

Call for Letters of Inquiry

Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot

Small Grants

Eligible Countries:	All eligible countries in the hotspot
Opening Date:	Tuesday 17 December 2019
Closing Date:	Wednesday 15 January 2020
Budget:	US\$25,000 to US\$40,000
Theme:	Strategic Direction 5: Conduct a regional, thematically focused workshop in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
Project Timeframe:	The successful grant is expected to start at the beginning of February 2020, with the workshop held from 30 March to 3 April 2020.

CEPF and BirdLife International, serving as [regional implementation team](#) (RIT) for the hotspot, are 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. 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,

available [here \(PDF – 31 MB\)](#). This investment strategy comprises of a series of strategic directions, broken down into investment priorities outlining the types of activities that will be eligible for CEPF funding.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Civil society groups, including 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 seeking LOIs from organizations able to organize a regional, thematically focused workshop on freshwater biodiversity and plant conservation, as part of the CEPF Mediterranean Basin mid-term assessment process.

LOIs will **only be accepted for Strategic Direction 5**, and for an event in **Bosnia and Herzegovina**. One application will be accepted at the end of the review process. Applicant organizations based outside of Bosnia and Herzegovina may submit an LOI as long as they can demonstrate a practical working knowledge of the country, display the capability to use local suppliers, and have the necessary skills to manage the logistics required for this regional event.

I) BACKGROUND

i) Regional Capacity Building

During the formulation of the CEPF investment strategy (2017-2022), it was identified that there is a need to facilitate regional-level interactions, to share lessons learned and good practice approaches developed by grantees, and to establish connections among civil society organizations (CSOs) around the Mediterranean Basin. Such interventions are expected to contribute to the development of a regional community of conservation organizations that can provide mutual support to its members beyond the end of the CEPF investment phase.

Therefore, CEPF created a strategic direction based around regional capacity building, with a focus on sharing best practices and knowledge between organizations and strengthening these networks (see Table 1). The investment priorities under this strategic direction provide opportunities to work with groups of grantees across the hotspot to undertake shared learning on themes such as the management of freshwater Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and the conservation of plants. They also assist grantees to learn about international and regional processes, including international conventions and associated national processes (e.g., CBD, Natura 2000, SDGs, UNFCCC, etc.).

Table 1: Strategic Direction 5 and Investment Priorities

Strategic direction	Investment Priorities
5: Strengthen the regional conservation community through the sharing of best practices and knowledge among grantees across the hotspot.	5.1: Support regional and thematically focused learning processes for CSOs and stakeholders.
	5.2: Support grantees to understand and engage with international conventions and processes.

ii) The mid-term assessment

In 2020, the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot program enters its mid-term of the second phase of investment (2017-2022). This is a valuable time to evaluate the impact of the

investment on the targeted conservation outcomes to date, review gaps in the portfolio of projects, discuss challenges, and seek recommendations for the remaining years.

A major aspect of this evaluation is to bring together grantees, to gather feedback on the operations of the program, take the opportunity to share experience and lessons learned, and facilitate in-depth discussions on the different themes of the investment.

II) EVENT INFORMATION

Key requirements:

- Held the week of Monday 30 March to Friday 3 April 2020.
- Held in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in either Trebinje or Mostar.
- Hosted in English, with facilities for translation in multiple languages.

Workshop objectives:

- Build the capacity of grantees in their relevant field of work; in either freshwater biodiversity or plant conservation.
- Enable the exchange of experience and networking between CSOs and experts for each conservation topic.
- Provide the platform for CEPF grantees to provide feedback on the CEPF investment, discuss challenges and the future focus of CSOs and CEPF.

Participants will be joining from around the Mediterranean Basin region (the Balkans, Middle East, North Africa and Cabo Verde). The event will focus on two core themes of the CEPF investment in the Mediterranean: freshwater biodiversity and plant conservation. Participants will primarily be CEPF grantees who have projects under these two themes.

The event will be structured with the first two-day workshop on one theme, followed by a joint field trip, and then the next two-day thematic workshop. Grantee participants will only attend the workshop relevant to their project. Currently, it is undecided which theme will be hosted first; the RIT will work with the successful host organization to finalize these plans depending on logistics and participant availability.

The field trip in the middle of the event will allow a crossover of participants to aid networking and collaboration. The RIT already has in mind an agenda for the field trip as it will include visiting grantee projects in the area, however, the host organization can make suggestions to this plan and offer alternatives or additions.

The RIT requests that there is an evening event for both the freshwater biodiversity and plant groups of participants, on either the first or last night of each workshop. The RIT welcomes ideas regarding what this could consist of.

The agenda for the workshops themselves will be determined by the RIT and contain different sessions around training, sharing best practices and discussing different topics. The host organization will be involved in finalizing the agenda with the RIT, and will be encouraged to offer recommendations and ideas on how to run sessions. The host organization will lead on arranging logistics around the required timetable, and support the smooth running of the event.

Event Guidelines

- Participants:
 - 80 estimated participants for the whole week event, with approximately 40 participants for each thematic workshop.
 - These are primarily CEPF grantees, other key experts and stakeholders, and members of the CEPF thematic expert groups.
 - Representatives from CEPF and the regional implementation team will be present for the whole week.
 - Participants will be joining from throughout the Mediterranean region, including Cabo Verde, and some may require travel advice.
 - Support staff from the host organization and translators.

- Location and venue:
 - Trebinje or Mostar.
 - Access to various transport links.
 - Conference facilities – a room to hold up to 80 people and, ideally, additional small rooms for breakout group discussions.
 - Meeting equipment available.
 - Accommodation – required for all participants for the days they are attending. If rooms cannot be found in the same place or in the same location as the conference room, we ask that they are within walking distance or that suitable timely transport can be arranged.
 - Catering for all participants (breakfast, lunch, dinner and coffee breaks).

III) HOST ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES

The host organization for the event will have experience coordinating large events, have the ability to convene participants of multiple nationalities from different countries, have a good understanding of CEPF, and be familiar with Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The timeline for arranging this event is short, so the organization will need to be able to work closely with the RIT to achieve tight deadlines.

Support guidelines:

- Overall event coordination:

- Provide an event coordinator to oversee the overall running of the event, logistics and support to the RIT.
- Ensure clear and effective communications with participants, including updates of event details and responding to queries.
- The logistical arrangements:
 - Book the venue for the event and ongoing communications.
 - Arrange suitable conference facilities, equipment and materials needed.
 - Arrange food and refreshments for all participants.
 - Arrange translators, with input and support from the RIT.
 - Book the accommodation for all participants.
 - Arrange the travel and transfers for participants where required.
 - Arrange the field trip, with support from the RIT.
 - Arrange an evening event for each thematic group.
- The facilitation of the workshops:
 - Ensure at least one member of staff is available prior and during each session to ensure smooth running of the event.
 - Ensure the set-up of the meeting room/s with equipment and materials.
 - Arrange a registration process for participants.
 - Ensure media coverage and communications of the event.
 - Ensure meeting minutes are recorded for all sessions.
- Production of an event report:
 - Produce a consolidated report, containing the meeting minutes from the two thematic workshops.
 - Include participant list.
 - Include media references and photos of the event.
- Financial management of meeting:
 - Manage expenses within the budget and with procurement procedures.
 - Arrange all invoicing to suppliers.
 - Arrange all reimbursements to participants where relevant.
 - Keep receipts of all expenditures.
 - Produce a final budget report.

IV) EVENT BUDGET

The budget must be completed to the best estimate possible, with anticipated meeting costs projected based on the information given. The comments box should be used to explain unit costs and calculations where possible. Costs are to be calculated in USD dollars (\$) with the exchange rate stated.

The CEPF and RIT members will cover their own costs, and some grantee projects already have travel costs covered for attending regional meetings, therefore, the budget required for this grant application will only need to cover the expenses for the other participants; those estimates are shown below.

For this application, please include the costs listed below at a minimum, and add on additional costs where you feel they are required:

- Travel: US\$18,000
- Hotel Accommodation: US\$7,000

These numbers are currently an estimate and may change as the RIT gathers more information. The RIT will work with the successful organization to ensure all costs are adequately covered in the final budget, before contracting the grant.

The applicant should add in support costs for managing the grant as required; staff costs, rent, supplies, etc., can all be added into the relevant budget line. Management support costs of up to 13 percent can be added to the budget if required; if so, information on what this cost covers must be clearly stated in the comments box.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications (LOIs) must be written in **English**. Please **download the letter of inquiry form** here: [LOI Form](#)

Applicants must submit their letter of inquiry by the deadline to CEPF-MED-RIT@birdlife.org.

You will receive an acknowledgement from the RIT confirming your submission.

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

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. The final approved LOI 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, which provides more detail on the types of activity CEPF will fund under each investment priority.

- Ecosystem Profile: [English \(PDF – 31 MB\)](#)
- Ecosystem Profile - Technical Summary: [English \(PDF – 4.6 MB\)](#), [Arabic \(PDF – 2.7 MB\)](#), [French \(PDF – 5 MB\)](#)
- Mediterranean Hotspot map [here](#)

CEPF is committed to integrating gender into its portfolio. Applicants should design projects and write proposals that consider gender issues in the achievement of their conservation impacts. CEPF has developed several resources that can help applicants to design, implement and evaluate gender-aware projects ([CEPF Gender Toolkit](#)) and understand what CEPF seeks in a proposal ([CEPF Gender Fact Sheet](#)). Visit the [CEPF and Gender webpage](#) to learn more about how CEPF addresses gender in the projects it supports.

Help and resources:

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

CONTACT

Before applying, applicants are encouraged to discuss ideas and eligibility. Please contact our Small Grant Coordinator for the Balkans, Milica Mišković, at milica.miskovic@pticesrbije.rs, tel: +381 213023361.

For general enquiries please contact Small Grant Manager Salwa Elhalawani at Salwa.Elhalawani@birdlife.org, or visit www.birdlife.org/cepf-med.