



Evaluation of Lessons Learned to Inform Reinvestment in the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot



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The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund or its donors.

List of acronyms:

- **AECID:** Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional al Desarrollo
- **AFD :** L'Agence Française de Développement (French inclusive public development bank)
- **AVSF :** Agronomes et vétérinaires sans frontières
- **BIOPAMA:** Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management
- **CARIBSAVE:** Not-For-Profit regional organization based in the Caribbean with Headquarters in Barbados
- **CAREBios:** GIZ funded binational project aiming to increasing the adaptability of ecological systems in biosphere reserves close to the borders of Haiti and Dominican Republic
- **CANARI:** Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
- **CARPHA:** Caribbean Public Health Agency
- **CBO:** Community Based Organization
- **CCCCC:** Caribbean Community Climate Change Center, based in Belize
- **CSO: Civil Society Organization**
- **CAD:** Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano, based in the Dominican Republic
- **CCAM:** Caribbean Coastal Management Foundation, based in Jamaica
- **GEF:** Global Environment Facility. The GEF is an international partnership of 183 countries, international institutions, civil society organizations and the private sector that addresses global environmental issues.
- **GEM:** The Conservation International's online report system. Every grantee used this system to report their projects' progress
- **GIZ:** „Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit“ , ie, the German Association for International Cooperation
- **GLISPA:** Global Islands Partnership
- **IDDI:** Instituto Dominicano de de Desarrollo Integral
- **IIF:** International Iguana Foundation
- **INTEC:** Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo
- **IUCN:** International Union for Conservation of Nature
- **JET:** Jamaica Environment Trust
- **LOI:** Letter of Inquiry
- **OECS:** Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
- **OPDFM:** Organisation des Paysans pour le Développement de l'Unité II de la Forêt des Pins
- **PPS:** Programa de Pequeños Subsidios; the Spanish denomination for the Small Grants Program
- **PRONATURA:** Fondo Pronaturaleza. Located in the Dominican Republic
- **RACC:** Regional Advisory Committee
- **RIT:** Regional Implementation Team
- **SGP:** Small Grants Program
- **SOH: Sociedad Ornitológica de la Hispaniola**



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1. INTRODUCTION

CEPF and the Caribbean Island Hotspot

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is a global leader in enabling civil society to participate in and influence the conservation of some of the world's most critical ecosystems. CEPF is a joint initiative between l'Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank. CEPF is unique among funding mechanisms in that it focuses on high-priority biological areas rather than political boundaries and examines conservation threats on a landscape scale.

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 square kilometers of ocean. Due to the region's geography and climate, it is one of the world's greatest centers of endemic biodiversity, and is one of the world's 36 biodiversity hotspots—Earth's most biologically rich yet threatened areas.

In 2009, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) created a conservation strategy for the entire region. From 2010 to 2015, this strategy, known as the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot Ecosystem Profile, has guided CEPF's highly targeted investment in the region— \$6.9 million, to be disbursed via grants to civil society.

CANARI as a RIT

In each of the biodiversity hotspots where it invests, CEPF selects a regional implementation team (RIT) to provide strategic leadership for the program. Each RIT consists of one or more civil society organization active in conservation in the hotspot. The objective of the RIT is to convert the plans in the ecosystem profile into a cohesive portfolio of grants that contribute to CEPF's long-term goals for the hotspot.

During the recently completed first phase of CEPF investment in the Caribbean Islands Hotspot, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) performed the role of RIT. CANARI is a regional technical institute with more than 30 years of experience in research, policy influence and capacity building for participatory natural resource governance in the Caribbean. The institute was established under its present name in 1989. It facilitates and promotes participatory approaches to natural resource governance to conserve biodiversity, enhance ecosystem goods and services, and enhance the livelihood benefits and wellbeing of the poor in the Caribbean. It places strong emphasis on multidisciplinary research, capacity building, partnerships and communication to build awareness and influence policy.

The Second Phase and the Evaluation of Lessons Learned

CEPF donors selected the Caribbean Islands Hotspot for reinvestment. The ecosystem profile prepared for this hotspot presents an overview of the hotspot in terms of its biological importance; its socioeconomic, policy and civil society contexts; and the major direct threats to biodiversity and their root causes. This evaluation of lessons learned is complemented by assessments of current conservation investment and the implications of climate change for biodiversity conservation. Informed by these analyses, the ecosystem profile articulates an all-encompassing strategy for investing in conservation efforts led by civil society over a five-year period.



Evaluation objectives:

Through this evaluation, CEPF is looking for a better understanding of all the steps concluded in the first period of work in the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot. The evaluation team has focused on these criteria:

Criteria	Evaluation Questions
Relevance	Were the activities undertaken relevant to the RIT terms of reference, the geography of the hotspot, the capacity of civil society there and the global results framework of CEPF?
Efficiency	How efficiently was the budget allocated to the RIT converted into results?
Effectiveness	What were the strengths and weaknesses of the RIT structure and capacities in terms of effective delivery of the results?
Coverage	To what extent does the portfolio of grants awarded to date cover the strategic directions and investment priorities set out in the investment strategy for the hotspot?
Impact	To what extent have the targets set in the ecosystem profile for impacts on biodiversity conservation, human wellbeing, civil society capacity and enabling conditions been met?
Accessibility	Taking into account the relative strengths of various organizations with regard to delivering the investment strategy, and considering the priority given by CEPF to building the capacity of local civil society, does the grants portfolio involve an appropriate balance of international and local grantees?
Adaptive management	How has the development of the grants portfolio been hampered by risks (political/institutional/security) or availed of unforeseen opportunities?

2. METHODOLOGY:

Although mainly qualitative as to data collection, the evaluation team used a mixed methodology to conduct an in-depth analysis. The following were the main data collection tools used in the evaluation:

Preliminary study and stakeholder mapping:

As part of the data collection process, the evaluation team reviewed the relevant information from the CEPF Program in the Caribbean Islands. This information included:

- The ecosystem profile for the hotspot;

- The final proposal for the RIT grant;
- The RIT grant agreement, plus amendments;
- Half-yearly supervision mission reports prepared by the CEPF Secretariat;
- Half-yearly performance reports prepared by the RIT;
- Annual portfolio overviews prepared by the CEPF Secretariat;
- Mid-term evaluation report prepared by the CEPF Secretariat and the RIT, plus appendices;
- Report on achievement of portfolio targets prepared by the CEPF Secretariat;
- Report of an independent evaluation of CEPF implementation in island hotspots (conducted by GLISPA);
- Summary data on the grant portfolio in the hotspot, exported from CEPF's grant management system;
- RIT final report and appendices;
- CANARI policy brief #22 and #23;
- Various issues of the CAPACITÉ newsletter;
- RIT communication strategy;
- List of CANARI projects FY 2018 Q1-Q2;
- Matrix of CANARI partnerships – Jan 2018;
- Monitoring and evaluation strategy – Jan 2013.

The evaluation team also gathered sundry documents and information from CANARI's corporate website, CEPF corporate site and the Internet in general.

During the desk study phase, the evaluation team devised a map of key role players with CEPF Secretariat staff, determining the main role players in each country, including RIT staff, CEPF grantees, and other relevant stakeholders (e.g., representatives of other donors, government agencies, etc.). Thanks to this work, the evaluation team obtained a list of 44 key role players to interview and the contact details of all the grantees to send the survey to.

Questionnaire and opinion poll:

With the support of the CEPF Secretariat, the evaluation team produced an online questionnaire directed at CEPF grantees throughout the region, in the three main languages of the region. This tool was used to guarantee a wide coverage of the grantees and to collect qualitative and quantitative information that allowed a more thorough analysis. The data was handled both quantitatively (descriptive statistics) and qualitatively (analysis of responses to open questions).

The survey was sent to all the grantees funded by CEPF on the Caribbean Islands, that is, to 68 local, national, regional and international CSOs. Twenty-three grantees answered the survey (approximately 34%). In spite of the moderate participation, the survey helped consolidate the information compiled by the semi-structured interviews.

In depth semi-structured interviews with key role players:

With the collaboration of the CEPF Monitoring Committee, the evaluation team selected a sample of 44 key role players (RIT and CEPF staff, CEPF grantees and stakeholders among RACC (Regional Advisory Committee; the technical team conducting the review of the LOIs) members, donors and governmental sector) so as to obtain precise in-depth information about the central questions of the evaluation. This type of interview allows flexibility in broaching different subjects and identifying unforeseen topics that can be considered relevant for the evaluation.

Thanks to the help of all key role players and the availability of most of the people contacted, the evaluation team could interview 39 out of 44 previously identified role players, either in person or by videoconference. The field work was very productive: 22 out of 28 of the stakeholders identified for interview in the three main countries (DR, Haiti and Jamaica) could be interviewed in face to face meetings (approximately 79%). Among them, 4 RACC

members, 2 Directors of Biodiversity from environmental ministries, 2 donors, all 3 national coordinators and 11 grantees were interviewed.

RIT and CEPF staff members as well as other regional stakeholders were interviewed by Skype or Whatsapp conference call, among them: 5 CEPF staff members, 4 RIT staff members in Trinidad, 2 grantees from Eastern Caribbean, 1 regional grantee, 1 more grantee and one RACC member from Haiti and 1 grantee from Jamaica and a representative from the EU-BEST Initiative¹.

Data analysis

Data analysis was mainly carried out through data triangulation and comparison of evidence collected by various means. The quantitative results of the survey monkey questionnaire were analyzed with descriptive statistics techniques. Classification and categorization techniques were used for the qualitative results of the opening questions.

3. THE TASK OF THE RIT:

The RIT is responsible for implementing the following components and functions set out in its Terms of Reference:

1. Coordinate and communicate CEPF investment, build partnerships and promote information exchange in the hotspot

- 1.1. Serve as the lead point of contact for CEPF
- 1.2. Facilitate information exchange among stakeholders.
- 1.3. Facilitate partnerships between stakeholders
- 1.4. Promote opportunities to leverage CEPF funds
- 1.5. Visit stakeholders, and attend meetings and events to ensure collaboration, coordination and outreach.

2. Build the capacity of grantees

- 2.1. Assist civil society groups in designing projects
- 2.2. Build institutional capacity of grantees
- 2.3. Provide guidance to grantees for the effective design and implementation of safeguard policies

3. Establish and coordinate a process for proposal solicitation and review

- 3.1. Establish and coordinate a process for solicitation of applications.
- 3.2. Establish and coordinate a process for evaluation of applications.

4. Manage a program of small grants; that is, grants of less than \$20,000

5. Reporting and Monitoring

- 5.1. Collect and report on data for portfolio-level indicators.
- 5.2. Support the CEPF Secretariat to monitor programmatic performance of grantees.
- 5.3. Support a mid-term and final assessment of the CEPF portfolio.
- 5.4. Visit grantees to monitor their progress and ensure outreach, verify compliance and support capacity building.

¹ The Best initiative is the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Territories of European overseas. It aims to support the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of ecosystem services including ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation in the EU Outermost Regions (ORs) and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs). Info taken from http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/best/index_en.htm

Also, the RIT was responsible for converting the strategic directions and the investment priorities of the CEPF portfolio in the Caribbean Hotspot into a cohesive portfolio of grants:

Strategic directions	Investment priorities
1. Improve protection and management of 45 priority Key Biodiversity Areas.	1.1 Prepare and implement management plans in the 17 highest-priority key biodiversity areas. 1.2 Strengthen the legal protection status in the remaining 28 key biodiversity areas. 1.3 Improve management of invasive species in the 45 priority key biodiversity areas. 1.4 Support the establishment or strengthening of sustainable financing mechanisms.
2. Integrate biodiversity conservation into landscape and development planning and implementation in six conservation corridors.	2.1 Mainstream biodiversity conservation and ecosystem service values into development policies, projects and plans, with a focus on addressing major threats such as unsustainable tourism development, mining, agriculture and climate change. 2.2 Strengthen public and private protected-area systems through improving or introducing innovative legal instruments for conservation. 2.3 Prepare and support participatory local and corridor-scale land-use plans to guide future development and conservation efforts. 2.4 Promote nature-based tourism and sustainable agriculture and fisheries to enhance connectivity and ecosystem resilience and promote sustainable livelihoods.
3. Caribbean civil society supported to achieve biodiversity conservation by building local and regional institutional capacity and by fostering stakeholder collaboration.	3.1 Support efforts to build and strengthen the institutional capacity of civil society organizations to undertake conservation initiatives and actions. 3.2 Enable local and regional networking, learning and best-practice sharing approaches to strengthen stakeholder involvement in biodiversity conservation.
4. A Regional Implementation Team provides strategic leadership and effectively coordinates CEPF investment in the Caribbean Islands Hotspot.	4.1 Build a broad constituency of civil society groups working across institutional and political boundaries toward achieving the shared conservation goals described in the ecosystem pro le.
5. Emergency support provided to Haitian civil society to mitigate the impacts of the 2010 earthquake.	5.1 Support conservation of priority key biodiversity areas and ensure the integration of conservation priorities into reconstruction planning.

The RIT’s project proposal was comprised of 10 components designed to meet strategic direction #4 of the CEPF investment strategy for the Caribbean Islands Hotspot, namely: “Provide strategic leadership and effective coordination of CEPF investment through a regional implementation team”.

RIT logframe
Component 1:

Regional Implementation Team (RIT), Regional Advisory Committee, and a team of reviewers of Letters of Inquiry (LOIs) and proposals for the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot functioning effectively

Component 2:

Broad constituency of civil society organizations working across institutional and political boundaries participating in CEPF implementation in the Caribbean islands.

Component 3:

Effective communication to promote CEPF as a dynamic funding mechanism and for the dissemination of information and results of the project.

Component 4:

Strategic leadership provided to develop a coherent portfolio of grants that effectively responds to each strategic direction and the investment priorities identified in the ecosystem profile, takes advantage of opportunities for drawing and building on existing work of the RIT and others in the region, facilitates coordination for increased impact, and complements and leverages investments by other donors.

Component 5:

Targeted support provided to civil society organizations with design, management, monitoring, and reporting on conservation actions and incorporating lessons learnt from successful conservation activities into developing and implementing existing and new projects on a needs basis through advisory, training and mentoring programs

Component 6:

Internal and external reviews of grant applications conducted under Sub-Grant Mechanism.

Component 7:

Internal and external reviews of grant applications conducted on applications for larger grants (> \$20,000).

Component 8:

CEPF investments monitored and evaluated at grant and portfolio levels.

Component 9:

Management and facilitation of the mid-term evaluation of implementation of the CEPF strategy in the Caribbean islands hotspot.

Component 10:

Support the Final Assessment of the CEPF Caribbean program.

4. THE TASK OF RIT: findings

A. RELEVANCE

a. Coordination and communication:

Leadership capacity

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a regional organization that already had well established strong links with civil society and governmental institutions in the Eastern Caribbean prior to running the program. It has a good knowledge of the civil society throughout the region. At the beginning of the program, although it had less experience in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, CANARI was already considered a trusted reference among organizations working in natural resources and conservation in most of the Caribbean. For example, the Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano (CAD) and Grupo Jaragua, both based in the Dominican Republic, were already CANARI's partners before running the program. Furthermore, CANARI is a member of key international conservation organizations. This has been a strong asset in running the program from the beginning.

CANARI's mission is in line with CEPF's guidelines to establish a biodiversity conservation strategy: both are based on strengthening civil society.

One of the RIT tasks was to serve as the lead point of contact for CEPF in relation to international donors, host country governments and agencies, and other potential partners within the hotspot. Therefore, at the start of the program, the RIT established contacts with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) focal points, among other things to receive their endorsement. They also established contact with the local ministries of environment/natural resources.

During the five years while the program ran, the country coordinators maintained contact with the government agencies and CEPF donors. The RIT also capitalized on the supervisory visits from the CEPF Secretariat to organize meetings with the key stakeholders.

From the onset, the RIT involved government agencies and civil society organizations in the program. The RIT visited the local government offices on various occasions.

In the three main countries involved (Jamaica, Haiti and the Dominican Republic), the RIT country coordinators kept contact with their respective government agencies. They also invited These government agencies to express their views during the mid-term and final assessments.

The relationships established with the government differed from one country to the next, and this is also linked with contextual elements.

For example, in the Dominican Republic coordination is strong between the ministry of environment and the civil society. Furthermore, the technical staff is stable, and over the past years they have established mutual awareness of the activities carried out by the various stakeholders. The country coordinator capitalized on this favorable situation and kept ongoing contact with the biodiversity department of the Dominican Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources by email, phone, and office visits.

In Jamaica, the country coordinator communicated regularly with government partners and “*CEPF has been recognized in Jamaica as a support mechanism for biodiversity conservation.*”²

In Haiti, the country coordinator also established a strong link with the Haitian Ministry of Environment. Worth noting that at the Environment Ministry of Haiti opened a Biodiversity Conservation Office in December 2017.

Although the relationships with local governments depend on the local context, the RIT capitalized on its experience and the strong ties established in the Eastern Caribbean right from the beginning.

In the areas where the RIT supported grantees, it focused on encouraging the participation by the local government in the project design and running, where considered relevant and appropriate. For example, the RIT manager stated that the Grenada Dove Conservation Program was carried out in “...close working relationships with the Grenada Forestry Department who has the mandate for managing the priority KBA”. The RIT did not get directly involved at local government level, such as village councils.

RACC members based in the Dominican Republic actively engaged in ensuring that CEPF strategies are aligned with national GEF priorities including the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources agenda for the system of national protected areas. The country coordinators and other members of the RIT staff also took part in national and regional events linked to the program’s activity sector.

Furthermore, the CANARI Executive Director conducted outreach activities during various events, (e.g. Meeting of Senior Officials & Council of Ministers on Environmental Sustainability for the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and other global events such as the IUCN World Parks Congress and Samoa SIDS Conference on

² As stated in the RIT final report, Oct 2016, p.13.



Sustainable Development in September 2014.³ Taking part in These events were good opportunities to heighten awareness of the program and identify potential synergies.

Communication

General

One of the RIT's task was to facilitate exchange among stakeholders. It had to provide lessons learned and other information to the secretariat to be communicated via the CEPF website. It also had to disseminate results via appropriate multiple media.

The RIT established a communication strategy at the beginning of the program. It included clear objectives, a target audience, messages and a detailed methodology and tools to reach the objectives.

The e-newsletter *Capacité*, the CEPF Caribbean webpage located on the CANARI's website, the CANARI Facebook page and the spread of information via some biodiversity related listservs in the Caribbean were the main tools used to disseminate information.

These tools were consistent with the RIT's objectives, which were to communicate the availability of CEPF funding in the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot and the lessons learned as the project progresses. They were also consistent with the primary audience which comprised prospective applicants, grantees, the CEPF secretariat, CEPF donors and RACC members

However, some elements suggest that it could have been implemented more effectively. There was no clear budget line for communication. The initial budget had an "Other professional services" line of \$ 2,000, with the following tasks: design web page, including social networking site and small grants database. There was also a \$ 1,000 line for the purchase of a video camera and \$ 5,000 were also allocated to translation in the RIT's first amendment.

Some responsibilities specific to communication were specified in 2012, (that is more than one year after the program started running), for example, assigning one of the RIT staff members as in charge of updating the CEPF Caribbean webpage.⁴ Also, another member of the Trinidad and Tobago staff was appointed in April 2012 on a 5% of a full-time basis as "Responsible for RIT communication, including managing the *Capacité* newsletter"⁵. One of the country coordinators was subsequently named as in charge of the *Capacité* newsletter.⁶

The RIT published 14 issues of the *Capacité* e-newsletter, in English, French and Spanish⁷. It was considered a well written communication tool with quality information. However, it seems that it did not reach its objectives with its target audience. Most of the grantees and regional advisory committee members said they lacked the time to read the newsletter. One of the concerns expressed by the stakeholders has to do with the outdated format of the newsletter, the fact that it comes as an attachment which the reader has to first open and then peruse to identify the information he/she considers relevant. This issue was also mentioned in the RIT's final assessment.

The RIT created a specific webpage for the CEPF Caribbean program within its corporate website. The objectives were to provide information to the grantees and other stakeholders, as well as transparency regarding the project.

³ *Performance Tracking Report July – December 2014*; p. 30.

⁴ *RIT performance report 2012 Jan-June*

⁵ *RIT supervision mission report – November 2012; annex 5. P11.*

⁶ *RIT supervision report – December 2014*

⁷ *RIT Final report, Oct 2016; p.16.*

This page had weaknesses. The website's content management system too old and inflexible to offer the information in a user-friendly and attractive format. Furthermore, the page was not easy to find, as there was no direct link from the front page of CANARI's website. Very few interviewed stakeholders mentioned the page as an important tool used to foster information exchange.

The RIT also built a database with content information for 507 key stakeholders in the hotspot. This database includes applicant grantees, other civil society partners, CEPF and other key donors, technical partners, government agencies and technical reviewers. This database was not public.⁸

Fifty project posters were also designed and introduced during an outreach event organized by the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the RIT and the CEPF Secretariat in Santo Domingo in November 2015.

Experiences and know-how sharing activities between similar projects have not been held on a systematic basis, neither on local nor regional level. Many grantees believe greater efforts should be made in this respect.

Furthermore, some of the grantees were surprised to learn that another organization been awarded a project affecting the same area, with some similar activities, without any previous coordination. For example, such was the case in Jamaica with the Caribbean Coastal Management Foundation, (CCAM) and the Jamaica Environment Trust (JET) organizations in the Portland Bight KBA in Jamaica.

Some lessons learned with regard to communication:

RIT communication activities could have had a bigger impact if better integrated with the global implementation strategy. Some tools could also have had a greater particularly with regard to the choice of means to reach their audience. For example, video should be considered a way to share lessons learned, know-how and to present the different projects.

The evaluations, meetings and workshops organized in the framework of the program were considered by most of the stakeholders as excellent moments where they could share information with each other and build partnerships. Although these events are effective in terms of communication and partnerships, they are generally expensive.

Meetings are essential, but there may be cheaper solutions that could work in parallel. A smartphone application designed for this purpose could simultaneously provide an effective way to share information and identify potential partnerships. Every grantee could automatically receive information and updates regarding similar projects and contact these projects with a chat system providing automatic translation. This option could stimulate regional awareness.

Language capability of country coordinators and CEPF staff was a positive point, with fluency in the local languages considered a strong asset by every stakeholder in the program.

The RIT attached importance to local languages in relation to every aspect of the small grants management. This was considered very valuable by the local CBOs, mainly in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Facilitating partnerships between stakeholders

The RIT had to facilitate partnerships between stakeholders to achieve the objectives of the ecosystem profile. More specifically, they had to build partnerships between and among grantees and other stakeholders, foster

⁸ RIT Final report, Oct 2016; p.10.

collaboration and coordination among local or international donors, and, in coordination with CEPF's Secretariat, ensure communication and collaboration with the seven CEPF donors.

Partnerships between and among grantees and other stakeholders:

The RIT stated that it evaluated the possibility of synergies during the reviewing process of the small and large grants LOIs and proposals.⁹

Twenty-three stakeholder partnerships and initiatives were established in the framework of the program.¹⁰ This means that almost 30% of the projects carried out during the program included a partnership.

What strategy did the RIT use to promote partnerships between and among grantees and other stakeholders? The country coordinators played a key role in these activities. The common evidence that we received from the country coordinators was that this work was mainly done independently at a national level in their respective country. Working with the Secretariat, the RIT identified possible synergies taking into consideration the thematic and, if relevant, the geographical complementarity of the projects, and put the grantees in contact.

Two national action learning groups were also created aimed at improving networking among CSOs¹¹. In the Dominican Republic, the first group was established in June 2012. 25 representatives from 19 groups took part. In Jamaica, the first meeting took place in February 2013. These activities provided opportunities for organizations working on similar issues to share experiences and lessons learnt. It is worth mentioning that in Jamaica, participants noted that "networking among CSOs and the need for opportunities to do so in a more systematic manner should be a priority".¹²

Civil society organization networks differ greatly from one country to another. The Dominican Republic civil society availed of previous projects run by Helvetas and the DED (formerly the German Development Service). The CEPF program helped amplify and strengthen this process and one could say that a network of CEPF grantees was formed in the Dominican Republic. Hence, as mentioned in the funds leverage section, several grantees are still working together on a common climate change project proposal.

The RIT country coordinator in Haiti encouraged four grantees, namely, Organisation des Paysans pour le Développement de l'Unité II de la Forêt des Pins (OPDFM), the Philadelphia Zoo, Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (AVSF) and International Iguana Foundation (IIF) to work together. This resulted in increased coordination and effort.¹³

Nine public-private partnerships were cultivated in the Dominican Republic, Antigua & Barbuda, and Haiti through a variety of modalities: leveraging of funds to purchase land from local businessmen, support for reforestation through carbon credit from US and Canada-based chocolate manufacturers, alliances with tourist operators, and creation of conservation networks and alliance with local businesses. A public-private and academic consortium as well as a national trust were also established.¹⁴

A good example of projects that attracted different types of stakeholders at local, national or international levels is the Reserva Privada El Zorzal in the Dominican Republic, in which the national and international private sector,

⁹ RIT Final report – Oct 2016; p 20.

¹⁰ Achievement of CEPF portfolio targets from 2010 to 2016 – Final report; p11.

¹¹ See: <http://www.canari.org/networking-and-action-learning-by-csos>

¹² RIT final report; p22.

¹³ RIT final report, Oct 2016; p.15.

¹⁴ Achievement of CEPF portfolio targets from 2010 to 2016 – Final report; p9.

government and universities, and international organizations worked together. Other examples are, the OPDFM reforestation project in La Forêt des Pins, in Haiti, involving a university, a grass-roots organization and a development agency, and, in Jamaica, another exceptionally strong model partnership was established for the Goat Island campaign, which truly brought together a force of organizations working locally, nationally and even internationally.

The interviews carried out by the evaluation team confirm that the face-to-face events organized by the RIT were seen by the grantees as important for identifying potential partnerships. Various grantees also mentioned that the country coordinators played an essential role in identifying potential partnerships.

However, the general point of view, even for most of the RIT members, is that the task of identifying potential partnerships should be conducted more systematically. There were no clear procedures for this activity and pinpointing potential partnerships and synergies was limited to a national range, at least as far as the country coordinators were concerned.

The Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano (CAD) manager suggested that internships between organizations that have similar activities in the whole intervention area should be encouraged and organized when considered appropriate. The evaluation team also considers that this could be a relevant way to promote experience sharing activities and synergies. If this option is considered, it would however be important to formalize the activities with clear objectives and procedures to guarantee their impact.

New technologies should also be considered while investigating options to bring similar grantees together. Setting up an application that automatically transmits information relevant to every grantee, that identifies complementarity among projects, and allows direct communication with automatic translation, could very likely be the key to encouraging partnerships.

Promote collaboration and coordination among local and international donors

The RIT maintained several discreet collaborations with CEPF donors, but opportunities for more collaborations exist.

In general, the RIT and the CEPF Secretariat coordinated visits to the program's donors during the supervision missions. The country coordinators also maintained contact with donors.

The World Bank capitalized on a supervision mission conducted in November 2012 by the CEPF Secretariat. They conducted two field visits and joined the grantees meeting held in Santo Domingo. The RIT also organized a donors meeting in Barbuda. The World Bank also visited Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago in February 2015. The EU visited the Dominican Republic in July 2016.

Some specific collaborations have been carried with a donor in this context.

Three outreach events were held in Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica. These events helped to start conversation between some donors and grantees on a one-on-one basis.¹⁵

The privileged relation established with the AFD and the French Embassy in the Dominican Republic in the framework of this program led to organizing an event in Santo Domingo aimed at presenting the projects being run in the region, as well as a photographic exhibition that gave visibility to the 36 biodiversity hotspots located all over the world. Also, a visit to the La Humeadora National Park was organized the day after. Members of the government, the private sector and the media were present.

¹⁵ *Performance Tracking Report July – December 2015; p24.*

In Jamaica, the country coordinator had preliminary discussions with the GEF Small Grants Program Director in September 2013 to explore how the two funds might support complementary work in the Peckham Woods KBA.¹⁶ Furthermore, several GEF staff participated on the RACC, and several projects received GEF co-financing.

It is worth mentioning that the GIZ showed interest in offering collaboration to perform binational activities in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, but this proposal was not followed up.

Worth noting is that local representatives from AFD, the EU, the World Bank, and the Japanese Government actively participated in the final assessment workshops, showing a strong commitment with the program.

Funds leverage

The RIT had to foster opportunities to leverage CEPF funds with donors and governments investing in the region.

The RIT mentioned in its final report having adopted two main approaches to fundraise for CEPF projects:¹⁷

1. Developing proposals to seek complementary or follow-up funding.
2. Brokering relationships between CEPF grantees and donors.

The Report of Achievement of CEPF Portfolio Targets from 2010 to 2016 mentions various donor investments influenced by the Caribbean ecosystem profile. These successes cannot be attributed to the RIT. Nevertheless, it is important to mention their role in facilitating partnerships and encouraging co-financing.

The MacArthur Foundation supported complementary work of several grantees while the program was running. One of them was a US\$ 375,000 grant for CANARI to support its role as the RIT. The RIT received additional grants from:

1. IUCN Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) for US\$ 31,000 to design and deliver a training course for terrestrial protected areas managers in the Caribbean region.
2. UNDP Haiti for US\$ 10,410 to facilitate a protected areas study tour in Trinidad for Haitian government agencies and key partners.
3. Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation ACP-EU (CTA) for \$82,250 for a regional training course in participatory three-dimensional modeling (P3DM) for trainers.
4. Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and GIZ for US\$ 49,190 to run a Participatory Three-Dimensional Modelling (P3DM) exercise for the Soufriere Scotts Head Marine Reserve, in Dominica.

In Haiti, the Conseil des Hauts de Seine (a French local government) co-financed a CEPF project in the Massif de la Selle. The Norwegian Government funded three Haitian CEPF grantees in Macaya, Massif de la Hotte for a total funding of almost US\$ 2,400,000. Also, the Barr Foundation and Vétérinaires Sans Frontières mobilised around US\$ 1,000,000 in the Parc National des Trois Rivières and in the Fonds Melon River Basin of the Massif de la Selle.

In the Dominican Republic, UNDP-GEF contributed to the integration of two new protected areas and their management plans, as well as other activities. AECID (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional al Desarrollo) co-funded infrastructure in the Bahoruco Oriental KBA.

Still in the Dominican Republic, various donors invested in the El Zorzal Private Reserve, for a total amount of almost US\$1,000,000.

The total funds leveraged amount to more than US\$ 5,000,000, which is substantial considering the US\$ 6,900,000 of the program's budget.

¹⁶ *Performance Tracking Report July-December 2013; p5.*

¹⁷ *RIT Final report – Oct 2016; p.25*

The RACC was considered a great source of strategic advice, not only during the projects approval process, but also as promoters of the CEPF at a regional level that, among other things, helped to open perspectives for funds leverage. For example, one of the RACC members in the Dominican Republic helped mobilize GEF funds.

Most of the interviewed grantees mentioned that they did not really feel supported by the RIT on this matter. It seems that most of the funds leverage activities were the consequence of isolated opportunities identified and pursued by grantees themselves.

Climate change funding workshop in the Dominican Republic:

At the end of the program, several grantees in the Dominican Republic and CEPF team members sought options to ensure the sustainability of their biodiversity conservation projects. There are more funds for climate change, so the idea was to establish links between biodiversity and climate change in order to ensure the sustainability of the biodiversity conservation activity of the grantees.

With the support of the RIT, Fondo Pronaturaleza (PRONATURA) organized a workshop with the CEPF grantees and other stakeholders to identify the funds available for climate change, to understand their specificities, and to learn how to apply for them. Grantees understood that to have access to these funds they must establish synergies as these funds are generally very large (min. one million dollars). After this workshop, more meetings to produce proposals were organized among grantees. At the beginning of 2018, various grantees were still working together in order to securing these funds (Grupo Jaragua, CAD, INTEC, and CEBSE).

b. Capacity Building:

According to the TORs, the RIT task was to build the grantees' capacity in a variety of ways: assisting civil society groups in designing projects; building their institutional capacity and providing guidance in implementing safeguard policies.

The capacity building activities focused on the following topics: Strategic planning, financial management, development of sustainable financing strategies, feasibility action plans, improvement of governance structures, development/improvement of websites, training and mentoring in proposal development and scientific writing, effective communication, networking and outreach¹⁸.

The RIT based its capacity building strategy on a varied set of activities which included mainly workshops, national action learning groups and one-on-one coaching. Other actions, for example, communication, contributed to the capacity building process of the grantees, the dissemination of lessons learned being a factor of capacity building.

Various workshops were held, several with MacArthur Foundation co-funding:

- January-July 2012 – Barbados, Antigua & Barbuda, Grenada, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Saint Lucia and Dominica: 4 national level workshops for civil society groups with the aim of building capacity in project design and proposal development.¹⁹
- July 2013 - Kingston:

¹⁸ RIT performance tracking report Jan-June 2016; p1.

¹⁹ RIT performance tracking report Jan-June 2012; p19 and July-Dec 2012; p14.

- Training session aimed at strengthening the grantees' capacity in financial management and reporting. Representatives from 15 grantee organizations took part in the workshop. (Held in advance of the Mid-Term Evaluation Workshop).
- 38 attendees took part in the mid-term evaluation, which can be considered an important component of capacity building as it focused on knowledge sharing and networking among grantees.
- September 2013 – Santo Domingo: the RIT and the CPEF grantee Instituto Dominicano de Desarrollo Integral (IDDI) held a workshop on sustainable financing.²⁰
- October-November 2013 – Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent & the Grenadines: national workshops held by mentors to provide support to applicants (complementary funding from the MacArthur Foundation).

It is also worth noting that some of the grantees played an important role in terms of the capacity building of other grantees and in some cases of the CSO in general. It is not a direct outcome of the RIT, as the grantees were in charge of their own projects, but their activity played a considerable role in the capacity building process of the grantees. For example, the RIT participated in a March 2014 workshop held by PANOS in Jamaica focusing on social communication. CEPF also funded two webinars aiming to strengthen the grantees communication capacities. These events were performed by the Rainforest Alliance in collaboration with PANOS Caribbean.²¹

One-on-one coaching:

It should be noted that when asked about capacity building some grantees were confused and associated this task with workshops. Then, it was while mentioning the country coordinators or the staff in Jamaica that they stated their key role in terms of capacity building.

The RIT concentrated most of its capacity building activities on one-on-one coaching. The country coordinators played a key role here. They provided support to the grantees in many aspects of the activities that they had to carry out: designing the project, submission and reporting. The country coordinators visited the grantees, maintained contact by email, by phone or by videoconference. The type and intensity of support depended on the specific needs of the grantees and the context of intervention, but all in all, grantees were very satisfied by the support and its contribution in terms of capacity building.²²

The vast majority of the grantees praised the one-on-one coaching activities carried out by the country coordinators.

For example, CCAM in Jamaica said that their institution was on the verge of collapse before the program, and that the support had “strongly improved their capacities” and “has been absolutely brilliant”.

Some grantees received only one visit, and others were visited in the field more than 3 times. Given that RIT travelling was limited in the Eastern Caribbean, part of this exercise was in the form of online field visits. The RIT also availed of visits conducted for other activities to visit the grantees.

Pool of mentors:

²⁰ RIT performance tracking report July-Dec 2013; p5.

²¹ “Connecting Conservationists in the Caribbean Islands Hotspot” Rainforest Alliance Final Project Completion Report

²² The results of the online survey confirm the information received during the interviews: Eastern Caribbean apart, the reviews are positive in the three countries where there was a country coordinator physically available on the field, namely, is Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, and Jamaica.

The RIT also developed a pool of mentors throughout the region. This activity was part of a US\$ 475,000 project funded by the MacArthur Foundation outside the framework of the CEPF program²³.

They organized two training sessions focused mainly on CEPF procedures: proposal forms and organization assessment tools. As mentioned above, workshops organized by mentors were held in Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, and St. Vincent & the Grenadines in October and November 2013.

The mentor's intervention varied from one country to another. In the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Haiti it was limited to some logistical help during workshops. However, according to the RIT, mentors helped to anchor the RIT's activities in the areas where they could not be physically present all the time, i.e., in the Eastern Caribbean KBAs. The mentors that were identified as having the greater potential impact on running the program were in Dominica, St. Lucia, and Antigua & Barbuda.

Although the RIT expected mentorship to play an important role in terms of capacity building and monitoring in specific areas, it did not have the expected impact. The RIT recognizes that the efficacy and impact of this activity vary greatly, and most of the stakeholders who were asked about the mentors were completely unaware of them or had the impression their work was irrelevant.

The RIT identified several reasons to explain the mentors' poor impact:

- Inadequate selection of the mentors;
- The mentorship program is not cross-curricular in terms of running the program;
- Volunteer work limitations in terms of the mentors' availability and motivation;
- More resources were needed so the mentors could deliver their work properly.

Despite the mixed impact of mentorship, the RIT still believes it is a relevant solution for this type of program. They believe it should be better resourced and better integrated into the program.

Considering the fragmented profile of the hotspot, mentorship still appears to be a relevant solution to provide custom support to the grantees located in remote areas.

Worth mentioning is that some grantee to grantee mentorship activities have been carried out in the framework of the program. As mentioned in the *Accessibility* section, in the Dominican Republic the Sociedad Ornitológica de la Hispaniola mentored the Fundación José Delio Guzman. Also, Fauna and Flora International directly mentored the Environmental Awareness Group (EAG) in Antigua & Barbuda and the Saint Lucia National Trust through its "Islands Without Aliens: Building Regional Civil Capacity to Eradicate Alien Invasive Species" project²⁴.

Capacity building in the perspective of the next program

Considering the experience provided during the first phase of the CEPF program in the Caribbean, what strategy would be relevant to assisting civil society groups in designing projects, building their institutional capacity and guidance for the implementation of safeguard policies?

The consulted RIT members and stakeholders mentioned the importance of a holistic approach to capacity building. Specific actions do not have a strong and sustainable impact unless they are anchored in a long term strategy. Many interviewed grantees stated that a single event is generally not enough to significantly improve capacity building.

²³ RIT final report – Oct 2016; p.31.

²⁴ Fauna & Flora "Islands Without Aliens: Building Regional Civil Capacity to Eradicate Alien Invasive Species" – Final Project Completion Report.

Because of the fragmented specificity of the Caribbean and the diversity of CSOs, the RIT's strategy, mainly based on one-on-one support backed up with workshop, seems to be relevant.

Workshops

Regional workshops in the Caribbean are very expensive and their logistics present many difficulties: flights from one island to another are expensive and often require transit to hubs. Furthermore, language issues pose a challenge. At the same time, every grantee that participated in these events considered them very important in terms of capacity building and experience sharing. The grantees also thought the national workshops and the in-person events in general were valuable.

Some adjustments could however be considered.

Grantees asked for long term training on specific topics. For example, many asked for training in funds leverage and sustainability. Because of the specificity of the CEPF program which is not designed to run activities on a long-term basis in the same hotspot, sustainability of the activities carried out by the grantees is a concern for many of them. As mentioned above, some activities have been carried out in Jamaica and the Dominican Republic, but the main opinion is that these activities should have been contemplated on a long-term basis.

Considering the difficulty in holding workshops, the RIT could be capitalizing on each of them organizing multi-thematic events for the next phase of the program. A set of events providing training in priority themes of capacity building could be integrated into the beginning of the program.

Also, these events could ideally provide a regional perspective. Stakeholders, whose activities, experience or know-how are linked to an event's themes, could be invited to share their experience online during such events. An example of this is the Rainforest Alliance grant that held webinars on various grantees.

One-on-one coaching

The impact of the one-on-one coaching could be improved thus strengthening the presence of the RIT in the Eastern Caribbean KBAs.

The RIT also emphasized the importance of bringing the grantees to the point of realizing their own weaknesses and needs. Once they are aware of their own needs, and depending on the specific characteristics of the grantee (location and accessibility, language, etc.), the RIT could offer various solutions, namely: hiring a specialist or mentor or other grantee to respond to these capacity building needs.

Grantee to grantee experience exchange at national and regional level is another way of capacity building as well as a way of building a regional scope of the program. More can be done at this level.

As the RIT manager stated, *"There is a lot of room for grantees to work together in tangible ways to build each other's capacity and this proved ever more important in light of the limited time that the RIT had to work on a one-on-one basis"*.²⁵

The evaluation team addressed some suggestions on this point in the conclusions of this document.

²⁵ CANARI's CEPF Final completion report, 25 October, 2016; p. 53

c. Coordination of the entire grant process

Handling open calls

Most of the consulted key role players believe the proposal submission process is very positive. They mentioned transparency, continuous follow-up and feedback as very important assets.

However, they expressed some concern about processing delays during the first open call for proposals: the information given to the organizations participating in the bid could be confusing. However, these issues could be overcome thanks to the feedback and support offered by the RIT team and the CEPF secretariat.

On the other hand, some grantees mentioned confusing information coming from RIT and CEPF.

For example, a grantee located in the Eastern Caribbean was supposed to contact the RIT, but it also received a feedback from the CEPF secretariat that differed from the RIT's feedback. The grantee had the same problem while reporting. In the end, the grantee decided to send every email to five different contacts (from the RIT staff and CEPF secretariat) simultaneously.

This misalignment was detrimental in preparing their proposals. Also, a high level of coaching was needed for these first calls because the CEPF format was new to all the organizations and it took them some time to understand it.

The majority of the grantees learned from this feedback activity during the application process, but some organizations refused to take the recommendations into account and therefore failed to secure the grant. *For example, the RIT performance report (July-Dec 2011) states: "However, in some cases during part 2 proposal development (ie. JET and CCAM), applicants felt as though the proposal development process was cumbersome and overwhelming which partly lead to one applicant withdrawing from the entire process". This was confirmed during interviews performed in Jamaica and the Dominican Republic.* Worth noting that some potential grantees also withdrew because they disagreed with CEPF policies.

Some of the grantees and the country coordinators mentioned the importance of flexibility with regard to the budget section of the project design. Every part of the budget has to be meticulously justified, and every conceptual modification leads to subsequent budget modifications. Repeating this step is considered very tedious by the interviewed grantees. Therefore, one solution could be to budget the project only after there is a common agreement on the concept of the project and all the activities.

Review process

Regional Advisory Committee (RACC)

As a part of the applications evaluation process, the RIT had to facilitate technical advisory committee review.

The purpose of the RACC was to "provide technical guidance to the RIT to ensure that CEPF Caribbean investments are targeted to have the maximum impact on priority biodiversity areas with civil society playing a key role in these conservation efforts".²⁶ This technical guidance also had to guarantee transparency and accountability in the review process.²⁷

²⁶ *Terms of Reference for the Regional Advisory Committee for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) Caribbean Islands Hotspot – June 22, 2011.*

²⁷ *Achievement of CEPF portfolio targets from 2010 to 2016 – June 2016; p.12.*

The RIT established a team of 17 experts. RACC members followed an inception training workshop held by the RIT in May 2011 in Trinidad and Tobago.²⁸

The RIT not only considered the RACC an adequate way to provide expert inputs during the proposals selection, the RACC also “proved to be a great source of strategic advice in the region for the RIT”²⁹, as stated in the RIT final report.

The consulted members of the RACC expressed concern regarding the decision process that follows their advice: there was no systematic method of informing about the decision taken. Also, they did not consider Capacité an adequate way of reporting the selection process as they need more summarized and systematic information. The evaluation team believes this is an important point. Each of the 5 consulted RACC members mentioned this issue as a concern.

One RACC member also mentioned that in some cases projects she/he did not approve were selected in the end, and suggested her/his point of view should be considered or at least subject to discussion with the RIT and the CEPF grant coordinator.³⁰

Some of the interviewed members of the RACC also reported they were unaware of the procedures that follow their technical guidance. For example, they did not know that the proposals they reviewed were also reviewed by another member of the advisory committee. Worth noting, some of the members of the committee did not attend the training workshop, which could account for their lack of understanding of the procedures. However, this type of issue should be addressed during the next phase of the CEPF Caribbean program.

Some lessons can be drawn from the RACC role in the implementation of the first phase of the CEPF program in the Caribbean:

The advisory committee is volunteer-based and the work of its members should be acknowledged. Some procedures could be adopted to ensure the systematic communication of the final decision.

Also, when the members of the team in charge of the reviewing of the same proposals disagree a subsequent short online meeting aimed at exchanging points of views could be considered.

d. Managing a small grants program (under US\$ 20,000)

One of the RIT tasks was to manage a program of grants under US\$ 20,000. It had to announce the availability of the grants, ensure sub-grantee applicant eligibility and capacity to comply with CEPF funding terms, manage the contracting of these awards, ensure sub-grantee compliance with CEPF funding terms, monitor, track and document grantee technical and financial performance, and assist the secretariat in maintaining the accuracy of the CEPF grants management database.

All the consulted grantees considered the small grants management process very positive. This is partially due to the experience the RIT had already gained in this area before running the program. The updated and translated templates were considered very useful for the grantees and the administrative support provided by the RIT was also considered very effective.

²⁸ *Caribbean Island Supervision Mission Report - June 2011; p.19.*

²⁹ *RIT final report – Oct 2016; p.49*

³⁰ *This was identified during an interview with a member of the RACC and confirmed in the RIT performance report 2011 Jul – Dec; p.7.*

Small grants were not only designed for CBOs. Some of them have been used as a complementary intervention to strengthen some components of a large grant.

Members of the RIT team as well as from the CEPF office mentioned the possibility of lending more importance to the work with CBOs. These statements came mainly from stakeholders intervening in Haiti, but also from Jamaica and the Dominican Republic³¹.

For example, during his interview, the Haiti country coordinator stated “The main lesson I draw from this experience is that money that is invested directly in communities has a lot more impact. Local organizations do not have a lot of capacity, but if you invest US\$ 1,000 in a community, the impact will be much greater than if you invest US\$ 20,000 in an organization with much more capacity...”³²

This option can be considered valuable as it tends to provide a higher investment to impact ratio than with large grants. This option is however time consuming and would mean a higher level of involvement in the field to coach the CBOs during the design and implementation of their grants. It is worth mentioning that, if this option is taken into account, the Small Grants Program has vast experience in terms of CBO coaching that could be capitalized.

e. Project supervision and reports:

Overall, the monitoring and supervision activities were considered part of the capacity building process. Clearly, it is an added value for the project.

Supervisory visits

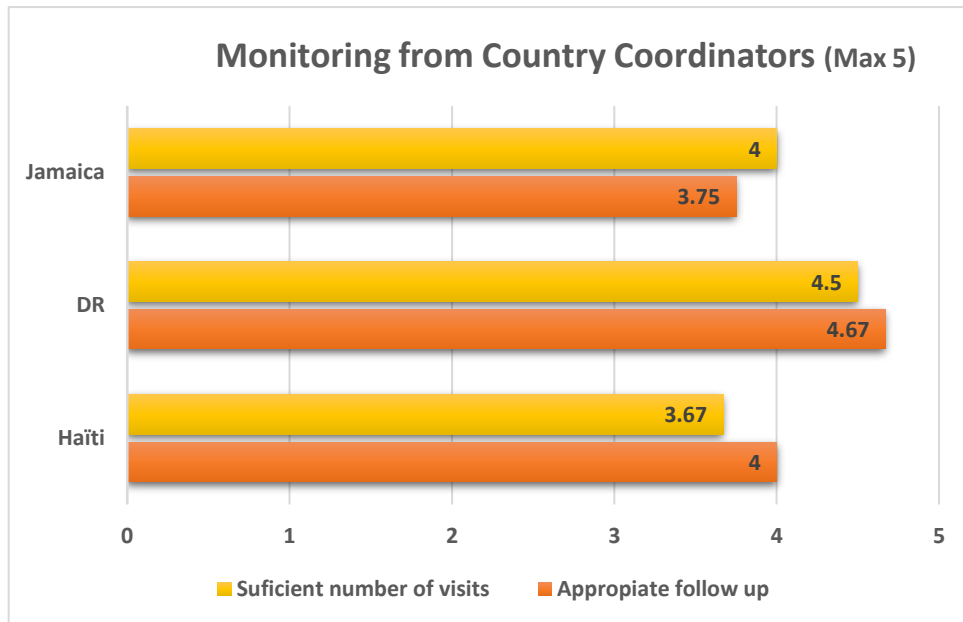
The RIT conducted 86 monitoring visits during the portfolio period. It also capitalized on the CEPF secretariat supervision missions to conduct 14 monitoring visits. Worth mentioning is that generally various grantees were visited during each of these supervision missions.³³

Below: rating of the country coordinators visits and follow-up from the perspective of the organizations that worked directly with a country coordinator located in their country of intervention.

³¹ A country coordinator, a member of the CEPF secretariat, a member of the RIT’s Trinidad & Tobago staff, but also a potential donor and some grantees expressed interest in this option. The statement is also confirmed in the mid-term assessment focus group and the regional workshop reports.

³² Original statement in French: “La principale leçon que je tire de cette expérience, c’est que l’argent que l’on investit directement dans les communautés a beaucoup plus d’impact. Les organisations locales n’ont pas beaucoup de capacités, mais si vous investissez US\$ 1,000 ; dans une communauté, l’impact va être beaucoup plus important que si vous investissez US\$ 20,000 ; dans une organisation qui a beaucoup plus de capacités,...” »

³³ RIT Final Report - Oct 2016; p.9 & 37



Remarks regarding the results of the survey:

Only 23 grantees answered the survey: 13 for the English version, 6 for the Spanish one, and 4 for the French one. They account for approximately 34% of the grantees. Although too few responses were received to draw substantive conclusions, overall the results confirm the information collected during the interviews.

The survey was based on rating CANARI and the country coordinator on various aspects of their roles. The chart confirms the information gathered during the interviews: the number of visits was satisfactory and the follow-up activities were considered appropriate.

Monitoring activities were generally carried out in the form of participatory activities. There were established procedures and a monitoring and evaluation strategy.³⁴ The RIT presented this option as time consuming, but valuable, as it helps to “capture local knowledge, skills and relationships among the project staff...,”³⁵ among other things.

Haiti

Most of the consulted grantees considered the monitoring activities provided by the country coordinator were considered very valuable. The chart above confirms the information gathered during the interviews. The number of visits gets a rating of 3.67 out of 5, and the follow-up gets a rating of 4 out of 5. However, the appreciation differs from one grantee to another. Most of them would have appreciated more field visits. The Société Audubon mentioned that they would have appreciated more presence of the country coordinator on the field. This type of activity is particularly expensive and time consuming in this country. This option would mean an increase in the country coordinator budget.

Dominican Republic

Visit and monitoring activities were considered appropriate by the majority the grantees.

³⁴ See *CANARI Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy*

³⁵ *RIT Final Report - Oct 2016; p.50*



As mentioned in the chart above, the number of visits and follow-up received a respective rating of 4.5 and 4.67 out of 5.

The grantees showed varied interest regarding the project supervision and report. One of the grantees stated that it did not need monitoring visits. Another one apologized for its lack of availability while the country coordinator was organizing a visit, and sub-grantee suggested that one or two more visits during the implementation of its project would have been relevant.

Jamaica

Overall, the consulted grantees considered the support provided by the country coordinator very valuable. For Jamaica, the number of visits and follow-up activities received a respective rating of 4 and 3.75 out of 5. All of the grantees interviewed on this matter mentioned the country coordinator's availability and effectiveness.

Eastern Caribbean and the Bahamas

The RIT team acknowledges that it has been unable to provide adequate support in this part of the hotspot. CANARI's strategy in this area relied on availing of activities held in the framework of parallel activities. Although not as effective as the permanent physical presence of a country coordinator, this strategy provided a minimum presence in the field.

The RIT also organized online visits. It followed procedures similar to the ones adopted during normal field visits, which includes a field monitoring report.

As mentioned above, the RIT had the will to rely on the mentors whose training and activities was funded through a parallel project run by the MacArthur Foundation. However, mentorship was not as effective as expected.

Worth mentioning that the RIT did not receive sufficient training in safeguards and recommends taking this into account for the next phase of the program.

Supervision missions

The supervision missions carried out by the CEPF Secretariat grant directors were considered very positive from the view point of the grantees and the country coordinators. They consider it very important the fact that the CEPF could be aware of the different contextual and practical aspects involved in carrying out their activities.

Mid-term and final evaluations

The mid-term and final evaluations also took place in the form of two regional workshops seen as moments conducive to sharing experiences and lessons learned.

Mid-term evaluation:

The mid-term evaluation was carried out by the RIT from May until September 2013, in collaboration with CEPF's secretariat. A combination of methods was used: desk review of key reports, online survey of stakeholders, interviews with the members of the RACC and grantees, three national focus groups and a regional workshop.

The objectives of the assessment were: to facilitate knowledge sharing, enhance coordination and collaboration among grantees, evaluate progress on achieving the CEPF Caribbean program, build awareness and commitment of

CEPF grantees, develop recommendations on strategies, identify impacts, analyze lessons learnt during implementation, and develop recommendations for improving the process.

The focus groups were held in June 2013 and attended by 20 people in Haiti, 22 in the Dominican Republic, and 14 in Jamaica.³⁶

47 people representing grantees, donors, key partners and representatives of the RACC attended the regional workshop held in Jamaica as well as members of the RIT staff and CEPF secretariat.³⁷ The key partners included representatives of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für International Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Organization of American States (OAS) Secretariat, IUCN - Regional Office for Mesoamerica and the Caribbean, Caribbean Public Health Agency, and Caribbean Research and Management of Biodiversity (CARMABI Foundation).³⁸ The workshop included a field visit to CCAM.

The RIT opted for a participatory methodology based on different tools for the workshop as well as the focus groups: individual stories, small groups sharing, plenary sharing, short presentations, outcome mapping, analysis of lessons on process, analysis of lessons learned, etc.

Some concerns about the assessment included that there were insufficient field visits, insufficient simultaneous interpretation, and few moments for informal networking. The participants did not express any notable concerns regarding the methodology.³⁹

The stakeholders involved said unanimously that it helped them have a better understanding of the program and the interventions.

For the grantees, these events have been referred to as key moments for sharing their experiences and improving their practice. They also played an important role in terms of creating a sense of community. Therefore, the RIT mentioned the importance of participating to generate an in-depth knowledge.

Final assessment

The final assessment was held in November 2015.

Three events were held in Haiti (8 - 10 Nov, 2015), Dominican Republic (11 - 14 Nov, 2015) and Jamaica (15 – 18 Nov, 2015). The CEPF hired local organizations to organize these events: CARIBSAVE for Haiti and Jamaica, and KIUNZI for the Dominican Republic.

The objectives of the final assessment were: to “showcase the achievements made by the project grantees in the region, evaluate the CEPF investment and its contribution to achieving the strategic directions of the CEPF investment strategy in the Caribbean Islands, celebrate the relationships built and partnerships established, explore opportunities for sustaining the gains made on the ground, and strengthen the network of learning”⁴⁰.

These objectives were different from the mid-term assessment, and the activities carried out were different in Jamaica and the Dominican Republic: two days of workshops in Jamaica and one day of workshop and one day of field visit in the Dominican Republic. The evaluation team did not find any information regarding the events held in Haiti.

³⁶ *Report of National Focus Group meeting for Haiti, Dominican Republic and Jamaica*

³⁷ *RIT final report, Oct 2016 – P.21;*

³⁸ *RIT final report, Oct 2016 – P.21;*

³⁹ *Report of the regional workshop 10-12 July, 2013*

⁴⁰ *Back to office report, final assessment, Caribbean Islands Hotspot*

The RIT supported planning and facilitating these events, as well as the three cocktail events also held in the framework of the final evaluation in Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica.

Worth noting is that these high-level cocktail events were considered by the RIT as “very effective in engaging donors, government and the media”.⁴¹ Some interviewed stakeholders as well as the RIT’s final report mentioned that these events were considered very valuable in so far as they helped start conversations between grantees and donors.

Some additional considerations:

- By opting to hold three separate events the program lost part of its regional scope.
- Because of the activities carried out in the framework of the assessment, a few stakeholders expressed that they had the impression that it was more a closing event than a formal assessment.
- The RIT expressed some concerns regarding the resourcing and organization of this event: because of its key role in the program, it is not realistic to think that it could play a minimal role in implementing the final assessment, and “even though an amendment was made to provide additional resources for the RIT for these efforts, in hindsight, the budget was not enough to cover the level of work that was eventually put in, especially the country coordinators”.⁴²

Gathering and reporting data (indicators)

Reporting is also considered an activity that has notably improved some of the grantees capacities. It is worth mentioning that not just the CBOs have benefited from this experience. For example, INTEC in Dominican Republic and Philly Zoo, as a regional grantee, said they learned a lot in terms of reporting and communicating their achievements. A researcher at the INTEC University in Santo Domingo, said: “This helped me a lot in other projects. Now, for example, I’ve just been awarded a Project with a Science Academy in the US, which isn’t easy to get ...”.

The Grant Writer/GEM system has also been the subject of concern for the grantees. The monitoring platform was classified as unintuitive and cumbersome. Efforts to improve the entire grant management system, from proposal submission through to project closure, were ongoing throughout the investment. A monitoring framework was developed and adopted in 2012. Most of the organizations that complained mentioned that the platform usability has considerably improved. Regardless, the RIT spent a lot of time aiding grantees to submit budget and performance reports.

Several grantees said there was some confusion as to roles of the RIT and CEPF secretariat: in many cases they did not know who to refer to.

B. EFFICIENCY

Because of the geographical characteristics of the Caribbean, the high wages and cost of life, as well as cultural and linguistic fragmentation, the Caribbean is an expensive region to run a project.

For this reason, like other hotspots based in archipelagos, the investment to impact ratio is high.

Everyone consulted on this matter reported that given the above-mentioned context, the RIT grant was under-budgeted at the beginning of the program.

⁴¹ RIT final report – Oct 2016; p.52-53.

⁴² RIT final report – Oct 2016; p.52.

In order to respond to this limitation, the CEPF acted flexibly by gradually increasing the RIT's budget. In fact, the RIT agreement was amended nine times over the course of the program.

The original grant agreement stated a total amount of US\$ 650,000 to implement the program in the Caribbean, while the final budget was US\$1,021,428. This corresponds to a rise of 57%.⁴³ As we can see below, 6 of the 9 amendments state a fund increase. Most of these fund increases were destined to Salaries and Professional Services budget lines. Some other budget lines, such as Travel and Meetings & Special Events (one large amendment was for the mid-term assessment) were also substantially increased.

Amendments:

1. **Grant funds increase of US\$ 5,000; from US\$ 650,000; to US\$ 655,000.** The \$ 5,000 was destined for translations (included under the budget line "Professional services"). Some budget lines also changed: US\$ 168,126.42; from the budget line "Salaries" were transferred to "Professional services" with the subsequent results:
 - "Salaries" = US\$ 382,999.05 (US\$ 551,125.47 in the initial budget proposal)
 - "Professional services" = US\$185,099.49 (US\$ 11,973.07 in the initial budget proposal)
2. **Grant funds increase of US\$ 74,217; from US\$ 655,000; to US\$ 729,217.** This amendment adds component 9: "Management and facilitation of the mid-term evaluation of implementation of the CEPF strategy in the Caribbean islands hotspot".
3. **Grant funds increase of US\$ 78,364; from US\$ 729,217; to US\$ 807,571.** Some budget lines were increased: "Professional services", "Travel" and "Telecommunications".
4. This amendment concerned the **payment schedule**.
5. **Grant funds increase of US\$ 160,957; from US\$ 807,581; to US\$ 968,538.** Some budget lines increased. Mainly "Salaries", with \$ 110,726.26 and "Professional services" with \$ 45,021.88.
6. This amendment concerned an **extension of the agreement** from 30 Sept 2015 to October, 31 2015.
7. **Grant funds increase of US\$ 22,798.40; from US\$ 968,538; to US\$ 991,336.40.** Component 10 included: "Support the Final Assessment of the CEPF Caribbean program".
8. **Grant funds increase of US\$ 30,091.60; from US\$ 991,336.40; to \$1,021,428.00.** The scope of work is amended to include support for outreach to encourage a new investment in the Caribbean from regional organizations through short publication and donor-visits.
9. This amendment concerned an **extension of the agreement** from 30 June 2016 to 31 July 2016.

Approved budget after first amendment compared with the final budget. The budget lines highlighted underwent substantial increases.

	Approved Budget after first amendment	Final Budget
Salaries	382,999.05	534,534.83
Professional services	185,099.49	331,038.71
Rent and storage	16,576.90	18,483.71
Telecommunications	4,973.08	7,559.4
Postage and delivery	3,050.14	196.41
Supplies	10,497.43	10,607.79
Equipment	800.00	787.5

⁴³ See grant agreement

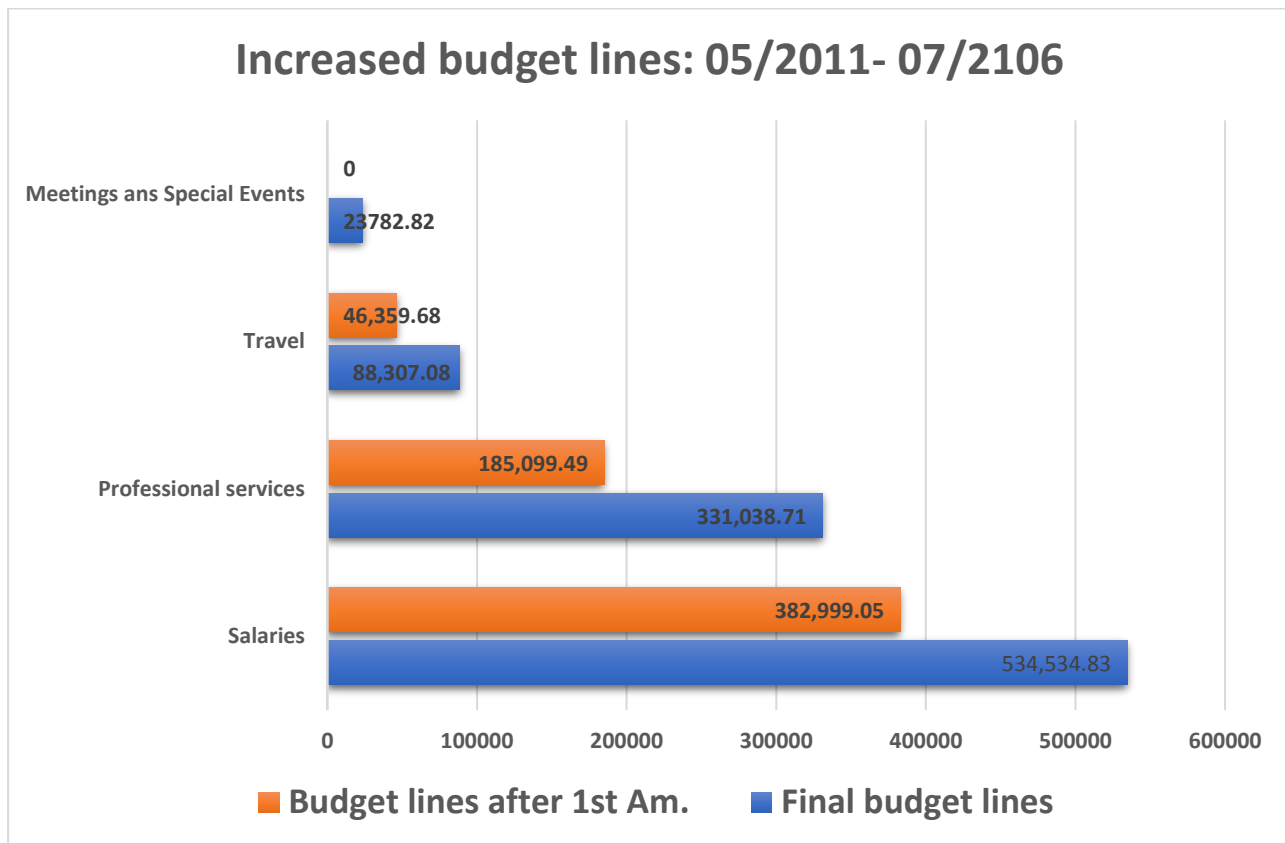


Maintenance	2,762.82	2,884.5
Travel	46,359.68	88,307.08
Meetings and Special Events	0.00	23,782.82
Miscellaneous	1,881.41	3,245.92
Subgrants	0	0
Indirect Cost	0	0
TOTAL	655,000.00	1,021,428.67

In the first amendment, US\$168,126.42 was realigned by moving the country coordinator fees from staff salaries to professional services. This amount also included an additional \$5,000 for translations.

From the first amendment until the end of the program, we can see a budget increase for the four following budget lines:

- Meetings and special events rises from US\$ 0; to US\$ 23,782.82;
- Travel: saw an increase of 90%.
- Professional services: saw an increase of 79%.
- Salaries: saw an increase of 40%.



CEPF increased the RIT's budget by 55% during the implementation of the program.

Despite the constant rise in the salaries and professional services budget lines by the CEPF office, the overall budget did not cover the effective cost of the work carried out in the context of this program. The three national coordinators, as well as other members of the RIT, reported giving their in-kind contribution to the project. As one of the country coordinators stated, the “in-kind contribution” was in some cases higher than the paid work. Documentation sent by the RIT for the June 2015-July 2016 period confirms this statement.

When asked about this issue, the RIT’s Executive Director answered that the “monthly timesheets record the hundreds of hours volunteered by CANARI’s CEPF team” and that “country coordinators submitted quarterly invoices which provide similar info”.

Some considerations on this point:

1. The work time established at the beginning of the program was not realistic, neither for the RIT manager (55% of a full time), nor the country coordinators (15% of a full time for each one).
2. Despite the important rise salaries and professional services resources during the five years running the program, the RIT considers that a significant part of the work it accomplished was not resourced.
3. Because their work for the RIT was part-time basis, the country coordinators had to dedicate time and energy to other work activities. Most of them probably could not live with the fee they received with the program.
4. It would be unrealistic to consider a full time or even 75% of a full-time position for the RIT manager and the country coordinators with the fees paid during the first phase of the CEPF program. For example, maintaining the fees applied during the first phase for the three country coordinators on a full-time base would imply a budget higher than the entire 2010-2015 RIT budget.

Therefore, considering the fact that a 5 years’ program will be implemented, one solution could be to reconsider the status of the country coordinators in the next phase. The challenge would be to offer a fee consistent with the work they are achieving while controlling the professional services line budget.

One solution could be to pay the country coordinators based on the activities they perform. This solution would not only be relevant to control the professional services budget line.

Another solution to consider would be to establish a fixed term contract for the five years of the program.

Estimates of the time that should have been dedicated to coaching activities (project designing, submission, reporting, monitoring) was also underestimated. Some tools could be developed to make the implementation of these activities more systematic.

It is also worth mentioning that the capacity of the organizations applying for grants to design projects and subsequently report their activities was in general lower than expected. For this reason, the country coordinators, the RIT office and the CEPF secretariat dedicated more time than expected to coaching activities.

Focusing on these coaching activities detracted from other activities expected to take place in points 1.1 to 1.5 of the Terms of Reference, namely, contact with donors, fostering synergies, and leveraging funds, among other things. In accordance with their assignment, these activities were carried out mainly by the three country coordinators, the RIT manager (who also was coordinator for the Lesser Antilles and the Bahamas), and the technical officer, who was assisting the RIT manager. However, the testimonies of the interviewed stakeholders agree on the fact that they were not conducted systematically. For example, while talking about the partnership building activities, one country coordinators stated: “it was done on an opportunistic basis”.

Furthermore, the international and local travel expenses were underestimated from the beginning of the project. As a consequence, travel was limited, and visits to the eastern Caribbean and more remote projects in Haiti were the most severely affected. Regional activities were also limited to one, carried out in Kingston during the mid-term



assessment. Worth mentioning is that the US\$ 10,000 of the US\$ 46,359.68 were allocated to the Regional Advisory Committee (RACC) inception workshop, which unbalanced this budget line right from the onset of the program.

In terms of efficiency, the fact that the RIT's office was based out of the hotspot was not considered a major concern by the interviewed stakeholders.

Every trip within the archipelago is expensive. If the RIT had been based closer to the main corridors, e.g. in Santo Domingo, the travel budget would probably have gone down because the Dominican Republic shares the same island with Haiti. However, the difference in price between flights from Port of Spain to Kingston and Santo Domingo to Kingston is minimal. To illustrate this, a simultaneous search for round trip flights from Port of Spain (Trinidad & Tobago) to Kingston (Jamaica) and Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) to Kingston on the same three dates showed no significant price difference. Furthermore, there are no direct flights from Santo Domingo to Kingston, while there are some on the Port of Spain to Kingston route.

All the consulted key stakeholders even mentioned the positive aspects of the neutrality provided by the distance from the zone of intervention. Having one national coordinator in the three biggest islands where the project was running also helped mitigate the effects of distance.

Also, as mentioned below, most of the budget is assigned to salaries and fees, and, therefore, modifications in the travel budget have a very small impact on the global budget.

A set of targets was designed to implement the CEPF's three main strategic directions and investment priorities for the Caribbean program. The following table shows the level of achievement of these targets:

Targets	Achievements
NGOs and civil society role players 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.	68 civil society organizations (46 local and regional Caribbean CSOs and 22 international CSOs) directly engaged in and benefiting from CEPF support in six conservation corridors and 32 KBAs (14 highest priority KBAs and 18 other priority KBAs) in Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.
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.	7 development plans, projects and policies have integrated ecosystem services and biodiversity, focusing on water resources management, reforestation, forest carbon, and regulation of ecosystem functions in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica.
17 Key Biodiversity Area covering 911,000 ha have strengthened protection and management as guided by sustainable management plans	12 out of the highest priority 17 KBAs (approx. 71%) covering a total of 468,268 ha have strengthened protection and management as guided by sustainable management plans.
At least 20 percent of under-protected priority key biodiversity areas (at least six) brought under new and/or strengthened protection status.	Approximately 16.6% or 8 out of 48 under-protected KBAs in the Bahamas and Haiti, covering 111,496 ha, under improved legal protection.
Strategic areas of the production landscape of six conservation corridors under improved	5 of the 6 conservation corridors have improved management in the production landscape through forest carbon, reforestation, integrated management plans, agro-forestry, beekeeping and sustainable tourism, in

management for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services.	the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Grenada, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.
The Caribbean ecosystem profile influences and complements other donor's investment strategies.	The Caribbean ecosystem profile influenced and complemented 11 other donor's investment strategies.
Number of hectares in key biodiversity areas and number of key biodiversity areas (and percent) with demonstrable improvements/strengthening in their protection and management as guided by a sustainable management plan.	25 out of priority 48 KBAs (approx. 52%) covering a total of 593,967 ha with demonstrable improvements in their management as guided by management and operational plans. 13 out of 31 medium priority KBAs (approximately 42%) covering 125,699 ha, under management improvements in the Dominican Republic, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Saint Lucia and The Bahamas.
Number of hectares brought under new or upgraded protection.	111,496 ha (in eight KBAs) in the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and Haiti, brought under new protection.
Number of sustainable financing mechanisms established and/or strengthened with initial capital secured.	2 sustainable funding schemes established.
Number of co-management arrangements established or supported.	Five co-management agreements at the KBA level established or supported.
Percent and number of grants that enable effective stewardship by local communities for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation.	76% or 59 out of 77 grants analyzed enable effective stewardship by local communities for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation with local municipalities, communities, and the private sector in all countries with CEPF grants.
Number of policies, projects and plans incorporating ecosystem services, climate change and biodiversity conservation.	10 policies, project and plans integrate climate change, forest carbon, water resource management, impact mitigation from infrastructure development into policies, projects and plans.
Number of hectares in production landscapes with improved management for biodiversity conservation.	20,146.4 ha under management improvements in reforestation, sustainable tourism, livelihood development and sustainable agriculture
Number of policies formulated and adopted to strengthen public and private protected areas systems.	Nine public – private partnerships achieved in the Dominican Republic, Antigua & Barbuda and Haiti.
Number of co-management arrangements established or supported.	1 co-management arrangement established at the corridor level.
Number of projects located outside protected areas that integrate biodiversity conservation in management practices.	10 projects in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti and St. Vincent and the Grenadines located outside of protected areas.
Number of civil society organizations with strengthened institutional capacity.	58 civil society organizations have strengthened institutional capacity.



Number of local and regional initiatives supported to strengthen stakeholder involvement in biodiversity conservation	23 stakeholder partnerships and initiatives created and/or strengthened.
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Although some of the targets did not establish a minimum level of achievement to be considered satisfactory, the first observation that can be made is that the RIT supported achievements for all of the targets.

Some of the significant findings:

- 71% of the highest priority KBAs strengthened their protection and management;
- 52% of the priority KBAs and 42% of the medium priority KBAs improved their management;
- 16.6%, or 8 out of 48 under-protected KBAs, covering 111,496ha, is under improved legal protection after running the program. The target was to improve the legal protection of at least 6 of the KBAs, and at least 20% of the total area of the under-protected KBAs. This target can be considered nearly achieved;
- 83% of the conservation corridors have improved management in the production landscape. Although no minimum was established, it can be considered a significant achievement;
- 85% of the organization involved in the program have strengthened institutional capacity;
- Almost 30% of the projects created and/or strengthened partnerships.

Also, 78% of the total funds committed went to local and regional Caribbean CSOs. This figure is important as one of the main objectives of the CEPF is to strengthen the civil society.

In terms of target reaching the results are clearly positive. No important gap is evident in the light of the target established at the beginning of the program.

However, the imbalance of the budget has an impact on the RIT capacity's to systematically implement some aspects of its assignment, namely, communications, funds leverage activities, innovative projects fostering, and overall, from a more cross-sectoral perspective, the regional scope, among other things.

Lessons learned: the activities carried out by the RIT supported satisfactory achievement of the main targets of the portfolio. However, the budget imbalance affected part of its operative capacity. Some adjustments should be considered to provide the necessary means to operate on a more systematic basis and give a regional scope to the program.

C. EFFECTIVENESS

a. Structure:

The structure was based on four types of role players: the team based in Trinidad & Tobago; the three country coordinators (Haiti, Jamaica and the DR); the Regional Advisory Committee, and the team of mentors funded by the MacArthur Foundation.

Trinidad & Tobago team:

At the start of the program, the team comprised 5 part-time members. The time dedicated to the program varied from 55% for the RIT Manager and the Technical Officer to 15% for the Financial Officer. Various adjustments were made during the program.

By the end of the program, the manager had 75% of a full-time contract and the Technical Officer's time was lowered to 17%. Worth noting that the members of the team were subject to competing priorities as they were also working on other projects being run by the CANARI. Therefore, the RIT manager stated that involving every member of the staff in more than one project is part of the RIT's corporate culture as it promotes collaborative work.

The majority of the consulted stakeholders, including the two consulted CEPF grant directors, believe that the RIT manager for this project should be full time. The main reasons given were that most of its activities were under budgeted or not budgeted at all, namely:

- The project management included communication with the CEPF Secretariat which was far more time consuming than expected, according to the RIT's executive director;
- The time given to coaching activities (the RIT manager was also coordinator for the Eastern Caribbean);
- Unplanned activities requested by the donors;
- Coordination of capacity building activities;
- Coordination of communication activities;
- Reporting.

As one key stakeholder stated, "RIT manager must be 100%, at least for the first 2 years. The country coordinator must be at least 50%"⁴⁴

The country coordinators:

The stakeholders consulted during the evaluation considered the work performed by the country coordinators highly valuable. The factors mentioned were: the knowledge of local reality and languages, as well as establishing a horizontal relationship. They were seen as coaches and mentors who helped them to reach their goals.

The three country coordinators of Haiti, Dominican Republic and Jamaica were hired to work 15% of a full-time position, which had risen to 20% (Haiti), 25% (Dominican Republic) and 30% (Jamaica) by the end of the program. The Jamaican Coordinator also replaced the RIT manager from January until May 2014, due to her maternity leave.

Everyone consulted thought that the actual work dedicated to country coordination is far greater than anticipated, and some evidence sent by the RIT confirms this.⁴⁵ Most of the stakeholders, including the CEPF staff, believe the job needs to be full time. However, one of the country coordinators estimated that 50% could be enough.

So as to objectively define the time needed to be dedicated to the project, the evaluation team believes different aspects must be taken into account:

- National context: For example, field work in Haiti is very time consuming and relations with the governmental sector are not really easy;
- Portfolio size: more projects to attend means more time needed for coaching;
- Grantees institutional capacity: CBOs need more attention than institutionalized NGO's.

The Regional Advisory Committee:

⁴⁴ As evidence, the RIT reported 202 hours of Trinidad & Tobago's staff in-kind contribution from June 2015 until July 2016

⁴⁵ The RIT reported 157 hours of country coordinators in-kind contribution from June 2015 until July 2016



The RACC was considered a great source of strategic advice, not only during the project's approval process, but also as regional promoters of the CEPF who helped open up the potential for funds leverage, among other things.

It is volunteer work, with its cons and pros. They provided quality work because of their expertise and knowledge of the context and the grantees. At the same time, they are busy people in general. Some of them admitted that at times they were not in a position to provide their advice on time. Given the high number of RACC members, the RIT tried to anticipate this type of problem, which in most cases prevented large workloads.

b. Capacities of the RIT:

Overall, the RIT as a team had the technical and linguistic competencies required to perform its work. However, they lacked the same proficiency in terms of biodiversity conservation. Their experience is more on participatory natural resources management, supporting CSOs and government outreach. In order to compensate this weakness, the RIT relied on the RACC and the CEPF Secretariat to add technical capacity in this area.

While the program was running, the RIT strengthened its Trinidad & Tobago team by hiring two people proficient in French, Creole and Spanish.

The consulted stakeholders unanimously described CANARI as a very professional and efficient organization whose participatory approach was highly valued. The network they built over the last decades is reliable. The civil society already knew them before running the CEPF program. They also benefit from the trust of the CSOs in the region, which is a valuable asset considering the regional idiosyncrasy. They have an in-depth knowledge of the region and of the Caribbean civil society.

Two other strengths of this organization that were mentioned were its ongoing self-assessment and lessons learned sharing processes.

CANARI and the CEPF converge in their mission in so far as they both rely on the CSO's strengthening to reach their goals in terms of nature conservation. It is a strong asset that can help ensure the sustainability of the results and impacts.

D. COVERAGE

Biodiversity conservation is a complex subject that must be considered from a long-term perspective. In this context, the program is framed on the basis of a limited budget over a limited period. This period is very short in terms of biodiversity conservation. A balance must be found between the area covered and the intended impact.

CEPF's investment comprised 11 islands, 45 KBAs and 6 corridors. Projects were run in 25 KBAs and 5 corridors through the program. The work was focused on 12 of the 17 top priority areas which were located in the 3 main countries of intervention.

Meanwhile, the KBAs that were not considered top priority were also taken into account: projects were run in 13 out of the 31 medium priority KBAs (approximately 42%).

Furthermore, various regional scope projects have been implemented aimed at covering the entire area of intervention (eligible countries only).

Overall, the consulted stakeholders agree on the fact that the portfolio was fair and echoed the strategy. The CEPF secretariat and the RIT worked in close coordination during the calls for proposals to ensure that coverage met the strategic directions and investment priorities.

In addition, 78% of the funds committed went to local and regional CSOs. In this way, implementation responded to one of the strategic directions of the program, which was to strengthen the Caribbean civil society to achieve biodiversity conservation.

The main weaknesses identified in terms of coverage were the following:

- Few projects involved the private sector to ensure sustainable financing mechanisms
- Strategic direction number 5, aimed at providing emergency support to Haitian civil society to mitigate the impact of the 2010 earthquake, did not reach its objectives.

E. IMPACT

a. Biodiversity conservation:

Biodiversity initiatives must rely on a long term vision, and we may objectively consider that the program activities were based on a long term vision:

- Because they were built in close coordination with the corresponding public sector;
- Because they included partnerships with the private sector or implied fund leverage procedures;
- Because they were carried out by CSOs whose mission also aims at biodiversity conservation as well as the sustainable use of natural resources and environmental services.

The consulted stakeholders unanimously concurred that the program had a notable impact on biodiversity conservation in the areas of intervention. Many examples were mentioned. Some worth mentioning are:

- Creating the first private protected areas in Haiti and the Dominican Republic;
- The reappropriation of natural resources by local communities in Haiti and St Vincent;
- Creating new protected areas;
- Including innovative funding schemes based on payment for ecosystem services;
- Drafting protected area development plans in coordination with the public sector;
- Helping to cancel the Goat Island port development in Jamaica's Portland Bight Protected Area;
- Increasing the protection of several KBAs, including in Antigua & Barbuda and The Bahamas.

b. Human wellbeing:

The impact on human wellbeing is more difficult to measure. However, many projects included an element that offered economic alternatives and improved the living conditions of the populations that were exerting a stress on natural resources. The productive activities aimed at conserving the biodiversity were: beekeeping, agro-forestry, ecotourism, and payment for ecosystem services.

These types of initiative are very important in areas where the population lives in extreme poverty. In this case, conserving biodiversity must be linked to improving human wellbeing.

A member of the Diamond Village heritage community in St. Vincent reported that the project run in his community had an impact in the way that the people are now looking for options beyond cultivating banana.

c. Civil society capacities:

The fact that 78% of the grants were allocated to regional and national CSOs gives an idea of the importance given to local civil society. Most of the consulted stakeholders stated that the project had a really significant impact on the civil society. This is one of the consequences of the capacities built during the program. In this framework, the ongoing support provided by CANARI's office and the country coordinators in terms of project designing, monitoring, accounting and management, has notably improved the organizations' capacities. The CBOs are the ones that most benefitted from this support. As stated above, the RIT devoted considerable attention to ensure the CSOs were aware of CEPF calls. It also provided a sustained follow-up to these organizations.

In the Dominican Republic, the CSOs also improved their communication skills. As coordinator staff member of the Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano (CAD), said: communication is now part of his agenda.

Some of the organizations that were having difficulties in guaranteeing their own sustainability have now found alternative funding. The Caribbean Coastal Management Foundation based in Jamaica (CCAM) was on the verge of collapse at the beginning of the program. Now, this foundation has been added to the NAP support system and will receive salaries and monitoring from the government. It successfully applied for funding from the Conservation Strategy Fund and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Center (CCCCC). As one staff member from CCAM stated: "No doubt that CEPF program contributed to it... and the impact will continue to be felt for years to come"

The RIT itself believes it increased its reach to other Caribbean areas, such as the Dominican Republic and Haiti, where "we were not going strongly on the ground before". The RIT manager also stated that "... it gave us the platform to meet new civil society groups. It increased our capacity for grants management and opened new opportunities. It also gave us the chance to access new funds from new donors".

Hence the RIT is running three biodiversity conservation related projects at the moment:

- Development of a five-year (2018 to 2022) CARICOM Biodiversity Road-map and Strategy for the implementation of the Biodiversity Cluster of MEAs Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS);
- Building capacity for communication and stakeholder engagement under the Integrating Land, Water and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island Developing States (GEF-IWEco project);
- Civil society and small and micro enterprise innovation for marine and coastal conservation in the Caribbean (European Union project).

Furthermore, new donors are now showing interest in biodiversity conservation in the Caribbean.

The abovementioned five-year CARICOM road-map and strategy is a leading example of this new interest. The UE funded African Caribbean and Pacific group (ACP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and UN Environment are involved in this program.

There was also a multiplier effect. Some organizations, such as the Fondo Pro Naturaleza (PRONATURA) and the Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo (INTEC) in the Dominican Republic, were able to bring other resources to the



table thanks to the CEPF program.⁴⁶ Because of its activities in the Valle Nuevo protected area, PRONATURA established contact with USAID which is now funding part of its activities in the area, and, as mentioned above, INTEC has been awarded a Project with a Science Academy in the US.

F. ACCESSIBILITY

The RIT has made outstanding efforts to be in position to provide small grants to every type of organization.

Special efforts in the small grants program were made to reach grassroots organizations. For example, during the first call for proposal, the information was sent by email and broadcast on community radio stations.⁴⁷ For subsequent calls, the RIT sent the information to media outlets located in the Caribbean for every call for proposal.⁴⁸

An important effort was also made to have every important document available in the local language. The projects submissions assessment criteria were also oriented so that international organizations would involve national and local organizations.

In spite of the measures taken to open the grants to grassroots organizations and to give them ongoing support, it is still very difficult for many of them to answer this type of call for proposals. For example, email is the main means of establishing communication between the grantees and the RIT staff. Lack of access to Internet and even to electricity is still part of the reality in many rural areas, at least in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Some of the CBOs that applied for the small grants did not have the level of competency required to apply for a grant. As the country coordinator for Jamaica and the Bahamas stated, “the proposals with large grants are biased towards professional NGOs”.

One of the measures adopted to facilitate access to grants for organizations that are not used to this type of procedures is the peer to peer solution: organizations with more ability and experience help the ones applying. For example, during a workshop on sustainable financing organized by the RIT and held in Santo Domingo by the IDDI, the Fundación José Delio Guzmán asked the Sociedad Ornitológica de la Hispaniola (SOH) to help them design their project and apply for a grant, which they did.

The RIT also tried to involve organizations whose main scope is not linked to conservation. For example, a Large Grant was awarded in Haiti to Agronomes et Vétérinaires sans frontières. A member of the CEPF secretariat suggested that more can be done on this matter and, biodiversity conservation projects could be implemented by organizations from the humanitarian sector, at least in Haiti.

All in all, the vast majority of the consulted key stakeholders, RACC members included, concluded that the overall spread of the grants was relevant. However, they also expressed the need to give more importance to regional projects in order to develop Caribbean awareness among the stakeholders and the grantees in particular. The islands of the Caribbean region have many common issues and developing regional awareness can be a way of building

⁴⁶ TNC is currently running a five-year program (2014-2019) funded by the U.S. Agency for international development “that aims to achieve sustained biodiversity conservation, maintain critical ecosystems and realize tangible improvements in human and community wellbeing ... in five target countries: Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica and St. Vincent & the Grenadines”:
<https://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/caribbean/caribbean-marine-biodiversity-program.xml>

⁴⁷ The evaluation team received this information during interviews. The RIT performance report 2011 Jan-Jun 2011; p.23. confirms this statement.

⁴⁸ According to the RIT manager, the RIT has a list of media listing of media outlets which includes radio. It was enriched by the addition of another list provided by PANOS Caribbean during the implementation of the program.

the bases of a regional community which would be stronger in the face of biodiversity conservation challenges and other related issues like climate change.

Part of the RIT team also referred to the relevance of raising the small grants maximum threshold. US\$ 40,000 and US\$ 50,000 were mentioned. However, there were some doubts with regards to the acceptable level of risk involved in such a decision.

G. ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Opportunities and threats vary greatly from one country to another in the hotspot. Some opportunities have been capitalized. However, identifying opportunities means networking which is time consuming. Face to face is important, especially in the Caribbean context.

Jamaica

As mentioned above, CEPF helped the civil society to gather the information needed to show that the Goat Islands port development project was not a good option, not only from an environmental point of view, but also from an economic perspective. This event shows the program's level of flexibility. CEPF's secretariat provided strategic advice and formed the partnership between Conservation Strategy Fund and CCAM, to support technical study and outreach. This success is also proof of concept: it shows that biodiversity conservation can work jointly with sustainable development goals. Goat Island has now been declared a wildlife refuge by the Jamaican government.

Haiti

The 2010 earthquake in Haiti took place three days before the ecosystem profile was presented to the CEPF Donors Council for its approval. As a consequence, the donors decided to create a new strategic direction and open a new budget line in order to support the Haitian civil society and mitigate the impacts of the 2010 earthquake. As one of the members of the CEPF secretariat stated, the decision, taken during a chaotic situation brought on by one of the most lethal natural disasters of recent human history, to support the reconstruction of the country, "was well intended but not realistic". The situation was too chaotic after the earthquake and, besides, the trauma suffered by most of the population, most of the people had more basic priorities, like finding a place to live, to eat. Furthermore, most of the civil society was not operational for any activities other than humanitarian help. Part of the staff of the local organizations died and lot of data was lost. According to the grant director for Haiti and the country coordinator, the situation was simply not conducive for running this type of project.

Two cross-border projects were run between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The dynamics of cross-border collaboration were different in both cases. One arose from the shared commitment of two organizations that already knew each other and worked in the same area, while the other seems to be the result of an outside initiative.

Worth mentioning is that geopolitical aspects must also be taken into account: relations between the two countries permanently fluctuate. This instability does not favor setting up such projects.

However, the current situation seems open to new opportunities: the Haitian Ministry of Environment officially opened the biodiversity department at the end of 2017, and some cross-border projects are being run in close coordination between the two governments. The Reserva de la Biosfera Transfronteriza Jaragua - Bahoruco - Enriquillo - La Selle is in its Operative Annual Plan phase. The Corredor Biológico del Caribe, is another project initiated at the beginning



of 2015 aimed at strengthening the environmental ministries in Haiti, Dominican Republic and Cuba in terms of biodiversity conservation activities, among other things.

There is also the CAREBios initiative: a cross-border project financed by GIZ aimed at strengthening eco-systemic adaptation in bordering biosphere reserves.

Dominican Republic

The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources has a stable technical staff which remained unaltered during the last changes in government. It is a valuable asset in so far as it guarantees some continuity with regard to the outreach and partnership activities carried out in this ministry. The country coordinator has managed to establish a trust relationship with various members of the technical staff of this ministry, which helped a lot in terms of running the program and is still a positive asset from the point of view of running the next phase.

Some complementary funds were available while the program was running in the country: GEF and PPS funds. Only one grantee capitalized on these opportunities: the Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano, which succeeded in leveraging these funds and established partnerships with the Dominican Government and the private sector as a way to finance the first private protected area of the country. More can be done in that direction.

5. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The RIT running the first phase of the CEPF in the Caribbean was overall relevant, and the objectives set at the beginning of the program were globally reached.

However, part of the strategy aimed at guaranteeing the sustainability of the intervention and optimizing its impact was not implemented in a systematic and consistent manner.

Communication, partnerships among grantees, establishing synergies between the public and private sectors, fund leverage and developing a regional dimension among the grantees were not prioritized during the first phase of the program. To heighten the impact of the program, these aspects of running the program must be redressed to their full extent in the second phase.

Therefore, these activities must be included in the regional implementation team planning, with clear procedures and responsibilities, and must be resourced.

The CEPF provides a regional framework that needs to be enhanced in the case of the Caribbean. This region is fragmented in many aspects, and one of the main challenges for the second phase will be to build Caribbean awareness.

Strong regional links must be established within the Caribbean civil society, with the donors, with the public and private sectors, with the academia and the media. These links must transcend borders, cultures and languages. How can this be done?

A. RELEVANCE

a. Coordination & communication:

Leadership capacity

Considering the characteristics of the region (different cultures, languages, and geographic and political fragmentation), a regional implementation team that has its origins in the Caribbean civil society, that is already acknowledged and trusted by the civil society working in the area of conservation, with an pre-established network of role players in the various sectors of society, is a strong asset.

Communication

General

The RIT made great efforts to offer an equal opportunity to every potential grantee in terms of languages. Every communication initiative must include this component. This has implications in terms of translation and, subsequently, budget.

Communication and visibility is fundamental at every level. We now live in a society of information, and the ability to capitalize its potential can have a significant impact on every other element of the program. Moreover, the ability of the grantees to communicate and give visibility to their activities is an important factor for sustainability.

It is important to better integrate the communication strategy with the rest of running the program. A communication coordinator position should be considered from the beginning of the project, but the ability to involve every stakeholder as a potential producer of content could significantly enhance the impact of the communication strategy. To be effective, the communication strategy should be organic. Nowadays, every stakeholder with a cellphone connected to Internet potentially produces relevant information for the other stakeholders of the program. For a very short investment, every grantee could be able to communicate their lessons learned and experience without being involved in a complicated process. To do so, a small CEPF program communication toolbox could be provided to every grantee.

Implementing a multilingual communication platform (maybe an app) that facilitates communication among stakeholders as well as identifies potential partnerships might be an idea: it can be a very effective and efficient way to bring stakeholders together and to send relevant information to each of them⁴⁹.

Capacité newsletter

Despite its inner qualities, the Capacité newsletter did not reach its objectives.

The newsletter's format should be reconsidered. Radical changes regarding the use and production of information by the public in general could be considered:

- Abundance of information;
- Use of new devices, the use of the smartphones being critical;
- Importance of relevant information directly available for the target audience;
- Improve availability of alternatives to written information: audio, video, photographic information.

Also, how the various types of potential users customarily use information should be addressed:

- CBO's members;

⁴⁹ *If it really responds the grantees and other stakeholder's needs this option can be effective in the way that it will significantly improve their ability to build partnerships, and its design and development will involve one single initial investment. If successful, the same platform could be used in the other regions of intervention. The evaluation team is unaware of any similar application. It would be a pilot project.*

- Local & national NGO's;
- Regional NGO's;
- RACC members;
- Donors.

Facilitating partnership between stakeholders

Because it focuses on the CSOs, CEPF provides a unique niche in terms of funding biodiversity conservation. This opportunity should be optimized to the fullest. It is also fundamental to foster synergies and collaborative work with the public and private sector, donors, academia, NGOs & CBOs. The initiatives that capitalize the opportunity provided by the diversity of inputs (know how, expertise, funding, community organizations contributions, ...) are in general the most effective.

What could be done to facilitate grantee to grantee partnerships?

Concerning each call for a proposal, once the grants are approved, the first step would be to establish a map of project complementarity at a regional level. This map should be shared with the stakeholders, along with any information that could help the grantees establish a first contact.

At a later stage, various procedures can be adopted at various levels:

- Face to face meetings between country coordinators and technical managers at the beginning of the project submission evaluation process to identify the potential links between the projects;
- Country coordinators side meetings and/or information sharing procedures;
- Include a specific budget for experience sharing internships and regional travel in every grant. The country coordinators or mentors could play a key role in this process, stimulating, monitoring and, if needed, being present in these activities. We strongly recommend investigating the possibility of allocating this budget as a part of the subsidies;
- Involve various types of stakeholders in the logistic aspects of these activities. For example, the GIZ has expressed their availability to fund this type of activity and the AFD offers access to its facilities.

Funds leverage:

Different options are available to diversify, provide sustainability and amplify the impact of the program. As for the above-mentioned activities, funds leverage should be considered an organic activity during the next phase of the program.

Here are some options that could be considered:

Complementarity with similar funds

The projects' impact may be amplified thanks to complementarity with other similar funds like the Small Grants Program (SGP) or the GEF. Both globally work in the same area at different levels. Although they have a broader scope of intervention, biodiversity is one of their priorities.

The Reserva Privada el Zorzal project in the Dominican Republic, which is one of the most successful projects run in the hotspot, also availed of these two funds. Worth mentioning that private funds were involved in this project.

The relevance of establishing a geographic complementarity with the BEST program of the European Union may also be worth investigating.

Strategically speaking, it is also important to investigate the chances of partnerships with climate change initiatives. Climate change being one of the main threats to biodiversity conservation overall in archipelagos there is a high potential for complementarity between these areas. Furthermore, climate change is nowadays considered a priority for governments all over the world, and most probably for a long time to come.

Transversal

To be effective, biodiversity projects must respond to population priorities. So, opportunities must be considered to involve programs and organizations that are not involved in biodiversity conservation or environment conservation but could be incorporated as a transversal activity. Overall, this could be relevant in areas of higher level of poverty, for example, in Haiti.

Private sector

Another way of achieving this goal could be to build private sector donors pools. There are various private sector organizations potentially interested in funding environmental and biodiversity conservation projects. Many CSOs do not want to work directly with these companies because of the sector they belong to (mining, fossil energy, etc.) or reputation (Coca Cola, etc.). The creation of private donor pools at a national level could be a strong element to ensure sustainable financing of the biodiversity conservation initiatives funded by CEPF.

Various grantees also mentioned their interest in having direct contacts with the CEPF donors. The country coordinators could play a key role here.

b. Capacity Building:

The RIT based its capacity building activities on one-on-one coaching during the first phase of the program, and the grantees globally agreed on the fact that this activity had an important impact on many organizations' capacities. The fact that CEPF also funded many capacity building activities by means of the grant also helped in this sense. However, weaknesses have been identified in terms of sustainability, networking and funds leverage.

Capacity building activities must be based on a long-term holistic strategy determined once the grantees have been identified. Every grantee conducts its activities in a specific context and has particular strengths and weaknesses. For this reason, it is important to consider the simultaneous use of different methodologies adapted to the grantees on a long-term basis. In most of the cases, a simple workshop is not enough and must be part of a set of activities: workshops, country coordinator coaching, peer to peer exchange activities, monitoring, etc.

The strategy should take into consideration the national-level needs in this matter. The country coordinators should play a key role in this context, identifying needs and potential organizations that could provide training activities. This capacity building map should also be set up on a regional level, identifying the weaknesses and capacities, as well as the project similarities of the various grantees. Subsequently, every grantee, and maybe even stakeholder, must have access to this information and be in a position to share and exchange it with every stakeholder of interest.

c. Coordination of the entire grant process

The RIT's previous experience dealing with grants management is a strong asset.

For the second phase, the RIT and the CEPF must ensure to be exactly on the same page regarding the strategy, especially before the beginning of the call for proposal.

Regional Advisory Committee

The members of the committee regard the RACC inception workshop as very positive. Since the areas of intervention and strategic directions may have significantly changed, another inception workshop should be considered for the next phase before the first call for proposal. This activity could be considered very expensive. Nevertheless, as stated above in the report (see *Review Process*), the RACC played a key role in the implementation of the program that goes further than its original advisory role. A US\$ 10,000⁵⁰ investment for the inception of the program would correspond to an investment of less than ten USD per month per RACC member.

Also, communication between the RACC members, the RIT staff and the CEPF secretariat during the project review process should be improved. Some of them expressed the need for more transparency concerning the decisions made and, if needed, exchange points of view when there is difficulty in making a decision.

d. Project supervision and reports:

The RIT and the CEPF secretariat should make sure they have defined the reporting responsibilities and procedures in detail at the beginning of the program to avoid any confusion during the grantees reporting process. The grantees must know who to refer to in every type of circumstance. This was considered one of the most outstanding difficulties encountered, not only by the grantees, but also by the RIT and CEPF secretariat.

B. EFFICIENCY

As mentioned above, because of its intrinsic characteristic, intervention in the Caribbean hotspot has an important investment to impact ratio.

Having a country coordinator in the three main islands of the program has proved to be very effective in several ways. However, the whole structure was under resourced during the first phase of the program and the budget was unbalanced, concentrating 85% of the amount on salaries and professional services. A solution must be found to give them time to carry out their work in proper conditions.

Externalizing some expenses including additional funds in grantee budget could be considered, for example the grantee's travel budget to attend workshops and other types of networking and capacity building activities,

C. EFFECTIVENESS

a. Structure

RIT staff

The intervention structure adopted by the RIT staff, composed of two main positions (manager and technical officer assisted by the administrative staff) is on the whole relevant. However, some changes may be considered for the next phase of the program.

⁵⁰ Budget mentioned in the RIT supervision mission June 2011; p.19.

The RIT manager should be able to dedicate at least 90% of his/her time to the program in order to respond to the array of duties specified in the RIT TORs, as well as the unforeseen ones.

The national coordinators:

In the three major islands of intervention the country coordinators need significantly more time to dedicate to their tasks.

It should be adapted to the reality of the countries, and the activities that were accounted for systematically during the first phase of the program in terms of communication, networking, funds leverage, synergies and partnerships, should now be considered. Furthermore, because of the country's specificities more time must be dedicated to field visits in Haiti. The country coordinator for Jamaica could also oversee the Eastern Caribbean even though it would be mainly distance work, considering the travel difficulties in this area.

In order to objectively define the time that must be dedicated to the program, different aspects must be taken into account:

- National context: for example, field work in Haiti is very time consuming and relations with the government sector are not easy
- Portfolio size: more projects to attend means more time for coaching
- Grantees institutional capacity: CBO's need more attention than institutionalized NGO's.

b. Capacities

The know-how and expertise required to implement the CEPF in the region are not easy to find. The main required capacities include, but are not limited to: knowledge of the region and its civil society, networking, capacity building, proficiency in the local languages as well as knowledge and empathy for its cultures, holistic understanding of the environmental challenges at the global, regional, national and local level, expertise in biodiversity conservation, etc.

During the first phase of implementation, the RIT's main weakness in terms of capacity was proficiency in biodiversity conservation. However, this area improved during the investment by inputs from the secretariat and the RACC. This weakness was not considered critical by the members of the RACC consulted on this matter.

For the next phase, if a future RIT lacks biodiversity skills, then options will have to be considered to figure out to include that skill on the RIT team. A budget aimed at responding to specific needs in terms of capacities could also be considered.

Annex I: stakeholders interviewed

CANARI

	Name	Responsibility
1	Nicole Leotaud	Executive director
2	Anna Cadiz	RIT Manager
3	Loiza Rauzduel	Technical Officer
4	Venash Ramberan	Financial Officer
5	Nicole Brown	Jamaica country coordinator
6	Leida Buglass	DR country coordinator
7	Paul Judex Eduardzin	Haïti country coordinator

CEPF

	Name	Responsibility
8	Olivier Landgrand	Executive Director
9	Jack Tordoff	Managing Director
10	Michele Zador	Regional Grant Director
11	Pierre Carret	Haïti Grant Director
12	Nina Marshall	Monitoring, Evaluation and Outreach

Grantees

	Name	Organization	Country
13	Jorge Brocca	Sociedad Ornitológica de la Hispaniola	DR
14	Solhanlle Bonilla	INTEC	DR
15	Sésar Rodríguez	Consortio Ambiental Dominicano	DR
16	Frank Arnemann	PRONATURA	DR
17	Sixto Inchaústegui	Grupo Jaragua	DR
18	José Delio Guzmán	Fundación José Delio Guzmán	DR
19	Elie Desmarrattes	OPDFM/ Forêt des Pins	Haïti
20	Jean-Mary Laurent	Société Audubon	Haïti
21	Jean Wiener	Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine (FoProBim)	Haïti
22	Ingrid Parchment	Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation	Jamaica
23	Allison Ramgolan	Environmental Foundation of Jamaica	Jamaica
24	Karen McDonald	Environmental Foundation of Jamaica	Jamaica
25	Donna Blake	The Nature Conservancy	Jamaica

26	Ann Sutton	Conservation Ecologist	Jamaica
27	Carlos Martínez	Philly Zoo	Regional
28	Natalya Lawrence	Environmental Awareness Group	Antigua
29	Simeon Green	Diamond Village Community Heritage	St. Vincent

RACC members:

	Name	Organization	Country
30	Carlos García Cartagena	Fondo Marena	DR
31	María Eugenia Morales	UNDP	DR
32	Florence Sergile	Florida University	Haiti
33	Yves-André Wainright	UNDP	Haiti
34	David Smith, PhD	Institute for Sustainable Development	Jamaica

Other Stakeholders (donors, government...):

	Name	Organization	Country
35	Hypatia Modesto	AFD	Dominican Republic
36	José Manuel Mateo Félix	Environmental M.	Dominican Republic
37	Christiane Delfs	GIZ/ Port-au-Prince	Haiti
38	Michelet Louis	Environmental M.	Haiti
39	Romain Renaud	BEST-Initiative	Regional

Contacted but finally not interviewed:

	Name	Organization	Country
40	Massani Accime	Iguana International Foundation	Haiti
41	Sol Teresa	Environmental Ministry	DR
42	Diana McCauley	Jamaican Environmental Trust	Jamaica
43	Elaine Fisher	Regional Advisory Committee (RACC)	Jamaica
44	Antonia Cermak-Terzian	CEPF Secretariat	USA