



**Call for Letters of Interest
Madagascar and the islands of the Indian Ocean
(MADIO)
Biodiversity Hotspot**

Large grants

Eligible countries:	Madagascar
Opening date:	Thursday February 1 2024
Closing date:	Thursday March 7, 2024 - 11:59 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time Zone equivalent to 8:59 a.m. Friday March 8, Antananarivo time)
Grant Size:	Greater than US\$50,000

The [Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund](#) (CEPF), as part of its partnership with the [Franklinia Foundation](#), accepts letters of interest (LOI) from [civil society organizations](#) for projects that meet the eligible activities and geographies of this call.

1. CONTEXT

CEPF is a joint initiative of the French Development Agency (AFD), Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan and the World Bank. A fundamental objective is to ensure that civil society is engaged in the conservation of biodiversity.

The Franklinia Foundation is a private Swiss foundation created in 2005. It financially supports projects for the protection of nature, with the primary objective of supporting the conservation of endangered tree species all over the planet, and improving their conservation status.

CEPF and the Franklinia Foundation have been active in Madagascar for a long time. CEPF's investment in the country began in 2001. Over the past 23 years, CEPF has invested \$17.5 million in grants to 83 organizations in Madagascar, strengthening their capacity. The current phase of CEPF investment in the hotspot began in 2022.

Complementing CEPF's general objectives for protecting Biodiversity, a focus in MADIO Hotspot lies on ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change, reflecting the priorities of the main donor for the hotspot, the Green Climate Fund.

In 2023, Franklinia and CEPF decided to join forces to create an initiative dedicated to endangered trees within the CEPF Madagascar program. This initiative is intended to finance projects aimed at protecting endangered tree species in Madagascar.

Organizations will be able to benefit from capacity building and exchanges with the community of CEPF beneficiaries in the region. It is also expected that the experience of the projects in this component can benefit on a larger scale the restoration programs implemented under the other components of the CEPF program.

2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In order to be eligible for this call for letters of intent, applications must meet the criteria indicated below. LOIs not meeting these criteria will not be eligible for this call and will therefore not be considered.

- a. Eligible Candidates
- b. Strategy investment
- c. Geographical area
- d. Budget and duration
- e. Date of submission
- f. Language of the LOI

a. Eligible Candidates

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

Individuals are not eligible. Individuals should work with CSOs to develop project proposals rather than applying directly.

A company or public institution is only eligible if it can establish:

- that it has a legal personality independent of any government body or actor;
- that it has the power to request and receive private funds;
- and that it cannot assert a claim for sovereign immunity.

Applicants who are not based in Madagascar may submit an application, as long as the project activities meet the conservation needs listed in this call for projects. However, the attention of Applicants is drawn to the fact that Malagasy organizations will benefit from particular attention in order to meet the expectations of strengthening the capacity of civil society in the country.

Preference will be given to projects that demonstrate:

- (i) a leading role for local organizations and/or an explicit focus on building the capacity of local civil society, and
- (ii) that they coordinate with other organizations to avoid duplication of efforts, such as projects that work with partnerships and alliances. Joint projects with multiple organizations are eligible provided that a lead organization submits the application and the project partners have clearly defined roles in the application.

Applicant organizations must have their own bank accounts and be legally authorized to receive grants.

Applicants may already be funded by CEPF on another project.

Potential applicants who are unsure of their organization's eligibility are encouraged to contact the Grant Director directly at the address listed at the end of this document.

b. Strategy investment eligible

Applicants should ensure that the main content of their LOI refers to the following strategic direction.

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

Proposals under this call for projects must imperatively focus on actions to **improve the conservation status of threatened tree species** listed on the [Red List of Endangered Trees of Madagascar](#). The species concerned must be under the status of "Critically Endangered (CR)", "Endangered (EN)" or "Vulnerable (VU)", with priority given to the highest statuses (CR and EN).

Actions may concern the protection of species in situ (improvement of management/protection of sites sheltering threatened species), the strengthening of populations of threatened species and/or the reduction of threats weighing on these species. Questions of sustainability of the actions undertaken will be particularly studied during the selection.

This call concerns **all of Madagascar**, regardless of the key areas for biodiversity (priority or not) given in the Ecosystem Profile. Where relevant, coordination and synergies with other projects carried out by CEPF in Madagascar will be appreciated.

Applicants are asked to justify in the concept note that their project will meet the following main objective:

1. **Improving the conservation status** of globally threatened tree species targeted by CEPF grants, with a particular focus on critically endangered species (CR);

Projects should also, wherever possible, include elements to achieve the following objectives:

2. **Improve well-being of local populations** dependent on ecosystem services, with particular emphasis on women and economically marginalized groups ;
3. **Strengthen the capacities of civil society** organizations in Madagascar committed to the conservation of globally threatened trees.

The indicators used by CEPF for the “threatened trees” program are as follows – therefore Applicants are asked to verify that their project will actually meet (at least) some of these indicators:

Number of globally threatened species benefiting from conservation actions	Applicants must indicate the species targeted by the project, with their Latin name and their IUCN status.
Number of hectares of production landscapes (i.e. agricultural land) with reinforced management in favor of biodiversity	Applicants must indicate, where applicable, the number of hectares concerned as well as the actions planned to strengthen management in favor of threatened tree species.
Number of hectares of protected areas created and / or expanded	If the project allows the creation or expansion of a protected area to save threatened trees, the bidder may indicate the number of hectares concerned
Number of hectares of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) benefiting from improved management	If the project is carried out in a KBA (priority or not), and the project provides for better management in favor of threatened trees, the bidder may indicate the number of hectares concerned
Number of hectares restored and number of plants per species envisaged in the restored areas	For projects involving ecosystem restoration, an indication of the size of the areas and the intensity of the replanting work must be provided.
Number and categories of people (M/F) benefiting from alternative economic activities or means of subsistence	The estimated number of people involved in livelihood activities/benefiting from employment or economic support should be indicated.
Number of people benefiting from structured training.	As part of capacity building. This number remains estimated at this stage

Applicants are encouraged to add a map of the project area in the additional documents, online.

All elements provided at the concept note stage are estimates and will be detailed as part of the complete proposal, once the Applicants have been selected for this second phase.

c. Budget and duration

The minimum amount for these grants is \$50,000. Applications with a budget below this amount will not be eligible.

It is brought to the attention of Applicants that the total budget within the framework of this will cannot exceed 800,000 USD, and that the CEPF intends to support between

8 and 12 projects under this call. In this context, the average grants are expected around 80,000 USD and requests for large amounts will be examined with extreme care.

Projects in this call are expected to start between July and September 2024 and should not have a duration exceeding July 31, 2026. It is important to mention the duration of the project to be funded by CEPF and not that of the larger project/program in which he registers, if applicable.

d. Date of submission

LOIs must be submitted no later than Thursday, March 7, 2024 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern time zone (Washington DC) – corresponding to 8:59 a.m. Friday, March 8, Antananarivo time.

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted whatever the reason. Applicants are advised to submit a few days early to avoid any issues or delays due to connection etc.

e. Language of the LAW

Applications can be submitted in French or English.

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

For all applicants, CEPF encourages developing joint project proposals with organizations from different sectors to address the need for a multi-sector and/or multi-regional approach, where appropriate. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to discuss their project ideas with relevant stakeholders, particularly at the local level.

Priority will be given to projects that:

- i. Meet the objectives set out above (section 2).
- ii. Address priorities identified in the national policy or strategy documents on biodiversity and climate change of the implementing country(ies) concerned.
- iii. Demonstrate positive impacts on gender.
- iv. Demonstrate effective and efficient use of funds with a budget that is linked to planned results and activities.

Other considerations that will strengthen an application include:

- Clear plans to continue the project beyond the proposed project end date (and where applicable achieve financial viability).
- Support for indigenous and local communities in community or co-management activities and actions that improve the land rights and use of resources of local communities.
- A strong impact on local communities, thus strengthening their

resilience and their capacity to protect biodiversity.

- An approval from the relevant government authorities through the corresponding designated national authorities.

Grants cannot be used for:

- The use of child labor or forced labor.
- The construction or rehabilitation of large dams or other infrastructure.
- The payment of salaries or salary supplements to state personnel.
- Purchasing firearms or other weapons.
- Activities that introduce or use potentially invasive non-native species.
- The removal or alteration of any material cultural heritage.
- Activities that promote trade in or use of any substance listed in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, or other chemicals or hazardous materials subject to international bans, restrictions or elimination in due to their high toxicity to living organisms, their persistence in the environment, their bioaccumulation potential, or the potential depletion of the ozone layer.
- The purchase and use of pesticides that fall under classes IA and IB of the World Health Organization, or class II ([English](#) / [French](#)) if they are likely to be used or accessible to non-professional personnel. specialists, farmers or others without training, equipment and facilities to properly handle, store and apply these products.
- The displacement and physical resettlement of people (voluntary or involuntary).
- Buying land
- Activities likely to have negative effects on critical habitats.

Before awarding a grant, CEPF will review all projects against the [CEPF safeguard policies](#) to prevent any potential negative impact of projects on human populations and the environment.

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

4. HOW TO APPLY

Large Grant applicants are invited to submit their LOI online via the [ConservationGrants portal](#) in French or English. An automated acknowledgment email will be sent by ConservationGrants confirming that the submission has been received.

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

Existing users must use their credentials to log in. If you have never used ConservationGrants before, you will need [to create a new account](#) by clicking " New

user? " or "First time user? Click here" to create an account on the main page.

If you experience technical difficulties with ConservationGrants, please email conservationgrants@conservation.org.

If you have a specific question about your eligibility, you can send an email to Pierre Carret, Grant Director at CEPF: pcarret@cepf.net

5. SELECTION AND AWARD PROCESS

The LOI selection process will take approximately six to eight weeks from the submission deadline. The LOIs will be evaluated according to the eligibility criteria of this call for projects. All applicants will receive notification following review of their LOI.

Applicants invited to submit a Full Proposal will be invited to a "Master Class" around mid-April. The submission of the complete proposal will be done, always through the platform ConservationGrants, in May/June. More information about the Master Class will be provided to candidates who have received a favorable evaluation of their LOI.

Complete proposals that receive a positive evaluation will lead to the award of a grant which will be the subject of a grant agreement between Conservation International, as host of the CEPF Secretariat, and the project lead organization ("the beneficiary"). Grants will be in US dollars and grant agreements will be in English.

6. REFERENCE MATERIAL

All candidates are invited to consult:

- CEPF Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands Ecosystem Profile: [English - French](#)
- Ecosystem-based adaptation in the Indian Ocean: [English](#)

Additional Resources:

- [Eligibility](#)
- [Before applying](#)
- [How to apply](#)
- [12 tips for getting your project idea financed](#)
- [CEPF Project Database](#)
- [Grant life cycle](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions About Conservation Grants](#)
- The WHO recommended classification of pesticides by hazard [English - French](#)

Specific resources on endangered trees

- [State of the World's Trees 2021](#) . Botanic Gardens Conservation International.

- [Red List of Trees of Madagascar 2021](#). Botanic Gardens Conservation International.
- [Basic Guidance for Threatened Trees Conservation](#), Botanic Gardens Conservation International.
- [10 Golden Rules for reforestation to optimize carbon sequestration, biodiversity recovery and livelihood benefits](#), article by A Di Sacco et.al, in *Global Change Biology*.
- [National Strategy and Action Plans for Biodiversity 2016-2025](#), Ministry of the Environment of Madagascar, 2016.