



**Call for Proposals
Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
Regional Implementation Team
Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot**

Opening date: 10 March 2017

Closing date and time: 7 April 2017; 6:00 pm Eastern Standard Time

Location: CEPF, 2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 500, Crystal City VA 22202, USA

Electronic submission: cepfgrants@conservation.org

1. INVITATION

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank designed to help safeguard the world's biodiversity hotspots. As one of the founding partners, Conservation International administers the global program through the CEPF Secretariat.

The pre-qualified parties named below are invited to apply for a five-year grant to implement a Regional Implementation Team (RIT) that will oversee a \$10 million CEPF investment in the Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot. The maximum funding available for this grant will be \$1,650,000.

The Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot is the second largest hotspot in the world and the largest of the world's five Mediterranean-climate regions. The hotspot covers more than two million square kilometers and is the third richest hotspot in the world in terms of its plant diversity. Approximately 25,000 plant species occur here, more than half of which are endemic to the hotspot, meaning that they are found nowhere else.

CEPF's first investment in the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot, from 2012-2017, resulted in the disbursement of 106 grants to 83 different organizations in 12 countries, for a total investment of around \$11 million. CEPF-funded actions contributed directly to improved management of sites, conservation of critically endangered species, improved policies for the environment, and greater collaboration and regional networking among civil society organizations, as well as among civil society, government and private sector actors.

Over the next five years, CEPF support to conservation action in the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot will be delivered through six strategic directions focused on three ecosystems (coastal, freshwater and traditionally managed landscapes), a species group (plants), and a supporting thematic focus (regional networking). Underpinning these strategic directions will be three cross-cutting priorities: a focus on site-based conservation action; integration of civil society capacity building into projects; and attention to sustainability and mainstreaming of impacts.

A final draft of the updated CEPF ecosystem profile for the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot and a technical summary are available for download from the CEPF website. The profile describes the five-year

investment strategy and identifies priority sites for investment. The CEPF Donor Council is expected to formally approve this document in April 2017. In order to ensure expediency of process, this call for proposals is being issued with the ecosystem profile in final draft, as no major changes are expected.

The following organizations submitted an expression of interest by the previously announced closing date and are thus eligible to apply in a lead role or as part of a consortium for the RIT. There is no obligation for these organizations to submit an application. These organizations are free to form partnerships with other organizations, regardless of whether those other organizations submitted an Expression of Interest.

Applicant Organization	Lead Contact	EOI received from	Country
Association Arc en Ciel	Abdallah Khazene	akhazene@gmail.com	Algeria
Association for Animal Inventory and Protection	Andrej Gajić	agajic@sharklab-adria.org	Bosnia and Hercegovina
BirdLife International	Patricia Zurita	patricia.zurita@birdlife.org	United Kingdom
Center of Studies on Bio-Economy, Agriculture, Food and Rural Development (ISBUR)	Skender Uku	suku@ubt.edu.al	Albania
Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS)	Marian Adel	marian.adel@ceoss.org.eg	Egypt
Egyptian Society of Environmental Sciences (ESES)	Abdel-Raouf A. Moustafa	raoufmoustafa2@hotmail.com	Egypt
Herpetological Association in Bosnia and Hercegovina "ATRA"	Emina Šunje	sunje.emina@gmail.com	Bosnia and Hercegovina
Instituti I Bimeve Medicinale te Shqipërisë (MedAlb Institut)	Luan Ahmetaj	medalbinstitut@yahoo.com	Albania
ISL Ingénierie	Jérôme Partiot	partiot@isl.fr	France
Italian Federation of Parks and Natural Reserves – Europarc Italy (Federparchi)	Giampiero Sammuri	segreteria.federparchi@parks.it	Italy
Mediterranean Sea and Coast Foundation (MEDSEA)	Alessio Satta	alessiosatta@medseafoundation.org	Italy
NYCOB Enterprise Consortium	Paul Peter Hammond	info@nycob.org	Ghana
OKIANOS	Chedly Rais	chedly.rais@okianos.org	Tunisia
Public Institution National Park "Sutjeska"	Dejan Pavlović	info@npsutjeska.net	Bosnia and Hercegovina
Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe	Lejla Šuman	lsuman@rec.org	Hungary
Udruga Dinarica	Hilary Cottrill	hcottrill@wwfadria.org	Bosnia and Hercegovina
WWF Mediterranean Programme Office	Paolo Lombardi	plombardi@wwfmedpo.org	Italy
Zelena akcija – FOE Croatia	Jagoda Munic	jagoda@zelena-akcija.hr	Croatia

2. CONFERENCE CALL AND CLARIFICATIONS

A conference call was held on 8 March 2017, at which time CEPF representatives described the expectations for the Regional Implementation Team and responded to participants' questions. A full audio recording of the call is available on the CEPF website.

CEPF will accept written questions at any time during the application process via e-mail to cepfgrants@conservation.org. CEPF will also accept telephone calls during the application process. Applicants should request a time for a call by e-mailing cepfgrants@conservation.org. CEPF will post all questions received and responses for public viewing on www.cepf.net on a weekly basis. CEPF may also use www.cepf.net to release other explanatory documents that may assist applicants in completing their proposals.

3. BACKGROUND

The ecosystem profile for the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot was updated in 2016 thanks to the support of CEPF, the MAVA Foundation and the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation. The process to update the ecosystem profile was led by the BirdLife International secretariat, working in close partnership with IUCN, Tour du Valat, Conservatoire du Littoral, Sociedad Española de Ornitología (BirdLife Spain), Društvo za opazovanje in proučevanje ptic Slovenije (BirdLife Slovenia) and Association les Amis des Oiseaux (BirdLife Tunisia). The consultation process to update the profile engaged more than 500 biodiversity experts, field conservationists, government officials, and representatives of donors and civil society organizations.

The ecosystem profile presents an overview of the hotspot in terms of its biological importance, climate change impacts, major threats to and root causes of biodiversity loss, socioeconomic context, and current conservation investments. It provides a suite of measurable conservation outcomes, identifies funding gaps, and opportunities for investment, and thus identifies the niche where CEPF investment can provide the greatest incremental value.

The ecosystem profile also contains a five-year investment strategy for CEPF in the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot. This investment strategy comprises a series of strategic funding opportunities, termed strategic directions, broken down into a number of investment priorities outlining the types of activities that will be eligible for CEPF funding. The ecosystem profile does not define specific project concepts, as civil society groups will develop these as part of their applications for CEPF grant funding.

The CEPF investment niche in the Mediterranean Basin is to support 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. The ecosystem profile identifies six strategic directions, for a total investment of \$10 million:

1. Support civil society to engage stakeholders in demonstrating integrated approaches for the preservation of biodiversity in coastal areas
2. Support the sustainable management of water catchments through integrated approaches for the conservation of threatened freshwater biodiversity

3. Promote the maintenance of traditional land use practices necessary for the conservation of Mediterranean biodiversity in priority corridors of high cultural and biodiversity value
4. Strengthen the engagement of civil society to support the conservation of plants that are critically endangered or have highly restricted ranges
5. Strengthen the regional conservation community through the sharing of best practices and knowledge among grantees across the hotspot
6. Provide strategic leadership and effective coordination of CEPF investment through a Regional Implementation Team

The RIT is responsible for Strategic Direction 6 but implicitly becomes a critical partner of the CEPF Secretariat based in Washington D.C., as well as to CEPF's global donors.

The purpose of this Request for Proposals is for interested organizations to demonstrate their approach to Strategic Direction 6 within the context of the objectives presented in the ecosystem profile and the other five strategic directions.

The Terms of Reference for the RIT are sent together with this request for proposals.

4. ELIGIBILITY AND EXCLUSIONS

Nongovernmental organizations and other civil society applicants with substantial experience in biodiversity conservation, sustainable development, or capacity building may apply. Private and for profit firms, including consultant groups, as members of civil society, are eligible to apply.

Government-owned enterprises or institutions are eligible only if they can establish that the enterprise or institution: (i) has a legal personality independent of any government agency or actor; (ii) has the authority to apply for and receive private funds; and (iii) may not assert a claim of sovereign immunity.

Provided that it meets the above criteria, any organization that participated in the ecosystem profiling process, as a stakeholder, participant, author, or consultant is eligible to apply. Any potential advantage gained as a result of involvement in updating the CEPF ecosystem profile for the hotspot will not be considered during selection of the winning application.

The RIT can consist of a single entity or a consortium of eligible entities. If a consortium is submitting a proposal, then one organization must be clearly identified as the lead. The lead organization will have final responsibility for submitting the consolidated proposal, and if successful, will be responsible for leading implementation, reporting to CEPF, receiving and disbursing funds, and coordinating the other members of the consortium.

Organizations that are members of the selected RIT will not be eligible to apply for other CEPF grants within the same hotspot. Applications from formal affiliates of those organizations that have an independent operating board of directors will be accepted, subject to additional external review.

5. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance is five years from the date of award, currently expected to be 1 July 2017 through 30 June 2022.

6. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE

The place of performance will be predominantly within the hotspot countries of Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cabo Verde, Egypt, FYR of Macedonia, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey. It is possible that RIT staff will be occasionally required to travel to CEPF headquarters or other CEPF hotspots for trainings and exchanges.

7. SEPARATE AWARD OF REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION TEAM GRANT AND SMALL GRANTS FUND

The result of this competitive process will be two separate grant agreements between Conservation International, acting on behalf of CEPF, and the lead entity of the RIT.

The first agreement, with a ceiling of \$1,650,000, will be to conduct the role of the RIT as described in the Terms of Reference and as based on the proposal of the lead entity.

As described in the Terms of Reference, the RIT will be responsible for managing and disbursing a small grants fund. This fund will be for grants of up to \$20,000. The total amount of money for small grants will be determined by the winning applicant and the CEPF Secretariat but could be in the range of \$1 million. This amount is separate from the RIT agreement. For administrative and contractual reasons, the organization/consortium that receives the RIT grant will receive a second, separate grant agreement that consists only of money for the small grants fund.

Applicants should include all labor, managerial, and administrative expenses associated with the small grants fund in their proposal for the RIT.

In summary, this solicitation is for one proposal that will lead to two separate agreements with one organization.

8. SOLICITATION, REVIEW AND AWARD

This call for proposals is being distributed to all organizations that have expressed their interest in response to the request that was widely distributed by the CEPF Secretariat in February 2017, including by direct email to all stakeholders who participated in the final consultation workshops for the ecosystem profiling process, and via the CEPF website.

The CEPF Secretariat is responsible for the analysis and ranking of applications. The Secretariat will present this analysis and all responsive applications to the CEPF Working Group, which consists of representatives from each donor. The Working Group will make a final recommendation to the CEPF Donor Council, which will formally approve the selection of the RIT.

The review and selection process for the Regional Implementation Team is expected to be completed within three months of the closing date for applications.

9. COST CEILING FOR STRATEGIC DIRECTION 6

As stated in the logical framework of the ecosystem profile, the maximum amount of money allocated to Strategic Direction 6, which comprises the RIT function, is \$1,650,000. The two investment priorities under Strategic Direction 6 reflect, in a shorter form, the full terms of reference of the RIT sent together with this request for proposals.

Applicants are expected to put forward proposals reflecting any of the following arrangements:

- a) A proposal for \$1,650,000 where a single entity performs all components and functions described in the terms of reference.
- b) A proposal for \$1,650,000 where a lead entity and named sub-agreement partners perform all components and functions described in the terms of reference.
- c) A proposal where a lead entity and some number of named sub-agreement partners perform fewer than all components and functions described in the terms of reference, and consequently, propose a total cost less than \$1,650,000. The lead entity would then propose a strategy to find sub-agreement partners or experts or to make separate grant awards in the future, as needed, to complete remaining components/functions, such that the total amount does not exceed \$1,650,000.

CEPF anticipates that the amount of money for Strategic Directions 1 to 5 may increase due to successful fundraising efforts by the Secretariat and/or the RIT. However, this will not necessarily lead to an increase in the allocation for Strategic Direction 6. The \$1,650,000 allocated for Strategic Direction 6 has been purposefully set in anticipation of an eventually larger grants pool.

10. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PREPARATION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals must be submitted in either English or in French.

The application process for the RIT involves completion of several separate elements, described below. Please consult the CEPF Operational Manual, as the RIT will be responsible for helping CEPF fulfill the policies and procedures contained therein. The CEPF Operational Manual is located on the CEPF website at http://www.cepf.net/SiteCollectionDocuments/CEPF_OperationalManual.pdf

If a consortium of organizations is submitting a proposal, at least initially, only the lead organization needs to submit the items specified in Section 10.1. However, the lead organization must incorporate relevant material from its sub-agreement members. In other words, the proposal should reflect the inputs and capabilities of the entire consortium. Subsequent to evaluation and prior to grant award, CEPF may require some of the documents detailed below from each consortium member.

Applicants are advised to read this section carefully in conjunction with Section 14 (Evaluation Criteria) in order to understand the relative weighting CEPF will use in evaluating proposals.

10.1 Proposal Files in Microsoft Word, Excel, or PDF

Applicants should provide Microsoft Word, Excel, or PDF files that address all the items below.

10.1.1 Applicants should include a **cover note** to their proposal listing all documents submitted. The cover note should clearly list the name of the organizational chief executive, and, if different, the name(s) of all parties with the ability to legally bind the organization and the name(s) of all parties who CEPF should contact for clarifications and negotiations. The cover note should also provide complete mailing address, street address (if different), email address(es), and telephone number(s).

10.1.2 **Organizational experience** related to the tasks described in the RIT terms of reference and ecosystem profile, including demonstrated experience in the following areas:

- i) Playing a leadership role in biodiversity conservation and civil society capacity building in the hotspot.
- ii) Working with diverse civil society organizations, including providing technical assistance for project proposal development and implementation.
- iii) Conducting performance, programmatic, and financial management monitoring.
- iv) Working with donors, governments, communities, the private sector, and other stakeholders on conservation and development issues, including building alliances and networks of stakeholder groups to achieve conservation goals.
- v) Managing multi-faceted programs and grants of similar size, scope, and complexity as the RIT and small grants fund.
- vi) Transboundary collaboration on conservation initiatives.
- vii) This section should also include such basic information as:
 - a. History and mission statement.
 - b. Year organization established.
 - c. Total permanent staff.

10.1.3 **Project rationale and project approach**, demonstrating a clear understanding of the ecosystem profile, including the conservation issues in the hotspot, the strategic directions and investment priorities, and overall mission and strategic approach of CEPF; the role of civil society to achieve the investment strategy set out in the profile; and the constraints and opportunities of working in a diverse and broad political, socioeconomic, and geographic environment. Applicants should demonstrate a clear approach to working with civil society and an understanding of the different contexts/challenges facing civil society organizations in the hotspot. Applicants should include a general approach to integrating gender considerations into CEPF investments.

- 10.1.4 **Supplemental text** to the project approach that explains how applicants will:
- i) Work with grantees and other important stakeholder groups to build a grant portfolio that encourages collaboration and synergy to implement the CEPF investment strategy.
 - ii) Ensure the sustainability and ability to replicate their efforts.
 - iii) Ensure synergy and collaboration across national borders, particularly in bi-national conservation corridors and hotspot-wide initiatives.
- 10.1.5 If a consortium of organizations is applying, applicants should explain the **contractual arrangements** that will be made between the lead applicant and sub-agreement partners.
- 10.1.6 If the organization/consortium is proposing to undertake anything less than the entire terms of reference, then it should discuss how it will ensure the completion of **remaining components/functions**.
- 10.1.7 **Management systems** and/or approach to the requirements of the terms of reference. This includes systems or demonstration of administrative capacity and systems for monitoring grants and for managing a small grants fund (including solicitation, award, monitoring and evaluation, and modification and/or resolution of non-performing grants). Furthermore, given the challenge of working in multiple countries, applicants should be specific about their proposed placement of personnel; their ability to work in multiple languages (especially English, French and Arabic); and their understanding of constraints for implementing the CEPF strategy and managing a small grants program in multiple countries. Applicants should further describe their plan for engaging personnel and mobilizing the program.
- 10.1.8 An **organizational chart** describing the lines of authority between individuals or organizational relationships between consortium members to achieve desired results. This figure should show where individuals are placed (e.g., city, country) and relationships between the RIT, the CEPF Secretariat, and other relevant stakeholders.
- 10.1.9 As appropriate, **work flow diagrams** (e.g., for soliciting and awarding grants), **work plans** (e.g., Gantt charts), or any other visual element better explaining how technical activities will take place, when they will take place, and who will be responsible for leading them.
- 10.1.10 **Curricula vitae** of all principal technical personnel making up the RIT. Applicants must propose, by name, a single, dedicated team leader with appropriate managerial and technical experience and who is fluent in English or French (ideally both). CEPF's expectation is that this person will be recruited now and named in the proposal. Applicants that do not name a team leader – but intend to recruit one after project award – must name similarly qualified full-time organizational staff who will fill this role until the permanent team leader is engaged. Applicants should name all other principal personnel, including, for example, regional coordinators, financial officer, or specialists in capacity building, communications, policy, or private sector engagement.

10.1.11 Budget in Microsoft Excel (a sample budget template is provided as an attachment to this RfP). If a consortium of organizations is applying, each organization should have a parallel budget on a separate worksheet, all of which feed into the lead applicant's worksheet. Each worksheet should have subtotals for salaries/benefits, professional services, rent and storage, telecommunications, postage and delivery, supplies, furniture and equipment, maintenance, travel, meetings and special events, miscellaneous, and management support costs. Worksheets should show all calculations, including unit costs, total units, and totals per year over five years.

Technical proposals should clearly state the applicant's assumptions regarding translation, in part based on your own capabilities, if deemed necessary. Budgets for translation should correspond to those assumptions.

Budgets should include costs for legal review and translation of the small grant agreement template. Specifically, a local firm will need to review the small grant agreement template for compliance with CEPF funding terms as well as enforceability under applicable laws. CEPF allows for a maximum management support cost of 13 percent. Management support costs must be justified with supporting documentation such as audited financial statements, organizational policies, or precedent contracts.

Budgets should not include costs for actually holding the mid-term and final assessment (Terms of Reference 7.7). The CEPF Secretariat will cover these costs through a separate grant agreement which may or may not be awarded to the RIT.

As stated previously, the maximum budget for the RIT is \$1,650,000 over five years. This amount pertains to all organizations working over the entire CEPF investment region. The proposed budget should incorporate all costs associated with implementing the terms of reference, including the labor associated with managing the small grants fund. However, the RIT grant budget should be only for the RIT award and not the separate small grants fund. The small grants fund will consist of only the money for the small grants themselves, and perhaps small associated amounts related to bank fees or exchange costs.

10.2 Financial Questionnaire

All applicants, including members of a consortium, will need to complete a financial questionnaire as part of their full application. The questionnaire itself requests further documentation about each organization, including financial statements, auditor statements and registration/incorporation certification.

10.3 Anti-Terrorism Screening

The highest rated applicant will subsequently be required, per United States law, to complete forms demonstrating compliance with anti-terrorism statutes.

11. APPROACH TO THE RIT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Items 10.1.3 through 10.1.11 above, all refer to the applicant's approach to completing the job of the RIT. Good proposals will address the following issues:

- **Number of grantees.** CEPF is setting aside \$1,650,000 for the RIT and \$1 million for small grants, leaving \$7,350,000 to be awarded as grants larger than \$20,000. The average size of a grant is \$115,000, meaning the RIT could expect about 64 large grants over the life of the portfolio. The average size of the small grants is \$20,000, meaning the RIT could expect about 50 small grants over the life of the portfolio. That is an expected total of about 114 different relationships with grantees.
- **Ratio of applicants to grantees.** Consider the sophistication of applicants, how well they write proposals, and how well they respond to the goals of the ecosystem profile. Project how many proposals would yield 114 award-worthy grants. The RIT might review 300 or more proposals over five years to yield 114 awards.
- **Timing of solicitations, awards, and monitoring.** All CEPF grants must be fully complete one month prior to the close of the RIT grant, so by 31 May 2022. By that logic, the last award should be made no later than 1 June 2021. Consider, then, the solicitation processes occurring in Years 1, 2, and 3; the contracting processes in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4; and the monitoring processes in Years 2, 3, 4, and 5.
- **Review processes.** CEPF expects a competitive and transparent grant review process. Consider how proposal reviews will occur. Will the RIT convene a panel of external experts, or a subpanel, to assist in reviews? Will the RIT screen proposals and only submit a short-list of those to the experts? Will the RIT decide on its own which proposals should move forward and, instead, use a panel of experts to advise on the overall direction of the program?
- **Geographic or technical plan for awards.** One approach to making grant awards is to accept proposals from any priority geography for any strategic direction, starting immediately. In that sense, the approach of the RIT is to accept what applicants put forward. Alternatively, the RIT could have a geographic plan, focusing on one sub-region in the first year; or, a technical plan, focusing on one strategic direction in the first year. The RIT could opt to focus on the lowest capacity groups early in the portfolio, or it could focus on the “easy wins” first. In some hotspots, RITs have created “cornerstone” grants around which other activities, and grantees, are built. There is no correct answer, and certainly, strategies evolve, but the successful RIT applicant will suggest an approach and a rationale for doing so.
- **Approach to capacity building.** Component 4 requires the RIT to build the capacity of applicants and grantees. This is complementary and distinct from capacity building projects that will be funded under other strategic directions. The successful RIT applicant will show an understanding of what this implies with appropriate allocations for one-on-one training, workshops, mentoring, and facilitation.
- **Approach to public policy and private sector engagement.** Component 2 requires the RIT to take a leadership role on behalf of CEPF, the grantees, and broader civil society in relation to the public and private sectors. This could require presence in national and/or provincial capitals, or other locations that are not necessarily in priority KBAs, and will require working with individuals who are not grantees. The successful RIT applicant will anticipate the direction such work might go, particularly in terms of Strategic Directions 1, 2 and 3, each of which envision engagement with public and/or private sector actors.
- **Approach to donor outreach.** Given the ambitious scale of the CEPF investment strategy and presence of private foundations and public donors, Component 1 expects the RIT to forge collaborative relationships with other conservation donors, particularly with CEPF partner donors. The successful applicant will provide an approach to collaborate with CEPF and other conservation donors to ensure successful outreach and complementarity of investments.
- **Ability to operate in multiple languages.** The RIT will serve as the interface between the CEPF Secretariat and applicants. As such, the RIT, as a team, must be multilingual. CEPF will always accept

proposals and reports in English and French, so the RIT must be able to work in these languages. The agreements for large grants will always be in English, so that the RIT may need to help explain the agreement provisions to the grantee. The RIT may wish to allow applications for small grants in other languages in addition to English and French, such as Arabic and Portuguese.

- **Staffing strategy.** Based on the above, the successful RIT applicant will anticipate what type of personnel it needs and where they need to be placed physically. The successful applicant will propose a plan for staff placement, travel, and communication (with grantees and with other members of the RIT) that reflects the approach to the items above.

Applicants are free to propose a team in whatever fashion and with whatever commitment of time they like, provided that the team leader is a full-time position for at least three years. However, the Secretariat has found that successful RITs have, at a minimum:

- a. Regional coordinators for each sub-region (i.e. Balkans, Turkey, Middle East and North Africa) for at least three years, either on a part or full-time basis.
- b. Financial manager and project officer/administrator with a committed percentage of time for small grants management.

12. CEPF DONOR COUNCIL APPROVAL AND NEGOTIATIONS

The CEPF Secretariat will review the applications it receives against the evaluation criteria in Section 14. The Secretariat will present this analysis to the CEPF Working Group, which consists of representatives from each donor. The Working Group will make a final recommendation to the CEPF Donor Council. Upon receiving approval from the Donor Council, the Secretariat will engage in negotiations with the top-ranked organization/consortium. At the time of negotiations, CEPF will ask the top-ranked organization/consortium to prepare a logical framework that corresponds to the terms of reference listed above and that reflects the approach and targets of the proposal.

13. KEY PERSONNEL

The team leader and regional coordinator positions are considered key personnel. Applicants that do not name a permanent team leader or regional coordinators now must submit the names and CVs of the candidates to CEPF for approval in advance of his/her engagement. CEPF must approve of the team leader and country coordinators prior to their engagement and must approve any replacement of these positions during the period of engagement.

14. EVALUATION CRITERIA

CEPF will use the following scorecard for evaluating proposals. The scorecard shows the questions that reviewers will use and the relative weighting of each category. Applicants should ensure that each of these points is adequately addressed in either their proposal files (discussed in Section 10.1) or financial questionnaire (discussed in Section 10.2.)

CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM
PARTNERSHIP FUND

1	Organizational Experience: Technical	Points: 5
1.1	Is the organization’s mission statement congruent with the objectives and priorities identified for the region in the ecosystem profile?	
1.2	Does the applicant present experience working with potential partner NGOs, academic institutions, local and national government agencies, and donors?	
1.3	Does the organization have an existing conservation or development program in the region, demonstrated by its duration and record of support by other donors?	
2	Organizational Experience: Management	Points: 15
2.1	Does the organization demonstrate experience managing programs of similar size, scale, and complexity as that of the Regional Implementation Team?	
2.2	Does the organization have a monitoring and evaluation system or methodology that it has used to manage its own or other programs?	
2.3	Does the applicant have proven financial and administrative system?	
2.4	Has the organization managed the both the technical and financial elements of a small grants program in the past, and was this program of a size (e.g., total amount of money, total number of grants) and complexity (e.g., technical components and recipients) that is comparable to what it will undertake with CEPF?	
3	Personnel	Points: 30
3.1	Does the applicant propose a clear and viable personnel plan, including names, resumes, position titles, job descriptions, level of effort, work location, and reporting lines of authority?	
3.2	Does the applicant submit the name and resume a single, dedicated team leader, and does this person have the appropriate technical skills/experience and appropriate managerial skills/experience?	
3.3	Does the applicant propose, by name and resume, personnel other than the team leader, and do these people have appropriate technical skills/experience and appropriate managerial skills/experience?	
3.4	Do the proposed team members have, individually or collectively, the language skills necessary to operate effectively in the hotspot?	
3.5	Does the applicant propose a plan for recruitment and/or mobilization of “to be determined” personnel, including job descriptions, job qualifications, and curricula vitae of personnel from the applicant’s organization who will perform relevant duties while recruitment is pending?	
4	Understanding of the Ecosystem Profile	Points: 5
4.1	Does the applicant demonstrate its understanding of the strategic directions in the ecosystem profile and the associated investment priorities and outcomes, targets, and indicators (other than the RIT strategic direction)?	
4.2	Does the applicant discuss the differing challenges of conservation and engagement with civil society in the countries in the hotspot, demonstrating an anticipation of the types of grants to be funded, the viability of targets, and the capacity of potential grantees?	
4.3	Does the applicant describe how its own organizational strategy will be advanced by serving as the lead entity for CEPF in the region and how this will help to ensure sustainability of results beyond the CEPF implementation period?	

CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM
PARTNERSHIP FUND

5	Proposed Technical Approach	Points: 15
5.1	Does the applicant address all components of the RIT as described in the terms of reference?	
5.2	Does the applicant demonstrate its plans to work with partners or with civil society organizations that have very different levels of capacity from one corridor or country to the next?	
5.3	Does the applicant propose a method to effectively communicate and coordinate the funding opportunity, results and lessons learned?	
5.4	Does the applicant propose a system for soliciting proposals for projects conforming to the strategy described in the ecosystem profile and establish an effective, transparent review process to evaluate these applications?	
5.5	Does the applicant propose a system to monitor and evaluate individual projects and assist in monitoring portfolio performance overall?	
5.6	Does the applicant propose a system to directly award and manage all small grants for civil society of up to \$20,000?	
6	Proposed Technical Approach	Points: 25
6.1	Does the applicant demonstrate its understanding of the legal requirements to make grants in the hotspot countries, employ people or engage organizations in these countries, and foreign exchange restrictions?	
6.2	Does the applicant have defined administrative/financial roles demonstrating a segregation of duties and a chart indicating the leadership and employee structure of the organization?	
6.3	Does the applicant propose a method to track, record, and account for funds received and disbursed, and does it propose a method for regular completion of reconciliations of money received and disbursed in comparison with bank statements?	
6.4	Does the applicant propose a system for internal controls and objective criteria that guide the review of payment requests and other invoices, systematic record keeping, and fraud and embezzlement safeguards?	
7	Proposed Technical Approach	Points: 5
7.1	Is the budget complete and within the allocated amount named in the request for proposals?	
7.2	Are all costs mathematically justified through the clear presentation of unit costs, total units, and total costs?	
7.3	Are all unit costs, total units, and total costs appropriate in relation to the proposed technical and managerial activities?	
7.4	Are proposed unit rates in accord with market rates in the region?	
7.5	If the applicant claims indirect costs, does it clearly show the base of application and is this distinct from any previously enumerated direct costs; does the applicant provide an explanation of how the indirect cost rate has been determined (e.g., historical averages, audited financial statements, precedent contracts); and does the applicant provide supporting documentation with its financial questionnaire?	
7.6	If the applicant proposes to work in only a subset of the eligible countries, is the total budget proportionately less than the maximum allowable amount and is this amount adequately justified?	
Total		100 Points

END OF CALL FOR PROPOSALS

