

**Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
31st Meeting of the CEPF Donor Council
Brussels, Belgium
27 June 2017
2:00 – 6:00 p.m. CET**

Executive Director's Report

At a Glance

• Hotspot Strategies implemented	24
• Countries and territories included	92
• Grantees supported	2,157
• Grants committed	\$212 million
• Amount leveraged by those grants	\$371 million
• Protected areas created [hectares]	14.5 million
• Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) with strengthened Management and protection [hectares]	41.7
• Biodiversity management strengthened in Production landscapes [hectares]	6.4 million
• IUCN Red-listed species benefited	1,200

Actions From Previous Meeting

The 30th CEPF Donor Council meeting took place on 12 January 2017 at the GEF Secretariat in Washington, D.C. The agenda included discussion and decisions related to assessments of CEPF being undertaken by the World Bank; review of CEPF administrative costs over the past five years; and review of the regional implementation team role and purpose. CEPF also gave a presentation on its 2000–2016 Global Impact Report during the Executive Director's report. [Continue reading](#)

Updates From the Secretariat

Foundation Connect

As reported in a prior Executive Director report, to address some shortcomings of CEPF's custom-built grants management system, CEPF selected and has now customized for our use the Foundation Connect system. Foundation Connect, which is now being called Conservation Grants within CEPF, has been rolled out to applicants and grantees through a phased approach with three remaining active CEPF regions to be migrated to the new system. Further minor enhancements to the system are anticipated in FY18.

Grants Management Unit Update

Conservation International has created a centralized Grants and Contracts Unit to standardize and centralize the administration of grants and contracts in order to reduce risks and realize increased efficiency within CI's grant-making and contracting practices. As previously reported, goals of the new unit include (1) strengthening risk assessment and risk management practices across portfolio of grants and contracts, (2) standardizing monitoring protocols and tools for monitoring of grants and contracts, and (3) strengthening and supporting our grantees and staff through targeted training.

As part of this initiative, CI is hiring a fourth grant manager for CEPF grants who is scheduled to start in July, and CI has hired a procurement specialist to guide CEPF and CI's other programs on program-level procurement and sub-grantee procurement matters.

Timeline Associated with the Contribution of the Government of Japan and Timing of the Two Assessments Commissioned by the World Bank in August 2016

October 26, 2010: The Government of Japan pledged USD25 million at the 18th CEPF Donor Council Meeting in Nagoya, Japan.

March 25, 2011: The general terms of the contribution from Japan to the World Bank in support of CEPF were agreed. The World Bank (Inger Andersen, VP Sustainable Development) wrote to Japan (Mr. Hayashi, Executive Director for Japan at the World Bank) acknowledging the intention of Japan to commit US\$25 million to CEPF. This was done through an initial contribution of USD10 million, with additional contributions up to another US\$15 million to be decided in subsequent years.

October 25, 2012: The effective date of the initial USD10 million commitment from Japan to CEPF.

December 31, 2013: CEPF fully expensed the initial USD10 million, and began requesting additional commitments towards the remaining balance of the US\$25 million pledge.

April 30, 2015: The Government of Japan transferred the additional US\$15 million to the World Bank for processing to CEPF.

May 7, 2015: The World Bank Task Team Leader (Valerie Hickey) informed the CEPF Secretariat that the funds would be processed to CEPF within two weeks.

2015-2016: CEPF Secretariat followed up regularly with the World Bank thereafter as the process was repeatedly delayed.

June 2016: The results from a recent World Bank supervision mission raised issues of concern which deserved a closer examination before the World Bank could continue with the preparation of the project that will channel the additional grant resources provided by Japan.

August 2016: The Task Team – led by Andrea Kutter – discussed these concerns with World Bank Senior Management and ended up commissioning two assessments: (1) a “value-for-money” assessment of the CEPF to: (i) get an independent assessment of the economy, effectiveness, efficiency and equity of the use and flow of CEPF resources in support of the project/CEPF objective; and (ii) identify opportunities for enhancing the delivery of conservation outcomes supported by the CEPF over the next 3 years; (2) an in-depth fiduciary review of the CEPF to assess the financial and procurement procedures followed for the project, and to assess compliance with the agreed provisions of the applicable legal / grant agreements as well as use of funds.

The in-depth fiduciary assessment started on September 12, 2016, and ended on May 1, 2017. The assessment involved, at minimum, 86 person/day on behalf of CEPF Secretariat and RIT staff from Indo-Burma, Eastern Afrotropical and Cerrado biodiversity hotspots. CEPF shared approximately 2,000 documents amounting to over 2.5GB of data as part of the in-depth fiduciary review.

The value-for money assessment started on February 1, 2017, and ended on May 15, 2017. The assessment involved, at minimum, 87 person/day on behalf of CEPF Secretariat and RIT staff from Mediterranean Basin, Atlantic Forest, Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands biodiversity hotspots.

September 12, 2016: The World Bank informed the CEPF Donor Council members that they had temporarily put on hold the processing of the additional finance in the amount of USD15 million provided by the Government of Japan through the Japanese Trust fund in support of the objectives of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF).

January 12, 2017: The two assessments commissioned by the World Bank discussed among CEPF Donor Council members during the 30th CEPF Donor Council meeting in Washington, DC. Donor Council members request to receive the preliminary findings of the In-depth fiduciary assessment by January 31, 2017.

February 9, 2017: Meeting between the World Bank and the CEPF-Secretariat to review the preliminary findings of the In-depth fiduciary assessment.

April 19, 2017: Meeting between the World Bank and the CEPF-Secretariat for the presentation of the results of the Value-for-money assessment conducted by ICF.

June 2017: Expected delivery of the Action Plan

CEPF Upcoming Travel Schedule

We hope you will consider joining CEPF during an upcoming field visit. These trips provide an opportunity for you to meet our grantees and learn more about CEPF in the field. [View upcoming field visits](#)

2017 RIT Exchange

Last month, CEPF held its second RIT Exchange, this time in Athens, Greece. Twenty-eight RIT members, along with six Secretariat staff, came together for three days of discussion. All nine active biodiversity hotspots were represented.



“Although we were from all over the world and had only just met, we could easily talk from the beginning,” said Jorge Mariaca, Bolivia country coordinator for Tropical Andes. “I think we all have similar challenges and commitments, not only in our CEPF work but also regarding conservation challenges in our own countries.” [Continue reading](#)

Newly Discovered Frog Named After CEPF

In recognition of CEPF's investment in the Western Ghats Biodiversity Hotspot from 2008 to 2015, one of four new frog species has been named the CEPF burrowing frog (*Fejervarya cepfi*). [Continue reading](#)



Partnership Highlights

Mediterranean Basin Grantee Secures Co-funding



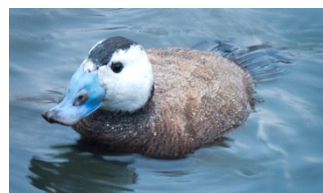
As a result of its CEPF-funded project and the good relationship formed with the CEPF grant management team, the organization Global Diversity Foundation (GDF) leveraged significant amounts of co-funding for water management activities.

CEPF Grant Director Pierre Carret had previously put Global Environment and Technology Fund (GETF) in contact with the Coca-Cola Africa Foundation (TCCAF) to work on a project as part of their Replenish Africa Initiative (RAIN). GDF worked closely with GETF to submit a concept note, followed by an implementation plan. The project has a budget of nearly US\$245,000 and focuses on establishing efficient irrigation for community nurseries and smallholder parcels in two communities. [Read all partnership highlights](#)

Updates on Profiling

Mediterranean Basin Reinvestment

In February, the profiling team completed the first draft of the ecosystem profile. The draft profile defines a niche for CEPF investment, which focuses on supporting civil society to implement integrated projects rooted in ground-level realities that provide local civil society organizations with the experience and credibility needed to engage effectively at a larger scale. [Read all profiling updates](#)



Communications



CEPF Annual Report

The digital version of the 2016 report will be available by the end of June. Mailed copies will soon follow.



CEPF Photo Contest

The winners of CEPF's annual photo contest have been chosen. [See the winning images](#)

[Read recent articles from CEPF](#)

Highlights From the Field

Mission Trip to Vanuatu

CEPF Executive Director Olivier Langrand and Grant Director Michele Zador were joined by East Melanesia's RIT Manager Helen Pippard and Vanuatu Country Coordinator Vatumaraga Molisa on a supervision mission to Vanuatu in February.

They witnessed how CEPF is building the capacity of local civil society and piloting several successful conservation projects that support local indigenous communities. It also found that many needs and opportunities exist to build on this foundation and maintain the positive trajectory. [See more highlights](#)



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