CEPF Letter of Inquiry

To submit your Letter of Inquiry, please send it to the email address for your region. If you have any questions or concerns please send your inquiry to the same account, and we will do all that we can to assist.

Thank you for your interest in CEPF.

Organization Information
Organization Legal Name Biodiversity Inventory for Conservation
Organization Short Name / Acronym, if any. BINCO
Project Lead Contact – Provide the name and contact information for the person responsible for correspondence with CEPF regarding this project. Matthias De Beenhouwer, m.debeenhouwer@gmail.com
Organization Chief Executive – Provide the name and contact information for the chief executive or person who is authorized to sign contracts on behalf of your organization. Jeroen Casteels, Chief executive, BINCO info@binco.eu
Mailing Address Luitenant Jacopsstraat 42 1750 Lennik, Belgium
Physical Address – if different from mailing address above. Not differing
Country Belgium
Telephone +32485304360
Fax, if any.
Web Site Address, if any. www.binco.eu
E-mail Address – Provide an e-mail address. CEPF will use this to communicate the status of your application. m.debeenhouwer@gmail.com
Total Permanent Staff One
Year Organization Established 2008

Organization Type

International

Local organizations should be legally registered in a country within the hotspot where the project will be implemented and have an independent board of directors or other similar type of independent governing structure.

History and Mission Statement – Provide a brief description of your organization's history and mission, including experience relevant to the proposed project.

BINCO (Biodiversity Inventory for Nature Conservation) was founded in 2008 by five motivated biologists who share a passion for nature and who feel an urge to take part in the conservation of the Earth's threatened biodiversity. The current biodiversity crisis has become a worldwide issue. Many areas and uncountable species are already lost due to the impact of man on the environment. If we want to preserve the current biodiversity of our planet it is essential to increase our knowledge about the diversity of fauna and flora. This provides a solid fundament for conservation activities.

Information about the biodiversity of certain areas, both nationally and internationally, is often surprisingly limited and restricted. BINCO aims to inventory interesting and threatened areas with standardized scientific procedures. This leads directly to the protection of selected areas and individual species. A lot of successful projects have been executed in Belgium, where the organization was founded, while educational projects, conservation actions and biodiversity assessments have also taken us to different parts of the world, including Tanzania, French Guiana, Ethiopia and Honduras, and Papua New Guinea in the near future. This has resulted in the discovery of new species, the founding of educational programs and increased awareness (of both government bodies and tourists) and protection of investigated sites (see http://binco.eu/en/projecten/ and http://binco.eu/en/publicaties/artikels/).

We are committed to generate objective and solid data about the biodiversity of a target area. Furthermore, this is always happening in close collaboration with local communities around or in the area. Our activities mostly result in reports with species inventory lists and recommendations for the protection of the studied area. Additionally we provide an ecological interpretation of our results with advice on the appropriate actions needed to maintain the species-richness of an area. A stable man-nature relationship is essential for successfully tackle the biodiversity crisis and BINCO aims to increase this awareness.

BINCO aims at creating a base for conservation initiatives, governments and nature management. To achieve this BINCO has three main objectives:

1. Biodiversity assessment
BINCO focuses on the inventory of ecologically interesting but poorly studied areas, which may be under imminent threat. This can be achieved either by the implementation of biodiversity assessments or the establishment of long term monitoring programs in cooperation with specialists worldwide and local people in the project area.

2. Centralization of data
Frequently, partial data is available on the fauna and flora of even the most isolated regions, but this is often scattered over different sources and is difficult to obtain. With every study, BINCO provides a report on the website with an overview of all (most) data available on the existing species distributions complemented with the newly gathered data.

3. Biodiversity conservation
Using the gathered data and the reports published, our aim is to enhance the protection of the researched area. Appropriate steps are taken to bring our results to the decision making policy level and local people or organizations will be helped to implement the correct management strategy.

Eligibility Questions

The questions below help CEPF determine the eligibility of your organization or proposed project activities to receive CEPF funds. Where possible, you may revise your strategy to avoid these elements or you may wish to consult the "Resources" section at www.cepf.net that provides links to additional funding sources and resource sites.

Ineligible Recipients of Funds

Government agencies, and organizations controlled by government agencies, are **not** eligible to receive CEPF funds.

Do you represent, or is your organization controlled by, a government agency?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

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

If your organization is a government-owned enterprise or institution, can it clearly establish each of the three items named above?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

Ineligible Use of Funds

CEPF will **not** fund the capitalization of trust funds, the purchase of land, the involuntary resettlement of people, or the removal or alteration of any physical cultural property under any circumstances. Please answer "yes" or "no" to each item below.

Does your proposed activity intend to use CEPF grant money to capitalize a trust fund?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

Does your proposed activity intend to use CEPF grant money to purchase land?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

Does your proposed activity intend to use CEPF grant money to resettle people?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

Does your proposed activity intend to use CEPF grant money to remove or alter any physical cultural property (defined as movable or immovable objects, sites, structures, and natural features and landscapes that have archeological, paleontological, historical, architectural, religious, aesthetic, or other cultural significance)?

[ ] Yes
[ ] No

Safeguard Questions
The questions below will help CEPF to determine whether your project triggers any of the World Bank's safeguard policies. CEPF is required to assess all applications to determine if safeguards are triggered, and if so, whether or not appropriate mitigation measures are included in project design and implementation. For further information on CEPF application of safeguards please refer to http://www.cepf.net/grants/Pages/safeguard_policies.aspx.
Environmental assessment. Will the project have adverse impacts on the environment? If you answer yes, please provide additional information and a description of mitigating measures you will take. [ ] Yes [ ] No
Natural habitats and forests. Will the project cause or facilitate any significant loss or degradation of forests or other natural habitats? If you answer yes, please provide additional information and a description of mitigating measures you will take. [ ] Yes [ ] No
Involuntary restrictions of access to resources. Will the project introduce or strengthen involuntary restrictions of access to resources? If you answer yes, please provide additional information and a description of mitigating measures you will take. [ ] Yes [ ] No
Indigenous peoples. Does the project plan to work in lands or territories traditionally owned, customarily used, or occupied by indigenous peoples? If you answer yes, please provide a brief description of planned activities in these lands or territories, any adverse impacts foreseen on these indigenous peoples and any mitigating measures you will take. [ ] Yes [ ] No The Sheka forest is traditionally used and occupied by local forest villages that have used the forest for centuries in a sustainable way. However, increased conservation efforts in the area should result in a higher protection of parts of the forest against people and companies from outside the area, rather than limiting the forest needs of local villages. Wherever adverse impacts might occur, local people can be compensated through benefits acquired from higher tourism capacities, but also through coffee certification and higher prices for other forest products.
Pest management. Will the project involve use of herbicides, pesticides, insecticides or any other poison for the removal of invasive species? If you answer yes, please provide the name of the pesticide, herbicide, insecticide or poison you intend to use. [ ] Yes [ ] No

Project Title and Request
Project Title Filling the gap: biodiversity surveys to increase long-term forest sustainability
CEPF Region – Please list the CEPF region where your project will be implemented. CEPF funding regions are described on www.cepf.net. Sheka Forest
Project Location – Define the geographic location (including country, corridor, site, etc) where project activities will take place. Sheka forest biosphere reserve
Project Duration – Enter the approximate time period of your project. Twelve months
Strategic Direction from the CEPF Ecosystem Profile – Enter the single strategic direction this proposal aims to address. Use the exact number, such as 1, 2, etc. and wording from the ecosystem profile for this region found on www.cepf.net. 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.1.4 and 1.1.5.
Funding Request Amount – Enter the amount of funds (in US $) requested from CEPF. 19,813
Total Project Budget –Enter the total budget for this project from all funding sources. 25,263
Counterpart Funding – Identify the amounts and sources of any other funding already secured to be directed to this project. A grant of 4,150 dollar is donated by the University of Leuven, Belgium, while a material grant of 1,300 dollar is donated by the VLIR-UOS. These grants were partly awarded due to the high sustainability and community based outcome of the project. Furthermore we believe that a follow-up grant (5,000 pound) from the Rufford foundation (UK) is feasible on the short term.
In-Kind Contributions – Enter the amount of your organization's contributions to be directed to this project and explain how these have been calculated. The NGO BINCO is a nonprofit organization relying on grants and donations. The investment of BINCO will be mainly in providing Biodiversity assessment equipment (e.g. camera traps, GPS, satellite phone). Adding up, materials of BINCO can easily be seen as a contribution of 5000 dollars. Additionally all logistics needed for an expedition in rural areas will be provided. The main contribution of BINCO is in the extensive expertise in standardized biodiversity assessments and substantial academic potential to prepare the research and publish the results.
Project Budget – Provide a breakdown of the proposed budget (in US$ and only for the CEPF funded portion of the project) using the following categories.
Salaries/Benefits: 0
Professional Services: 5450
Rent and Storage:
Telecommunications: 80
Postage and Delivery: 100

Supplies:
Furniture and Equipment: 3975
Maintenance:
Travel: 2750
Meetings & Events: 6100
Miscellaneous: 875
Sub-Grants:0
Indirect Cost (max 13%):483
Total Budget: 19,813

Letter of Inquiry
The letter of inquiry is meant to provide CEPF with an overview of the project concept. It is typically 2-3 pages in length, and must include at least the following information: **Project Rationale** – Describe the conservation need (key threats and/or important opportunities) your project aims to address and what would happen if this project were not implemented. **Project Approach** – Describe the proposed strategy and actions of your project in response to the conservation need stated above. Include the expected results of the project and any potential risks you face in implementing this plan. **Link to CEPF Investment Strategy** – How does your project relate to the CEPF investment strategy presented in the Ecosystem Profile? (This document may be found at www.cepf.net) Your answer should include reference to a specific strategic direction from the relevant ecosystem profile that the project will support. **Project Partners / Stakeholders** – List any partners to be directly involved in implementing this project as well as important stakeholders and how you have involved them in your planning. **Long-term Sustainability/Replicability** – Describe how project components or results will continue or be replicated beyond the initial project. Please compose your letter of inquiry in the section below.
* Letter of Inquiry Project rationale Ethiopian natural forests are rapidly decreasing, both in quality of the forests, which are more and more conversed to coffee forest and their quantity, which is estimated to decline with 140,000 ha annually (FAO, 2010). With only 2.7% of the Ethiopian land surface forested, the need to conserve the last forests is rapidly increasing. The most important threat to the Ethiopian forests is the rising population pressure with deforestation for new settlements and agricultural land, and general overexploitation of the remaining forested areas. Moreover short term needs, such as firewood collection, are omnipresent in the remaining forests with unknown effects on Ethiopia's flora and fauna, known for its high percentage of endemism. Sheka forest is the largest unfragmented forest remaining in the country, and by far the largest in the horn of Africa. The local communities at the border and within the forest have developed a long tradition in sustainable use of the forest, mainly for coffee, honey and cardemon. Recently, MELCA-Ethiopia has worked hard to stress the importance of this forest, both nationally and internationally, and with success, as the Sheka forest and its surroundings are now known as the Sheka Forest biosphere reserve. The Biosphere Reserve area includes forest, wetlands, bamboo thickets, mountain grassland, agricultural land and rural areas and is therefore crucial for conservation of thousands of species. Moreover, it covers a unique biogeographic gradient with cold and wet highlands to hot lowland areas. However, conflicts between man and nature occur regularly and the long term sustainability of this biosphere reserve is uncertain. Link to CEPF Investment Strategy Our main focus would be on strategic direction 1 as we want to include mainstream biodiversity, as well as biodiversity assessment techniques into wider development policies, plans and projects with benefits for biodiversity conservation on the long term. With the expertise of MELCA,

we can translate this further into improving local livelihoods and sustainable economic development in this specific region. The ngo BINCO, together with the Jimma University (hereafter JU) under supervision of Dr. Tadesse Habtamu (Animal ecology) and Dr. Kitessa Hundera (Plant ecology), will focus on priorities 1.1.1. and 1.1.5. BINCO is already working together with JU in another project in the Beleta-Gera forest, supported by the Rufford foundation, and we have plans to cooperate also in the future (via follow-up grants). We are confident that activities will later be scaled up as in priority 1.2. and integrated into national development plans, as this is the main expertise of MELCA. Previous projects of MELCA have proven their capability to integrate forest protection into wider land use and development plans. Up to now, however, the biodiversity assessments and assessment knowledge are mainly lacking from their projects. The biodiversity inventory that has currently been done in the area is very preliminary and not sufficient to indicate this area as a biodiversity hotspot. MELCA acknowledges this and is therefore highly interested in cooperating with BINCO. We believe this biodiversity assessment and long-term follow up is crucial for three reasons: 1) It will fill the knowledge gap on key species for conservation, currently existing in Sheka forest, 2) long-term biodiversity projects can be set up by BINCO and JU and maintained in cooperation with the local people, ensuring long term biodiversity research and 3) benefits towards local employment and ecosystem service provisioning. Moreover, biodiversity assessment can indicate hotspots within the Sheka forest (e.g. water ponds, marshy areas or untouched natural forests) which can then receive a higher status of protection in comparison with the rest of the biosphere reserve and can act as tourist attraction via small projects. Small ecotourism projects in Bale Mountains national park in cooperation with FZS yielded similar results where certain areas within the national park are left untouched by the local communities (e.g. Rira bamboo and waterfall trail).

Project approach

This project will consist of the following four components:

(1) Biodiversity assessments; desk studies and field surveys:

RESULT: At the end of the project, BINCO will have made a biodiversity inventory. BINCO will deliver checklists of Birds, Mammals and Amphibians. Also, BINCO will advise and propose certain hotspots within the Biosphere reserve which can be further monitored or receive increased protection.

ACTIVIES: We will use, and teach how to use, wildlife camera traps together with live mammal trapping in a standardized way. In addition, camera traps can be occasionally put along riverside shores, drinking ponds and animal tracks to increase the chance to film scarcer animals with tourist potential. Lions and leopards, for example, are regularly heard by local people within this area but actual data are missing. The amphibians in the wider region show an exceptionally high degree of endemism, making this a priority group of international importance (Largen & Stephen, 2001). Endemic amphibians in Ethiopia have already shown to be highly sensitive to human disturbance (Gower et al. 2012). It is our strong believe that Sheka forest contains a unique set of endemic amphibians, though this requires further study. They will be surveyed with standard techniques including pitfall trapping, night trapping and call surveying (Rödel & Ernst, 2004). Lastly, a bird inventory will be made with focus on endemic birds and other species. Birdwatchers are mainly interested in areas with high bird diversity but to convince birdwatchers, it is crucial to publish inventory lists of certain key areas and specific data on where to find localized/endemic birds. Lastly, we aim to sample both semi forest and forest to quantify the effect of human change due to coffee intensification. Camera traps will be purchased with the grant for the local communities to assess larger mammals. Other materials can be provided by BINCO and/or JU.

(2) Training of 5 local community members in biodiversity monitoring and field guides

RESULT: At the end of the project, BINCO will have delivered 5 trainees, capable of monitoring

and identifying birds, mammals and amphibians. These persons will also be able to show tourists around in the Biosphere reserve.

ACTIVITIES: Our aim is to educate local people on how to recognize and how to assess the presence, distribution and population size of mammals, amphibians and birds across a gradient of habitats within the Sheka forest biosphere reserve. In a first phase, species identification will be desk training. In a second phase, we will teach biodiversity assessment techniques to the trainees mainly by actively using them within the forest. To tackle this we will focus on mammals, amphibians and birds. Trainees will actively monitor these species groups and will be taught how to identify certain species in the field. Additionally, they will be capable of identifying certain more difficult species by identification by hand. We will also train these people as tourist guides: how to show tourists around in the forest, indicate interesting places in the forest (e.g. waterfall) and indicate certain species of interest (in English).

(3) Supporting MELCA's research centre with additional equipment

RESULT: At the end of the project, BINCO will have supported MELCA's research centre and constructed a protocol that can be used for researchers and tourists to visit the Biosphere reserve / research centre.

ACTIVITIES: BINCO will deliver equipment to MELCA's research centre. This material is crucial for biodiversity assessment and long-term monitoring. Knowledge on how to use this will be implemented in component (2). We will make an inventory list for MELCA. We will also develop sampling protocols and write down assessment techniques. Lastly, we will develop a simple guide book which can be used by both researchers and tourists who want to visit (or do research in) the area.

(4) Result sharing

RESULT: At the end of the project, BINCO will have delivered a final report and disseminate results together with MELCA

ACTIVITIES: Results will be disseminated via meetings both at local level (villages) and at national level (Jimma University, Metu University, Addis Ababa University). Project outcomes will be promoted via websites and tour operators. MELCA will present and use our results at policy level. The development plan that has been proposed by MELCA in cooperation with CEPF can be evaluated with and, if necessary, adapted to our results.

Sustainability and replicability:

The long term sustainability of this project has a strong educational emphasis where teaching local people how to use and research forest biodiversity and how to conduct biodiversity assessments is crucial for the long term survival of this unique biodiversity hotspot. Furthermore the benefits of biodiversity need to be emphasized as such that increased forest protection can lead to better livelihood. We will use the MELCA research center in Sheka forest as a base for the activities and will help to build a biodiversity research center here. In the long term, we aim to build up to a research center where people from abroad can volunteer to do research in the area, and students/researchers can be assisted by local people to do their fieldwork here. This will be a unique concept for Ethiopia, but has already proven fruitful in other African countries (South-Africa, Kenya, Tanzania...). Furthermore, BINCO is launching the "Binco-Local" idea via their website where sustainable ecotourism programs are worked out for the different project areas where BINCO is active. We will also develop, in cooperation with MELCA and the trainees, a guide association, which will be promoted through different social channels (guide book, website,

tour companies).
MELCA will further use our results to strengthen the protection of the Sheka forest biosphere on national and international level and by increasing local participation of civil societies via meetings, education in the schools and improving livelihoods via alternative income. For example, certification of forest produce such as cardamom, coffee and honey can provide a sustainable income for the farmers in the area. As such, long-term benefits for farmers can lead to long-term conservation of the forest. If successful, the project idea and active involvement of the local people in forest protection and biodiversity assessments can be implemented in other KBA's under threat.

Project partners

MELCA gave their full support for this project after meetings with Dr. Million Belay, head of the organization (millionbelay@yahoo.com). Their main focus is on bio-cultural diversity conservation for healthy ecosystem and sustainable life. They work for a healthy ecosystem, vibrant culture and improved lives of communities in Ethiopia through developing and spreading innovative methods.
Jimma University will be mainly involved in this project via the laboratory of forest ecology, head is Dr. Kitessa Hundera (kitessah2@yahoo.com) and via the laboratory of animal ecology, supervised by Dr. Tadesse Habtamu (Tadese.habtamu@gmail.com). JU has an excellent reputation in providing research that benefits the local community and is very active in sharing knowledge with the community (Hence their slogan, "We are in the community").