

## Call for Letters of Inquiry for Multi-Hotspot Grants

**Eligible Hotspots:** Proposed projects must address multiple hotspots, including at least one of the following: Cerrado, Eastern Afromontane and Indo-Burma.

**Opening Date:** Friday, 15 February 2019

**Closing Date:** Friday, 12 April 2019

**Grant Amount:** US\$20,000 to US\$100,000

**Eligible Languages:** CEPF accepts applications in English, French, Portuguese or Spanish.

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is currently accepting letters of inquiry (LOIs) from civil society organizations (NGOs, community groups, private enterprises, universities, etc.) for projects that promote collaboration for biodiversity conservation among two or more biodiversity hotspots.

### BACKGROUND

CEPF is designed to safeguard Earth's biologically richest and most threatened regions, known as [biodiversity hotspots](#). 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 that civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

Since 2001, CEPF has funded conservation in 24 of the world's 36 biodiversity hotspots. Over this period, CEPF's grantees have made significant contributions to safeguarding the biodiversity hotspots, developing sustainable livelihoods for local people, and strengthening local conservation leadership. Impacts include: creation and expansion of 14.8 million hectares of protected areas; improved management of biodiversity within 8.1 million hectares of production landscapes; and conservation actions benefiting 1,250 globally threatened species.

CEPF grants catalyze partnerships among civil society organizations, and between them and public and private-sector actors. Through these partnerships, CEPF's grantees have been able to develop and test innovative models and tools for conservation that empower local actors to protect, restore and sustainably manage critical ecosystems in ways that conserve biodiversity, improve human well-being and enhance resilience to climate change. Among other places, these models and tools have been developed in the Cerrado, Eastern Afromontane and Indo-Burma hotspots, where innovative approaches to mainstreaming biodiversity into public policy and private sector practices are being piloted as part of an initiative to conserve biodiversity cost effectively and progress toward long-term institutional sustainability.

Under this call, CEPF is seeking to support initiatives that involve two or more hotspots within its global

portfolio that face similar challenges and to facilitate collaboration among conservation actors that involves replication of innovative models or tools by means of case studies, study tours, exchange visits or other appropriate activities. In this way, cross-learning between civil society organizations from different hotspots will be facilitated, and South-South collaboration will be encouraged.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the CEPF website, particularly the sections on [Eligibility](#), [Before You Apply](#) and [How to Apply](#). Potential applicants who are uncertain of the eligibility of their organization or project concept are encouraged to contact CEPF at [cepf@cepf.net](mailto:cepf@cepf.net) for clarification.

## SCOPE OF THE CALL

Projects should cover at least two hotspots from Appendix A, including at least one of the following hotspots:

- Cerrado
- Eastern Afromontane
- Indo-Burma

Projects should build upon current and/or past investments by CEPF. Projects should demonstrate clear and concrete conservation results that address one of the following topics. (Projects that address other topics will not be considered).

### **1. Sharing experience on mainstreaming biodiversity into large development projects.**

Large development projects, including logging, agriculture, mining, roads, dams and tourism development, are a major threat to biodiversity in all hotspots. The CEPF global portfolio contains good examples of civil society organizations engaging constructively to mainstream biodiversity conservation into development plans, policies and projects. There are opportunities to link former CEPF grantees with experience of engaging successfully on these issues with civil society organizations that are facing similar challenges in other hotspots.

### **2. Responding to the impacts of Asian overseas investments in natural resources sectors.**

Overseas investments by Asian countries with large and growing economies are being recognized as a driver of biodiversity loss in hotspots across the globe. There are opportunities to connect civil society organizations in hotspots experiencing these impacts with organizations in the countries where the investments originate. The aim of these collaborations would be to promote the adoption of social and environmental safeguards by Asian companies and financial institutions that are active in natural resources sectors with a large environmental footprint (forestry, agriculture, energy, etc.).

### **3. Forging new partnerships to tackle the illegal wildlife trade.**

The illegal trade of wildlife is a profitable enterprise being perpetrated by criminal gangs at a scale comparable to human trafficking and the illegal arms trade. It is driving biodiversity loss in many hotspots that serve as sources of wild animals and plants destined for markets in Asia. Many of the major hubs for the illegal wildlife trade are located in the Indo-Burma Hotspot, where CEPF grantees have been working on intelligence-led enforcement, consumer-demand reduction and voluntary commitments by the private sector, especially logistics companies. There are opportunities to connect civil society organizations in Indo-Burma with civil society organizations in “source” hotspots, such as the Eastern Afromontane, Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany and Wallacea, to demonstrate more effective responses.

**4. Replicating wildlife-friendly agriculture models.**

CEPF grantees in the Cerrado, Eastern Afromontane and Indo-Burma hotspots have piloted various models of wildlife-friendly agriculture, using standards, certification, eco-labeling and other economic incentives to strengthen management of biodiversity within production landscapes. A number of these models have potential for replication, not only within the hotspots where they have been developed, but also in other hotspots. This will allow the effectiveness of these models to be tested in different socio-ecological conditions, as a step toward wider amplification.

**5. Replicating community-based fish conservation zones in freshwater ecosystems.**

CEPF grantees have piloted community-based fish conservation zones in freshwater ecosystems throughout the Indo-Burma Hotspot. These models have proven a win-win model, bringing rapid and substantive benefits to local communities—in terms of increased income and food security—while strengthening the conservation of threatened species and their habitats. A considerable body of knowledge now exists that can be transferred to civil society organizations in other hotspots, where freshwater conservation often receives less attention than that of terrestrial or marine biodiversity.

**6. Developing training materials for Key Biodiversity Area identification.**

Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) provide the scientific basis for prioritizing sites for CEPF investment. Consequently, the identification of KBAs is an integral part of CEPF's investment in any hotspot, not only because of their utility to CEPF but also because, as sites that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity, KBAs can be used to mainstream biodiversity into public policy and private sector practices. The adoption of a new global standard for identification of KBAs in 2016 introduced new requirements—in terms of criteria, documentation and process—which need to be met. Drawing on experience from CEPF-supported KBA identification exercises, there is a need to develop training materials aimed at civil society organizations to help grow the number of actors who are able to lead and participate in KBA identification as well as communication materials to introduce the KBA concept to potential users of KBA data in the hotspots.

**7. Replicate best-practice approaches to building the capacity of applicants to CEPF.**

Various approaches have been tested for helping CEPF grant applicants design impact-based conservation projects, engage stakeholders (including integrating gender into project design), and monitor and communicate the impact of their work. There is a need to capture the best practice from pilot hotspot(s) and replicate it more widely. This could involve development of a toolkit adaptable to local contexts, or other suitable means.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The funding for this solicitation is sourced from a portion of CEPF funds dedicated to multi-hotspot grants and to the Cerrado, Eastern Afromontane and Indo-Burma. CEPF does not suggest that these three hotspots are more important than any others in terms of the seven priority topics named above.

This call is open to both international civil society organizations and civil society organizations local to the biodiversity hotspots. Please note, however, that preference will be given to projects that demonstrate a leading role for local organizations and/or an explicit focus on capacity building for local

civil society. Individuals must work with civil society organizations to develop applications, rather than apply directly.

Grants cannot be used for: (i) purchase of land; (ii) removal or alteration of any physical cultural property (including those with archaeological, palaeontological, historical, religious or unique natural values); (iii) relocation of people or any other form of involuntary resettlement; or (iv) capitalization of trust funds. All activities must comply with CEPF's social and environmental safeguard policies, which can be found [here](#).

## HOW TO APPLY

Applicants must apply through CEPF's online portal, [ConservationGrants](#). First-time users will need to [register](#) to create an account. Applicants encountering any technical difficulties with the online portal should contact [conservationgrants@conservation.org](mailto:conservationgrants@conservation.org).

The first step in the application process is to submit a letter of inquiry (LOI). LOIs can be submitted in English, French, Portuguese or Spanish. Successful applicants at the LOI stage will be invited to prepare a full proposal, providing more information, a detailed budget and supporting documentation. CEPF is not able to accept applications submitted by email or in hard copy.

**Applicants must submit their LOIs by 6.00 p.m. Washington D.C., time (Eastern Time) on Friday, 12 April 2019.** LOIs received after this time will be rejected. Applicants will receive an email acknowledging receipt of their LOI at the time of submission. LOIs will then undergo technical review by the CEPF Secretariat. Applicants will be informed whether or not they are invited to the full proposal stage within three months. Detailed guidance on preparing a full proposal will be provided along with the letter of invitation.

Full proposals that receive a positive review will lead to the award of a grant between Conservation International, as the host of the CEPF Secretariat, and the recipient (the "grantee"). Grants will be denominated in United States dollars and grant agreements will be in English. It is anticipated that grants will start on or after 1 September 2019, and be no longer than 18 months in duration.

## APPENDIX A

### List of Biodiversity Hotspots in the CEPF Global Portfolio

#### Hotspots where CEPF is currently investing:

1. Cerrado
2. East Melanesian Islands
3. Eastern Afromontane
4. Guinean Forests of West Africa
5. Indo-Burma
6. Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands
7. Mediterranean Basin
8. Tropical Andes
9. Wallacea

#### Hotspots where CEPF previously invested:

1. Atlantic Forest
2. Cape Floristic Region
3. Caribbean Islands
4. Caucasus
5. Coastal Forests of Eastern Africa
6. Himalaya
7. Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany
8. Mesoamerica
9. Mountains of Southwest China
10. Philippines
11. Polynesia-Micronesia
12. Succulent Karoo
13. Sundaland
14. Tumbes-Chocó-Magdalena
15. Western Ghats and Sri Lanka