

## CEPF FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

<b>Organization Legal Name:</b>	Association "Les Amis des Oiseaux" (AAO) / BirdLife in Tunisia
<b>Project Title:</b>	Mediterranean Mid-term Assessment Regional Meeting
<b>Date of Report:</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> August 2015
<b>Report Author and Contact Information</b>	Claudia Azafaf, Project Coordinator, aao.org@gmail.com

**CEPF Region:** Mediterranean

**Strategic Direction:** 4

**Grant Amount:** \$ 56,520

**Project Dates:** 1<sup>st</sup> March 2015-31<sup>st</sup> May 2015

**Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):**

The Regional Implementation Team (RIT) for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) in the Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot provided guidance for the meeting arrangements.

### Conservation Impacts

***Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.***

CEPF investment in the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot began in 2012 and in the mid-term of the programme occurs in 2015. The investment to-date was evaluated through the Mid-Assessment, comprising of a series of participatory exercises to gather feedback from all stakeholders within the programme.

These exercises are comprised of an online questionnaire, national meetings and a final regional meeting. These different platforms have given the opportunity for all CEPF grantees and other stakeholders to feedback on areas such as: granting processes, CEPF RIT support and updates to the Ecosystem Profile.

Information gathered through the online questionnaire and national meetings will feed into the regional meeting discussions and the final Mid-term Assessment report. The outcomes from the Mid-term Assessment report will provide CEPF with recommendations for changes to processes, targets or the overall strategy, where appropriate. This will ultimately improve the efficiency of CEPF investment and increase the likelihood of positive conservation outcomes in the Mediterranean basin.

***Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project.***

Unfortunately, due to a terrorist attack, the planned meeting in Hammamet, Tunisia, was cancelled at the last minute. However all the arrangements such as participant travel, meeting agenda and excursions, and accommodation had all be carefully arranged by AAO for the purpose of the meeting. AAO were able to recycle some of the materials for the following meeting in Montenegro, and liaised closely with the new meeting hosts CZIP, the RIT and CEPF). AAO Director Claudia Feltrup-Azafaf also kindly agreed to co-host the new meeting, using her expertise and knowledge from the event organization to-date.

The Regional Meeting (eventually held in Montenegro, with AAO's support), provided the platform for CEPF grantees; Advisory Committee members, RIT, CEPF, Secretariat and other stakeholders to assess the CEPF Investment regionally, from feedback for the national meeting. Also, the meeting has given the opportunity to discuss major challenges and the future of CEPF investments on a regional scale. After the meeting, a regional report summarizing the discussions and decisions taken collectively was created, which will be feed in the overall Mid-term Assessment.

The meeting provided the opportunity for the Mediterranean stakeholders, made up of grantees from a variety of institutions and countries, to assess the investments made-to-date. Solutions to challenges were discussed, lessons learned shared, and made contact across the region.

#### **Planned Long-term Impacts - 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal):**

The civil society in the Mediterranean develops a common vision and works collectively towards conserving natural ecosystems and maintaining the livelihoods of people dependent upon natural resources in the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot.

#### **Actual Progress Toward Long-term Impacts at Completion:**

1. Gathering more than 60 grantees from Mediterranean basin on the Meeting ensured exchange of practices and experiences what will lead to strengthening of cooperation as well as improvement in their future work in the conservation of Mediterranean basin.
2. Creating and defining of long-term vision and goals of CEPF strategy directions in different areas was succeeded by participating of all CEPF grantees in active discussions.

#### **Planned Short-term Impacts - 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal):**

The Regional Mid-term Assessment meeting will provide the platform for CEPF grantees, Advisory Committee members, RIT, CEPF Secretariat and other stakeholders to assess the CEPF investment regionally, from feedback from the national meetings. It will give the opportunity to discuss major challenges and the future of CEPF investment on a regional scale. The Regional Mid-term Assessment report will summarize the discussions and decisions taken collectively, which will feed into the overall Mid-term Assessment of the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot.

#### **Actual Progress Toward Short-term Impacts at Completion:**

Participants from 19 countries, representing CEPF grantees, Committee members, RIT, CEPF Secretariat were gathered on the Meeting that led to the discussion and joint conclusions on steps which should be taken to meet major challenges and the future of CEPF investment on a regional scale.

Discussions and work in group were organized with aim to provide platform for future work on three Strategic Directions.

All decisions and conclusions were gathered and will feed into the Regional Mid-term Assessment report what will ensure better cooperation and practice exchanges of participant.

**Please provide the following information where relevant:**

**Hectares Protected:** N/A  
**Species Conserved:** N/A  
**Corridors Created:** N/A

***Describe the success or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives.***

This meeting established the basis for the planning of future CEPF work where investments to-date were assessed, and shared lessons learned between CEPF grantees, Advisory Committee members, RIT, CEPF Secretariat and other stakeholders.

Outcomes from the meeting included recommendations for the Long-term Strategic Vision (a long-term tool for CEPF investments) and solving challenges in conserving natural ecosystems and maintaining the livelihoods of people dependent upon natural resources in the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot. The regional meeting notes will feed into the overall mid-term assessment report for the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot.

***Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?***

*Yes. Due to a terrorist attack in the capital city Tunis a couple of days before participants were due to travel, the meeting was cancelled by the CEPF Secretariat. Many countries were advising against all necessary travel at this time and some meeting participants felt personally unable to attend so soon after the attack for safety reasons.*

*As the majority of arrangements such as travel and hotel logistics had already been arranged, it was difficult to cancel and gather a full refund on all costs, however AAO managed the relationship with the suppliers to get a refund where possible. Although the circumstances were very difficult, AAO liaised continually with the CEPF-RIT staff and supported the whole process.*

*In order to maximize the efforts made, AAO agreed to be co-host of the new planned meeting in Montenegro, and was able to recycle many of the meeting materials for this new event such as banners and bags. For this to be successful, the AAO team worked closely with the new meeting hosts CZIP, as well as continued support to CEPF and the RIT.*

## **Project Components**

**Project Components:** *Please report on results by project component. Reporting should reference specific products/deliverables from the approved project design and other relevant information.*

**Component 1 Planned(as stated in the approved proposal):**

Assessment of the CEPF Mediterranean Basin investment, based on the current biodiversity situation and threats in the hotspot area, from Mediterranean stakeholders.

**Component 1 Actual at Completion:**

Regional Mid-term Assessment Meeting to assess the investment to-date, understand the challenges faced and any changes to the conservation priorities in the region was implemented with participation of 60 participants from 40 different organizations from 19 countries. This took

place in Montenegro instead of Tunisia due to the external factors mentioned above, and was carried out with the help and support of AAO.

***Were any components unrealized? If so, how has this affected the overall impact of the project?***

The meeting took place in Ulcinj, Montenegro instead of Hammamet, Tunisia. The impact and aim of the project was still realized however with the input of AAO throughout. Even though the field visits and understanding of the Tunisian grants on the ground was less, all Tunisian grantees were invited to the Montenegro so lessons could still be shared.

***Please describe and submit (electronically if possible) any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.***

Agenda, Participant list, Mid-term Assessment Regional Meeting notes and conclusions (linked to other CZIP grant 65780)

## **Lessons Learned**

***Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building. Consider lessons that would inform projects designed or implemented by your organization or others, as well as lessons that might be considered by the global conservation community.***

At the beginning of the organization of such international meetings, it is important to establish clear terms of references and an organization chart of all staff, volunteers and partners involved.

The selection of service providers (travel agency, hotel, design company, etc.) has to take place in a transparent way. In addition to the financial and technical aspects of the tenders, the proposed contractual arrangements need to be taken into consideration when choosing service providers. Tiered cancellation arrangements help to reduce financial loss in the case of unforeseen events, especially when organizing conferences, meetings, etc.

International meetings are great opportunities to promote the “local to global” approach in biodiversity conservation by involving Local Conservation Groups (LCG) and local communities, either by inviting them to the meeting or by organizing field visits to project sites. For a maximum benefit for both, local communities and visitors, an early involvement of the locals under a participatory approach is necessary.

International meetings are more sensitive with regard to the security situation and it is better to move a meeting instead of risking a low and non-representative participation.

In unexpected situations it is very helpful to be able to rely on a vast network of partners, as in the case of the BirdLife Partnership, in order to provide rapid and effective responses. In this case the ease of BirdLife Partners to work together and the motivation to act for the same goals helped to organize the meeting in another location within a short time.

In turbulent times it is always useful to have a plan B and even C for large events involving a large number of partners and participants, especially in the case of international meetings.

***Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings)***

With the choice of AAO as partner for the implementation of the Mediterranean Mid-term Assessment Regional Meeting in Tunisia, the RIT-CEPF involved a national NGO with a long experience in the organization of international meetings and used to the collaboration with international, national and local partners for common objectives. This has certainly facilitated the moving of the meeting from Tunisia to Montenegro and the co-organization between CZIP and AAO.

***Project Implementation: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)***

The participation of many various stakeholders from the Mediterranean region encouraged the exchange of experiences and creation of new ideas in order to preserve the Mediterranean basin.

***Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:***

CSOs working in the Mediterranean are facing many issues which are common and it is needed to build a sense of ownership within organizations that are implementing the projects granted by the CEPF.

**Additional Funding**

***Provide details of any additional funding that supported this project and any funding secured for the project, organization, or the region, as a result of the CEPF investment in this project.***

<b>Donor</b>	<b>Type of Funding*</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Notes</b>

***\*Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:***

- A*** *Project co-financing (Other donors or your organization contribute to the direct costs of this project)*
- B*** *Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF funded project.)*
- C*** *Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

**Sustainability/Replicability**

***Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.***

***Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieve.***

The outcomes of the meeting will lead to a greater understanding of the conservation priorities, potential partners and the civil society capacities in the Mediterranean, and therefore will be used to plan for effective future investment.

The logistical approach and implementation of the meeting will be used as an example for future CEPF mid-term assessments.

### **Safeguard Policy Assessment**

*Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.*

N/A

### **Additional Comments/Recommendations**

### **Information Sharing and CEPF Policy**

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net), and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

**Please include your full contact details below:**

Name: Claudia Feltrup-Azafzaf

Organization name: Association "Les Amis des Oiseaux" (AAO) / BirdLife in Tunisia

Mailing address: Avenue 18 janvier 1952, Ariana Center, Bureau C 208-209, 2080 Ariana, Tunisia

Tel: +216 53 937 127 & +216 23 221 781

Fax: +216 71 717 860

E-mail: [aao.org@gmail.com](mailto:aao.org@gmail.com)