

CEPF Final Project Completion Report

Organization Legal Name:	BirdLife International
Project Title:	Eastern Afromontane-2, RIT Programs
Grant Number:	61681
CEPF Region:	Eastern Afromontane
Strategic Direction:	4 Provide strategic leadership and effective coordination of CEPF investment through a regional implementation team.
Grant Amount:	
Project Dates:	September 01, 2012 - March 31, 2020
Date of Report:	March 24, 2020

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

List each partner and explain how they were involved with the project.

Main partners in this project were the following:

- 1. BirdLife Middle East office - supported the grants programme in Yemen, and assisted with attempts to raise funds for the hotspot in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.**
- 2. The Ethiopia Wildlife and Natural History Society (EWNHS, BirdLife in Ethiopia) - supported the implementation of the CEPF programme in Ethiopia.**
- 3. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) through their ESARO (Eastern and Southern Africa) office in Nairobi, Kenya, and the Maputo office in Mozambique - supported the implementation of the CEPF programme in Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique; also provided technical advice in the areas of M&E, species and site conservation, and METT. Additionally, the programme was supported by:**
 - a high-level Board of Advisors (including representatives from donors, civil society, private sector and academia);**
 - 188 external reviewers (LOI/proposal reviews) from 26 countries; and**
 - the RITs from other hotspots (best practices, experience exchange, and encouragement).**

CONSERVATION IMPACTS

Summarize the overall impact of your project, describing how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.

The Programmes component of the CEPF investment in the Eastern Afromontane hotspot consisted of four main areas:

- 1. Communications: the RIT communicated extensively and continuously with potential applicants, grantees, donors, and the CEPF Secretariat, including through targeted outreach, an on-line advisory service, and the production of 90 articles, 25 videos, 6 newsletters, 39 e-bulletins and various social media campaigns.**
- 2. Leverage: based on experience in other hotspots, the RIT expected that the portfolio would leverage about 150% of its value at the start of the programme (which would have been USD 15m, based on a USD 9.8m investment). In the end, CEPF, RIT and grantees managed to raise almost double that amount (USD 27.7m), in co-funding and leveraging.**
- 3. Capacity building and lessons learned: the RIT, together with CLP, FFI and TBA, co-organised 21 training and learning events and 14 experience exchange events, directly building the capacity of 249 conservationists (164 male/85 female, mainly grantees) from 128 organisations (including 79 CEPF grantees) in 13 hotspot countries.**
- 4. Developing and supporting a coherent portfolio that delivers impacts: 164 CEPF-funded projects, implemented by 115 CSOs, delivered conservation at 83 KBAs, strengthened management of almost 5m ha of land, created 1.4m ha of new protected area, produced 50 management plans and 74 policies/bylaws, planted almost 2m trees, supported the EIA process at 14 KBAs under threat, assessed 25 KBAs using the new KBA criteria, and identified 7 new KBAs (designation in process). Grantees carried out 114 surveys, covering 7 taxa, implemented conservation action for 29 species, and discovered 5 new species (most are still being described). The programme also created/strengthened 77 networks, facilitated the creation of 33 new Civil Society Organisations, and trained about 35,000 people in new conservation-related skills across the hotspot.**

Planned Long-term Impacts – 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
To contribute to strengthening the involvement and effectiveness of civil society in achieving conservation and management of globally important biodiversity in the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot through the implementation of a coherent investment strategy	The ecosystem profile's investment strategy includes the following goals and targets: - work with 60 grantees (achieved: 115) - develop grantee capacity (51 of 75 CSOs with start/end CSTTs reported an increase in capacity = 68%) - all grantees received positive scorecard (achieved: 90% of large grants, 93% of small grants) - work at 25 priority KBAs (achieved: 37 out of 47); total nr of KBAs touched by investment: 83 out of 317, including 7 new KBAs - improve management of 1.2 million hectares at pKBAs (achieved: 3.1m ha at pKBAs, 4.8 million across the hotspot) - expand/create 500,000 ha of new protected areas at pKBAs (achieved: 1.4m at pKBAs, 1.43m across the hotspot) - bring 1.7m ha of production landscape under improved management (achieved: 1.5m ha) - develop management plans (achieved: 50, covering almost 3.3m ha) - establish 8 sustainable financing schemes (achieved: 11) - produce local/national policies/plans (achieved: 74) - develop private sector ventures for biodiversity and livelihoods (achieved: 9) - engage in safeguards (EIA) activities (achieved: 21 engagement by 16 grantees at 14 KBAs) - support conservation community in Eritrea, South Sudan and Yemen (partly achieved) - USD 15m leveraged over the USD 9.8m portfolio (achieved: USD 27.7m)
Provision of strategic leadership and effective coordination of CEPF investment through a regional implementation team	The RIT was deployed, at any given time, in person in Amman, Addis Ababa, Nairobi, Kigali, and Maputo and thus able to engage with hundreds of applicants/partners and with scores of government agencies and donors in all relevant

	hotspot countries. The team participated in conferences that set the agenda for conservation (including IUCN WCC, World Parks Congress, Rwanda Water and Development conference etc). BirdLife International and IUCN, as literally two of the leading biodiversity conservation organizations in the world, provided legitimacy to many of the smaller organizations receiving grants.
Promulgation of the goals of CEPF, as represented in the Ecosystem Profile.	The goals of CEPF, as represented in the EAM ecosystem profile, were to: - implement a large grant programme in the hotspot (achieved: 67 large grants - including 3 to the RIT - at a value of USD 10.09m) - implement a small grant programme in the hotspot (achieved: 97 small grants at a value of USD 1.88m; the available small grants fund was used for 99.9%) - enable civil society to engage in conservation: grants were made to 27 international CSOs, 85 local/national CSOs, and 3 individuals (total: 115 including sub-grantees) - support projects under SD1: Mainstream biodiversity into wider development policies, plans and projects to deliver the co-benefits of biodiversity conservation, improved local livelihoods and economic development (achieved: 60 projects, USD 3.48m) - support projects under SD2: Improve the protection and management of the KBA network throughout the hotspot (achieved: 75 projects, USD 4.71m) - support projects under SD3: Initiate and support sustainable financing and related actions for the conservation of KBAs and corridors (achieved: 26 projects, USD 1.84m) - support projects under SD4: Provide strategic leadership and effective coordination of CEPF through a regional implementation team (achieved: 3 projects, USD 1.94m)

Planned Short-term Impacts – 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
The Programs component of the EAM Regional Implementation Team is well managed and delivers all components and expected results	(1) The RIT communicated with potential applicants (outreach, advisory service), grantees (calls, emails, meetings), governments (mainly at grantee/project level, as it proved hard to engage governments at national level as they are not eligible for CEPF funding), CEPF Secretariat staff, and both CEPF and non-CEPF donors. Overall, the USD 11,975,000 invested by CEPF raised an additional USD 27.7 million in co-funding/leveraging (USD 2.3 for every CEPF dollar). (2) The RIT, together with experts in the field of capacity building, trained 249 individuals from 79 grantees and 49 other agencies in proposal writing, project management (technical and financial), report writing and a range of other skills. Especially the 'Master Classes' at the start of the grants under the last three calls for proposals (organised in 2017-2018) proved to be very helpful in improving the proposals, projects and reports of the grantees. (3) These last three sets of projects, under the 'bridge fund', proved highly effective in terms of mainstreaming (e.g. mining in Uganda/Rwanda; policy-making in Kenya), sustainable financing (e.g. PES in Kenya and Uganda), work in production landscapes (e.g. charcoal harvesting in Tanzania) and KBA/species conservation (from dragonflies to primates).

Describe the successes or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives.

Challenges:

1. The size of the hotspot. The Eastern Afromontane hotspot covers 15 countries, with a total area of more than 1 million km². Within these countries, the

ecosystem profile lists 261 terrestrial KBAs, 49 freshwater KBAs, and 12 corridors. The initial funding for the investment programme was USD 9.8 million. The balance between the size of the hotspot and the funds available was rather out of whack, so the choice was: do we spread this money far and wide (i.e. spend little in many places), or do we concentrate on the (still 47) priority KBAs, and spend more money in fewer places? In the end, we decided on the latter, and increasingly focused on programmatic priorities (i.e. KBAs where we already worked) within the priorities (i.e. all priority KBAs) among the priorities (i.e. all KBAs).

2. The complexity of the profile/investment strategy. Initially, the investment strategy was highly prescriptive, with specific strategic directions and investment priorities only eligible for certain countries/corridors/KBAs. This made the calls for proposals long and complicated, and we had to produce specific information materials (fact sheets, PowerPoints) to potential applicants across the hotspot to explain exactly what they could apply for, and where. Despite these efforts, the juxtaposition of SDs/IPs with countries/sites caused a lot of confusion. This was discussed during the Mid-term Assessment in 2015, and on advice of our Board of Advisors, the investment strategy was simplified and the 'geographical restrictions' were removed from the strategic directions and investment priorities.

Successes

1. The shape of the RIT. When BirdLife wrote the proposal to manage the RIT, it designed the team as follows:

- a core group in the middle: 'miniRIT', including the team leader, key technical staff, and key financial staff, based at the BirdLife office in Nairobi. This team covered three of the main languages in the hotspot: English, French and kiSwahili;
- outposted staff based in parts of the hotspot where different languages were spoken - e.g. in Jordan (Arabic; BirdLife ME office) for the Arabian Peninsula, and in Mozambique (Portuguese; IUCN Maputo office);
- a specific team for Ethiopia (Amharic language, and covering a large part of the hotspot and the programme; EWNHS);
- specific added value in areas where the miniRIT was weak, i.e. M&E, government outreach, non-bird technical expertise (IUCN).

This shape worked well. 'MiniRIT' meetings took place every week, with monthly check-in calls with the outposted staff and the main IUCN contact person. The whole RIT (aka 'maxiRIT') met every year (2013: Kikuyu Escarpment; 2014: Mt Kenya; 2015: Laikipia; 2016: Nairobi; 2017: Dar es Salaam). There was a continuous information flow between the mini- and the maxiRIT, ensuring a coherent management of the whole programme while facilitating local outreach and local grant-making activities. Applicants and grantees could be serviced in their own languages, and we could rely on local RIT members to enlist external reviewers and find up-to-date information about real needs and appropriate interventions at Eastern Afrotropical KBAs.

2. Board of Advisors

The Board of Advisors started with different people then it ended with, but a core group remained the same (the chairman, the ecosystem profiler, the BirdLife regional (later global) director, the donor representative and the NGO representative) and provided excellent suggestions throughout the investment period. The chairman was the only one who was officially contracted by the RIT, and was also hired to provide scientific support and linkages with other initiatives (e.g. WDPA, WCMC). The chairman attended the maxiRIT in 2014 and chaired three Board meetings (one in 2015 and two in 2017), while other Board members also participated in long-term vision exercises/advisory groups. All Board members also served as external reviewers and made efforts to amplify the CEPF

investment through their own networks/programmes. In lieu of a final Board meeting, the Board submitted a 'lessons learned' document about the 7 years' investment in the EAM hotspot, which includes recommendations to both the RIT and the CEPF Secretariat.

3. Strong relations between RIT and CEPF Grant Directors/Grants Managers
Throughout the implementation of the programme, the RIT has had an excellent relationship with the Grant Directors (first two, later one) and the Grants Managers (5 over the course of the investment). This has helped immensely with both the administrative and the programmatic/strategic components of the programme.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

The only area of the hotspot/programme where we did not fully meet the profile's ambitions, was to support/develop civil society in Yemen, Eritrea and South Sudan. At the start of the investment period, the RIT issued two consultancies to carry out civil society (needs) assessments for Yemen (done), Eritrea (not done - access to the country was denied) and South Sudan (done). In Yemen and South Sudan, this was followed by an initial training programme, based on these assessments. However, in both countries the investment had to be halted due to civil unrest and security issues.

Working within the limits of possibility, in Yemen CEPF supported (1) a network of conservationists, who are (2) trained in conservation skills, and (3) have access to a data portal that provides up-to-date information about KBAs in Yemen (www.naturemena.com). The hope is that when peace breaks out, the work can continue as soon as possible. In South Sudan, the RIT supported two small grant training projects, but the second project which commenced in 2014, had to be halted, and despite the fact that it was extended until mid-2019, it had to be closed unfinished as the situation remained too dangerous to continue.

During the lifetime of the programme, security problems also occurred in Ethiopia, Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, local grantees managed to keep their projects on track, without taking any unnecessary risks, which is highly commendable. It shows that, even when countries suffer from political problems, donors should not necessarily stop investing in local civil society; on the contrary, it can actually be very beneficial to continue supporting these groups, if at all possible, in order to keep the organisations and their work going during and after the problem period.

PROJECT COMPONENTS AND PRODUCTS/DELIVERABLES

Describe the results from each product/deliverable:

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
1	CEPF investment in the EAM Hotspot well coordinated and communicated, and additional funding leveraged	1.1	Regular communication with donors, partners, grantees/stakeholders and CEPF (including CEPF donors)	<p>The RIT organised 12 "launch and outreach" events in 2013-2014, directly reaching 300+ potential applicants and donors in 9 countries. During this period we also made 83 attempts to inform CEPF donors in hotspot countries about the programme. We ran a continuous advisory service (CEPF-EAM-RIT@birdlife.org) which responded to more than 1,000 inquiries from 673 different organisations in 7 years.</p> <p>We attended/presented at an average of 3 'external' meetings per year (i.e. conferences organised by others).</p> <p>We spoke to, met and/or visited each and every grantee (103). On average, there were 8.3 communication events between the RIT and every grantee (excluding emails etc).</p> <p>We invited the CEPF donors (in-country) to all major events (organised by RIT/grantees) and aimed to visit their country offices during monitoring visits. We also tried to link up grantees and CEPF donor agencies.</p> <p>We made efforts to interest more than 45 non-CEPF donors in the programme, and in the work of our grantees. We submitted multiple letters of support for grantees, and responded to all requests for information from other donors.</p> <p>We were visited (supervision) by our Grant Director(s) 15 times, spoke regularly with them and other CEPF staff, and attended 3 RIT exchange programmes (2013, 2017, 2019).</p>
1	CEPF investment in the EAM Hotspot well coordinated and communicated, and additional funding leveraged	1.2	At least 20 articles produced for websites, magazines, e-bulletins etc with news about the EAM	<p>The RIT produced 90 articles on the news hub on the BirdLife website www.birdlife.org/hub/cepf-eam-news; 14 stories on the CEPF website; and 17 stories in BirdLife magazines. All grantee project articles have been uploaded under the CEPF web page for the grant they covered. All CEPF project web pages have also received a cover image.</p> <p>The BirdLife website for the EAM programme was designed in 2012-2013, and overhauled in 2018. It included a homepage with the latest news; a strategy page featuring the ecosystem profile, the GEF results framework and the long-term vision; a page describing the application process and calls for proposals; the news hub; a page showing the main outputs from grantees; and a contacts page.</p>

				<p>An interactive map showed all projects supported by CEPF in the Eastern Afromontane hotspot. The RIT ran a Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/CEPF.EAM (almost 1300 followers); a Twitter account https://twitter.com/eam_hotspot (297 followers) and a YouTube channel https://www.youtube.com/cepfeamrit (25 videos, 3769 views).</p> <p>Between 2013 and 2016, the RIT produced 6 newsletters ("SASA bulletin") with a mailing list of over 1000 people; this was followed by 39 monthly "EACN" e-bulletins that came out between February 2016 and June 2019 (in collaboration with TBA)</p>
1	CEPF investment in the EAM Hotspot well coordinated and communicated, and additional funding leveraged	1.3	At least USD 15 million leveraged from a range of additional donors	<p>Based on experience from RITs in other hotspots, as reported in their final reports, the RIT estimated that it would be possible to leverage about USD 15 million from other donors, to support the programme.</p> <p>In the proposals submitted by grantees, they "promised" a combined total of USD 4.5 million in co-funding and in-kind contributions (the two questions asked in the LOI format).</p> <p>In the end, the total amount of additional funding reported by grantees was USD 27.7 million, including more than USD 4 million in co-funding (i.e. other donors and/or the organization itself contributed to the direct costs of the project); USD 20.7 million in grantee/partner leveraging (i.e. other donors contributed to the grantee organization and/or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF funded project); and almost USD 3 million in regional/portfolio leveraging (i.e. other donors made large investments in a region because of successes related to the project; this includes the USD 2.2 million received from the GEF).</p> <p>Contributing donors include small grant donors (International Tree Foundation, Rufford Foundation, NGS and others) as well as bilateral and multilateral donors (USAID, Darwin initiative, EU Civil Society Support Programme...) and governments and corporates.</p>
2	Enhanced capacity of civil society groups in project development and management	2.1	Grantee proposals, projects and reports are of increasingly good quality between the	<p>The RIT facilitated training in:</p> <p>(1) Project development, proposal writing and fundraising (with CLP). We organised 3 regional trainings and 1 training in Jordan (Yemeni conservationists), covering 60 people (15 female/45 male) from 10 countries; 13 participants were/became CEPF grantees.</p> <p>(2) Project implementation, M&E, achieving impact,</p>

			start end the end of the investment period	<p>communications, gender and mainstreaming (with FFI and TBA). We organised 7 regional trainings / knowledge exchange events, covering 97 people (39f/58m) from 73 CSOs (including 67 CEPF grantees) in 12 countries.</p> <p>(3) Grantee site exchange visits (with FFI and TBA). We organised 14 exchange visits, covering 19 female and 26 male grantees from 32 CSOs (all CEPF grantees) in 10 countries.</p> <p>(4) Master Classes (with TBA). We ran 4 Master Classes, one as a pilot in 2016, and 3 as a 'formal' part of the application process for our last 3 calls for proposals in 2017-2018. A total of 42 people (17f/24m) from 24 grantees attended these classes.</p> <p>(5) One MTA and 2 final assessment/lessons learned events (see below)</p> <p>(6) On-the-job support (and 3 trainings, with ZESMAN and CI) in project design (logical frameworks), technical/financial management, conservation agreements and a range of other skills to all grantees, during all phases of their projects.</p>
2	Enhanced capacity of civil society groups in project development and management	2.2	The investment portfolio shows a coherent set of high quality projects	<p>The RIT followed the investment strategy as described in the ecosystem profile. This strategy included instructions on themes to invest in, the (number and location of) sites to invest in, the (number and type of) grantees to invest in, and various other variables. Following a "RIT best practices" document, compiled at the start of the programme, the RIT issued a range of calls for proposals which went from 'very general' (to find the best grantees) to 'very specific' (to fill gaps in the portfolio). Geographically we focused on the 47 priority KBAs; thematically we allowed grantees to address SDs/IPs that were most appropriate to them (e.g. in Ethiopia, 18 of the 32 projects addressed SD1 - mainstreaming, 16 of which addressed IP1.1 - livelihoods). During the 2015 Board meeting, this approach was discussed and adjustments were made to the strategy (e.g. allowing for PES/REDD work in Kenya/Uganda). The RIT was also encouraged to consolidate work at sites we were already investing in (not expand to others), and to focus on a subset of promising grantees (rather than finding more). We thus established 'clusters' of projects at high-priority sites, working with selected CSOs and further building their capacities. 92% of CEPF grant(ee)s in the hotspot received a positive scorecard.</p>
2	Enhanced capacity of civil	2.3	Lessons learned	<p>The RIT facilitated the production of the following lessons learned reports:</p>

	society groups in project development and management		document produced and shared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Lessons from Lessons Learned - A review of lessons learned by CEPF grantees in the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot, 2012 – 2019" by Paul Mugo (2019). Mugo validated his findings during the Uganda lessons learned event. - "Evaluation of Payment for Ecosystem Services grants in the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot" by Mwangi Githuru (2019). - Project Evaluation Reports "Misuku Hills Conservation Programme, Malawi"; "Wof Washa Community Tourism Programme, Ethiopia"; "Assessment of Cumulative Impacts at Gishwati Forest, Rwanda"; and "Assessment of Cumulative Impacts at Chimanimani, Mozambique and Zimbabwe" by Paul Buckley (all 2019). Buckley also produced synthesis reports and gave a presentation to CEPF staff in October 2019. - "Report to the EAM RIT with regard to the implementation and lessons learned from the work in the EAM hotspot" by Prof Neil Burgess, chairman of the EAM Board (2020). <p>The RIT facilitated two lessons learned events in 2019: in Uganda (July) and in Ethiopia (November). These produced 5 documents and 1 article: https://www.cepf.net/stories/15-lessons-learned-east-africa-grantees</p> <p>EAM lessons (and tools) are available on https://www.livebinders.com/b/2556368.</p>
2	Enhanced capacity of civil society groups in project development and management	2.4	Mid-term and final assessments supported	<p>FFI was contracted to carry out the programme's Mid-Term (in 2015) and Final (in 2017) Assessments. The MTA included: desk review of documents; questionnaires sent to applicants, grantees, donors and other partners; interviews with selected applicants, grantees, donors, RIT and CEPF staff; a draft report that was validated during a grantee meeting in Nairobi in July 2015; and the production of a final report. The RIT also organised a strategic meeting with CEPF staff and the Board of Advisors, for which CEPF donors were invited but they didn't attend. The grantee meeting brought together 39 people (10f/29m) representing 38 CEPF grantees. The meeting was organised in conjunction with a regional 'Conservation Capacity' conference, and included two major CEPF EAM side events on training needs and experience exchange, co-facilitated by TBA. This meeting and the MTA report directly fed into the design of the capacity building programme and 10 of the 14 grantee site exchanges as described above.</p>

				<p>FFI also took the lead on the 'final assessment' in 2017, following a similar process to produce a report. However, by then the programme had been extended to 2020, and the report was never validated by the grantees.</p> <p>In 2020, the RIT was assessed by an external consultant hired by CEPF.</p>
3	Subgrant to IUCN and separate contract to EWNHS are well implemented and supervised	3.1	IUCN implements agreed activities according to ToR (subgrant)	<p>IUCN was contracted by BirdLife to: (1) develop robust M&E systems for the portfolio; (2) support the implementation of the CEPF programme in Mozambique; (3) provide general technical support (species/sites) with a focus on the Northern Lake Nyasa mountains corridor and the Southern 'montane islands'; and (4) support 'high-level' outreach through the IUCN networks [see also report under 61682].</p> <p>Overall, IUCN provided strategic support to the design and implementation of the investment strategy in the hotspot. Senior IUCN staff helped think through the (sequence of) calls for proposals, assisted with decision-making about grants, provided a fall-back if there was a (perceived) conflict of interest [e.g. grant-making to BirdLife Partners], shared calls for proposals through their networks, promoted the CEPF programme at regional and global (IUCN) events, and created linkages with other programmes (e.g. in Tanzania (Mahale) and Zimbabwe/Mozambique (TFCA).</p> <p>IUCN staff attended monthly RIT meetings; annual RIT meetings (2013, 2014); the MTA/Board of Advisors meeting (2015); and provided input for the 2017 Board meeting. Financial monitoring was carried out regularly by BirdLife/RIT. The World Bank visited in 2017.</p> <p>The IUCN contract was successfully completed in 2017.</p>
3	Subgrant to IUCN and separate contract to EWNHS are well implemented and supervised	3.2	EWNHS implements agreed activities according to ToR (CEPF contract)	<p>EWNHS was contracted directly by CEPF, to implement the small grants programme in Ethiopia, and to support the large grants programme and the wider objectives of the profile. BirdLife, as the lead RIT organisation, agreed on a scope of work with EWNHS, and oversaw its implementation. Supervision included (at least) monthly Skype calls with the EWNHS project leader; annual RIT meetings in 2013, 2014, 2015 (including Board meeting/MTA), 2016 and twice in 2017 (including a</p>

				<p>Board meeting); and regular visits to EWNHS and, if possible, CEPF grantees and donors in the country. These visits included: initial engagement meeting in October 2012; launch event in February 2013; office and grantee visits in March 2014; office and field visits in October 2014; co-organisation of financial training to CEPF grantees, office and grantee visits in June 2016; office and field visits in December 2016; attendance of TBA communications training in May 2017; and the co-organisation of impacts/lessons learned/KBA training in November 2019.</p> <p>ZESMAN Consultancy assisted with the strategic roll-out of the programme in Ethiopia; this included the organisation of 3 training programmes, grant-making support and (grantee/site) monitoring.</p> <p>The programme in Ethiopia was successfully completed in 2017.</p>
4	Ensuring the financial and institutional sustainability of multi-sector conservation programs	4.1	Technical reports submitted showing increased capacity and credibility of conservation -focused civil societies in the Eastern Afromontane Hotspot.	<p>This deliverable, as envisioned when written, was that the RIT would mark increased capacity of grantees through various technical reports summarizing their capacity, or through the quality of the grantee reports, themselves. In retrospect, this deliverable was not accurately phrased: the “deliverable” of “technical reports” was not met, but the intent of increased capacity was met. The RIT and the Grant Director realized, early on, that the phrasing of the deliverable was not precise, but agreed to proceed. The intent of the deliverable was met, as demonstrated by increased scores in CSTTs (institutional capacity building) and GTTs (gender mainstreaming). Further, virtually every grantee established credibility by including letters of endorsement with local government agencies during the proposal and then maintaining partnerships with these groups throughout implementation.</p>
4	Ensuring the financial and institutional sustainability of multi-sector conservation programs	4.2	Technical reports submitted showing increased and more sustained financial flows to civil societies engaged in the	<p>This deliverable, as envisioned when written, was that the RIT would submit reports on grantee leveraging. In retrospect, this deliverable was not accurately phrased: the “deliverable” of “technical reports” was not met, but the intent of leveraged funding was met. The RIT and the Grant Director realized, early on, that the phrasing of the deliverable was not precise, but agreed to proceed. The intent of the deliverable was met, as demonstrated by grantee final completion reports showing leveraged funding. That there was no significant amount of money from “non-traditional”</p>

			conservation of biodiversity, from diverse sources, including non-traditional sources, in the Eastern Afromontane Hotspot.	sources is not an indicator of failure, but an indicator that grantees were able to sufficiently exploit "traditional" sources (e.g., donors, government, CSR, small enterprise).
5	Amplifying the impacts of CEPF investments through enhanced and innovative public and private sector partnerships	5.1	Technical reports submitted showing integrated biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in production landscapes, implemented with public and private sector actors, in the Eastern Afromontane Hotspot.	This deliverable, as envisioned when written, was that the RIT would submit reports on production landscapes. In retrospect, this deliverable was not accurately phrased: the "deliverable" of "technical reports" was not met, but the intent of promoting sustainable management of production landscapes was met. The RIT and the Grant Director realized, early on, that the phrasing of the deliverable was not precise, but agreed to proceed. The intent of the deliverable was met, as demonstrated by impact data that show that 45 CEPF-funded projects contributed to 1.5 million hectares of strengthened biodiversity management in production landscapes across the hotspot.

Describe and submit any tools, products or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.

1. Best practices manual: as soon as the RIT started in 2012, it interviewed staff of 12 other active/closed "RITs" (some weren't called RITs) to learn how best to implement a CEPF hotspot programme. We collected best practices about launch events, calls for proposals, LOIs, review and selection of proposals, capacity building, M&E, advisors, leveraging/donors and communications. This document has proven to be very helpful and was subsequently also shared with the CEPF Secretariat and other new RITs.

2. Master Class: during the roll-out of the programme, we discovered that it would be hugely beneficial to be able to meet with all new grantees at the start of their grant, to discuss their project, to review their technical/administrative/financial set-up and skills, to advise them about CEPF (reporting) requirements, and to provide any and all assistance necessary to get them off to a good start. Later on, we realised it would be even better to meet with grantees BEFORE they sign their agreements, so we could also assist them more effectively with their project

design, and with getting everything right in the CEPF systems. However, the Eastern Afromontane hotspot was too vast and the RIT too small to actually be able to do this, so most of this support had to be delivered on-line (email, skype etc). Still, during the last 2 years of the investment period, the scope of the investment narrowed down to 4 countries only, and we took the opportunity to develop the so-called 'CEPF Master Classes'. This 5-day 'class' brought together 2 people from each shortlisted grantee (1 financial staff, 1 technical), and included learning and practical exercises in project design, achieving impact, financial management/budgeting, safeguards, gender, ethics, communications and various other topics. This class is now being worked up as a CEPF 'knowledge product'.
3. Lessons learned / livebinder: at the end of the programme in 2019, we did not only think about 'what are our lessons learned', but also about 'how can we make sure that we (and others) actually learn them'. The products of this exercise can be found on <https://www.livebinders.com/b/2556368>.

LESSONS LEARNED

Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building.

Consider lessons that would inform:

- Project design process (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings)
- Project implementation (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)
- Any other lessons learned relevant to the conservation community

As part of the implementation of this project, we were supposed to produce regular 'lessons learned' reports, but we struggled to find a way how to make these reports more interesting than just lists of things that did or did not go well. We also could not think of effective ways to make sure 'lessons' would actually be 'learned'. We also found the 'lessons', as reported by grantees, often lacking in structure, i.e. it was often not clear what was done, what worked/didn't work, what action was taken subsequently (if needed), what was learned, and how that could be applicable to others. More often than not, 'lessons' turned out to be 'statements of the obvious'. The RIT therefore issued some research into 'how to learn lessons' (and how to apply them). This research is available in a 'livebinder' here: <https://www.livebinders.com/b/2556368>. At the time of writing this report, this publicly available document has been visited almost 400 times already. A key lesson learned about learning lessons is that a good lesson is (1) significant (i.e. it describes a key success or failure); (2) authentic (i.e. it must be factual and contextualised); and (3) applicable to, or replicable by, others (i.e. other groups must be able to apply the lesson in a similar situation elsewhere). We also learned that it takes a lot of thinking, asking questions, critical reflection, and time, if you want to really design and describe a good lesson.

SUSTAINABILITY/REPLICATION

Summarize the successes or challenges in ensuring the project will be sustained or replicated, including any unplanned activities that are likely to result in increased sustainability or replicability.

In order to sustain the Eastern Afromontane hotspot programme, the following efforts have been made:

(1) at hotspot level: two additional sources of funding were obtained that added value to the initial 5-year programme: first, the CI-funded 'Women in Healthy Sustainable Societies' programme that funded 5 small grant projects at Eastern Afromontane KBAs in Kenyan and Tanzania; and later the GEF-funded 'bridge programme' that extended the initial 5-year programme with both money and time. Both programmes were also managed by the RIT.

(2) at sub-hotspot level: a 'long-term vision' was developed in 2018, which provides a strategic approach that would ultimately lead to the 'graduation' of Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda, i.e. it would lead to a situation where these countries would be able to continue the EAM programme without CEPF funding. The vision estimates that this would take 10 years (the plan runs to 2030) and about USD 46 million. This long-term vision can be found here:

<https://www.cepf.net/our-work/biodiversity-hotspots/eastern-afromontane>

(3) at grantee level: among the 164 projects funded by CEPF, 76 reported that they received co-financing to increase the budget of the CEPF-funded projects, and 65 reported they managed to leverage additional funding as a result of the project that was funded by CEPF. The latter is an ongoing effort, strongly supported by both the CEPF Secretariat and the RIT, including through notification of funding opportunities, access to donors, letters of support etc.

(4) at RIT level: the RIT continuously tried to reach out to CEPF and non-CEPF donors, to drum up support for the programme, for specific grants, and/or for the continuation of the RIT itself (as an entity that can assist with grant-making, capacity building, M&E and other civil society support functions). Despite these efforts, the RIT will no longer be active after 31 March 2020.

SAFEGUARDS

If not listed as a separate project component and described above, summarize the implementation of any required action related to social, environmental or pest management safeguards.

Of the 164 projects funded by CEPF in the EAM programme, 66 triggered some form of safeguard:

- environmental assessment: 5**
- involuntary resettlement (restricted access to resources): 21**
- indigenous people: 17**
- stakeholder engagement: 15**
- health and safety: 23**
- gender mainstreaming: 21**

[see also report 61682 about how we applied these safeguards.]

The RIT provided the following training to grantees in the application of these safeguards:

1. When it was clear that a safeguard/safeguards applied, during the project design phase of shortlisted applicants, a dedicated RIT member would work

through the process with the applicant to explain the concept, provide the necessary forms that needed to be completed, share examples, and ensure that all documentation would be in place and of sufficient quality. He would also make sure that grantees would understand that this was not just a 'tick-box' exercise, but that the application of the safeguard should be mainstreamed across the implementation (and reporting) of the project.

2. During project management and other trainings that were provided to grantees, the RIT would always take the opportunity to talk to the grantees - plenary and individually - about the application of their safeguards.

3. The RIT also discussed safeguards during the 'CEPF Master Classes' at the start of the grantees' project, again both plenary and individually. Activities related to safeguards would also be included in the final project design of the approved projects.

4. A high-level learning event was organised for 19 active grantees in March 2019 - this included corporate and government mainstreaming, gender mainstreaming, and safeguards. The session on safeguards was supported by the International Finance Corporation and Environmental Resources Management (Kenya), and looked at the management of risk and the business reasons for companies being involved in biodiversity conservation. Important key messages included:

- The importance of engagement with regulators and lenders
- Understanding why and how unintentional negative things may happen, even if the initial objectives were to conserve biodiversity
- Conservation organisations should try and look at all issues and seek help from partners or collaborators, which is cost effective and promotes knowledge sharing
- Advice was given on how to potentially engage with IFC – CSOs should be raising red flags and offering expertise in fixing problems.

Participants were then split up into groups and had to a) identify safeguarding risks associated with a particular sector; b) what ways could they minimise or mitigate this risk. The groups looked at Forestry, Agriculture, Mining and Energy.

(5) The RIT also provided training in the application of safeguards to other BirdLife staff in Africa.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Use this space to provide any further comments or recommendations in relation to your project or CEPF.

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, throughout the implementation of the 7-year programme, we have tried to engage both CEPF and non-CEPF donors, including GEF focal points, GEF/UNDP small grant programmes, and local Embassies/delegations. This has proven to be extremely difficult, for various reasons.

Non-CEPF donors sometimes found it hard to understand the programme's complexities (donor council, CEPF secretariat, RIT, grantees, ecosystem profile, etc). Additionally, all donors tend to have their own strategies and there is limited ability and/or willingness to be flexible in trying to align strategic objectives. For CEPF donors, the experience was that not many (i.e. hardly any) staff at country level would know about the CEPF programme. Even when we would inform them (we were, after all, spending their money), they were not very interested - perhaps because the CEPF programme is too small to beep on their

radar. Having said that, we did manage to work together with CI (through the WHSS programme), with the MacArthur Foundation (joint launch, two joint calls for proposals) and with the GEF SGP programme (most notably in Kenya, Ethiopia and Mozambique). In the first two cases, this was as a result of relationships at central level, i.e. at CI and the MacArthur Foundation HQs in the USA.

A recommendation therefore would be that, if we want to make sure (CEPF) donors know about our programme, and engage in it, *all* CEPF actors - the donor council, the secretariat, and the RITs - need to work together. The donor council could put more effort into informing their local offices/partners, link them up with the RIT, encourage them to attend CEPF and grantee events, and take an active interest in the grants supported by CEPF in their respective countries. The CEPF secretariat and the RIT could develop a joint programme of action to reach out to CEPF and non-CEPF donors, provide them with information through regular (targeted) communications, write joint proposals, and support grantees to approach these donors directly. One way to do this could be around the revamped KBA concept, which is increasingly becoming a global 'currency for conservation', referred to in various Multilateral Environmental Agreements and targets.

[As an additional note to this section, we can report that we were visited 5 times by CEPF donors. In 3 of these 5 cases, we did not receive any feedback/report/follow-up; in one case we received a report that was riddled with factual errors and baseless conjecture, and only in one case (CI) we received a follow-up letter that addressed the findings of the visit, which was helpful.]

Attached are:

- Best RIT practices report 2012-2013
- Baseline METT report 2012-2013 (produced in 2015)
- List of communications outputs (articles, videos, social media etc) 2012-2020
- List of 25 KBAs assessed using new criteria + 7 new KBAs (2016-2020)
- Five lessons learned documents (2019)
- EAM dashboard (administrative grant data) and impact tables (portfolio impact data) 2012-2020

ADDITONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional funding that supported this project and any funding secured for the project, organization or region as a result of CEPF investment.

Total additional funding (US\$)

\$2,306,888.00

Type of funding

Provide a breakdown of additional funding (counterpart funding and in-kind) by source, categorizing each contribution into one of the following categories:

- A. Project co-financing (other donors or your organization contribute to the direct costs of this project)
- B. Grantee and partner leveraging (other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF-funded project)
- C. Regional/portfolio leveraging (other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project)

**Category C: USD 2,200,000 from GEF ["bridge fund", raised through CEPF]
Category C: USD 106,888 from CI ["Women in Healthy Sustainable Societies"
small grants programme]**

INFORMATION SHARING AND CEPF POLICY

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our website, www.cepf.net, and may be publicized in our e-newsletter and other communications.

1. Please include your full contact details (name, organization, mailing address, telephone number, email address) below.

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