

Regional Implementation Team of the Madagascar
and the Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot

NEWSLETTER

View of Black River Gorges National Park from trail on the Petrin side, Mauritius. © CI/ photo by Russell Mittermeier

NEWS FROM CEPF

New RIT coordinator: Monique Randriatsivery

Since 1st October Monique Randriatsivery is the coordinator of the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) for the Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands Hotspot. Monique's role includes to act as the engine that drives and stimulates the RIT in order to create a pleasant and effective working atmosphere, to be the "ambassador" for an Ecosystem Based Adaptation approach to climate change, communicate our approach and way of thinking, to represent the CEPF RIT at meetings with the donor community when needed and to assure the liaison between the RIT member organizations and IUCN NL.

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The RIT can be reached at:
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Newsletter Highlights

News from CEPF

Grantee Story

Meet the CEPF team

Training opportunities

Contact Details Regional Implementation Team



Madagascar
www.saf-fjkm.org



Comoros
www.id-ong.org



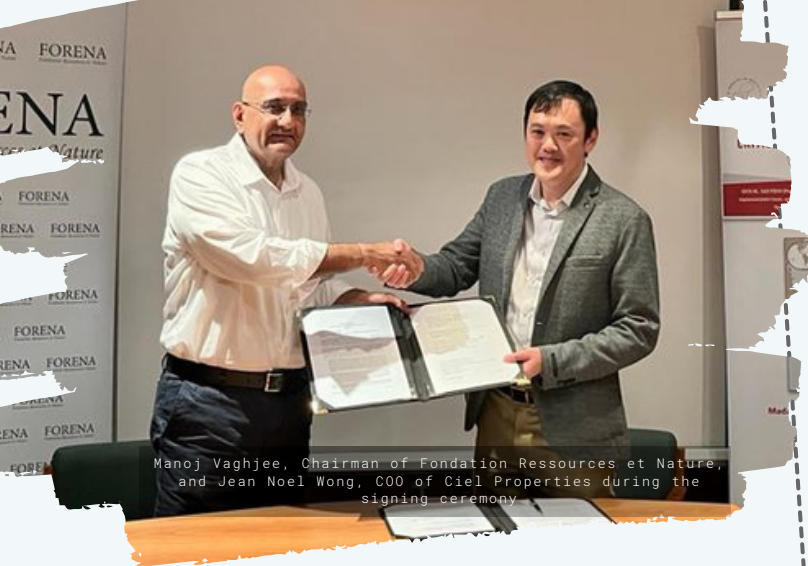
Mauritius
www.forena.mu



Seychelles
www.seyccat.org



International
www.iucn.nl



CEPF annual report 2022

Since 2000, CEPF has worked to empower civil society in developing countries and transitional economies to protect the world's biodiversity hotspots, some of the Earth's most biologically rich yet threatened terrestrial ecosystems. CEPF's annual report 2022 presents 21 years of results achieved by 2,673 partners that have implemented 2,786 grants.

[Read the report](#) >

Ecosystem profile brochure

CEPF has just published a brochure that summarizes the ecosystem profile. It can be found via the following links in French and English.

- [Ecosystem profile brochure - French](#)
- [Ecosystem profile brochure - English](#)

Before providing funding to a hotspot, CEPF develops an "ecosystem profile," an assessment of the hotspot and strategy for CEPF's investment. This work identifies threats, the current economic situation and conservation priorities. The ecosystem profile takes stock of the status of the region in a way that can serve as a guide for other entities interested in conserving the hotspot. CEPF's first ecosystem profile covering the whole of the Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands Hotspot was developed in 2014. In 2022, ahead of the new investment phase (2022- 2027) the profile was updated. The consideration of climate change, particularly adaptation to climate change, is central to this update, given the importance of this issue in the face of threats of ecosystem loss and species extinctions.

First CEPF Large Grant signed in Mauritius

FORENA (Fondation Ressources et Nature), our MADIO RIT member in Mauritius, was pleased to host a signature ceremony for the first Large Grant signed in Mauritius within the CEPF 2022-2027 funding cycle. The beneficiary is Ferney Ltd of Ciel Group.

Ferney's project titled "Building climate resilience in the Nyon River watershed" received a grant of USD 284 022.73 (approximately Rs 13 million) for a span of three years.

It comprises the rehabilitation of 20 hectares of forest and a reforestation program over an extent of 10 hectares. The signature ceremony was attended by representatives from the CEPF donors.

Supervision missions Seychelles and Madagascar

From 10 to 22 July 2023, members of the hotspot's regional implementation team, CEPF grants director Peggy Poncelet and CEPF grants manager Annie Kaufmann came together in the Seychelles to look back at year one and plan for year two. In addition, site visits were made to the anticipated grantees of the first call for proposals of November 2022, to improve the understanding of their project plans.

"It was a pleasure for SeyCCAT to host the first supervision mission, which provided opportunity for all the RIT members to meet in person and to solidify the work of the CEPF Programme for our region. Through the discussions and visits we have been able to chart a clearer way forward for the RIT and the successful implementation of the work in our respective countries."



Ms Marie-May Jeremie, Chief Executive Officer Seychelles Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT)

"Our countries being very diverse, meeting the stakeholders in-situ whether in Cousin Island, St Anne, or Praslin, amongst others, gave a better insight about the proposed projects under review for funding in Seychelles. The face-to-face meetings with fellow RIT members and the CEPF delegation further reinforced our work as a team. And the cherry on the cake was, the invitation by the UNDP Resident Representative extended to our whole delegation for the Launch of the Seychelles SDG Investor Map, which gave us the opportunity to meet with His Excellency, The President of Seychelles."

Manoj Vaghjee,
President of Fondation
Ressources et Nature



"These two weeks in Seychelles have been a real eyeopener for me. The Seychellois government, in collaboration with local and international organizations, is actively engaged in long-term strategies aimed at preserving the rich and unique ecosystems that thrive in this island nation. The establishment and management of protected areas, such as marine and terrestrial national parks, were central to these collaborative initiatives."

Roshan Baguant, Country Focal
Point of Mauritius,
from Fondation Ressources et
Nature (FORENA)



From 6 to 12 October representatives of CEPF, IUCN NL and SAF/FJKM conducted a supervision mission to Madagascar. The delegation met with local representatives of CEPF donors and visited in the field three large grant projects and one small grant project. One of the projects the team visited is implemented in the Natural Reserve of Ambodivoasary which is part of the Ankeniheny Zahamena forest corridor by the Association Acting for Community and Trees (ACT) in partnership with a local Association called FITAMA. By improving forest ecosystem management, the project will contribute to ecosystem resilience in the project area, while providing economic opportunities for local people and strengthening their resilience to the impacts of climate change.

CEPF supports communities near Betampona Integral Natural Reserve in Madagascar with climate change adaptation

The Betampona Integral Natural Reserve is facing environmental and social risks related to climate change, including issues with soil fertility and silting up of lowlands, that severely impact the livelihoods of communities living in the area. With its small grants mechanism, CEPF supports the local Association MATEZA with their project focusing on forest restoration in the Betampona Integral Natural Reserve with eradication of the *Rubus moluccanus* invasive alien plant species and promoting agroforestry and other improved agricultural techniques.



Masterclass on ecosystem-based adaptation

On 7 July 2023, IUCN NL organized a masterclass on Ecosystem based Adaptation (EbA). 109 people registered for this online session during which the concept of EbA was explained and concrete examples of EbA projects in the hotspot were shared by Mrs. Harisoa Hasina RAKOTONDRAZAFY and her team from WWF Madagascar.

Are you also interested to learn more about ecosystem-based adaptation in Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands? [Read more](#) on the CEPF website or [download](#) the presentation.



Europe Week in Madagascar

On May 11, 2023, as part of the celebration of Europe Week, a one-day exhibition on EU-funded projects was held in Analakely, Madagascar. SAF/FJKM, through its participation in the implementation of the "Ecosystem Based Adaptation in the Indian Ocean" (EBAIO) program, was one of the exhibitors. The project day was an opportunity to interact with a diverse range of visitors: representatives from businesses and NGOs, students and other citizens who were interested to learn more about the grant program focusing on ecosystem-based adaptation and conservation in the Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands biodiversity hotspot. On behalf of the EU, Mrs. Isabelle DELATTRE BURGER, Ambassador of the European Union to Madagascar attended the project day.

GRANTEE STORIES

Building Community-Based Conservation in Madagascar Forests and Wetlands

The Ambato-Boeny and Maevatanana-Ambato-Boeny Wetlands Key Biodiversity Areas comprise unprotected low-elevation dry forests and wetlands that support several threatened mammals - including the Critically Endangered mongoose lemur (*Eulemur mongoz*), the Endangered crowned sifaka (*Propithecus coronatus*) and the Vulnerable Madagascar flying fox (*Pteropus rufus*)—as well as numerous threatened bird and fish species.

Historically, little conservation work has taken place in the area, and most flora and fauna have not yet been inventoried.

Meanwhile, Ambato-Boeny-Maevatanana suffers from forest destruction and degradation, fires, hunting, wetland conversion for rice production, overfishing and, most probably, invasive non-native wetland vegetation and introduced fish species.

Recognizing the need for urgent action, the Aspinall Foundation moved to engage local communities in wetland and forest assessments, and prioritization of species and sites for conservation action.

After identifying priority sites, the foundation supported local communities to create six new community associations with the legal structure to protect and manage local biodiversity. These groups then developed management plans for defined areas of natural resources, leading to the transfer of management responsibility from regional government to the local community associations.

Soon six new community-management agreements were established, covering a total of 37,364 hectares within the project area, including more than 11,000 hectares of dry deciduous forest and over 1,200 hectares of river and gallery forest. Also covered are nearly 4,000 hectares of freshwater lakes designated for improved community-based management, and more than 1,800 hectares targeted for community-based reforestation. Numerous species will benefit from this new management, including two wetland species, the Critically Endangered Madagascar big-headed turtle (*Erymnochelys madagascariensis*) and the Endangered endemic cichlid fish (*Paretroplus maculatus*). And these activities set the stage for sound conservation work in these KBAs in the future.



Mongoose lemur (*Eulemur mongoz*) by Ian Redding from Getty Images

MEET THE CEPF TEAM

Meet the team at CEPF Secretariat that is involved in the Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot.

Olivier Langrand, Executive Director

Olivier joined CEPF as its executive director in 2015. He previously spent three years with Island Conservation as the director of global affairs; 11 years with Conservation International, working first as the senior vice president in charge of the Africa and Madagascar Program and then as the executive vice-president in the Center for Conservation and Government; and 14 years with WWF in Madagascar and in Central Africa. Olivier holds a master of science in zoology from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. He is an expert on the birds of the southwest Indian Ocean.



Peggy Poncelet, Grant Director

Peggy is the grant director for the Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot. She was previously the grant director for the Guinean Forests of West Africa and the Cerrado hotspots, and was part of CEPF's Monitoring, Evaluation and Outreach Unit.

Peggy joined CEPF in 2014 after working for four years with Noé Conservation, a CEPF grantee in the Mediterranean Basin Hotspot, creating their international department. Peggy also previously worked for a community-based natural resources management program funded by the French Global Environment Facility, and in various wildlife scientist positions during six years in Namibia. Peggy is a tropical agronomist with a master of sciences in environment from Wageningen University.



Annie Kaufmann, Grants Manager

Annie joined CEPF in 2021 as the grants manager for the Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands and Guinean Forests of West Africa biodiversity hotspots. Annie has a bachelor of science in business administration (International Business) from the University of Southern Mississippi and a degree in accounting from Madison Technical College in Wisconsin.

Prior to joining CEPF, Annie worked as a grants administrator for the Brookings Institution and as a contract and grants accountant for both the University of Southern Mississippi and Mary's Center in Washington D.C. Annie was born and raised in Madagascar.



TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CEPF GRANTEES

Masterclass

As part of the second call for CEPF projects, the Regional Implementation Team, in collaboration with the CEPF Secretariat, will organize a masterclass in December 2023 for the next cohort of potential grantees. This masterclass will focus on improving project proposals in line with CEPF procedures and expectations.

Share your story with GECKO magazine

The Varuna program, implemented by Expertise France and financed by Agence Française de Développement, aims to halt biodiversity loss in the southwestern Indian Ocean. The Varuna program funds the new popular science magazine GECKO. It is published online and on paper and aims to highlight the actions and players involved in preserving biodiversity in the Indian Ocean, and in particular to disseminate the results of scientific research in a form that can be appropriated by a wider audience. All CEPF laureates, past and future, are invited to contribute to the journal.

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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.

With funding from the Green Climate Fund through AFD as the accredited entity, CEPF will institute and manage a 10-year program of support to civil society organizations to promote ecosystem-based adaptation in the Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot. Program activities will take place in Madagascar, Comoros, Mauritius and the Seychelles.



IUCN NL, SAF/FJKM (Madagascar), ID-ONG (Comoros), FORENA (Mauritius) and SeyCCAT (Seychelles), as a regional implementation team, are working with CEPF to implement a five-year conservation strategy for the Madagascar and the Indian Ocean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot and build local civil society capacity.