

## Recent Hotspot Highlights

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### East Melanesian Islands

From 5-7 December, 56 CEPF partners and grantees met at Solomon Islands National University in Honiara for CEPF's East Melanesian Islands mid-term review. Participants came from six countries—Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Australia, Fiji and the United States—to share their experiences, assess progress in the hotspot thus far, and identify and evaluate key gaps and opportunities for future investment.

Participants agreed that CEPF's US\$5.3 million invested since 2013, through 79 grants, has made a significant impact in promoting biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in the island hotspot. Forty-five civil society organizations—of which 30 organizations originate from the hotspot—have built technical and administrative capacities and have filled a critical gap by generating baseline information on 23 IUCN Globally Threatened species and 20 Key Biodiversity Areas.



The conservation results have been notable. Communities on the island of Mussau in Papua New Guinea, for example, stopped the culling of loggerhead turtles through environmental education and food security activities. In Vanuatu, the government officially protected Mount Tabwemasana, the country's highest peak and one of the highest mountains in the Pacific, based on CEPF-funded surveys and community management planning. To date, more than 180 communities have benefitted from the improved management of their environment and its ecosystem services, including from improved access to clean water and improved food security. CEPF has also helped to promote new incentives for local communities to benefit from their natural resources through ecotourism and carbon projects.

Participants also agreed that much work remains to put the hotspot on strong footing for the future. They noted logging in the Solomon Islands as a major concern: If current rates continue, the archipelago could become completely stripped of its forests in the next two to three decades. They also concurred on the importance of continuing to strengthen the institutional and project management capacity of local groups and communities, supporting local incentives for conservation such as ecotourism and crops, increasing CEPF's visibility in the region, and supporting sustainable financing to ensure the long-term viability of CEPF-supported projects and grant recipients.

A final evaluation of the meeting was overwhelmingly positive, with respondents commenting on the utility of meeting with other CEPF grantees to share their experiences and lessons learned, and on the productive discussion to help position CEPF to meet the hotspot's priorities for the remaining investment period, which is scheduled to conclude in 2021.

*Two small grants, totaling US\$36,001, have been awarded in fiscal year 2019 thus far.*

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### Tropical Andes

In Peru, CEPF grantee Nature and Culture International (NCI) has worked to have the Carpish montane forest legally protected. In December, that goal was achieved with the National Park Service of Peru approving the final technical proposal for the establishment of the Carpish Regional Conservation Area.

The approved technical proposal included the final zoning proposal approved by the communities, maps and final approved extension of 75,534 hectares that is now legally protected in perpetuity.

As a next step, NCI will assist the government in completing the consultation process with indigenous people of the Patay Rondos community, in coordination with the Ministry of Culture.

*Two large grants and one small grant, totaling US\$41,700, have been awarded thus far in fiscal year 2019.*



### Mediterranean Basin

Assad Serhal, the director general of former CEPF grantee Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) received the 2018 Midori Prize for Biodiversity.



Established in 2010 by the Japan-based AEON Environmental Foundation, the prize honors individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Serhal helped establish SPNL in 1984 during Lebanon's 15-year civil war and has worked to protect the country's natural habitats and biodiversity for some 40 years. [Learn more](#)

*Four large grants and two small grants, totaling US\$733,696, have been awarded thus far in fiscal year 2019.*

### Eastern Afromontane



When the ecosystem profile for the Eastern Afromontane Biodiversity Hotspot was prepared in 2011, stakeholders identified 24 Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) in Yemen. At the time, there were hopes of building scientific knowledge of the region, engaging Yemeni NGOs with nearby counterparts in Jordan and Ethiopia, and building broader civil society in the country. Unfortunately, since the beginning of armed conflict in 2014, which continues to this day, CEPF has been unable to make grants to Yemeni NGOs.

Rather than abandoning work there, CEPF made a grant to a Jordanian NGO, Enviromatics, which maintains connections to Yemeni scientists. Enviromatics supported the travel of 16 Yemeni scientists to

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Jordan and collected and compiled data on the KBAs. The organization created a website, [www.naturemena.com](http://www.naturemena.com), to catalog and disseminate the information.

The CEPF-funded website offers a lifeline to Yemeni conservation scientists, showing that conservation work in the country is important. Further, at some point peace will return to the region, and the data that Environmatics has collected and shared will be the base from which others can begin their efforts.

*Twelve small grants totaling US\$454,567 have been awarded in the hotspot since the beginning of fiscal year 2019.*

### Cerrado

In September, Executive Director Olivier Langrand and Grant Director Peggy Poncelet attended a meeting in Paris, organized by IUCN, with global coffee brands Nespresso, Nestlé, Illy and Lavazza to introduce the Waters of the Cerrado Consortium (Consórcio Cerrado das Aguas) and seek additional financial support. The consortium is an initiative in Brazil's Minas Gerais State by coffee growers, producers, researchers and environmentalists to deliver positive conservation and socio-economic impacts at a landscape level. CEPF has provided a large grant to IMAFLORA, a founding member of this consortium, to support best coffee production and restoration practices and to pave the way for a pilot payment-for-environmental-services scheme.



Two main action items resulted from the meeting. IUCN, the Coffee Federation and CEPF will work together to develop a project for 2019-2020 that will implement additional conservation actions in the region and support the consortium.

In addition, IUCN and members of the consortium will develop a proposal, with support from Nestlé, for the Global Coffee Platform, which helps coordinate the \$350 million spent annually on sustainability and enables all of its members (producers, international roasters, governments, traders, donors and NGOs) to align and multiply their efforts and investments to scale successful sustainability initiatives across the sector.

*Since the beginning of fiscal year 2019, two large grants and seven small grants, totaling US\$667,734, have been awarded in the hotspot.*

Photos (top to bottom): Mid-term review participants. © CI/Michele Zador; Celebrating the agreement. © Silvia Usuriaga; Assad Serhal in Lebanon. © O. Langrand; Website screenshot; Toucan in Brazilian Cerrado. © CI/photo by Peggy Poncelet