

## **Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot**

### **Program for Consolidation**

June 2009

The Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands biodiversity hotspot comprises the island nation of Madagascar and the neighboring island groups of the Mascarenes, Comoros and Seychelles, with a total area of 594,221 square kilometers. Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) investment has focused on Madagascar, as this island contains the largest amount of remaining habitat in the hotspot and has the most significant national system of protected areas. The Madagascar and Indian Oceans Islands Hotspot was one of the first three hotspots where funding was launched by CEPF in 2000. The five-year, grant-making period concluded in December 2005 with the final portfolio comprising 40 grants totalling \$4.25 million.

At the start of investment, Madagascar's biodiversity faced an immense array of threats. Nearly 80 percent of the island's original forest cover had been lost. The population was estimated at 15 million, with a rate of increase of 3 percent per year. Poverty was extremely high, with the country being regarded as one of the most economically disadvantaged countries in the world. Key threats at the time included agricultural expansion (in particular for upland rice production resulting in a loss of about 2,000 square kilometers of forest per year); uncontrolled livestock grazing; unsustainable charcoal production, mining, hunting and timber exploitation; and unregulated international trade in plants and animals.

Compounding these threats was a civil society characterized by insufficient technical capacity and limited biodiversity information, alongside an inadequate government presence to manage and protect natural resources, and ambiguous policies. Additional threats present on the island included poverty, and inadequate access to education. These factors presented a complex set of challenges to address if conservation for the people of Madagascar were to be achieved.

The CEPF investment strategy for this region built on initiatives such as those put forth under the auspices of the National Environmental Action Plan, and recommendations that emerged from a conservation priority-setting workshop convened by Conservation International in 1995. This workshop was attended by more than 100 of the world's foremost experts in the island's biology. The workshop proved to be a catalyst for new efforts to conserve the island's rich biodiversity, such as the Second Environmental Action Plan (PE2) and Global Environment Facility programs. As part of the priority-setting process, workshops were held in each of the nation's biodiversity conservation corridors.

CEPF studied the conservation planning and implementation efforts undertaken in the last decade, as well as the key threats facing the hotspot, to determine the niche for investment. Based upon these threats and bearing in mind the roles of other actors in the environment and

conservation sector, the niche for CEPF to provide the greatest incremental value focused on: a) filling the gaps between existing efforts and investments; b) defining the mechanisms to ensure the proper coordination among existing efforts; and c) providing civil society with the capacity to manage biodiversity conservation more effectively.

As defined in the ecosystem profile<sup>1</sup> developed for this region, six strategic directions guided grant-making in the hotspot:

1. Integrating local groups and individuals into the management of protected areas and reserves.
2. Private sector conservation initiatives.
3. Biodiversity conservation and management training programs.
4. Public awareness and advocacy.
5. Small grants program (Biodiversity Action Fund).
6. Creation of a participatory monitoring and coordination network.

The flexibility of CEPF's approach during the initial investment period meant that CEPF was able to respond to opportunities as they arose. Significant progress was made in improving stewardship of natural resources, developing community-based management of the environment and creating new protected areas.

Considerable scientific focus was also given to determine which areas are of highest priority for increased protection. However, there has not been a similar investment in understanding the socioeconomic aspects that need to be addressed if management is to be effective, nor in looking at potential for community-based conservation and protected area management at sufficient scale.

The ecosystem profile identified a number of human-based threats. Projects supported by CEPF funding often fulfilled a priority need to identify the scale and exact nature of these threats. During a consolidation phase for this important region, CEPF seeks to further build up the ability of civil society to address these threats and thereby sustain the gains made to date.

**Achievements:** CEPF investment in Madagascar has resulted in both high-profile and subtle conservation achievements. The most significant result pertains directly to the Durban Vision in that CEPF's support, in concert with other donors, assisted in making possible the gazettlement of more than 1 million hectares as protected areas. These protected areas have been selected based upon CEPF-supported scientific surveys conducted throughout the country to enable identification of the most critical areas and species for inclusion in the country's new protected area network. These data also contributed to the Madagascar Biodiversity Network to assist in further refining sites for increased protection. An additional 2.3 million hectares are now under temporary protection and in the advanced stages of public consultations.

Investment made a significant impact by increasing the role of local organizations in achieving conservation at the local, regional and national levels. It also improved the local livelihoods of communities surrounding several protected areas by reinforcing the link between sustainable livelihoods and biodiversity conservation. Projects undertaken by MATEZA in Zahamena, L'Homme et l'Environnement in the Vohimana Forest and the Wildlife Conservation Society in Makira, for example, included income generation components and other elements of social

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<sup>1</sup> Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands (Madagascar) Ecosystem Profile  
[English](#) (PDF - 361 KB) / [Français](#) (PDF - 390 KB)

importance such as health, nutrition and involvement in resource planning and management. Communities participating in these programs have demonstrated understanding and commitment to conservation by reducing deforestation and other unsustainable actions.

Sustainable financing of the current and future protected area system is a great concern for all. To this end, CEPF supported Conservation International-Madagascar to take a lead role in securing financing for biodiversity conservation in Madagascar by supporting the establishment of the Madagascar Foundation for Protected Areas and Biodiversity, a trust fund that will be used to finance the operating costs of existing and new protected areas. This fund, supported by the French and German governments, Conservation International, WWF and other partners, will be an important source of long-term revenue to complement donor support for PE3.

**Justification for consolidation:** Engaging local communities in natural resource management is vital. Recently, there also has been a shift in the conservation paradigm in Madagascar from defining sites to be gazetted as protected areas to finding ways to integrate civil society in natural resource and protected area management. The greatest challenge to successful conservation of priority areas is now the long-term governance of these new protected areas.

During the initial CEPF investment it was recognized that there was a paucity of national or local nongovernmental organizations in Madagascar and that civil society had limited capacity to implement CEPF funds directly. As a result, the majority of the funds were channelled through the established international nongovernmental organizations. However, funds did reach community-based organizations on a site-by-site basis through Conservation International's small grants program, the national nongovernmental organization Fanamby's pioneering efforts in Daraina and the BirdLife wetlands conservation projects in Mahavavy-Kinkony Complex. These examples have demonstrated that community conservation can be achieved given the right level of support, and this is an aspect that CEPF seeks to scale up during the consolidation phase.

Most of the newly protected areas plan to integrate local communities and allow some level of sustainable use within their limits. To accompany communities' engagement in conservation activities, with CEPF support under the first phase, Conservation International developed its small grants program. Known as "Keystones" (or Nodes in Madagascar where the approach has been piloted) these locally based units managed by partner organizations provide funding for communities to undertake activities that integrate conservation and development around new protected areas.

Building upon the recommendations emanating from CEPF's assessment of impact in this region<sup>2</sup> and the 2005 independent evaluation of CEPF, four themes have been selected to consolidate CEPF's original investment. These four, cohesive themes take advantage of the opportunities that have arisen as a result of implementing the Durban Vision and complement the activities under phase 3 of the National Environmental Action Plan as well as the Madagascar Action Plan and will be undertaken in parallel with other ongoing initiatives such as the GEF-UNDP small grants program. To successfully implement these, a sum of \$1.4 million is planned to build upon and sustain the achievements in Madagascar to date.

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<sup>2</sup> Assessing Five Years of CEPF Investment in the Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot (Madagascar)  
[English](#) (PDF - 407 KB) / [Français](#) (PDF - 320 KB)

This consolidation program also has been refined as a result of the political strife that has beleaguered the island nation since January 2009 and resulted in President Marc Ravalomanana and his government being overthrown in March 2009. The new government of Madagascar has been designated by a “High Transitional Authority (HAT)” that has stated that democratic elections will be held by September 2010. The new government in Madagascar has also stated that it will honor the temporary protection orders established under the previous government, and is encouraging promoters of these new protected areas to complete the necessary steps for permanent status and to start to manage them actively.

After consultation with possible grantees and other partners as well as the CEPF donor partners, it is believed that the objectives of the consolidation phase as now refined and elaborated below can be achieved. The operations of the nongovernmental sector have not been directly affected by the change in government and indeed the new regime has stated and so far demonstrated that its priorities for the environment during the “transition” before the elections will remain those in the Madagascar Action Plan that have been pursued since 2007. None of the organizations that CEPF has consulted in Madagascar believe that there is a risk of actions by the government with regard to their licenses being revoked or seizure of bank accounts, funds and assets. This ability of the NGO sector to operate is crucial to achieving CEPF’s fundamental goal of engaging civil society in the conservation of natural resources and long-term sustainability.

As a result of these changes, the focus of CEPF’s consolidation phase has been narrowed to support civil society, especially in rural areas, to act as stewards of the natural resource base. Building upon the achievements of the initial investment, this strategy includes providing support to the nodes network pioneered with previous support from CEPF, as well as supporting other national civil society organizations in realizing benefits from community-based conservation activities and sharing lessons learned.

While CEPF will continue to support civil society, the revised strategy has a reduced focus on engaging the new government in implementing conservation targets such as the creation of the protected area system. The partners implementing the activities on the ground will maintain links with relevant government departments during the transition phase, however. Activities specific to ecotourism have also been removed from the consolidation plan at this time.

**Table 1. Investment Priorities & Activities**

<b>Investment priority 1:</b> Enable scaling up of the opportunities made possible by keystones (nodes) in support of community conservation action and sustainable livelihoods in priority corridors. <b>Implementing partners:</b> Conservation International – Madagascar <b>Potential leverage:</b> National Institute of Health, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, GEF SGP	
<b>Outcome 1:</b> Improved community stewardship of natural resources and livelihoods of local communities in the keystone areas.	
<b>Activity</b>	<b>CEPF budget: \$749,878</b>
Promote on-the-ground conservation action that contributes to improving communities’ overall well-being and livelihoods through building local capacity in financial and project management to sustain and advance gains in five priority areas	

- Daraina-Loky-Manambato
- Mahavavy-Kinkony
- Ankeniheny-Zahamena
- Nosivolo
- Menabe

Activities to be supported include reforestation, small animal husbandry, fruit tree gardens, ecological monitoring to reduce threats to natural forests, community forest management, aquaculture, apiculture and environmental education as a means to break the negative-feedback cycle involving slash-and-burn agriculture (tavy) to expand farm land that is only productive for two or three agricultural cycles

**Investment priority 2:** Improve the capacity of community-based natural resource management and local governance structures by sharing lessons learned both between sites in Madagascar, as well as examples of participatory forest management from elsewhere.

**Implementing partners:** Association Fanamby, Peregrine Fund Ltd

**Potential leverage:** Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation

**Outcome 2:** Improved understanding by civil society, national nongovernmental organizations and government of community-based natural resource management and governance issues.

Activity	CEPF budget \$325,000
Establish community management of the important aquatic areas of Tambohorano and Bealanana Protected Areas by empowering the local communities to manage their natural resource base through sustainable fishing and use of forest resources and initiating reforestation with native species to conserve wetland and forest habitat and natural resources.	
Replicate the approaches developed around the Anjozorobe-Angavo corridor and undertake study tours and exchange visits by community representatives and nongovernmental organizations to promote sustainable natural resource use.	
Capture lessons learned from exchanges and distribute these in a relevant media.	

**Investment priority 3:** Launch a social marketing and awareness campaign at local and national scales focused on a series of audiences and highlight the value provided and the importance of sustainable natural resource management and activities that have demonstrated socioeconomic and conservation impacts.

**Implementing partners:** Field Museum of Natural History, NGO Arboretum Antsokay

**Outcome 3:** Increased access to information of the value of Madagascar's natural resources, threats to these and ways to mitigate these threats.

Activity	CEPF budget \$324,391
<p>Through the Arboretum Antsokay undertake a campaign to raise awareness of the threats to the spiny forest and engage local communities in the conservation and management of this habitat. Activities include development of a range of education activities to enable sustainable use of natural resources and appreciation and conservation of endemic flora important for communities.</p> <p>Provide institutional support to Vahatra, an independent Malagasy organization created with CEPF support and now one of the leaders in advancing future generations of Malagasy conservation biologists. Activities will include advancement of conservation biology on Madagascar, as well as promoting the publication of a new journal on Malagasy natural history and conservation science <i>Malagasy Nature</i> to further build and share knowledge.</p>	

**Total consolidation: \$1,399,269**

**Donor Collaboration:** CEPF and its grantee partners are committed to collaborating with a variety of donors to achieve the conservation outcomes pursued under consolidation. While several bilateral donors are reviewing their aid to the nation's government agencies, CEPF is a proven vehicle to support civil society conservation efforts. This much-needed support for civil society may be more critical now than ever before to sustain and advance the gains made to date in Madagascar. The MacArthur Foundation, for example, has also continued with a broad portfolio of grants in the island nation, building on its previous investments. There are several opportunities to not only complement MacArthur-supported activities but also to leverage its support in key biodiversity areas. MacArthur also plans to continue support to several consolidation grantees for selected, complementary projects. Additional opportunities are expected to arise through collaboration with the partners identified above and others during implementation of this consolidation plan.

**Monitoring Plan:** CEPF will monitor the performance of its grantees in achieving a core set of consolidation targets as outlined below through the review of programmatic and financial progress reports and site visits to each project. The specific targets presented in Table 2 have been selected based on their relevance from the CEPF Global Results Framework. Targets have also been developed based on the unique aspects of this consolidation plan.

**Table 2: Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot Logical Framework for Consolidation**

Objective	Targets	Means of Verification
Reinforce and sustain the conservation gains achieved as a result of previous CEPF investment in Madagascar	25 civil society actors, including NGOs and the private sector, actively participating in conservation programs	Grantee performance reports and Annual Portfolio Overview Reports
	5 key biodiversity areas totaling 10,000 hectares with strengthened management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daraina-Loky-Manambato</li> <li>• Mahavavy-Kinkony</li> <li>• Ankeniheny-Zahamena</li> <li>• Nosivolo</li> <li>• Menabe</li> </ul>	Management plans, Protected Areas Tracking Tool (SP1 METT)
	10,000 hectares of production landscapes with improved management through community conservation agreements	Grantee performance reports and Protected Areas Tracking Tool (SP1 METT)
<b>Outcome 1:</b> Improved community stewardship of natural resources and livelihoods of local communities in the keystone areas.	Five nodes awarding sub-grants to civil society organizations in priority key biodiversity areas.	Grant Agreements. Grantee reports and accounts
	25 civil society groups receiving grants effectively plan and manage conservation projects	Grantee performance reports, annual overviews

	15 communities involved in sustainable use projects show socioeconomic benefits	Grantee performance reports, annual overviews
<b>Outcome 2:</b> Improved understanding by civil society, national nongovernmental organizations and government of community based natural resource management and governance issues.	Effective community management of 10 key biodiversity areas	Grantee performance reports
	Three policies permitting community based natural resource management put in place	Grantee performance reports
<b>Outcome 3:</b> Increased access to information of the value of Madagascar's natural resources, threats to these and ways to mitigate these threats.	Scientific data analyzed and made available to a wider audience through the publication of the Journal <i>Malagasy Nature</i>	Peer reviewed publications. Grantee performance reports and Annual Portfolio Overview Reports
	<p>Focused local environmental education activities undertaken focusing on the importance of the key biodiversity areas of the Spiny Forest including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Angavo</li> <li>• Cap Ste. Marie Special Reserve</li> <li>• Mahafaly Plateau Forest complex</li> <li>• Mahafaly Plateau North</li> <li>• Menarandra Forest</li> <li>• Mikea Forest</li> <li>• Amoron'I Onilahy</li> <li>• PK32-Ranobe</li> <li>• Saint Augustin Forest</li> <li>• Southwestern Coastal Wetlands and Nosy Manitse Future SAPM Marine</li> <li>• Tsimanampetsotse National Park</li> </ul>	Grantee performance reports