

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
No Objection Approval Pursuant to Section 4.1 of the Operational Manual

September 22, 2020

Ecosystem profile for the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot

Recommended Action Item:

The Donor Council is asked **to approve on a no-objection basis** the ecosystem profile for the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot, and an increase in CEPF's spending authority by \$10 million for the implementation of this profile.

The deadline for no-objection approval is **November 6, 2020**.

Background

The ecosystem profile for the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot was updated between November 2019 and August 2020, following the Donor Council's selection of the hotspot for reinvestment at its Thirty-fifth meeting on 23 October 2019.

This is intended to be a full reinvestment, following an initial investment phase between 2008 and 2013, during which CEPF provided a total of US\$9.7 million in funding to conservation projects in the hotspot, and a second investment phase between 2013 and 2020, during which CEPF made further investments totaling US\$15.8 million. The investment strategy set out in the updated ecosystem profile builds on the results achieved and lessons learned from these earlier investments.

The ecosystem profile was updated through a remote consultative process coordinated by the CEPF Secretariat between November 2019 and August 2020. The updating process also drew on the results of the final assessment workshop for the second investment phase, held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in May 2019. More than 170 stakeholders were consulted during the updating process, whether through the final assessment workshop, email correspondence or providing comments on the draft profile. Additional stakeholders were involved indirectly, by contributing to the main source documents that were drawn on to update the ecosystem profile.

At its Thirty-fifth Meeting, on 23 October 2019, the Donor Council approved a full reinvestment in the Indo-Burma Hotspot. It was anticipated that the initial spending authority would be US\$10 million, with around US\$7 million coming from CEPF's global donors and the balance being leveraged from regional donors. To date, \$2.1 million of this balance has been secured, from Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies.

At its Sixty-second Meeting, on 19 May 2020, the Working Group reviewed the independent evaluation of lessons learned by the RITs for the Eastern Afromontane, Indo-Burma and Wallacea Hotspots, and recommended that, for the next phase of investment in Indo-Burma, the incumbent RIT should be selected on a sole-source basis. In line with this recommendation, and with the approval of the Working Group, the CEPF Secretariat has entered into negotiations with the IUCN Asia Regional Office to act as the RIT for the next phase of investment in the Indo-Burma Hotspot. These negotiations are proceeding on the understanding that the RIT grant agreement can only be signed once the Donor Council has approved the updated ecosystem profile and a spending authority for the investment phase.

The draft ecosystem profile was shared with the Working Group on September 8, 2020, for its review and recommendation to the Donor Council. The ecosystem profile was subsequently revised, to address comments from the Working Group. A matrix showing how comments from the two Working Group meetings have been addressed is attached, together with the final ecosystem profile and an extended technical summary.