

## **Call for Letters of Inquiry Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot**

### **Small Grants**

<b>Eligible Countries:</b>	Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia
<b>Opening Date:</b>	Monday, 24 June 2019
<b>Closing Date:</b>	Thursday, 25 July 2019
<b>Budget:</b>	US\$5,000 to US\$20,000
<b>Project Timeframe:</b>	Projects are expected to start on 1 September 2019, at the earliest, and must be completed by 31 January 2020.

CEPF and BirdLife International, as regional implementation team (RIT) for the hotspot, is inviting proposals in the form of letters of inquiry (LOIs) for small grants from non-governmental organizations, community groups, private enterprises, universities and other civil society organizations (CSOs). Applicants are advised to read this call for proposals document in full and submit LOIs under the scope of this call.

### **BACKGROUND**

The [Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund](#) (CEPF) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

The Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot is the second largest hotspot in the world and the largest of the world's five Mediterranean-climate regions. CEPF's niche for investment in the Mediterranean was formulated through a participatory process that engaged civil society, donor and governmental stakeholders throughout the region. The resulting investment strategy (2017-2022) is documented within the [ecosystem profile](#) (PDF – 16 MB). This investment strategy is comprised of a series of strategic directions, broken down into investment priorities outlining the types of activities that are eligible for CEPF funding.

## ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Non-governmental organizations, community groups, universities and private enterprises may apply for funding. Individuals must work with civil society organizations to develop applications rather than apply directly.

Organizations must have their own bank account and be authorized under relevant national laws to receive charitable contributions.

Government-owned enterprises or institutions are eligible only if they can demonstrate that the enterprise or institution has:

- a legal personality independent of any government agency or actor;
- the authority to apply for and receive private funds; and
- may not assert a claim of sovereign immunity.

Grants cannot be used for:

- the purchase of land, involuntary resettlement of people, or activities that negatively affect physical cultural resources, including those important to local communities.
- activities adversely affecting Indigenous Peoples or where these communities have not provided their broad support to the project activities.
- removal or alteration of any physical cultural property (includes sites having archaeological, paleontological, historical, religious or unique natural values). Proposed activities should observe all other relevant safeguard and social policies as set out on the [CEPF website](#).

## ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The scope of this call is limited to the types of activities and locations described below.

CEPF is calling for LOIs to **provide a review**, to elaborate and answer the issues described below.

LOIs will only be accepted for the following strategic direction and countries:

- Strategic Direction 3: Promote the maintenance of traditional land-use practices necessary for the conservation of Mediterranean biodiversity in priority corridors of high cultural and biodiversity value.
- Countries: Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia
- Corridors: Orontes Valley and Levantine Mountains, the Atlas Mountains, and the Dorsal and Telian Atlas

### **i) Strategic Direction 3**

Mediterranean biodiversity has evolved with human land-use practices over several thousand years, to the extent that many of the most threatened terrestrial species in the hotspot are dependent on habitats that are maintained through continuing human interventions for agriculture, seasonal grazing or harvesting of wild products.

The species that depend on these anthropogenic systems can become threatened when an established management system is abandoned and vegetation succession occurs; when traditional sustainable practices change and cause degradation and erosion (e.g. over-grazing); or when modern agricultural and land-use practices, including the use of irrigation and agrochemicals, replace traditional practices and eliminate the opportunity for wild biodiversity to co-exist with agricultural systems. More information can be found in the [ecosystem profile](#) (PDF – 16 MB).

Under this strategic direction (Table 1), CEPF aims to support CSOs to work with local community land managers and local businesses to pioneer innovative ways to sustain the elements of traditional land-use practices that are important for biodiversity.

To maximize the value of projects in demonstrating innovative approaches to land management, in order to conserve biodiversity values, corridors were selected where elements of traditional management systems are still the main land use (Figure 1).

**Table 1: Strategic Direction 3 and Investment Priorities**

<b>Strategic Direction</b>	<b>Investment Priorities</b>
3: Promote the maintenance of traditional land-use practices necessary for the conservation of Mediterranean biodiversity in priority corridors of high cultural and biodiversity value.	3.1: Support local communities to increase the benefit they receive from maintaining and enhancing traditional, biodiversity-friendly land-use and agricultural practices.
	3.2: Promote awareness of the value of traditional, biodiversity-friendly land-use practices among local community and government decision makers, to secure their recognition and support.
	3.3: Encourage business actors in the trade chain to support and promote traditional, biodiversity-friendly land-use practices.

**Figure 1. Map of corridors under Strategic Direction 3**



**ii) Background**

CEPF launched a call for proposals for this strategic direction in 2018 and several applications were submitted. Generally, there were major gaps in the concepts, illustrated below:

- There was a lack of clarity about the relationship between traditional land -use practices, their biodiversity importance, the changes affecting these land -uses, and the underlying causes ('drivers') behind these changes.
- There was a lack of focus in the project interventions that were being proposed to address these changes in land -use, how these interventions would make a difference in terms of demonstration value, and the prospects for scaling-up and sustainability.

It is apparent that key questions still need to be answered:

1. What is the biodiversity value associated with traditional land-use practices, and how have traditional practices maintained such values?
2. Are such biodiversity-rich traditional land-use practices changing and, if so, what are the drivers of such changes and at what scale?
3. What are the impacts on biodiversity from shifting traditional land uses to new modern practices?

4. What are the options for supporting biodiversity-rich traditional land-use practices and addressing the causes of the changes that are happening?
5. What would be the economic and social arguments for supporting traditional practices, who would be the beneficiaries and supporters, and who would not be supportive?
6. What wider economic, social or political conditions would be needed for these interventions to be effective, and are these feasible and realistic?
7. What product lines and/or supply chains might be supported that could enhance the economic arguments for maintaining traditional practices?

CEPF projects under this strategic direction need to address these issues, focus on biodiversity conservation and provide sustainable interventions.

In this call, CEPF is seeking LOIs for small grants to provide a review, which will help answer these questions for the eligible areas.

The findings from the selected reviews will provide the basis for CEPF to focus its investment on interventions that will support traditional land-use practices of high biodiversity value. CEPF will use the findings to announce further Calls for Proposals for large grants for strategic direction 3.

### **iii) Requirements for this Call**

CEPF is calling for LOIs to **undertake a review**, which will enhance our understanding of the relationship between production landscapes and native biodiversity in priority corridors.

Key deliverables of the review:

- Focus on one of the corridors indicated in Table 2, only in the countries specified.
- Identify the native biodiversity associations to agriculture, including any beneficial and adverse impacts on agriculture.
- Identify products or value-chains that could benefit local native biodiversity.
- Provide an analysis of the drivers of change of traditional land-use.
- Explain the options available to promote the re-introduction or maintenance of traditional land-uses.
- Describe the feasibility of different practices and links to other stakeholders, including factors such as land ownership and management, necessary knowledge and skills that still exist within local communities, and potential engagement to the private sector.
- Provide a summary of best practices (up to 4), on traditional and non-traditional practices, including products or value chains, which include the integration of biodiversity-friendly land uses with a proven added value of increased benefits to local people adopting such practices.

**Table 2. Corridors and countries eligible under this call**

<b>Corridor</b>	<b>Countries</b>
Orontes Valley and Levantine Mountains	Lebanon, Jordan
The Atlas Mountains	Morocco
The Dorsal and Telian Atlas	Tunisia

Successful applicants will provide evidence of their understanding of the strategic direction, and how they will undertake the review to gather all the information required.

The review should be compiled in the format of a formal report, in English or French. The completed report with its findings will be made publicly available.

The period of project implementation (compiling the review) should take no longer than 5 months. The majority of work should be undertaken in 2019 and the report completed by 31 January 2020.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Applications (LOIs) can be submitted in **English or French**.

Please download the Letter of Inquiry (LOI) form in the language of your choice:

- [English](#) (Word – 836 KB)
- [French](#) (Word – 840 KB)

Applicants must submit their LOI by the deadline to [CEPF-MED-RIT@birdlife.org](mailto:CEPF-MED-RIT@birdlife.org).

You will receive an acknowledgement from the RIT confirming that your submission has been received.

The LOI review process will take approximately three weeks from the deadline date. The review committee will select the strongest LOIs that meet the eligibility criteria. All applicants will receive a response from the RIT following the review of their project.

Applications that have been accepted will be moved to the second stage and asked to elaborate their LOI with a more detailed budget and logframe. Final approved LOIs will be awarded a small grant, with an agreement made between BirdLife International, as the RIT for the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot, and the applicant's institution (the "grantee"). Grants will be denominated in United States dollars and grant agreements will be in English.

## REFERENCE MATERIALS

All applicants are advised to review the CEPF Investment Strategy for the Mediterranean Basin within the ecosystem profile. This provides more detail on the types of activities CEPF will fund under each investment priority:

- Ecosystem Profile: [English](#) (PDF – 16 MB)
- Ecosystem Profile Technical Summary:
  - [English](#) (PDF – 2.2 MB)
  - [Arabic](#) (PDF – 2.6 MB)
  - [French](#) (PDF – 2.9 MB)

An interactive map of the Mediterranean Hotspot can be accessed [here](#); use the top right-hand “layer list” icon to select the layer you need.

Helpful resources:

- [Eligibility and How To Apply](#)
- [Safeguard Policies](#)
- [CEPF and Gender](#)
- [12 Tips for Getting Your Grant Idea Funded](#)
- [CEPF Project Database](#)

## CONTACT

Before applying, applicants are encouraged to discuss project ideas and eligibility with the programme officer for your region:

- Middle East: Programme Officer, Sharif Jbour: [sharif.jbour@birdlife.org](mailto:sharif.jbour@birdlife.org)
- North Africa Programme Officer Awatef Abiadh: [awatef.abiadh@lpo.fr](mailto:awatef.abiadh@lpo.fr)

For general queries about the CEPF Mediterranean Basin Hotspot programme, please contact the Regional Implementation Team Manager Liz Smith at [liz.smith@birdlife.org](mailto:liz.smith@birdlife.org), or visit the regional implementation team’s [website](#).