

**Call for Letters of Inquiry
Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands (MADIO)
Biodiversity Hotspot**

Small Grants

Eligible Countries:	Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles
Opening Date:	Tuesday 15 November 2022
Closing Date:	Thursday 2 February 2023 – 11pm Madagascar Time
Grant Size:	Maximum grant size US\$50,000

A consortium coordinated by IUCN NL and SAF/FJKM, serving as the regional implementation team for the hotspot, is accepting letters of inquiry (LOIs) from nongovernmental organizations, community groups, Indigenous peoples' organizations, women's groups, private companies and other [civil society organizations](#) for projects that address the eligible activities of this call.

BACKGROUND

The [Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund](#) (CEPF) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

The Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and the Seychelles are extremely vulnerable to climate change. People, agricultural land and infrastructure are concentrated in coastal areas, which are exposed to rising sea levels and increased frequency and severity of cyclones. Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) promotes the conservation, improved management and restoration of ecosystems to provide the essential services people need to adapt to climate change and variability. While there are a few pilot projects, EbA funding is currently insufficient and civil society organizations (CSOs) are not sufficiently engaged.

In response to the challenges of climate change in the Indian Ocean island countries, CEPF has prepared a new program titled Ecosystem-Based Adaptation in the Indian Ocean, financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), through AFD as the Accredited Entity. The new program will provide targeted funding to mobilize CSOs in implementing EbA.

CEPF has enlisted a consortium of nongovernmental organizations to be its regional

implementation team (RIT) in the hotspot. Coordinated by IUCN NL and SAF/FJKM (regional team lead), the RIT includes SAF/FJKM for Madagascar, ID-ONG for Comoros, FORENA for Mauritius and SeyCCAT for Seychelles. These organizations are working with CEPF to implement a five-year conservation strategy for the hotspot and build local civil society capacity.

Additional calls for Letters of Inquiry will be published in 2023 and during the rest of the CEPF investment. They will have different eligibility criteria in alignment with the evolution of the portfolio of projects.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Nongovernmental organizations, community groups and associations, universities and research institutes, private enterprises and other civil society organizations may apply for funding.

Individuals are not eligible. Individuals should work with civil society organizations to develop applications rather than apply directly.

A government-owned enterprise or institution is eligible only if it can establish that it:

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

Applicants based outside the eligible geographic areas may submit an application as long as the project deliverables are focused on the conservation needs of this call within the eligible geographies.

Preference will be given to projects that (i) demonstrate a leading role for local organizations and/or an explicit focus on capacity building for local civil society, and (ii) show that they will coordinate with other organizations to prevent duplication of efforts, such as projects that work with partnerships and alliances. As such, joint projects with multiple organizations are eligible, as long as one lead organization submits the application and project partners have clear roles stated in the application.

Applying organizations must have their own bank accounts and be legally entitled to receive grants.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the CEPF website, particularly the sections on [Eligibility](#), [Before You Apply](#) and [How to Apply](#). Potential applicants who are uncertain of the eligibility of their organization or project concept are encouraged to contact the RIT at cepf.ritmadio2@saf-fjkm.org for clarification.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES AND GEOGRAPHIC AREAS

The scope of **this first call** is limited to two investment priorities under Strategic Direction 1 of the ecosystem profile (*Empower communities and civil society to*

implement actions to improve the resilience of species, ecosystems and human populations to climate change in priority Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs)) and one investment priority under Strategic Direction 3 (Strengthen the capacities of local communities and civil society at the regional and local levels to enhance adaptive capacity and reduce exposure to climate change risks) as described below. Different geographic areas are eligible depending on the investment priority considered and are also presented below.

- **Eligible for all four countries:**

Investment Priority 1.1: Implement ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) actions, including agroforestry, “climate smart agriculture,” eradication of invasive alien species (IAS), restoration of degraded watersheds and coastal ecosystems (including wetlands, mangroves, reefs and seagrass beds), and promotion of sustainable management of coastal and terrestrial ecosystems.

Eligible projects will be those proposing to design and implement EbA, [nature-based solutions \(NbS\)](#) and conservation actions that respond to climate impacts at priority KBAs. Activities will analyze the adverse impacts of climate change on human livelihoods and propose solutions that can support, conserve, or restore species and natural areas in ways that help regulate or diminish the negative impacts. Identified solutions will then need to be planned based on an understanding of their costs and strategies to cover those costs, both during the projects and beyond, to ensure the sustainability and continuity of the new EbA actions.

Priority will be given to the following approaches:

- i. Promoting resilient agroforestry and developing “Climate Smart Agriculture.”
- ii. Promoting the sustainable management of freshwater, wetlands, and marine and coastal ecosystems (mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass beds).
- iii. Strengthening management of intact watershed forest ecosystems through the implementation of protected area management plans in collaboration with local communities.
- iv. Enhancing resilience and adaptation of ecosystems.
- v. Restoring degraded coastal ecosystems (wetlands, mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass beds).
- vi. Restoring degraded watershed forest ecosystems.
- vii. Promoting control and eradication of invasive alien species.
- viii. Strengthening the capacity of local communities in participatory ecological monitoring of KBA target species and their habitats. Find the list of target species in Annex 7 of the ecosystem profile.

Projects under Investment Priority 1.1 have to be in any of the 61 priority KBAs listed below. Multi-country and multi-KBA projects are eligible. The 61 priority KBAs eligible for Investment Priority 1.1 are:

- 10 priority sites for Comoros distributed among the three main islands.
- 30 priority sites for Madagascar mainly concentrated in the Eastern Ecoregion and the southwest.
- 10 priority sites for Mauritius located on both Mauritius and Rodrigues islands.

- 11 priority sites for Seychelles located in both the inner and outer islands.

KBA code	KBA name	Country
COM-01	Moya Forest	Comoros
COM-04	Grille Massif	Comoros
COM-05	Karthala Massif	Comoros
COM-07	Mount Ntringui (Ndzuan Heights)	Comoros
COM-08	Ex-Marine Park of Moheli	Comoros
COM-12	Bimbini Area and Selle Islet	Comoros
COM-14	Domoni Area	Comoros
COM-16	Moya Area	Comoros
COM-19	Pomoni Area	Comoros
COM-20	Coelacanth Zone	Comoros
MDG-011	Tsinjoriake-Andatabo	Madagascar
MDG-027	Belalanda	Madagascar
MDG-033	Three Bays complex	Madagascar
MDG-045	Grand Reef Toliary	Madagascar
MDG-053	Lake Tseny	Madagascar
MDG-056	Makay	Madagascar
MDG-066	Amoron'i Onilahy et Onilahy River	Madagascar
MDG-070	Analalava Foulpointe	Madagascar
MDG-072	Analavelona	Madagascar
MDG-088	Mahafaly Plateau forest complex	Madagascar
MDG-089	Lake Ihotry-Mangoky Delta complex	Madagascar
MDG-091	Complex Mangoky-Ankazoabo Forest	Madagascar
MDG-094	Ambositra Vondrozo Corridor	Madagascar
MDG-095	Zahamena-Ankeniheny SAPM	Madagascar
MDG-097	Analamay-Mantadia Corridor	Madagascar
MDG-098	Fandriana Marolambo Corridor	Madagascar
MDG-106	Vohibola Classified Forest	Madagascar
MDG-110	Sahafina Forest (Anivorano-Brickaville)	Madagascar
MDG-128	Vohibe Ambalabe (Vatomandry)	Madagascar
MDG-131	Nosivolo Wetland	Madagascar
MDG-152	Ranomafana National Park	Madagascar
MDG-154	Zombitse-Vohibasia National Park	Madagascar
MDG-164	Betampona Strict Nature Reserve	Madagascar
MDG-175	Beza-Mahafaly Special Reserve	Madagascar
MDG-179	Mangerivola Special Reserve	Madagascar
MDG-187	Pic d'Ivohibe Special Reserve	Madagascar
MDG-199	Mangoro-Rianila rivers	Madagascar
MDG-200	Namorona-Faraony River	Madagascar

MDG-217	Faraony Headwaters	Madagascar
MDG-230	Nosivolo Ramsar Site	Madagascar
MUS-02	Bamboo Mountain Range	Mauritius
MUS-03	Chamarel - Le Morne	Mauritius
MUS-05	Relict Forests of the Central Plateau	Mauritius
MUS-06	Rodrigues' Islets	Mauritius
MUS-08	Mauritius South-Eastern Islets	Mauritius
MUS-11	Guardhouse Mountain	Mauritius
MUS-12	Black River Gorges National Park and Surrounding Areas	Mauritius
MUS-14	Plaine des Roches - Bras d'Eau	Mauritius
MUS-16	South Slopes of Grande Montagne	Mauritius
MUS-17	Yemen-Takamaka	Mauritius
SYC-03	Astove	Seychelles
SYC-05	Cosmoledo	Seychelles
SYC-06	Farquhar - South Island and islets	Seychelles
SYC-19	D'Arros Island and Saint Joseph Atoll	Seychelles
SYC-32	Saint-François and Bijoutier Islands	Seychelles
SYC-46	Curieuse Island Marine National Park	Seychelles
SYC-47	Port Launay Marine National Park and coastal wetlands	Seychelles
SYC-48	Sainte-Anne Marine National Park (SAMNP)	Seychelles
SYC-50	Aldabra Special Reserve	Seychelles
SYC-51	Aride Island Special Reserve	Seychelles
SYC-52	Cousin Island Special Reserve	Seychelles

An interactive map showing the priority KBAs eligible for this call, as well as the priority KBAs not eligible for this call and the non-priority KBAs is available. The link is provided below under "Reference Materials."

- **Eligible for Seychelles only:**

Investment Priority 1.2: Support the establishment and development of economic models that improve the resilience of local communities to climate change and support value chains for natural products while strengthening ecosystem services that contribute to EbA.

Eligible projects will be those supporting the development of economic models that improve community resilience to climate change, including nature-based tourism and sustainable production of natural products. This could be done through:

- i. Strengthening production to increase sustainability, resilience and competitiveness.
- ii. Improving access to national and international markets for small and large producers via the prospection for potential markets, the transportation of goods, and the development of infrastructure for collection, processing and packaging.

- iii. Building capacity of women, men and youth in agribusiness, entrepreneurship and sustainable development of value chains.

Projects under Investment Priority 1.2 have to be in any of the 11 priority KBAs previously listed for the Seychelles. Multi-country projects are not eligible under Investment Priority 1.2, but multi-KBA projects are.

The 11 priority KBAs eligible for Investment Priority 1.2 are:

KBA code	KBA name	Country
SYC-03	Astove	Seychelles
SYC-05	Cosmoledo	Seychelles
SYC-06	Farquhar - South Island and islets	Seychelles
SYC-19	D'Arros Island and Saint Joseph Atoll	Seychelles
SYC-32	Saint-François and Bijoutier Islands	Seychelles
SYC-46	Curieuse Island Marine National Park	Seychelles
SYC-47	Port Launay Marine National Park and coastal wetlands	Seychelles
SYC-48	Sainte-Anne Marine National Park (SAMNP)	Seychelles
SYC-50	Aldabra Special Reserve	Seychelles
SYC-51	Aride Island Special Reserve	Seychelles
SYC-52	Cousin Island Special Reserve	Seychelles

- **Eligible for Madagascar only:**

Investment Priority 3.1: Strengthen the technical, administrative and financial capacities of local civil society organizations with missions related to the environment and the fight against climate change.

Limitations in the administrative, management, and fundraising capacities of local CSOs form a major obstacle to biodiversity conservation and the fight against climate change in the hotspot.

Eligible projects will be those providing support to local CSOs from Madagascar to strengthen their technical, administrative and financial capacity in the areas of conservation, climate change, and EbA through training or custom-designed activities. CEPF will also support specific actions to strengthen the operational capacities of local organizations in the areas of project preparation, fundraising, programming and budget management, human resources, and organizational governance, in order to give these organizations greater access to diversified funding sources.

As used by CEPF, and for this call, the term "local CSOs" refers to organizations headquartered in Madagascar regardless of whether they work at the grassroots, national or regional level. Local CSOs supported under this investment priority do not necessarily need to work in priority KBAs. However, particular priority will be given to projects supporting organizations working to plan and implement EbA actions.

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Small grants applications can be either in French or English.

Priority will be given to projects that:

- i. Demonstrate that the proposed EbA activity addresses vulnerability based on a clear climate change risk.
- ii. Adopt EbA approaches that increase the resilience of ecosystems and ecosystem services in the priority KBAs.
- iii. Reflect on the climate change mitigation potential of the project.
- iv. Address priorities identified in national climate change policy or strategy documents of the relevant country of implementation.
- v. Demonstrate positive gender impacts.
- vi. Demonstrate effective and efficient use of funds.
- vii. Demonstrate a clear strategy for achieving financial sustainability.
- viii. Are the closest fit to the investment strategy set out in the ecosystem profile.

Other considerations that will strengthen an application include:

- Clear plans for continuing the project after the proposed project end date.
- Support for Indigenous and local communities in community-based or co-management activities for EbA and actions that enhance local communities' tenure and resource use rights.
- Complementarity to existing projects and coordination or partnership with other organizations to prevent duplication of efforts.
- Strong impact on local communities, thereby enhancing their resilience and capacity to protect biodiversity.
- Endorsement from relevant government authorities, through the corresponding National Designated Authorities.

Grants may not be used for:

- Use of child labor or forced labor.
- Construction or rehabilitation of large or complex dams.
- Payment of salaries or salary supplements to government personnel.
- Purchase of firearms or other weapons.
- Activities that promote the trade in or use of any substances listed under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, or other chemicals or hazardous materials subject to international bans, restrictions or phaseouts due to high toxicity to living organisms, environmental persistence, potential for bioaccumulation, or potential depletion of the ozone layer.
- Purchase and use of pesticides that fall in the World Health Organization classes IA and IB, or in class II if they are likely to be used by, or be accessible to, lay personnel, farmers or others without training, equipment and facilities to handle, store and apply these products properly.
- Physical resettlement of people (voluntary or involuntary).
- Purchase of land.
- Activities that have the potential to cause adverse impacts to critical

- habitat.
- Activities that introduce or use potentially invasive, non-indigenous species.
- Removal or alteration of any tangible cultural heritage.

Further information on strategic directions and KBAs can be found in Chapter 14 of the ecosystem profile. The link is available below under "Reference Materials."

BUDGET AND TIMEFRAME

The maximum amount for small grants is US\$50,000. To apply for a grant above US\$50,000, see the link to the Call for Letters of Inquiry for Large Grants on [CEPF website](#).

Letters of inquiry (LOIs) are due no later than Thursday 2 February 2023, 11:00 pm (Madagascar time zone). Applications submitted after the deadline will not be eligible. Before submitting your LOI, we encourage you to read the [tips for submitting a successful letter of inquiry](#) for helpful advice.

The selection process for the LOI will take approximately six weeks from the submission deadline. After six weeks, all applicants will be informed of the decision. Applications that have been selected will be asked to elaborate further on their LOI. Final approved LOIs will be awarded a small grant, with an agreement made between IUCN NL, as the RIT, and the applicant's organization (the "grantee"). Grants will be in United States dollars and grant agreements will be in English or French.

Small grant projects are expected to start in May-June 2023 and can have a time span not exceeding 31 December 2026.

HOW TO APPLY

Small grant applications can be written in English or French. Please download the LOI and budget templates in the language of your choice:

- English: [LOI template](#) and [Budget template](#)
- French: [LOI template](#) and [Budget template](#)

Any alteration to the LOI and the budget templates will make the application ineligible. Applications must be submitted as a Word (for the LOI) and as an Excel (for the budget) formats.

Small grants applicants are invited to submit their LOI and budget by email to cepf.ritmadio2@saf-fjkm.org, with the following subject line:

LOI_1/2022/SG_CEPF_ "*countries*" / "*your organization*". For example:

- For Comoros: LOI_1/2022/SG_CEPF_COM/IUCN NL
- For Mauritius: LOI_1/2022/SG_CEPF_MUS/IUCN NL
- For Madagascar: LOI_1/2022/SG_CEPF_MDG/IUCN NL
- For Seychelles: LOI_1/2022/SG_CEPF_SYC/IUCN NL
- Multi-country: eg: LOI_1/2022/SG_CEPF_SYC_MDG_COM/IUCN NL

An acknowledgement email will be sent confirming that the submission has been received. Any LOI submitted after the deadline will not be eligible, as well as incomplete applications or emails without attachments. LOIs will be evaluated according to the eligibilities of this call.

The RIT encourages applicants to develop joint project propositions with organizations from different sectors to respond to the need for a multi-sectoral and/or multi-regional approach where relevant. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to discuss their project ideas with relevant stakeholders in order to ensure complementarity.

Questions can be sent to the RIT at cepf.ritmadio2@saf-fjkm.org, by specifying in the subject line the proposed country of implementation (or “multi-country” when relevant). The consultation service provided by the RIT will end on Tuesday 31 January 2023.

An online information session will be held on Friday 25 November 2022 to inform all prospective applicants and provide the opportunity to ask questions. The information session will be **in French** from 11:00 am – 12.30pm and **in English** from 2:00 pm – 3.30pm (Madagascar time zone). The sessions will be recorded.

- To register to the [French](#) session
- To register to the [English](#) session

On this [webpage](#), a section containing questions from potential applicants and answers given by the RIT will be provided and updated regularly until the deadline.

Before awarding any grant, the RIT will screen your project against [CEPF’s safeguard policies](#) in order to prevent or avoid any potential negative impacts of the project on humans and the environment. The RIT will also evaluate your project based on its integration of gender. CEPF has developed several resources that can help applicants to design, implement and evaluate gender-aware projects ([CEPF Gender Toolkit](#)) and understand what CEPF seeks in a project ([CEPF Gender Fact Sheet](#)). Visit the [CEPF and Gender webpage](#) to learn more about how CEPF addresses gender in the projects it supports.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

All applicants are advised to review the ecosystem profile for the Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot, which provides more detail on the types of activities CEPF will fund under each investment priority.

- Ecosystem Profile: [English - French](#)
- Ecosystem-based Adaptation in the Indian Ocean: [English - French](#)
- [Interactive map of eligible KBAs in target countries](#)

Additional resources:

- [Before You Apply](#)

- [12 Tips for Getting Your Grant Idea Funded](#)
- [CEPF Project Database](#)
- [Life Cycle of a Grant](#)
- [ConservationGrants Frequently Asked Questions](#)

DISCLAIMER

In the event of any differences in meaning or interpretation between the original English/French version and the local translation, the original English version takes precedence.