

## **Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund**

Fifth Meeting of the Donor Council  
World Bank Headquarters, Washington, DC  
31 July 2003

### **Summary of CEPF progress since February 2003**

#### **Update on Partnership**

In February, the CEPF Donor Council approved the partnership's expansion to an 11<sup>th</sup> biodiversity hotspot: the Succulent Karoo. The CEPF strategy for this southern Africa hotspot includes awarding grants to nongovernmental and community groups to expand protected areas and engage specific land users such as the agricultural sector, mining companies and communal authorities to help meet conservation objectives identified by the Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Planning (SKEP) process.

Following this approval, more than 130 people attended a special event on 7 April in the heart of the hotspot to mark the official launch of the partnership's new \$8 million investment strategy for the region. What stood out at this gathering in Southern Namaqualand, South Africa was the diversity of participants from South Africa and Namibia—from community leaders, local landowners and nongovernmental nature and tourism groups to representatives of governmental institutions and multi-national mining companies. The launch also garnered significant media coverage, with CEPF Executive Director Jorgen Thomsen and local stakeholders featuring in top news stories on SABC TV and Radio and Namaqualand Radio and in *Business Day*, the nation's leading daily newspaper for the business community; *Africa Geographic*; and *Sawabona*, South African Airways' in-flight magazine.

Together with the Japan government and other partners, CEPF is exploring a series of events in Japan this October. These include:

- A joint launch with BirdLife of a condensed regional conservation strategy and action plan for threatened birds of Asia. As part of a CEPF grant, BirdLife is condensing the vast source book *Threatened Birds of Asia (the Red Data Book)* into a prospectus of about 150 pages. The initial funding for this book was provided by the Government of Japan, with a successful launch of the book in Tokyo. The first launch had a significant impact in Japan and throughout the region, and this new product is seen as a good opportunity to publicize this revision as well as the Government of Japan's partnership with the CEPF initiative.
- Meetings with technical representatives from JBIC and JICA (among others) in Japan to get input on the four upcoming ecosystem profiles, for which Japan has significant strategic interest: Indo-Burma; Eastern Himalayas; Western Ghats & Sri Lanka; and Polynesia & Micronesia
- A potential seminar to inform Japanese NGOs about the opportunity presented by CEPF.

#### **Emerging Results and Highlights from the Field**

- In the Atlantic Forest hotspot, the Alliance for the Conservation of the Atlantic Forest launched a new grants program supported by CEPF to assist landowners in sustainable management of existing private reserves and in creating new ones in the Brazilian part of the hotspot. The alliance includes CI-Brasil and SOS Mata Atlântica. The new grants program, which has already received more than 40 grant applications, is focusing its efforts on Private Natural Heritage Reserves (RPPNs) in the Central and Serra do Mar conservation corridors in Brazil. While more than 500 private reserves exist in Brazil today, many landowners need technical or financial support to effectively manage these areas and maximize the benefits for conservation.
- In the Guinean Forests of West Africa hotspot, a CEPF-funded survey by the Save My Future Foundation revealed an alarmingly high incidence of sea turtle nest poaching in Liberia. Poachers had

struck 214 of 223—or more than 95 percent—of the sea turtle nests observed. Building on baseline data collected in 2000, the survey included a series of community meetings and site visits from September 2002 to March 2003 in all coastal communities in Sinoe, Grand Kru and Maryland counties. Of greatest concern is that the killing of nesting females and poaching of eggs could have a long-term effect on sea turtle populations in the region, which include populations of the endangered leatherback, Olive Ridley and hawksbill sea turtles. The findings will now be used to help develop a national strategy for the conservation of sea turtles.

- In the Philippines hotspot, the Haribon Foundation kicked off a comprehensive program to arrest species loss. The program is made possible by a CEPF grant. While CEPF focuses primarily on Eastern Mindanao, Palawan and Sierra Madre, the new Emergency Action for Threatened Species Program is working across the rest of the hotspot to help conserve the 30 percent of the Philippines' unique species found outside the CEPF focal areas, particularly in Cebu, Negros, Mindoro, Panay, Sibuyan and Tawi-tawi. As part of the program, the Foundation recently co-sponsored this year's Wildlife Conservation Society of the Philippines Symposium, where it led a workshop on threatened vertebrate species. In addition, the Foundation conducted a one-week field course jointly supported by the Royal Netherlands Embassy to further conservation research on threatened species.
- In the Tropical Andes hotspot, a series of workshops brought together members of indigenous communities, private industry and conservation organizations to share lessons and experiences as representatives of three of the world's most successful community-based ecotourism lodges. The meetings took place in each of the three participating lodges, located deep in the rainforests of their respective countries: Posada Amazonas in Peru, Chalalan Ec lodge in Bolivia and Kapawi Ec lodge in Ecuador. Members of Ese'ejá, Quechua-Tacana and Achuar indigenous groups, along with representatives from CI and two tourism businesses—Rainforest Expeditions from Peru and Canodros from Ecuador—participated in each workshop. The exchange, called “Learning Host to Host,” was funded by CEPF as part of its strategic approach in the Tropical Andes to encourage community-based biodiversity conservation and natural resource management. Planned outputs now include a book on the workshops' findings and recommended best practices for community-based ecotourism, a manual for tour operators and communities and a series of articles for the general public. In the meantime, the diverse group of participants is already benefiting from the new alliances they have established. With a clearer understanding of the roles of ecotourism in their lives, the three communities will soon begin joint marketing their businesses.

A full list of approved grants for this period is included at the end of this summary of progress.

#### **Increasing Communication with Grantees, Donor Partners and the Conservation Community**

CEPF has continued to enhance its communications efforts to promote and help advance its mission, while expanding its relationship with grantees and partners and attracting new ones. One of the major communications aims is to demonstrate and share progress and lessons learned.

- Subscribers to CEPF E-News, the CEPF electronic newsletter, now number more than 700—a more than 100 percent increase from the 315 subscribers at the time of our last report to the Donor Council. Consistent marketing of the newsletter has helped the subscriber base, which includes all CEPF grantees and many others, grow each month since the newsletter's launch in May 2002. CEPF grantees and other organizations are now also proactively contributing ideas and draft articles for the newsletter, illustrating how the newsletter is becoming a resource both for and about the growing CEPF community. The newsletter is also proving to be an excellent tool to cross-market [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net), with the number of site visits rising dramatically each month just after the newsletter's distribution.
- Visitors to the CEPF Web site during Jan.-June 2003 totaled 61,355, a dramatic increase from the 28,388 visitors during the last six months of 2002. The visitors viewed 130,425 pages compared to 52,012 pages viewed during the last six months of 2002. During Jan.-June 2003, visitors also downloaded 73,423 documents from the site, including ecosystem profiles, applications and guidelines. These numbers illustrate how the site redesign, which launched in late December, together with marketing efforts have been highly successful.

- CEPF has launched a major project to post final reports from its projects on [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net). The project has focused on Africa to start, with 10 project reports posted in the past few months in PDF format. While the number is small to start, visitors to the site have downloaded more than 2,800 copies of these reports since March. CEPF will now expand the project to better market and share final project reports and lessons learned from CEPF projects in multiple hotspots through a variety of communications mediums, including [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net), CEPF E-News and the CEPF annual report.
- The first CEPF Annual Report has proven to be a very useful, illustrative tool for the CEPF Management Team, regional coordinators, partners and grantees. Nearly 1,000 printed copies have been distributed and visitors to the CEPF Website have downloaded 538 copies. CEPF is now preparing its 2003 Annual Report. The following is a draft outline:

### **CEPF 2003 Annual Report Outline**

#### **Objective**

Demonstrate CEPF benefits, results and lessons learned during FY03 – with a focus on the partnership’s strategic approach to engage civil society in hotspot conservation.

#### **Target Audiences**

Primary: Potential & existing donors

Secondary: grantees

#### **Approach**

Produce a high-quality publication as a core CEPF marketing tool to demonstrate value of CEPF investment and attract additional donors. Showcase innovation, people and progress in text, sidebars, pictures and graphics.

→ Period covered: FY03 = July 2002-June 2003

→ Initial length estimate: 32 pages

#### **Preliminary Content Overview**

##### **Inside front cover**

Purpose

Table of contents

##### **Message from the Partners**

Joint letter signed by five partners (focus on benefits/results: why the partners came together & why they stay together)

Sidebar: The Partnership (existing short paragraphs on each partner)

##### **Map indicating hotspots where CEPF supported projects during period**

(adapted from National Geographic map, as in 2002 Annual Report)

##### **Results (demonstrating progress/outcomes & links to regional strategies)**

Key achievements of FY (bulletpoints of key achievements)

Regional portfolios (short articles on projects/results)

Africa

Asia

Latin America

##### **CEPF Online (Web site, newsletter as primary means of communicating with & about grantees)**

Taking Stock for the Future

**Monitoring & evaluation; lessons learned plus expansion to new regions, etc.**

**Projects Supported**

List to include:

- 1) grant title, grantee and amount only – with referral to Web site for full listings of all grants to details and further details OR
  - 2) title, grantee, amount, description and partners as per 2002 Annual Report
- (Grant listings tallied 15 text pages before design for 2002 report; now 30+ text pages so may be too lengthy for inclusion but previously the CEPF Web site did not include this full list as it does now.

**Financial Summary** (1 page as per 2002 Annual Report)

**CEPF Donor Council, Working Group, Senior Staff, Regional Coordinators** (names + titles for all; full contact details for regional coordinators)

Sidebar: Roles and Responsibilities (as per 2002 Annual Report)

**Join Us**

Become a Donor Partner (focus on attracting new donors)

Potential sidebar: interview with Mohamed T. El-Ashry, outgoing GEF Chairman, on benefits of CEPF approach/action to date

Apply for Grants

**Other** (back inside/outside cover)

Publication credits

Photo credits

CEPF contact details, Web site address

**Taking Stock – Update on CEPF Monitoring and Evaluation**

As CEPF moves into its third year of operations and grant making, the ability to monitor CEPF's success as a fund and move forward with lessons learned, is increasingly a priority. The past few months have been didactic and productive in this respect with three very distinct efforts to point to 1) As a requirement of the World Bank, CEPF engaged an independent consultant to conduct an external mid-term review, 2) CEPF has moved forward with standardizing methods and tools and 3) CEPF has finalized the first regional mid-term review in Madagascar.

In May and June of 2003 Walter Arensberg (CV attached as appendix #3) performed an external evaluation of CEPF to assess whether the fund has operationalized and met its stated objectives. The evaluation involved an extensive review of documentation and a series of interviews with CEPF staff, CEPF grantees and donor partner staff. This external evaluation will serve as a starting point for discussions with donor partners for other future evaluations of CEPF, and provides a number of constructive suggestions for moving forward and taking stock. The final report is presented under agenda item six.

With the completion of the first portfolio mid-term review in Madagascar this spring, CEPF has had the opportunity to test and enhance the methodology and tools that have been developed and will be standardized for future reviews. The Madagascar mid-term review is now being finalized; more details and initial observations are presented under agenda item six.

The methodology and tools that have been developed by CEPF are also presented and illustrate how CEPF plans to move forward with future evaluations of this kind. A complete timeline for evaluations, with the estimation that one will be conducted every 6–9 months, is being finalized and will be shared.

**Progress on CEPF Preparation Regions**

In June 2002, the CEPF Donor Council authorized CEPF to begin preparation and profiling processes in Northern Mesoamerica in the Mesoamerica hotspot where CEPF funding is now available in Southern Mesoamerica, and in five new hotspots:

- Caucasus (Georgia, Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Iran)

- Eastern Arc Mountains and Coastal Forests of Tanzania and Kenya
- Polynesia & Micronesia
- Western Ghats & Sri Lanka
- Indo-Burma

CEPF has since initiated a partnership with a locally based organization in each of these regions to lead stakeholder consultations, analyze current investment and conservation actions, identify conservation outcomes and help determine CEPF's strategic niche and specific investment opportunities within a particular geographic focus. This cycle of CEPF preparation is characterized by an up-front identification of conservation outcomes that, once defined, will help guide CEPF's investment to achieve the largest positive impact on biodiversity.

CEPF has finalized and submitted to the CEPF Donor Council ecosystem profiles for three regions, the Caucasus; Eastern Arc Mountains and Coastal Forests of Tanzania and Kenya; and Northern Mesoamerica. The other three hotspots—Indo-Burma; Polynesia & Micronesia; and Western Ghats & Sri Lanka are in the midst of the planning and preparation phase. The aim is to submit these profiles in the February 2004 Donor Council meeting. Consultations, meetings, roundtables and scientific analysis have been underway in these regions for the past few months and will be ramping up in the months of June–October 2003. Initial draft profiles are expected in November for these three hotspots.

#### **Indo-Burma Hotspot**

The Indo-Burma hotspot extends from the Kangar-Pattani floral transition in the Malaysian Peninsula to the Eastern Himalayas, and includes Hainan Island, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand and Burma. It is more than 2 million km<sup>2</sup> in extent—a vastness in size matched by its complex biogeography and diverse flora and fauna. Although the hotspot largely represents the biodiversity of the Indo-Malayan realm, it also includes elements from the Sino-Himalayan and Palearctic realms. Levels of endemism are high, especially among taxa such as the gymnosperms, primates, ungulates and birds. Localized hotspots of endemism occur along the mountain ranges, a legacy of the complex geological history and topographic complexity.

The hotspot is represented by a diverse array of ecoregions across its breadth. The montane biodiversity of the Himalayan range is heavily influenced by the Palearctic and Sino-Himalayan realms, whereas the biodiversity of the eastern extent of the hotspot is predominantly of Indo-Malayan origin.

Due to geographic, political, biological and linguistic reasons, the Indo-Burma hotspot is being mobilized in two distinct processes: one for the Eastern Himalayas (Nepal, Bhutan, NE India) and one for Indochina (Burma, Lao, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and the Southern part of China). As a result, two profiles will be prepared for Indo-Burma: one for Indochina and one for the Eastern Himalayas.

#### ***Indochina***

In early August, BirdLife-Vietnam will convene a series of meetings to define conservation outcomes (targets) and evaluate possible themes for CEPF's investment niche. The schedule for the expert discussions is:

Burma: 4-5 August

Vietnam: 8-9 August

Cambodia: 11-12 August

Laos: 15-16 August

Thailand: 21-22 August

#### ***Eastern Himalayas***

The WWF–Asia Program is preparing this profile, which will incorporate conservation outcomes defined by BirdLife International, with inputs from WWF, CI-CABS and other stakeholders.

WWF, in partnership with multiple stakeholders, is conducting a gap analysis of current and planned conservation investments to identify strategic entry points and gaps where CEPF investment could provide

the most good, based on the analyses mentioned above. An argument will be made for the types of activities and interventions that CEPF should support.

Birdlife International and WWF moderated three workshops, each with about 40 participants, in Godavari (near Kathmandu), Gangtok (Sikkim) and Guwahati (Assam) as part of the initial phase of stakeholder consultation for the Eastern Himalayas. It is also anticipated that this profile will take into account the Terai Arc Landscape work that WWF has facilitated during the past few years.

### **Western Ghats & Sri Lanka Hotspot**

The Western Ghats & Sri Lanka hotspot is one of two hotspots on the Indian subcontinent. It stretches across approximately 160,000 km<sup>2</sup> of coastal mountains in five states of southern India and about 22,000 km<sup>2</sup> of rainforests in southwest Sri Lanka. Of its total original extent of 182,000 km<sup>2</sup>, only 7 percent is believed to be intact or covered by natural vegetation at present. The area is extraordinarily rich in biodiversity. Although the total area is less than 3 percent of the land area of India and Sri Lanka, the hotspot contains more than 30 percent of all plant, bird and mammal species found in both countries. It has a high proportion of endemic species, particularly in Sri Lanka. The region also has a spectacular assemblage of large mammals and is home to India's many wildlife sanctuaries, tiger reserves and national parks.

The Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), Bangalore, in collaboration with the Wildlife Conservation Society and Rohan Pethiyagoda, an independent consultant, in Sri Lanka, is leading development of this profile, with expert assistance from other organizations, individuals and agencies.

Recently, Penny Langhammer of CI-CABS spent three weeks working with Mr. Pethiyagoda and his team in Sri Lanka on defining outcomes for this hotspot. During this visit, they met with botanists who are doing the plants for the outcome definition and contributing to the profile in general, among others. They also informed the Minister of Environment, head of the Wildlife Department, head of the Forest Department and two GEF representatives of ADB and the World Bank about the CEPF preparation and profiling process. The team working on the Sri Lankan portion of the ecosystem profile is also on track to finish its section, including the outcome definition. A final Sri Lanka stakeholder meeting was held in Colombo on June 17.

A stakeholder workshop will be held for the Western Ghats in India on August 20–21 in Bangalore.

### **Polynesia & Micronesia Hotspot**

The Polynesia & Micronesia hotspot encompasses thousands of tiny islands of Micronesia and Polynesia, including Fiji, scattered across 21.6 million km<sup>2</sup> of the Pacific Ocean. Despite its large coverage—2.6 times that of the continental United States—it is one of the smallest hotspots in terms of terrestrial land area, covering only 46,012 km<sup>2</sup>. The wide geographic range and thousands of isolated island ecosystems have led to an extremely high diversity of wildlife in this hotspot. However, the plants and animals in this hotspot are among the most endangered in the world because of the extreme vulnerability of island ecosystems to habitat destruction and invasive species. Today, only 10,024 km<sup>2</sup>, 21 percent of the region's original vegetation, remains in more or less pristine condition throughout the hotspot.

Many of the countries and territories sharing the Polynesia & Micronesia hotspot still lack efficient institutional and legal set-up to protect the environment, as well as dedicated funding resources for conservation. They do, however, share a strong vision and commitment to conservation and the environment and generally work in collaboration with civil society groups, particularly in Micronesia with the support of The Nature Conservancy. At the forefront of this effort in the 1990s was the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme funded by the GEF and executed by the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) Centre as a pilot program to establish and manage a series of large, diverse conservation areas throughout the region with local community support. Within the hotspot, there are 221 terrestrial protected areas and community-based conservation areas but levels of protection vary considerably throughout the region, with more than half of these being established in Hawaii.

The Conservation International office in Samoa is leading facilitation of the preparation and profiling work for this profile. It has developed a joint task force of key organizations working in the Pacific to define conservation outcomes for the entire hotspot and catalyze the profile preparation in partnership with SPREP. SPREP has the mandate to coordinate biodiversity conservation in the Pacific Islands on behalf of local governments; its membership includes all countries and territories in the hotspot, with the exception of Pitcairn and Easter Islands. An innovative approach in targeted stakeholders' consultation and collaboration is being implemented in this region to ensure technical and analytical coverage across the diverse hotspot boundaries and biomes.

The CEPF strategy will be based on available sources of data, information and analysis and will address needs already identified in 1) the "Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Islands Region 2002-2007" recently adopted in the Cook Islands, 2) the Pacific Regional Invasive Species Strategy, which was cooperatively developed and formally endorsed in 2002 by government and NGO representatives from all SPREP member countries and territories and 3) the Regional Avifauna Strategy, which was cooperatively developed and endorsed in 2001.

At the national level, each Pacific Island country has produced National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAP) or is in the process of finalizing these. The NBSAPs all stress community involvement in biodiversity conservation programs, the need for increased knowledge of biodiversity and threats as well as the need to strengthen local decision making institutions and procedures.

In addition to SPREP, several regional and international organizations have been at the forefront of conservation initiatives in the Polynesia & Micronesia hotspot and several local NGOs are active in the region. They include WWF-South Pacific, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Foundation for the People of the South Pacific-International. BirdLife International recently opened a Secretariat in Fiji and works with local partners in most countries and territories in this hotspot, including French Polynesia. More recently, the Wildlife Conservation Society and Wetlands International opened offices in Fiji while CI has entered into a partnership with SPREP and opened an office in Samoa.

The profiling approach is being implemented in coordination with TNC, WWF, Birdlife International, FSPI, Wetlands International, Missouri Botanical Garden, the Government of French Polynesia and the Bishop Museum in Hawaii.

The CEPF profile team for this hotspot will host a sub-regional coordinators meeting, a Task Force meeting, a conservation outcome working session and introduce CEPF at the Pacific Islands Nature Conservation Roundtable the week of July 4–11. David Hulse from the MacArthur Foundation is participating in the Pacific Islands Nature Conservation Roundtable. Three sub-regional workshops for Fiji, West Polynesia and Micronesia are planned during July – September. Final dates are being confirmed for these meetings.