



CAPACITÉ

CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM
PARTNERSHIP FUND

Has it really been three years?

It's true. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) in the Caribbean islands recently had its mid-term evaluation, marking three years of hard work and exciting conservation initiatives being implemented by civil society in the region.

Since the CEPF Caribbean islands programme was first launched in October 2010, there have been many lessons learned and best practices emerging from the portfolio. The mid-term evaluation sought to capture these lessons, analyse results, and get feedback from CEPF grantees and other key stakeholders of the CEPF Caribbean programme in order to improve processes and focus the programme. Implementing the recommendations of the evaluation will help the CEPF achieve its highest priorities over the remaining two years (ending in September 2015), meet targets, and ensure maximum impact of its investment.

This issue highlights the key results and learning of the CEPF Caribbean mid-term evaluation. We also have four fantastic articles written by CEPF grantees on their projects in Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and region-wide initiatives, including the results of a workshop that was supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation which explored sustainable funding mechanisms for NGOs.

Wishing you an enjoyable read as always!
The Regional Implementation Team (RIT) in CANARI

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Inside this issue:

Management planning in Portland Bight, Jamaica	2
Grupo Jaragua Receives Highest National Awards for Environmental Defense and Solidarity in the Dominican Republic	3
New on the Eco-Index!	4
CEPF Regional Implementation Team Exchange	5
Caribbean Birding Trail Launches New Training Program for 24 Tour Guides on Grenada	6
Taking Stock of the CEPF Caribbean Initiative at the Half-way Mark	8
EVOLUTION AND SURVIVAL...of NGOs Helping Caribbean NGOs to be sustainable	10
Grant approvals July - September 2013	11

The **Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund** (CEPF) is a joint programme of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank.

The programme was launched in August 2000 and since then has supported civil society to conserve critical biodiversity in 22 hotspots, committing over US\$ 151 million in grants. CEPF is investing US\$ 6.9 million in the Caribbean islands during the five-year period from October 2010 to September 2015.

Management Planning in Portland Bight, Jamaica

- *Ingrid Parchment, Executive Director, Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation*

Between 2010 - 2012 the Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation drafted a participatory management plan for the Portland Bight Protected Area. During that process, stakeholders identified the need for more detailed sub-area plans for the Hellshire Hills and Portland Ridge - two areas of outstanding importance.

C-CAM started work on those plans in 2012 with funding from CEPF. The process included carrying out baseline surveys and assessments of plants and herpetofauna (reptiles and amphibians) to inform biodiversity and habitat action plans. We also did a socio-economic assessment and a climate change risk assessment. Community members and experts identified and prioritised goals and strategies to mitigate the threats to the areas' biodiversity. We are now having final public consultations to prepare final plans and get signoff from agencies.

Some new discoveries were the healthy populations of Jamaican Hutia in Hellshire Hills and many rare plants on Portland Ridge. The inventory of caves confirmed the belief that rare or endemic flora and fauna are found there – including possibly a new species of blind cave fish.



Greater fishing bats and pottery at Portland Ridge *Photo credit: Professor Byron Wilson, University of the West Indies*

The survey showed that fewer people are going into the forest to collect wood for fence posts and charcoal burning than we had thought, and that they come from all across Jamaica to exploit the Hellshire Hills. The climate risk assessment confirmed the vulnerability of the area to climate change and suggested strategies for adaptation.

This participatory management planning process brought together stakeholders from various sectors, including fishers, farmers, charcoal burners, business people, academia and representatives of government agencies. This ensured richness in the discussions and helped us develop stakeholder buy-in and partnerships.

We are currently working on a follow-up proposal that will allow us to start implementing the priority strategies that were identified in the plan.

Coney droppings in Hellshire
Photo credit: Donovan Hay, C-CAM



Grupo Jaragua Receives Highest National Awards for Environmental Defence and Solidarity in the Dominican Republic

- *Sixto Inchaustegui, Grupo Jaragua*

On the evening of 17 October 2013, Grupo Jaragua was given two prestigious awards by the Fundación Brugal, the largest private sector foundation in the Dominican Republic. It was named the honoree in the defence and protection of the environment category as well as overall winner of the George Arzeno Brugal Grand Prize in the “Brugal Cree en su Gente” (Brugal Believes in its People) Awards. Each year the Fundación Brugal recognises the outstanding contributions of Dominican NGOs in six areas of national development: education, health, social assistance, community development, art and culture, and defence and protection of the environment. The Grand Jury also gives an overall prize to the organisation it deems to have

made the most significant contribution of all honorees.

The decision to give both awards to Grupo Jaragua in 2013 was unanimous. This very important public recognition represents the strong support from the best of Dominican society for Grupo Jaragua’s efforts, spanning more than 24 years, to protect and promote the sustainable use of national biodiversity. In particular, it demonstrates backing for Grupo Jaragua’s work to stop the aggressive destruction of Sierra de Bahoruco National Park and the Charco Azul Reserve, and to resolve the longstanding land conflict in Bahía de las Águilas.

Grupo Jaragua is a member of the Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano (CAD) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). It is also a partner of BirdLife International and CEPF-Caribbean.



Grupo Jaragua, a Dominican, IUCN member, national conservationist NGO, received this week the national award for an environmentalist NGO, and the top Grand National George Arzeno Brugal award, from Fundación Brugal, in recognition for its continuous work for over 24 years for biodiversity conservation. Grupo Jaragua is also the BirdLife affiliate in the country. This is the biggest award offered from the private sector in the DR.

Photo credit and caption: Miguel Abreu, Grupo Jaragua

Note from *Capacité*:

On behalf of the CEPF Caribbean family, we congratulate Grupo Jaragua on this well deserved award that recognises their hard work and ongoing dedication!

New on the Eco-Index!

- *Melissa Norman, Rainforest Alliance*

With CEPF's support, the Rainforest Alliance is adding profiles for selected grantees to their [Eco-Index website](#) in English, Spanish and French. These profiles are a great way for you to learn about each other's work, identify potential areas for collaboration, and network across geographic and language barriers.



Projects recently added to the Eco-Index:

[Protecting Biodiversity by Promoting Nature-Based Tourism and Sustainable Livelihoods in the Massif-Plaine du Nord Conservation Corridor, Haiti](#) -- Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine (FoProBim)

[Designating the Key Biodiversity Areas of Graham's Harbour and Great Lakes as National Parks on San Salvador Island, Bahamas](#) -- The Bahamas National Trust (BNT)

[Management Planning and Reduction of Threats from Agricultural Encroachment in the La Humeadora and Valle Nuevo National Parks, Dominican Republic](#) -- Fondo Pro Naturaleza

[Supporting a Local Community in Creating a Municipal Protected Area for the Conservation of Ricord's Iguanas \(*Cyclura ricordii*\) in Anse-a-Pitres, Massif de la Selle Conservation Corridor, Haiti](#) -- International Iguana Foundation (IIF)

[Agro-forestry Model for Biodiversity in Local Communities of the Jaragua and Bahoruco National Parks, Dominican Republic](#) -- Grupo Jaragua (GJ)

[Assessing the Potential for Conservation Agreements to Contribute to Community-Based Conservation and Socioeconomic Development in the Caribbean Islands](#) -- Conservation International

[Ecotourism and Biodiversity Protection Project for the Kamacroubou Mountain and Diamond Village Community](#) -- Diamond Village Community Heritage Organisation

[Forest Diversified Restoration in Fonds-Melon River Basin in South-East of Haiti](#) -- Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (VSF-CICDA/ AVSF)

[Environmental Education for Community Participation in Conservation of Macaya, Massif de la Hotte Key Biodiversity Area](#) -- Fondation Nouvelle Grand'Anse (FNGA)

[Management planning and Stakeholder Alliance Building for Sustainable Conservation in the Bahoruco East Key Biodiversity Area](#) -- Instituto Dominicano de Desarrollo Integral, Inc. (IDDI)

CEPF Regional Implementation Team Exchange

- Nicole Brown, RIT Jamaica Country Coordinator

Between 16 – 18 September 2013, the CEPF Secretariat hosted its first ever exchange of Regional Implementation Teams (RITs). Representatives of 13 active and retired RITs met in Front Royal, Virginia, USA along with CEPF Secretariat staff to share experiences and ideas with a view to improving how the CEPF works in the biodiversity hotspots where it invests.

New RITs like the one in the East Melanesian Islands had an opportunity to learn from more established RITs like the Caribbean and Western Ghats and Sri Lankan teams. And the more established RITs were able to get tips and advice from representatives of those RITs that had already gone through an entire CEPF regional funding programme, like the ones in Mesoamerica and the Caucasus. RIT Manager, Anna Cadiz, and Jamaica Country Coordinator, Nicole Brown, represented the Caribbean.

Reflecting on the experience, Anna Cadiz noted that, “the best thing about the exchange was the opportunity to meet other RITs and other members of the CEPF Secretariat in an environment that allowed for open dialogue and sharing.”

Laura Johnston, Grant Manager at the CEPF Secretariat, who together with Managing Director Nina Marshall took the lead in organising the meeting, also placed considerable value on the opportunity for sharing. “The most useful thing from the RIT Exchange was the face time with so many people from around the world, “ she said. “It truly highlighted the importance and benefit of getting people from a global programme together to share their lessons, perspectives and ideas for the future. There's just no substitute for being together in person with people to get candid feedback and to catalyse ideas for the future!”

The RIT Exchange was followed by a meeting with representatives of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), one of the CEPF's seven donors, and a Brown Bag Lunch on 19 September which was hosted at the GEF's office in Washington, D.C. The RITs from the Caribbean and Western Ghats (south-western India and the highlands of south-western Sri Lanka) had an opportunity to share information about their work with staff members from the GEF, the World Bank and other biodiversity conservation stakeholders in Washington, D.C.



Representatives of CEPF Regional Implementation Teams (RITs) and the CEPF Secretariat at the RIT Exchange in Front Royal, Virginia, USA.

Photo courtesy of CEPF

Caribbean Birding Trail Launches New Training Program for 24 Tour Guides on Grenada

- *Holly Robertson, M.S., Project Manager, Caribbean Birding Trail*



Participants of the June 2013 interpretive guide training program in Grenada

Photo credit: Lisa Sorenson, SCSCB

Ramier. Godbird. Chicken Hawk. Until recently, that is how many of the Caribbean Birding Trail (CBT) Interpretive Guide Training participants would have described some of Grenada's common birds. Now, after having successfully completed the [five-day training course](#) funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, participants know that these birds have common English names that are recognised internationally by the birding community.

The CBT Interpretive Guide Training Program was held from 17-21 June 2013 on the campus of St. George's University and was attended by 24 participants from local tour operators, non-profit organisations and the Forestry and National Parks Department.

(continued on page 7)

(continued from page 6)

Grenada is the first country to receive training from the CBT, a newly launched project of the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB).



Training facilitator Beny Wilson discussing the challenges of spotting and identifying birds in the forest

Photo credit: Lisa Sorenson, SCSCB



Training facilitator Rick Morales assisting trainees with bird identification

Photo credit: Lisa Sorenson, SCSCB

The mission of the CBT is to engage audiences (both local and international) with the unique birds of the Caribbean and to stimulate sustainable livelihoods on the islands. The guide training program is integral to achieving this. Through the training guides learn about the natural and cultural resources of their islands, local conservation issues, and how to effectively communicate to audiences in a meaningful and enjoyable way. To that end, the training also covered the core principles of environmental interpretation, using a curriculum developed by the National Association of Interpretation.



Participants in the training take turns using the spotting scope.

Photo credit: Lisa Sorenson, SCSCB

The feedback on the training was very positive. One participant commented, *"This workshop helped me develop a passion for something I didn't even know I would have a passion for!"* Since June, several have led their first bird tour and at least one other is developing on-site bird watching opportunities at a local resort.

In addition, the group formed a bird club. Members organise weekly birding trips and submit observations to [eBird Caribbean](http://eBirdCaribbean.org). They also collaborate on how to tackle issues in Grenada that negatively impact the environment and their livelihoods as guides (e.g., littering). For more information on how your country can receive training, please contact us at info@caribbeanbirdingtrail.org.

Taking Stock of the CEPF Caribbean Initiative at the Half-way Mark

- Nicole Brown, RIT Jamaica Country Coordinator

When the CEPF Caribbean Initiative was launched in October 2010, the CEPF Secretariat and the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)-led Regional Implementation Team (RIT) didn't know exactly how the portfolio would take shape. What was certain, however, was that there was a need and a niche for the unique contribution that civil society can make to conserving globally threatened biodiversity and taking action in support of the region's highest conservation and ecosystem services priorities. Fast forward to the mid-point of the CEPF Caribbean initiative and a clear story of the CEPF's investment in the region has begun to unfold.

It's a story of how, by 30 June 2013, civil society organisations (CSOs) were helping improve protection and management in 18 priority sites across the region, and of how eight under-protected key biodiversity areas (KBAs) in the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, Grenada and Haiti were being brought under new protection status. It is also a story of innovation: six sustainable funding schemes in the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica; the exploration of a payment for ecosystem services scheme in the Dominican Republic; the development of private protected areas in the Dominican Republic; and ten grants in the Dominican Republic, Grenada and Jamaica that were contributing to public-private partnerships that mainstream biodiversity in the tourism sector.

But the story is not just about direct management interventions in protected areas; it also includes influencing public policy. In Jamaica, for example, CEPF support has been improving the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process. Active civil society networking within and beyond national borders on issues such as amphibian conservation, invasive alien species management, and communications for biodiversity conservation is another dimension of the Caribbean initiative's mid-way story. In fact, at the regional mid-term evaluation workshop that took place from 10 - 12 July in Kingston, Jamaica, one grantee from the Dominican Republic remarked that thanks to the CEPF, organisations in his country felt they were truly part of the Caribbean, with strengthened ties to the Anglo- and Francophone countries supported by the CEPF.

Building civil society capacity has been another significant feature of the CEPF's work in the region. More than 40 civil society organisations have benefitted from institutional capacity building in strategic planning, financial management, sustainable financing, improvement of governance structures, website development, training and mentoring in preparing proposals and scientific writing, and effective communications and outreach.

By 30 June 2013, just over US\$5.2 million of the Fund's initial US\$6.9 million investment had been allocated to 55 projects in eight Caribbean countries. Eighty-nine per cent of these funds (US\$4,497,157) had been committed to local and regional civil society organisations. Fifty-two civil society organisations were directly engaged and benefiting from CEPF support. And CEPF grants were complementing investments by 13 other donors.

But there is more to the story of the CEPF in the Caribbean at the mid-point than facts and figures like these. During the mid-term evaluation exercise carried out by the RIT in collaboration with the CEPF Secretariat between May – September of this year, CEPF partners and grantees identified significant changes which they felt had occurred or were occurring thanks to the Caribbean initiative.

(continued on page 9)



Participants at the regional mid-term evaluation workshop in Jamaica

Photo credit: Pierre Carret, CI

Partners and grantees felt the CEPF had been making it possible for CSOs to work in areas of need, some of which are not always readily supported by other donors. These areas include: collecting baseline data; applying communication for development theory and practice to biodiversity conservation; enabling conservation policy advocacy; and organisational capacity building. Another sphere in which the CEPF was

making a difference was by supporting participatory processes that strengthen biodiversity conservation through better engagement of key stakeholders, especially communities in and around protected areas. CEPF support to organisations working on environmental issues that had not been previously active in conservation has made it possible for new actors to enter into the biodiversity conservation field.

While much of the story of the CEPF Caribbean initiative at the half-way mark was positive, it also pointed to where change and improvement were needed to achieve lasting conservation results. Although actions had been initiated in several high priority key biodiversity areas (KBAs), there were still important sites in need of attention. It was felt that the CEPF should increase support for activities that enhance livelihood opportunities for local people in the KBAs as this can be an important strategy towards achieving biodiversity conservation outcomes. Partners and grantees believed more policy influencing work was needed to address many of the fundamental contextual issues hampering biodiversity conservation in the region, and civil society capacity to take such action ought to be strengthened. Partners and grantees in the Dominican Republic and Haiti also felt there was an opportunity for the CEPF to do more towards bi-national coordination and collaboration of conservation efforts.

Grantees also suggested that some of the CEPF Caribbean initiative's operational processes could be improved, for example, by reducing the time for technical review and selection of proposals and streamlining communications between the CEPF Secretariat, RIT and grantees.

These recommendations and others that appear in the mid-term evaluation report that is available for download from the CANARI website at http://canari.org/civil_sub5.asp are now shaping the CEPF Caribbean initiative. The August – September 2013 Call for Proposals was designed to fill a number of the portfolio gaps identified during the review process, and the RIT and Secretariat have modified some of their operating procedures in order to improve programme delivery. Immediately following the regional workshop, a new Listserv was set up to increase communication and networking capacity among grantees. With approximately two years remaining, the CEPF Caribbean initiative looks forward to consolidating and building on the gains made by the half-way mark, with a view to leaving a legacy of improved management of protected areas, more robust development and planning processes that incorporate biodiversity conservation, and a stronger and better networked civil society conservation community in the Caribbean.

EVOLUTION AND SURVIVAL...of NGOs

Helping Caribbean NGOs to be sustainable

- *Juan Manuel Díaz, Director of Sustainability
Dominican Institute for Integral Development (IDDI)*



Endangered Species

As organisations that work on biodiversity we are often so focused on our research and conservation work that we forget our own survival.

We have always clung to insufficient financing methods, based on finding money donated by governments, multilateral agencies and foundations with multi-million budgets. But the financial crisis has radically changed this scheme, making many of our organisations as endangered as the species of flora and fauna that we want to protect.

To the Barricades!

We need to change our strategy, open our minds, expand our revenue sources. There are many ideas floating in the air and many organisations already practice them in the Caribbean. Technology and social media can be our allies. Crowdfunding, for instance, is a powerful new tool.

Perhaps the change of mind set that has the most potential benefit is related to how we approach and deal with the private sector. There are hundreds of ways of collaborating with private enterprise. There are proven methods of how to get companies to be allies in protecting biodiversity, to donate resources, hardware or human resources to achieve conservation goals.

One can even go a step further and convert some of our usual activities in revenue generating activities. We can gradually build up our endowment. Or even jumping further ahead in the forefront of sustainability, our organisations can create businesses to generate resources to fund our dream projects or to cover the administrative costs that no donor wants to fund.



Juan Manuel Díaz, Director of Sustainability at IDDI, asking the best way to develop agreements with the private sector.
Photo credit: IDDI

It's about being proactive, taking the lead, not waiting for the money of others, to jump to the barricades to better defend our protected areas and our endangered flora and fauna.

Good Practice Made in the Dominican Republic

To discuss these issues, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) held a workshop on Friday 9 September 2013 under the title "Sustainable financing for civil society organisations working on biodiversity conservation in the Dominican Republic" in Santo Domingo, at the headquarters of the Dominican Institute for Integral Development (IDDI). IDDI is an entity with extensive experience in private sector relations. After 11 years of applying new methods, today IDDI has an endowment of US\$3 million. 55% of its funding comes from private funds.

(continued on page 11)

(continued from page 10)

The workshop was attended by 16 Dominican organisations working in biodiversity conservation across the country, for which funding has always been a great challenge and who had expressed a need and desire to learn to be more productive in ensuring financial sustainability.

The workshop was organised by CANARI, under the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation-funded project “*Strengthening the role of civil society in the conservation of biodiversity in the Caribbean Islands*”. IDDI presented its experience in creating biofuel companies, developing cleaning products made with natural glycerine; making recycled paper; as well as its experience of working with Dominican companies in the agribusiness, power generation and tourism sectors. All the participants felt the event was positive and innovative. IDDI plans to provide specific technical assistance to various organisations in the coming months.



Leida Buglass, RIT Country Coordinator for the Dominican Republic, smelling the fragrance of the dishwasher that IDDI produces with natural glycerine, a new business that helps IDDI cover its administrative costs.

Photo credit: IDDI

Grant approvals July - September 2013

To date, CEPF has approved 56 grants in the Caribbean region, totalling over USD 6 million. During the period July - September 2013, 1 new grant was contracted:

Grantee	Country	Grant (US\$)	Title/ Description
Strategic Direction 1: Improve protection and management of 45 priority Key Biodiversity Areas			
Arche aux Plantes	Haiti	135,140	Rescuing Eckmanni Junipers (Juniper Endemic to Haiti) and Conservation of Plant Species in the Context of Updating the Management Plan for the Pine Forest (Massif de la Selle)

To see a full listing including project summaries of all 56 grants in the region, you can view the link on the CEPF Caribbean webpage in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#).

Letters of Inquiry (LOI) submitted under the 6th Call for Proposals for the CEPF Caribbean islands programme

On 15 August 2013, a call for proposals was issued to invite letters of inquiry (LOIs) from civil society organisations for both small and large grant projects for all countries eligible for CEPF support in the region: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Bahamas, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The deadline date for receiving LOIs was 30 September 2013.

Small grant applicants who submitted an LOI under this call will get a response from the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) in CANARI by 25 November 2013.

Large grant applicants will get a response from the CEPF Secretariat no later than 15 December 2013.

Capacité newsletter archive

[Issue 1: June 2012](#)

[Issue 2: September 2012](#)
[French](#) and [Spanish](#) supplements

[Issue 3: December 2012](#)
[French](#) and [Spanish](#) supplements

[Issue 4: March 2013](#)
[French](#) and [Spanish](#) supplements

[Issue 5: June 2013](#)
[French](#) and [Spanish](#) supplements

We want to hear from you!

All grantees are invited to contribute updates on their projects in subsequent issues of Capacité. Share copies with others in your network and please send us your comments on Capacité to the address below!

About CANARI

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a non-profit organisation registered in Saint Lucia, St. Croix and Trinidad and Tobago, with its main office in Port of Spain, Trinidad. It has 501(c) (3) status in the United States and charitable status in Trinidad and Tobago.

Our mission is promoting and facilitating equitable participation and effective collaboration in the management of natural resources critical to development in the Caribbean islands, so that people will have a better quality of life and natural resources will be conserved, through action learning and research, capacity building and fostering partnerships.

CANARI's geographic focus is the islands of the Caribbean but its research findings are often relevant and disseminated to the wider region. Our programmes focus on research, sharing and dissemination of lessons learned, capacity building and fostering regional partnerships.



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