CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM PARTNERSHIP FUND

ECOSYSTÈM PROFILE

MADAGASCAR AND INDIAN OCÉAN ISLANDS HOTSPOT

ABSTRACT FROM PROFILE : NICHE, STRATEGY, LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

BASED ON THE FINAL ECOSYSTEM PROFILE,
DECEMBRE 2014

1. NICHE FOR THE CEPF INVESTMENT

During the past several decades, the Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands Hotspot has received much attention from the international community for biodiversity conservation. However, the level of attention varies significantly from country to country, and also considerably among regions within countries (all regions of Madagascar, for example, have not received comparable assistance). There are also variations in the levels of support for different activities. Meanwhile, indicators and trends show that while progress has emerged, threats remain significant and ecosystem degradation continues at a steady pace, endangering the long-term conservation of hundreds of species and the well-being of a growing population that is dependent on the health of the ecosystems they live in.

The level of CEPF financial commitment over the next seven years will be small in comparison to global interventions, as well as to the needs for biodiversity conservation across the hotspot. It is therefore necessary to define an investment niche in order to guide future CEPF investments on themes and towards geographical areas to maximize the program's impact in terms of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Defining such a niche should also reduce the risk of duplication with existing initiatives funded by other stakeholders, and avoid investments that would have only a marginal impact. The CEPF niche must also meet the CEPF main objective, which is to support the establishment of conservation communities in the hotspots in which civil society effectively assumes its role in leading species and landscape conservation at the local, national and regional levels, in conjunction with other stakeholders.

The definition of the CEPF investment niche is the result of a highly participatory process culminating with the strategic regional workshop held in Antananarivo on 15 November 2013. Based on the threats identified and prioritized during the previous workshops and bilateral consultations, participants were asked to identify, organize and prioritize the potential topics of CEPF intervention. These recommendations led to the definition of this niche and the development of the intervention strategy presented in the following chapter.

One of the main recommendations resulting from the consultations was the need to focus greater attention on the role of local communities in conservation programs. The conclusion that local communities need to be involved in protecting the environment is certainly not new, and Madagascar in particular is one country in the world where community-based approaches have been tested by international NGOs, and then widely promoted by national legislation. While Madagascar has experience that other countries in the hotspot could learn from, these approaches have not always produced the expected results. A recurring problem seems to be the lack of prior consultation with the residents, especially at the time of project identification, which leads to misunderstanding and sometimes an end to implementation before the project is completed.– This is a common finding of many conservation interventions in Africa, as indicated in the African Protected Areas Roadmap (IUCN and WCPA, 2012). On the other hand, with regard to the many interventions at the community level, some result in community-based organizations being able to work independently, although most have great difficulty continuing beyond funding periods that are often limited to one or two years. These organizations remain very dependent on national and international organizations.

CEPF has the ability to provide variable levels of funding, in particular with its small grants mechanism. In this context, CEPF could play an important role in the emergence and strengthening of local organizations that could work toward the implementation of site-based conservation actions, maximizing the chances of local inhabitants' ownership. It is at present unrealistic to think CEPF can identify local actors and award grants; capacities are simply too low. However, it would be feasible to establish a sequenced approach on a pilot basis and when appropriate award:

(i) a small grant to an organization for participatory preparation of a project,
(ii) a large grant to this organization for the implementation and monitoring /follow-up, with sub-grants or small grants in parallel to grassroots organizations, to strengthen their capacities,
(iii) small grants to pursue field activities and the grassroots organizations' objectives, with monitoring from a larger organization if necessary, and regular capacity-building actions.

It is worth noting that large grant awards (option ii) could be funded partially or entirely by donors other than CEPF or with CEPF as cofunding. This option might be appealing to donors whose operational procedures may limit the possibility, or the efficiency, of supporting a preparation phase. The role of the CEPF's regional implementation team would be essential to ensure a permanent dialogue with the donors present in the hotspots in order to catalyze their actions towards these potential projects and opportunities.

Implementation of a program that includes pilot phases may necessitate more than five years, therefore it is proposed that CEPF's new investment in this hotspot be implemented over a five-year period, noting that even with seven years, it is likely that grassroots organizations may not become fully capacitated over this period of time, and that an additional investment period will be necessary to achieve transformative results. However, seven years will allow CEPF to set the foundation for the strengthening of local organizations and the emergence of a regional conservation community.

The consultations have also shown conservation stakeholders' willingness to work together more closely. Complementarities exist in terms of experience and expertise between the various countries in the hotspot that are presently little exploited. CEPF is the first initiative specifically dedicated to supporting civil society to play a key role in biodiversity conservation within a regional strategic program, and is therefore ideally placed to support the birth of a regional conservation community. This initiative will allow partners to maximize mutual experiences, and to speak with a stronger voice in regional and international forums. This regional dimension will be integrated into the strategic directions and will be the subject of specific activities.

2. CEPF INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND PROGRAM FOCUS

2.1 Geographic Priorities

CEPF's geographic priorities were determined using a multi-criteria analysis, by initially gathering as much information for each of the KBAs as possible. Such analysis has some limitations, given the variability of existing data about each site, and because of the challenge of weighing each criterion objectively. While all KBAs are important to maintain the level of biodiversity in the hotspot, we have used a set of criteria as decision tools to select sites for which CEPF investment is most important, and for which sites present the best opportunities for CEPF interventions. (European overseas islands were not included in the prioritization process as they are not eligible to receive CEPF funds).

The following criteria were taken into account in the analysis:

- Biological irreplaceability, considering the presence of species classified as Endangered on the IUCN Red list.
- Status of site protection, considering the existing protected areas, those under temporary protection status, and finally those so-called "orphan" sites receiving no protection. The presence or absence of "implementers" on these sites also gives an indication of the level activity. In Madagascar, specific attention was given to the sites under "temporary protection status," as many need additional support in the coming years to ensure a full protection.
- Ecosystem services. These criteria could only be analyzed for Madagascar, through the work of the Moore Center for Science and Oceans. They provide guidance as to the sites' importance for local populations and beyond.
- Representativeness of the ecosystems within the protected areas systems.
- Level of pressure and threats, considering the most important factors (from scientific literature and consultations), analyzed at a higher geographic level (rather than on site-by-site basis) based on cartographic analyses of the pressures from population and use of natural resources, and on the risks associated with mining operations.

The ecosystem profile has highlighted that some natural landscapes and ecosystems are currently under-invested, both in terms of available international funding and the level of protection provided by the respective governments.

The **terrestrial wetlands** are under-represented in the protected areas system of Madagascar, and a similar situation exists in many Indian Ocean islands. Being biologically rich and diverse, the wetlands are under considerable pressure from urbanization (especially in Mauritius, Rodrigues and Seychelles) and the conversion to agricultural land (especially rice cultivation). Pollution and sedimentation compound these threats. However, these landscapes play a key role in supplying fresh water for domestic and agricultural use and in preventing drought and flooding. These are vital ecosystem services both on Madagascar and on the smaller islands, where issues of water availability become crucial in a context of population pressure and climate change. Streams and riparian-associated forest, in addition to environmental services related to supply and control of flows and the quality of water resources, play the role of an essential ecological corridor for the long-term survival of terrestrial KBAs.

Dry forests have also been identified as areas in which CEPF interventions can have a very significant impact in terms of conservation. These habitats have high ecological interdependence with marine and coastal systems, constituting (in non-degraded settings) a continuum from dry forests to wooded/grassy savannah to mangrove to beach vegetation to marine vegetation to coral reefs. Often degraded and existing as relics in fragmented areas, dry forests have not received the same attention as the rainforests. Iconic animal species are less frequent, the potential of these forests as carbon stock is lower, and their small size is less amenable to large-scale projects. Despite the fact that they have been less studied, they are recognized for hosting an extremely high wealth of species, particularly plants. Dry forests are subject to major threats such as deforestation for agriculture and livestock, bushfires, invasive species, and urbanization on some islands.

If **coastal areas** have received more attention, the ecosystem profile showed significant gaps in terms of investment. Many initiatives are being developed at the Indian Ocean high sea and western region level, but integration of local communities into coastal fisheries management and the establishment of locally managed marine areas are still highly inadequate. At the same time, the threats to these ecosystems are extremely worrying. Artisanal fisheries, a food source the hotspot's inhabitants could not survive without, are threatened in the short or medium terms. Integration of activities at the Land-Sea Interface is also largely insufficient. In places where actions are implemented on the marine-coastal landscapes, the associated terrestrial ecosystems (mangroves, coastal forests, estuaries and dunes) are often neglected, *ultimately* threatening the integrity and functions of the ecosystems.

The profile's prioritization process resulted in the selection of 78 priority KBAs for CEPF investment (cf. Table 2-1), out of the 369 KBAs identified in the hotspot. Given the available resources, CEPF will not necessarily be able to intervene at all these sites, but considers this subgroup as a guide for investment.

Table 2-1: Number of Priority KBAs for CEPF Investment by Country

Corridors or Clusters	Number of Priority KBAs	Surface in ha, terrestrial	Surface in ha, marine
Madagascar	**38**	**1,516,665**	**983,053**
Corridor of Kirindy-Mangoky Landscape	4		
Corridor of Mikea Landscape	6		
Corridor of Menabe Landscape	2		
Corridor of Extreme-North Landscape	6		
Corridor of North-West Landscape	10		
Cluster of the Coastal Forests and Wetlands of the East	3		
Cluster of the Central Highlands	4		
Other Sites	3		
Comoros	**19**	**36,538**	**105,672**
Mauritius	**9**	**14,894**	**43,702**
Saint Brandon	1		
Mauritius Island	5		
Rodrigues Island	3		
Seychelles	**12**	**8,492**	**18,217**
Cluster of Mahé Mountains	4		
Praslin	2		
Other Sites	6		
Total	**78**	**1,576,589**	**1,150,644**

Geographic Priorities for Madagascar

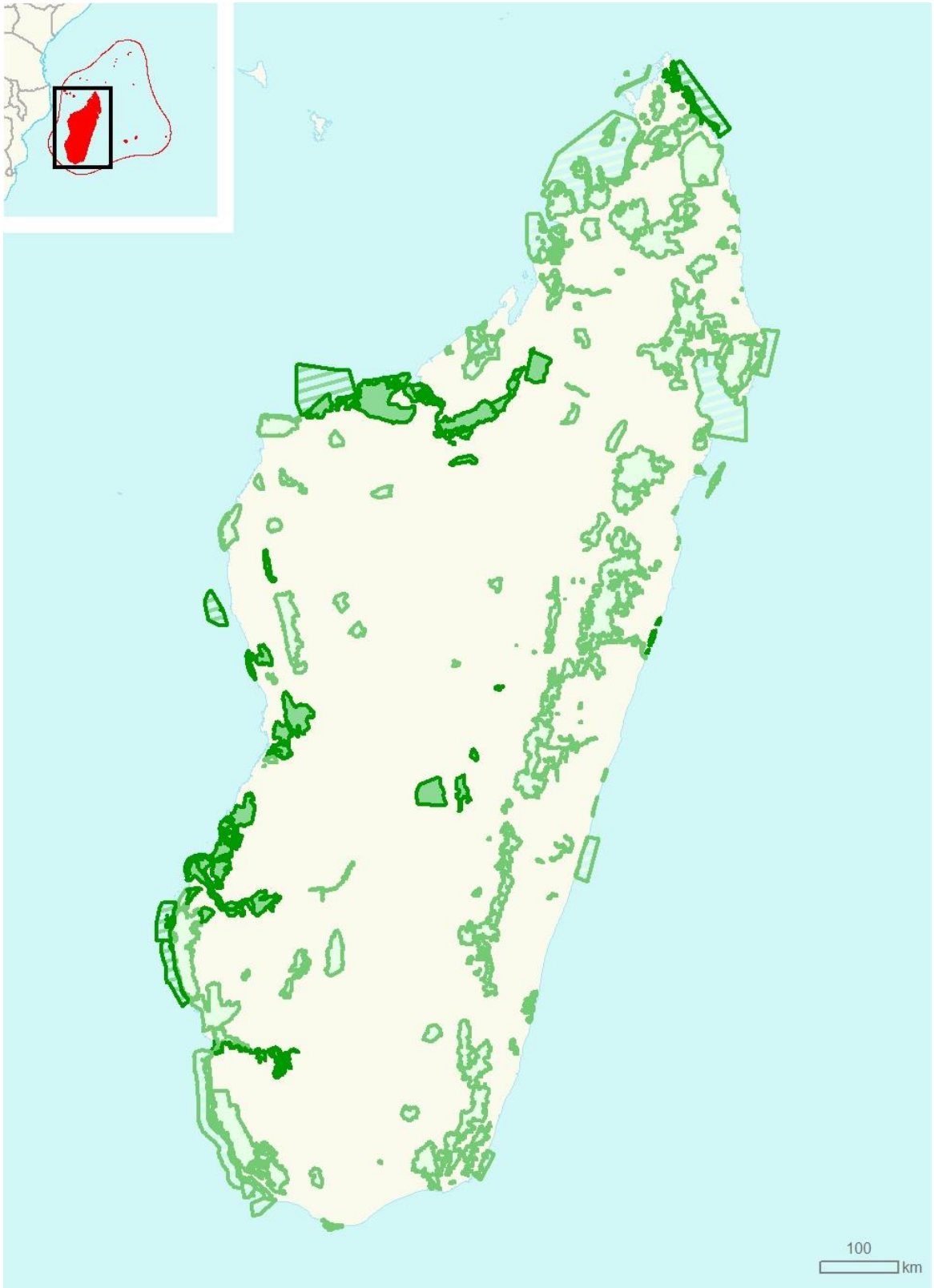
The prioritization process identified 38 among the 212 KBAs occurring in Madagascar as priorities. These 38 sites cover about 2,5 million hectares: 983,000 ha of marine areas and 1,517,000 ha of land areas. The sites were primarily chosen within five priority corridors where similar ecological characteristics and threats could be found, to allow the emergence of synergies between actors within small regions, to facilitate the exchange of experiences in case of success or failure, and to allow for approaches at a larger scale that would enhance connectivity and reinforce the long-term conservation of species and sites.

Following on the findings of the profile, CEPF geographic priorities are mainly focused in the western part of the country (from the extreme north to the Toliara Region). The selection of these corridors is the results of the difficult choice to not invest in the eastern rainforests. Despite the fact that these rainforests are still in need of attention, the findings of the profile (and in particular the results of the consultations) made it clear that these sites have received greater attention over the past 20 years. Civil society is relatively more developed, and funding, while still insufficient, is nevertheless more prevalent for the rainforests. Conservation of Malagasy biodiversity requires a focus on wetland ecosystems, shorelines and coastal areas, as well as on dry forests and the other xerophitic ecosystems of the west. Although these areas are less rich in species, they are unique and host numerous endemic species. With regard to environmental services, conservation of fish stocks through sustainable management of coastal ecosystems appears crucial for the West Coast populations, which are heavily dependent on protein from the sea. On the other hand, even if water flows are smaller in absolute value than in the more humid eastern region, the natural areas in the west and central watersheds are crucial for their ability to mitigate the water stress often experienced in these areas. The most important zones for ecosystem services within these ecosystems are therefore put forward as priorities.

In addition to the 28 KBAs that are part of the five priority corridors, 10 other KBAs have been prioritized for CEPF investment. These sites emerged during the prioritization process because of their outstanding biological value, importance in terms of ecosystem services and need for additional funding. Seven of these KBAs have been grouped in two “clusters”: these sites belong to the same administrative region, share a number of biological similarities, and therefore synergies and collaborations could be sought. These sites, however, are too disconnected to be considered a management unit and did not qualify as corridors. The first of these clusters is composed of four sites characteristic of the remnant forests of the Central Highlands—including the Tapia formation—and the second is composed of three small sites that are remnants of the humid ecosystems of the lowland of the East Coast.

Figure 12-1 below presents the general map of CEPF priority KBAs for Madagascar. Additionnal maps, detailing sites for each sub-region, are presented in Appendix.

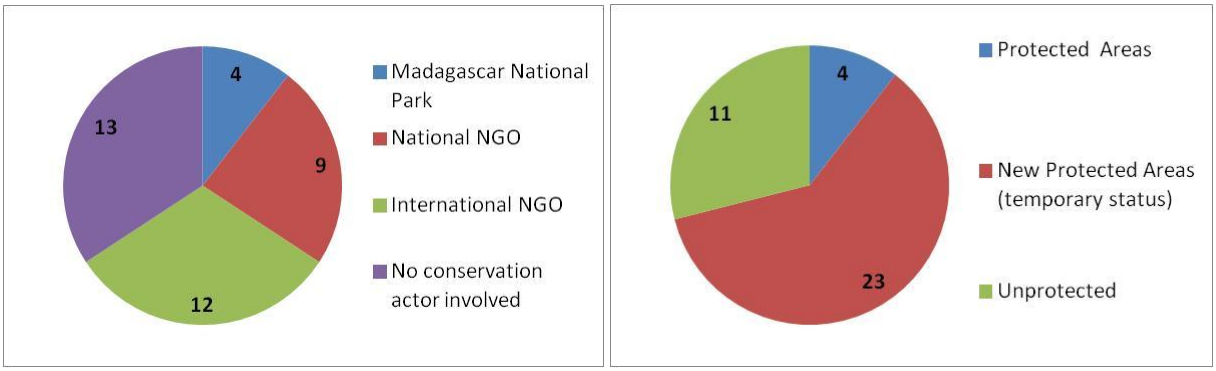
Figure 2-1: Priority Sites for CEPF Investment in Madagascar: General Map



Note: Additional maps with details of priority sites for Maurituius are presented in Appendix.

Protected areas under temporary status, requiring immediate support to implement management structures and ensure they obtain permanent protection status, represent 60 percent of the selected KBAs (see Figure 12-2**Error! Reference source not found.**). Many important orphan sites were also selected; they are generally small sites where national NGOs might intervene. A balance was also sought between national and international NGO 'implementers' of sites, again leaving the door open for collaboration and synergy between CEPF beneficiaries.

Figure 2-2: Distribution of Implementers (left) and Protection Status (right) of Priority Sites for CEPF Investment in Madagascar



Landscape of the Extreme North

This landscape is grouping together about a dozen KBAs in the extreme northern tip of Madagascar, in the Antsiranana Region. It contains marine and coastal areas as well as a mosaic of dry forests, rich in fauna and flora species, and is home to extremely rare endemic species. Most of the marine and coastal sites are presently unprotected, the marine fauna is relatively rich and varied, especially with the presence of important coral reefs. Many terrestrial sites are also unprotected. Ambodivahibe Bay is included among the important KBAs in terms of ecosystem services due to its role in supplying fish to the people of the region.

Mikea Landscape

This group of sites in the southwestern part of Madagascar consists of dry forests, xerophitic bush, wetlands, and marine and coastal areas, including in particular important mangrove forests. This diversity of habitats makes this a priority biodiversity landscape. The Mikea Forest, a protected area managed by MNP and an Alliance for Zero Extinction site, is home to 51 Endangered species. With such diverse habitats, this landscape is home to remarkable bird populations, namely populations of Bernier's teal (*Anas bernieri*) and pairs of Madagascar fish eagle (*Haliaeetus vociferoides*). It is also of major importance for reptiles, with the presence of *Pyxis arachnoides* and *P. planicauda*, Critically Endangered terrestrial tortoises. Velondriaka and Salary Nord are marine protected areas in the process of being established that are frequented by sea turtles. In addition to its biological importance, this landscape was also chosen because of its ecosystem services. Its mangroves, in a relatively densely populated area, provide many services against cyclones and are an essential element for the resilience of local communities. The marine areas are among the most important in Madagascar in terms of fish and seafood production, while the carbon stored in the forest areas is relatively high (especially for the western part of Madagascar), with great potential in terms of avoided deforestation.

This landscape also includes a set of wetlands and forests associated with the downstream part of the Onilahy River, which flows into the Saint Augustin Bay, not far from the town of Toliara. With the exception of the forest gallery of the Beza Mahafaly Special Reserve, managed by MNP, all sites have temporary or unprotected status. The WWF is the main organization present in this part of the landscape. This area is particularly important for environmental services because forests and wetlands in the area play a role of regulating water supply for household and farm use in this densely populated region. The gallery forests and dry forests in the area also represent a particular habitat subjected to population pressures.

Considering that the Global Environment Facility is launching a programme to support management of dry forests in this landscape, CEPF funding will focus on the coastal/marine areas and the wetlands – including the associated riparian vegetation, with the objective of being complementary to funding available for larger blocks of dry forests.

Northwestern Landscape

This group of Madagascar's Northwestern sites is composed of dry forests, xerophytic bush, wetlands, and marine and coastal areas, including mangrove forests. The central axis of this group of sites is the network of the Mahajamba River, which empties into the Bombetoka Bay or Mahajanga Bay, and its major sites of riparian forests and wetlands. Lake Tseny, although from another watershed, was associated with this group; it is an AZE site hosting many threatened fish species such as *Paretroplus*, whose only known population is *P. menarambo*, considered extinct in the wild before its rediscovery in 2008. The wetlands of Port Bergé, outside of the landscape, but important for their environmental services, have also been retained, noting that no implementers are present in the area. Also in this grouping is the Baie de Baly KBA, which includes the territory of the ploughshare tortoise *(Astrochelys yniphora)* and the Antrema bio-cultural reserve. The Mahavavy-Kinkony complex wetlands are extremely rich in species, with 30 species of fish, five of which are Endangered, and 133 species of birds, 10 of which are threatened. The grouping includes sites at different levels of protection from MNP-managed sites, sites supported by national NGOs (one site with an international organization) and orphan sites, including the Tseny Lake. The hydrographic network is one of the most important in the western part of the island for agricultural uses (and rice cultivation in particular), reinforcing the importance of the protection of the wetlands and the Bongolava Ankarafantsika-Ampijoroa forest corridors that also play an important role in flood prevention.

Central Highlands Group

This group includes a few sites representative of the ecosystem of the Tapia Forest, as well as the Ankaratra Manjakatompo range. These sites can be considered as the last important relics representing the Highlands ecosystems, which have largely disappeared due to livestock expansion and agricultural pressure. Three of five KBAs of the group are AZE sites. This group is particularly important for its plant diversity, as well as for amphibians. Many amphibian species with restricted distribution, such as *Boophis williamsi*, are endemic to the Ankaratra area. Protecting the high altitude areas, the sources of several of the rivers in the area, is of paramount importance for water supply services for domestic and agricultural uses.

Antsingy Landscape
The group includes the sites of the Menabe Central Corridor and Ambalibe Menabe. They are areas of high importance in terms of biodiversity, with an exceptional level of local wildlife endemism. These ecosystems of dry, dense forests are highly threatened by land clearing, illegal logging and hunting.

Menabe Landscape
This landscape consists of a set of sites particularly rich in wetlands, occurring around the Mangoky River and its tributaries, and the Kirindy Mite National Park and its extensions. The dry forests of Kirindy Mite, managed by MNP, are particularly rich with endangered species, and provide important environmental services. Ecosystems linked to the Mangoky River are particularly important for local communities and the delta area, with its mangroves, is a major fishing and nursery site of the western coast.

Group of Coastal Forests and Wetlands in the East
This group of three small KBAs on Madagascar's eastern coast was selected for its very high biological value. The Vohibola Forest is part of the coastal forest and stretches along the Pangalane Channel. It is the largest extent of nearshore sand forest between Ambila Lemaitso and Fenerive Est. The site hosts exceptional biodiversity with a high rate of local endemism and a very high threat level. There are 10 Critically Endangered species, 33 Endangered, and 36 Vulnerable species. The Pangalanes North and Ambila Lemaintso wetlands are also important in terms of biodiversity.

Other Eligible Sites in Madagascar:

Barren Islands Marine Protected Area
This group of islands, recognized as an IBA, holds temporary protected area status. It was selected due to its very high importance for supplying fish for communities in the region. The islets' conservation problem (including invasive species) also holds potential for regional collaboration. The international NGO Blue Venture has started actions in the area with local communities.

NAP Beanka (Tsingy de Beanka)
Receiving less attention than the Tsingy of Bemaraha and Namoroka managed by MNP, the Tsingy of Beanka, an exceptional karstic site, is home to numerous endemic animals and plants. Forests play a crucial role in regulating water supply in the Melaky Region.

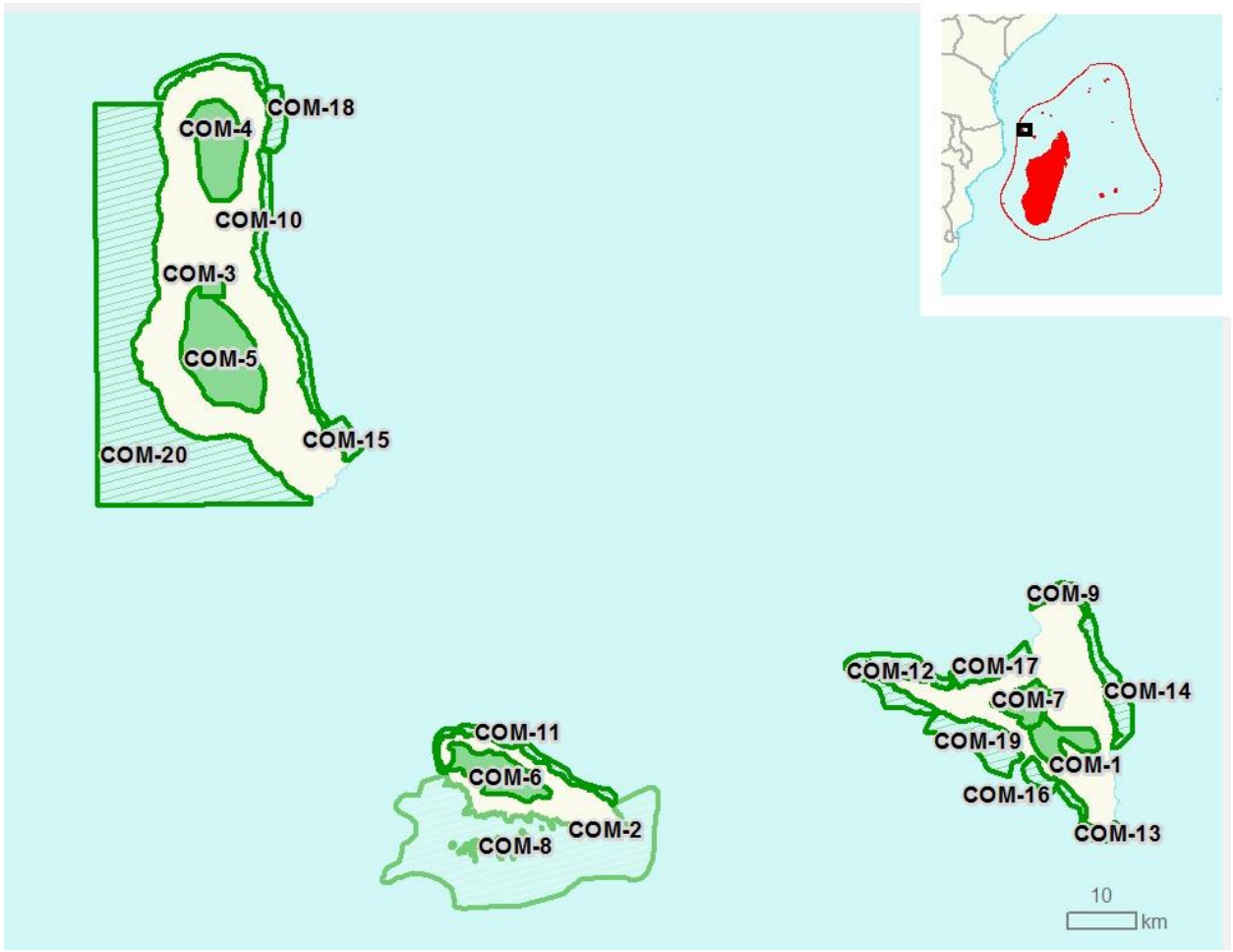
NPA Complex Tsimembo-Manambolomat-Bemamba
Very important coastal wetlands, classified as an IBA and as a RAMSAR site, this KBA has rich wildlife and flora. It is an important breeding area for the Madagascar fish eagle (*Haliaeetus vociferoides)*. This site appears to be particularly important in terms of environmental services, for both fresh water and for food.

Geographic Priorities for Comoros

Sites in Comoros are characterized by very low legal protection (only one marine protected area and no terrestrial protected areas), limited international investment, low presence of international

organizations, and very few local organizations capable of ensuring effective biodiversity protection. The only site under official protection and receiving significant international support until now has been the Moheli Marine Park. At the same time, available scientific knowledge is incomplete and has not allowed for identification of a comprehensive list of key sites for biodiversity conservation. Some sites have been identified, and it is likely that the list of KBAs will increase in the future. For these reasons, it was decided to consider all sites (with the exception of Moheli National Park for the reason presented above) as eligible for CEPF funding in Comoros. This will give latitude for civil society to develop projects where the needs and opportunities will be the most important. In parallel, Comoros islands will be a priority country for research and inventory actions under Strategic Direction 2. This will allow CEPF to be flexible as the investment phase evolves, and will aid in developing synergies with other programs for developing a protected area network, funded by the Comorian government, GEF and AFD.

Figure 2-3: Priority Sites for CEPF Investment in Comoros



Geographic Priorities for the Republic of Mauritius

Black River Gorges National Park and surrounding areas

This mountain KBA hosts very important diversity of passerine bird species, many species of dragonflies, and high endemic plant diversity. The National Park itself, managed by the forestry service, has received a lot of attention from the government and international community. The attention of CEPF, which can't fund governmental agencies, will focus on the surrounding areas, hosting a very high biodiversity but not officially protected. An important area identified during the ecosystem profiling is the mist forests of Montagne Cocotte, which host large populations of endemimc species, making *in situ* conservation not only possible but also a priority. Many rivers originate in this KBA, making it a priority in terms of environmental services. Montagne Cocotte is partially protected, as part of the Black River Gorges National Park. An extension of the park to the Bassin Blanc was proposed in the 1990s. The KBA extends to the lower elevation areas, and in particular the southern flank of the unprotected Montagne Cocotte where conservation activities could be implemented in collaboration with private sector and civil society.

Le Pouce-Anse Courtois-Pieter Both- Longue Mountain

This KBA groups together several important montane sites in Mauritius including Le Pouce Natural Reserve, the Mont Longue, and the Mont Pieter Both. Parts of these sites already enjoy legal protection. The most important populations of the island's many endemic species are found on these sites, particularly plants, but also mollusks (Pieter Both and Le Pouce), orthoptera (the taxonomic group of the grasshoppers) and other insects. The area of Mont Longue has relics of dry forests and may shelter presumed extinct species. Civil society could play an important role in supporting the government departments in charge of its management, and also in improving the management or conducting restoration operations in unprotected areas in collaboration with private landowners.

Yemen-Tamataka

This KBA comprises the most extensive dry forest ecosystems in Mauritius, and contains viable populations of some endemic species of *Aloe* and *Cyphostemma*. While many private reserves exist within this KBA, including Emilie Series, increasing the protection of nearby sites would help to maintain these exceptional plant populations.

Chamarel-Le Morne

As with Yemen-Tamataka, this KBA has important relics of dry forests, unique plant biodiversity threatened by invasive species, and fragmentation. The KBA includes private land, which is not always managed adequately for biodiversity protection. In its immediate vicinity live some of the island's poorest fishing communities, many of whose ancestors arrived on the island as slaves. Le Morne is classified as a UNESCO World Heritage site, and is an important symbol of slavery abolition on Mauritius. The region is home to various native bird species, intermediate wet to semi-arid forest areas, and many populations of Endangered species including *Trochetia boutonia*, a strict endemic from the Montagne du Morne that is the national flower of Mauritius. Civil society could play an important role in raising awareness and in supporting private owners.

Bambou Mountain Range

This KBA hosts significant plant diversity and populations of endemic birds, and even an endemic snail. Deer farming, tourism development, fragmentation and invasive species are the main threats. The area includes some protected areas. There is also a diversity of stakeholders

including those from the forest and private sector (Ferney SE, Bioculture Mauritius Ltd).. This diversity provides a range of opportunities for civil society to pursue collaborative conservation activities.

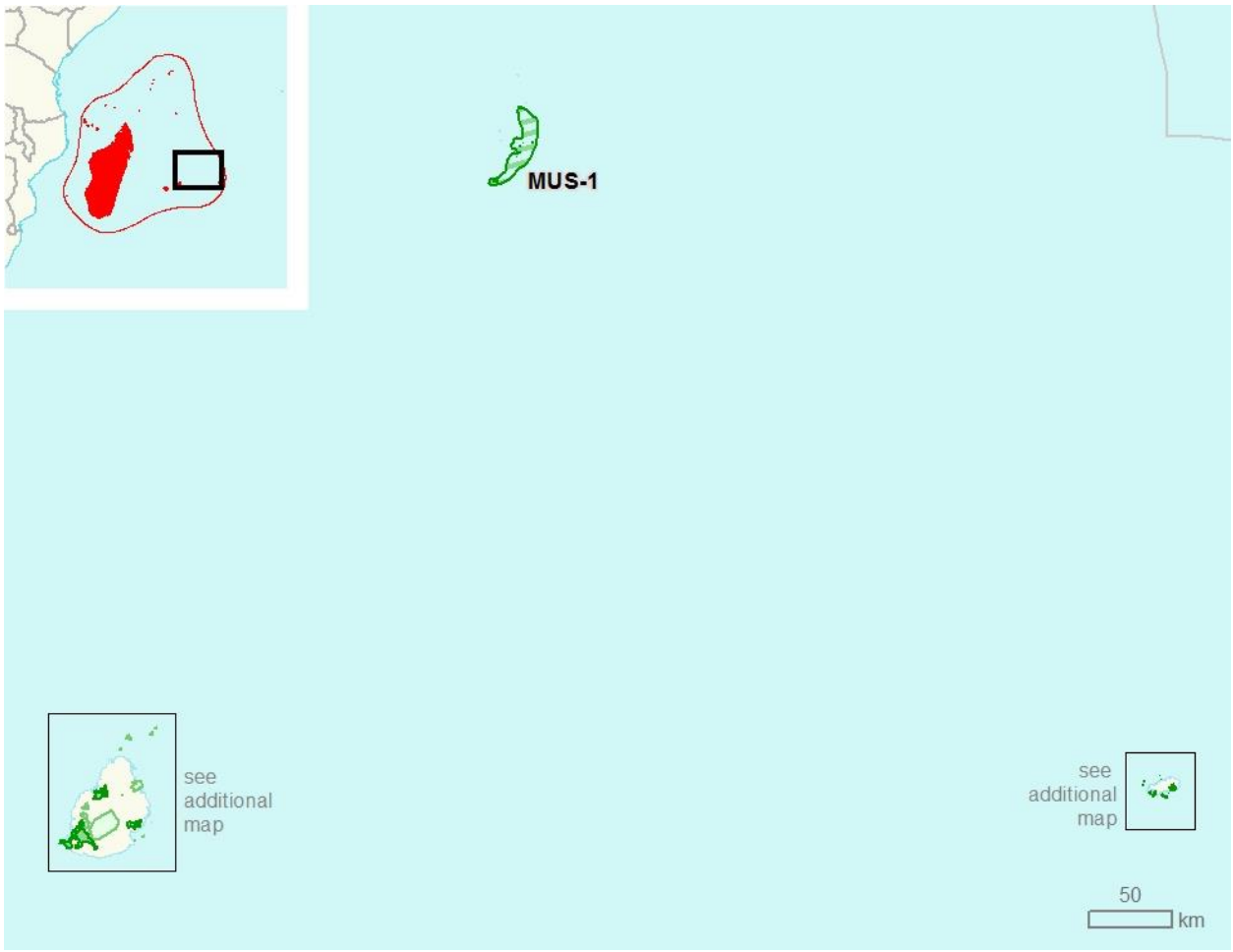
Key Biodiversity Areas of Rodrigues: South Slopes of Grande Montagne, Plaine Corail and the Rodrigues' Islets

People in Rodrigues are very dependent on natural resources. This is a small island, far from the other inhabited islands and the country's main island, and the resilience of the local population is simply not possible without sustainable management of freshwater, soil and fisheries resources. The three KBAs of the island are the Grande Montagne Southern Slopes, Plaine Corail and the Southern Islets Reserves. On Grande Montagne, freshwater and river bank biodiversity, in connection with water supply services, are paramount. La Plaine Corail has cave systems with unique biodiversity. The marine biodiversity of the Southern Islets is particularly high and the area plays a crucial role for the local fisheries. The native terrestrial biodiversity has suffered a lot from invasive species, but the ecosystems of these largely uninhabited islets could be restored with actions to combat invasives and reintroduction of species from Rodrigues island.

Cargados Carajos Shoals

This site is the most important KBA of the Republic of Mauritius in terms of marine biodiversity. The land portion is also an important area for bird conservation, with large concentrations of terns, tropicbirds and frigates, while the beaches are frequented by several species of sea turtles. There are opportunities to support protection and sustainable management actions, for instance through partnership with the Raphael Fishing company, to which some of the islets are leased. .

Figure 2-4: Priority Sites for CEPF Investment in Mauritius: General Map



Note: Additional maps with details of priority sites for Maurituius are presented in Appendix.

Geographic Priorities for Seychelles

Key Biodiversity Areas on Praslin Island: Fond Azore (Southern Slopes) to Anse Bois de Rose, and Fond Ferdinand

The first priority KBA of Praslin extends from the heights of the Fond Azore to the coastal areas of Anse Bois de Rose. Its biodiversity is exceptional, with presence of *Bwa Klate* (*Rapanea seychellarum*, CR), a tree endemic to the Seychelles, and two species of chameleons: the Seychelles' tiger chameleon (*Archaius tigris*, EN) and a new species, not yet formally described, *A. scychellensis*. This area is not currently protected. The gazettement of the Fond Ferdinand, a palm forest with very diverse flora, has been proposed by the Praslin Development Fund.

Silhouette (Silhouette National Park and Silhouette Marine National Park)

Silhouette is a granitic island and is the second highest (750 meters) in the country. Sparsely populated (a village of 100 people and the staff of a five-star hotel, Hilton-Labriz), 95 percent of its area is a national park. Silhouette is managed by the Island Development Company, the Island Conservation Society, and other partners of the Silhouette Foundation. Its biodiversity is extraordinary, especially at the upper elevation, where there are many rare endemic plant and animal species, some of which only exist on this island, such as the Mapou tree (*Pisonia*

sechellarum, EN), the centipede *Seychellonema gerlachi*, the recently discovered frog *Sooglossus pipilodryas* (CR), and one of the world's rarest bat, *Coleura seychellensis* (CR). The island is surrounded by a marine national park with outstanding diving sites.

Group of KBA in the Montagnes de Mahé

This group consists of four KBAs: Montagne Brûlée-Piton de l'Eboulis, Montagne Corail-Collines du Sud dry forests, Montagne Planneau and the Morne Seychellois National Park. These four sites, with their granitic peaks and dry forests, contain a significant portion of Seychelles' biodiversity (especially Montagne Corail and Collines du Sud). The four KBAs together host 34 VU, 27 EN and 16 CR species. These areas also play an important role in freshwater supply regulation and flood prevention. While the Morne Seychellois is a national park with strong regulatory protection with remarkable endemic wildlife and flora at the highest elevations, other important areas are unprotected or pending protection, or are still privately owned. CEPF funding will focus on these sites that require urgent attention and allow for building partnership with civil society, private sector and landowners.

Grand Police Wetlands

This KBA is one of the last large wetlands of Mahé. It is currently not protected, and is threatened by urbanization, eutrophication—a process via which water bodies receive excess nutrients that stimulate excessive plant growth—and pollution. Civil society could play an important role in conducting awareness campaigns and improving management of the site.

Ile Félicité

This privately managed island is home to at least eight species of globally threatened plants, a Vulnerable snail species, *Priodiscus costatus*, and the Seychelles' paradise flycatcher (*Terpsiphone corvina*, CR). The surrounding marine areas are also potentially rich in biodiversity, and recognized diving sites. The island's central part is the KBA zone, which is not legally protected at this time. The northern part has a tourist complex with villas.

Desnoeufs Island

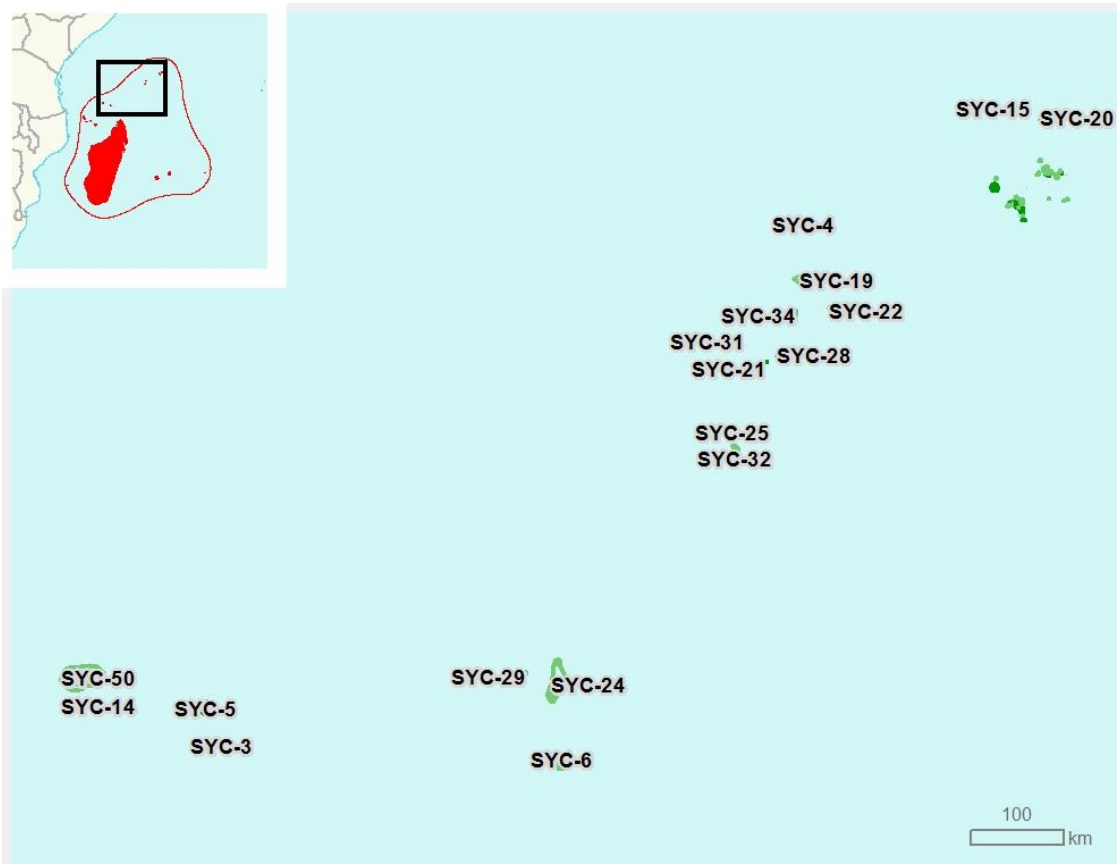
An IBA, Desnoeufs Island has been proposed as a protected area, but that status has not yet been granted. It hosts a colony of about 600,000 pairs of sooty terns (*Onychoprion fuscatus*) that is still used by humans for egg consumption. The waters in the area host high levels of biodiversity, especially for coral reefs. The beaches are important nesting sites for sea turtles.

Cosmoledo

The coral atoll of Cosmoledo consists of 13 islands and several islets around a vast lagoon (14,500 ha) that is extremely rich in marine life. The site does not include endemic terrestrial species, although several sub-species of birds endemic to Cosmoledo or the entire Cosmoledo-Aldabra area occur there. Its land area is important mainly for seabirds and marine turtles (*Chelonia mydas*, EN) that lay large numbers of eggs there. It is a nesting site of international importance for seabirds, with the largest colony of boobies (20,000 to 25,000 pairs of *Sula sula* and *s. dactylatra*) in the Western Indian Ocean, and the largest colony of sooty terns (*Onychoprion fuscatus*) in the country (1.2 million pairs). While some invasive species are present, much of the vegetation of these islands is native and undisturbed. The marine area has been subjected to several inventories (fish, corals and other invertebrates) and is recognized as

one of the richest in the region, along with Aldabra and Astove. Part of the area has been proposed as a protected area.

Figure 2-5: Priority Sites for CEPF Investment in the Seychelles: General Map



Note: Additional maps with details of priority sites for the Seychelles are presented in Appendix.

Table 2-2: List of the Biodiversity Key Areas, CEPF Investment Priorities in Madagascar

	Name of the KBA	International Standards				Protection Status	Areas (in ha)	Type of Promoter or Manager	Name of Promoter	Threatened Species			
		AZE	IBA	RAM SAR	IPA					VU	EN	CR	Total
Corridor du Paysage de Kirindy-Mangoky													
MDG-142	Kirindy Mite National Park and extension					AP	209,251.0	MADA NAT. PARKS	MNP	8	8	1	**17**
MDG-42	Mangoky River				X	non	10,504.9			0	1	0	**1**
MDG-90	Complex Lac Ihotry- Delta of Mangoky NPA		X			APT	176,104.5	NATIONAL NGO	ASITY	5	4	3	**12**
MDG-92	Complex Mangoky-Ankazoabo NPA		X			APT	58,228.5	NATIONAL NGO	ASITY	5	4	0	**9**
Corridor du Paysage de Mikea													
MDG-9	North Salary MPA					APT	108,627.1	INT. NGO	WCS	1	3	2	**6**
MDG-11	Tsinjoriake-Andatabo AMP					APT	5,400.9	NATIONAL NGO	ASE/TAMIA	1	1	0	**2**
MDG-12	Velondriake AMP					APT	94,573.4	INT. NGO	Blue Ventures	6	3	3	**12**
MDG-67	Amoron'i Onilahy et Rivière Onilahy NPA					APT	15,659.5	INT. NGO	WWF	4	0	1	**5**
MDG-127	Sept Lacs NPA					APT	7,850.2	INT. NGO	WWF	1	5	1	**7**
MDG-175	Beza Mahafaly Special Reserve					AP	30,922.4	MADA NAT. PARKS	MNP	3	2	2	**7**
Corridor du Paysage de Menabe													
MDG-2	Ambalibe Menabe				X	non	109,115.8			0	0	1	**1**
MDG-97	Menabe Central Corridor NPA	X	X			APT	77,719.4	NATIONAL NGO	FANAMBY	10	14	1	**25**
Corridor du Paysage de l'Extrême Nord													
MDG-16	Ampombofofo	X	X			non	2,992.81			1	2	4	**7**
MDG-8	Ambodivahibe Bay MPA					APT	181,600.41	INT. NGO	CI	1	1	0	**2**
MDG-33	Rigny Bay Complex				X	non	9,406.6			3	17	2	**22**
MDG-122	Montagne des Français NPA	X				APT	3,743.4	NATIONAL NGO	SAGE	11	10	2	**23**
MDG-123	Oronjia NPA	X				APT	2,503.61	INT. NGO	MBG	9	25	8	**42**
MDG-36	Coastal area East of Antsiranana					non	12,257.6			0	1	0	**1**
Corridor du Paysage du Nord-ouest													

MDG-54	Lake Tseny	X				non	935.6			1	0	2	**3**
MDG-83	Antrema NPA					APT	20,655.5	INT. NGO	MNHN	8	11	4	**23**
MDG-85	Bombetoka Bay - Marovoay NPA		X			APT	78,813.9	NATIONAL NGO	FANAMBY	7	10	3	**20**
MDG-105	Bongolava Classified Forest (Marosely) NPA					APT	57,936.4			4	5	0	**9**
MDG-130	Mahavavy-Kinkony wetlands NPA		X	X		APT	275,978.7	NATIONAL NGO	ASITY	10	14	3	**27**
MDG-132	Port-Bergé wetlands NPA		X			APT	80,536.8			1	3	0	**4**
MDG-143	Baly Bay National Park	X	X			AP	396,788.7	MADA NAT. PARKS	MNP	9	8	3	**20**
MDG-141	Ankarafantsika National Park and Ampijoroa	X	X			AP	135,085.0	MADA NAT. PARKS	MNP	16	19	5	**40**
MDG-211	Maevatanana-Ambato-Boeny wetlands		X			non	23,313.0			4	1	2	**7**
MDG-4	Ambato-Boeny					non	12,754.5			0	1	1	**2**
Groupe des forêts et zones humides littorales de l'Est													
MDG-137	North Pangalane		X			non	6,119.0			1	1	0	**2**
MDG-209	Ambila-Lemaintso wetland				X	non	823.7			17	11	2	**30**
MDG-107	Vohibola Classified Forest NPA	X				APT	2,224.9	NATIONAL NGO	MATE	32	32	7	**71**
Groupe des Hautes Terres du Centre													
MDG-5	Ambatofinandrahana				X	non	37,367.9			5	12	4	**21**
MDG-112	Ibity NPA	X				APT	7,032.1	INT. NGO	MBG	19	33	5	**57**
MDG-113	Itremo NPA	X				APT	100,115.9	INT. NGO	Kew	7	7	5	**19**
MDG-121	Manjakatompo-Ankaratra Massif NPA	X	X			APT	2,660.9	NATIONAL NGO	VIF	25	32	11	**68**
Autres sites													
MDG-13	Barren Islands MPA	X	X			APT	74,929.7	INT. NGO	Blue Ventures	4	6	2	**12**
MDG-86	Beanka NPA	X				APT	18,340.2	INT. NGO	BCM	1	4	0	**5**
MDG-93	Tsimembo-Manambolomaty-Bemamba Complex NPA		X	X		APT	50,845.6	INT. NGO	TPF	6	8	2	**16**

Table 2-1: List of the Key Biodiversity Areas, CEPF Investment Priorities in Comoros, Mauritius and Seychelles

	KBA name	International standards				Protection Status	Surface (ha)	Type of manager (or stakeholders involved)	Name of Manager / stakeholder	Threatened species			
		AZE	ZICO	RAM SAR	ZICP					VU	EN	CR	**Total**
Comoros													
COM-1	Moya Forest					non	3,486.0			2	5	2	**9**
COM-2	Dziani-Boudouni Lake			X		non	20.4			0	1	0	**1**
COM-3	Hantsongoma Lake			**X**		non	1,122.2			1	4	0	**5**
COM-4	La Grille Mountains		**X**			non	8,724.9			3	5	0	**8**
COM-5	Karthala Mountains	X	**X**	**X**		non	14,228.3			6	8	2	**16**
COM-6	Mont Mlédjélé (Mwali highlands)	X	**X**			non	6,268.3			3	6	2	**11**
COM-7	Mont Ntringui (Ndzuani highlands)	X	**X**	**X**		non	2,649.9			2	5	2	**9**
COM-9	Anjouan coral reefs					non	2,087.5			28	0	0	**28**
COM-10	Grande Comore coral reefs					non	7,956.7			30	0	0	**30**
COM-11	Mohéli coral reefs - outside of Marine Park					non	3,268.8			28	0	0	**28**
COM-12	Bimbini area and la Selle Islet					non	5,695.5			2	4	2	**8**
COM-13	Chiroroni area					non	1,141.3			1	3	1	**5**
COM-14	Domoni area					non	4,113.5			0	1	1	**2**
COM-15	Malé area					non	1,764.3			0	1	1	**2**
COM-16	Moya area					non	1,273.6			0	2	1	**3**
COM-17	Mutsamudu area					non	2,257.0			1	3	2	**6**
COM-18	Ndroudé area and Ilot aux Tortues					non	2,313.9			0	1	1	**2**
COM-19	Pomoni area					non	5,749.0			29	1	0	**30**
COM-20	Coelacanthe area					non	68,089.2			3	4	2	**9**

Mauritius													
Saint Brandon													
MUS-1	Cargados Carajos Shoals		X			PROPOSE E	43,793.7	GOUVERN EMENT/PRI VE	Raphael Fishing	0	1	1	**2**
Mauritius Island													
MUS-2	Bambou Mountain Range		X			PARTIELLE	1,740.9	GOUVERN EMENT/PRI VE	Ferney SE/La Vallee de FERNEY Trust/ Bioculture/Forest ry Service	32	17	14	**63**
MUS-3	Chamarel - Le Morne					PARTIELLE	2,900.3	GOUVERN EMENT/PRI VE	Bioculture Mauritius/Forestr y Service	30	15	15	**60**
MUS-9	Le Pouce - Anse Courtois - Pieter Both - Longue Mountain		X			PARTIELLE	2,582.2	GOUVERN EMENT	Forestry Service	41	24	29	**94**
MUS-17	Yemen-Takamaka					non	741.2	PRIVE	Medine SE	10	6	5	**21**
MUS-12	Black River Gorges National Park and surrounding areas		X			PARTIELLE	6,059.5	GOUVERN EMENT/PRI VE/ONG	Forestry Service - Private owners -MWF	76	43	26	**145**
Rodrigues													
MUS-13	Plaine Corail	X	X			PARTIELLE	57.1	GOUVERN EMENT/ON G/PRIVE	Forestry Service/ MWF/Bioculture Mauritius	0	8	22	**30**
MUS-16	South Slopes of Grande Montagne	X	X			PARTIELLE	612.4	GOUVERN EMENT	Forestry Service/MWF	0	7	28	**35**
MUS-6	Rodrigues' Islets	X	X			PROPOSE E	222.9	GOUVERN EMENT	Forestry Service/ RRA	1	4	4	9

Seychelles													
Silhouette													
SYC-42 and SYC-49	Silhouette (Silhouette National Park and Silhouette Marine National Park		X			AP	1,851.8	PARAPUBLIC/ONG /PRIVE	IDC/ICS/S NPA	40	20	21	**81**
Praslin													
SYC-9	Fond Ferdinand					PROPOSE E	128.9	PARAPUBLIC	Praslin Dvlpt Fund	12	6	1	**19**
SYC-7	Fond Azore southern slopes to Anse Bois de Rose		X			PROPOSE E	320.2			14	4	2	**20**
Malé													
SYC-13	Grand Police wetlands					non	18.5	PRIVE	Private company	4	1	0	**5**
SYC-43	Morne Seychellois National Park	X	X			AP	2,536.1	PARAPUBLIC	SNPA	29	21	13	**63**
SYC-36	Montagne Brûlée-Piton de l'Eboulis					PROPOSE E	114.2			21	9	3	**33**
SYC-11	Montagne Corail-Collines du Sud dry forests					PROPOSE E	298.9			12	1	1	**14**
SYC-38	Montagne Planneau (Grand Bois-Varigault-Cascade)	X	X			PROPOSE E	1,435.7			31	16	10	**57**
Other islands													
SYC-5	Cosmoledo		X			PROPOSE E	15,359.1	PARAPUBLIC/ONG	IDC/ICS	0	0	0	**0**
SYC-21	Desnoeufs Island		X			PROPOSE E	38.5	PARAPUBLIC/ONG	IDC/ICS	0	0	0	**0**
SYC-26	Félicité Island					non	141.4	PRIVE	Private company	9	0	1	**10**

2.2 Strategic Directions and Investment Priorities

The CEPF strategy in the Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands Hotspot intends to support complementary actions at three levels:

- At the local level, by providing practical answers to conservation and development issues, working with local communities at priority sites (Strategic Direction 1);
- At the national level, by supporting national civil society organizations to increase their influence on decisions affecting biodiversity, through strengthening partnerships with the private sector and government authorities (Strategic Direction 2);
- At the regional level, by supporting the emergence of a regional conservation community, allowing organizations throughout the region to share experiences, taking advantage of the diversity of situations and expertise in the Indian Ocean (Strategic Direction 3).

At the local level, activities will focus on priority sites, which represent ecosystems so far relatively neglected in terms of conservation investment, and of great importance in terms of environmental services for local populations. The objective of CEPF is to support pilot projects demonstrating that environmental protection and healthy economic development can go hand in hand and reinforce each other. This will include support to land use planning and natural resource management plans (including the establishment of protected areas under appropriate statutes) and support for environmentally sustainable economic activities. In parallel, CEPF will support the emergence of civil society networks, with the goal of developing, for each corridor or cluster of sites, collaboration between various stakeholders (farmers' or fishermen's organizations, village associations, local NGOs, cooperatives, private sector, etc.). CEPF's objective is to strengthen the capacities of individual organizations to ensure the sustainability of their common actions.

The second level of CEPF's intervention is the national level. The experience of CEPF in Madagascar shows the importance of supporting national NGOs in the implementation of their own programs of work, at a wider scale than the field-based projects. Currently, many national organizations focus on field projects in response to requests from donors, and can hardly focus on developing partnerships on a larger scale with the government parties and the private sector. CEPF aims to help a limited number of national organizations to invest in these broader issues of relationship between development and conservation, with the aim of strengthening a network of national champions that can contribute to a better consideration of conservation issues in decision making. CEPF will support these organizations in building their capacities with the objective that these organizations could deal with emerging threats in the future. Work at this level of intervention is intended to complement the local level. The regional implementation team will support the establishment of strong relationships between the beneficiaries at the local and at the national level, to make sure that feedback from the field benefits the national actions and vice versa.

The third level is the level of regional integration. To address the need to strengthen the technical and managerial capabilities of a new generation of professionals in the field of conservation, CEPF's strategy is to make the regional diversity an asset, making the best of the range of training opportunities, and introducing organizations and young professionals to different

situations and projects. Insisting on concrete regional cooperation programs, directly addressing the needs of the organizations, CEPF also intends to create conditions for strengthening interpersonal and inter-organizational relationships, with the objective to support the emergence of a regional conservation community, able to raise new ideas and concepts – following the natural principle of cross-pollination.

Table 2-2: Strategic Directions and CEPF Investment Priorities for 2014-2020

Strategic Directions	Investment Priorities
1. Empower local communities to protect and manage biodiversity in priority key biodiversity areas.	1.1 Support local communities to design and implement locally relevant conservation and sustainable management actions that respond to major threats at priority sites. 1.2 Support the development of economic models to improve both livelihoods and biodiversity conservation. 1.3 Build the technical, administrative and financial capacity of local organizations and their partners.
2. Enable civil society to mainstream biodiversity and conservation into policy making and business practices.	2.1 Support local research institutions to improve basic knowledge of biodiversity of priority ecosystems. 2.2 Support civil society to disseminate biodiversity information and influence political and economic decision-makers in favor of biodiversity and conservation priorities. 2.3 Explore partnerships with private sector stakeholders to promote sustainable practices that deliver positive impacts for conservation.
3. Strengthen civil society capacity at national and regional levels through training, exchanges and regional cooperation.	3.1 Foster the emergence of a new generation of conservation professionals and organizations through small grants for technical and practical training. 3.2 Encourage exchanges and partnerships between civil society organizations to strengthen conservation knowledge, organizational capacity, management and fundraising skills.
4. Provide strategic leadership and effective coordination of CEPF investment through a regional implementation team.	4.1 Make operational and coordinate the allocation and monitoring process of the CEPF grants to ensure effective implementation of the strategy. 4.2 Foster the emergence of a conservation community beyond institutional and political boundaries to achieve conservation objectives.

Strategic Direction 1: Empower local communities to protect and manage biodiversity in priority key biodiversity areas.

Local community involvement in biodiversity conservation and natural resources management is growing in importance, in particular in Madagascar and Comoros. This involvement is seen as essential to empower local stakeholders to address sustainable resource use, sites and species protection, and even site management and co-management. Consensus on this issue is clear and based on substantial evidence showing that limited community involvement is a major cause of failure. Experience shows it leads to the discontinuation of support to local communities by sponsoring organizations, as well as a lack of resources, lack of information and awareness, planning and implementation of projects without participation of local communities, and absence of involvement of local decision-makers and elected officials.

CEPF funding is an opportunity to develop models in several phases, with small grants serving to help lay the foundation for larger projects, thus maximizing the chances of success.

The very low capacity of local communities is a significant factor limiting effective involvement. It is unrealistic at present for CEPF to fund most of these community-based organizations directly, even with a small grants program, in part due to lack of bank accounts or legal status. Therefore, it will be necessary to work through local associations, and national or international NGOs that have a local presence, at least initially. Support to these organizations to train local communities (including local women groups, farmers associations or any relevant groups of local stakeholders) in management and administration is an area of intervention that will set the stage for future increased involvement of local communities in conservation.

It is imperative that local communities take greater responsibility and support the management of the KBAs that provide the environmental services that these communities receive directly, and that benefit more broadly the neighboring communities, their fellow countrymen and people around the globe. Actions taken under this strategic direction will lead to improved awareness about the importance of the sites that local communities manage, and will contribute to the development of mechanisms that will generate maximum direct benefits for people, to ensure their long-term commitment these important sites.

The list of priority KBAs is provided for in Tables 12-2 and 12-3.

Investment Priority 1.1: Support local communities to design and implement locally relevant conservation and sustainable management actions that respond to major threats at priority sites

The objective of this priority investment is to support the emergence and implementation in priority KBAs or their surroundings, of natural resources management plans enabling the long-term conservation of ecosystems and target species. These plans should take into consideration the development needs of local communities. Given the grassroots organizations' capabilities, these actions would have to be supported initially by national and international organizations playing the role of mentor. Considerable attention will be paid to the legitimacy of these mentoring organizations with the local communities. To be eligible for CEPF funding, projects must demonstrate effective participation of local communities in the early stages of project design, consideration of local expectations for development, and ownership by all stakeholders, including the local authorities, farmers or fishermen associations and women groups.

When necessary, CEPF will encourage organizations to undertake participatory planning and preparation, for example through a small grant (<$20,000). This could entail conducting baseline studies when necessary, or developing the detailed action plans necessary for additional support, in concert with local stakeholders.

CEPF will devote special attention to projects that allow:
- Establishment of locally managed protected areas.
- Implementation mechanisms for protection or sustainable management by private landowners (especially in Seychelles and Mauritius).
- Strengthening of local participation in protected-area management mechanisms.

The consultations highlighted the lack of understanding by local village communities of the importance of biodiversity and natural resources, and the profile recognizes this as an important factor affecting their motivation to engage effectively in protection of their environment. This is

not only the case in dire economic situations encountered in Madagascar and Comoros, but also in Seychelles and Mauritius, particularly for private landowners who are key players in the management of important sites for biodiversity (see Chapters 9 and 10). Awareness raising may be conducted as a complement to or as support for conservation efforts. The most appropriate local media (which may include radio, community theater, etc). will be favored, as will exchanges between village communities in targeted KBAs and areas where the environment is more degraded. Actions should aim to strengthen the integration of cultural and economic factors into conservation. To be eligible, awareness activities should include a monitoring and evaluation component to assess the validity of the approach and to measure impact in terms of behavioral change.

Investment Priority 1.2: Support the development of economic models to improve both livelihoods and biodiversity conservation.

It is also necessary to develop and support models that strengthen the link between biodiversity conservation and local livelihoods. In the absence of a direct link between these two issues, the success of long-term conservation actions cannot be guaranteed.

Considering the economic importance of this sector in the hotspot (see Chapter 7), CEPF would consider projects on promoting ecotourism, especially in the coastal portions of the priority geographic areas. However, due to the limited funding available, CEPF will not finance the construction of accommodations or the provision of large equipment. Actions funded by CEPF must also demonstrate a positive impact on the natural resources and biodiversity management—for example, by linking the establishment of an ecotourism program to stakeholders' commitments to conservation.

Projects involving incentives for conservation action will also be considered and could include support to commercialization of sustainably harvested natural product with high added-value, voluntary certification, and establishment of conservation agreements, possibly in connection with payments for environmental services. Partnerships and exchanges of experience between organizations in the hotspot will be promoted under this investment priority.

Investment Priority 1.3: Build the technical, administrative and financial capacity of the local organizations and their partners.

All consultations highlighted the low capacity of local organizations as one of the major obstacles to the adoption and implementation of local management plans, or natural resource management transfers in the case of Madagascar. The objective of this investment priority is to support the emergence of a network of competent community-based organizations with improved governance systems, management and organizational capabilities. This is a necessary step to enable local organizations to pursue the implementation of conservation activities for the long run.

It is common that even the most active and influential organizations at the local level do not yet have sufficient experience or technical capacities to effectively implement conservation actions. This is the case of many rural development groups, farmers associations, women groups, water management organizations and religious associations (see Chapter 8). CEPF will consider activities to build the technical capacity of these organizations in natural resources management and biodiversity monitoring. Community-based organizations engaging in actions for the

protection and sustainable management of natural resources could be supported to become legally established, to improve their governance structures and accounting systems, and to build the capacities of their members.

Strategic Direction 2: Enable civil society to mainstream biodiversity and conservation into political and economic decision-making.

Lack of availability, access and utilization of information about biodiversity has been identified as one of the most important barriers to efficient conservation action across the hotspot. Basic knowledge is still deficient for many species and sites. Even when information is available, it is not used or it is misunderstood by many decision-makers, with immediate consequences on ecosystems (cf. Chapters 6, 7 and 9).

Civil society has an important role to play to generate and disseminate information on biodiversity to stakeholders outside of the field of conservation, in particular to government authorities, the private sector and the development sector. This strategic direction aims at supporting the efforts of the conservation community to reach out to decision-makers, in order to influence economic choices and help mainstream biodiversity conservation. This could be done at three levels: by improving the knowledge base when needed; by facilitating access to data on biodiversity; and by using the adequate avenue to inform the choices of the decision-makers.

Investment Priority 2.1: Support local research institutions to improve basic knowledge of biodiversity of priority ecosystems.

It is clear that significant gaps remain in terms of basic knowledge about specific sites. In the absence of this information, some of these sites did not qualify for the status of KBA, although it is likely that further studies would generate the data to justify KBA status. Some of these sites might be threatened by current or future economic development, be it infrastructure, agricultural development or mining. In the absence of data, implementing appropriate conservation measures is very challenging. In Madagascar for example, there are significant gaps in knowledge on the marine environment, freshwater biodiversity, and botanical inventories (cf. Chapters 3 and 4). The situation is even more critical in the Republic of Comoros, where basic biological data are very limited, making it difficult to identify priority areas and to undertake biodiversity management planning, both at the site and national levels.

Under this investment priority, scientific programs inventorying biodiversity, and mapping of habitats, possibly linked with research on natural resources use by local populations, will be eligible. The activities will be implemented primarily by organizations from the hotspot, possibly in association with international researchers when local capacities are insufficient. CEPF will pay specific attention to activities which include young professionals from the region and promote regional cooperation. All research results funded by CEPF will be made publicly available, unless the diffusion of this information could result in adverse impacts on conservation (such as in the case distribution of species subjected to wildlife trafficking, for instance).

In the case of private or public investment in existing or potential KBAs, CEPF will not support the preparation of biological assessments that should be undertaken as part of the legal requirements under the Environmental Impact Assessment national regulations, and should therefore be paid for by the investors.

Activities under this investment priority are not restricted to CEPF priority KBAs, but the emphasis will be on

i) Freshwater biodiversity and marine/coastal biodiversity in CEPF priority KBAs.
ii) Potential important plant areas in neglected and/or underfunded areas.
iii) Biodiversity inventories for sites under an emerging direct threat (for instance, by mining or infrastructure development – with the limitations given above).

Investment Priority 2.2: Support civil society to disseminate biodiversity information and influence political and economic decision-makers in favor of biodiversity and conservation priorities.

Beyond the knowledge generation, the profile highlighted the need to strengthen the dissemination of information, i.e. the communication of the value of biodiversity to stakeholders outside of the field of conservation, in particular to decision-makers, the private sector and the development sector. Projects seeking to raise awareness and influence decision-making have great potential to impact conservation, especially in relation to the agriculture, fisheries or extractive sectors.

This investment priority will also allow for projects that respond to emerging opportunities and threats. The following examples are indicative:

- Support civil society participation in consultations for economic development plans, in environmental impact studies, and in appropriate fora to strengthen the consideration of conservation priorities.
- Initiate information campaigns on threats or unsustainable practices, or campaigns to promote the benefits of conservation to development actors, the private sector and government authorities (including by using the Red List tool when appropriate).
- Initiate dialogues with government authorities, establish multi-stakeholder discussion platforms, or support preparatory actions to support the adoption of legislation on specific issues.

The consultations also highlighted the difficulties encountered across the hotspot in accessing and sharing information on the hotspot's biodiversity. Efforts to increase access to information useful to the scientific community as well as to political and private decision-makers, ideally at a regional level, would be of great benefit for the hotspot.

This investment priority is not directly related to CEPF priority sites. However, establishing linkages with ongoing activities involving these sites, where justified, should be established.

Investment Priority 2.3: Explore partnerships with private sector stakeholders to promote more sustainable practices that deliver positive impacts for conservation.

Economic development is advancing steadily across the hotspot, with national strategies prioritizing development that may have an impact on the status of biodiversity. In particular, tourism, aquaculture, fishing and mining pose threats to biodiversity. These activities can however provide benefits to local communities and national economies, provided that adequate safeguards are in place to minimize and mitigate negative impacts, and to maximize positive impacts.

This investment priority will support civil society organizations to explore and develop partnerships with private companies operating in fisheries and aquaculture, export agriculture, mining, energy, infrastructure and tourism in order to identify and implement pilot actions to improve environmental and social practices. These projects will rely on global standards for sustainable business practices, for voluntary certification schemes, or other mechanisms adapted to the context of the hotspot. Under this investment priority, CEPF will consider projects from all eligible countries (Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles).

More specifically, CEPF will seek to fund innovative mechanisms that could provide sustainable financial incentives to local communities, or to benefit sustainable conservation. CEPF is willing to fund initiatives that will test new approaches and tools, and encourages civil society in the region to explore new mechanisms, alliances and forms of partnership.

Strategic Direction 3: Strengthen civil society capacity at local and regional levels through training, exchanges and regional cooperation.

The analysis and consultations for the chapter on the civil society context (Chapter 8) indicate clearly that in spite of efforts in several countries, the general capacities of national organizations for biodiversity in the hotspot still need to be strengthened. Where civil society plays an important role in conservation—such as in Madagascar—the conservation community is still dominated by a few large international organizations (even if these organizations employ mostly country nationals). National civil society organizations are very few and with little capacity in Mauritius or in the Comoros. Two important barriers have been identified that limit the ability of the civil society to support long-term conservation activities.

The first barrier is the insufficient pool of young professionals with technical capacities in fields related to natural resources management and conservation. In many cases, organizations have to rely on experts from other countries, putting at risk the sustainability of their activities. Supporting the emergence of a new generation of young professionals is therefore key to consolidating and sustaining the regional conservation community. It is also an important element for mainstreaming of conservation through governments and private sectors in the long term.

The second important barrier pertains to the overall capacities of national organizations in terms of administration, management and fundraising. While national organizations often have an understanding of the local situation and strong relations with local communities, their organizations' capacities affect their efficiency, limit their access to funding, and threaten their sustainability as well as their independence.

On the positive side, the profile also underlined the exceptional diversity of experiences and skills in the hotspot, which offers great potential for regional collaboration. For instance, Madagascar has substantial experience in engagement with local communities and joint management of protected areas. Mauritius has learned much in the face of serious loss of habitat, and has experimented with innovative techniques for ecosystem restoration. Seychelles has experience in invasive species eradication on the islets, and in partnering with the private sector. The Comoros have a very dynamic network of community-based organizations involving young

people. The French departments host high-level research centers and have great experience in engagement with local governments.

Investment Priority 3.1: Foster the emergence of a new generation of conservation professionals and organizations through small grants for technical and practical training.
Opportunities for conservation-related training exist today in La Réunion, Mauritius, Madagascar, and recently in Seychelles. With this investment priority, CEPF aims to expand the training opportunities, especially by supporting the creation of short programs for community leaders, development professionals, or other relevant stakeholders, and by supporting the participation of the beneficiaries in these trainings. Small grants, including grants for scholarships, may be given to young professionals in order to promote the active participation of these future professionals in conservation programs across the region. Exchanges between the hotspot countries will be favored.

For procedural reasons, CEPF can't support students or organizations of the French departments. However, it can support students or organizations in other countries to receive training or participate in exchanges and internships in the French departments and territories of the hotspot.

Under this priority, CEPF could also support national organizations to strengthen their institutional capacity by providing funding to complement conservation actions with training and specific activities tailored to improving organizational capacity.

Investment Priority 3.2: Encourage exchanges and partnerships between civil society organizations to strengthen conservation knowledge, organizational capacity, management and fundraising skills.
Under this investment priority, programs of exchange or mentorship, as well as establishment of platforms and/or networks for technical cooperation, will be supported. The focus will be on "doing together" rather than "sitting together". Priority areas for such actions shall be the following:

- Management of marine and coastal areas
- Management of wetlands
- Restoration of island ecosystems
- Eradication of invasive species
- Conservation action planning for Critically Endangered species
- Participation of local communities and joint management

The issue of sustainable financing has emerged as a priority for which civil society feels the need to strengthen its capacity. At present time, the "project approach" remains the main sources of funding. Projects are still primarily funded official development assistance - while private foundations tend to increase their presence. However, accessing these funds remains complex and only a small number of organizations, mainly international, manage to get grants. CEPF will support specific actions to strengthen the operational capacity of national civil society in the areas of project preparation, fundraising, programming and budget management, human resources and associative governance - in order to allow these organizations greater access to diverse sources of funding (public development assistance, foundations, etc). CEPF would encourage support to enhance the capacities of national organizations to explore other

sustainable funding mechanisms, such as payments for environmental services. These training opportunities will be open as much as possible to regional participation.

Strategic Direction 4: Provide strategic leadership and effective coordination of CEPF investment through a regional implementation team.

A global evaluation of CEPF found that the regional implementation teams are particularly effective at connecting the essential elements of a complex and integrated set of interventions. With the support of CEPF grant directors, the regional implementation teams effectively anchor large projects to small local initiatives, government cooperation and sustainable funding, enabling stronger and longer-lasting results that are greater than the sum of the outputs of individual interventions.

In each hotspot approved since 2007, CEPF supports a regional implementation team to put the ecosystem profile plans in the form of a coherent grants portfolio whose impacts exceed the sum of its parts. Each regional implementation team will include one or more of the active civil society organizations in the region. For example, the team can take the form of a partnership of civil society groups. It can also be a primary organization with an official mission to involve other bodies overseeing the implementation, for example through an Advisory Committee.

The regional implementation team will be chosen by the CEPF Donor Council on the basis of approved terms of reference, via a competitive procedure and selection criteria available on website at www.cepf.net. The team will operate transparently and openly, in accordance with the CEPF mission and all the provisions of the CEPF Operations Manual. Member organizations of the regional implementation team will not qualify for other CEPF grants in the same hotspot. Requests for official affiliated organizations having an independent Board of Directors will be accepted and subjected to an additional external review.

Investment priority 4.1: Make operational and coordinate the allocation and monitoring process of the CEPF grants to ensure effective implementation of the strategy.

One of the main objectives of the regional implementation team is to provide local coordination and support to the grant process. The main functions and specific activities of the team will be detailed in the approved terms of reference. The principal roles of the regional team under this priority are:

- Assist civil society groups in developing, implementing, and repeating successful conservation activities.
- Review all grant applications and manage external reviews with technical experts and the advisory committees.
- Approve grants up to $20,000 and make decisions jointly with the CEPF Secretariat for all other applications.
- Coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of individual projects through standard tools, sites visits and meetings with grantees, and provide assistance to the CEPF Secretariat for portfolio monitoring and evaluation.

The regional implementation team plays a crucial support role supporting and complementing the CEPF Secretariat. The regional team is the main contact for applicants and grantees, and with its knowledge of the region, plays a role of conduit between the field and the CEPF Secretariat—from project selection through evaluation. In particular, the regional implementation team has a

very important role to play in soliciting and reviewing project proposals. This role encompasses a wide range of activities, such as the publishing calls for proposals and establishing a group of experts tasked with recommending proposal approval or rejection. While such tasks could be considered as administrative, they have significant programmatic importance and require technical expertise. Their proper implementation is essential to the quality and consistency of the projects portfolio, which in turn is key to achieving CEPF's goals.

The regional implementation team also assumes significant administrative responsibilities as manager of the CEPF small grants mechanism for grants under $20,000. Its tasks in this context include budgeting, processing of proposals, drafting contracts, and monitoring and evaluation of small projects. Small grants play an extremely important role in the CEPF portfolio. These grants can be used for the preparation of larger actions, allow CEPF to engage with local groups that do not have the capacity to implement large grants, and can be used to quickly address emerging threats. The role played by these grants should not be underestimated. Strategic oversight of the small grants portfolio is necessary to ensure consistency with the overall grants portfolio, as well as with other actions carried out by CEPF donors and other players in the hotspot.

This investment priority also covers monitoring and evaluation. This involves collecting data on the portfolio performance, ensuring compliance with procedures, ensuring that recipients understand and comply with social and environmental safeguard policies, and of course reviewing project progress reports. Concerning follow-up and evaluation, the regional team is required to visit projects to identify capacity-building needs and help build links between the various projects. This is a crucial component for efficient project implementation and the global monitoring of CEPF, requiring technical expertise and experience.

Investment priority 4.2: Foster the emergence of a conservation community beyond institutional and political boundaries to achieve conservation objectives.

This investment priority covers the two functions of the regional implementation team terms of reference that are programmatic in nature:

- Coordinate and communicate the CEPF investment, build partnerships and promote exchange of information in the hotspot.
- Strengthen the capacity of the beneficiaries.

These functions include programmatic tasks that directly support the strategic development of the grant portfolio and contribute to achieving the conservation objectives. These functions include facilitating the exchange of experiences between beneficiaries and other stakeholders, identifying opportunities for co-financing for CEPF and for grantees, and aligning CEPF investment with other donors' investments. These programmatic functions require that the regional implementation team maintains internal conservation expertise to ensure that CEPF funds are strategically channeled to optimize the achievement of conservation objectives.

An essential programmatic function is to coordinate CEPF investments and facilitate the establishment of partnerships between the various actors. The regional implementation team will be responsible for identifying and contacting the active civil society organizations in priority sites, facilitating partnerships between themselves and the best placed national and international civil society organizations to provide technical and financial support, and facilitating the creation

of networks of civil society organizations at the national and regional levels to address issues of common interest.

The creation of linkages with other donors is also an important goal, particularly in the context highlighted in the investment niche, to support the preparation of programs and projects that can and or will later receive external assistance. The role of the regional implementation team will thus be crucial to ensuring a continuing dialogue with the donors present in the hotspots in order to promote opportunities to leverage their actions with CEPF's strategy. In the Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands Hotspot, the RIT will pay a specific attention at building strong relationship with the on-going and future programmes of CEPF's donors as well as of important Foundations, such as the Helmsley Charitable Trust. Programmes with which the RIT will be asked to develop strong collaboration include the GEF-AFD-Government of Comoros programme to establish the National System of Protected Areas in the Comoros, the GEF programme on protection of threatened endemic and economically valuable species in Madagascar, the GEF programme on Atsimo-Andrefana Spiny and Dry Forest Landscape, the Regional Programme for the Management of Biodiversity of the Indian Ocean Commission funded by the EU and the French GEF among others. Collaboration will also be sought with the GEF Small Grant Programme in all the countries. In Madagascar, the RIT will work closely with the Madagascar Biodiversity Fund to ensure synergies, in particular for activities to be implemented in and around the protected areas managed by Madagascar National Parks. The RIT will maintain a continuous dialogue with the Donors' community in order to support the emergence of positive collaborations for the benefit of the civil society partners of the hotspot. Chapters 7 and 10 provides for more detailed information on existing projects and initiatives with which synergies should be sought.

This investment priority also covers capacity building, a function that is at the heart of the regional implementation team responsibilities. It makes the regional implementation team central to strategy implementation by making it responsible for the coordination, communication, collaboration and liaison with donors, partners, governments and other stakeholders. It also puts the regional implementation team in charge of ensuring that the CEPF grant portfolio aims to achieve the goals set in the ecosystem profile. It includes the promotion of synergies between the CEPF objectives and local, national and regional initiatives.

This function focuses on strengthening national civil society organizations' capacity to access CEPF funds. It is important in this context that the team ensures that the partners have the institutional capacity to design and implement projects that contribute to the investment strategy objectives. Experience has shown that these capacity-building efforts are essential to ensure good projects are integrated into the broader hotspot strategy and a common vision for conservation. Capacity building occurs at the level of project design, implementation and drafting of reports, which helps prepare organizations to later benefit from other sources of funding, be they private foundations or institutional donors as mentioned in Chapter 10. Other more specific aspects of civil society capacity building are addressed by Strategic Directions 1 and 3.

MADAGASCAR AND INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS HOTSPOT: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Objective	Targets	Means of Verification	Important Assumption
Engage civil society in the conservation of globally threatened biodiversity through targeted investments with maximum impact on the highest conservation priorities. Total amount: $ 7,500,000	40 Key Biodiversity Areas, covering 2.8 million hectares, have new or strengthened protection and management. At least 10 Key Biodiversity Areas that were unprotected or under temporary protection gain officially declared permanent protected status, covering 1 million hectares. At least 10 partnerships and networks formed among civil society, government and communities to leverage complementary capacities and maximize impact in support of the ecosystem profile. At least 40 civil society organizations, including at least 30 local organizations, actively participate in conservation actions guided by the ecosystem profile.	Grantee and regional implementation team performance reports Annual portfolio overview reports; portfolio midterm and final assessment reports Protected Areas Tracking Tool (SP1 METT) Official decrees of creation of new protected areas	The CEPF ecosystem profile will effectively guide and coordinate conservation action in the hotspot. Investments by other donors will support complementary activities that reduce threats to priority sites and species. Political stability will facilitate the implementation of conservation initiatives and improve the operating environment for civil society. Civil society organizations and private companies will be willing to engage in biodiversity conservation, form new partnerships and adopt innovative approaches.
Outcome 1: Local communities empowered to protect and manage biodiversity at priority Key Biodiversity Areas. $ 2,700,000	Threat levels to at least 25 priority sites reduced through locally relevant conservation actions implemented by local communities. Awareness of the values of biodiversity and the nature of threats and drivers raised among local communities in at least 25 priority sites. Effective participation of local communities in the management of at least 10 new protected areas at priority sites. Mechanisms for effective participation of private landowners in improved biodiversity management on private lands for at least four	Grantee and regional implementation team performance reports CEPF Secretariat supervision mission reports Protected Areas Tracking Tool (SP1 METT) Community agreements designating new conservation areas	Local communities will be willing to play an active role in site-based conservation. Increased awareness of biodiversity values will translate into increased local community support for conservation initiatives. Government policies will continue to provide for community management of forests, fisheries and other natural resources.

	priority sites. Economic tools and models improving livelihoods while preserving natural capital and biodiversity (ecotourism, payments for ecosystem services, conservation agreements, etc). piloted and implemented in at least eight priority sites. At least 75 percent of local communities targeted by site-based projects show tangible well-being benefits. Capacities of local community organizations in charge of conservation and local development improved in at least 20 sites, allowing for increased sustainability and efficiency of these organizations.	Baseline survey reports Human well-being monitoring reports Civil Society Organizational Tracking Tools (applied to community-based organizations)	Suitable and sufficient funding sources will be available for conservation incentives models. Appropriate, cost-effective site-based monitoring protocols for human well-being impacts can be developed. Sufficient civil society capacity to implement site-based conservation exists or can be built.
Outcome 2: Civil society organizations have enhanced the knowledge base for biodiversity conservation and influence decision-makers for improved mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation. $ 2,000,000	Baseline studies, inventories and mapping of important biodiversity areas completed for at least six sites—with at least three sites in the Comoros. At least three platforms or dialogues positively engaging stakeholders from development agencies, government and local authorities and private sector, in place and delivering results for mainstreaming biodiversity in decision-making. Civil society actively participating in and influencing at least five local development strategies, environmental impact assessments or other appropriate decision processes. At least 12 national organizations improve their skills in advocacy and engagement with authorities and/or private sector. At least five partnerships between civil society organizations and private sector companies or	Grantee and regional implementation team performance reports CEPF Secretariat supervision mission reports Annual portfolio overview reports; portfolio midterm and final assessment reports Baseline survey reports Civil Society Organizational Tracking Tools Official reports of governments	

	professional organizations lead to concrete actions benefitting biodiversity conservation.	Annual reports (or other means) produced by private companies	
Outcome 3: Regional and national capacity to conserve biodiversity increased through civil society partnerships, within the conservation community and with other stakeholders. $ 1,300,000	At least 40 community leaders and/or development professionals with improved capacities and engagement to preserve biodiversity. At least 15 students—including at least six from the Comoros—successfully achieve a degree in a field related to conservation. At least 12 organizations engaged in a lasting mentoring or partnering relationship at the regional level. At least one regional network is created or reinforced allowing exchange of experience and mutual support at the regional level, enabling collective responses to priority and emerging threats. At least 20 local civil society organizations demonstrate improvements in organizational capacity, project development and institutional fundraising.	Grantee and regional implementation team performance reports Study reports from interns and graduates CEPF Secretariat supervision mission reports Civil Society Organizational Capacity Tracking Tool Training needs assessments and evaluation reports	The operating environment for civil society will remain constant or improve across the hotspot. The key capacity limitations of civil society organizations can be addressed through a combination of capacity building and grant support. National civil society organizations are willing to take on a leadership role. Domestic academic institutions continue to provide short-term training courses in relevant fields. Immigration policies of the hotspot countries allow for regular exchanges and visits of individuals
Outcome 4: A regional implementation team provides strategic leadership and effectively coordinates CEPF investment in the Madagascar and Indian	At least 40 civil society organizations, including at least 30 local organizations actively participate in conservation actions guided by the ecosystem profile. At least 80 percent of local civil society organizations receiving grants demonstrate more effective capacity to design and implement	Regional implementation team performance reports CEPF Secretariat supervision mission reports Civil Society	Qualified organizations will apply to serve as the regional implementation team in line with the approved terms of reference and the ecosystem profile. The CEPF call for proposals will elicit appropriate proposals that

Ocean Islands Hotspot. $ 1,500,000	conservation actions. At least 20 civil society organizations supported by CEPF secure follow-up funding from other donors. At least two participatory assessments are undertaken and lessons learned and best practices from the hotspot are documented.	Organizational Capacity Tracking Tool	advance the goals of the ecosystem profile. Civil society organizations will collaborate with each other, government agencies, and private sector actors in a coordinated regional conservation program in line with the ecosystem profile. Private foundations and other donors continue to allocate funds to hotspot countries.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