

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
No Objection Approval Pursuant to Section 2.03(c) of the Financing Agreement

13 July 2017

**Selection of BirdLife International as the Regional Implementation Team
for the Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot**

Recommended Action Item

The Donor Council is asked to approve, on a no-objection basis, the selection of BirdLife International as the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) for the Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot.

The deadline for no-objection approval is **27 July 2017**.

Background

On 9 February 2017, CEPF requested organizations interested in serving as the RIT for the second phase of CEPF investment in the Mediterranean Basin (2017-2022) to submit an expression of interest (EOI) by 27 February, in order to pre-qualify for a formal proposal. Eighteen organizations submitted an EOI by the deadline and were invited to submit full proposals. The Request for Proposals (RfP) was released on 10 March and was sent to all organizations that had submitted an EOI. The RfP placed the maximum value of proposals at \$1,650,000, as per the approved Ecosystem Profile. Three organizations submitted valid proposals by the closing date of 7 April:

- 1) BirdLife International;
- 2) Okianos S.A.; and
- 3) Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC)

Three CEPF Secretariat staff and three external reviewers (Paule Gros, Mediterranean Basin Programme Director at the MAVA Foundation; Fabrice Bernard, Délégué Europe & International at Conservatoire du Littoral; and Bertrand de Montmollin, President of the IUCN Mediterranean Plants Specialist Group) reviewed these proposals during April. Based on the scores awarded by the reviewers, the proposal from BirdLife International

was ranked first. The Secretariat then shared the full proposals and its evaluation summary with the CEPF Working Group, together with an evaluation of the performance of BirdLife International as the RIT during the first phase of CEPF investment in the Mediterranean Basin (2012-2017).

On 4 May 2017, the Working Group discussed the selection of the RIT for the second phase of CEPF investment in the Mediterranean Basin at its 55th meeting. During the meeting, and via written comments, the Working Group raised a number of questions about the selection process, which were responded to by the Secretariat. Consequently, the Working Group expressed its satisfaction with the selection process and indicated its support for the recommendation to select BirdLife International. Hence, the Working Group agreed to recommend to the Donor Council the selection of BirdLife as the RIT for the Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot, and authorized the Secretariat to enter into negotiations with BirdLife to strengthen several aspects of its proposal with room for improvement, to ensure that the proposal was more ambitious and represented an advance over business as usual.

On 12 July 2017, these negotiations were concluded successfully. Specifically, BirdLife agreed to address the following recommendations made by the Working Group:

- 1) Provide more strategic vision and proactive action to promote regional integration among the sub-regions of the hotspot;
- 2) Introduce an improved system for exchange and storage of information (about monitoring, grant selection, thematic lessons learned, etc.);
- 3) Incorporate elements of the Okianos-led proposal related to the proposal review process (i.e. inputs by (part-time) experts with significant relevant technical experience related to each strategic direction); and
- 4) Demonstrate how the RIT will take on the enhanced roles and responsibilities discussed in the Donor Council as part of the long-term strategy.

The response from BirdLife to the Working Group's comments, detailing how each will be addressed in the revised RIT proposal, is listed below and available for download from the following link: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/6h64pmdx18qy1td/AACLa17Lo-lqemQU8kE_aAx8a?dl=0

Also listed below and available for download are the assessment of proposals and the supporting documents provided to the Working Group

Attachment 1: Response by BirdLife International to Working Group comments on its proposal

Attachment 2: Proposal from consortium led by BirdLife International

Attachment 3: Proposal from consortium led by Okianos S.A.

Attachment 4: Proposal from consortium led by REC

Attachment 5: Evaluation of the performance of the RIT for the first phase of CEPF investment in the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot

Attachment 6: Assessment and recommendation of RIT for the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot



Olivier Langrand

Executive Director

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund