

**Call for Letters of Inquiry for the  
Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands (MADIO) Biodiversity Hotspot  
Large Grants**

**Eligible Country: Rodrigues Island (of the Republic of Mauritius)**

**Priority Key Biodiversity Areas: MUS 06 - Rodrigues' Islets and MUS 16 - South Slopes of Grande Montagne (Rodrigues)**

**Opening Date: 08 August 2024**

**Closing Date: 20 September 2024, 11.59 pm (Eastern Time, GMT-4)**

**Grant Size: Large Grant (>US\$50,000)\***

*\*On average Large Grant projects for Mauritius have been awarded USD 270 000 and are led by CSOs experienced in handling large scale projects.*

The [Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund](#) (CEPF) and its regional implementation team (RIT) for the hotspot the Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands, are accepting letters of inquiry (LOIs) from non-governmental organisations, community groups, Indigenous peoples' organisations, women's groups, private companies and other [civil society organizations](#) for projects that promote ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) in response to climate change and address the eligible activities and geographies of this call.

For more information about CEPF investment in the hotspot, consult:

- Ecosystem Profile: [English - French](#)
- Ecosystem-based Adaptation in the Indian Ocean: [English - French](#)

## **1. ELIGIBILITY**

### **Eligible Applicants**

Non-governmental organisations, community groups and associations, universities and research institutes, private enterprises and other civil society organisations may apply for this call.

Individuals are not eligible.

Government-owned enterprises or institutions are not eligible unless it can be established that they:

- o Have a legal personality independent of any government agency or actor.
- o Have the authority to apply for and receive private funds.
- o May not assert a claim of sovereign immunity.

**Applicants must be based in Rodrigues Island or have ongoing activities in the eligible KBAs.**

Preference will be given to projects promoting collaborative work, partnerships and alliances which can significantly reduce **duplication of efforts**. As such, joint projects with multiple organizations are eligible, as long as one lead organization submits the application and project partners have clear roles stated in the application.

Applying organizations must have their own bank accounts and must be legally entitled to receive grants.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with the CEPF website, particularly the sections on [Eligibility](#), [Before You Apply](#) and [How to Apply](#). Potential applicants who are uncertain of the eligibility of their organisation or project concept are encouraged to contact the RIT at [cepfproposals@iucn.nl](mailto:cepfproposals@iucn.nl) for clarification.

## Eligible Technical Scopes

Applicants should ensure that the core content of their LOI refers to Strategic Direction 1 and one or both of its Investment Priorities as listed below. Failing to align with this strategic direction will result in the application being considered ineligible.

***Strategic Direction 1: Empower communities and civil society to implement actions to improve the resilience of species, ecosystems, and human populations to climate change in priority KBAs***

This strategic direction will focus on providing the necessary funding, technical support, and capacity building for CSOs to implement EbA actions to improve the resilience of the most vulnerable species, ecosystems, and people to climate change. Expected outcomes include increased resilience and improved livelihoods for vulnerable populations, but also improved resilience of ecosystems and ecosystem services.

**Investment Priority 1.1: Implement EbA actions, including agroforestry, “climate smart agriculture”, eradication of IAS, restoration of degraded watersheds and coastal ecosystems (including wetlands, mangroves, reefs and seagrass beds), and promotion of sustainable management of coastal and terrestrial ecosystems**

Eligible projects will be those proposing to design and implement EbA, Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) and conservation actions that respond to climate impacts at priority KBAs.

Activities will analyze the adverse impacts of climate change on human livelihoods and propose solutions that can support, conserve, or restore species and natural areas in ways that help regulate or diminish the negative impacts. Identified solutions will then need to be planned based on an understanding of their costs and strategies to cover those costs, both during the projects and beyond, to ensure the sustainability and continuity of the new EbA actions.

**Investment Priority 1.2: Support the establishment and development of economic models that improve the resilience of local communities to climate change and support value chains for natural products, while strengthening ecosystem services that contribute to EbA**

Eligible projects will be those proposing to support the development of economic models that improve community resilience to climate change, including nature-based tourism and sustainable production of natural products. This could be done, in particular, through strengthening the factors of production, improving access to national and international markets and/or capacity building in business management and entrepreneurship.

**For this call, within the guidelines of Strategic Direction 1 and its associated Investment Priorities, only the following types of project will be considered eligible:**

- Projects that strengthen the management of intact watershed forest ecosystems through the implementation of protected area management plans in collaboration with local communities.
- Projects that enhance the resilience and adaptation of ecosystems through restoration.
- Projects that promote the control and eradication of invasive alien species.
- Projects that strengthen the capacity of local communities in participatory ecological monitoring of KBA target species and their habitats.

**For this call, the targets that projects are expected to partially or fully contribute to are:**

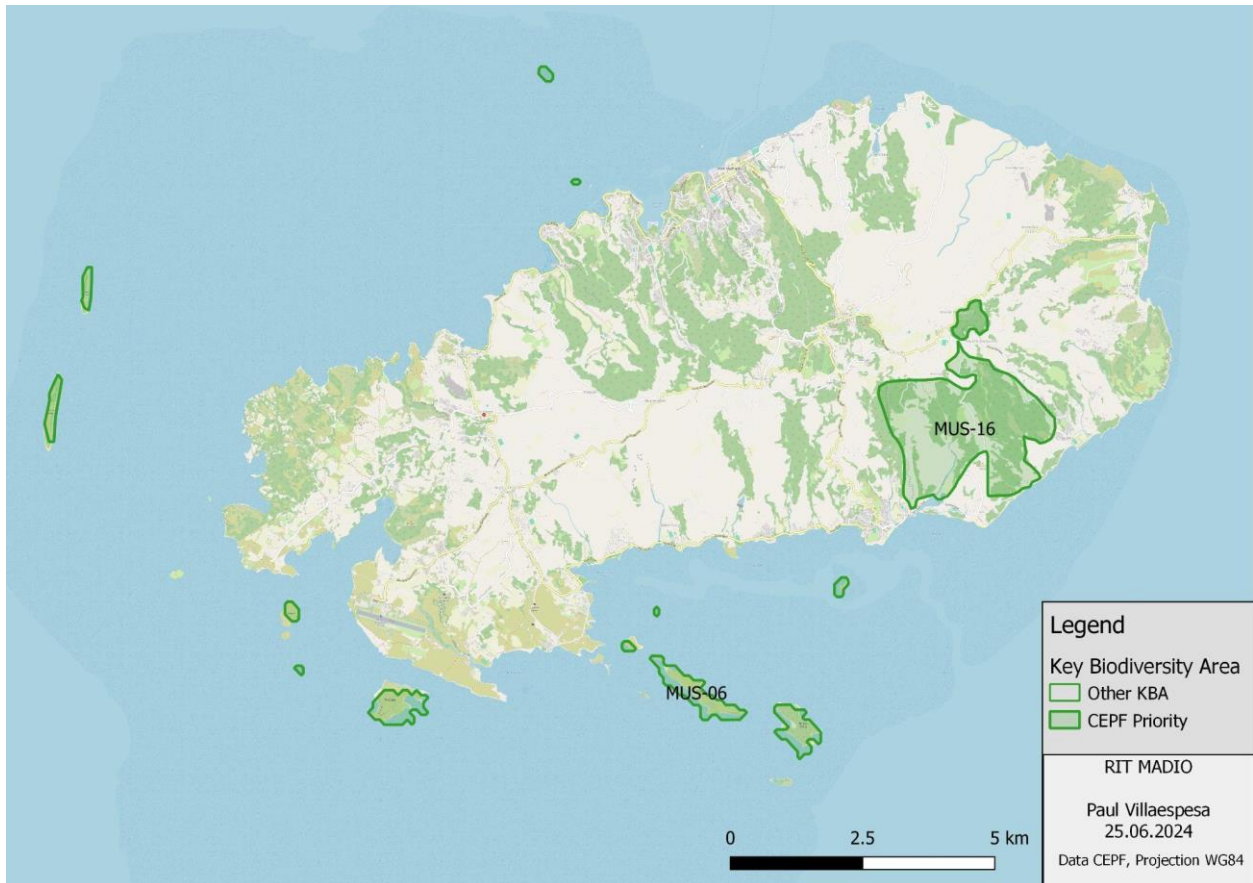
- 300,000 hectares of intact watershed forest ecosystems with enhanced management.
- 1,000 hectares of degraded watershed forest ecosystems restored.
- 1,000 hectares of small island ecosystems where invasive alien species have been eliminated or reduced.
- 16,500 women and 16,500 men with increased income as a result of ecosystem-based livelihood activities (sustainable fishing, nature-based tourism, harvesting natural products, etc.).
- 152,500 women and 152,500 men with non-monetary benefits other than formal training, as a result of strengthened ecosystem service delivery.

**LOIs should explicitly present the expected contributions of the projects towards these CEPF targets, with intermediate contributions by 31 December 2026 and final contributions by the project end.**

## Eligible Geographic Areas

This Call is open to the 02 priority KBAs identified by the CEPF for Rodrigues in Mauritius.

| KBA Code | KBA Name                        |
|----------|---------------------------------|
| MUS-06   | Rodrigues' Islets               |
| MUS-16   | South Slopes of Grande Montagne |



To help you locate the 02 KBAs open for this call, an interactive map showing all the priority KBAs identified by CEPF in the hotspot is available [here](#).

**Projects are eligible exclusively if the proposed activities impact the terrestrial part of the KBAs.**

Activities in KBAs sometimes require **authorization from the owner/manager of the area** (e.g., KBA MUS-06 Rodrigues' Islets). In case an authorisation is needed with regards to your project, please ensure that you are duly authorized, or have taken the necessary steps to obtain the official authorisation before submitting the LOI.

## Eligible Budget and Timeframe

The minimum amount for large grants is US\$50,000. Applications with a budget below US\$50,000 will not be eligible for review. These applicants are recommended to check the call for small grants.

**Large grant projects can start as of 1 April 2025 and run up until 31 December 2029 (56 months). However, every project will need to be designed in such a way that intermediate results towards the CEPF targets will be achieved by 31 December 2026.**

In case the project is part of a larger programme that runs beyond CEPF timelines and/or eligibility criteria, please ensure there is a clear distinction between the CEPF part (including activities and results) and the rest of the programme.

## Submission Date

**Letters of inquiry (LOIs) are due no later than 20 September 2023, 11.59 pm (Eastern Time, GMT-4).** Applications submitted after the deadline will not be eligible.

## Language Criteria

Large grants applications can be either in **French** or **English**. Other languages will not be considered for review.

## Preferred key LOI components

Priority will be given to projects that:

- i. Demonstrate that the proposed EbA activity addresses vulnerability based on a clear climate change risk.
- ii. Adopt EbA approaches that increase the resilience of ecosystems and ecosystem services in the priority KBAs.
- iii. Reflect on the climate change mitigation potential of the project.
- iv. Address priorities identified in national climate change policy or strategy documents of the relevant country of implementation.
- v. Demonstrate positive gender impacts.
- vi. Demonstrate effective and efficient use of funds.
- vii. Demonstrate a clear strategy for achieving financial sustainability.
- viii. Are the closest fit to the investment strategy set out in the ecosystem profile.

## ix. Collaborative projects and consortia of partners

Other considerations that will strengthen an application include:

- o Clear plans for continuing the project after the proposed project end date.
- o Support for Indigenous and local communities in community-based or co-management activities for EbA and actions that enhance local communities' tenure and resource use rights.
- o Complementarity to existing projects and coordination or partnership with other organizations to prevent duplication of efforts.
- o Strong impact on local communities, thereby enhancing their resilience and capacity to protect biodiversity.
- o Endorsement from relevant government authorities through the corresponding National Designated Authorities.

Check [here](#) what CEPF does **not** fund.

Before awarding any grant, CEPF will screen all projects against [CEPF's safeguard policies](#) in order to prevent any potential negative impacts of the project on humans and the environment.

CEPF will also evaluate the projects based on their integration of gender. CEPF has developed several resources that can help applicants to design, implement and evaluate gender-aware projects ([CEPF Gender Toolkit](#)) and understand what CEPF seeks in a proposal ([CEPF Gender Fact Sheet](#)). Visit the [CEPF and Gender webpage](#) to learn more about how CEPF addresses gender in the projects it supports.

## 2. HOW TO APPLY

Large grants applicants must respond to the call via the [ConservationGrants](#) electronic portal in either French or English. An automated acknowledgement email will be sent by ConservationGrants confirming that the submission has been received.

CEPF will not accept LOIs via email or any other mechanism.

CEPF will also evaluate the projects based on gender equality. CEPF has developed several resources that can help applicants to design, implement and evaluate gender-responsive projects ([CEPF Gender Toolkit](#)) and understand what CEPF expects in a proposal ([CEPF Gender Fact Sheet](#)). Visit the [CEPF and Gender webpage](#) to learn more about how CEPF addresses gender equality in the projects it supports.

Questions can be sent to the RIT at [cepfproposals@iucn.nl](mailto:cepfproposals@iucn.nl), by specifying in the subject line the proposed country of implementation (or "multi-country" when relevant).

### 3. SELECTION AND AWARD PROCESS

**An online information session will be held on Thursday, 22 from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (Mauritian time, GMT+4)** to inform all potential candidates and give them the opportunity to ask questions. The session will be recorded.

- Register [here](#) to join the Online Information Session

On this [webpage](#), a Q&A section will be regularly updated up till the deadline of the Call for LOI by the RIT, providing detailed answers to the questions submitted by the applicants.

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be eligible.

Before submitting an LOI, applicants are encouraged to read the "[12 Tips for Getting Your Grant Idea Funded](#)" for helpful advice.

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be eligible.

The selection process of the LOIs will take approximately eight weeks from the submission deadline. All applicants will receive a notification following the review of their LOI.

Large grant applicants whose LOIs receive a positive review will be invited to attend a masterclass in the first week of December 2024 and then submit a full proposal by the end of January 2024 approximately, again through ConservationGrants. More information on the masterclass will be provided to each applicant having received a favourable review of their LOI.

Final approved LOIs will be awarded a large grant, with an agreement made between Conservation International, as the host of CEPF Secretariat, and the applicant's organisation (the "grantee").

Grants will be in United States dollars and grant agreements will be in English or French.

### 4. REFERENCE MATERIALS

All applicants are advised to review the ecosystem profile for the Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot, which provides more detail on the types of activities CEPF will fund under each investment priority.

- Ecosystem Profile: [English - French](#)
- Ecosystem-based Adaptation in the Indian Ocean: [English - French](#)

Additional resources:



## Eligibility

- [Before You Apply](#)
- [How to Apply](#)
- [12 Tips for Getting Your Grant Idea Funded](#)
- [CEPF Project Database](#)
- [Life Cycle of a Grant](#)
- [Conservation Grants Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [The WHO Recommended Classification of Pesticides by Hazard English - French](#)