

Call for Letters of Inquiry Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot Large Grants

Eligible Countries:	Libya, Morocco, Tunisia
Opening Date:	Wednesday, 23 September 2020
Closing Date:	Friday, 30 October 2020
Budget:	US\$20,000 to US\$250,000
Project Timeframe:	Projects are expected to begin on 1 March 2021, at the earliest, and must be completed by 30 June 2022.

CEPF and BirdLife International, as regional implementation team (RIT) for the hotspot, are inviting proposals in the form of letters of inquiry (LOIs) for large grants from non-governmental organizations, community groups, private enterprises, universities and other civil society organizations (CSOs). Applicants are advised to read this call for proposals document in full and submit LOIs under the scope of this call.

BACKGROUND

The [Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund](#) (CEPF) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

The Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot is the second largest hotspot in the world and the largest of the world's five Mediterranean-climate regions. CEPF's niche for investment in the Mediterranean was formulated through a participatory process that engaged civil society, donor and governmental stakeholders throughout the region. The resulting investment strategy (2017-2022) is documented within the [ecosystem profile](#) (PDF – 16 MB). This investment strategy is comprised of a series of strategic directions, broken down into investment priorities outlining the types of activities that are eligible for CEPF funding.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Non-governmental organizations, community groups, universities and private enterprises may apply for funding. Individuals must work with civil society organizations to develop applications rather than apply directly.

Organizations must have their own bank account and be authorized under relevant national laws to receive charitable contributions.

Government-owned enterprises or institutions are eligible only if they can demonstrate that the enterprise or institution has:

- a legal personality independent of any government agency or actor;
- the authority to apply for and receive private funds; and
- may not assert a claim of sovereign immunity.

Grants cannot be used for:

- the purchase of land, involuntary resettlement of people, or activities that negatively affect physical cultural resources, including those important to local communities.
- activities adversely affecting Indigenous Peoples or where these communities have not provided their broad support to the project activities.
- removal or alteration of any physical cultural property (includes sites having archaeological, paleontological, historical, religious or unique natural values). Proposed activities should observe all other relevant safeguard and social policies as set out on the [CEPF website](#).

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The scope of this call is limited to the types of activities and locations described below.

LOIs will only be accepted for the following strategic directions and countries:

1) Strategic Direction 1: Support civil society to engage stakeholders in demonstrating integrated approaches for the preservation of **biodiversity in coastal areas**.

Countries: Libya and Tunisia

- Eligible coastal Key Biodiversity Areas under this call for proposals are presented in the table below:

Country	KBA code	KBA name
Tunisia	TUN03	Archipel de Zembra
Tunisia	TUN07	Îles Kuriat
Tunisia	TUN32	Golfe de Boughrara
Tunisia	TUN61	Sebkhet Sejoumi
Tunisia	TUN29	Îles Kerkennah
Tunisia	TUN30	Îles Kneiss
Tunisia	TUN32	Île de Djerba
Libya	LBY06	Farwa
Libya	LBY11	Karabolli
Libya	Other Coastal Sites*	

* For Libya—considering the current security situation, knowledge gaps and conservation needs—CEPF could consider projects outside of priority KBAs as long as the applicant demonstrates impacts on marine biodiversity.

For this call, under Strategic Direction 1, CEPF will consider proposals following **Investment Priority 1.2**: “Engage private sector stakeholders to adopt sustainable practices that deliver positive impacts for conservation in priority KBAs in the coastal zone.” In particular, CEPF expects to support projects that aim at:

- i) supporting best practices for artisanal fisheries (in particular, enhancing sustainable fishing practices, reducing by-catch and building synergies with marine protected areas).
- ii) mobilizing local private sector in support of biodiversity-friendly practices, supporting small-scale business in ecotourism, local fisheries, valorization of local products (fish, shells, food products), supporting local farmers or cooperatives, etc.
- iii) mobilizing larger private sector industries (national or international) to support local initiatives in favor of marine/coastal biodiversity conservation at local level, through partnership initiatives, setting-up of trust-funds, etc. (Note that CEPF funds cannot be used for the capitalization of a trust fund, but it can be used to design such mechanisms.)

Additionally, CEPF could consider activities that aim at:

- iv) improving knowledge and monitoring (in particular in areas where this is considered a barrier for conservation action, such as in Libya).
- v) improving site management, including through initiating site co-management arrangements and/or through preparing/updating strategic documents such as management plans.

Applicants can submit proposals under **Investment Priority 1.3** “Support civil society to engage with local or national governments to mainstream biodiversity conservation into integrated coastal zone management, land-use

and development planning processes” only:

- if the applicant can demonstrate that there is an existing initiative, from government or local authorities, to engage in territorial, land-use, coastal zone management, or fisheries planning exercises; and
- if the proposal relates to advocacy work in favor of better integration of biodiversity conservation in such planning exercises.

2) Strategic Direction 2: Support the sustainable management of water catchments through integrated approaches for the conservation of threatened **freshwater biodiversity**.

Country: Morocco

Nearly one-third of the Critically Endangered species found in the hotspot are freshwater animals and plants. The need for freshwater for agriculture and human consumption is one of the most persuasive reasons for the sustainable management of natural resources. Nevertheless, the hotspot’s freshwater ecosystems are poorly represented in national protected areas networks; they are under pressure from over-use and pollution, and the species that live in them suffer from over-exploitation and disturbance. Climate change is likely to make these problems worse.

There have been significant improvements in the identification and definition of freshwater Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in the hotspot, and of the threatened species they support. A number of Catchment Management Zones (CMZs) have also been identified which take into account hydrological connectivity and the threats outside KBA borders, to better inform management actions. Some freshwater KBAs are identical to CMZs and others are contained within CMZs.

- o Eligible Catchment Management Zones under this call for proposals are presented in the table below:

Country	Catchment Management Zone
Morocco	Abid River
Morocco	Arhreme River
Morocco	Middle Oum Er Rbia - Beni Mellal
Morocco	Oued Bouregreg
Morocco	Sehb El Majnourne
Morocco	Tifnout Basin
Morocco	Upper Oum Er Rbia

Each of the three investment priorities under this strategic direction is eligible under this call for proposals:

- **Investment Priority 2.1:** “Enhance the knowledge base on freshwater biodiversity and the importance of freshwater ecosystem services.”
- **Investment Priority 2.2:** “Take action to reduce threats and improve management of selected sites in priority freshwater catchments with the

participation of local stakeholders.”

- **Investment Priority 2.3:** “Engage with government, private sector and other stakeholders to support integrated river basin management practices that reduce threats to biodiversity in priority CMZs.”

Please consider the following points:

- For all site-based conservation projects (under IP 2.2), applicants must focus on freshwater KBAs, or demonstrate that the site(s) they aim to work at hosts threatened freshwater species recorded in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species or species that are not known from any other site (“site endemics”).
- For advocacy projects (under IP 2.3), priority will be given to *collaborative* projects that bring together civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, research centers etc., with the aim to work closely with decision-makers and institutions in charge of water management, and to engage in mainstreaming biodiversity into planning and practices.
- International organizations are encouraged to apply but must demonstrate collaboration with Moroccan organizations and ensure long-lasting benefits for national partners.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications (LOIs) can be submitted in English or French.

All applications must be submitted through the ConservationGrants website via [this link](#).

CEPF will not accept LOIs via email or any other mechanism. You will receive an acknowledgement from CEPF confirming that your submission through ConservationGrants has been received.

This is a new online system, so for CEPF applicants or grantees who applied in Phase I (2012-2017), please note that the Grant Writer/GEM system is no longer in use, and you will need to set up a new account at ConservationGrants to apply. Register a new account by clicking on the blue “New User?” link underneath the “Sign in” box. Existing ConservationGrants users can use the same login information and create a new LOI.

Questions regarding account creation or issues using ConservationGrants should be emailed to conservationgrants@conservation.org.

The LOI review process will take approximately eight weeks from the deadline date. The review committee will select the strongest LOIs that meet the eligibility criteria. All applicants will receive a response from CEPF following the review of their project.

Applications that are invited to the second stage will be developed into a full proposal through ConservationGrants. Full proposals that receive a positive review will lead to the award of a grant between Conservation International, as the host of the CEPF Secretariat,

and the applicant's institution (the "grantee"). Grants will be denominated in United States dollars and grant agreements will be in English.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

All applicants are advised to review the CEPF Investment Strategy for the Mediterranean Basin within the ecosystem profile. This provides more detail on the types of activities CEPF will fund under each investment priority.

- **Ecosystem Profile:**
 - [English](#) (PDF – 16 MB)
- **Ecosystem Profile Technical Summary:**
 - [English](#) (PDF – 2.2 MB)
 - [Arabic](#) (PDF – 2.6 MB)
 - [French](#) (PDF – 2.9 MB)

An interactive map of the Mediterranean Hotspot can be accessed [here](#); use the top right-hand "layer list" icon to select the layer you would like to view.

CEPF is committed to integrating gender into its portfolio. Applicants should design projects and write proposals that consider gender issues in the achievement of their conservation impacts. CEPF has developed several resources that can help applicants to design, implement and evaluate gender-aware projects ([CEPF Gender Toolkit](#), PDF – 359 KB) and understand what CEPF seeks in a proposal ([CEPF Gender Fact Sheet](#), PDF – 352 KB). Visit the [CEPF and Gender webpage](#) to learn more about how CEPF addresses gender in the projects it supports. The integration of gender in your project will be a factor in evaluation.

Helpful resources:

- [Eligibility and How to Apply](#)
- [ConservationGrants Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Safeguard Policies](#)
- [CEPF and Gender](#)
- [12 Tips for Getting Your Grant Idea Funded](#)
- [CEPF Project Database](#)

CONTACT

Before applying, applicants are encouraged to discuss project ideas and eligibility with the program officer for your region:

- North Africa Program Officer, Awatef Abiadh: awatef.abiadh@lpo.fr

In case the programme officer is not available, applicants can contact:

- Mediterranean Basin Grants Director, Pierre Carret: pcarret@cepf.net
- Mediterranean Basin Regional Team Leader, Maaïke Manten: maaike.manten@BirdLife.org