



## Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund

### Call for Letters of Inquiry No. 2

#### LARGE GRANTS

#### Investment in the Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot

1. **Opening Date:** Monday 25 June 2018
2. **Submission Deadline:** Friday 14 September 2018
3. **Budget and Timeframe**

The minimum budget per project is US\$20,000 and the maximum budget per project is US\$150,000. Projects are expected to start on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 at the earliest and must be completed by 30<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

4. **General information**

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. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

The Mediterranean Basin Hotspot is the second largest hotspot in the world and the largest of the world's five Mediterranean-climate regions. CEPF's niche for investment in the Mediterranean was formulated through a participatory process that engaged civil society, donor and governmental stakeholders throughout the region. The resulting Investment Strategy (2017-2022) is documented within the [ecosystem profile](#) (PDF – 31 MB). 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 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. Applicants are advised to read this call for proposals document in full and submit LOIs under the scope of this call, as described in Section 6.

## 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](#).

## 6. Eligible Activities

The scope of this call is limited to the types of activities and locations described below.

LOIs will **only be accepted** for these strategic directions and countries:

- Strategic Direction 2: Albania, Bosnia and Hercegovina, FYR of Macedonia, Montenegro.
- Strategic Direction 3: Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia.

Proposed projects must support **either Strategic Direction 2 or Strategic Direction 3**. If you wish to apply for both Strategic Directions you must complete a separate LOI for each one.

### **i) Strategic Direction 2: Sustainable management of water catchments**

Nearly one-third of the Critically Endangered species found in the hotspot are freshwater animals and plants. The need for freshwater for agriculture and human consumption is one of the most persuasive reasons for the sustainable management of natural resources. Nevertheless, the hotspot's freshwater ecosystems are poorly represented in national protected areas networks, they are under pressure from over-use and pollution, and the species that live in them suffer from over-exploitation and disturbance. Climate change is likely to make these problems worse.

There have been significant improvements in the identification and definition of freshwater Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in the hotspot, and of the threatened species they support. A number of Catchment Management Zones (CMZs) have also been identified which take into account hydrological connectivity and the threats outside KBA borders, to better inform management actions. Some freshwater KBAs are identical to CMZs, and others are contained within CMZs.

At present the most effective method for setting priorities for freshwater ecosystems is to prioritize the CMZs. Specific CMZs were identified as priorities for CEPF support, alongside 2 additional freshwater KBAs which fall outside of these areas.

CEPF is looking for:

- LOIs which **address Strategic Direction 2 through one or more of the Investment Priorities** (see Table 1).
- LOIs which only **focus on one or more of the CMZs and KBAs listed in Table 2.**
- LOIs which clearly **demonstrate how project activities will benefit threatened species.**

**Table 1: Strategic Direction 2 and Investment Priorities**

Strategic direction	Investment priorities
2: Support the sustainable management of water catchments through integrated approaches for the conservation of threatened freshwater biodiversity.	2.1: Enhance the knowledge base on freshwater biodiversity and the importance of freshwater ecosystem services.
	2.2: Take action to reduce threats and improve management of selected sites in priority freshwater catchments with the participation of local stakeholders.
	2.3: Engage with government, private sector and other stakeholders to support integrated river basin management practices that reduce threats to biodiversity in priority Catchment Management Zones (CMZs).

**Table 2: Eligible Areas for this Call for Proposal**

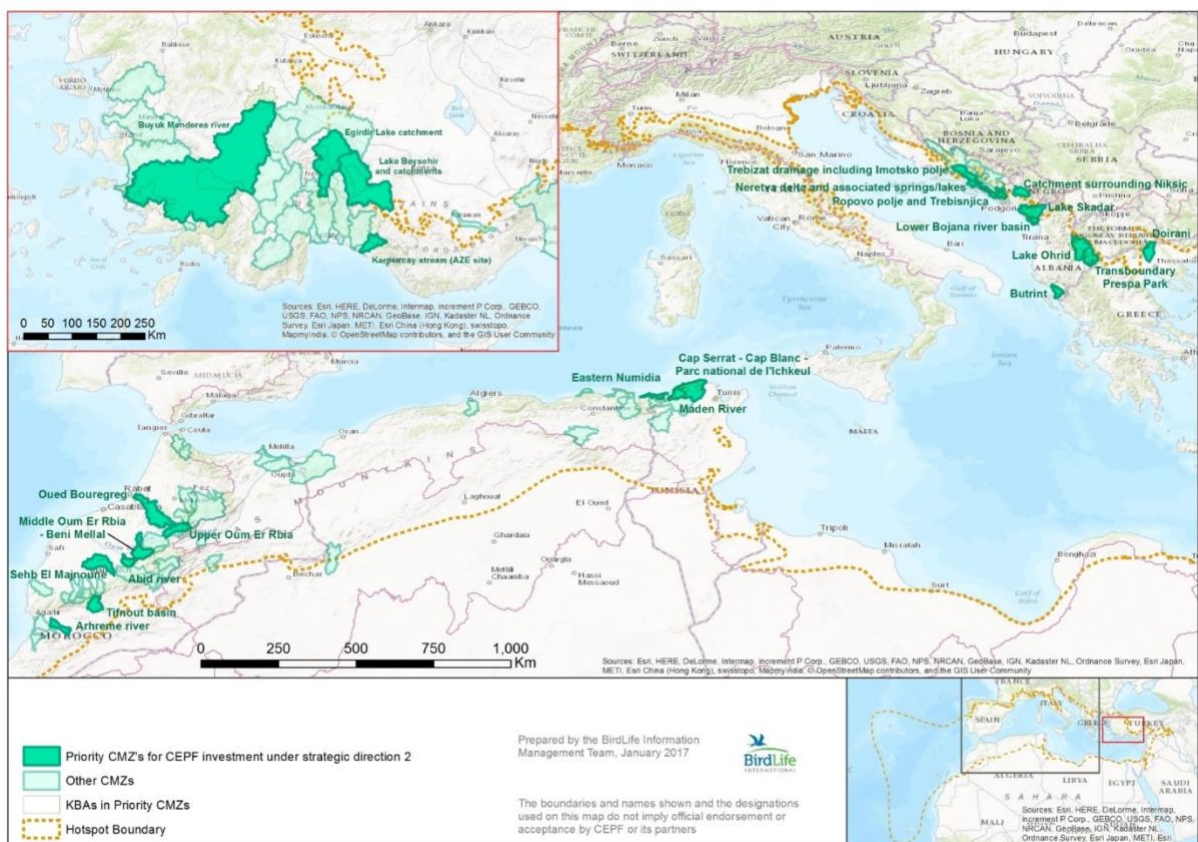
Country	Area Type	Area Name
Albania	Catchment Management Zone	Lake Butrint catchment
Albania, FYR Macedonia	Catchment Management Zone	Prespa Lake catchment
Albania, FYR Macedonia	Catchment Management Zone	Lake Ohrid catchment
Albania, Montenegro	Catchment Management Zone	Lake Skadar catchment
Albania, Montenegro	Catchment Management Zone	Lower Bojana river basin
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Catchment Management Zone	Trebizat drainage including Imotsko polje

Bosnia and Herzegovina	Catchment Management Zone	Popovo polje and Trebišnjica
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Catchment Management Zone	Neretva delta and associated springs/lakes including Hutovo Blato
FYR Macedonia	Catchment Management Zone	Doirani Lake catchment
Montenegro	Catchment Management Zone	Catchment surrounding Niksic
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Key Biodiversity Area	Livanjsko polje and Busko Lake
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Key Biodiversity Area	Mostarsko Blato

**Figure 1. Map of CMZs prioritized for CEPF support under Strategic Direction 2**

Please note that only Balkan countries are eligible in this call for proposals.

An interactive map of the hotspot can be accessed [here](#), use the top right-hand “Layer list” icon to select the layer you need (e.g., CMZ).



## **ii) Strategic Direction 3: Promoting the maintenance of traditional land use practices**

Mediterranean biodiversity has evolved with human land-use practices over several thousand years, to the extent that many threatened species are dependent on habitats maintained by agriculture, seasonal grazing or harvesting of wild products. The species that depend on these anthropogenic systems can become threatened when an established management system is abandoned and vegetation succession occurs, when traditional sustainable practices change and cause degradation and erosion, or when modern agricultural and land use practices, including the use of irrigation and agrochemicals, replace traditional practices and eliminate the opportunity for wild biodiversity to co-exist with agricultural systems.

Traditional management survives throughout the region, often in places affected by emigration, marginalization and rural poverty. To maximize the value of projects in demonstrating innovative approaches to land management, corridors were selected where elements of traditional management systems are still the main land use.

Under this strategic direction, CEPF will support civil society organizations to work with local community land managers and local businesses to pioneer innovative ways to sustain the elements of traditional land use practices that are important for biodiversity.

CEPF is looking for:

- LOIs which **address Strategic Direction 3 through one or more of the Investment Priorities** (see Table 3).
- LOIs which only **focus on one or more of the corridors specified, and the eligible countries within them** (see Table 4).
- LOIs which clearly **demonstrate how project activities will benefit threatened species**.

**Table 3: Strategic Direction 3 and Investment Priorities**

<b>Strategic Direction</b>	<b>Investment Priorities</b>
Strategic Direction 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	3.1 Support local communities to increase the benefit they receive from maintaining and enhancing traditional, biodiversity-friendly land-use and agricultural practices
	3.2 Promote awareness of the value of traditional, biodiversity-friendly land-use practices among local community and government decision makers, to secure their recognition and support
	3.3 Encourage business actors in the trade chain to support and promote traditional, biodiversity-friendly land-use practices

**Table 4. Eligible Corridors and Countries for this Call for Proposal**

Corridor	Eligible Countries	Corridor area (km <sup>2</sup> )	No. of KBAs
Orontes Valley and Levantine Mountains	Lebanon, Jordan	38,433	65
The Atlas Mountains	Morocco	106,691	44
The Dorsal and Telian Atlas	Tunisia	82,633	50

**Figure 2. Map of corridors prioritized for CEPF support under Strategic Direction 3**

Please note that only the 3 corridors stated in Table 4 are eligible in this call for proposals.

An interactive map of the hotspot can be accessed [here](#), use the top right hand “Layer list” icon to select the layer you need (e.g., Corridor).



### iii) General guidance

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 alongside 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.

Applicants are advised to **read the Investment Strategy chapter in the Ecosystem Profile** to ensure full understanding of the Strategic Directions and Investment Priorities (see Section 8).

## 7. The Application Process

Applications (LOIs) can be submitted in **English or French**.

All applications **must** be submitted through the ConservationGrants website via this link:

[Access to ConservationGrants](#)

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

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. Register a new account by clicking on the blue “New User?” link underneath the ‘Sign in’ box. Existing ConservationGrants users can use the same login information and create a new LOI.

Questions regarding account creation or issues using ConservationGrants should be emailed to [conservationgrants@conservation.org](mailto:conservationgrants@conservation.org).

The LOI review process will take approximately eight weeks from the deadline date. The review committee will select the strongest LOIs which meet the eligibility criteria in Section 5 and 6. All applicants will receive a response from CEPF following the review of their project.

Applications which will be moved to the second stage will be developed into a full proposal on ConservationGrants. 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. Reference Documents

All applicants are advised to review the CEPF Investment Strategy for the Mediterranean Basin within the Ecosystem Profile (Chapter 13). This provides more detail on the types of activity CEPF will fund under each Investment Priority:

- Ecosystem Profile: [English](#)
- Ecosystem Profile - Technical Summary: [English](#), [Arabic](#), [French](#)

An interactive map of the Mediterranean hotspot can be accessed [here](#), use the top right-hand 'Layer list' icon to select the layer you need.

Help and resources:

- [Eligibility and How To Apply](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Safeguard Policies](#)
- [12 Tips for Getting Your Grant Idea Funded](#)
- [CEPF Projects database](#)

## 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](mailto:borut.rubinic@dopps.si)
- Middle East: Programme Officer Sharif Jbour; [sharif.jbour@birdlife.org](mailto:sharif.jbour@birdlife.org)
- North Africa: Programme Officer Awatef Abiadh; [awatef.abiadh@lpo.fr](mailto:awatef.abiadh@lpo.fr)

Questions regarding account creation or issues using *ConservationGrants* should be emailed to [conservationgrants@conservation.org](mailto:conservationgrants@conservation.org).

For any other general queries about the CEPF Mediterranean Basin Hotspot program, please contact the Regional Implementation Team Manager Liz Smith at [liz.smith@birdlife.org](mailto:liz.smith@birdlife.org) or visit the [programme's website](#).