

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

Small Grants

Eligible Country: Mauritius (including Rodrigues Island)

Opening Date: Tuesday 15th August 2023

Closing Date: Saturday 30th September 2023, 12 pm (Mauritian time, GMT+4)

Grant Size: Maximum grant size US\$50,000

The [Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund](#) (CEPF) and its regional implementation team (RIT) for the hotspot, are accepting letters of inquiry (LOIs) from non-governmental organizations, community groups, Indigenous peoples' organizations, women's groups, private companies and other [civil society organizations](#) for projects that address the eligible activities and geographies of this call.

1. BACKGROUND

The CEPF is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

The Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and the Seychelles are extremely vulnerable to climate change. People, agricultural land and infrastructure are concentrated in coastal areas, which are exposed to rising sea levels and increased frequency and severity of cyclones. Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) promotes the conservation, improved management and restoration of ecosystems to provide the essential services people need to adapt to climate change and variability. While there are a few pilot projects, EbA funding is currently insufficient and civil society organizations (CSOs) are not sufficiently engaged.

In response to the challenges of climate change in the Indian Ocean island countries, CEPF has prepared a new program titled Ecosystem-Based Adaptation in the Indian Ocean, financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), through AFD as the Accredited Entity. The new program provides targeted funding to mobilize CSOs in implementing EbA.

CEPF has enlisted a consortium of nongovernmental organizations to be its RIT in the hotspot. Coordinated by IUCN NL, the RIT includes SAF/FJKM for Madagascar, ID-ONG for Comoros, FORENA for Mauritius and SeyCCAT for Seychelles. These organizations are working with CEPF to implement a five-year conservation strategy for the hotspot and build local civil society capacity.

Additional calls for Letters of Inquiry will be published in 2024 and during the rest of the CEPF investment. They will have different eligibility criteria in alignment with the evolution of the portfolio of projects.

2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In order to be eligible for this call for LOIs, applicants must meet the criteria as indicated below. LOIs not meeting these criteria will not be eligible for this call and therefore will not be reviewed.

- a) Applicant;
- b) Technical scope;
- c) Geographical area;
- d) Budget and timeframe;
- e) Date of submission;
- f) Language of LOI.

a. Eligible Applicants

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

Individuals are not eligible. Individuals should work with civil society organizations to develop applications rather than apply directly.

A government-owned enterprise or institution is eligible only if it can establish that it:

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

Applicants based outside the eligible geographic areas may submit an application as long as the project deliverables are focused on the conservation needs of this call within the eligible geographies.

Preference will be given to projects that:

(i) show that they will coordinate with other organizations to prevent duplication of efforts, such as projects that work with partnerships and alliances. 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 be legally entitled to receive grants.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to familiarize 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 organization or project concept are encouraged to contact the RIT at cepfproposals@iucn.nl for clarification.

b. Eligible Technical Scopes

Applicants should ensure that the core content of their LOI refers to the eligible strategic direction listed below and the associated investment priority. If the activity is not aligned with this strategic direction and the associated investment priority it will result in the non-selection of the LOI.

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.

Source: Further information on strategic directions and KBAs is available in Chapter 14 of the [ecosystem profile](#).

Priority will be given to the following approaches:

- i. Promoting resilient agroforestry and developing “Climate Smart Agriculture”.
- ii. Promoting the sustainable management of freshwater, wetlands, and marine and coastal ecosystems (mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass beds).

- iii. Strengthening management of intact watershed forest ecosystems through the implementation of protected area management plans in collaboration with local communities.
- iv. Enhancing resilience and adaptation of ecosystems.
- v. Restoring degraded coastal ecosystems (wetlands, mangroves, coral reefs, sea grass beds).
- vi. Restoring degraded watershed forest ecosystems.
- vii. Promoting control and eradication of invasive alien species.
- viii. Strengthening the capacity of local communities in participatory ecological monitoring of KBA target species and their habitats.

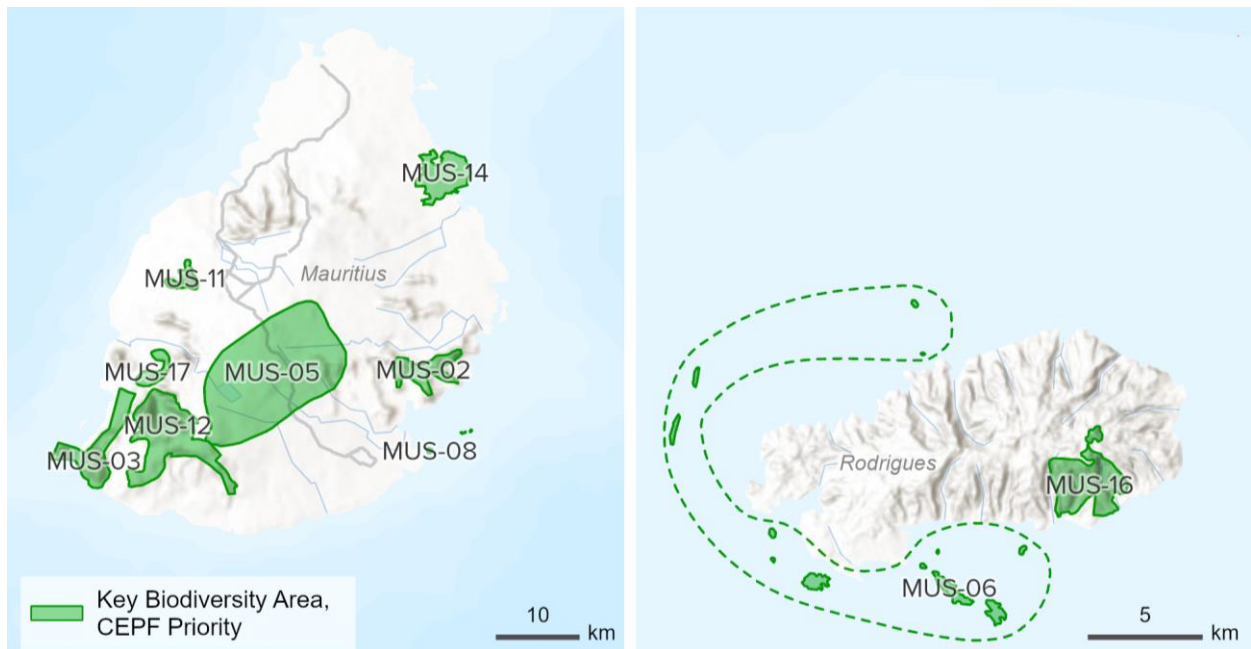
The targets of CEPF investment for these Investment Priorities can be found in chapter 15. LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE MADIO HOTSPOT of the Ecosystem Profile, and are:

- 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.
- 20 economic models to improve the resilience of local communities to climate change developed and implemented.
- 610,000 hectares of intact coastal ecosystems with enhanced management.
- 300,000 hectares of intact watershed forest ecosystems with enhanced management.
- 2,000 hectares of degraded coastal ecosystems restored.
- 1,000 hectares of degraded watershed forest ecosystems restored.
- 1,000 hectares of climate-resilient agroforestry systems implemented.
- 1,000 hectares of small island ecosystems where invasive alien species have been eliminated or reduced.

c. Eligible Geographic Areas

This Call is open to the 10 priority KBAs identified by the CEPF for Mauritius (and Rodrigues).

KBA Code	KBA Name
MUS-02	Bamboo Mountain Range
MUS-03	Chamarel - Le Morne
MUS-05	Relict Forests of the Central Plateau
MUS-06	Rodrigues' Islets
MUS-08	Mauritius South Eastern Islets
MUS-11	Guardhouse Mountain
MUS-12	Black River Gorges National Park and Surrounding Areas
MUS-14	Plaine des Roches - Bras d' Eau
MUS-16	South Slopes of Grande Montagne
MUS-17	Yemen-Takamaka



An interactive map showing the priority KBAs identified by CEPF is available [here](#). Further information on strategic directions and KBAs can be found in Chapter 14 of the [ecosystem profile](#).

d. Eligible Budget and Timeframe

The maximum amount for small grants is US\$50,000. Applications with a budget that is superior to this amount will not be eligible for review.

Small grant projects are expected to start in **1 April 2024** and can have a time span not exceeding 31 December 2026.

In case the project for which funding is being applied for is part of a vaster programme which runs beyond CEPF timelines / eligibility criterias, please ensure to provide clear distinction of these factors in order to establish eligibility of the application.

e. Submission Date

Letters of inquiry (LOIs) are due no later than Saturday 30th September 2023, 12:00 pm (Mauritius time zone GTM+4). Applications submitted after the deadline will not be eligible.

f. Language Criteria

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

3. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

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.

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.

Grants may not be used for:

- o Use of child labor or forced labor.
- o Construction or rehabilitation of large or complex dams.
- o Payment of salaries or salary supplements to government personnel.
- o Purchase of firearms or other weapons.
- o Activities that promote the trade in or use of any substances listed under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, or other chemicals or hazardous materials subject to international bans, restrictions or phaseouts due to high toxicity to living organisms, environmental persistence, potential for bioaccumulation, or potential depletion of the ozone layer.
- o Purchase and use of pesticides that fall in the World Health Organization classes IA and IB, or in class II (English / French) if they are likely to be used by, or be accessible to, lay personnel, farmers or others without training, equipment and facilities to handle, store and apply these products properly.
- o Physical resettlement of people (voluntary or involuntary).
- o Purchase of land.
- o Activities that have the potential to cause adverse impacts to critical habitat.
- o Activities that introduce or use potentially invasive, non-indigenous species.
- o Removal or alteration of any tangible cultural heritage.

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.

4. HOW TO APPLY

Small grant applications can be written either in English or French. Please download the LOI and budget templates:

- **English:** [LOI template](#) and [Budget template](#)
- **French:** [LOI template](#) and [Budget template](#)

Any alteration to the LOI and the budget templates will make the application ineligible. Applications must be submitted as a Word document (for the LOI) and as an Excel Sheet for the budget.

Small grant applicants are invited to submit their LOI and budget by email to cepfproposals@iucn.nl, with the following object of the email: LOI_2/2023/SG_CEPF_“MUS”/“your organization”.

For example: For Mauritius: **LOI_2/2023/SG_CEPF_MUS/IUCN NL**

5. SELECTION AND AWARD PROCESS

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be eligible. Before submitting your LOI, we encourage you to read the tips for submitting a successful letter of inquiry for helpful advice. The selection process for the LOI will take approximately six weeks from the submission deadline. All applicants will be informed of the decision in due time.

CSOs whose applications have been preselected will be required by the CEPF to provide a more detailed LOI proposal. Final approved LOIs will be awarded a small grant, with an agreement made between IUCN NL, as the RIT, and the applicant’s organization (the “grantee”).

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

An online information session will be held on Thursday, August 24 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.

6. 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](#)
- [Interactive map of eligible KBAs in target countries](#)

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](#)

DISCLAIMER

In the event of any differences in meaning or interpretation between the original English version and the local translation, the original English version takes precedence