

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund

**Call for Letters of Inquiry No. 1
LARGE GRANTS**

Investment in the Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot

- 1. Opening Date:** Monday 18th December 2017
- 2. Deadline:** Wednesday 14th February 2018 (midnight GMT)
- 3. Budget and Timeframe**

The minimum budget per project is US \$20,000 and the maximum budget per project is US \$250,000. Projects are expected to start on 01 June 2018 the earliest and must be completed by 30 May 2022.

4. General information

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), is inviting proposals in the form of Letters of Inquiry (LOIs) for large grants from non-governmental organizations, community groups, private enterprises, universities and other civil society organizations.

This is the first call for LOIs for large grants (projects with a budget between US \$20,000 and US \$250,000) for the second phase of investment in the Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot.

LOIs will only be accepted for Strategic Direction 1 and 4, and only for the eligible countries Albania, Cabo Verde, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia. The deadline for receipt of LOIs is on **Wednesday 14th February 2018**. Please read all the information below for details on the CEPF investment and how to apply.

The review committee will select the strongest LOIs which meet the eligibility criteria in Section 5 and 6. Please read all the guidelines and conditions included this document and complete the application process online (explained in Section 8).

The council of donors that governs CEPF approved in July 2017 a second 5-year investment strategy for the Mediterranean Basin based on the Ecosystem Profile for the region, with an initial budget of US\$10 million. This investment strategy comprises of a series of strategic directions,

broken down into investment priorities outlining the types of activities that will be eligible for CEPF funding.

CEPF has recruited Birdlife International as the Regional Implementation Team (or RIT) which in partnership with CEPF leads the implementation of the CEPF investment strategy for achieving conservation goals identified in the investment strategy, and provide assistance to civil society groups in designing, implementing and replicating successful conservation activities.

5. Eligible Applicants

Non-governmental organizations, community groups, universities and private enterprises may apply for funding. Individuals must work with civil society organizations to develop applications, rather than apply directly.

Organizations must have their own bank account and be authorized under relevant national laws to receive charitable contributions.

Government-owned enterprises or institutions are eligible only if they can demonstrate that the enterprise or institution has:

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

Grants cannot be used for:

- the purchase of land, involuntary resettlement of people, or activities that negatively affect physical cultural resources, including those important to local communities.
- activities adversely affecting Indigenous Peoples or where these communities have not provided their broad support to the project activities.
- removal or alteration of any physical cultural property (includes sites having archaeological, paleontological, historical, religious, or unique natural values). Proposed activities should observe all other relevant safeguard and social policies as set out on the CEPF website: http://www.cepf.net/grants/Pages/safeguard_policies.aspx

Further guidance on eligibility can be found here:

<http://www.cepf.net/grants/Pages/eligibility.aspx>

6. Eligible Activities

All applications must adhere to these criteria:

- The scope of this call is limited to the types of activities and locations described below.
- All activities must support either Strategic Direction 1 or Strategic Direction 4. Projects can focus on one or multiple Investment Priorities within the Strategic Direction (Tables 1 and 3). If you wish to apply for both Strategic Directions then you must complete a separate LOI application for each one.
- Only these countries are eligible for funding: Albania, Cabo Verde, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Morocco and Tunisia.

- The minimum budget is US \$20,000 and the maximum budget is US \$250,000, per project.
- Projects are expected to start on 1st June 2018 at the earliest and must be completed by 30th May 2022.
- Applications can be made in English, French or Portuguese.
- Applications must be made online (see Section 8).

Project proposals should be built on biodiversity conservation as a fundamental component, and should demonstrate positive impacts on the conservation status of biodiversity.

Where relevant, applicants are encouraged to submit LOIs which harmonize with existing national or regional initiatives. Synergies with other organizations are also eligible, with one lead organization submitting the application, with sub-grantee project partners.

Applicants based outside of eligible countries may submit an LOI as long as the project deliverables are focused on the conservation need within an eligible country/countries. International organizations are encouraged to involve local organizations or communities as project partners or explain how local stakeholders will be engaged as part of project implementation.

It is critical that applicants review the Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot Ecosystem Profile, and particularly the section ‘CEPF Investment Strategy and Programmatic Focus, 2017-2022’. This provides more detail on the types of activity CEPF will fund under each Investment Priority. The profile can be found here:

- Ecosystem Profile 2017 [English]:
<http://www.cepf.net/SiteCollectionDocuments/mediterranean/Mediterranean-Basin-2017-ecosystem-profile-English.pdf>
- Ecosystem Profile Technical Summary:
 - English:
<http://www.cepf.net/SiteCollectionDocuments/mediterranean/Mediterranean-Basin-2017-ecosystem-profile-summary-English.pdf>
 - French:
<http://www.cepf.net/SiteCollectionDocuments/mediterranean/Mediterranean-Basin-2017-ecosystem-profile-summary-French.pdf>
 - Arabic:
<http://www.cepf.net/SiteCollectionDocuments/mediterranean/Mediterranean-Basin-2017-ecosystem-profile-summary-Arabic.pdf>

Eligible Strategic Directions:

i) Strategic Direction 1 – Conservation of Coastal Areas

Given the intense and widespread nature of the threats to many coastal KBAs, most actions under this strategic direction will focus on preserving specific, high-priority KBAs where key elements of biodiversity (i.e., threatened species and ecosystems) are under pressure but where there is also a realistic prospect of making a difference.

CEPF is looking for LOIs which address the Strategic Direction through one or more of the Investment Priorities specified in Table 1 below.

Specific KBAs were identified as priorities for CEPF support (Table 2), so only those sites listed are eligible for funding. Activities proposed in LOIs must be focused on biodiversity conservation within one or more of these KBAs.

Table 1: Strategic Direction 1 and Investment Priorities

Strategic direction	Investment priorities
1: Support civil society to engage stakeholders in demonstrating integrated approaches for the preservation of biodiversity in coastal areas.	1.1: Engage local stakeholders in conservation actions that address threats to key elements of biodiversity in priority KBAs in the coastal zone.
	1.2: Engage private sector stakeholders to adopt sustainable practices that deliver positive impacts for conservation in priority KBAs in the coastal zone.
	1.3: Support civil society to engage with local or national governments to mainstream biodiversity conservation into integrated coastal zone management, land-use and development planning processes.

Table 2: Eligible sites (Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs)) for this call

Country	KBA code	KBA name
Albania	ALB04	Gjiri i Sarandës - Parku Kombëtar Butrint
Albania	ALB05	Gjiri i Vlorës - Gadishulli i Karaburunit - Ishulli i Sazanit - Mali i Çikës
Albania	ALB10	Liçeni i Shkodrës – Lumi i Bunës-Velipojë - Vau i Dejës
Cabo Verde	CPV04	Boavista praias
Cabo Verde	CPV05	Costa de Fragata
Cabo Verde	CPV10	Ilha de Santa Luzia
Cabo Verde	CPV14	Ilhéu Raso
Libya	LBY06	Farwa
Libya	LBY11	Karabolli
Montenegro	MNE03	Delta Bojane
Montenegro	MNE05	Katici, Donkova and Velja Seka

Morocco	MAR46	Parc National de Souss-Massa et Aglou
Tunisia	TUN03	Archipel de Zembra
Tunisia	TUN27	Golfe de Boughrara
Tunisia	TUN31	Îles Kuriat
Tunisia	TUN33	Jbel Nadhour et Lagune de Ghar El Melh
Tunisia	TUN60	Sebkhet Sejoumi

Figure 1. Map of coastal KBAs prioritized for CEPF support under Strategic Direction 1



ii) Strategic Direction 4 – Conservation of Plants

The level of threat and the lack of attention to the specific conservation needs of plants to date justified a separate strategic direction focused on this group. In addition to supporting direct conservation action, projects under this strategic direction will also strengthen the botanical knowledge and skills of scientists, conservationists and land managers.

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Demonstrate that they are focused on one or several priority species or are addressing a priority need for the conservation of plants.
- Demonstrate that they will lead directly to action for the conservation of threatened and endemic plant populations.
- Include, where possible, a significant component of capacity building for plant conservation, either for the project implementers, or their local partners

- Address the conservation of sites where there is a demonstrable need for funding and opportunity for success.

CEPF is looking for LOIs which address the Strategic Direction through one or more of the Investment Priorities specified in Table 3 below. Activities must be focused on the sites or plant species matching one or more of these criteria:

- **Sites** with plant species in threat categories Critically Endangered (CR) in the [IUCN Global Red List](#)
- **Sites** with plant species that have not yet been assessed in the Global Red List, but that would qualify for CR according to the [IUCN global Red List criteria](#) and thresholds.
- Site restricted endemics (SRE), which include:
 - Taxa occurring in only one site (and nowhere else in the world)
 - Extent of occurrence less than 100 km²
 - Area of occupancy less than 10 km²

Projects proposals which focus on Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) identified in the Ecosystem Profile will be prioritized due to the known biodiversity value of the site. If conservation work is to be conducted outside of a KBA, the coordinates for the site/s must be included in the LOI. Additional information about the site such as its ownership and management, if it is a Protected Area, if there are any local communities within or nearby it, and if there are any threats faced, must be fully explained in the LOI.

If a plant species is not currently assessed under the IUCN Global Red List, applicants must clearly state in the project rational why this plant species needs special conservation attention, using IUCN criteria and thresholds. If a site restricted endemic (SRE) species is proposed, then the applicant must justify it against the criteria listed above. Justification may include references to previous work conducted for the species, detail on the habitat where it occurs and the threats faced.

Table 3: Strategic Direction 4 and Investment Priorities

Strategic direction	Investment priorities
4: Strengthen the engagement of civil society to support the conservation of plants that are critically endangered or have highly restricted ranges.	4.1: Increase knowledge and skills to support assessment and planning for the conservation of plants, and foster the emergence of a new generation of young professionals in plant conservation.
	4.2: Support integration of plant conservation into the management of protected areas.
	4.3: Support innovative actions for the conservation of important populations of plants, working with land owners and managers.

7. Letter of Inquiry, Full Proposal, and Award Process

LOIs must be submitted through the **ConservationGrants** electronic portal open for this call (section 8). You will receive an acknowledgement confirming that your submission through **ConservationGrants** has been accepted.

All applicants will receive a notification following the review of their project. Applicants whose LOIs receive a positive review will be invited to submit a full proposal, again through the **ConservationGrants** electronic portal.

Full proposals that receive a positive review will lead to the award of a grant between Conservation International, as the host of the CEPF Secretariat, and the applicant's institution (the "grantee"). Grants will be denominated in United States dollars and grant agreements will be in English.

8. Application format

LOIs must be submitted through the **ConservationGrants** electronic portal open for this call, here: conservationgrants.force.com

This is a new online system, so for previous CEPF applicants or grantees, please note that the Grant Writer/GEM system is no longer in use and you will need to set up a new account on **ConservationGrants** to apply.

If you do not have a **ConservationGrants** account, you will need to register a new account by clicking on the blue "New User?" link underneath the 'Sign in' box.

CEPF will **not** accept LOIs via electronic mail or any other mechanism. You will receive an acknowledgement confirming that your submission through **ConservationGrants** has been accepted.

Questions regarding account creation or issues using **ConservationGrants** should be emailed to conservationgrants@conservation.org.

Further useful resources can be found here:

- How to Apply: http://www.cepf.net/grants/apply/Pages/application_guidelines.aspx
- Frequently Asked Questions: http://www.cepf.net/about_cepf/faq/Pages/default.aspx
- CEPF Projects database: http://www.cepf.net/grants/project_database/Pages/default.aspx

9. Contact

Before applying, applicants are encouraged to discuss project ideas and eligibility with the Programme Officer for your region:

- Balkans: Programme Officer, Borut Rubinič; borut.rubinic@dopps.si
- Cape Verde: Programme Officer, Mariana Carvalho; mariana.carvalho@birdlife.org

- Middle East: Programme Officer, Sharif Jbour; sharif.jbour@birdlife.org
- North Africa: Programme Officer, Awatef Abiadh; awatef.abiadh@lpo.fr

Questions regarding account creation or issues using **ConservationGrants** should be emailed to conservationgrants@conservation.org.

For any other general queries about the CEPF Mediterranean Basin Hotspot programme, please contact the Regional Implementation Team Manager, Liz Smith, on: liz.smith@birdlife.org; or visit <http://www.birdlife.org/cepf-med>



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. More information on CEPF can be found at www.cepf.net