



Assessing Five Years of CEPF Investment In the Caucasus Biodiversity Hotspot

A Special Report

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OVERVIEW

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) commenced its investment in the Caucasus biodiversity hotspot in August 2003, following the approval of an ecosystem profile¹ developed with stakeholders' input and a grant allocation of \$8.5 million to be awarded over five years. The Caucasus Hotspot has the greatest biological diversity of any temperate forest region in the world. It spans 580,000 square kilometers of mountains in Eurasia, between the Black and Caspian seas. The hotspot includes all of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, the North Caucasus portion of the Russian Federation, northeastern Turkey and part of northwestern Iran (Figure 1).

This report aims to assess the achievements made possible by CEPF investment in the hotspot. It draws on experience, lessons learned and project reports² generated by civil society groups supported during the period of investment. In addition, data were drawn from questionnaires completed by grantees as part of this assessment. Finally, a draft of this report was reviewed at a two-day assessment workshop held in Tbilisi, Georgia in September 2009, at which participants reviewed the results of CEPF's five years of investment, with a particular emphasis on impacts, lessons learned and sustainability.

CEPF is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank. CEPF provides strategic assistance to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), community groups and other civil society partners to help safeguard Earth's biodiversity hotspots: the biologically richest yet most threatened ecosystems. A fundamental goal of CEPF is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

CEPF Niche

One of the most biologically rich regions on Earth, the Caucasus is listed among the planet's 34 biodiversity hotspots. The Caucasus is also recognized as a Global 200 Ecoregion by WWF and as an Endemic Bird Area by BirdLife International. The unique geology and topography of the Caucasus have allowed a variety of microclimatic, soil and vegetative conditions to develop, resulting in unusually high levels of species diversity for a temperate region.

More than 6,500 species of vascular plants are found in the Caucasus. A quarter of these plants are found nowhere else on Earth and as such the hotspot has the highest level of floral endemism in the temperate world. At least 153 mammals inhabit the Caucasus, one-fifth of which are endemic to the hotspot. As many as 400 species of birds are found in the Caucasus, including four hotspot endemics. The coasts of the Black and Caspian seas are important stop-over sites for millions of migratory birds that fly over the isthmus each spring and autumn between their breeding and wintering grounds. Twenty-two of the 77 reptile species in the Caucasus are endemic to the hotspot, as are four of the 14 amphibian species found there. More than 200 species of fish inhabit the rivers and seas of the hotspot, and more than a third of these are found nowhere else. In addition to its outstanding biological values, the Caucasus is a globally significant center of cultural diversity, where a multitude of ethnic groups, languages and religions intermingle over a relatively small area.

¹ The Ecosystem Profile for the Caucasus Biodiversity Hotspot is available on the CEPF Web site. English, www.cepf.net/Documents/final.caucasus.ep.pdf (PDF - 3.5 MB) / Russian, www.cepf.net/Documents/final.russian.caucasus.ep.pdf (PDF - 4.8 MB)

² All available final project reports can be downloaded from the CEPF Web site, www.cepf.net

The WWF Caucasus Programme Office developed the CEPF ecosystem profile for this hotspot. The science-based conservation outcomes definition process used to set targets for CEPF investment, combined with WWF's ability to guide regional-scale strategy development (expertise gained in part through its experience putting together an Ecoregional Conservation Plan for the Caucasus), resulted in a clear investment strategy with broad stakeholder support. As part of the process, WWF brought together more than 130 experts from the six Caucasian countries to consider how CEPF could best add value to the region's conservation efforts. The ecosystem profile focused on conserving the hotspot's globally threatened species, most of which are found in key sites within focal corridors.

Figure 1. The Caucasus Hotspot



As a result of the conservation outcomes definition process, a total of 50 species outcomes were identified comprising 18 mammals, 11 birds, 10 reptiles, three amphibians, seven fishes and one plant. Site outcomes were defined for each target species and, in total, 205 site outcomes were identified for the Caucasus, covering 19 percent of the hotspot. These sites are listed in full in the ecosystem profile. At a larger spatial scale, 10 conservation corridors were identified in the

Caucasus based on their importance for biodiversity conservation. Of these, five were determined to be priority corridors for CEPF investment. These are: the Greater Caucasus Corridor (4.68 million hectares), which covers the middle and high mountain areas of the Greater Caucasus Range; the Caspian Corridor (3.23 million hectares), located along the Caspian Sea coast from the Talysh Mountains in the south to the northern border of the hotspot; the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor (2.99 million hectares), situated in the western part of the Lesser Caucasus Mountain Range, where it extends from northeastern Turkey to central Georgia; the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor (1.43 million hectares), situated in Armenia and the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan; and the Hyrcan Corridor (1.85 million hectares), which includes the Talysh Mountains in Azerbaijan and the northwestern part of the Alborz Mountains in Iran.

Through a participatory approach adopted during the ecosystem profiling process, four strategic directions were identified for CEPF investment, each with its own set of investment priorities³:

- Support civil society efforts to promote transboundary cooperation and improve protected area systems in five target corridors.
- Strengthen mechanisms to conserve biodiversity of the Caucasus Hotspot with emphasis on species, site, and corridor outcomes.
- Implement models demonstrating sustainable resource use in five target corridors.
- Increase the awareness and commitment of decisionmakers to biodiversity conservation in five target corridors.

Thus, the ecosystem profile defined priorities for CEPF grantmaking in the region at three levels: species, sites and corridors. Specifically, there were 50 priority species (30 Vulnerable, 14 Endangered and six Critically Endangered species), and 107 priority sites within five priority corridors (Greater Caucasus, West Lesser Caucasus, East Lesser Caucasus, Caspian and Hyrcan).

COORDINATING CEPF INVESTMENT ON THE GROUND

CEPF investment was coordinated and managed through the mutual efforts of CEPF and the WWF Caucasus Programme Office. Prior to CEPF's investment, the WWF Caucasus Programme Office had been working to protect biodiversity landscapes in the region for more than a decade. Given its breadth of experience, and commitment and coverage in the region, the organization was selected to be CEPF's local Coordination Unit. This choice allowed CEPF to tap into and enhance an existing regional effort with a focus that complemented CEPF's own, as well as to support a seamless transition from planning to implementation. In addition to bringing to the table its existing network of collaborators in six countries, WWF was able to provide matching funds for CEPF coordination on a one-to-one basis.

The Coordination Unit managed and led development of the CEPF grants portfolio, in close cooperation with CEPF staff. The unit maintained close contact with CEPF grantees at each stage of project identification, design and implementation. The unit had the following key tasks:

- Arrange calls for proposals.
- Assist applicants with project design and application procedures.
- Review project proposals and facilitate review by external reviewers.
- Facilitate conclusion of grant agreements.
- Strengthen applicants' capacity to manage and implement projects.
- Facilitate and monitor project implementation.

³ The investment priorities under each strategic direction are described in full in the Ecosystem Profile, which can be downloaded from www.cepf.net

- Build and facilitate partnerships, alliances and close cooperation among CEPF grantees.
- Ensure collaboration, communication and exchange of information among CEPF grantees, relevant government agencies, local communities and other key stakeholders.
- Seek and secure funding to leverage and sustain CEPF investments.
- Assist CEPF to periodically review and monitor the performance of the grant portfolio.

In addition to the local Coordination Unit, an external reviewers group was established. This group involved more than 100 experts, drawn from all countries of the hotspot, representing NGOs, government agencies, scientific institutions and donor organizations. The external reviewers group was responsible for review and evaluation of Letters of Inquiry (LoIs) and project proposals.

Within the overall investment portfolio of \$8.5 million, two types of grant were made: small grants of up to \$20,000 and large grants above that amount. With a few exceptions, small grants were contracted and managed by the WWF Caucasus Programme Office, while large grants were contracted and managed directly by CEPF.

Over the duration of the CEPF investment window, two official calls for proposals were made in the region, and a total of 465 proposals were received and reviewed. Following the call for proposals, applicants submitted project proposals using a standard LoI template. LoIs were reviewed by the Coordination Unit, the CEPF grant director and selected external reviewers. If an LoI for a large grant was approved, the applicant was invited to submit a full proposal.

Programmatic and financial risk assessments were undertaken by CEPF and, once final approval was given, a grant agreement was signed between the grantee and the CEPF executive director. In the case of small grants, a full proposal was not required, and grant agreements were signed between the grantee and the WWF Caucasus Programme director.

IMPACT SUMMARY

The CEPF program in the Caucasus can be regarded as the first ever opportunity in the Caucasus Hotspot to strengthen and coordinate transboundary cooperation and initiate new regional interactions for biodiversity conservation.

The grantee achievements through CEPF's five years of investment can be summarized as follows:

- Expanded regional protected area system by 83,093 hectares through creation of new protected areas and expansion of existing ones.
- Protection proposed for a further 194,443 hectares, with planning well advanced and proposals submitted to relevant government bodies.
- Strengthened management for more than 17 protected areas, with a total area of more than 1,23 million hectares.
- Implemented conservation actions for 47 of the 50 priority species.
- Conducted global threat assessments of all vascular plants, mammals and amphibians endemic to the Caucasus Hotspot.
- Initiated and strengthened transboundary cooperation, including joint working groups, joint training courses and exchange programs.
- Increased capacity of civil society, which enabled direct involvement in biodiversity conservation activities, including the creation of a regional platform to involve civil society in implementation of the European Neighborhood Policy in the southern Caucasus, and the emergence of the Armenian Society for the Protection of Birds as a fully fledged NGO.

- Established regional biodiversity monitoring network with common monitoring indicators, data sharing and dissemination protocols and model monitoring plans.
- Trained around 1,500 representatives of government and nongovernmental organizations, and local communities in biodiversity conservation, sustainable natural resource use, alternative livelihoods and environmental journalism.
- Raised public environmental awareness, with a special focus on biodiversity values and conservation issues, resulting in changes to development plans and policies, such as the rerouting of a highway to minimize impact on Armenia's Shikahogh Nature Reserve.
- Developed alternative livelihoods for local communities, including honey production, ecotourism and fruit orchards.
- Demonstrated various approaches for sustainable natural resources use, including sustainable forestry demonstration plots in Armenia and an integrated river basin management plan for the Firtina Valley in Turkey.
- Enabled national, regional and international partnerships to support biodiversity conservation, including the Caucasus Biodiversity Council, whose semi-annual meetings are attended by representatives from all six Caucasian countries.
- Leveraged \$21.9 million for conservation activities in the hotspot, more than matching the CEPF investment.
- Attained 71 percent of the medium-term targets of the Ecoregional Conservation Plan of the Caucasus.

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

Resource Allocation

CEPF awarded 42 grants to civil society organizations active in the Caucasus Hotspot, with a total value of \$8,498,783 (Appendix A). The CEPF grant portfolio in the Caucasus was balanced and well aligned to the strategic directions set out in the ecosystem profile (Table 1). The grant portfolio consisted of: one large umbrella grant for the overall program coordination and leadership, issued to the WWF Caucasus Programme Office; a modest number of relatively large grants, issued to capable national and international NGOs for strategic, high-priority projects; and a larger number of smaller grants, mostly below \$20,000, mainly to national and local NGOs.

Ten international organizations received grants totaling \$5,418,079, while 21 local organizations received grants totaling \$3,080,704 (Table 2). The median grant size was \$100,000. The grants to international organizations included a grant of \$2.92 million to WWF, nearly half of which was for the CEPF/WWF Small Grants Program. Under this program, 87 small grants (of up to \$20,000) were made, almost all of them to local organizations (Appendix B).

Given the very high level of interest in CEPF among civil society organizations active in the Caucasus relative to the amount of resources available, it was only possible to fund one application in four. Reasons for rejection were varied but always made clear to the applicant. Common reasons for rejection included: applications not being sufficiently aligned with a strategic direction; applications being located outside of CEPF's geographic priorities; and applications lacking adequate details about the proposed project.

During the CEPF investment period, large investments were made in the West Lesser Caucasus, East Lesser Caucasus and Greater Caucasus corridors, with considerably smaller investments in the Caspian and Hyrcan corridors. Multi-corridor projects generally covered all five priority corridors but, again, there was a skew towards the Greater Caucasus, West Lesser Caucasus and East Lesser Caucasus corridors. The Hyrcan Corridor, which is located mainly in Iran, received

the lowest level of investment among the five priority corridors. This was because, although Iran was eligible to receive CEPF funding, no suitable proposals were forthcoming.

In the Greater Caucasus, West Lesser Caucasus and East Lesser Caucasus corridors, the thematic priorities articulated in the ecosystem profile were much more comprehensively addressed by the CEPF grant portfolio. Each of these three corridors witnessed parallel CEPF projects addressing: (i) species conservation; (ii) establishment of new protected areas and/or expansion of existing ones; (iii) strengthening of protected area management; (iv) formulation of biodiversity policy and implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs); (v) development of models for sustainable forestry; (vi) development of alternative livelihoods for local communities; (vii) increasing awareness and commitment of decisionmakers on the value of biodiversity and the need for conservation; and (viii) capacity building for environmental journalists. Such a multi-thematic approach proved very effective at delivering a general improvement in biodiversity conservation at the corridor scale, and was made possible by the work of the Coordination Unit to deliver the vision set out in the ecosystem profile.

Table 1: Resource Allocation by Strategic Direction

| Resource Allocation | Strategic Direction 1 | Strategic Direction 2 | Strategic Direction 3 | Strategic Direction 4 | Total |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| Total number of grants | 13 | 13 | 8 | 8 | 42 |
| Percentage of total grants | 31.0 | 31.0 | 19.0 | 19.0 | 100 |
| Total dollar allocation | \$4,657,633 | \$2,022,515 | \$1,101,475 | \$717,160 | 8,498,783 |
| Percentage of total allocation | 54.8 | 23.8 | 13.0 | 8.4 | 100 |

Table 2: Resource Allocation by Organization Type

| Resource Allocation | International Organizations | Local Organizations |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Total number of organizations | 10 | 21 |
| Percentage of total organizations | 32.3 | 67.7 |
| Total dollar allocation | \$5,418,079 | \$3,080,704 |
| Percentage of total allocation | 63.8 | 36.2 |

Strategic Direction 1: Support civil society efforts to promote transboundary cooperation and improve protected area systems in five target corridors

Each of the five corridors in the Caucasus Hotspot extends across two or more countries because threatened species, their habitats and threats to both do not recognize international boundaries. As a consequence, regional and transboundary cooperation is a key requirement for ensuring long-term biodiversity conservation in the region, which CEPF helped to catalyze. A total of 13 large grants amounting to \$4,657,633 were supported under this strategic direction, complemented by 15 small grants made under the CEPF/WWF Small Grants Program.

Strategic Direction 2: Strengthen mechanisms to conserve biodiversity of the Caucasus Hotspot with emphasis on species, site and corridor outcomes

Endangered species are the first elements of biodiversity to disappear as ecosystems and natural conditions are altered. Thus, effective conservation planning requires up-to-date information on the status of threatened species and the habitats on which they depend. Civil society organizations have a role to play in collecting this information and using it to promote appropriate management actions. In support of this strategic direction, CEPF awarded 13 large grants totaling \$2,022,515, and provided a further 37 small grants via the CEPF/WWF Small Grants Program.

Strategic Direction 3: Implement models demonstrating sustainable resource use in five target corridors

Sustainable resource use entails reducing the negative environmental impacts of development. Civil society organizations can work with local communities to develop alternative livelihoods that make them less dependent on natural resources. Civil society can also play an important role in monitoring the impacts of large-scale development projects, and promoting mitigation measures. Eight large grants amounting to \$1,101,475 were supported under this strategic direction, as well as 20 small grants made under the CEPF/WWF Small Grants Program.

Strategic Direction 4: Increase the awareness and commitment of decisionmakers to biodiversity conservation in five target corridors

Lack of environmental awareness among decisionmakers and the general public is a factor underlying many of the threats to biodiversity in the Caucasus Hotspot. Civil society has a role to play in raising awareness at the community, national and regional levels, including by training journalists to write about conservation issues, and fostering cooperation between journalists and local government representatives. CEPF awarded eight large grants totaling \$717,160 under this strategic direction, while 15 small grants were made via the CEPF/WWF Small Grants Program.

Leveraging Additional Resources

Civil society groups that received CEPF grants reported leveraging and co-financing of at least \$21.9 million, more than double the total amount invested by CEPF in the hotspot (Appendix C). The grant with the greatest amount of co-financing was the Coordination Unit grant, “Building Capacity to Strengthen Conservation Alliances through CEPF Coordination and Grant-making in the Caucasus,” which leveraged a total of \$16,500,000. These funds were provided by KfW, the government of Norway and the MAVA Foundation, and were used to support conservation efforts at the transboundary, corridor and protected area scales.

BIODIVERSITY RESULTS

Priority Species Targeted for Conservation Action

Under Strategic Direction 2, CEPF supported conservation actions for the 50 priority species identified in the ecosystem profile, 94 percent of which were targeted by CEPF-funded projects. The main approaches adopted by species-focused projects were: (i) field studies and population status assessments; (ii) global and national Red List assessments of poorly represented taxa; (iii) creation and population of databases; (iv) formulation of regional or national species conservation action plans; (v) involvement of local people in species conservation projects through creation of volunteer or caretaker networks; (vi) consultations with key stakeholders to promote recommendations; and (vii) regional and transboundary cooperation.

Through these projects, scientific knowledge on the status of 45 of the 50 priority species, as well as more than 1,000 vascular plants, was significantly improved, and conservation action plans were prepared for many of them. These achievements have created a foundation for better targeted and coordinated conservation action for globally threatened species. At the same time,

significant improvements to the conservation status of species were achieved during the lifetime of these projects, thereby averting the risk of extinctions. For instance, under a project that established local caretaker networks for 29 priority sites, overall threat level declined at more than 50 percent of them. Similarly, a publicity campaign to inform the public of the illegal origin of caviar and its implication for the conservation of wild sturgeons contributed to strengthened controls on the illegal trade and a significant decline in the volume of caviar traded on the domestic market.

All of the new scientific data generated by CEPF-supported studies on priority species, as well as all activities related to protected areas, were collated within a publication titled “Status and Protection of Globally Threatened Species in the Caucasus.” This publication was distributed to key stakeholders at national, regional and international levels, and is available from the WWF Caucasus Programme Office:

www.panda.org/what_we_do/where_we_work/black_sea_basin/caucasus/news/?185301/New-publication-based-on-CEPF-supported-studies

Mammals

CEPF investment in mammal conservation was concentrated on regional networks, status assessments and priority conservation actions. One of the key investments in networking was the establishment and capacity building of a regional bat monitoring network, covering Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Russia. Network members were provided with essential equipment and literature and trained in standard survey and monitoring methodologies. A database on priority bat species and their habitats was developed and made available at www.campester.org, and conservation action plans for priority bat species were developed. The project’s results were used to justify proposals to establish three caves as new protected areas under a World Bank-supported initiative in the Central Caucasus.

Regarding conservation status assessments, at the regional level, CEPF supported an assessment of the global conservation status of all mammals occurring in the Caucasus against the IUCN Red List criteria. The results are available in a searchable database, including status assessments and maps, at www.iucnredlist.org/mammals. At the national level, CEPF supported research on the status of common otter (*Lutra lutra*) in Azerbaijan, giant mole rat (*Spalax giganteus*) in Russia and Dahl’s jird (*Meriones dahli*) in Armenia, and conservation action plans were prepared.

At the beginning of the CEPF investment period, a regional workshop dedicated to the conservation of priority Caprinae (wild goat) species was organized, where leading experts from the hotspot agreed on a common vision and practical conservation strategies for wild (bezoar) goat (*Capra aegagrus*), West Caucasian tur (*C. caucasica*), East Caucasian tur (*C. cylindricornis*) and Armenian mouflon (*Ovis ammon*). Based on the results of this workshop, CEPF supported priority conservation actions for all four species, including support to captive breeding of wild (bezoar) goat in Georgia, public awareness raising and consultations with key stakeholders.

Birds

The conservation needs of all priority bird species were addressed widely across the hotspot through large grants to BirdLife International and WWF-Russia. Through the BirdLife-led project networks of caretakers were established in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, covering 29 CEPF priority sites containing Important Bird Areas (IBAs). The caretakers were members of the local community able to promote, carry out or contribute to the conservation and monitoring of globally threatened bird species at each site. Another output of this project was the development of Regional Species Action Plans for seven globally threatened bird species, which were contextualized locally in the form of Site Action Plans for 24 sites spread across the four

countries. These local-language documents represented written agreements with the caretaker about what they should do to address threats, and their implementation was supported through small grants to caretakers.

Through the grant to WWF-Russia, which was implemented in close cooperation with Wetlands International, 80 IBAs (72 percent of the total) in the North Caucasus region of Russia were covered by 86 caretakers, organized into seven caretaker groups. New data on 14 priority bird species were obtained through 17 micro-projects, and conservation action plans for them were developed and produced as a bilingual book in English and Russian. As a result of the project, 43 new IBAs were identified, described and entered into the World Bird Data Base.

Amphibians and Reptiles

CEPF supported efforts to initiate transboundary and regional cooperation for conservation of amphibians and reptiles in the Caucasus Hotspot. In 2005, leading experts from across the hotspot were brought together for a regional workshop in St. Petersburg, Russia, at which they agreed upon a common vision and priority actions for conservation of amphibians and reptiles in the Caucasus. As a follow-up to this workshop, amphibians and reptiles on the IUCN Red List for the Caucasus Hotspot were re-assessed, according to the IUCN categories and criteria.

This regional initiative was complemented by several national conservation status assessments. In Armenia, the status of all amphibians and reptiles was reassessed, leading to updates being proposed to the national and IUCN Red Lists. In Azerbaijan, the status of two amphibians, Caucasian toad (*Bufo verrucosissimus*) and Caucasian parsley frog (*Pelodytes caucasicus*), was assessed and a national conservation action plan covering both species was developed, with the involvement of key stakeholders from government and academia. In Georgia and Russia, surveys for common tortoise (*Testudo graeca*) were carried out, the status of the species was assessed, and conservation action plans were developed in each country. Two more reptiles, Caucasian viper (*Vipera kaznakovi*) and Dinnik's viper (*V. dinniki*) were investigated in Georgia, Russia and Turkey. Their current status was assessed and recommendations for further conservation actions were developed. Following the project's recommendations, all key habitats of both species in Russia were considered and covered by a new zoning of Sochinsky National Park.

A transboundary approach was applied to assessing the current status of Caucasian salamander (*Mertensiella caucasica*) in the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor, spanning Georgia and Turkey. Fieldwork was carried out in both countries, the current population status of the salamander was assessed and a conservation action plan was developed through a participatory approach. The project also featured a public-awareness-raising component, including a special Web site dedicated to the salamander at <http://mertensiella.biodiversity-georgia.net>.

Fishes

CEPF investments in the conservation of fishes under Strategic Direction 1 focused on sturgeons (Acipenseridae), and delivered some significant results for this highly threatened group. At the beginning of the CEPF investment period, a regional workshop on sturgeon conservation was organized, and a common vision and practical conservation measures were outlined. Follow-up grants from CEPF then allowed many of the identified measures to be implemented. Under one such grant, the domestic markets for sturgeons in Russia and Azerbaijan were analyzed and illegal catch and illicit trade volumes were evaluated. Trends in sturgeon populations were described and the main reasons for declines were analyzed. In Russia, several activities were implemented to raise public awareness about the illegal trade in sturgeons and caviar. The results of a public opinion poll showed that most consumers accepted the idea of significantly limiting the consumption of caviar and even an outright ban. Good coverage of the campaign in the mass-media raised awareness among the general public and motivated the relevant authorities in Russia

to strengthen controls on the illegal trade, including a legislative amendment that obligated the relevant authorities and inspectorates to destroy confiscated caviar and not return it to the trade, as happened previously.

Under another grant, CEPF supported an assessment of the status of sturgeons in the Georgian part of the Black Sea and the rivers flowing into it. As well as looking at species composition, population size, distribution and habitat status, this study also assessed the causes of declines in sturgeon populations and range sizes. Based upon the study's findings, a conservation action plan for sturgeons in Georgia was developed and final recommendations were submitted to the relevant governmental bodies. These recommendations included a proposal to expand Kolkheti National Park to protect the main nursery and feeding area for sturgeons in Georgia. CEPF also supported a joint morphological and molecular genetic study to clarify the taxonomic status of Persian sturgeon (*Acipenser persicus*) that did not support its validity as a separate species.

At the end of the CEPF investment period, the grantee organized a concluding regional workshop dedicated to the conservation of sturgeons. Leading experts from across the hotspot considered and shared the results and conservation impacts of the CEPF-funded projects. In addition, participants discussed new initiatives in sturgeon conservation and agreed to a common vision and concrete steps for further conservation actions.

Plants

Although only one of the 50 species outcomes identified in the Caucasus was a plant, this reflected the state of knowledge at the time the ecosystem profile was prepared and not the actual status of the hotspot's plants. Consequently, CEPF invested in filling the information gap that existed with regard to the endemic plants of the Caucasus. These efforts were led by IUCN, in close cooperation with Missouri Botanical Garden, which established an effective network of Caucasian plant specialists in the form of a Caucasus Plant Red List Authority under the IUCN Species Survival Commission. A comprehensive list of Caucasian endemic plant species, subspecies and varieties, comprising 2,800 taxa, was compiled. Of these, 1,100 taxa were assessed according to the IUCN Red List categories and criteria, of which around 600 were found to be globally threatened. The results were compiled as the Caucasus Plant Red List, which is scheduled for publication in 2010. The IUCN project also led to the development of a draft Regional Plant Conservation Strategy for the Caucasus, corresponding to the aims of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity.

CEPF grants also supported several other actions to improve the status of knowledge on plants in the hotspot. These included: a survey of the endemic plant species of the Adjara-Shavsheti transboundary floristic region, between Georgia and Turkey; preparation of a preliminary list of threatened species of higher plant in Hyrcan National Park, Azerbaijan; and updates to the flora section of the national Red List of Armenia.

Priority Sites and Corridors Targeted for Conservation Action

Under Strategic Direction 1, CEPF invested heavily in the protected area system of the Caucasus, on which other conservation efforts are anchored. CEPF investment contributed to system-level planning, expansion and creation of new protected areas, strengthening of management at existing protected areas and development of sustainable financing mechanisms. All of these grants featured an awareness-raising component and adopted participatory approaches.

Contribution to Conservation Planning at the Landscape Scale

CEPF made a significant contribution to landscape-scale planning for conservation in three corridors: the West Lesser Caucasus; the Greater Caucasus; and the Caspian. In the West Lesser

Caucasus Corridor, an analysis of the socioeconomic, demographic and geo-ecological characteristics of the corridor was undertaken, and a strong foundation for further landscape planning and protected area development was put in place. Also, a GIS database was created and specific recommendations for protected area network development were formulated.

In the Russian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor, an ecological network or “Econet” scheme was developed, based on an analysis of satellite images, biodiversity data, and landscape and topographical maps. The Econet scheme stretches for nearly 1,500 kilometers along the Greater Caucasus, from the Black to the Caspian seas, and incorporates protected areas and multiple-use areas (corridors) into a continuous, efficiently managed system. The Econet scheme provides a strong basis for further land-use planning, sustainable regional development and development of the protected area system, as well as a guide for biodiversity conservation activities. All key stakeholders from government, NGOs and academia were involved in the development of the Econet scheme, and around 60 experts and government staff working on land-use planning, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources received training in the use of GIS.

In the Russian parts of the Greater Caucasus and Caspian Corridors, an inventory of internationally and nationally important wetlands was carried out. The results of this inventory were published as “Wetlands in the North Caucasus” (volume 6 of the “Wetlands in Russia” series). This book included accounts of 35 wetlands (with a total area 11,245 square kilometers), and made recommendations about their nomination as Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention. More generally, the results of the inventory can be used to guide protected area planning and to develop appropriate, wise-use management regimes for these wetlands.

Creation and Expansion of Protected Areas

As a result of CEPF investment, two new protected areas with a total area of 51,771 hectares were created, and five other protected areas with a total area of 107,941 hectares were planned and initiated. In addition, two protected areas were expanded by a total of 31,322 hectares, and expansions of two more protected areas totaling 86,502 hectares were initiated and are expected to be approved in the near future.

In the Russian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor, CEPF supported the creation of a contiguous protected area system (“Green Corridor”) through the enlargement of three nature reserves: Teberdinsky, Dagestansky and Erzi. These enlargements will ensure the maintenance of ecological connectivity among key habitats, which is essential for conserving biodiversity at the corridor scale. Teberdinsky Reserve will be expanded by 29,070 hectares through the creation of a biosphere polygon linking Teberdinsky Reserve, Kavkazsky Reserve and Sochinsky National Park into a single nature corridor. Dagestansky Reserve will be expanded by 57,432 hectares through the addition of the Tlyarata area, while the expansion of Erzi Reserve by 29,322 hectares has already been approved. These latter two expansions increase the protection of high mountain ecosystems in the eastern part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor, and contribute to the future development of transboundary protected areas among Azerbaijan, Georgia and Russia. All documentation for the enlargements of Teberdinsky and Dagestansky Reserves has been submitted to the government and is currently under consideration.

Elsewhere in the Russian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor, a management guide for the creation of Mezmay Nature Park (20,000 hectares) was prepared to facilitate the establishment of this protected area in the future. This management guide included all of the background information necessary to support protected area establishment, including zoning maps. Another management guide was prepared for the creation of Khevsureti Protected Area (50,000 hectares) in the Georgian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor, and various preparatory activities were

carried out. This planned protected area serves as a stepping stone or connecting bridge between Tusheti National Park in the east and Kazbegi National Park in the west. Both management guides were submitted to the respective governments to advance the establishment processes for these new protected areas.

Also in the Greater Caucasus Corridor, the inclusion of three caves (Gogoleti, Sakishore and Kidobana in Racha region, Georgia) in the protected area system of the Central Caucasus was justified and initiated. These caves were considered for the establishment of new protected areas under a World Bank-supported initiative, through which a management guide and draft law on establishing of the protected area system in the Central Caucasus were submitted to the government for approval.

In the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor, the Natural-Landscape Territory of Mtirala and Machakhela was created with a combined area of 22,941 hectares through the development of a spatial planning document. This spatial planning document was approved and endorsed by the local government and the next step is establishment of two new protected areas under the Georgian Law on the Protected Area System: a buffer zone for Mtirala National Park (10,202 hectares); and Machakhela Protected Landscape (12,739 hectares). Machakhela Protected Landscape has the potential to be further developed into a transboundary protected area between Georgia and Turkey along the Machakhela gorge.

In Armenia, two new protected areas were created in the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor: Arevik National Park (34,402 hectares); and Zangezur Sanctuary (17,369 hectares). In addition, Shikahogh Nature Reserve was expanded by 2,000 hectares, taking its total area to 12,000 hectares. Also in Armenia, a feasibility assessment was carried out and a draft management guide was prepared for the creation of Arpi/Gnishik National Park in the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor, and submitted to the government to advance the protected area establishment process. This protected area, which covers around 15,000 hectares, would consolidate ecological connectivity between Khosrov Nature Reserve and the newly created Arevik National Park and Zangezur Sanctuary.

Improved Management of Protected Areas

CEPF contributed to improving and strengthening the management of more than 17 protected areas across the hotspot, covering a total area of over 1.2 million hectares. In the Armenian part of the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor, CEPF invested in improving the management and protection regime of Khosrov (29,196 hectares) and Shikahogh (12,000 hectares) nature reserves. Through these grants, protected area facilities were improved; training, technical support and equipment were provided to protected area staff; and draft concepts of management plans were developed for further approval by the government.

In the Greater Caucasus Corridor, an assessment of natural resources values and ecosystem services was carried out for Sochinsky National Park (193,737 hectares), and specific recommendations were formulated to improve the management of this protected area. This was the first time that such an assessment had been carried out for a federal-level protected area in Russia and it can be a model for similar assessments at other protected areas in the Caucasus.

Elsewhere in the Russian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor, CEPF supported the preparation of management plans for Kavkazsky Nature Reserve (330,000 hectares) and Chernogorie Sanctuary (4,400 hectares). The Kavkazsky Nature Reserve management plan was approved by the Ministry of Natural Resources and a proposal was submitted to UNESCO to nominate this protected area as a World Heritage Site. The Chernogorie Sanctuary draft management plan was submitted to the relevant governmental body for further approval.

In Azerbaijan, CEPF made investments in new facilities and technical capacity for several protected areas, including Absheron National Park (783 hectares) and Shirvan National Park (54,373 hectares) in the Caspian Corridor and Zakatala Strict Nature Reserve (47,349 hectares) in the Greater Caucasus Corridor. In addition, a management plan for Absheron National Park was elaborated, and the development of tourism facilities for Shirvan National Park was supported.

Management plans were developed for four wetlands, submitted to the relevant protected area administrations, and communicated to local stakeholders. These wetlands comprised: Gull Islets and Lake Lichk within Armenia's Sevan National Park (150,100 hectares); and Lake Paliastomi in Kolkheti National Park (45,446 hectares) and Hispani 2 Mire in Kobuleti Nature Reserve (331 hectares) in Georgia. As part of this project, 24 people, including representatives of Sevan and Kolkheti national parks and other governmental bodies, were trained in wetland management.

Training was also an approach adopted by a project in the Greater Caucasus Corridor, where CEPF support helped to improve the professional skills of around 30 rangers from seven federal-level protected areas in Russia: Kavkazsky, Erzi, Kabardino-Balkarskii and Severo-Osetinsky Nature Reserves; and Sochinsky, Priobrusiye and Alania national parks. Training focused on management, biodiversity conservation, legislation and monitoring issues. Based on the trainings, a set of guidelines for rangers was developed and distributed among all national protected areas.

Under another project, a management plan was developed for Posof Wildlife Reserve (59,589 hectares) in the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor. This plan, which the Ministry of Environment and Forestry adopted, is the first of its kind for Turkish wildlife reserves and has good potential for replication at other reserves. Already, the success of the CEPF project prompted the management planning of Urfa Wildlife Reserve, a steppe habitat in southeastern Turkey.

Also in the Turkish part of the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor, a rapid assessment and prioritization of protected area management was carried out and recommendations for improving management were formulated and communicated to the relevant institutions.

Transboundary Action for Priority Sites

CEPF significantly contributed to strengthening transboundary cooperation for site conservation between Georgia and Turkey through a suite of small and large grants, which covered bilateral meetings between representatives of government, NGOs and academia, as well as the creation of joint working groups, joint training courses, and exchange programs. Specifically, a CEPF grant to Doğa Derneği contributed to improving human resources, enhancing baseline information and setting scientific standards for Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) conservation in the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor. This project also created a joint working group for the conservation of a transboundary KBA, comprising Posof Forest in Turkey and Akhaltsikhe-Erusheti in Georgia. As a follow-up to this project, CEPF supported a bilateral meeting between Georgia and Turkey with the active participation of key stakeholders from the governmental, nongovernmental and scientific sectors of both countries. This meeting served as very effective forum for sharing experience and knowledge in the fields of protected area management and wildlife management.

Sustainable Forestry and Sustainable Resource Use

Under Strategic Direction 3, CEPF investment significantly contributed to sustainable forestry and sustainable resource use in the Greater Caucasus, West Lesser Caucasus and East Lesser Caucasus Corridors. CEPF-supported projects developed and demonstrated various models for sustainable resource use, several of which were shown to have potential for wider replication.

A CEPF grant enabled the Armenian Tree Project (ATP) and the Global Institute of Sustainable Forestry at Yale University to conduct one of the most in-depth studies of the forests in the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor ever. This study helped clarify the most appropriate methods for identifying species that would thrive in northern Armenia and led to the establishment of two forestry demonstration plots (10 and 4 hectares) with tens of thousands of indigenous trees. These plots will serve as training sites for current and future foresters. Also, as the trees grow, they will be monitored and the data gathered will help to identify techniques that encourage high survival rates and to determine sustainable extraction rates. The project culminated in a sustainable forestry training manual, which was rolled out during a national level participatory workshop attended by 30 participants from state agencies and NGOs. A curriculum was developed for future seminars, which will be held throughout Armenia, to promote discussion and application of sustainable forestry techniques with local stakeholders. This work has been brought to the attention of several international and private donors. ATP staff members were trained in sustainable forestry techniques, rotational grazing and general natural resource conservation techniques, and 30 local community members received training in sustainable range management.

In the Azeri part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor, CEPF supported a model project on sustainable forestry that aimed to mitigate anthropogenic pressure on forests through providing local communities with alternative energy sources and livelihoods. In close cooperation with the local community in Oguz-Gabalinski district, a cooperative was legally established and began producing briquettes out of sawdust. This innovative product reduces demand for firewood while reducing pollution of freshwater by sawdust from the woodwork and construction industries, and providing an alternative source of income for locals. At least 500 kilograms of sawdust is now being transformed into briquettes each day, with significant direct and indirect conservation impacts.

In the natural landscape around Mtirala National Park in the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor, which was proposed to be upgraded as a buffer zone under a separate project, CEPF supported three model projects for sustainable resource use, comprising a nursery for valuable plant species, horseback riding tours, and a local business center. Local communities were involved in the development of these models of sustainable resource use and they directly benefited from them.

In the Turkish part of the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor, CEPF invested in raising the phenomenon of high-mountain forest ecosystems to the top of the public agenda. A multi-disciplinary analysis was undertaken of rural settlements and forest management units located inside or around high-mountain forest ecosystems. The resulting multilingual book, “Determining and Preventing the Economic, Social, Cultural and Technical Causes Harmful to High-Mountain Ecosystems in the East Black Sea Region,” was published and communicated to key national-level stakeholders as well as various partners from different countries of the Caucasus. In addition, under the framework of another CEPF project, a book titled “The Forest Ecosystems Under Protection for Special Aims in the Eastern Black Sea Region” was published and distributed among key national-level stakeholders.

Another project in the Turkish part of the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor contributed significantly to training governmental officials in sustainable forestry, biodiversity assessment and monitoring. The project provided a week-long training program for 42 forest managers from Giresun and Trabzon Forest Districts, who manage a combined area of 949,730 hectares. Also, a book, “Forest and Biodiversity,” was published and communicated to relevant stakeholders, presenting information on forest biodiversity and describing forestry techniques. Thanks to being disseminated by the Directorates General of Forestry and National Parks, and university forestry faculties, this book was made available to field foresters managing a combined area of more than

21 million hectares. The training course and the book, which was the first of its kind in Turkey, were critical for raising awareness among government officials of the ecosystem services performed by forests. Another result of the project was to facilitate closer partnership and cooperation between the governmental and nongovernmental sectors in Turkey.

A third project in the Turkish part of the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor developed an Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) Plan for the Firtina Valley, which covers an area of 80,000 hectares including Kackar Mountains National Park. This plan was developed with the participation of local stakeholders from the governmental and nongovernmental sectors, and complemented by guidelines for sustainable tourism, water use, grazing and infrastructure development. The plan was endorsed by the Firtina IRBM Council and the local government, and, accordingly, there was a strong commitment to implement it. The project made significant contributions to NGO networking in the region and strengthened partnerships among government, NGOs and academia. As part of its support to local organizations, the project featured a small grant component, and supported advocacy by local NGOs regarding hydroelectric power projects, mining and road construction, which are the main threats to ecosystems. Some of these planned developments were cancelled in the region. The project also had a training component for local stakeholders from the government and NGO sectors and local communities, through which more than 100 stakeholders were trained in different subjects, such as IRBM plan implementation and communication, the EU nature conservation approach, and project cycle management.

Hotspot-wide Initiatives

Caucasus Biodiversity Council

In 1999-2000, during the preparation of the first Conservation Strategy for the Caucasus Ecoregion, the stakeholders agreed on the urgent need to establish a coordination body to improve cooperation in the field of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in the Caucasus. They thus asked WWF to facilitate the establishment of a coordination body, termed the Caucasus Biodiversity Council (CBC), in close partnership with the stakeholders from the region. CEPF contributed significantly to the effective functioning of the CBC, which was established in 2004 with financial support from the MacArthur Foundation. The CBC is a regional body, consisting of officially nominated government representatives and NGO delegates from all countries of the hotspot. The council also invites academics to participate in its meetings, which are organized twice a year. Since its establishment, the council has proved itself invaluable to conservation in the region, not only by promoting and monitoring the implementation of an Ecoregion Conservation Plan (ECP) for the Caucasus, but also by facilitating implementation of regional programs and projects, providing a forum for exchange of opinion, and promoting transboundary activities.

During the period between 2004 and 2009, the CBC promoted effective coordination among CEPF-funded conservation projects, programs and initiatives, and significantly contributed to the implementation of the CEPF priorities and ECP targets through its technical support and recommendations. Thanks to the support of the CBC, many conservation outcomes contained in the ecosystem profile were met, including ones not prioritized for CEPF funding, and most (71 percent) of the medium-term targets of the ECP were achieved. Moreover, the CBC was instrumental in leveraging funding from other donors to expand or extend CEPF investments in many important projects. In these ways, the CBC has become an important mechanism for promoting conservation in the hotspot, and building confidence *vis-à-vis* donor agencies and the conservation community. This role is expected to become more and more important in years to come, in view of the growing development pressures that are being felt in the hotspot.

Caucasus Protected Areas Fund

The Caucasus Protected Areas Fund (CPAF) is a charitable foundation that promotes sustainable environmental conservation in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The CPAF was designed to provide grants to cover the operating costs of protected areas designated as priorities under the ECP. These grants can, potentially, match the budgetary contributions made to protected areas by the three national governments. The CPAF seeks to work with protected area managers and the relevant ministries to ensure that funds are properly spent. In this way, the CPAF aims to ensure the financial sustainability of the region's protected area networks, enabling them to maintain their contribution to regional biodiversity conservation in the context of sustainable development.

CEPF assisted the CPAF to become operational and, thereby, attract the necessary funds to meet its core endowment target of €50 million. An endowment of this size would enable the fund to offer grants totaling €1.7 million annually. To date, the CPAF has raised initial endowment capital of €8 million from the German government (through BMZ and KfW), WWF and the Global Conservation Fund at Conservation International. Fundraising will continue to be a primary focus of the CPAF, and opportunities for receiving contributions from private business will be vigorously pursued.

Regional Biodiversity Monitoring Network

CEPF investment helped to establish the Regional Biodiversity Monitoring Network for the Caucasus Hotspot. As a first step, an international conference on “Perspectives of Biodiversity Monitoring in the Caucasus” was held in Tbilisi, Georgia, on December 6–7, 2005. This conference was the first attempt by the government, NGO and academic communities from all Caucasian countries to initiate regional efforts for biodiversity monitoring. The conference highlighted the fact that monitoring of the status of biodiversity in the Caucasus is essential for its effective conservation. As a result of the conference, monitoring indicators were selected; data collection, sharing and dissemination methods were defined; model monitoring plans were designed; and a general outline of a regional network was developed. Based on results of the conference, development of the Regional Biodiversity Monitoring Network began. The WWF Caucasus Programme Office is presently working to maintain the network and develop it across the whole of the Caucasus. As part of this, special software, including a database on protected areas, has been developed for the whole hotspot.

SOCIOECONOMIC RESULTS

CEPF invested significantly in developing alternative livelihoods for local communities in the East Lesser Caucasus, Greater Caucasus, Hyrcan and Caspian corridors. At least seven communities, 19 families and 210 individuals benefited directly from these activities, with an unquantified number benefiting indirectly, through replication of the livelihood alternatives demonstrated. The beneficiaries of these activities are summarized in Table 3, with fuller descriptions given in the following section.

Table 3: Socioeconomic Benefits for Communities

| Corridor/Site(s) | No. of Beneficiaries | Sector | Description of Benefits |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| East Lesser Caucasus Corridor (Shikahogh Nature Reserve, Arevik National Park and Zangezur Sanctuary) | 5 communities | Agriculture | Introduction of improved agricultural techniques. Development of beekeeping. Development of fruit orchards. Establishment of rabbit, goat and sheep farms. |
| East Lesser Caucasus Corridor (Ordubad Sanctuary) | 1 community | Medicinal plant collection | Establishment of a producers' cooperative. |
| Greater Caucasus, Caspian and Hyrcan Corridors | 80 individuals | Beekeeping | Training in beekeeping |
| Greater Caucasus Corridor (Zakatala Nature Reserve) | 20 individuals | Beekeeping | Training in bee selective breeding. Establishment of a cooperative. |
| Greater Caucasus Corridor (Eastern Caucasus area) | 1 community | Beekeeping | Provision of bee colonies and equipment. |
| Greater Caucasus Corridor (Gabala Nature Reserve and Ismailli area) | 10 individuals | Hunting | Establishment of a sustainable hunting area. |
| Greater Caucasus Corridor (Khevi area) | 14 families | Tourism | Establishment of an ecotourism camp. |
| Hyrcan Corridor (Hyrcan Nature Reserve and Zuvand Sanctuary) | 2 families, 100 individuals | Agriculture, Tourism | Establishment of a quail farm. Ecotourism development training. Ecotourism guide training. |
| Caspian Corridor (Gizil-Agach Nature Reserve) | 3 families | Agriculture | Establishment of model goose and duck farm. Establishment of producers' cooperative. |

Investment in the Armenian part of the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor had significant impacts. One grant provided alternative livelihoods for five communities living around Shikahogh Nature Reserve, Arevik National Park and Zangezur Sanctuary, thereby helping to reduce pressure on natural ecosystems in southern Armenia. The alternative livelihood activities comprised: improved agricultural techniques; beekeeping; apple and pomegranate orchards; and rabbit, goat and sheep farms. Through these activities, the communities targeted by the project had less need to engage in unsustainable use of natural resources, and developed good relationships with local protected area administrations.

In the Azeri part of the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor, communities around Ordubad Sanctuary were supported to legally establish, build and equip a producers' cooperative for collection and processing of medicinal plants, and artificial propagation of medicinal plants was initiated.

Around 80 beekeepers and interested persons from five administration districts in the Greater Caucasus, Caspian and Hyrcan corridors received training in beekeeping techniques. As part of this project, brochures and information materials on beekeeping were published and distributed to local people for further application and improvement of beekeeping and honey production. Additionally, around 20 representatives from four local communities in the Zakatala region of the Greater Caucasus Corridor were trained in the creation of selective-tribal bee colonies. Also, 50 selective-tribal bee colonies were purchased and a producers' cooperative was legally established. Following consultations with communities and other stakeholders in the Zakatala region, seven proposals for further development of alternative livelihoods for local communities were prepared.

Continuing the theme of beekeeping, CEPF supported the creation of a honey production farm in Kvareli district in the Georgian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor. Under this initiative 100 bee colonies were purchased, new equipment and materials were obtained, and the product was licensed. One innovation of this initiative was the establishment of a “Biodiversity Fund” for Kvareli district, into which bee farm owners contribute 25 percent of their annual income from honey production. Money from the fund is then allocated for priority biodiversity conservation activities at the district level, through small-grantmaking. To date, application procedures have been agreed and the first grants have been awarded for environmental education activities around Tusheti Protected Area (113,660 hectares), Ilto Sanctuary (6,971 hectares) and Babaneuri Reserve (862 hectares), and for monitoring of management plan implementation at these sites.

In the Azeri part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor, a sustainable hunting area, focused on wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) and roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), was established in the Gabala-Ismailli area to provide alternative livelihoods for local people. At present, around 10 locals regularly benefit from this initiative.

In the Georgian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor, an ecotourism camp was built and equipped in Stepantsminda district. This camp is situated in a very attractive area for tourism development, and the number of eco-tourists visiting the camp has increased significantly of late. Two visitor trails were created, and a brochure publicizing the camp was produced and distributed widely. The camp is managed by a local village, and all 14 families in the village benefit from the revenue generated from ecotourism.

In the Hyrcan Corridor, CEPF funded three separate initiatives to develop alternative livelihoods for local people. In one district, a quail farm was established, and two families now receive a regular alternative income from this activity. Around 80 representatives from NGOs, government agencies and local communities throughout the Azeri part of the corridor were trained in ecotourism development and its importance, and a brochure on two ecotourism trails was published and communicated to the trainees for their use. Finally, around 20 local community members explored new ways of making alternative livelihoods by working as ecotourism guides at protected areas in the Hyrcan Corridor. Thanks to the project, they gained new skills and are able to work as guides according to demand.

In the Caspian Corridor, alternative livelihoods were supported as part of efforts to develop alternative ways of saving the avifauna of Gizil-Agach Nature Reserve. In one settlement close to the reserve, a model goose and duck farm was established in order to slowly replace off-take of wild ducks and geese. At the same time, a producers’ cooperative was established in Masally district, and the three local families involved now gain a regular income from it.

ENABLING CONDITION RESULTS

Policy Improvement and Implementation

Under Strategic Direction 4, CEPF provided several grants to civil society organizations in support of their efforts to advocate for policy improvements with regard to biodiversity conservation. In Armenia, CEPF supported a civil society campaign to save Shikahogh Nature Reserve (12,000 hectares) in the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor. Initially, the government planned to run a highway through this sensitive reserve, which boasts 1,074 plant species, many of which are endemic. The highway project threatened to destroy at least 30 hectares of the reserve’s territory, and would have inevitably led to the loss of some of Armenia’s unique virgin oak forests. Thanks to CEPF support, more than 20 Armenian NGOs united around a single clear goal: to save Shikahogh Reserve and keep it untouched. Different ways of campaigning and

influencing the Armenian government were used, including widely broadcasting a specially commissioned documentary, “Shikahogh.” The NGO coalition proposed four alternative highway routes to the government and convinced decisionmakers about the inappropriateness of highway construction through the reserve. Finally, the goal was achieved: the highway route crossing the reserve was officially rejected by the government. This was a very clear example of how policy change can be initiated and motivated by civil society, with leadership from a CEPF grantee.

CEPF also supported a public initiative in the Sochi Region of the Greater Caucasus Corridor to assist preparations for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games and help the event adhere to environmental regulations. This project aimed at preventing the games from impacting negatively on protected areas in the western part of the Greater Caucasus, especially Sochi World Heritage Site. Unfortunately, this goal was not fully achieved, because several infrastructure projects are still planned within Sochinsky National Park, including three within the protected zone of the World Heritage Site. Nevertheless, the project was successful in engaging a wide circle of local citizens, NGOs, mass media and other public organizations in a vigorous campaign. This coalition found expression in a joint statement by 47 organizations to the International Olympic Committee, headed “No to the Olympic Games at the cost of nature destruction and Sochi dwellers’ rights violation”. The project was also successful at informing the Russian and international public about the dangers to biodiversity arising from planned infrastructure developments associated with the Olympics.

CEPF provided significant support to improve the implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) related to biodiversity, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar), and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and its agreements. CEPF investment helped facilitate quite remarkable cooperation among key stakeholders, including the relevant ministries, local governments and NGOs, with regard to implementation of biodiversity-related MEAs, particularly in Azerbaijan and Georgia.

With specific regard to the CBD, CEPF investment significantly addressed gaps and weaknesses in the protected area systems of Caucasian countries and, thereby, helped their governments to implement the CBD Program of Work on Protected Areas, in force since 2004. In addition, the regional plant red-listing project led by IUCN made a significant contribution to the CBD Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, in force since 2002, particularly Target 2, which requires plant Red List assessments at national, regional and global levels by 2010.

CEPF supported a review of the implementation of biodiversity-related MEAs in Azerbaijan, which covered both the relevant national legislation and civil society’s involvement in decisionmaking processes. Based on this review, concrete recommendations on perfecting national legislation to ensure harmonization with MEAs were provided to the government. A database of biodiversity-related legislation was created and 500 copies were distributed to key stakeholders. Additionally, a user guide, with concrete recommendations on how to improve implementation and reporting of biodiversity-related MEAs, was prepared and 400 copies were distributed to governmental officials. Also, 30 governmental officials were trained in the implementation of biodiversity-related MEAs. At a national workshop, specific proposals for improving national legislation related to biodiversity were formulated and presented to representatives of responsible institutions, including the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Justice and the Parliament Commission on Environmental Issues.

Also in Azerbaijan, CEPF supported specific steps to enhance CITES implementation on the ground. A national-language guidebook on CITES-listed species was prepared, published and

communicated to all customs services and the central administration. In parallel, around 200 customs officers were trained in CITES implementation. Based on the success of the project, the National Customs Committee decided to publish the CITES guidebook in a large format and disseminate it to all customs services.

In Georgia, different approaches were used to promote enhanced implementation of biodiversity-related MEAs. A practical dialogue was initiated between the central and regional bodies of the Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources and representatives of governmental and nongovernmental bodies at the local level, in order to help Georgia meet its obligations under MEAs and ensure the participation of local stakeholders in the implementation process. As part of this initiative, recommendations and a plan for improving MEA implementation at the local level were developed and submitted to the Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources. More than 150 people from central and local government agencies and the NGO sector were trained in obligations and requirements of the biodiversity-related MEAs. Local decisionmakers from seven regions took part in the training, a critical step from the viewpoint of biodiversity conservation. An illustrated brochure, “Review and Texts of International Conventions and Agreements Ratified by Georgia in the Field of Biodiversity,” was developed, 500 copies were printed, and the brochure’s availability was communicated to key stakeholders. It included both the original texts and simple explanations of CBD, CITES, Ramsar and CMS (and its various agreements).

Concrete steps were also taken to enhance CITES and Ramsar implementation on the ground in Georgia. A review of national legislation related to CITES and Ramsar was undertaken and, based on this, recommendations for improving this legislation were elaborated and submitted to the Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources. A Georgian-language guidebook, containing a CD database on CITES-listed species, was published and 200 copies were distributed to all customs services and the central administration. Also, around 80 customs officers received training in CITES issues. According to the requirement of the Ramsar Convention, a Ramsar National Committee was established by decree of the Minister of Environment Protection and Natural Resources.

CEPF supported the direct involvement of local civil society groups in the implementation of MEAs and encouraged on-the-ground biodiversity conservation in the Georgian parts of the Greater Caucasus and West Lesser Caucasus Corridors. This was achieved through strengthening the local civil society sector and facilitating its involvement in mitigating and monitoring the impacts of development projects in selected corridors. To this end, a network of local support groups was successfully developed through building the capacities of selected NGOs by means of technical support and trainings as well as direct financial support. These groups were then involved in monitoring of local development projects with potential impacts on biodiversity.

Civil Society Capacity Building and Involvement

Throughout the investment period, CEPF invested in building the capacity of individual civil society organizations, strengthening networking among them, and assisting them to engage in national and regional policy processes. CEPF investment strengthened civil society and forged new partnerships among local community watch groups, NGOs, local media and government agencies, resulting in more efficient actions.

Via a small grant, CEPF assisted civil society in the southern Caucasus region to engage in the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) process. The ENP offers the prospect of an increasingly close relationship with the EU, involving a significant degree of economic integration and a deepening of political cooperation. Taking into account the complex character of existing

transnational political, social, economic and environmental problems, NGOs active in the entire southern Caucasus region agreed on the need for a Regional NGO Platform to promote formulation of a regional vision on ENP implementation with regard to environmental and sustainable development issues. Through the Regional NGO Platform, recommendations were elaborated and adopted on regional priorities and actions for inclusion into the National ENP Action Plans of the southern Caucasus countries.

As a follow-up to the aforementioned initiative, CEPF invested in civil society capacity building for participation in and monitoring of large development projects in Armenia and Azerbaijan, which are currently being developed within the framework of the ENP and other initiatives. Many of these development projects and processes do, however, incorporate sustainable development and environmental protection within their objectives. CEPF investment helped promote transparent processes, through which civil society could advocate for stability, nature protection and sustainable use of natural resources. This was achieved by: (i) raising the awareness of environmental NGOs about planned development projects and identifying opportunities for civil society involvement; (ii) establishing an NGO monitoring and assessment network and initiating monitoring; (iii) facilitating partnership and dialogue among NGOs, decisionmakers and the private sector with regard to large development projects; and (iv) formulating recommendations on how to “green” the development process. Around 40 NGOs were involved in this process, with around 50 persons receiving training.

In the Armenian part of the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor, CEPF supported the development of the EcoLur Network, which operates an online information exchange (www.ecolur.org). Key environmental information, including topical issues, is made available on this Web site for all stakeholders. The Web site has become recognized as a key tool for information sharing, communication to key stakeholders, and engagement of civil society in hot environmental issues to advocate for transparent environmental decisionmaking. Existing strong partnerships helped to coordinate an effective civil society campaign against forest destruction in the Lori Region of Armenia, which resulted in a reduction in illegal activities and more effective enforcement of forest management regulations.

Public Awareness Raising

Under Strategic Direction 4, CEPF invested in public-awareness-raising activities, with a principal focus on Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey. These activities contributed significantly to increased awareness and understanding among local populations of environmental protection and the value of biodiversity.

In Armenia, CEPF supported efforts to identify and maintain a network of decision-makers, protected area administrations, hunters, local authorities, NGOs and local residents committed to biodiversity preservation, and make them aware of the threats faced by local biodiversity. Special emphasis was placed on raising awareness about Armenian mouflon and wild (bezoar) goat, aimed at encouraging measures to fight poaching, stem the uncontrolled spread of infrastructure and decrease grazing in the species' habitats. Around 40 communities adjacent to the key habitats of these species were reached, more than 15 national and local NGOs actively cooperated in disseminating awareness materials and delivering trainings, and 12 journalists from print, electronic and broadcast media covered the various activities.

The range of public-awareness-raising activities in Armenia was very broad. Two films on Armenia's biodiversity and protected areas were produced and broadcast by major TV channels. One environmental clip was prepared and aired by a major TV channel. A booklet on the conservation of Armenian mouflon and wild (bezoar) goat, a guidebook on Armenia's

biodiversity, and other communication materials were published and distributed in three target areas. Four billboards were erected along Yerevan's major streets for six months. A competition among journalists on biodiversity topics was held. A book-album and a documentary titled "Escaping in the Mountains: Armenian Mouflon and Bezoar Goat" were produced. Environmental centers were established in six schools in communities adjacent to Shikahogh and Khosrov Nature Reserves, as a focus for environmental education among pupils and the wider community.

CEPF supported a similarly impressive range of public-awareness-raising activities in Azerbaijan. A coordinated series of activities with the slogan "picture your nature," including a mobile photo exhibition, were organized in Baku, Sumgait, Sheki, Mingechauri and Astara. These activities attracted a lot of attention from the government, students and civil society. A documentary about the nature of Azerbaijan and threatened species was prepared and broadcast by the private nationwide channel, Khazar TV. Four press trips were organized with the participation of journalists from 12 nationwide newspapers. These trips covered the Greater Caucasus, East Lesser Caucasus, Caspian and Hyrcan corridors, and resulted in around 50 articles being published in different newspapers and electronic mass media. These articles were discussed widely in Azeri society and some received awards.

CEPF also supported a range of public-awareness-raising activities in Georgia. "Beautiful Georgia," a Georgian-language periodical magazine covering environmental issues, was launched. The Georgian Red List of threatened species was promoted through creation of a Web site (www.red-list.ge). A documentary, "The Return of the Bezoar Goat," was produced and distributed, as was a bilingual Georgian-English book titled "Caucasus: Treasure of Nature." A wide range of mass-media features on environmental issues was supported, including 12 articles, 38 digests, four radio programs and five types of public service announcements (four on radio and one on TV). CEPF also supported nine roundtables, three photo exhibitions and the production and distribution of promotion materials, including calendars, postcards, T-shirts, stickers and posters.

Public-awareness-raising activities in Turkey included production of a documentary on the biodiversity of the Turkish part of the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor. In addition, more than 6,000 copies of different publications on biodiversity conservation were produced with support from CEPF, and CEPF-supported initiatives generated more than 50 articles and TV and radio broadcasts. Finally, CEPF supported a number of conferences, meetings, festivals and symposiums on environmental protection issues.

Training of Journalists

CEPF supported an initiative in Georgia, aimed at fostering cooperation between journalists and local government representatives for the conservation of biodiversity. This project created local journalists' networks in two regions of Georgia, and trained around 70 journalists and local decisionmakers on environmental issues and the value of biodiversity.

Also in Armenia, a network of eco-journalists was created. Special media tours for journalists were arranged to so-called "hotspots" where pressing environmental problems exist. Relevant government and NGO stakeholders and independent experts were involved in these tours as well. Following the media tours, a publication, "Hotspots through Journalists' Eyes," was produced, to bring their findings to a wider audience. Through this project, local journalists gained experience writing on environmental problems, and local communities and journalists became more active and more involved in decisionmaking about environmental problems. The project also contributed significantly to building partnerships between journalists and decisionmakers.

In Azerbaijan, around 120 students from the journalism faculties of Baku State University and Azerbaijan International University were trained in writing about environmental issues.

In Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, information and expert support was provided to journalists interested in development of environmental stories. Their stories were then communicated to decisionmakers via the media and the Regional Environment Centre for the Caucasus mailing list. The project carried out 11 trainings for a total of 120 local journalists, 40 local decisionmakers and 45 NGO representatives. Two transboundary media tours (Armenia-Georgia and Azerbaijan-Georgia) were organized and 10 stories on the importance of transboundary cooperation on environmental issues were developed. In all, 70 site-oriented journalistic investigations were carried out, 35 newspaper articles were published and 12 radio programs were broadcast. CEPF support enabled the strengthened regional network to grow, and it now consists of 76 environmental journalists.

CEPF also supported the International Center for Journalists (ICFJ) to train journalists in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Russia in environmental journalism techniques. Around 100 journalists attended the trainings organized by the project, which included field trips to practice reporting from the field. In 2007, 2008 and 2009, ICFJ organized a Biodiversity Reporting Award for the Caucasus. The winners and their stories were announced on Conservation International's Biodiversity Awards Web site (<http://www.biodiversityreporting.org>).

LESSONS LEARNED

The following section briefly outlines the key lessons learned from the implementation of the CEPF program in the Caucasus Hotspot:

- There were a number of challenges encountered during the CEPF investment period, most of which are common to hotspot-wide conservation programs in areas with great geographic, cultural and biological diversity. Principal among these challenges were the needs to: (i) work in countries with different cultures; (ii) engage various groups of stakeholders in biodiversity conservation; (iii) address several thematic work areas simultaneously; (iv) overcome capacity limitations among local civil society groups; and (v) build partnerships and cooperation among different stakeholders at both national and regional levels to ensure tangible impacts on the ground.
- It is useful to maintain very close coordination with grantees and partners at all stages of project development and implementation.
- Implementation of innovative and complex approaches requires considerable time and patience because it is necessary to ensure that key partners and stakeholders properly understand the concept and convince them to implement it with their own efforts and resources. Only through the joint efforts and partnership of several organizations can some outcomes be achieved.
- Establishing partnerships among governmental, nongovernmental and academic organizations can be an effective means of delivering conservation impacts, by bringing together various skills and facilitating experience sharing. Strong partnerships among civil society organizations can also be an effective way of eliciting changes in government policies and actions.

- Where project implementation involves more than one organization, it is important to ensure close collaboration among project partners from the earliest stage of project design in order to ensure successful and smooth implementation. Also, ensuring that the right organizations are involved in the partnership is as important as ensuring their involvement from the beginning of the project planning process.
- Income-generating activities for local communities can be a very effective means of generating support for project implementation and improving relations between them and protected area administrations. CEPF has supported some efforts to provide alternative resources to reduce illegal natural resource use and contribute to poverty alleviation. However, there is still a need for more innovative and effective approaches to be developed that offer better alternative livelihood practices that are more beneficial to local communities than existing ones.
- Conservation issues are often quite low on the agenda of local people and authorities, and it can be difficult to recruit conservation volunteers because of the socioeconomic situation and the lack of a culture of volunteerism.
- Effective communication of biodiversity-related issues, through various forms of mass media and with different techniques, is essential to reach politicians, business sector representatives and the general public, in order to: (i) raise their awareness of these issues; (ii) engage them in the conservation process; and (iii) place on their agenda environmental problems requiring urgent solutions.
- Local knowledge is fundamental to identifying threats, their driving forces and solutions. In particular, local hunters are an important source of knowledge about local biodiversity. The confrontational "conservationists-versus-hunters" dynamic encountered in other regions of the world is not apparent yet.
- Sometimes the conditions encountered during project implementation differ from those prevailing at the time the project was designed. Careful attention needs to be given to project planning, especially for long and complex actions. However, an adaptive management approach is the best solution for overcoming problems and obstacles that may arise during project implementation. As an aspect of this, flexible financial planning is helpful in order to be able to respond to unexpected impacts arising from changes in prices or exchange rates.
- The sustainability of many of CEPF's impacts in the region is dependent upon long-term commitments by government. It is essential, therefore, to raise awareness and build support among key decisionmakers throughout implementation. Involvement of central and local governmental officials in project activities on the ground is an effective way of increasing their commitment and ensuring that conservation actions have concrete impacts. Any initiative related to protected area system development needs to be implemented in close cooperation with the government, and allowances should be made for the unpredictability of the time required for official adoption of the relevant documents.

CONCLUSION

CEPF investment in the Caucasus Hotspot was a unique and valuable opportunity for the region to strengthen and coordinate transboundary cooperation and initiate new regional interactions for biodiversity conservation. The ecosystem profile and the planning process significantly enhanced the impact of CEPF investment in the Caucasus by establishing a clear vision and priority

directions based on the experience of a wide range of stakeholders. In particular, the corridor approach provided unprecedented opportunities for promoting regional and transboundary partnership, because each priority corridor extends across multiple countries.

The role and strong capacity represented by the Coordination Unit was another crucial element for the successful implementation of the CEPF program. The Coordination Unit allowed CEPF funding to reach civil society organizations from the grassroots to the international level, and significantly increased their capacity to contribute to conservation. Around 90 organizations were involved in the implementation of the CEPF program, of which more than 75 local organizations received grants. In most cases, local organizations received training in proposal writing, reporting and project management.

CEPF invested heavily in the protected area system of the Caucasus, on which other conservation efforts are anchored. CEPF investment contributed to system-level planning, expansion and creation of new protected areas, strengthening of management in existing protected areas, and development of sustainable financing mechanisms. All of these grants featured an awareness-raising component and adopted participatory approaches.

Of the 50 priority species identified in the ecosystem profile, 94 percent were targeted by CEPF-funded projects including: (i) field studies and population status assessments; (ii) global and national Red List assessments of poorly represented taxa; (iii) creation of databases and population of those databases with newly available data; (iv) formulation of regional and national species conservation action plans; (v) involvement of local people in species conservation projects, through creation of volunteer and caretaker networks; (vi) consultations with key stakeholders, including representatives from government, NGOs and academia, to promote recommendations; and (vii) regional and transboundary cooperation.

The CEPF portfolio included several grants to civil society organizations in support of their efforts to advocate for policy improvements with regard to biodiversity conservation, and provided significant support to improve the implementation of MEAs related to biodiversity. CEPF also invested widely in raising public environmental awareness, with a special focus on biodiversity values and conservation issues, through applying different communications techniques. More than 200 journalists and 120 journalism students were trained in environmental and biodiversity conservation issues, communication techniques and reporting from the field.

Other achievements of CEPF included developing alternative livelihoods for local communities at priority sites, and promoting sustainable natural resource use within priority corridors. Finally, CEPF played a crucial role in building partnerships between the governmental and nongovernmental sectors, as well as with mass media at both national and regional levels.

CEPF 5-YEAR LOGICAL FRAMEWORK REPORTING

| LONG-TERM GOAL STATEMENT | TARGETED CONSERVATION OUTCOMES | RESULTS |
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| Improve or stabilize the conservation status of species and ultimately avoid extinctions through the conservation and improved management of key sites and corridors. | 1. 113 sites targeted | By and large, the CEPF grant portfolio addressed the conservation of almost all priority sites through different initiatives. The exceptions were: (i) six priority sites in the Iranian part of the Hyrcan Corridor; and (ii) five priority sites located in the Georgian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor but not currently under the control of the Georgian government due to existing political tension. |
| | 2. Five corridors covering 14.2 million hectares: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater Caucasus - Caspian - West Lesser Caucasus - East Lesser Caucasus - Hyrcan | <p>Large investments were made in the West Lesser Caucasus, East Lesser Caucasus and Greater Caucasus Corridors, with considerably smaller investments in the Caspian and Hyrcan corridors. As for multi-corridor projects, generally they covered all five priority corridors, but there was a skew towards the Greater Caucasus, West Lesser Caucasus and East Lesser Caucasus corridors.</p> <p>In these three corridors, the thematic priorities articulated in the ecosystem profile were much more comprehensively addressed by the CEPF grant portfolio. Each of these three corridors witnessed parallel CEPF projects addressing: (i) species conservation; (ii) establishment of new protected areas and/or expansion of existing ones; (iii) strengthening of protected area management; (iv) formulation of biodiversity policy and implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs); (v) development of models for sustainable forestry; (vi) development of alternative livelihoods for local communities; (vii) increasing awareness and commitment of decisionmakers on the value of biodiversity and the need for conservation; and (viii) capacity building for environmental journalists. Such a multi-thematic approach proved very effective at delivering a general improvement in biodiversity conservation at the corridor scale, and was made possible by the work of the Coordination Unit to deliver the vision set out in the ecosystem profile.</p> |
| | 3. 50 Globally threatened species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 18 mammals - 11 birds - 10 reptiles - 3 amphibians | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mammals: Common otter, wild (bezoar) goat, West Caucasian tur, East Caucasian tur, Armenian mouflon, Dahl's jird, giant mole rat and seven species of bat were directly addressed by CEPF projects. The current population status of each species was evaluated, and 14 conservation action plans were developed at national and regional levels. These action plans |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7 fishes - 1 plant | <p>were submitted to the relevant governmental bodies for further consideration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Birds: Conservation action was taken for 31 CEPF priority sites, containing 32 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey. Regional Species Action Plans for seven priority bird species were developed: imperial eagle and lesser kestrel were covered by individual documents, while Dalmatian pelican, lesser white-fronted goose, red-breasted goose, marbled duck and white-headed duck were covered by a joint plan. Through a grant to WWF-Russia, all 29 IBAs in the Russian parts of the Greater Caucasus and Caspian Corridors were covered by 42 caretakers, new data on 14 priority bird species were obtained and conservation action plans for these species were developed. ➤ Reptiles: The global conservation status of all reptiles in the Caucasus was assessed by IUCN. Conservation action plans for common tortoise were developed in Georgia and Russia. Also, the current status of Caucasian viper and Dinnik's viper was investigated in Georgia, Russia and Turkey, and both species were included on the regional Red List of Krasnodar Region, Russia. ➤ Amphibians: Amphibians on the IUCN Red List for the Caucasus were re-assessed. In Azerbaijan, the current status of two amphibians, Caucasian toad and Caucasian parsley frog, was assessed and a national conservation action plan covering both species was developed. The status of Caucasian salamander in the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor, spanning Georgia and Turkey, was investigated and a conservation action plan was developed. ➤ Fish: The status of all six sturgeon species found in the Georgian part of the Black Sea was evaluated and a conservation action plan was prepared. ➤ Plants: A comprehensive list of Caucasian endemic plant species, subspecies and varieties, comprising 2,800 taxa, was compiled. Of these, 1,100 taxa were assessed according to the IUCN Red List categories and criteria, of which around 600 taxa (mostly ones with very restricted distributions) were assessed as globally threatened. In the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor, a more focused survey of endemic plant species of |
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| | | the Adjara-Shavsheti transboundary floristic region was carried out, resulting in the global threat status of 48 endemic species being assessed according to the IUCN criteria. |
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| CEPF PURPOSE | IMPACT INDICATORS | RESULTS |
| CEPF will further biodiversity conservation, in particular, through increasing transboundary cooperation, strengthening existing protected areas systems, strengthening mechanisms for biodiversity conservation, promoting sustainable resource use, and increasing awareness and commitment of decisionmakers for biodiversity conservation in the region. | <p>a. Protected area network strengthened and management plans developed.</p> | <p>Creation and Expansion of Protected Areas Through creation of new protected areas and expansion of existing ones, protection was extended to 83,093 hectares.</p> <p>Two new protected were established in the Armenian part of the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor: Arevik National Park (34,402 hectares); and Zangezur Sanctuary (17,369 hectares).</p> <p>Shikahogh Nature Reserve in the Armenian part of the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor was enlarged by 2,000 hectares and approved by the government.</p> <p>Erzi Nature Reserve in the Russian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor was expanded by 29,322 hectares.</p> <p>A management guide for the creation of Mezmay Nature Park (20,000 hectares) in the Russian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor and a management guide for the creation of Khevsureti Protected Area (50,000 hectares) in the Georgian part of this corridor were developed to further protected area establishment on the ground.</p> <p>In the Georgian part of the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor, a spatial planning document was prepared and approved for the Natural Landscape Territory of Mtirala and Machakhela, which creates a foundation for the future establishment of a buffer zone for Mtirala National Park (10,202 hectares) and Machakhela Protected Landscape (12,739 hectares).</p> <p>The inclusion of three caves (Gogoleti, Sakishore and Kidobana in Ambrolauri district, Racha region) in the Georgian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor in the protected area system of the Central Caucasus was justified and initiated. The management guide and a draft law on establishment of the protected area system in the Central Caucasus have been submitted to the government for approval.</p> |

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| | | <p>Improved Management of Protected Areas</p> <p>CEPF contributed to improving the management of more than 17 protected areas, with a total area of more than 1,230,033 hectares, through development of management plans, improving infrastructure and technical resources, and training of protected area staff.</p> <p>A management plan was developed for Posof Wildlife Reserve (59,589 hectares) in the Turkish part of the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor and adopted by the government.</p> <p>The management and protection regime of Khosrov (29,196 hectares) and Shikahogh (12,000 hectares) nature reserves in the Armenian part of the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor were improved, and draft concepts of management plans were developed for further approval by the government.</p> <p>In the Russian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor, a management plan for Kavkazsky Nature Reserve (330,000 hectares) was approved by the Ministry of Natural Resources and this protected area was proposed to UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The management plan for Chernogorie Sanctuary (4,400 hectares) was developed and submitted to the relevant governmental body for further approval.</p> <p>In Azerbaijan, the management and protection regimes for Absheron National Park (783 hectares) in the Caspian Corridor and Zakatala Strict Nature Reserve (47,349 hectares) in the Greater Caucasus Corridor were improved. A management plan for Absheron National Park was elaborated for further approval by the government.</p> <p>Management plans were developed for four wetlands, comprising Gull Islets and Lake Lichk within Armenia's Sevan National Park (150,100 hectares), and Lake Paliastomi in Kolkheti National Park (45,446 hectares) and Hispani 2 Mire in Kobuleti Nature Reserve (331 hectares) in Georgia.</p> <p>In the Caspian Corridor, the development of tourism facilities for Azerbaijan's Shirvan National Park (54,373 hectares) was supported.</p> <p>In the Russian part of the Greater Caucasus Corridor, an</p> |
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| | | <p>assessment of natural resources values and ecosystem services was carried out for Sochinsky National Park (193,737 hectares), and specific recommendations were formulated to improve the management of this protected area.</p> <p>Also in Russia, training was provided to around 30 rangers from seven federal-level protected areas: Kavkazsky (330,000 hectares), Erzi (35,292 hectares), Kabardino-Balkarskii (82,507 hectares) and Severo-Osetinsky (29,530 hectares) nature reserves; and Sochinsky (193,737 hectares), Prielbruskiye (100,400 hectares) and Alania (55,000 hectares) national parks.</p> |
| | b. Transboundary cooperation improved. | <p>CEPF significantly contributed to strengthening transboundary cooperation for site conservation between Georgia and Turkey through a number of grants that covered bilateral meetings between representatives of government, NGOs and academia, and creation of joint working groups, joint training courses and exchange programs.</p> <p>Transboundary projects also undertook: (i) an analysis of the socioeconomic, demographic and geo-ecological characteristics of the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor as a basis for protected area system planning and development; (ii) a study of endemic plant species in the Adjara-Shavsheti transboundary floristic region; and (iii) an assessment of the current status of Caucasian salamander.</p> |
| | c. Alternative income generation and sustainable resource use projects implemented in local communities. | <p>CEPF invested significantly in developing alternative livelihoods and sustainable resource use approaches for local communities in all five priority corridors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Greater Caucasus Corridor: In Georgia, a honey-production farm was created in Kvareli district: 100 bee colonies were purchased, new equipment and materials were obtained, and the product was licensed and marketed. Also, an ecotourism camp was built and equipped and two visitor trails were created in Stepantsminda district, which is a very attractive area for tourism development. The camp is managed by a local village and all 14 families benefit from the revenue generated by ecotourism. In Azerbaijan, 50 selective-tribal bee colonies were purchased and a producers' cooperative was legally established in Zakatala region. In addition, around 20 representatives from four local communities were trained in the creation of selective-tribal bee colonies, and 32 locals were trained in beekeeping. A Sustainable Hunting Area also was established in the Gabala-Ismaili area, focused on wild boar and roe deer hunting. At present, around 10 locals regularly |

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| | | <p>benefit from this initiative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Caspian Corridor: In Azerbaijan, a model goose and duck farm was created and a producers' cooperative was established in Masally district. The three local families involved in this cooperative gain a regular income from this farm. ➤ West Lesser Caucasus Corridor: In the Turkish part of the West Lesser Caucasus, an Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) Plan for the Firtina Valley, which covers an area of 80,000 hectares including Kackar Mountains National Park, was developed and endorsed by the Firtina IRBM Council and the local government. ➤ East Lesser Caucasus Corridor: In Armenia, five communities living around one existing protected area (Shikahogh Nature Reserve) and two proposed protected areas (Arevik National Park and Zangezur Sanctuary) were introduced to alternative income-generating activities, including: (i) improved agricultural techniques; (ii) beekeeping, (iii) apple and pomegranate orchards; and (iv) rabbit, goat and sheep farms. In Azerbaijan, local communities around Ordubad Sanctuary established and equipped a producers' cooperative for collecting and processing medicinal plants, and also initiated artificial propagation of medicinal plants. ➤ Hyrcan Corridor: In Azerbaijan, several alternative livelihood initiatives were supported. In Leriski district, a quail farm was established, generating a regular alternative income for two families. Also, around 20 local community members were trained as future ecotourism guides and explored new ways of generating alternative income by working as guides at protected areas in the corridor. |
| | <p>d. Training and technical support provided to civil society and conservation agencies.</p> | <p>In Armenia, 30 representatives from the government and nongovernmental sectors received training in sustainable forest management, and 30 local community members received training in sustainable range management.</p> <p>In Azerbaijan: (i) 30 government officials were trained in the implementation of biodiversity-related MEA; (ii) around 200 customs officers were trained in CITES issues; (iii) around 20 representatives of local communities were trained in the creation of selective-tribal bee colonies; (iv) around 80 beekeepers and interested persons received training in beekeeping techniques, as</p> |

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| | | <p>well as environmental protection and biodiversity conservation issues; (iv) around 80 representatives from NGOs, government agencies and local communities were trained in ecotourism development; and (v) around 20 local community members were trained as future ecotourism guides.</p> <p>In Georgia: (i) around 60 volunteers, mainly students, working on a sturgeon project were trained and actively involved in project implementation, while around 40 government officials were trained in monitoring and halting poaching of sturgeons as well as on law enforcement issues; (ii) more than 150 people from central and local government agencies and NGOs were trained in the obligations and requirements of biodiversity-related MEAs; and (iii) around 80 customs officers received training in CITES issues.</p> <p>In Russia, around 50 IBA caretakers from the Greater Caucasus and Caspian Corridors were trained in priority bird species, threats to IBAs, IBA monitoring and conservation issues.</p> <p>In Turkey: (i) 42 forest managers, responsible for a combined area of 949,730 hectares in Giresun and Trabzon forest districts, received a week-long training program in sustainable forestry, biodiversity assessment and monitoring; (ii) around 50 stakeholders from the government and nongovernmental sectors and local communities were trained in the Firtina Valley IRBM plan and its future implementation; (iii) more than 65 stakeholders were trained in EU nature conservation, project cycle management or networking/communication; and (iv) 31 stakeholders participated in two nature school trainings on KBAs, of whom 16 are now employed in the conservation sector.</p> <p>Across the hotspot, more than 200 journalists and (in the case of Azerbaijan) 120 journalism students were trained in environmental and biodiversity conservation issues, communication and writing techniques, and reporting from the field. Also, around 40 local decisionmakers and 45 NGO representatives were trained in environmental and biodiversity conservation issues. In addition, around 24 volunteers and students from the Caucasus countries were trained in survey and monitoring methodologies for bat species.</p> <p>Staff members of BirdLife International's national partner NGOs were trained in project management, fundraising, integrating conservation and development, site management, and monitoring. IBA caretakers in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey</p> |
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| | | <p>received training in baseline surveys, biodiversity conservation and monitoring, and were involved in various fieldwork and educational activities, particularly in schools.</p> |
| | <p>e. International conventions on biodiversity and the IUCN Red List updated and enforced.</p> | <p>CEPF provided significant support to improve the implementation of MEAs related to biodiversity (i.e. the CBD, CITES, Ramsar, and the CMS and its agreements). This included support for: (i) review of the relevant national legislation and preparation of recommendations for its perfection and harmonization; (ii) development of concrete proposals for improving the national legislation and submission to the relevant governmental institutions; (iii) training of central and local governmental officials in the implementation of biodiversity-related MEAs; and (iv) publication of the relevant publications and manuals for government officials.</p> <p>All mammals occurring in the Caucasus were assessed against the IUCN Red List criteria.</p> <p>The national conservation status and regional Red List status of bat species in the Caucasus were re-evaluated according to the IUCN criteria.</p> <p>Amphibians and reptiles on the IUCN Red List for the Caucasus Hotspot were re-assessed according to the IUCN categories and criteria. As part of this work, all supporting materials necessary to justify global threat assessments were prepared for 45 amphibian and reptile species. This regional initiative was complemented by a project to reassess the status of amphibians and reptiles in Armenia, which aimed to update the national and IUCN Red Lists. As a result, two amphibians and 19 reptiles were assessed as being threatened and in need of inclusion on both the national and IUCN Red Lists.</p> <p>A national database of invertebrates containing 650 species was created for Armenia, which contains part of the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor. Ten of these species were proposed for inclusion on the IUCN Red List: eight as Critically Endangered and two as extinct.</p> <p>A comprehensive list of Caucasian endemic plant species, subspecies and varieties, comprising 2,800 taxa, was compiled. Of these, 1,100 taxa were assessed according to the IUCN Red List categories and criteria, of which around 600 taxa (mostly ones with very restricted distributions) were assessed as globally threatened.</p> |

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| | | <p>In the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor, in the Adjara-Shavsheti transboundary floristic region, the global threat status of 48 endemic plant species was assessed according to the IUCN Red List criteria, and recommendations for in-situ conservation and further update of the national Red Lists of Georgia and Turkey were formulated.</p> |
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APPENDICES

- A. List of CEPF Approved Grants
- B. List of Grants Made Under the CEPF/WWF Small Grants Program
- C. Leveraging Data for the Caucasus
- D. Reporting Against Standard World Bank Biodiversity Indicators

Appendix A: List of CEPF Approved Grants

Strategic Direction 1: Support civil society efforts to promote transboundary cooperation and improve protected area systems in five target corridors

Assistance to Establishment of New Protected Area Zangezur in Southern Armenia

Enhance the ability of civil society to partner with the government of Armenia in expanding an effective network of protected areas in the East Lesser Caucasus biodiversity conservation corridor. The organization, Khustup, will work closely with government to create a new specially protected natural area, Zangezur.

Funding: \$174,769

Grant Term: 3/1/06 to 9/30/09

Grantee: Khustup Nature Protection NGO

Assistance to Establishment of New Specially Protected Natural Area, Arevik, in Southern Armenia

Assist the government of Armenia in establishing a new protected area, Arevik, in Southern Armenia. The project site is located in an area of importance for corridor-wide conservation adjacent to the Shikahogh State Reserve and will complement recent CEPF and WWF investments to maintain the integrity of this critical area.

Funding: \$156,237

Grant Term: 12/1/05 to 9/30/09

Grantee: Ecotourism Association Public Organization

Attending the Regional Stakeholder Meeting and Planning Workshop for the Project: Development of an IBA Caretaker Network in the Five Priority Corridors

Provide support for a staff member from the Center for Applied Biodiversity Science at Conservation International to attend a regional stakeholders' workshop organized by WWF Caucasus to launch CEPF investment in the Caucasus Hotspot and a second workshop organized by BirdLife International to develop an Important Bird Area Caretaker Network in the hotspot. Staff will assist participants in developing clear objectives and setting priorities during both workshops to be held in June in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Funding: \$4,586

Grant Term: 5/21/04 to 6/1/04

Grantee: Conservation International

Building Capacity to Strengthen Conservation Alliances through CEPF Coordination and Grantmaking in the Caucasus

As the CEPF coordination mechanism for the Caucasus Hotspot, build civil society capacity to effectively engage in conserving the region's globally threatened species and unique biodiversity. Activities include raising awareness about the CEPF opportunity in the region, helping develop and assess grant proposals, directly managing a small grants program, communicating lessons learned, monitoring and evaluating the investment portfolio, and leveraging additional funding to ensure sustainability.

Funding: \$2,920,000

Grant Term: 7/1/04 to 6/30/09

Grantee: World Wide Fund for Nature

Under this project, a total of \$1.36 million was disbursed to civil society groups in the form of 86 small grants directly managed by the WWF Caucasus Programme Office in close cooperation with CEPF. A full list of these grants is given in Appendix B.

Creation of the System of Protected Areas of the North Caucasus (Green Corridor of the North Caucasus)

Create a green corridor stretching nearly 1,500 kilometers from the Black to the Caspian seas along the Great Caucasus Range — the backbone of the Caucasus Mountains. The green corridor will incorporate protected areas, flora and fauna migration routes, corridors, stepping stones and multiple-use areas into a continuous and efficiently managed system.

Funding: \$138,542

Grant Term: 1/1/06 to 6/30/07

Grantee: World Wide Fund for Nature - Russia

Creation of the System of Protected Areas of the North Caucasus (Green Corridor of the North Caucasus) — Phase II

Create a green corridor stretching nearly 1,500 kilometers from the Black to the Caspian seas along the Great Caucasus Range — the backbone of the Caucasus Mountains. The green corridor will incorporate protected areas, flora and fauna migration routes, corridors, stepping stones, and multiple-use areas into a continuous and efficiently managed system.

Funding: \$125,948

Grant Term: 2/1/08 to 6/30/09

Grantee: Vsemirnyi Fond Prirody

This grant is a continuation of the above project, implemented by WWF-Russia.

Development of Ecotourism Infrastructure in the Shirvan and Hyrcan National Parks of Azerbaijan

Support the development of tourism infrastructure in Shirvan and Hyrcan national parks, which are easily accessible and increasingly visited by tourists. Both protect several CEPF priority species in the Caspian and Hyrcan biodiversity conservation corridors. The grantee will work with the local population to establish alternative livelihoods to help counteract the poverty that threatens the local biodiversity.

Funding: \$250,000

Grant Term: 6/1/08 to 6/30/09

Grantee: World Wide Fund for Nature Caucasus Programme Office

Development of the Econet Scheme of the North Caucasus on the Base of Analysis of Satellite Images and Topographical Maps

Enhance the ability of civil society to influence the process of land-use planning in the Russian portion of the Greater Caucasus Corridor through development of an Econet plan — a high-resolution, landscape-scale conservation planning framework.

Funding: \$70,000

Grant Term: 4/1/06 to 6/30/07

Grantee: World Wide Fund for Nature - Russia

Development of the Econet Scheme of the North Caucasus on the Base of Analysis of Satellite Images and Topographical Maps — Phase II

Enhance the ability of civil society to influence the process of land-use planning in the Russian portion of the Greater Caucasus Corridor through development of an Econet plan — a high-resolution, landscape-scale conservation planning framework.

Funding: \$28,194

Grant Term: 2/1/08 to 6/30/09

Grantee: Vsemirnyi Fond Prirody

This grant is a continuation of the above project, implemented by WWF-Russia.

Enhancing Conservation in the West Lesser Caucasus through Transboundary Cooperation and Establishing a Training Program on KBA Conservation

Promote transboundary cooperation between Turkey and Georgia by carrying out joint initiatives that support the conservation of the West Lesser Caucasus biodiversity conservation corridor by implementing strategies relevant to priority species and site outcomes and organizing exchanges across the project sites and key experts in biodiversity conservation.

Funding: \$254,705

Grant Term: 7/1/06 to 12/31/08

Grantee: Doğa Derneği

Planning Workshop for the Project: Development of an Important Bird Area Caretaker Network in the Five Priority Corridors

Enhance participatory development in a larger grant proposal through an international workshop in Tbilisi, Georgia. Through this forum the existence of a network of like-minded organizations associated with BirdLife in five countries — Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Russia and Turkey — will provide a unique opportunity to increase civil society support to the 45 sites identified for birds in the priority corridors of the Caucasus biodiversity hotspot.

Funding: \$4,652

Grant Term: 5/15/04 to 6/15/04

Grantee: BirdLife International

Supporting the Institutional Development of the Caucasus Protected Areas Fund

Support the institutional development and start-up costs of the Caucasus Protected Areas Fund to provide long-term financial sustainability for priority protected areas in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Establishment of the fund has been made possible through a partnership of Conservation International, the German Ministry of Economic Development and Cooperation through the German International Development Bank, and World Wide Fund for Nature.

Funding: \$500,000

Grant Term: 1/1/08 to 9/30/09

Grantee: Caucasus Protected Areas Fund

Wetland Management Training Course for the Staff of Sevan National Park (Armenia) and Kolkheti National Park (Georgia)

Increase the capacity of the staff of Lake Sevan and Kolkheti national parks and improve the management of the protected areas (inventory and monitoring). The project will be implemented through training seminars to be carried out for park staff as well as representatives from other relevant environmental entities, including nongovernmental organizations, research institutes and universities.

Funding: \$30,000

Grant Term: 10/1/06 to 12/31/07

Grantee: Professional and Entrepreneurial Orientation Union

Strategic Direction 2: Strengthen mechanisms to conserve biodiversity of the Caucasus Hotspot with emphasis on species, site and corridor outcomes

Coordination and Development of Plant Red List Assessments for the Caucasus Biodiversity Hotspot

Improve understanding of threatened plants in the Caucasus and increase the capacity of local botanists to be able to use the internationally accepted methods for plant conservation assessment and monitoring. A botanical consortium from five countries in the hotspot, with technical support from IUCN and the Missouri Botanic Garden, will implement the project.

Funding: \$355,350

Grant Term: 7/1/05 to 6/30/09

Grantee: IUCN-The World Conservation Union

Development and Capacity Building of Transboundary Bat Monitoring Network in the Caucasus

Establish and build capacity of a transboundary bat monitoring network in four countries of the Caucasus region: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Russia. The project includes development of a key habitat database, national and regional conservation action plans, establishment of a model protected area in the region, and a public awareness campaign for globally threatened bats.

Funding: \$175,000

Grant Term: 7/1/06 to 9/30/08

Grantee: Field Research Union “Campester”

Development of an IBA Caretaker Network in the Priority Corridors

Increase the capacity of civil society at the national and community levels to support appropriate management and monitoring of 31 sites that are important for the conservation of globally threatened species. BirdLife's Europe Division will coordinate overall implementation by working with four national NGOs: Armenian Society for the Protection of Birds, Azerbaijan Ornithological Society, Georgian Center for the Conservation of Wildlife, and Doğa Derneği, Turkey.

Funding: \$720,433

Grant Term: 6/1/05 to 6/30/08

Grantee: BirdLife International

Establishing the Conservation Status of the Acipenseridae Family in Georgia

Define the current status of the Acipenseridae species of sturgeon along the Georgian Black Sea coast, where no survey has been conducted over the last 15 years. The results will be used to elaborate recommendations on the current / updated status of the Acipenseridae species in a National Conservation Action Plan that will be submitted to the Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources of Georgia and IUCN-The World Conservation Union.

Funding: \$55,000

Grant Term: 9/1/06 to 9/30/08

Grantee: Black Sea Eco Academy

Global Mammal Assessment — Wider Caucasus Regional Workshop

Support a regional workshop to assess the current conservation status of mammal species within the Caucasus region. The project will produce electronic maps of the current known distribution for each mammal species and assess their conservation status through the use of the IUCN Red List categories and criteria classification system. This will contribute significantly to the refinement of key biodiversity areas and site outcomes within the Caucasus region.

Funding: \$19,910

Grant Term: 11/1/05 to 4/30/06

Grantee: IUCN-The World Conservation Union

Global Reptile Assessment — Wider Caucasus Regional Workshop

Support a regional workshop to assess the current conservation status of reptile species within the Caucasus region. The project will produce electronic maps of the current known distribution for each reptile species and assess their conservation status through the use of the IUCN Red List categories and criteria classification system. This will contribute significantly to the refinement of key biodiversity area targets for conservation within the Caucasus region.

Funding: \$19,870

Grant Term: 1/1/06 to 3/31/09

Grantee: IUCN-The World Conservation Union

NBSAP Implementation Program — International Conventions and Local Communities

Promote biodiversity conservation in Georgia by developing a local nongovernmental and community-based sector and promoting involvement in participatory planning and implementation of species and habitat conservation activities and mitigation and monitoring of development projects in selected areas.

Funding: \$235,000

Grant Term: 9/1/06 to 12/31/08

Grantee: NACRES Foundation for Biodiversity Conservation

Provide Support to Conservation Agencies Specifically to Improve Implementation of International Conventions

Improve protection and sustainable use of biodiversity resources in the Caucasus by supporting officials in implementation of international conventions directed toward protection, use and biodiversity management. Activities also include deepening cooperation between governmental bodies, nongovernmental groups, and public structures both within the country and on regional and international levels.

Funding: \$34,963

Grant Term: 4/1/06 to 5/31/07

Grantee: Environmental Law Center

Reduction of Illegal Catch of Sturgeons by the Slowdown of the Demand for Caviar and Sturgeon Flash on the Domestic Market

Support the updating of data on sturgeon populations within the Caucasus Hotspot and enhance the ability of civil society to contribute to reducing demand for illegally harvested and processed caviar in Russia and Azerbaijan.

Funding: \$39,677

Grant Term: 4/1/06 to 3/31/07

Grantee: World Wide Fund for Nature - Russia

Regional Council for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Resource Use in the Caucasus

Enhance implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile and investment strategy for the Caucasus Hotspot by improving the coordinated donor investment and catalyzing the policy support necessary for sustainability beyond CEPF's five-year investment window. The Regional Council will provide a high-level forum to address transboundary issues as an effective, widely accepted, and broadly supported institution for regional conservation.

Funding: \$200,000

Grant Term: 1/1/05 to 6/30/09

Grantee: World Wide Fund for Nature

Site Network for Birds and Wetlands: Inventory, Protection and Community Management

Expand the CEPF-supported network of Important Bird Areas caretakers into the Russian areas of the Greater Caucasus and Caspian biodiversity conservation corridors by generating new knowledge on the conservation needs of globally threatened species, particularly birds, and by developing and implementing management recommendations at key sites.

Funding: \$95,624

Grant Term: 4/1/06 to 6/30/07

Grantee: World Wide Fund for Nature - Russia

Site Network for Birds and Wetlands: Inventory, Protection and Community Management — Phase II

Expand the CEPF-supported network of Important Bird Areas caretakers into the Russian areas of the Greater Caucasus and Caspian biodiversity conservation corridors by generating new knowledge on the conservation needs of globally threatened species, particularly birds, and by developing and implementing management recommendations at key sites.

Funding: \$54,688

Grant Term: 2/1/08 to 1/31/09

Grantee: Vsemirnyi Fond Prirody

This grant is a continuation of the above project, implemented by WWF-Russia.

Small Grants for Global Conservation of Amphibian Diversity within Hotspots

Develop and implement the Amphibian Action Fund aimed at the long-term conservation of amphibian species, and their habitats, within biodiversity hotspots around the globe. This fund will make available small grants of up to \$10,000 to be awarded to individuals and groups working within the hotspots on targeted amphibian conservation activities.

Funding: \$17,000

Grant Term: 7/1/05 to 9/30/09

Grantee: Arizona State University

This is part of a multiregional project covering seven hotspots. The total grant amount is \$200,000.

Strategic Direction 3: Implement models demonstrating sustainable resource use in five target corridors

Development of the Buffer Zone of Mtirala National Park: Initiation of Sustainable Resource Use Activities

Demonstrate sustainable forest resource management through three models within the buffer zone of Mtirala National Park: a local business center, a valuable plant nursery, and horse-back riding tours. This project is the second phase of the CEPF-supported project “Promoting Sustainable Forest Management in the Support/Buffer Zone of Mtirala National Park.”

Funding: \$95,000

Grant Term: 7/1/08 to 7/31/09

Grantee: Association for Nature Protection and Sustainable Use “Mta-Bari”

Equator Ventures

Support the pilot phase of Equator Ventures, a partnership initiative with UNDP’s Equator Initiative. Implement loan and technical assistance packages to small- to medium-sized enterprises benefiting biodiversity and local communities, and monitor biodiversity results.

Funding: \$11,110

Grant Term: 6/1/05 to 3/31/09

Grantee: Conservation International

This is part of a multiregional project covering nine hotspots. The total grant amount is \$95,229.

Evaluation and Implementation of Sustainable Forestry Models in Northern Armenia

Evaluate the current status of the forest in the project site, develop a strategy on sustainable forestry practice, carry out a training program on sustainable forestry and a pilot program based on sustainable forestry principles, and provide training and projects for local stakeholders on alternative income-generating activities.

Funding: \$100,000

Grant Term: 10/1/06 to 12/31/08

Grantee: Armenian Assembly of America, Inc.

Integrated River Basin Management in the Turkish West Lesser Caucasus

Promote sustainable resource use through integrated river basin management in the Firtina Valley and the Turkish part of the West Lesser Caucasus. Priorities include reducing resource use pressure on the Kackar Mountains National Park and building new partnerships for improved management of these resources.

Funding: \$349,908

Grant Term: 7/1/06 to 12/31/08

Grantee: World Wide Fund for Nature - Turkey

Model Project on Sustainable Forestry and Introduction of Alternative Energy Sources for Saving Habitats of CEPF Priority Species

Produce briquettes from sawdust and replace the use of forests for heating purposes. Creating this small enterprise producing wooden briquettes will generate income for the local community, make it less dependent on natural resources, and reduce pollution.

Funding: \$45,000

Grant Term: 5/1/06 to 3/31/07

Grantee: Sumgayit Center for Environmental Rehabilitation

Promoting Sustainable Forest Management within the Support/Buffer Zone of the Mtirala National Park

Establish effective management in the buffer zone around the newly declared Mtirala National Park in the Republic of Georgia. The buffer zone area is 35,000 hectares, 20,000 hectares of which is forest important for globally threatened species. The CEPF investment will complement support from the Government of Norway to the Government of Georgia and WWF, which will establish an effective management regime within this newly established park.

Funding: \$154,000

Grant Term: 6/1/07 to 5/31/08

Grantee: Association for Nature Protection and Sustainable Use “Mta-Bari”

Promoting Sustainable Resource Use Among Local Communities Near Protected Areas in Southern Armenia

Provide small grants for local communities to implement model sustainable-use projects. The Fund will engage six communities around protected areas benefiting local economic development and enhancing protected areas management effectiveness in the Syunik region.

Funding: \$199,700

Grant Term: 7/1/07 to 12/31/08

Grantee: Fund for Biodiversity Conservation of Armenian Highland

Training for Conservation — Biodiversity Assessment and Monitoring Training Program in the Turkish Caucasus

Adapt and develop training materials on biodiversity assessment and monitoring techniques for protected area management. A course will be adapted from the Smithsonian Institution’s internationally respected Biodiversity Monitoring and Assessment Course and will be tailor-made for the forest and alpine regions of the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor.

Funding: \$146,757

Grant Term: 9/1/06 to 6/30/08

Grantee: Nature Conservation Centre

Strategic Direction 4: Increase the awareness and commitment of decisionmakers to biodiversity conservation in five target corridors

Building Awareness of Conservation in the Caucasus

Enhance journalists’ capacity to cover biodiversity conservation issues and create new incentives for them to do so. An increase in quantity and quality of coverage will heighten public interest and encourage decisionmakers to take additional steps to protect habitat for globally threatened species. Activities include a training program for journalists, ongoing coaching for journalists and editors, and conducting a special awards program for biodiversity reporting.

Funding: \$275,168

Grant Term: 10/1/06 to 9/30/09

Grantee: International Center for Journalists

Conservation in the Caucasus: Reports from the Field

Raise awareness about the importance of the Caucasus Hotspot and the efforts underway to protect it through a series of articles in Russian Conservation News, an English-language quarterly that promotes biodiversity in Russia and throughout northern Eurasia. Activities also include building local capacity in communications through work with local writers contributing to the publication.

Funding: \$20,000

Grant Term: 7/1/04 to 7/31/05

Grantee: Center for Russian Nature Conservation

Environmental Communication Campaign — “Conservation for Sustainable Development in the Caucasus Ecoregion”

Increase knowledge and awareness of biodiversity conservation among decisionmakers, the private sector, local communities, and other stakeholders. This is a national project to be implemented at local communities, districts, and national levels with a special focus on CEPF priority species and sites.

Funding: \$67,687

Grant Term: 9/1/06 to 9/30/07

Grantee: Caucasus Environmental NGO Network

Environmental Hot Spots Journalistic Monitoring

Develop local environmental journalists' capacity at the provincial/district level and increase commitment among decisionmakers toward biodiversity conservation. This project will promote dialogue among environmental journalists, governmental, nongovernmental and private sectors that will engage decisionmakers on issues dealing with biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

Funding: \$100,000

Grant Term: 8/1/06 to 12/31/08

Grantee: Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus

Increasing the Awareness and Commitment of Decisionmakers to Biodiversity and Ecosystem Conservation in Armenia’s East Lesser Caucasus Corridor

Increase decisionmakers' and communities' awareness and commitment to biodiversity conservation, with a particular focus on the Armenian mouflon and bezoar goat. This will be done through trainings, publications, posters, contests among photojournalists and other activities tailored for these target audiences.

Funding: \$100,000

Grant Term: 10/1/06 to 6/30/08

Grantee: Armenian Forests NGO

Magazine on Nature Conservation in Georgian

Establish a Georgian periodical magazine titled Nature and Society to increase environmental awareness of decisionmakers and the public and providing pivotal environmental information with special emphasis on biodiversity conservation. The magazine will cover specific biodiversity conservation-related topics and reflect on decisionmaking processes in the field of environmental protection.

Funding: \$45,000

Grant Term: 9/1/06 to 3/30/09

Grantee: Georgian Center for the Conservation of Wildlife

Mobilization of Civil Society to Solve Biodiversity Conservation Problems

Increase public awareness of the threats facing local biodiversity through production of a series of publications and television broadcasts and by organizing a special trip for journalists to visit remote and vulnerable sites.

Funding: \$100,000

Grant Term: 12/1/06 to 12/31/08

Grantee: Independent Producer Center Yeni Dalga

Public Initiative for Western Greater Caucasus Biodiversity Protection from Planning of Olympic Games in Sochi Region, Russia

Conduct a public initiative to inform and assist preparations for the 2014 Olympic Games in Sochi to adhere to environmental requirements. The initiative will involve mass media, local citizens, regional, Russian and international organizations, authorities, and other stakeholders.

Funding: \$9,305

Grant Term: 5/1/06 to 10/31/06

Grantee: Environmental Watch on the North West Caucasus

Appendix B: List of Grants Made Under the CEPF/WWF Small Grants Program

Strategic Direction 1: Support civil society efforts to promote transboundary cooperation and improve protected area systems in five target corridors

Analysis of Socio-Economic-Demographic and Geo-Ecological Characteristics for Further Planning of New Protected Areas in the West Lesser Caucasus

Funding: \$17,700

Grant Term: 4/1/2005 to 5/1/2006

Grantee: Association of Scientists-Ecologists — “Caucasian Eco-House”

Conservation of Endemic Plant Species of Ajara-Shavsheti Floristic Region

Funding: \$18,880

Grant Term: 4/1/2005 to 12/1/2005

Grantee: Association for Environment Protection and Sustainable Development — “Mta-Bari”

Designing of Mezmay Nature Park

Funding: \$20,000

Grant Term: 4/1/2008 to 6/30/2009

Grantee: Public Institute of Regional Biological Researches

Development of a Management Plan for Kavkazsky Biosphere Nature Reserve

Funding: \$19,900

Grant Term: 6/10/2005 to 6/10/2006

Grantee: NGO - Partnership for Zapovedniks

Economic Estimation of Natural Resources and Environmental Services as a basis of Specially Guarded Nature Territories (SGNT) Effective Management and Biodiversity Conservation (by the Example of the Sochi National Park)

Funding: \$19,700

Grant Term: 6/1/2005 to 2/1/2006

Grantee: Institute of Environmental Economics and Nature Resources — “KADASTR”

Feasibility Study on Establishment of “Arpi” National Park

Funding: \$17,000

Grant Term: 4/1/2006 to 4/1/2007

Grantee: Biodiversity and Landscape Conservation Union

Initiation and Harmonization of Transboundary Cooperation in Conservation of the Herpeto-complexes in the Caucasus Ecoregion

Funding: \$19,540

Grant Term: 2/21/2005 to 6/30/2005

Grantee: Zoological Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences / European Herpetological Society

Management Effectiveness Assessment of Protected Areas in Turkish part of the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor using a RAPPAM Methodology

Funding: \$5,507

Grant Term: 4/25/2005 to 6/1/2006

Grantee: The Society of Green Artvin

Planning Workshop on Caprinae Species Conservation in the Caucasus Hotspot

Funding: \$8,084.19
Grant Term: 4/1/2005 to 5/31/2005
Grantee: Association of Friends of Nature — “Tskhratskharo”

Planning Workshop on Sturgeon Conservation in the Caucasus Hotspot

Funding: \$5,888
Grant Term: 2/21/2005 to 4/21/2055
Grantee: Center for Biodiversity

Preliminary Work and Development of Documentation for Establishing Khevsureti Protected Area

Funding: \$20,000
Grant Term: 1/12009 to 8/31/2009
Grantee: Khevsureti Center for Natural and Cultural Heritage “Sane”

Regional Workshop on Sturgeon Conservation in the Caucasus

Funding: \$12,000
Grant Term: 4/20/2009 to 5/31/2009
Grantee: Association Flora and Fauna

Strengthening Transboundary Cooperation between Turkey and Georgia

Funding: \$20,000
Grant Term: 4/1/2009 to 7/1/2009
Grantee: Association for Environment Protection and Sustainable Development — “MTA-BARI”

Territory Optimization and Development of a Management Plan for Chernogorie Sanctuary

Funding: \$19,890
Grant Term: 4/1/2008 to 4/1/2009
Grantee: Sochi Branch of Russian Geographic Society

Transboundary Strategy for Conservation of endemic species of Caucasus Vipers, *Vipera kaznakovi* and *Vipera dinniki*, in Russia, Georgia and Turkey

Funding: \$17,000
Grant Term: 7/1/2006 to 9/30/2007
Grantee: Association of Natural Reserves and National Parks of the Caucasus

Strategic Direction 2: Strengthen mechanisms to conserve biodiversity of the Caucasus Hotspot with emphasis on species, site and corridor outcomes

Analysis of Conservation Project Relevance to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands in Caucasus Ecoregion

Funding: \$20,000
Grant Term: 6/1/2005 to 5/31/2007
Grantee: Biodiversity Conservation Center

Asian Mouflon *Ovis (Orientalis gmelinii)* and Bezoar Goat (*Capra aegagrus*) in Azerbaijan — Present and Future

Funding: \$18,800
Grant Term: 4/1/2006 to 10/1/2007

Grantee: Institute of Bioresources at Nakhchivan Division of NAS of Azerbaijan

Assessment of Biodiversity and Threats in Russian Part of the Caspian Corridor

Funding: \$20,000

Grant Term: 4/1/2008 to 9/30/2009

Grantee: Dagestan Regional Social Organization — “Agama”

Assessment of Current Status and Preparation of a Strategy Plan for Conservation of Dagestan Tur (*Capra cylindricornis*) in Azerbaijan

Funding: \$18,000

Grant Term: 4/1/2006 to 12/31/2007

Grantee: Azerbaijan Society of Zoologists

Assessment of Meriones Dahli's Population and Elaboration of Recommendations for Species Conservation

Funding: \$8,000

Grant Term: 4/1/2006 to 8/1/2007

Grantee: Nature Rights Protection

CITES Species Hand-Book and Trainings to Employees of Customs Service

Funding: \$19,494

Grant Term: 4/25/2005 to 4/1/2007

Grantee: Centre for Economic and Political Researches

Clarification of Categories and Update of the Red Book of Armenia with Certain Rare and Endangered Wood Species

Funding: \$4,500

Grant Term: 4/1/2008 to 2/1/2009

Grantee: Biodiversity and Landscape Conservation Union

Conservation of the Bezoar Goat in the East Caucasus

Funding: \$17,000

Grant Term: 7/1/2006 to 7/1/2008

Grantee: Pre-Caspian Institute of Biological Resources of the Daghestanian Scientific Centre at the Academy of Science of Russia

Conservation of the *Capra* Species in Georgia

Funding: \$20,000

Grant Term: 1/5/2005 to 4/2/2007

Grantee: Noah’s Arc Centre for the Recovery of Endangered Species (NACRES)

Conservation of the Dagestan Tur in the East Caucasus (Dagestan)

Funding: \$18,000

Grant Term: 7/1/2006 to 7/1/2008

Grantee: Pre-Caspian Institute of Biological Resources of the Daghestanian Scientific Centre at the Academy of Science of Russia

Clarification of the Persian Sturgeon’s Taxonomic Status

Funding: \$18,000

Grant Term: 7/1/2006 to 7/1/2007

Grantee: IUCN Representative Office for Russia and CIS / WWF Russia

Create Baseline Data on Rare Invertebrates for the National Red Book and Prepare Materials for the Caucasus Red Book and IUCN Red List

Funding: \$17,866

Grant Term: 4/25/2005 to 5/1/2007

Grantee: Institute of Zoology, National Academy of Sciences, Russia

Creation of a Base for Improvement / Perfection of National Legislation to Ensure Implementation and Full Enforcement of CITES and RAMSAR Conventions

Funding: \$19,750

Grant Term: 4/1/2005 to 6/1/2006

Grantee: Union for Sustainable Development — “ECO-VIEW”

Determination of Conservation Status and Conservation of the Mediterranean Tortoise (*Testudo graeca*) in Southern Caucasus

Funding: \$7,000

Grant Term: 3/1/2006 to 6/30/2008

Grantee: Found — Aquamedia

Developing a Conservation Strategy for Giant Mole Rat *Spalax giganteus* for the territory of the Northern Caucasus

Funding: \$10,000

Grant Term: 4/25/2005 to 6/20/2007

Grantee: Pre-Caspian Institute of Biological Resources of the Daghestanian Scientific Centre at the Academy of Science of Russia

GIS-based Habitat Modeling of West Caucasian Tur, East Caucasian Tur, Bezoar Goat, and Argali in the Caucasus Hotspot

Funding: \$16,000

Grant Term: 3/1/2006 to 10/1/2006

Grantee: Georgian Center for the Conservation of Wildlife

Helping the Otter (*Lutra lutra*) to Survive

Funding: \$18,000

Grant Term: 4/25/2005 to 6/25/2007

Grantee: Sumgayt Center for Environmental Rehabilitation

Improve Nature Reserve and National Park Rangers' Professional Skills in the Greater Caucasus

Funding: \$19,900

Grant Term: 6/10/2005 to 6/10/2006

Grantee: Partnership for Zapovedniks

Improvement of the Azerbaijan and the IUCN Red Lists for Arthropoda and Higher Plant Species in Hyrcan Corridor, Including Establishment of a Base for Monitoring and Conservation in the National Park Hyrcan

Funding: \$20,000

Grant Term: 11/1/2005 to 1/20/2008

Grantee: Michael Succow Foundation for the Protection of Nature / Azerbaijan Society of Zoologists

Improvement of Protection of Caspian Seal *Phoca caspica* Breeding-grounds and Habitats of Priority Bird Species in the Absheron Sanctuary

Funding: \$20, 000

Grant Term: 4/25/2005 to 5/25/2006

Grantee: Ecology and Conservation of Birds

Improvement of Protection of the Dagestanian Tur *Capra cylindricornis* and Other CEPF Priority Species in Zakatala Strict Nature Reserve

Funding: \$20,000

Grant Term: 4/25/2005 to 7/25/2006

Grantee: Center for Biodiversity

Inventory of Internationally and Nationally Important Wetlands in the Russian Caucasus Region

Funding: \$20,000

Grant Term: 5/20/2005 to 5/20/2006

Grantee: WWF Russia & Russian Representative Office of Wetlands International-Russia Programme

Investigating the Population of Bezoar Goat *Capra aegagrus* in the Kackar Mountains of Turkey

Funding: \$17,037

Grant Term: 4/1/2008 to 6/15/2009

Grantee: Society of Green Artvin

Methodology Support and Special Trainings to Prevent Poaching Activities and Control Timber Logging in Russian Caucasus

Funding: \$19,950

Grant Term: 6/57/2005 to 6/27/2006

Grantee: WWF Russia

Practical Activities for Conservation of *Testudo graeca* in Russia

Funding: \$17, 200

Grant Term: 7/1/2006 to 12/31/2007

Grantee: Russian Botanical Society

Reassessment of the IUCN Red List for Amphibians and Reptiles of the Caucasus According to IUCN Categories and Criteria

Funding: \$16,500

Grant Term: 7/1/2006 to 12/31/2007

Grantee: European Herpetological Society

Status of Armenian Mouflon *Ovis ammon gmelinii* and Bezoar Goat *Capra aegagrus* in Armenia and its Implications for Conservation of these Ungulates

Funding: \$18,500

Grant Term: 4/1/2006 to 2/1/2008

Grantee: Fund for Biodiversity Conservation of Armenian Highland

Strengthening the Protection Regime of Garni and Kaqavaberd Tracts of Khosrove Nature Reserve

Funding: \$20,000

Grant Term: 4/25/2005 to 4/24/2006
Grantee: Armenian Tourism Association

Strengthening the Protection Regime of Shikahogh Nature Reserve

Funding: \$20,000
Grant Term: 6/27/2005 to 4/1/2007
Grantee: Khustup Nature Protection

Study of the Present State of Amphibian and Reptile Populations as a Base for Updating Red Lists of Armenia and IUCN

Funding: \$18,000
Grant Term: 4/1/2006 to 3/31/2008
Grantee: Institute of Zoology, National Academy of Sciences

Support Bezoar Goat Conservation and Captive Breeding in Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park

Funding: \$20,000
Grant Term: 5/1/2009 to 9/30/2009
Grantee: Georgian Young Naturalists Society

Support Government Conservation Agencies in the Implementation and Reinforcement of International Conventions and Agreements Related to Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use

Funding: \$12,697.13
Grant Term: 4/1/2005 to 12/1/2005
Grantee: Union – Eco-pulse Association

Support Preparation and Editing of 180-200 Page Book on Status and Conservation Measures of Globally Threatened Species in the Caucasus Envisaged in the Frame of the CEPF Ecosystem Profile

Funding: \$11,000
Grant Term: 9/5/2008 to 3/5/2009
Grantee: David Mallon

Support Protected Areas to Improve Protection of Priority Amphibians *Bufo verrucosissimus* and *Pelodytes caucasicus* in Azerbaijan

Funding: \$10,000
Grant Term: 4/1/2006 to 4/1/2007
Grantee: Center for Biodiversity

Support to Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park and Nedzvi Sanctuary for Conservation of Bezoar Goat and Caucasian Salamander

Funding: \$9,500
Grant Term: 8/1/2008 to 1/1/2008
Grantee: Georgian Young Naturalists Society

Transboundary Conservation-oriented Study and Conservation of the Western Lesser Caucasus Endemic Species Caucasian Salamander

Funding: \$19,000
Grant Term: 3/1/2006 to 12/31/2007
Grantee: Caucasian Endemics Research Centre

Turs of the Caucasus — Taxonomy and Conservation Strategy

Funding: \$12,000

Grant Term: 8/1/2006 to 8/1/2008

Grantee: North Ossetian State Nature Reserve

Strategic Direction 3: Implement models demonstrating sustainable resource use in five target corridors

Alternative Livelihood for Local Population of Ordubad Sanctuary

Funding: \$19,000

Grant Term: 4/1/2007 to 1/1/2008

Grantee: “Gakhir” Charitable Organization

Alternative Ways of Saving Ornithofauna of the Gizil-Agach Nature Reserve

Funding: \$19,890

Grant Term: 4/1/2007 to 7/31/2008

Grantee: Veterinarian Sanitary and Nature Protection

Building of Regional NGO Platform in the South Caucasus for Involvement of Civil Society in Formulation and Implementation of European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) Process

Funding: \$10,998

Grant Term: 10/31/2005 to 12/30/2005

Grantee: The Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus (REC Caucasus)

Campaigning Against Corruption in Forests Supervision and Participation of Society in Forests Management of Lore Region

Funding: \$9,000

Grant Term: 4/1/2006 to 5/1/2007

Grantee: Lore Eco Club

Capacity Building of CWC and Preparation for Controlling and International Certification in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia

Grant Term: 1/3/2005 to 8/1/2007

Grantee: Caucasus Wild Plants Certification Centre

Community-Based Ecotourism Development in Azerbaijan’s Part of Hyrcan Corridor of the Caucasus Ecoregion

Funding: \$19,000

Grant Term: 4/1/2007 to 7/1/2008

Grantee: Organization — Agro-Meslehet

Creation of a Book-album and Scientific Video on “Escaping in the Mountains: Armenian Mouflon and Bezoar Goat”

Funding: \$17,500

Grant Term: 4/1/2006 to 10/1/2007

Grantee: Charitable Fund for Protection of Nature and Culture Value in the Nature Reserves of Armenia

Creation of Selective-Tribal Beekeeping Economy in Zakatala Region for Production of Bee Families as Alternative Income Sources for Rural Communities

Funding: \$12,500
Grant Term: 4/1/2007 to 4/1/2008
Grantee: Centre for Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage

Creation of Sustainable Hunting Area in the Gabala–Ismailli Area as an Alternative Livelihood for Local Populations

Funding: \$19,000
Grant Term: 4/1/2007 to 4/1/2008
Grantee: SAS.H Ltd

Development of Beekeeping — One of the Main Factors of the Social Problems' Solution

Funding: \$16,168
Grant Term: 11/7/2005 to 5/7/2007
Grantee: Azerbaijan Society of Zoologists

Documentary film on the CEPF Investment and Footprint in the Caucasus Hotspot

Funding: \$20,000
Grant Term: 5/1/2009 to 7/31/2009
Grantee: Piligrim Studio

Honey Production — Promotion of Non-timber Forest Product Use in Kvareli Forests

Funding: \$18,000
Grant Term: 9/20/2005 to 12/20/2006
Grantee: Union — DURUJIS MADLI

Obtaining the Information on Alternative Income Sources and Ways of Sustainable Development of Zakatala-Belokan Region

Funding: \$3,700
Grant Term: 4/1/2006 to 4/1/2007
Grantee: Centre for Protection of Natural and Cultural Heritage

Perspectives of Ecotourism Development in Chaukhski Massif of Greater Caucasus

Funding: \$19,450
Grant Term: 4/1/2005 to 2/1/2006
Grantee: Association of Ecology and Tourism

Preservation of Caucasian Ecoregion Natural Ecosystems on the Basis of Elaboration and Application of Rational Environmental Management Model

Funding: \$9,800
Grant Term: 6/1/2005 to 2/1/2006
Grantee: Institute of Environmental Economics and Nature Resources Account — “KADASTR”

Publication on Determination and Prevention of Potential Negative Impacts on High-Mountain Ecosystems in the East Black Sea Region

Funding: \$19,000
Grant Term: 4/25/2005 to 12/28/2007
Grantee: Research Association of Rural Environment and Forestry

Quail Farming — the Alternative Source of Income for Village Communities and One of the Methods for Survival of Relict Hyrcanian Forests

Funding: \$19,563

Grant Term: 11/01/2005 to 7/31/2007
Grantee: Ecology and Conservation of Birds

Support Civil Society Capacity Building in Participation and Monitoring of Large Development Projects in Armenia

Funding: \$19,998
Grant Term: 7/1/2007 to 4/1/2008
Grantee: Association for Sustainable Human Development

Support Civil Society Capacity Building in Participation and Monitoring of Large Development Projects in Azerbaijan

Funding: \$20,000
Grant Term: 4/1/2007 to 4/1/2008
Grantee: Environmental Law Centre "Ecolex"

Trainings for Future Eco-tourist Guides in the Hyrcan Corridor in Azerbaijan

Funding: \$9,900
Grant Term: 4/1/2007 to 1/1/2008
Grantee: Youth Ecotourism Eco-educational Public Organization "Pilgrim"

Strategic Direction 4: Increase the awareness and commitment of decisionmakers to biodiversity conservation in five target corridors

Amazing Caucasus Hotspot — Book and Slides
Funding: \$19,210
Grant Term: 6/20/2005 to 10/31/2007
Grantee: Caucasus Center for Ethological Research

Campaigning About Highway Construction through Shikahogh Reserve

Funding: \$4,664
Grant Term: 7/1/2005 to 10/1/2005
Grantee: Ecolor Informative

Civil Society and Biodiversity — Involvement of Youth in Conservation

Funding: \$19,850
Grant Term: 4/25/2005 to 10/25/2007
Grantee: IUCN Representative Office for Russia and CIS / WWF Russia

EcoTopia: Contemporary Art and Nature in the Caucasus
Funding: \$5,916.11
Grant Term: 9/20/2005 to 12/20/2005
Grantee: Goethe-Institute in Tbilisi

Improving of Ecological Culture in Young Generation
Funding: \$7,000
Grant Term: 9/20/2005 to 11/20/2005
Grantee: Union — Ano & Vano

Introduction of Protected Forest Ecosystems in Eastern Black Sea Region of Turkey
Funding: \$5,000

Grant Term: 5/1/2008 to 11/1/2008
Grantee: Research Association of Rural Environment and Forestry

Information exchange on ecological risks in the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor through the “EcoLurNetWork”

Funding: \$10,000
Grant Term: 4/1/2008 to 2/1/2009
Grantee: Ecolur Informative

Journalist and Representatives of Municipal Institutions for the Conservation of Biodiversity — Forms and Methods of Cooperation

Funding: \$11,005
Grant Term: 9/1/2005 to 9/1/2006
Grantee: Association “Journalists and the Society”

Picture Your Nature

Funding: \$19,613
Grant Term: 11/4/2005 to 5/4/2006
Grantee: Association of Social Economic Researches

Production of a Documentary Film — “Coming Back of Bezoar Goat”

Funding: \$19,824
Grant Term: 6/1/2008 to 12/31/2008
Grantee: Piligrim Studio

Promotion of Updated Georgian Red List

Funding: \$8,484
Grant Term: 1/3/2007 to 6/3/2009
Grantee: Wild Plants Conservation Association & Ilia Chavchavadze State University

Public Awareness Raising on Values and Benefits of Protected Areas

Funding: \$7,159
Grant Term: 10/1/2009 to 12/30/2009
Grantee: McCann-Erickson/Georgia Ltd

Stimulation of Eco-journalism to Monitor Problems of Environment Protection in the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor

Funding: \$17,000
Grant Term: 4/1/2006 to 5/22/2007
Grantee: Ecolur Informative

Strengthening of Environmental Propaganda and Increase Environmental Awareness of Local Communities in the East Lesser Caucasus Corridor

Funding: \$17,000
Grant Term: 7/1/2006 to 11/1/2007
Grantee: Eco-Club Tapan

You or Them

Funding: \$14,760
Grant Term: 8/1/2005 to 4/20/2007
Grantee: Kackar Rafting and Climbing Club

Appendix C: Leveraging Data for the Caucasus

| Project Title | Grantee | CEPF Funds Agreed | Leveraged & Co-financing Funds |
|--|--|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Building Capacity to Strengthen Conservation Alliances through CEPF Coordination and Grant-making in the Caucasus ⁴ | World Wide Fund for Nature | \$2,920,000 | \$16,500,000 |
| | | | |
| Development of an IBA Caretaker Network in the Priority Corridors | BirdLife International | \$720,433 | \$244,069 |
| Development of the Buffer Zone of Mtirala National Park: Initiation of Sustainable Resource Use Activities — Phases I and II | Association for Nature Protection and Sustainable Use 'Mta-Bari' | \$95,000 | \$155,648 |
| Development of the Econet Scheme of the North Caucasus on the Base of Analysis of Satellite Images and Topographical Maps - Phase II | Vsemirnyi Fond Prirody | \$28,194 | \$45,000 |
| Enhancing Conservation in the West Lesser Caucasus through Transboundary Cooperation and Establishing a Training Program on KBA Conservation | Doğa Derneği | \$254,705 | \$59,283 |
| Environmental Communication Campaign — "Conservation for Sustainable Development in the Caucasus Ecoregion" | Caucasus Environmental NGO Network | \$67,687 | \$4,934 |
| Environmental Hot Spots Journalistic Monitoring | Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus | \$100,000 | \$20,000 |
| Establishing the Conservation Status of the Acipenseridae Family in Georgia | Black Sea Eco Academy | \$55,000 | \$1,863 |
| Evaluation and Implementation of Sustainable Forestry Models in Northern Armenia | Armenian Assembly of America, Inc. | \$100,000 | \$1,475,000 |
| Global Mammal Assessment — Wider Caucasus Regional Workshop | IUCN-The World Conservation Union | \$19,910 | \$5,000 |
| Global Reptile Assessment — Wider Caucasus Regional Workshop | IUCN-The World Conservation Union | \$19,870 | \$31,120 |
| Integrated River Basin Management in the Turkish West Lesser Caucasus | World Wide Fund for Nature - Turkey | \$349,908 | \$158,500 |
| Magazine on Nature Conservation in Georgian | Georgian Center for the Conservation of Wildlife | \$45,000 | \$90,000 |
| Regional Council for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Resource Use in the Caucasus | World Wide Fund for Nature | \$200,000 | \$210,000 |
| Site Network for Birds and Wetlands: Inventory, Protection, and Community Management — Phase II | Vsemirnyi Fond Prirody | \$54,688 | \$2,000 |

⁴ The co-financing for the Coordination Unit grant comprised the following: (i) Euro 7 million (c.\$11.51 million) from the "Biodiversity Conservation in Javakheti and Caspian Corridors" project financed by KfW; (ii) Euro 400,000 (c.\$660,000) from the "Halting the Extinction of the Threatened Tugai Forest in the Transboundary Area of the Lori River in the Lori-Mingeauri Corridor" project financed by the government of Norway; (iii) Euro 400,000 (c.\$660,000) from the "Effective Functioning and Maintenance of Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park (West Lesser Caucasus Corridor)" project, financed by KfW; (iv) Euro 1.2 million (c.\$1.97 million) from the "Saving Forest Ecosystems and Promoting Transboundary Cooperation in the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor" project financed by the government of Norway; and (v) around US\$1.7 million from the "Protected Areas for a Living Planet – Caucasus Ecoregion" project financed by the MAVA Foundation.

| Project Title | Grantee | CEPF Funds Agreed | Leveraged & Co-financing Funds |
|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Supporting the Institutional Development of the Caucasus Protected Areas Fund | Caucasus Protected Areas Fund | \$500,000 | \$2,925,000 |
| Training for Conservation — Biodiversity Assessment and Monitoring Training Program in the Turkish Caucasus | Nature Conservation Centre | \$146,757 | \$10,000 |
| Additional CEPF Grants in Region (Total grants without known leverage funding) | | \$2,821,631 | |
| Total | | \$8,498,783 | \$21,937,417 |

Appendix D: Reporting against Standard World Bank Biodiversity Indicators

| Impacts on: | Has the project produced impacts? | Quantitative information on changes | Comments on changes, including qualitative information |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| Expanding protected areas | <p>Yes</p> <p>Through creation of new protected areas and expansion of existing ones, protection was extended to 83,093 hectares. Sites include:</p> <p><u>Armenia</u> Creation of Arevik National Park (34,402 hectares) Creation of Zangezur Sanctuary (17,369 hectares) Expansion of Shikahogh Reserve (2,000 hectares)</p> <p><u>Russia</u> Expansion of Erzi Reserve (29,322 hectares)</p> <p>Planned</p> <p>A further 194,443 hectares was proposed for protection, and approval is expected in the near future on:</p> <p><u>Armenia</u> Creation of Arpi/Gnishik National Park (15,000 hectares)</p> <p><u>Georgia</u> Creation of Khevsureti protected area (50,000 hectares) Creation of a buffer zone for Mtirala National Park (10,202 hectares) Creation of Machakhela Protected Landscape (12,739 hectares)</p> <p><u>Russia</u> Creation of Mezmay Nature Park (20,000 hectares) Expansion of Dagestansky Reserve (57,432 hectares) Expansion of Teberdinsky Reserve (29,070 hectares)</p> | | |
| Improving management effectiveness of protected areas | <p>Yes</p> <p>CEPF contributed to improving the management effectiveness of more than 17 protected areas with a total area of over 1,230,033 hectares, through development of management plans, improving infrastructure and technical resources, and training protected area staff. Sites that benefitted include:</p> <p><u>Armenia</u> Shikahogh Nature Reserve (12,000 hectares) Khosrov Nature Reserve (29,196 hectares) Sevan National Park (150,100 hectares)</p> <p><u>Azerbaijan</u> Absheron National Park (783 hectares) Zakatala Strict Nature Reserve (47,349 hectares) Shirvan National Park (54,373 hectares)</p> <p><u>Georgia</u> Kolkheti National Park (45,446 hectares) Kobuleti Nature Reserve (331 hectares)</p> <p><u>Russia</u> Erzi Nature Reserve (35,292 hectares) Kabardino-Balkarskii Nature Reserve (82,507 hectares)</p> | | <p>Management plans were developed and adopted and/or capacity building was provided for the listed protected areas.</p> <p>CEPF HQ staff worked with KfW, WWF and the Global Conservation Fund (GCF) at Conservation International to establish and fund the Caucasus Protected Areas Fund (CPAF). CPAF will support the recurring management costs for priority protected areas in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Approximately \$9.7 million has been committed toward the endowment by KfW, BMZ, WWF and GCF. CEPF committed \$500,000 toward the first two years' operational costs of CPAF.</p> |

| | | | |
|---|----------------|---|--|
| | | <p>Severo-Osetinsky Nature Reserve (29,530 hectares) Prielbruskiye National Park (100,400 hectares) Alania National Park (55,000 hectares) Sochinsky National Park (193,737 hectares) Chernogorie Sanctuary (4,400 hectares) Kavkazsky Biosphere Reserve (330,000 hectares)</p> <p><u>Turkey</u> Posof Wildlife Reserve (59,589 hectares)</p> | <p>More than 60 protected area staff in Azerbaijan and Russia received training. In the Azeri part of the Greater Caucasus, staff were trained in monitoring methodologies for the East Caucasian tur. In Russia, staff were trained in anti-poaching and anti-illegal logging methods. In addition, a special handbook on protected area management was published in Russian.</p> <p>Management effectiveness of 11 protected areas in the Turkish part of the West Lesser Caucasus Corridor was undertaken using WWF's RAPPAM Methodology.</p> |
| Area of production systems that involve improving sustainable use of biodiversity resources | Yes | <p>Sustainable forestry demonstration plots (14 hectares) were established in the Armenian part of the East Lesser Caucasus.</p> <p>The Natural Landscape Territory of Mtirala and Machakela (22,941 hectares) was created in the Georgian part of the West Lesser Caucasus.</p> <p>An Integrated River Basin Management Plan was adopted for the Firtina Valley (80,000 hectares) in the Turkish part of the West Lesser Caucasus.</p> | |
| Percentage of beneficiaries engaged in improved livelihoods based on sustainable NR management (or sustainable harvesting) | Not applicable | Percentage not tracked | |
| Changes in sectoral policies, laws and regulations and their application, changes in institutional arrangements, responsibilities and effectiveness, to improve biodiversity conservation and sustainable use | Yes | <p>The government of Armenia revised the route of a major highway to minimize impact on Shikahogh Nature Reserve.</p> <p>Threats to Sochinsky National Park from planned infrastructure improvements for Russia's Olympic Games bid were mitigated in part.</p> <p>A regional NGO platform was established to involve civil society in the southern Caucasus in formulation and implementation of the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) process in the region.</p> <p>Special training courses were provided to customs services to improve implementation of CITES at the national level and strengthen control over international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora. More than 150 customs officers were trained in Azerbaijan and Georgia and received specially produced guidebooks to CITES-listed species.</p> | |

| | | | |
|--|----------------|---|--|
| | | In Georgia, 30 government officials were trained in biodiversity related MEAs (i.e. CBD, CITES, Ramsar and CMS). Also, the complete versions of the texts of these agreements and simple explanations were published and distributed to key stakeholders. | |
| Sharing of benefits between and/or in countries, arising from the use of genetic resources | Not applicable | | |
| Other impacts (e.g. increase in scientific understanding and knowledge base for biodiversity conservation) | Yes | <p>Scientific knowledge on the status of 45 out of 50 CEPF priority species was improved.</p> <p>Global threat assessments of all vascular plants, mammals and amphibians endemic to the Caucasus Hotspot were conducted according to the IUCN criteria.</p> <p>Approximately 200 journalists and 120 journalism students were trained to better report biodiversity issues in national and local media.</p> <p>Local level 'caretakers' were identified and trained at 29 Important Bird Areas (IBAs), and are working to improve the management of these sites for globally threatened species.</p> <p>The Caucasus Biodiversity Council meets twice annually. The council, which consists of representatives of government agencies, NGOs and scientific institutions, strengthens trans-boundary cooperation and coordination among the countries of the Caucasus Hotspot.</p> <p>Two PhD studies were carried out on subjects related to high-mountain forest ecosystems in Turkey.</p> <p>A first-of-its-kind book on forest biodiversity was published and communicated to all foresters in Turkey, as well as among forestry faculties in different universities.</p> | |

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