

Annual Portfolio Overview - October 2010 to December 2011
Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot
June 2012

I. Introduction

The Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot, an archipelago of habitat-rich tropical and semi-tropical islands, comprises 30 nations and territories and stretches across nearly 4 million km² of ocean. Its unique island geography and complex geology has created unique habitats and high species diversity. Species endemic to the hotspot account for 70% of the hotspot’s plants and animals, which represent 2.6 percent of the world’s 300,000 plant species, and 3.5 percent of the world’s 27,298 vertebrate species. Furthermore, the hotspot contains among the highest in number of globally threatened species in the world at 703 species, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Terrestrial Species Diversity, Endemicity and Global Threat in the Caribbean Islands Hotspot

Taxonomic Group	Species	Hotspot endemics	% Endemism	Globally Threatened	% Threatened
Mammals	69	51	74	27	39
Birds	564	148	26	51	9
Reptiles	520	494	95	37	7
Amphibians	189	189	100	145	77
Freshwater fish	167	65	39	5	3
Plants	11,000	7,868	72	438	4
Total	12,509	8,817	70	703	6

The hotspot’s biodiversity has been impacted by humans since the arrival of the Amerindians some 6,000 to 7,000 years ago. These impacts increased substantially following the arrival of Europeans in the 1490s and have escalated in the last 50 years due to the rapidly increasing population and economic development in the region. The main threats to the terrestrial biodiversity of the insular Caribbean are habitat destruction and fragmentation due to agricultural, tourism, and industrial and urban development driven by increasing population and affluence. Overexploitation of living resources, predation and competition by invasive alien species are also regarded as significant threats. Pollution affects freshwater and marine environments, as does sedimentation flows downstream, affecting coastal water quality, smothering corals, killing fish and reducing the tourism value of beaches.

The region has already experienced the impacts of climate change with increased temperatures and more hurricanes and droughts. Concerns are growing over predicted sea level rise. The Caribbean’s main priority in addressing climate change is to formulate and implement appropriate strategies for adaptation to minimize the social and environmental impacts.

Underlying these direct threats are multiple root causes, including poor land-use planning, limited capacity and financial resources, lack of awareness and political support, weak and ineffective legislation, limited availability of information, and inefficient institutional organization. Improved management of the hotspot's landscapes, freshwater and coastal ecosystems is essential for sustainable growth and development in the region. Government and nongovernmental capacity must be increased if conservation is to succeed in this hotspot in the long term.

II. Niche for CEPF Investment

The Caribbean Islands portfolio formally started in October 2010 with CEPF's approval of the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) grant. The total allocation for the portfolio is \$6.9 million for five years to invest in 11 eligible countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

While the ecosystem profile identifies 703 globally threatened species, 290 key biodiversity areas, and seven corridors as hotspot-level conservation targets, CEPF has prioritized these outcomes to ensure its funds achieve the greatest conservation benefits relative to the costs. CEPF targets 17 KBAs as its highest priorities in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Jamaica, known to have the highest concentrations of globally endangered species. The strategy also calls for supporting 28 KBAs as medium-level priorities that include sites in the other CEPF eligible countries with fewer such species, and six conservation corridors where many of these KBAs are located.

The CEPF niche is to support civil society groups so that they can serve as effective advocates, facilitators and leaders for conservation and sustainable development of their islands. Civil society groups are in a unique position in the Caribbean to fulfill this role, as they have knowledge of and experience in conserving biodiversity. They also can bridge local development aspirations with longer term conservation goals. CEPF investments seek to empower civil society groups to engage in strategic conservation efforts, as well as to participate in and influence broader development planning and policy agendas. To achieve this niche, the profile identifies strategic directions where civil society can play a meaningful role to achieve long-term conservation goals:

1. Improve protection and management of 45 priority key biodiversity areas.
2. Integrate biodiversity conservation into landscape and development planning and implementation in six conservation corridors.
3. Support Caribbean civil society to achieve biodiversity conservation by building local and regional institutional capacity and by fostering stakeholder collaboration.
4. Provide strategic leadership and effective coordination of CEPF investment through a regional implementation team.
5. Provide emergency support to Haitian civil society to mitigate the impacts of the 2010 earthquake.¹

¹ CEPF provides special support to Haitian civil society to mitigate the impacts of the 2010 earthquake. This support, approved separately by the Donor Council in March 2010, has been incorporated as the fifth strategic direction.

III. Portfolio Status

The CEPF Secretariat and RIT dedicated 2011 to undertaking a variety of activities in order to prepare the region for grant making. The portfolio formally began with the start of the RIT grant to the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) in October 2010. By early November, the CEPF Secretariat and RIT met in CANARI's office in Port of Spain, Trinidad to undertake formal training and to plan launch activities for CEPF. Based on these plans, CANARI issued three calls for letters of inquiry (LOI) in 2011 for all eligible countries, as listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Timeline for Calls for Letters of Inquiries

Countries	Release	Deadline for Small Grants	Deadline for Large Grants
Haiti and Jamaica	February 1, 2011	March 31, 2011	April 15, 2011
Dominican Republic	April 1, 2011	June 3, 2011	June 10, 2011
All	September 21, 2011	October 17, 2011	October 24, 2011

In conjunction with the calls, the RIT held outreach meetings in January and February in Santo Domingo, Port au Prince, and Kingston to disseminate information on CEPF funding priorities and its application process. More than 80 participants from 60 local civil society and government groups attended. In October 2011, CANARI facilitated a training workshop in St. Vincent for 20 participants from 12 countries to build their capacity to be effective mentors to civil society organizations (CSOs) in writing proposals and implementing them. This training workshop was part of a large project funded by the MacArthur Foundation (see section VIII on donor outreach for more detail).

Concurrent to these outreach events, the RIT established the Regional Advisory Committee for CEPF (RACC), which brought together 17 senior-level conservationists with a full breadth of thematic and geographical expertise. The RACC is dedicated to reviewing CEPF proposals and to offering strategic guidance on CEPF engagement in the region. CANARI facilitated a one-day RACC inception meeting in May 2011 in Port of Spain to go over CEPF funding priorities and application processes and to define the RACC's process of reviewing LOIs and communication, in addition to finalizing the RACC terms of reference.

The CEPF Secretariat and RIT also dedicated time to obtaining the endorsement of the ecosystem profile and CEPF's engagement from the GEF focal points for all CEPF-eligible countries. The team sent emails and made telephone calls to all focal points, and met personally with several. By the end of 2011, CEPF received endorsements from eight GEF focal points, presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Status of GEF Focal Point Endorsements

Country	Endorsement Date
Antigua and Barbuda	08/04/11

Bahamas	10/18/11
Barbados	10/11/11
Dominica	10/12/11
Dominican Republic	03/16/11
Grenada	not received
Haiti	02/19/10
Jamaica	01/20/11
Saint Lucia	06/29/11
St. Kitts and Nevis	not received
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	not received

Based on these efforts, CEPF received 116 LOIs for small and large grants to undertake conservation activities in 10 countries. These new LOIs build on the four projects approved in 2010: two grants are associated with the RIT and its small grants program and another two grants fulfill CEPF's contribution to emergency recovery in Haiti following the 2010 earthquake. By the end of 2011, three new grants had been contracted as part of the 2011 calls, and 24 small and large grants were in the pipeline.

Table 4 – Approved Grants, December 2011

No.	Country	Grant Status	Strategic Direction	Applicant/ Grantee	Title	Total
1	Haiti	Contracted	1	Organisation des Paysans pour le Développement de l'unité II Foret des Pins – Mare Rouge (OPDFM)	Measures to Support the Zoning Plan in Unit II of the Forest Reserve in "La Foret des Pins."	70,845
2	Dominican Republic	Contracted	1	Instituto Dominicano de Desarrollo Integral	Management Plan for Bahoruco Oriental	49,669
3	Haiti	Contracted	2	International Iguana Foundation	Municipal Reserve for Ricord's Iguana	49,885
4	Regional	Contracted	4	CANARI Regional Implementation Team	Regional Implementation Team	655,000
5	Haiti	Contracted	5	Birdlife International	Post-Earthquake environmental Support for the Haitian NGO Sector	251,354
6	Haiti	Completed	5	Birdlife International	Preparation of Emergency Support	13,188
Total						1,089,941

Table 5 shows the current funding in contract and pipeline as of December 31, 2011. Fully contracted grants totaled \$1,089,941,² with pipeline grants totaling slightly over \$2.3 million. In the latter half of

² Please note that an allocation of \$200,000 for CANARI to issue small grants does not count for funding under active grants.

2011, grant applicants were dedicated to preparing their full proposals. The momentum that started in December 2011 for contracting new grants should continue in 2012, as pipeline proposals should be come to fruition. Please note that the pipeline budget represents an estimate of project costs, since these figures rely on funding requests put forward in the LOI. Should pipeline proposals be contracted as currently programmed, the expectation is that a total of \$3.4 million will be contracted by June 30, which compromises 49% of the total \$6.9 million portfolio allocation.

Table 5. Contracted and Pipeline Grants by Strategic Direction, December 2011

Strategic Direction	Budget Allocation	Contracted		Pipeline		Sub-Total of Contracted and Pipeline	Unobligated	% Contract or Pipeline
		Contracted	Number of grants	Pipeline	Number of Grants			
SD1 - Strengthen 45 KBAs	3,050,000	120,514	2	1,305,691	11	1,426,205	1,623,795	47%
SD2 - Strengthen Corridor Conservation	1,900,000	49,885	1	658,979	7	708,864	1,191,136	37%
SD3 - Institutional Strengthening	900,000	-	-	344,958	4	344,958	555,042	38%
SD4 - Regional Implementation Team	650,000	655,000	1	-	-	655,000	(5,000)	101%
SD5 - Haiti Emergency Support	400,000	264,542	2	-	-	264,542	135,458	66%
Total	6,900,000	1,089,941	6	2,309,628	22	3,399,569	3,500,431	49%

Demand for funding is strongest under strategic direction 1, which supports site-based investment in 45 KBAs. This trend is not surprising as most local and national NGOs have a history of supporting site-based conservation. It should be noted that several projects falling in SD1 also contain significant capacity building components linked to strategic direction 3.1. The CEPF Secretariat and RIT agreed to integrate components from SD3.1 as part of a larger site-based project under SD1. The alternative of issuing separate grants dedicated exclusively for capacity building to complement SD1 grants was considered to be both programmatically and administratively cumbersome. Gaps in the portfolio have emerged under SD 2, particularly for policy development and strengthening. The team will aim to address this gap by putting special emphasis in future calls for proposals for undersubscribed investments priorities and sites.

IV. Coordinating CEPF Grant Making

The CEPF RIT function is fulfilled by CANARI, a regional NGO dedicated to promoting equitable participation and effective collaboration in the management of natural resources critical to development in the Caribbean Islands since the 1980s. As a well-recognized leader in participatory natural resource management, CANARI's emphasis is on applied action and research learning, capacity building and fostering partnerships. Although its office is in Trinidad, CANARI works in all the islands of

the Caribbean and currently implements projects in the Caribbean UK Overseas Territories, Dominican Republic, Haiti, and the English-speaking Caribbean Islands.

The RIT officially started on October 1, 2010 with two complementary, five-year grants. The RIT grant is for \$655,000 and the small grant fund with a ceiling of \$700,000, with a first disbursement of \$200,000. Due to the geographic configuration of this island hotspot, the RIT is a large team with eight part-time staff spread over four countries, as shown in Table 6. CANARI has engaged three country coordinators on a professional services contract who are based out of the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Jamaica. All other personnel are full-time CANARI employees based in Port of Spain, which is a transportation hub for the Lesser Antilles. All personnel demonstrate strong credentials to serve on the RIT. Collectively, they possess the required language capacity, longstanding experience working with local civil society organizations in CEPF eligible countries, and experience managing grant programs for NGOs and CBOs.

Table 6. Members of CANARI RIT

Position	Name	Base of Operation	Time Billed to Grant	Key Responsibilities
RIT Manager	Anna Cadiz	Port of Spain, Trinidad	55%	Overall RIT management and staff coordination; coordination and outreach to partners in the eastern Caribbean and the Bahamas.
CANARI Executive Director	Nicole Leotaud	Port of Spain, Trinidad	23%	Facilitate strategic alliances with government agencies, civil society, private sector, donor agencies; leverage new funds.
Technical Officer	Loïza Rauzduel	Port of Spain, Trinidad	55%	Support RIT Manager; assist in LOI reviews and communications efforts; small grants database manager.
Financial Officer	Venash Ramberan	Port of Spain, Trinidad	15%	Oversee financial management of RIT and small grants facility.
Administrative Officer	Anastacia Lee Quay	Port of Spain, Trinidad	40%	Assist the RIT in administration of logistics, databases, filing.
Jamaica Country Coordinator	Nicole Brown	Kingston, Jamaica	15%	Provide technical advice and capacity building to CEPF applicants and implementers; assist in LOI reviews; monitor grant implementation; ensure cohesion and synergy among grantees.
Dominican Republic Country Coordinator	Leida Buglass	Samana, Dominican Republic	15%	Provide technical advice and capacity building to CEPF grant applicants and implementers; assist in LOI reviews; monitor grant implementation; ensure cohesion and synergy among grantees.
Haiti Country Coordinator	Paul Judex Edouarzin	Port au Prince, Haiti	15%	Provide technical advice and capacity building to CEPF grant applicants and implementers; assist in LOI reviews; monitor grant implementation; ensure cohesion and synergy among grantees.

As an organization devoted to building Caribbean civil society capacity, CANARI is committed to supporting a strong communications program for CEPF to complement its existing outreach efforts. Several steps toward this end have been developed using electronic media. CANARI established a page on its website dedicated specifically to CEPF (http://www.canari.org/civil_sub5.asp). The page explains its role as the RIT, provides a link to the CEPF webpage, and provides the platform for issuing calls for LOIs. The CANARI website also contains a portal for RACC members to access a secure intranet page with LOIs and reviews along with other key CEPF documents. CANARI has established a Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Caribbean-Natural-Resources-Institute/159735514051858?sk=wall>, as a means of communicating directly with Caribbean partners, applicants, and grantees.

V. Performance Assessment

The RIT and CEPF Secretariat devoted much of 2011 to laying the foundation for grant making. The team invested a significant amount of effort in stakeholder outreach and awareness building, developing grant-making review and assistance processes, and receiving necessary approvals from GEF focal points. Several factors weighed into performance during the year:

- CEPF started in the Caribbean Islands with no previous track record outside of preparation of the ecosystem profile, which had been produced in early 2009 and approved by the CEPF Donor Council in January 2010. As a result, the portfolio's early months were devoted to building understanding of CEPF (including its funding strategy and priorities, management structure, and application procedures) for the RIT, RACC, government partners and potential civil society applicants. A special effort was made to ensure that local civil society groups had sufficient information so that they could submit good proposals. These outreach and capacity building efforts were considered essential in order to lay the groundwork for the initiative's future success, and meant that the portfolio had a relatively slow start with respect to grant making, as the first call for LOIs was issued in February 2011, four months after the official start of the RIT in October 2010.
- The Caribbean region itself is highly complex, covering 11 island countries, and therefore a multitude of different stakeholder groups, including 11 different environmental ministries, a wide variety of local civil society organizations dispersed across the hotspot, and the full gamut of donor representatives. Obtaining endorsements from 11 GEF focal points was labor-intensive and time consuming. Furthermore, the region works in four languages, which mirrors its cultural diversity. It should not be underestimated the time required to reach out to the wide variety of stakeholders in order for CEPF to function successfully.
- While the region is complex, CANARI and its RACC members are well placed to conduct outreach to potential applicants and stakeholders. They have an excellent network of partners in the Caribbean and an in-depth understanding of the region, which ensured that activities in 2011 were undertaken in ways that are appropriate for individual countries and the region as a whole. The location of RIT country coordinators in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Jamaica helped to ensure that CEPF was supported by experts who knew their countries well and could provide guidance to applicants, as well as engage government partners, with relative ease.
- The transaction costs of maintaining such a complex portfolio are high. The RIT itself involves eight staff working across four countries. Portfolio-level documents are translated into at

minimum French and Spanish. Travel from one island to another island is time consuming and expensive. Reliable access to the internet is spotty. Because many countries rely heavily on imports and tourism, the costs of doing business are significantly higher in the insular Caribbean than on continental hotspots.

- As discussed in the ecosystem profile, CEPF found that capacity of local civil society groups to respond to CEPF's proposal and financial management standards was mixed. Some applicants from smaller organizations had difficulty devoting enough time to preparing their proposal and responding quickly to grant-processing timelines because they had other important commitments to attend to. Furthermore, CEPF found that the early proposal submission had a variety of weaknesses due to applicants' lack of familiarity with how to develop a logical framework and performance tracker and how to present a well articulated budget. In addition, some applicants considered CEPF's financial management and procurement policies to be overly restrictive for their small organizations. One applicant expressed significant hesitation in putting in place the kinds of financial oversight procedures that CEPF requires to ensure its funds are used exclusively for grant objectives in compliance with CEPF policies, even though CEPF was willing to cover the full cost of putting in place these procedures. In addition, it should be noted that non-English speaking groups had difficulty understanding the contents of CEPF contracts, which are only in English. Collectively, these early limitations meant that both the RIT and CEPF Secretariat needed to provide a significant amount of technical assistance to local applicants so that they could advance with their proposals and contracts.

While these performance factors created a number of challenges inherent to engaging in new, multi-country island hotspots where local civil society capacity is recognized to be limited, the year ended on a strong footing. By December, CEPF signed three new grants and counted a pipeline of 24 small and large grants that were well aligned with the CEPF strategy and that were advancing with their proposals. Many pipeline grants were from local civil society groups, which reflected the success of early outreach and assistance efforts.

VI. Portfolio Highlights

While CEPF's strategy in the Caribbean Islands supports four strategic directions for grant making to civil society organizations, only strategic direction 5 had grants in implementation long enough in 2011 to report on their progress and performance. This section, therefore, focuses on this strategic direction, as there is not progress to report on for the other strategic directions.

Strategic Direction 5. Provide emergency support to Haitian civil society to mitigate the impacts of the 2010 earthquake.

Following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the Donor Council instructed the Secretariat to prepare a request to allocate an additional \$400,000 for emergency support to Haitian civil society, with three main objectives:

- 1) Prevent the degradation and potential destruction of two of Haiti's most important key biodiversity areas, Massif de la Hotte and Massif de la Selle;
- 2) Assist in the immediate recovery of the environmental and development civil society sector;

- 3) Foster stakeholder engagement and integration of environmental concerns into reconstruction and development planning.

Following Donor Council approval, CEPF asked BirdLife International to prepare a proposal to fulfill the terms of the earthquake reconstruction funding. However, the team encountered several obstacles due to Haiti's difficult post-earthquake condition which created significant barriers to efficient communication and proposal development with project stakeholders. CEPF's grant under this strategic direction started in October 2010. It supports the Rezo Ekolo network of environmental NGOs in order to enhance the capacity of its individual members and to involve them in the reconstruction process.

Strategic Direction 5 – Highlights

The emergency recovery project has faced several challenges in Haiti's post-disaster environment. One difficulty has been recruiting staff in the country's environment characterized by strong competition for well trained professional between various development agencies and NGOs. The grant's first coordinator left after only a few months and proved to be very difficult to replace. Another issue has been the complexity of the grant's management structure – which has Birdlife International in Cambridge as the lead grant providing a sub-grant to Société Audubon Haiti, which pays for Rezo staff and activities. This structure was needed at the time due to the dire situation in the aftermath of the earthquake.

In such a difficult context, the project made some progress towards enhancing the network of environmental NGOs in Haiti. The Rezo members met with the newly elected President Martelly in June 2011 and presented a message for improved mainstreaming of environmental issues in the reconstruction process. A learning center, providing a place for meetings, was also put in place for the use of the local NGOs. But the pace of progress remained slow compare to the initial planning.

In autumn 2011, following a site visit by the Grant Director, the CEPF Secretariat asked Birdlife and the organizations from the Rezo to revise the project design to address the most prominent issues. The implementation team issued a revised work plan at the end of the year, including a three-month extension and a commitment to achieve tangible results, including such priority activities as a retreat to decide on the network's future. The revised plan has gained good momentum among local partners and good progress has been achieved in most revised targets.

VII. Donor Outreach

Both the RIT and CEPF Secretariat have put a high premium on conducting donor outreach, particularly to CEPF donor partners, to explore opportunities for collaboration and coordination.

The strongest example of such collaboration is with the MacArthur Foundation through the award of a three-year, \$475,000 grant to CANARI starting in January 2011, "Consolidating the Role of Civil Society in Biodiversity Conservation in the Caribbean Islands". One component aims to develop a pool of mentors throughout the region who can help strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations to play a larger and more effective role in biodiversity conservation. This program is providing training to 20 mentors who are available to work closely with local groups to help them access and successfully implement conservation projects funded by CEPF and other donors.

Several points of collaboration took place over the year related to the MacArthur project. In February 2011, the CEPF Haiti grant director, RIT manager and Haiti country coordinator participated in a meeting in Port au Prince hosted by the MacArthur Foundation to foster collaboration among its grant recipients in the country. In October 2011, CANARI organized a five-day training workshop in St. Vincent for 20 participants from 12 countries, of which the CEPF grant director was invited to observe. The workshop brought together experienced individuals already involved in the management of natural resources and sustainable natural resource-based livelihoods who had the ability to build the capacity of CSOs in their country. Objectives of the meeting included enhancing mentors' understanding of CEPF's strategy in the region and building capacity in project planning and writing proposals.

The CEPF team also developed strong relationships with other CEPF donors. The RIT and Secretariat met repeatedly with GEF representatives in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad, Grenada, St. Vincent, Saint Lucia, Panama, and Barbados, as well as with national biodiversity focal points and other government partners, to explore opportunities for information exchange and for co-funding opportunities. In Haiti, the RIT and grant director met on several occasions with the GEF focal point to ensure good collaboration with the national authorities and to seek synergies in the Massif de la Hotte region, where the GEF and Haitian government are developing a large environmental and biodiversity conservation project. In the Dominican Republic, a member of the RACC is a program specialist with UNDP, one of the implementing agencies of GEF in the country. Furthermore, CEPF and GEF will co-finance a project to the Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano for sustainable financing and establishment of private reserves in Loma Quita Espuela and Loma Guaconejo KBAs. With respect to small grants, the RIT has met with representatives working in the Lesser Antilles to explore opportunities for collaboration.

In September 2011, the RIT and CEPF grant director organized a donor round table in Port-au-Prince attended by representatives from the World Bank, AFD, French Embassy, EU, and local civil society. In Jamaica, opportunities for potential collaboration have been discussed with a World Bank rural development project and with a Government of Japan grassroots development project. The CEPF team has met with the Embassy of France and World Bank in the Dominican Republic and Haiti to explore how best to coordinate efforts.

CEPF also has met with representatives from donors not affiliated with CEPF as well to seek opportunities for collaboration. In Haiti, good relations were developed with German donors who intend to support several environmental NGOs with national and international expertise. The Haiti grant director also met on several occasions with the European Union delegation to explore potential cooperation on future environmental projects in Haiti. In Jamaica, opportunities for collaboration were explored with the Forest Conservation Fund and CEPF.

The CEPF team has agreed that such outreach efforts to CEPF donors will continue to be a priority for the future. As such, CANARI is expected to conclude a donor mapping exercise which will also facilitate further exploration of this goal.

VIII. Conclusions

The Caribbean Islands portfolio ends its first 15 months poised to start its next year with robust grant making, awarding strategically aligned grants that show good promise of making a meaningful contribution to conservation in the Caribbean. Key systems and procedures are now in place, while a critical mass of GEF focal point endorsements have been secured. Existing relationships with CEPF

donors and stakeholders are being solidified, while new relationships with other donors are being forged.

In the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, a portfolio of grants is being developed that is innovative and fills critical management voids through the development and implementation of management plans in the most biologically diverse sites in the region, safeguarding remaining intact habitat on Hispaniola and Jamaica. In Haiti, CEPF promises to work on restoring and protecting highly degraded and threatened habitat to create connectivity for new forests, while also building the capacity of nascent civil society organizations. The smaller islands of the Lesser Antilles and Bahamas will also access CEPF support to help with high priority conservation actions, such as in invasive species control. The portfolio will also continue to work on building capacity of leading environmental civil society organizations so that they can grow in their ability to serve as effective advocates of conservation and green economics. Attention in 2012 will now focus on contracting pipeline proposals and addressing emerging gaps in the portfolio, such as the need to strength CEPF's engagement in supporting policy development, sustainable financing, declaration of new protected areas, and assisting remaining high priority KBAs.

Annex 1. Summary Figures

Figure 1. Status of Grant Funds, December 2011

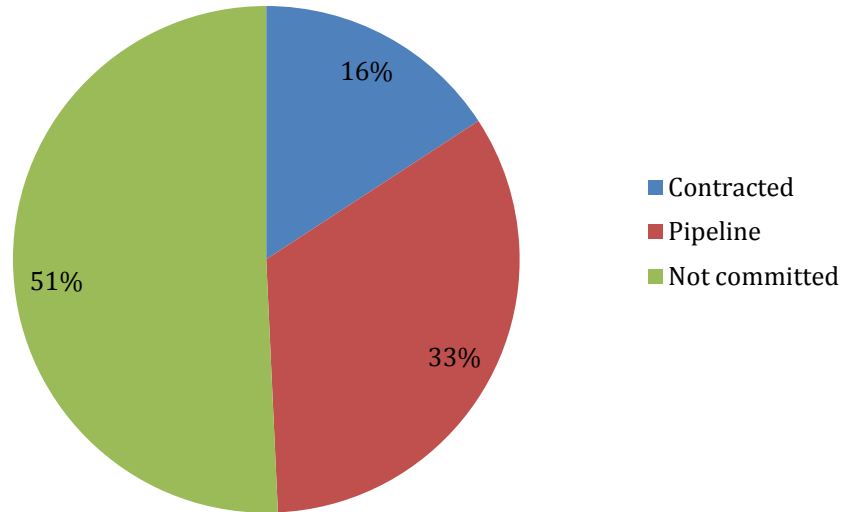
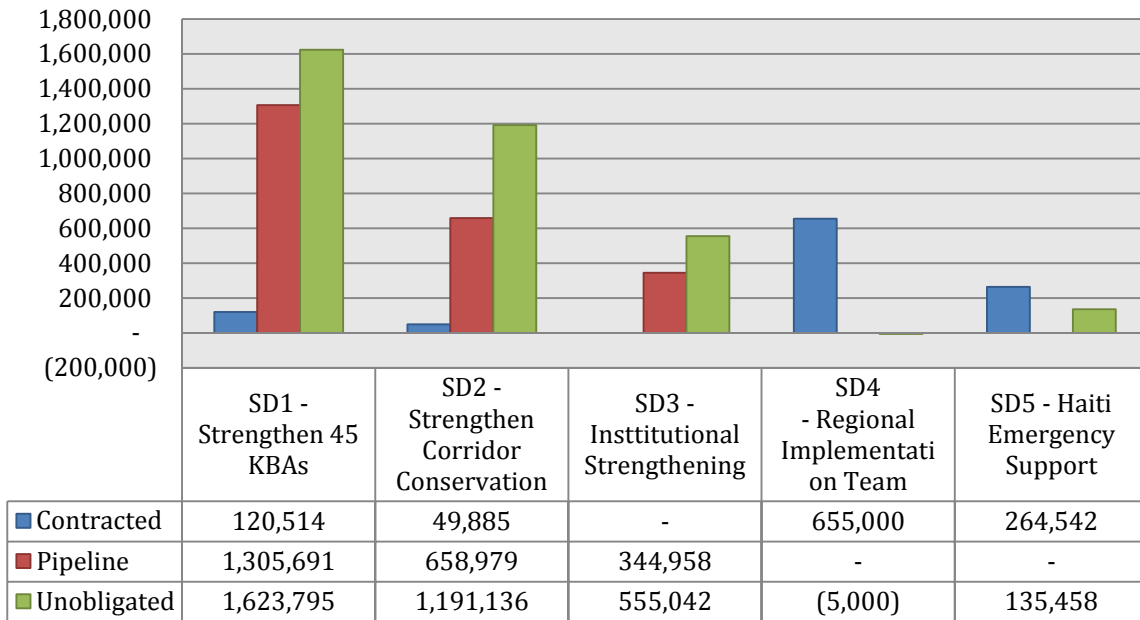
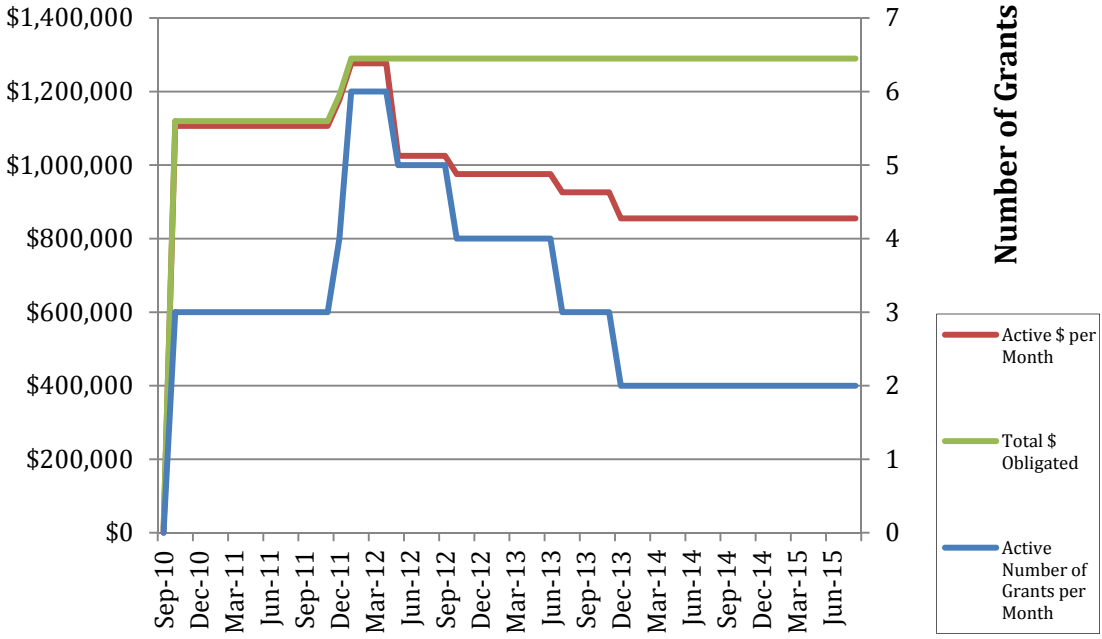


Figure 2. Portfolio Status by Strategic Direction, December 2011



Caribbean Island Region - Obligation Trend



Annex 2. Progress in Achieving Logframe Targets from October 2010 – December 2011

Objective	Targets	Progress
<p>Engage civil society in the conservation of globally threatened biodiversity through targeted investments with maximum impact on the highest conservation and ecosystem services priorities.</p>	<p>NGOs and civil society actors from CEPF eligible countries, with an emphasis on the six priority conservation corridors and 45 key biodiversity areas, effectively participate in conservation programs guided by the ecosystem profile.</p>	<p>5 civil society organizations are directly engaged and benefitting from CEPF support in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.</p>
	<p>Development plans, projects and policies which influence the six conservation corridors and 45 key biodiversity areas mainstream biodiversity and ecosystem services, with a focus on tourism, mining and agriculture.</p>	<p>No progress yet</p>
	<p>At least 20 percent of under-protected priority key biodiversity areas (at least six) brought under new and/or strengthened protection status.</p>	<p>No progress yet</p>
	<p>Strategic areas of the production landscape of six conservation corridors under improved management for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services.</p>	<p>No progress yet</p>
	<p>The Caribbean ecosystem profile influences and complements other donor’s investment strategies.</p>	<p>Current activities complement MacArthur Foundation projects. CEPF applicants have reached out to the following donors during preparation of their proposals: Global Environment Facility (GEF), Forest Conservation Fund, Environmental Foundation of Jamaica, Conseil Général des Hauts de Seine (CG 92) [a French local government], U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, BBC Wildlife Fund, Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund.</p>
<p>Outcome 1. Improve protection and management of 45 priority Key Biodiversity</p>	<p>Number of hectares in key biodiversity areas and number of key biodiversity areas (and percent) with demonstrable improvements/strengthening in their protection and</p>	<p>No progress yet</p>

Areas.	management as guided by a sustainable management plan.	
	Number of hectares brought under new or upgraded protection.	No progress yet
	Number of sustainable financing mechanisms established and/or strengthened with initial capital secured.	No progress yet
	Number of co-management arrangements established or supported.	1 co-management arrangement for the Bahoruco Oriental KBA in Dominican Republic being developed under an active grant.
	Percent and number of grants that enable effective stewardship by local communities for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation.	No progress yet
Outcome 2. Integrate biodiversity conservation into landscape and development planning and implementation in six conservation corridors.	Number of policies, projects and plans incorporating ecosystem services, climate change and biodiversity conservation.	No progress yet
	Number of hectares in production landscapes with improved management for biodiversity conservation.	No progress yet
	Number of policies formulated and adopted to strengthen public and private protected areas systems.	No progress yet
	Number of public-private partnerships that mainstream biodiversity in the agriculture, tourism and mining sectors.	No progress yet
	Number of co-management arrangements established or supported.	No progress yet
	Number of projects located outside protected areas that integrate biodiversity conservation in management practices.	No progress yet
Outcome 3.	Number of civil society organizations with strengthened	No progress yet

Caribbean civil society supported to achieve biodiversity conservation by building local and regional institutional capacity and by fostering stakeholder collaboration.	institutional capacity.	
	Number of local and regional initiatives supported to strengthen stakeholder involvement in biodiversity conservation	2 grants support local initiatives focusing on country-based networking. In Haiti, a grant strengthens the voice of environmental civil society in reconstruction process.
Outcome 4. A Regional Implementation Team provides strategic leadership and effectively coordinates CEPF investment in the Caribbean Islands Hotspot.	Regional Implementation Team performance in fulfilling the approved Terms of Reference.	The RIT is fulfilling most performance targets, while some targets are slightly delayed.
	Number of groups receiving grants that achieve a satisfactory score on final performance scorecard.	No progress yet.
Outcome 5. Emergency support provided to Haitian civil society to mitigate the impacts of the 2010 earthquake.	# of actions taken to prevent destruction of forests in Massif de la Selle and Massif de la Hotte.	No progress yet
	Environmental Network Resource Centre established.	An environmental network resource centre has been established with detailed activities and an implementation plan for conservation efforts in Massif de la Selle and Massif de la Hotte developed in consultation with Haitian NGOs.
	# of reconstruction and development policies and plans that incorporate environmental concerns.	No progress yet.

Annex 4. Contracted Grants as of December 31, 2011

Strategic Direction 1: Improve protection and management of 45 priority Key Biodiversity Areas

Grantee: Instituto Dominicano de Desarrollo Integral, Inc. (IDDI)

Amount: \$49,669

Grant term: January 2012 – September 2012

Project Title: Management planning and Stakeholder Alliance Building for Sustainable Conservation in the Bahoruco East Key Biodiversity Area

Summary Actions: Strengthen management planning and stakeholder participation in the protection of Bahoruco Oriental through the preparation of a threats analysis for incorporation into management planning activities, creation of an alliance of community and private sector stakeholders dedicated to conserving the KBA, and preparation of a proposal for co-management of the protected areas.

Grantee: Organisation des Paysans pour le Développement de l'Unité II de la Forêt des Pins, Mare Rouge (OPDFM)

Amount: \$70,845

Grant term: December 2011 – November 2013

Project Title: Measures to Support the Zoning Plan in Unit II of the Forest Reserve in "La Foret des Pins"

Summary Actions: Reforest 100 hectares of Hispaniola pine and 30 hectares of evergreen forest (rak bwa) that have been cleared from the center of the forest reserve. Also support viable long-term livelihood options through the emergence of sustainable value chains for several non-timber forest products, and sensitize local communities to the importance of this protected area to ensure their full engagement in the implementation of the Forest Reserve Management Plan. With the long-term goal of preserving the Forêt des Pins, one of Haiti's last forests.

Strategic Direction 2: Integrate biodiversity conservation into landscape and development planning and implementation in six conservation corridors.

Grantee: International Iguana Foundation (IIF)

Amount: \$49,885

Grant term: January 2012 – June 2013

Project Title: Supporting a Local Community in Creating a Municipal Wildlife Habitat for the Conservation of Ricord's Iguanas (*Cyclura ricordi*) in Anse-a-Pitres, Massif de la Selle Conservation Corridor, Haiti

Summary Actions: Support the creation of the first municipal reserve in Haiti, for the

protection of several species among which the critically endangered Ricord's Iguana. This includes the scientific monitoring of the last Haitian population of Ricord's Iguana, together with local NGO "Jenes Ansapit", development of a management plan integrating the needs of local herdsmen, and awareness raising and environmental education for the communities of Anse-a-Pitre.

Strategic Direction 4:

Provide strategic leadership and effective coordination of CEPF investment through a regional implementation team

Grantee: Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)

Amount: \$655,000

Grant Term: October 2010 – October 2015

Project Title: CEPF Regional Implementation Team in the Caribbean Islands

Summary Actions: Provide strategic leadership and local knowledge to build a broad constituency of civil society groups working across institutional and geographic boundaries toward achieving the conservation goals described in the ecosystem profile for the Caribbean Island Hotspot. Major functions include assisting civil society groups in designing, implementing, and replicating successful conservation activities; building synergies with grantees and stakeholders; conducting outreach; assisting grant application preparation and review; and awarding small grants.

Strategic Direction 5:

Provide emergency support to Haitian civil society to mitigate the impacts of the 2010 earthquake

Grantee: BirdLife International

Amount: \$251,354

Grant Term: October 2010 – April 2012

Project Title: Post-Earthquake Environmental Support for the Haitian NGO Sector

Summary Actions: Support the conservation of Haiti's highly threatened and species rich key biodiversity areas following the January 2010 earthquake. This grant supports the recovery and strengthening of a network of 12 local conservation groups, integration of conservation goals into reconstruction and development activities, and strengthening of site-based conservation in two priority sites.

Grantee: BirdLife International

Amount: \$13,188

Grant Term: June 2010 – July 2010. This grant is closed.

Project Title: Stakeholder Consultation and Planning for Post-Earthquake Environmental Support for the Haitian NGO Sector

Summary Actions: Prepare the CEPF full proposal for post-earthquake reconstruction of the Haitian environmental sector. This small grant supports consultations with Haitian

nongovernmental organizations, governmental officials and donors; visits to priority key biodiversity areas; and completion of the CEPF final proposal.

CATCHING UP WITH THE CARIBBEAN

September 27, 2011

By Laura Johnston, CEPF Grant Coordinator

CEPF staff checks in with the team helping to implement conservation strategy



When imagining the Caribbean, does your mind conjure up postcard images of white-sand beaches, clear waters and swimsuit-clad people lounging under palm trees? These images are part of the reality of the Caribbean Islands, but just as important are the realities of the governance, socioeconomics and cultural norms of the region that impact the status of these biodiverse ecosystems.

The Caribbean Islands are classified as one of the Earth's 34 biodiversity hotspot because they hold at least 1,500 endemic plant species and may have lost at least 70 percent of their original habitat.

The islands within the hotspot, which are located southeast of the Gulf of Mexico and North America, east of Central America, and to the north of South America, are quite distinct from each one to the next—and are more complex than what most postcard images might lead you to believe. While idyllic coastlines and a slow pace of life are common, there is also an urgent battle under way to conserve the area's vital ecosystems and unique species. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is supporting a major investment in these conservation efforts.

I recently flew to Port of Spain, Trinidad with former fellow grant coordinator Malick Keita and grant director Michele Zador of the CEPF.



Malick, Michele and I spent three days with the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), a regional nongovernmental organization that is serving as the CEPF Regional Implementation Team (RIT) during the investment in the Caribbean over the next five years.

CEPF is providing \$6.9 million in grants to the region to address four conservation strategies:

1. Improving protection and management of 45 priority key biodiversity areas;
2. Integrating biodiversity conservation into landscape and development planning and implementation in six conservation corridors — strategically located regions that link key species habitats, including protected areas;
3. Supporting Caribbean civil society to achieve biodiversity conservation by building local and regional capacity and by fostering stakeholder collaboration; and
4. Providing emergency support to Haitian civil society to mitigate the impacts of the 2010 earthquake.

The RIT is composed of a five-person team from CANARI who are based in Trinidad and three country coordinators (one based in Jamaica, one based in Haiti and one based in the Dominican Republic).



As the RIT, CANARI is the extension system of CEPF in the field. It supports the various aspects of managing CEPF small grants (less than \$20,000) and large grant contracts. This includes facilitating learning exchanges between grantees and stakeholders, identifying leverage opportunities for CEPF, and collaborating with other donors and their conservation projects.

Nicole Leotaud, the executive director of CANARI, says the key to successful conservation in the Caribbean is understanding people first and then learning their conservation needs. “Without that mentality,” she said, “we get nowhere for conservation or civil society empowerment.”

Civil society organizations conducting conservation-related activities in the following Caribbean countries are eligible to receive CEPF funds: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Bahamas and Barbados. In the coming months, successful grant applicants will begin implementing projects in Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica.

“CEPF’s focus on engaging and building civil society capacity to conserve critical ecosystems provides a unique opportunity for the Caribbean,” said Anna Cadiz, the RIT manager. “Traditionally, the region has not been at the forefront of funding conservation driven by civil society.”

CEPF funding is even more important as donor priorities have shifted in the region, and funding for conservation efforts by civil society has declined in recent years. “Consequently, civil society in the region has a lot to offer,” said Cadiz, “and CEPF’s approach of both helping to build organizational capacity and helping to facilitate regional networking will help tap into invaluable resources for conservation in the islands.”

Regional background



With the exception of Haiti, the region enjoys moderate to high income rates; however, economic imbalance is quite high even in the wealthier countries, and poverty is a major concern across the region. If current trends continue, the region’s limited natural resources will dry up as demand outpaces what the ecosystems can provide. Predicted rates of population growth, increasing urbanization and rising poverty add to the strain on the ecosystems and the biodiversity of the region. These realities make CEPF funding increasingly critical.

The Caribbean Islands have an exceptional array of ecosystems ranging from montane cloud forests to cactus scrublands, and house dozens of highly threatened species, including two species of solenodon (giant shrews) and the mountain chicken (*Leptodactylus fallax*), which is not a chicken, but rather one of the largest of all frogs. The threats to this biodiversity require immediate attention and financial support.

Throughout the Caribbean, most people live close to the ocean, so coastal ecosystems like mangroves, beaches, lagoons and cays are essential not only for biodiversity, but also to buffer the effects of the tropical storms, which are a regular part of life in the islands. In addition, these ecosystems provide habitats for commercial fish species as well as a base for recreation and tourism—which are crucial to the economies of the Caribbean.

Night of the Leatherback



On our last night in Trinidad, Malick, Michele and I caught a taxi to Matura Beach on the northeastern coast, where the awe-inspiring leatherback turtles come ashore just once a year to nest, laying and burying their eggs for hatching. We took advantage of the timing of our trip to witness this rare occasion.

Leatherbacks are enormous—measuring up to 12 feet in length and up to 1,200 pounds (nearly the size of a Volkswagen Beetle car). Female leatherbacks come ashore at night to nest, staying inland for about an hour to dig a hole in which each will lay up to 100 eggs. Females will return to the beach about half a dozen more times over the coming months to lay eggs.

These turtles are a vital part of the Caribbean ecosystem and provide many key services, including feeding on and regulating the jellyfish population. Today international trade of all sea turtle products and sub-products is forbidden under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). However, the use of the leatherback meat, oil or eggs is allowed in some nations as part of internal traditional customs or rituals.

According to the IUCN Redlist, leatherbacks are Critically Endangered, but they are proving to be a conservation success story of the Caribbean. In the past, residents traditionally poached and harvested the turtle eggs, but with recent support of local conservation groups and volunteers, they have gained notoriety and increased protection. Today in Matura, volunteers protect the eggs from human and animal predators for two months until the babies hatch.

To witness these creatures in action is both humbling and inspiring. As I glance at the photo of that night sitting on my desk, I am reminded why conservation matters. If we're not careful, amazing creatures like leatherbacks will be lost for future generations and the ecosystem relied on by all forms of life in the region will be weakened.

HAÏTI : LE REZO EKOLO RENCONTRE LE PRÉSIDENT MARTELLY

le 17 juin 2011

Par Pierre Carret



Le 8 juin dernier, les membres de Rezo Ekolo, la plateforme des ONG environnementales Haïtiennes, a reçu le nouveau président de la République d'Haïti, Michel Joseph Martelly, et lui a remis un Manifeste en 25 points, qui présente la vision de la société civile haïtienne pour répondre aux principales menaces pesant sur l'environnement du pays.

Le chef de l'état a affirmé qu' « il y a urgence » et a appelé à la mise en place de synergies efficaces entre l'état et la société civile haïtienne. Le Président, s'adressant à une vingtaine de représentants des principales organisations luttant en faveur de l'environnement, a promis de créer 100 000 emplois verts et d'augmenter la couverture forestière de 8% au cours de son mandat – un véritable défi dans ce pays où les dernières forêts naturelles, d'une incroyable biodiversité, sont gravement menacées par la fabrication de charbon et l'expansion de l'agriculture.

Les discussions ont achoppé sur la question de la « disparition » du Ministère de l'Environnement, que le Premier Ministre, Daniel Gérard Rouzier, souhaite fusionner avec le Ministère de l'Intérieur et des collectivités locales, en charge de l'aménagement du territoire. Certaines des organisations craignent que les préoccupations environnementales ne soient sacrifiées au profit des autres attributions du super-ministère... Le Président Martelly préfère y voir le signe d'une plus grande importance donnée à l'environnement et d'une plus grande efficacité, affirmant que l'indépendance du Ministère de l'environnement n'a jusqu'ici « rien donné ».

Cette première réunion de haut niveau avec l'exécutif haïtien, et la rédaction commune du Manifeste, est l'aboutissement d'un processus de longue haleine de la société civile haïtienne pour fédérer ses forces et peser dans les processus politiques. Créé informellement depuis plusieurs années et appuyé par le CEPF depuis 2010 via une subvention à Birdlife International, le Rezo Ekolo devient un acteur essentiel de la protection de l'environnement, dans un pays qui a en grand besoin...

Article in english available on

http://www.cepf.net/news/top_stories/Pages/Haiti_RezoEkolo_meets_President_Martelly.aspx

HAÏTI : MISSION D'ÉVALUATION DES BESOINS POUR LA PRÉSERVATION DES ÉCOSYSTÈMES

22 janvier 2011



d'Emily Rudge, traduit par Pierre Carret

Haïti fait partie du Hotspot de biodiversité des îles Caraïbe, où le CEPF a commencé en juin dernier sa phase d'investissement. Récemment, Pierre Carret, assistant technique auprès du CEPF, et Joel Timyan, consultant pour Birdlife International, ont mené une mission en Haïti pour évaluer les besoins pour la sauvegarde de deux sites clef pour la biodiversité : le Massif de la Selle et le Massif de la Hotte, deux chaînes de montagnes situées dans la péninsule sud du pays.

Les 129 000 hectares du Massif de la Hotte couvrent les parties amonts de trois bassins-versants déservant les villes de Port Salut, Tiburon et Les Cayes. Ces trois villes, et les villages alentours, ont subi et subissent encore régulièrement, lors des épisodes cycloniques, d'importantes pertes humaines en raison des inondations et des glissements de terrain – une situation largement liée à la dégradation du couvert forestier et à l'érosion dans les zones d'altitude. Ce Massif abrite également 13 espèces endémiques classées en danger critique d'extinction – ce qui lui donne le triste privilège d'être classé au premier rang mondial par l'Alliance pour Zéro Extinctions.

Le Massif de la Selle, un espace de 167 000 hectares, ne se situe qu'à une vingtaine de kilomètres de Port-au-Prince, et est considéré comme le principal château d'eau de la capitale. Il abrite lui aussi les dernières populations de plusieurs espèces menacées, à l'instar du pétrel diabolin.



Les résultats de la mission d'étude de Pierre Carret permettront de définir les axes suivant lesquels le CEPF investira, pour la sauvegarde de ces sites d'une importance vitale pour les haïtiens, une somme de 130 000 dollars encore disponible sur le fonds d'urgence débloqué par le Conseil des bailleurs suite au dévastateur tremblement de terre de janvier 2010. Le CEPF a déjà accordé à Birdlife International plus de 250 000 dollars pour appuyer le Rézo-Ekolo – un réseau de 12 organisations environnementales – afin que la société civile haïtienne puisse jouer pleinement son rôle pour une meilleure intégration de l'environnement dans le processus de reconstruction et de développement. Les résultats de cette mission seront également utiles pour les futurs autres investissements du CEPF.

Quelques observations de la mission

Abritant une richesse biologique prodigieuse – avec des taux d'endémisme très élevés – les Massifs de la Selle et de la Hotte sont sous le coup d'une intense dégradation de leurs écosystèmes. La principale

menace est la défriche et le brûlis à vocation agricole, qui se développe de manière non-durable aux dépens des milieux naturels. Cette situation entraîne un fort déclin des populations d'amphibiens et d'oiseaux endémiques.

Bien que les parcs nationaux présents dans les deux massifs aient déjà subi des dommages significatifs, il reste encore dans les deux massifs des espaces boisés, en nombre suffisant pour espérer maintenir les services écosystémiques et sauvegarder les populations de la plupart des espèces menacées. Les autorités haïtiennes travaillent à la protection de ces espaces mais ces efforts restent limités dans un contexte de crise économique et d'incertitude politique.

Selon les mots de Pierre Carret, « les sites-clefs de biodiversité d'Haïti sont certainement parmi les sites les mieux qualifiés, à l'échelle mondiale, pour réclamer l'appellation d'écosystèmes critiques »

Le Massif de la Selle – Parc national La Visite

Les hauteurs du parc national La Visite, dans le massif de la Selle, sont couvertes d'une forêt assez jeune de pins d'Hispaniola (*Pinus occidentalis*), qui protège un plateau karstique très sensible à l'érosion, mais qui joue le rôle de collecteur et de purificateur d'eau pour toutes les communautés en aval. Le site contient encore de petits espaces étonnamment intacts de forêt de feuillus (Rak-Bwa en Créole) qui abritent une très riche biodiversité, en particulier de plantes, d'amphibiens et d'oiseaux. Certaines de ces petites forêts doivent leur salut à leur inaccessibilité – sur des falaises par exemple. La plupart toutefois, comme dans la zone de Bérac, continuent d'être soumises à d'immenses pressions.

Le Massif de la Hotte – Parc National Macaya



Le Parc Macaya abriterait encore plus de 120 espèces de plantes endémiques du Massif de la Hotte, et au moins 26 espèces de grenouilles (sur les 33, dont 29 endémiques, du massif). Le parc est mieux préservé que son voisin du massif de la Selle, en raison de la difficulté d'accès et de sa topographie mouvementée. Il est essentiellement composé de vieilles forêts de pins, entrecoupées de bosquets de feuillus. Le parc Macaya joue un rôle important dans la prévention des catastrophes naturelles et la préservation des ressources hydrologiques de la péninsule Sud.

Alors que la pression démographique augmente aux abords de la zone, les espaces naturels souffrent des diverses utilisations non-durables de la forêt : agriculture sur abatis-brûlis, production de charbon ou encore collecte de bwa-gra (pièces de bois résiné utilisées comme alume-feu). Ces problèmes sont renforcés par l'absence d'une délimitation claire du parc et une situation foncière très complexe.

Principales recommandations

Suite aux observations réalisées par la mission, et en étroite collaboration avec les acteurs de la société civile locale, il est aujourd'hui proposé d'orienter les financements du CEPF sur plusieurs projets combinant paiement pour services écosystémiques, promotion de foyers améliorés et développement de stratégies communautaires de conservation et protection des sols.

En particulier, les premiers investissements de terrain du CEPF devront prendre en compte les critères suivants :

- soutenir des activités combinant protection de la biodiversité et développement économique ;
- renforcer ou développer des activités déjà existantes ou se baser sur des activités déjà promues sur les sites concernés ;
- soutenir des activités pouvant démontrer un impact visible et mesurable sur les espaces naturels, la qualité de l'eau, la couverture végétale ou la lutte contre l'érosion ; le cas échéant, développer les indicateurs et les évaluations initiales ;
- renforcer les capacités des organisations locales de conservation, leur permettre de développer leur rôle de plaidoyer et de devenir des partenaires efficaces des autorités et des acteurs du développement ;
- Améliorer les capacités techniques et administratives des organisations partenaires, leurs capacités de gestion de projet, sur une base d'apprentissage « en situation » ;
- intégrer dès le début du projet la question du financement durable ;
- assurer que les activités sont en synergie avec i) les activités menées par les autres organisations sur la zone, ii) les activités du Rézo-Ekolo, et iii) les autres activités du CEPF Caraïbes et en particulier les actions de l'équipe régionale de mise en oeuvre ;

Sur cette base, le CEPF travaille actuellement avec les partenaires de la société civile haïtienne pour définir un ensemble cohérent d'activités de terrain. Celles-ci débiteront dans les prochains mois sur les deux massifs.

Article in English on http://www.cepf.net/news/top_stories/Pages/Ecosystems_Needs_Haiti.aspx