy developments in the region, enhancing cooperation and networking among and between regional, national and grassroots NGOs

in the Drin Basin that are working on sustainable water resources management and freshwater biodiversity conservation. The Alliance is a result of the Act4Drin project funded by CEPF and led by MIO-ECSDE.

Securing Financial Commitments, Strengthening Partnerships

Meeting with Agence Française de Développement

On 19 April, Olivier Langrand, Pierre Carret (grant director for the Mediterranean and the Madagascar and Ocean Islands hotspots) and Peggy Poncelet (grant director for the Cerrado and the Guinean Forests of West Africa hotspots) met at Agence Française de Développement (AFD) in Paris with Jean-Luc François (head of the Agriculture, Rural Development and Biodiversity Division) and Guillaume Chiron (project manager the Environment & Biodiversity Department).

The meeting was concluded with the commitment of AFD to initiate the process for obtaining a regional contribution of 5 million Euros to be shared between the Guinean Forests of West Africa and Madagascar and Ocean Islands hotspots. Should this new regional contribution be approved, funds would be available in mid-2017.

Engaging Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial

On 19 April, Olivier Langrand, Pierre Carret (grant director for the Mediterranean and the Madagascar and Ocean Islands hotspots) and Peggy Poncelet (grant director for the Cerrado and the Guinean Forests of West Africa hotspots) met with Constance Corbier-Barthaux (project manager of Biodiversity and Programme de Petites Initiatives) from Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial (FFEM) in Paris.

Discussions focused primarily on establishing a collaboration between CEPF's upcoming investment in the Guinean Forests of West Africa hotspot and the upcoming new investment phase of the Programme de Petites Initiatives (PPI), which was set up in 2006 by FFEM to support African civil society groups actively involved in biodiversity protection and climate change actions.

Five collaboration points were identified: (i) to organize annual donors round tables on a rotation basis, (ii) to release joint Calls for Proposals, (iii) to share common monitoring and evaluation tools, (iv) to work hand-in-hand when building the capacities of the beneficiaries and (v) to pool together our means for field-based monitoring of the projects. A discussion is also taking place between the FFEM and the MAVA Foundation and IUCN-NL. A Memorandum of Understanding to formalize the alliance of the different parties will be finalized in the coming few months.

MAVA Commitment to Mediterranean Hotspot

On 20 April, Olivier Langrand, Pierre Carret (grant director for the Mediterranean and the Madagascar and Ocean Islands hotspots) and Peggy Poncelet (grant director for the Cerrado and the Guinean Forests of West Africa hotspots) met at MAVA Foundation in Gland, Switzerland, with Lynda Mansson, general director. The meeting focused on securing the commitment of the MAVA Foundation to the re-profiling of the Mediterranean biodiversity hotspot Ecosystem Profile and the coordination of the investment of CEPF and MAVA in this hotspot. MAVA confirmed that \$100,000 will be contributed toward the re-profiling of the Mediterranean biodiversity hotspot and that the strategy designed in the Ecosystem Profile will take into account the conservation strategy adopted by MAVA for the 2016 – 2022 cycle.

PAII Contribution to Mediterranean Hotspot

On 21 April, Olivier Langrand and Pierre Carret (grant director for the Mediterranean and the Madagascar and Ocean Islands hotspots) met at Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation (PAII) in Monaco, with Minister Bernard Fautrier, CEO, and Philippe Mondielli, director. The meeting focused on securing the commitment of the PAII Foundation to the re-profiling of the Mediterranean biodiversity hotspot Ecosystem Profile and the coordination of the investment of CEPF and PAII foundation in this hotspot. PAII foundation confirmed that US\$ 100,000 will be contributed toward the re-profiling of the Mediterranean biodiversity hotspot and that the funding allocated to projects in the hotspot will take into account the investment plan by CEPF during the 2017 – 2022 phase.

Morocco Projects Supervision Mission

From 22 to 29 April, Olivier Langrand and Pierre Carret (grant director for the Mediterranean and the Madagascar and Ocean Islands hotspots) traveled to Morocco for a projects supervision mission. They were accompanied by Awatef Abiah, from the RIT (BirdLife International - Ligue de Protection des Oiseaux).

They visited five of the 14 projects funded in Morocco and met with project executants, civil society partners and national, regional and local governmental representatives. Conservation challenges in Morocco are important and most of the projects are implemented in water stressed areas where overgrazing is aggravating the overall environmental situation. The collaboration between CEPF grantees and government representatives is effective, and solutions to protect biodiversity restore natural habitats to allow communities to benefit from ecosystem services are being implemented.

KfW Considering Support for Tropical Andes

In May, Olivier Langrand reached out to German Development Bank KfW to investigate the status of the concept that has been submitted to the government in February 2016. The concept that has been designed to support the Tropical Andes biodiversity hotspot portfolio investment is still under consideration, and CEPF should hear



The Endangered Atlas cedar (*Cedrus atlantica*)
© O. Langrand in Morocco.

possibility of a partnership in the Mediterranean biodiversity hotspot. A meeting is scheduled for 24 June. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was very receptive to the idea of a discussion with CEPF and proposed to extend it to other hotspots.

Pending Connections

In May, Olivier reached out to the Government of Canada through contacts at Parks Canada, and no response has been received yet.

Similar requests for meetings were sent to the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and to the Federal Office of the Environment (FOEN) in Switzerland but, to date,

shortly from KfW.

A meeting to seek support from KfW for CEPF investment in Africa and Madagascar will take place 23 June in Frankfurt.

Discussion with Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

In May, Olivier contacted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from Italy to offer to meet to explore the

no responses have been received.

The Swiss government could be an important partner in the context of the forthcoming investment of CEPF in the Mountains of Central Asia that Switzerland has been supporting for the past 15 years. Zoï Environment, the Swiss NGO selected to prepare the Ecosystem Profile for the Mountains of Central Asia, is assisting in establishing the contacts with the Swiss government entities.

CEPF Plans Participation in IUCN World Conservation Congress

CEPF will participate in the IUCN World Conservation Congress set for September 1-10 in Honolulu, Hawaii. We invite donor representatives who are attending to the conference to join us for CEPF activities, including the following.

Friday, September 2

- KBA Consultative Forum: Exchanging Experience on Application of the KBA Standard at the National Level. 5-7 p.m., Room 301. Lead from CEPF: Managing Director Jack Tordoff

Saturday, September 3

- Program on the effectiveness of small grants to conserve biodiversity, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Species Conservation Pavilion. Lead from CEPF: Executive Director Olivier Langrand
- Key Biodiversity Area Partnership Launch, 7:30-9:30 p.m., Species Conservation Pavilion. Lead from CEPF: Executive Director Olivier Langrand

Sunday, September 4

- Panel discussion on funding opportunities for indigenous peoples and local communities, organized by the UNDP, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Lead from CEPF: Grant Director Michele Zador
- CEPF's 15th anniversary reception, featuring CEPF's Hotspot Heroes. Tentative time: 7-9 p.m., at the Bishop Museum, Honolulu.



This year's World Conservation Congress will take place in Honolulu, Hawaii. © Mark Jensen

Monday, September 5

- A workshop from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. – Investing in Conservation: How Long is Enough? Room 317A. Leads from CEPF: Executive Director Olivier Langrand (speaking); Senior Director of Monitoring, Evaluation and Outreach Nina Marshall

Tuesday, September 6

CEPF field excursion with the Hotspot Heroes – time and location to be determined.

See Agenda Item #10 for more information.

Communications Corner

CEPF's Stories from the Biodiversity Hotspots

Forests and Fresh Water: Reviving Rwanda's Gishwati Forest

The deforestation of Gishwati Forest has had devastating effects on the local communities' water quality. CEPF grantee Forest of Hope Association has increased forest area and established community committees to protect the region from further degradation.

[Read more](#)



Ninety-eight percent of Gishwati Forest has been deforested. © Antoine Torrens

Strengthening Women's Role in Conservation

Women are increasingly becoming active players and leaders in the conservation movement, but challenges to equality still remain.

[Read more](#)



Gender equality is a key component to successful conservation efforts. © Benjamin Drummond

Cave-Dwelling Salamander Sheds Light on Drinking Water Resources

Nine previously unknown olm populations were discovered in Slovenian and Bosnian caves by a CEPF grantee. Using known olm habitats, the researchers tested water flowing out of the caves for DNA.

[Read more](#)



The Vulnerable olm, or proteus (*Proteus anguinus*), is a 30-centimeter long, mostly blind aquatic amphibian restricted to cave ecosystems. © Gregor Aljančič

The Fate Of The Addax In The Wild And Its Future Between Fences

The IUCN recently announced that the addax may become Extinct in the Wild. Efforts are being made to ensure that doesn't happen.

[Read more](#)



The Critically Endangered addax (*Addax nasomaculatus*) in Morocco. © O. Langrand

Endangered Indonesian Bird Feels The Heat To Reproduce

Maleo parents will never see their egg hatching, feed their baby or raise their young as most bird species do.

[Read more](#)



The Endangered maleo (*Macrocephalon maleo*) in Bogani Nani Wartabone National Park. © O. Langrand

CEPF in the News

CEPF-supported initiatives are often the subject of news articles and magazine features. Below is a sampling of recent stories featuring CEPF and/or our grantees.

World's Largest Ape in Decline

ScienceDaily reported on a new study that revealed an alarming drop in the population of Grauer's gorillas (*Gorilla beringei graueri*).

[Read more](#)



The Endangered Grauer's gorilla, also known as the Eastern lowland gorilla, is found only in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. © CI/photo by John Martin

Additional stories:

[The plan to save the giant pelicans of Skadar Lake](#)
BBC Earth

[Fiji: A walk on the wild side](#)
New Zealand Herald

[A project to save the Sarus Crane in Cambodia is putting people right at the heart of conservation](#)
worldwetlandsday.org

[Guided eco-tours in Hainan: Giving hope to an unprotected wetland](#)
IUCN

[More stories](#)

Updates on Profiling

Mediterranean Basin

Upon approval by the Donor Council for reinvestment in the Mediterranean Basin, the Secretariat issued a call for proposals in late February for organizations interested in leading the profiling process. The call for proposals closed in mid-April and, although only one proposal was received, it came from a consortium of NGOs that has great capacity to analyze the ecological situation of the entire hotspot. (The consortium consists of BirdLife International, IUCN, Tour du Valat, Conservatoire du Littoral, Sociedad Española de Ornitología from Spain, Društvo za opazovanje in proučevanje ptic slovenije from Slovenia and Association Les Amis des Oiseaux from Tunisia.)

The contract is expected to be signed by the end of May, and the profiling process will begin with launch and scoping meetings in Brussels during the week of 13 June.



CEPF Grant Director Pierre Carret presents during a mid-term assessment back in 2015. © O. Langrand

Mountains of Central Asia

Following Donor Council approval of investing in the Mountains of Central Asia, the Secretariat issued a call for proposals for profiling of the hotspot and received eight proposals.

CEPF received eight proposals:

1. The American University of Central Asia, in association with the Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia, Eco-Solutions KG and Aleyne Plus (Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic)
2. The Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan, in association with BirdLife International, Fauna & Flora International,



The Mountains of Central Asia biodiversity hotspot encompasses portions of seven countries, including Kyrgyzstan. © Evgeniy Khilkevitch

- Naturschubund Deutschland, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Wildlife Conservation Society (Astana, Kazakhstan)
3. Beijing Forestry University (Beijing, China)
 4. The Czech Academy of Sciences, in association with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (Brno, Czech Republic)
 5. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, in association with the Michael Succow Foundation (Belgrade, Serbia)
 6. The University of Central Asia, in association with the Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh and the Central Asia Mountain Hub (Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic)
 7. WWF-Russia (Moscow, Russia)
 8. Zoï Environment Network (Zoï) (Châtelaine, Switzerland)

CEPF reviewed proposals, analyzing organizational experience, personnel and the technical approach.

Zoï was selected to lead the Ecosystem Profile and Viktor Novikov, a Tajik citizen based in Geneva, will serve as team leader.

In mid-May CEPF's Jack Tordoff, Pierre Carret and Dan Rothberg, along with Zoï's Novikov, Otto Simmonet, and Firuza Illarionova, briefed the EU

in Brussels. In late May, Rothberg and Tordoff briefed the World Bank. Immediate plans for consultations in the region are as follows:

1–2 June: Political and technical meetings in Almaty, Kazakhstan (including invited participants from China)

6–7 June: Political and introductory (e.g., public) meetings in Dushanbe, Tajikistan

9 June: Introductory meetings in Almaty

10–11 June: Political and introductory meetings in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

13–14 June: Possible meetings in Tashkent, Uzbekistan

June – September: Data gathering, writing, individual consultations

26 September – 14 October: Formal stakeholder consultations to define KBAs and strategic directions in Bishkek, Almaty (including China) and Dushanbe (including Afghanistan)

Early/mid-December: Senior stakeholder workshop, likely in Almaty

From the Field



CEPF's efforts in the Caribbean included supporting turtle monitoring by Haiti organization FoProBIM.
©FoProBiM/photo by Jean Wiener

Caribbean Islands

Reflecting on CEPF's Investment

CEPF continued to close its last grants in the US\$ 6.9-million portfolio. Forty-six groups — 77 percent of the 68 grantees — were Caribbean based. Thirty Key Biodiversity Areas covering over 850,000 hectares experienced tangible conservation improvements.

Preliminary analysis of progress against the civil society tracking tool shows that that Caribbean-based NGOs receiving CEPF funds experienced a 14 percent increase in their capacity, from an average of 61.8 points in 2001 to 70.7 points in 2015.



Members of CEPF grantee Solomon Islands Community Conservation Partnership. © CEPF/photo by Michele Zador

East Melanesian Islands (EMI)

Spreading the Conservation Message Through Hands-On Training

In the Solomon Islands, 18 participants from throughout the EMI region learned about participatory resource management and community-conserved areas during a three-week Pacific Islands Community Co-Manager's Course run by the University of the South Pacific (USP), Solomon Islands Community Conservation Partnership (SICCP) and BirdLife International.

Also in the Solomon Islands, the University of Queensland, Solomon Islands University, SICCP and the American Museum of Natural History held

classroom and field-based lectures and activities for 20 participants from across the country.

In Vanuatu, Landcare Research, USP and Live and Learn Vanuatu provided hands-on training for 15 participants on the eradication and control of invasive alien species. Following the training, participants developed case studies to put into practice the skills and methodologies learned in the classroom.

Capacity building was the aim of a small grant to Tawatana Community Conservation and Development Association (TCCDA). Tawatana is a strong yet isolated community in a remote part of in the Solomon Islands. TCCDA was formed to protect the last remaining area of unlogged, traditionally owned lands on Makira Island. Under their CEPF grant, the TCCDA strengthened their governance and project management skills. An ongoing relationship with SICCP involves mentoring members of the association. Members took part in a "look and learn" trip to the Western Province of the country, which helped build networks and gain direction, perspective and support from other SICCP partners.

Funded under Strategic Direction 4: Increase local, national and regional capacity to conserve biodiversity through catalyzing civil society partnerships. and Strategic Direction 1: Empower local communities to protect and manage globally significant biodiversity at priority key biodiversity areas underserved by current conservation efforts, respectively.

Eastern Afromontane

Helping Grantees Become More Effective

The RIT, BirdLife International, held a small grantee workshop in Nairobi with nine grantees from Tanzania, Rwanda, Zambia and Ethiopia to help them revise their projects for better results. The RIT has the explicit goal of building the capacity of grantees to make them better implementers and more sustainable as organizations. The agenda addressed project design, budget development, and monitoring and evaluation to feed into CEPF portfolio and global indicators.

Funded under Strategic Direction 4: Provide strategic leadership and effective coordination of CEPF investment through a regional implementation team.



Waterfall in Ethiopia's Bale Mountains. © Robin Moore/iLCP

Indo-Burma

Coming Back from the Brink of Extinction

Myanmar roofed turtle (*Batagur trivittata*) is the second rarest turtle species on Earth. The entire wild population is reduced to fewer than 10 adult females and a small number of males, which live along the Chindwin River in northern Myanmar.

Since the discovery of this surviving population, the Turtle Survival Alliance and its partners have been protecting nesting sites and transferring

eggs to a secure facility. In this way, the conservationists were able to ensure more than 80 turtle hatchlings a year returned to the wild. In 2013, however, while the adult females continued to lay eggs, the number that were fertile began to decline. In 2014, only a single egg hatched while, in 2015, no eggs were fertile. The assumption is that the last wild adult males either died or became infertile in or around 2013.

Fortunately, with support from CEPF, a full-scale recovery effort for the species was underway. Captive facilities were established, where turtle hatchlings were raised to a size where they were at less risk of being eaten by predators before being released into the wild. Additional adult turtles were found in temple ponds, maintained by Buddhist monks, and used to supplement the captive population. Post-release monitoring using radio telemetry indicates that survivorship is good.

The most encouraging result came in the spring of 2016, when the first batch of fertile eggs since 2014 was laid by an adult female. With more than 100 animals released to date and hundreds more in the captive facilities, there is hope yet that the extinction of the world's second rarest turtle may be averted.

Funded under Strategic Direction 1: Safeguard priority globally threatened species by mitigating major threats.



Steve Platt from the Turtle Survival Alliance. © CEPF/
photo by Jack Tordoff



Cargados Carajos shoal satellite image © NASA

Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands

Conserving Cargados Carajos

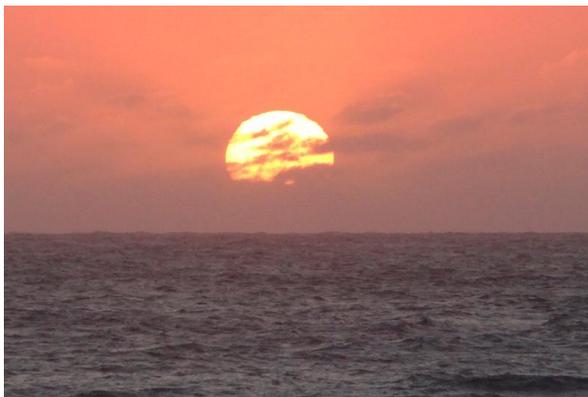
Tany Meva, the RIT, awarded a small grant to support an expedition in Cargados Carajos, a remote archipelago belonging to Mauritius in a CEPF priority KBA. The archipelago is under a private lease to a fishing company, and CEPF grantee Mauritian Wildlife Foundation supports the company's long-term environmental preservation efforts.

Funded under Strategic Direction 2: Enable civil society to mainstream biodiversity and conservation into political and economic decision-making.

Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany

Wrapping Up Regional Efforts

The RIT grant ended on 30 March 2016, marking the formal close of CEPF investment in the region. The RIT and Secretariat are now writing the final assessment report and engaging with local partners to leverage CEPF's investment over the past five years.



Sunset in Mozambique © CI/photo by Dan Rothberg

Mediterranean Basin

Long-Term Financing in the Balkans

Prespa Ohrid Nature Trust (PONT), a new conservation trust fund, was created to financially support the growing environmental needs of the transboundary Prespa area in the Balkans.

PONT is a Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) founded at the end of 2015 as an independent legal entity, based on the recommendations of a scoping study carried out by WWF Greece. The first transboundary CTF in the Balkans, PONT's mission is to provide long-term financing for the conservation and sustainable management of biological diversity, natural processes and ecosystem services in Prespa and its wider area, covering the Lake Region of Albania, Macedonia and Greece.

Along with the MAVA Foundation, CEPF is supporting legal consultations, communications and preliminary meetings with local civil society organizations and local governments in Albania and Macedonia, the two CEPF eligible countries covered by the fund. The initial capital comes from MAVA Foundation and the German development bank KfW.



Little owl (*Athene noctua*) on Jerba Island in Tunisia.
© El Goulli Mohamed

Funded under Strategic Direction 2: Establish sustainable management of water catchments in 4 priority corridors.

A Roadmap for Conservation of the Mediterranean Monk Seal

In March 2015, a pregnant Endangered Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*) was found dead on the coasts of Lebanon. The monk seal is believed to be the world's rarest species of pinniped (i.e., seals, sea lions and walruses). Upon hearing the news, the Mediterranean RIT granted an emergency small grant to the Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) to carry out a thorough identification of the remaining Mediterranean monk seal habitat in the country, to investigate new threats and to work with local communities, including fishermen, to protect them. To compensate for the current absence of surveys and scientific data about the monk seals, SPNL has begun talking to fishermen and divers while simultaneously building a data bank.

SPNL has identified new potential threats, including the consumption of an invasive alien poisonous fish, the silver-cheeked toadfish (*Lagocephalus sceleratus*), illegal fish blasting near caves and oil spill incidents. A conservation action plan for the species is the next step. SPNL is developing a Mediterranean working group, which will include key range states and stakeholders where seal conservation lessons from other countries have already been learned and can be shared.

Funded under Strategic Direction 2: Establish the sustainable management of water catchments and the wise use of water resources with a focus on the four priority corridors.



Tamil Nadu, India, Western Ghats Region © Anjana Vencatesan

Western Ghats

A New Era of Conservation in Tamil Nadu

The Tamil Nadu state government approved a new financing mechanism and set of guidelines for environmental protection in the Western Ghats portion of the state, called the Special Area Development Programme. The program was given an annual budget allocation of INR 75 crores, equivalent to approximately \$US 11 million. This program incorporates recommendations and best practice models from CEPF grants in Tamil Nadu, particularly ones regarding conservation and restoration of critical ecosystems (e.g., riverine forests, shola grasslands, hill wetlands) outside of

the formal protected area system. The adoption of this program marked the culmination of eight years of effort by CEPF, the RIT at ATREE and grantees to test innovative conservation models and promote their amplification through integration into government plans and budgets.

This result was made possible through a CEPF grant to Care Earth Trust, a local NGO based in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The grant achieved unprecedented success in mainstreaming the work of civil society actors into a major government conservation program. The grant presented data, case studies and recommendations from other CEPF grantees and other civil society groups to relevant government departments through briefings, seminars and a resource compendium. The success of this was attributed to a cross-departmental approach not limited to a single line department; the willingness of multiple actors to work in partnership and let the common good take priority over other concerns; and the humility and perseverance of the Care Earth team.

Funded under Strategic Direction 2: Improve the conservation of globally threatened species through systematic conservation planning and action

From the Secretariat

Open Positions Filled

The CEPF Secretariat team is full again, following the hiring of two staff members to replace staff who left recently. Marsea Nelson is now the communications manager, replacing Mandy DeVine; and Priscila Borba is now a grant manager, replacing Laura Johnston. Check out [our team](#) on the website for more information.

Featured New Grant

Enhancing Climate Change Resilience in Rwanda

In February the Association pour la Conservation de la Nature au Rwanda (ACNR) received a grant of US \$ 99,698 to improve the management of the Lake Kivu Basin. Along with partners in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, ACNR is using a technique called “soil fingerprinting” — taking soil samples in respective tributaries and then, with laboratory assistance from Florida International University, determining the source of the soil. The next step will be targeted interventions at each site. If the project is successful, it can be replicated elsewhere.

Funded under Strategic Direction 1: Mainstream biodiversity into wider development policies, plans and projects to deliver the co-benefits of biodiversity conservation, improved local livelihoods and economic development in priority corridors.

Update on New Investments



A collared crescentchest (*Melanopareia torquata*) in the Cerrado in Brazil © O. Langrand



Children on Sierra Leone's Tiwai Island. © CI/photo by Dan Rothberg

Cerrado

IEB Chosen as New RIT

With an investment of US\$ 8 million over a period of five years (June 2016 – May 2021), CEPF will invest to support (i) the adoption of best practices in agriculture in the four priority corridors, (ii) the creation/ expansion and effective management of protected areas in the priority corridors, (iii) the strengthening of supply chains associated with the sustainable use of natural resources and ecological restoration in the hotspot, (iv) the protection of threatened species in the hotspot, (v) the implementation of tools to better inform decision-making processes, (vi) the strengthening of civil society organizations and (vii) the provision of a strategic leadership via the RIT.

In February, the CEPF Secretariat reviewed proposals submitted by two institutions and conducted interviews in Brasília. The Secretariat presented the Working Group with an analysis of the RIT applicants, and the Donor Council officially selected the Instituto Internacional de Educação do Brasil (IEB) in April.

Since then, the Secretariat and IEB have worked together to reach an agreement on the three negotiation points identified by the Secretariat while reviewing the initial proposal. These points were the recruitment of one additional full-time junior operational staff member; the elaboration of a strategy for mainstreaming the results of the CEPF grant portfolio into public policy and private sector practices; and the elaboration of a plan for

Guinean Forests of West Africa

BirdLife International Chosen as New RIT

Beginning in June, CEPF will invest US\$ 9 million for a period of five years (2016–2021). Investments will focus on (i) empowering local communities to sustainably management 40 priority sites, (ii) mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into public policy and private sector practices in the nine identified conservation corridors, (iii) safeguarding priority globally threatened species throughout the hotspot, (iv) building the capacity of local civil society organizations and (v) providing strategic leadership via the RIT.

On 4 January, as part of the RIT selection process, the CEPF Secretariat organized a conference call with interested pre-qualified organizations to better explain the roles and responsibilities of a successful RIT. Seven full proposals were subsequently received and the Donor Council officially selected BirdLife International was officially selected in April.

The Secretariat had identified negotiation points while reviewing the initial proposal. The Secretariat and BirdLife International have thus discussed the modalities related to these points and reached an agreement on a strengthened staffing arrangement, with three sub-regional officers dedicating 50 percent of their time for the full five years and being based within their respective regions; the elaboration of a strategy for mainstreaming the results of the CEPF grant

monitoring and evaluation of the grant portfolio.

A final, updated proposal will soon be submitted by IEB via CEPF's online grant management system. The contracting process of the grant will start in early June for a project starting date of 1 July.

portfolio into public policy and private sector practices; a greater clarity on the proposed long-term vision process; the provision of funds to allow a baseline and a final assessment of CEPF Global indicators by the identified partner (UNEP-WCMC); and a clear timeframe for rolling out the new financial system of BirdLife International to their Accra office.

A final updated RIT proposal for the hotspot was submitted by BirdLife via CEPF's online grant management system in late May, and the grant contracting process is now initiated for a project starting date of 1 July.



The Critically Endangered Peruvian yellow-tailed woolly monkey (*Oreonax flavicauda*). © CI/photo by Stephen Nash



Nest guardians for the Bogani Nani Wartabone National Park hold an Endangered maleo (*Macrocephalon maleo*) egg above its nest. © O. Langrand

Tropical Andes

Reviewing Potential Projects

The Tropical Andes team has spent the third and fourth quarters of FY16 processing more than 110 letters of intent (LOIs) submitted from NGOs from Bolivia, Colombia and Peru. It received support from national review committees comprised of biodiversity experts, civil society representatives, former environmental authorities and other donors. The team worked on contracting 14 of the most promising proposals for FY16, and plans to continue contracting additional proposals into early FY17.

In April, the Tropical Andes Grant Director Michele Zador traveled to Lima to meet with a representative from KfW to explore options for operationalizing a potential donation to CEPF for the hotspot. She also traveled to Quito to meet with representatives of the Ministry of the Environment to discuss securing the GEF Focal Point endorsement for Ecuador and helping to ensure that reconstruction efforts following the April earthquake integrate environmental and social sustainability.

Wallacea

Preparing Future Applicants

The RIT, Burung Indonesia, held stakeholder workshops in Sengkang, South Sulawesi, and Ternate, Maluku Utara, in advance of releasing calls for letters of inquiry. Representatives of more than 25 different organizations attended each workshop.

RIT members explained to potential applicants the goals of CEPF, how to design a project and how to write a proposal to CEPF. The aim of the workshops was to improve the quality of applications, particularly from local and national NGOs.