



# CAPACITÉ

CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM  
PARTNERSHIP FUND

## Partnerships for Conservation

In this issue of *Capacité* we focus on some of the partnerships that Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) grantees have formed to support implementation of their projects.

Sometimes fruitful partnerships can be forged with unlikely allies, as we learn from the Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation, which is developing a new partnership with recreational hunters in Jamaica's Portland Bight Protected Area. And sometimes it takes an external prompt for organisations to come together as partners: the Fundación José Delio Guzmán shares its experience in the Valle Nuevo National Park in the Dominican Republic.

Partnerships can support innovation, as has happened in the Dominican Republic's first private reserve, the Reserva Privada Zorzal, where a consortium of CEPF grantees is addressing climate change through reforestation and a sustainable financing mechanism. At the regional level, partnerships can help individual NGOs achieve economies of scale. A new network, Nature Caribé, tells us about its efforts to build a Caribbean-wide partnership to catalyse cooperation, influence policy and take collaborative action for the conservation and sustainable use of the region's natural resources.

As ever, we are happy to receive your feedback on *Capacité*. The next and final issue of our newsletter will appear in December 2015. We will feature the results of initiatives funded by the CEPF over the past five years and share lessons learnt. Do let us know if you would like your project to be highlighted.

*The Regional Implementation Team (RIT) in CANARI*

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.

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## Forging Linkages between Recreational Users and Conservationists in the Portland Bight Protected Area, Jamaica

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



Strategic partnerships can be a great way to pool resources for mutual benefit. Since 1998, the Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation has been working with stakeholders (community representatives, youth, fishers and government agencies) in Jamaica's Portland Bight Protected Area (PBPA) through a co-management process to conserve natural and cultural heritage resources while supporting the livelihoods of the people who live there. Formal and informal partnerships have been an important part of C-CAM's approach to working in the area, particularly in the development and implementation of management plans. Our current work to implement sub-area management plans for the Hellshire Hills and Portland Ridge Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), which is being supported by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), has afforded us the opportunity to continue that process and build new partnerships. One such partnership is the relationship being forged between a group of recreational users in Portland Ridge, the Jackson's Bay Gun Club, and C-CAM.



*Red Birch (Bursera simaruba) and the endemic Broom Thatch (Thrinax parviflora), two of the dominant species in the Portland Ridge forest. The latter is an important bird feeder.*  
©Andreas Oberli

The Jackson's Bay Gun Club is a private members' club. Its approximately 30 active members are mainly recreational bird hunters who take part in their sport during a regulated hunting season. Outside of the hunting season, members use the club's lodge for seaside recreation. The club has a lease arrangement with the Government of Jamaica for more than 2,000 acres of the Portland Ridge forest. Portland Ridge is globally important because of its rich biodiversity. The forests and the mangroves support the many natural ecological functions of the area, and there are several caves that provide important habitat for reptiles and frogs. Many are also culturally important as they house rock paintings by the indigenous Tainos.

The relationship with the Jackson's Bay Gun Club is new and it is motivated by a shared desired to conserve and protect the area's important assets. Through several discussions with the club's leadership we have agreed, in principle, that we are working towards a formal partnership arrangement or a memorandum

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of understanding (MOU). In the short to medium-term, however, we have agreed that C-CAM will establish a site office in one of the club houses, from which we will more closely monitor use of the area to prevent illegal activities (such as night spear fishing, felling trees for charcoal and fence posts), as well as be on the lookout for fires. We will also work with local stakeholders to establish community nature and heritage tourism in the area and continue our public education there. The Jackson's Bay Gun Club has recognised the importance of engaging the local community to prevent illegal use of the forest resources, and the partnership with C-CAM will give them a vehicle for doing this.



*View of the Portland Ridge and Bight dry limestone forest.  
©Andreas Oberli*

We will work together to get funds to improve the facility and install trails and signage. The club will make a boat available so C-CAM can monitor the area by sea. The lodge will be used as a visitor rest stop, and outside of the hunting season it will be available for short stays by researchers and other overnight guests.

This partnership will be beneficial to all in the long-term, especially as we start replanting native trees from our new nursery, which will naturally have a positive impact on the bird population. C-CAM will have an inflow of funds from the tourism operations, and those community members who become trained, certified tour guides will have an opportunity to diversify their livelihood strategies with tourism-related activities. As people in the area begin to see the KBA as important to their livelihoods, we expect they will encourage their friends and neighbours to reduce, and ultimately stop, negative environmental practices in the area.

This is not the first time that C-CAM is partnering with PBPA recreational users. There are five active gun clubs in the PBPA and we have forged relationships with three of them, including the one in Jackson's Bay. We have a formal MOU with the Monymusk Gun Club, where our field office is located, and we collaborate with the PWD Gun Club on discrete activities as the need arises. While these recreational user groups may not seem like logical allies at first glance, they do in fact have a strong interest in protecting the forest resource because of its importance to their sport. They want to see more birds and understand the need to look after trees and the forest ecosystem for that to happen. In fact, when some 4,000 hectares of another section of the Portland Ridge was destroyed by fire in 2005, the PWD Gun Club took on the task of reforesting the area, with support from the Forestry Department and the National Environment and Planning Agency. From working with the gun clubs over the years, C-CAM has learned that not only do these recreational users appreciate the beauty and history of the PBPA, their repeated interaction with the forest over time has made them aware of the changes that are taking place in the environment due to climate change. As a result, they are interested in ecosystem-based adaptation. They also have an interest in the people of the PBPA, particularly the communities that are close to their lodges: they support schools, provide employment for local people and provide water, where needed. However, they are concerned about illegal activities in the forest and, recognising the economic pressures that drive people to engage in some of these activities, they want to support livelihood enhancement. The gun clubs we have worked with want to be good stewards of the environment and they value C-CAM's work and that of other like-minded organisations. 

## Building Partnerships in the Valle Nuevo National Park, Dominican Republic

- José Delio Guzmán, President, Fundación José Delio Guzmán



Entrance to the Valle Nuevo National Park near Constanza.  
©Fundación José Delio Guzmán

Sometimes it takes an external prompt to stimulate partnerships on the ground. The Fundación José Delio Guzmán (FJDG), the Sociedad Ornitológica de la Hispaniola (SOH), the Fondo Pro Naturaleza (PRONATURA) and the Consejo Interinstitucional para el Desarrollo de Constanza (CIDC) all have a history of working in the Dominican Republic's Valle Nuevo National Park, but in 2014 we began working together in a more concerted manner to improve the

management of park. Up until then, while we were all familiar with each other and our respective activities in Valle Nuevo, collaboration among us in the area had been limited. It is partly thanks to the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund's (CEPF's) commitment to ensuring there was no duplication of effort from the four organisations that approached them for funding to work in Valle Nuevo that we have now forged a partnership.

At the urging of the CEPF, coordination for the implementation of joint activities began at the stage of project formulation. This has allowed for better coordination and more unified joint action and helped ensure there is no overlap in our efforts. Through our CEPF-funded projects we have come to know and support each other better. We have developed synergies for common initiatives that, in turn, lead to improved conservation of the protected area and to the further strengthening of our organisations, thanks to the value-added that each partner brings.

### Fundación José Delio Guzmán and Ecotourism in Valle Nuevo

Since the 1960s, the Fundación José Delio Guzmán (FJDG) has been promoting ecotourism in Valle Nuevo as a strategy to increase appreciation of the area's important biological resources and provide sustainable livelihoods and an improved quality of life for the communities in the national park.

In 2014, FJDG received a grant from the CEPF for a number of components of its ecotourism strategy, including the creation of footpaths and signage, public relations, environmental education, strengthening partnerships for better conservation of the park, as well as improving the sustainability of the NGOs involved.

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Building alliances in the course of project implementation is transforming what were formerly informal relationships into formal partnerships. The reason our partnership is with these organisations and not others is due to the long history and broad experience we all have in conserving protected areas in the Dominican Republic and working with communities. For example, one of the advantages of the alliance created between SOH, PRONATURA and FJDG is the complementarity of the strengths each institution has, with the result that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. SOH has long been having a significant institutional impact across the island, and PRONATURA's team in Santo Domingo has strong research links at a national level which, in a country as centralised as ours, is essential. On the other hand, FJDG has been, and continues to be, a leader in field work with different communities within the Valle Nuevo National Park.

### **Success factors**

As with everything that has a social dimension, not forgetting that NGOs are ultimately made up of people, there is no hard recipe or exact science for forging partnerships among NGOs; however, sharing common interests and objectives, professionalism, willingness to work in teams and a sense of solidarity are fundamental values for collaborative working arrangements. And indeed, a long history of civil society activism is also helpful. At least this is the case for conservation NGOs in the Dominican Republic. While shared common objectives for biodiversity conservation were at the foundation of the partnership, another factor that has contributed to its success is the diverse strengths of the institutions that have come together. This has had a catalytic effect on all of us.

Although the joint working relationship has helped all of our projects, it is crucial to highlight the important role played by the communities with which we work. The communities are also partners, not just beneficiaries. For example, at the last capacity training for ecotourism guides that we carried out jointly with SOH in April and May 2015, it was the community members (without official titles or a command of the English language – something that at first seemed essential) who helped us the most in interpreting the diversity of the nature of their surroundings.

### **Impact on the Fundación José Delio Guzmán**

Good partnerships can help each partner learn and grow. Working with organisations like SOH has allowed us at FJDG to see more clearly the importance of our interaction with state agencies like the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources and the Ministry of Tourism and the impact this can have. The partnership has allowed us to have more direct contact with relevant people with responsibility in areas that affect the management of the Valle Nuevo National Park and we have been able to bring important on-the-ground perspectives to them. 



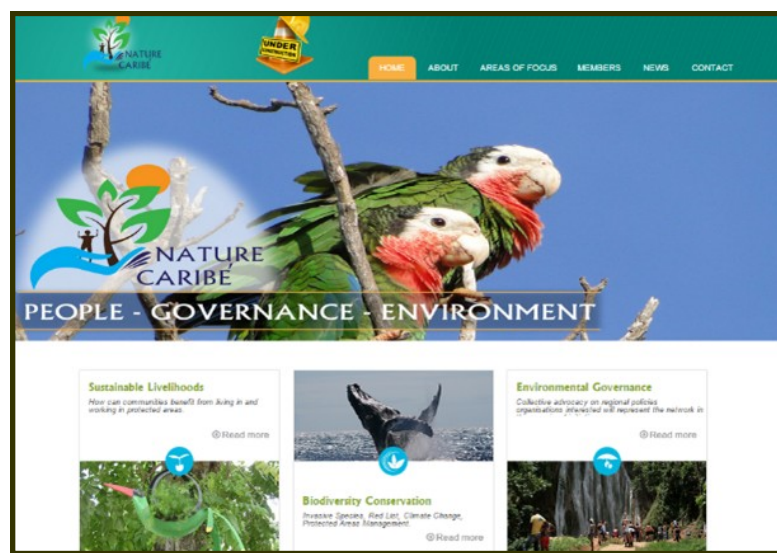
*Installing Golden Swallow nest boxes with community members.  
©Fundación José Delio Guzmán*

## Nature Caribé: A Caribbean Network for the Environment

- *Karen McDonald-Gayle, Member, Nature Caribé*



Partnerships among non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can be an important vehicle for building capacity, sharing resources, achieving economies of scale, meeting common needs and working to shared agendas. When the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund's (CEPF's) Ecosystem Profile for the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot was published back in 2010, it identified a number of institutional limitations to environmental management in the region. These included weak networks and the relatively isolated way in which many environmental and community organisations work, often due to a project-centred approach to operating and intense competition for limited funding. This competition not only occurs among regional stakeholders, but increasingly with international NGOs as well. The implications of these limitations are not lost on some



### Nature Caribé Members

- The Bahamas National Trust
- Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), Trinidad and Tobago
- Caribbean Research and Management of Biodiversity (CARMABI), Curaçao
- Centro para la Conservación y Ecodesarrollo de la Bahía de Samaná y su Entorno (CEBSE), Dominican Republic
- Environmental Foundation of Jamaica
- Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine (FoProBiM), Haiti
- Grupo Jaragua, Dominican Republic
- Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCdT)
- Jamaica Environment Trust (JET)
- Para La Naturaleza/The Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico

Caribbean organisations. In 2013, ten environmental NGOs from across the region agreed to work together as part of a new network, Nature Caribé, to identify opportunities for strategic collaboration in the best interest of the Caribbean and its development.

Nature Caribé aims to use practical actions such as research, knowledge sharing, capacity building, advocacy, and education to address environmental governance, biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods. Its vision is to be the leading Caribbean network catalysing regional cooperation, influencing policy and taking collaborative action for the conservation and sustainable use of the region's natural resources.



While the founding members were all part of the IUCN Caribbean grouping, they decided it was strategic to network across a wider platform than the IUCN membership in the region. The members of Nature Caribé are leaders in conservation, research, advocacy, and outreach activities and are all strong regional and national organisations in their own right.


Nature Caribé's areas of initial focus are:

- Environmental governance
  - ⇒ Collective advocacy on regional policies. (Organisations interested in particular policies will represent the network in regional initiatives.)
- Biodiversity conservation, in particular:
  - ⇒ Invasive alien species
  - ⇒ Red List species and ecosystems
  - ⇒ The effect of climate change on biodiversity
  - ⇒ Protected areas management
- Sustainable livelihoods, in particular:
  - ⇒ Ways to live and benefit from protected areas and the role of conservation in social justice; and
  - ⇒ Sustainable income generating activities, including tourism



Participants in the 2nd meeting of Nature Caribé, Kingston, Jamaica, December 2014. *Left to right:* Paul Stokkermans (CARMABI), Glenis Padilla (PLN), Karen McDonald Gayle (EFJ), Susan Otuokon (JCDDT), Danielle Andrade (JET), Lisa Russell (JET), Allison McFarlane (EFJ) and Yogani Govender (PLN) ©CARMABI

Para La Naturaleza/The Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico received a small grant from the CEPF in 2014 to develop the operational structures of Nature Caribé, and identify viable funding opportunities. An earlier grant to the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica in 2013 led to the decision to form Nature Caribé. Support from the CEPF has allowed Nature Caribé members to meet to reach consensus on the best means of operation (currently through an MOU and with a secretariat at Para La Naturaleza/The Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico); and design and begin implementing the network's communication strategy.

Based on members' past experiences of networks, the focus and aim of Nature Caribé have been on strong, early collaboration. But as with any new undertaking of this scope that has partners spread across the region with their own full-time commitments, the ability to focus on the start-up has been a challenge. While the network is off to a start, all of the Nature Caribé partners acknowledge there is more work to be done. 

For more information contact: Dr. Yogani Govender, Para La Naturaleza/The Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico, [yogani@paralanaturaleza.org](mailto:yogani@paralanaturaleza.org)

Visit Nature Caribé's web site <http://naturecaribe.org>. Follow them on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/naturecaribe> and on Twitter @naturecaribe.



## New on the Eco-Index!


- *Melissa Normann, Rainforest Alliance*



CEPF has given a grant to the Rainforest Alliance (RA) to work with fellow grantees to publish profiles of projects on the Eco-Index. In addition, RA staff will feature a select number of projects in the Eco-Index's "Stories from the Field" and *Eco-Exchange* publication, and will also organise and facilitate a number of webinars among grantees and with recognised experts.

All grantees in the hotspot are encouraged to participate; to add your project to the Eco-Index database, please visit: [www.eco-index.org/add](http://www.eco-index.org/add), or contact Melissa Normann at [mnormann@ra.org](mailto:mnormann@ra.org).

Projects recently added to the Eco-Index:

- Assessing the Feasibility of Sustainable Financing Mechanisms in Bahoruco Oriental, Dominican Republic: <http://www.eco-index.org/search/results.cfm?projectID=1611>
- Offshore Islands Conservation Program: <http://www.eco-index.org/search/results.cfm?projectID=1418>
- Youth Network of the Loma Quita Espuela Scientific Reserve, Dominican Republic: Capacity-building in Civil Society Organizations and Youth Groups for Biodiversity Conservation: <http://www.eco-index.org/search/results.cfm?projectID=1612> 



## New Resources from Rainforest Alliance

### REDD+ and Sustainable Agriculture Online Training Materials from The Rainforest Alliance

The Rainforest Alliance has developed a [Sustainable Agriculture Online Training Platform](#), which features a number of courses in best practices for sustainable agriculture, for example: reducing the use of chemicals, conserving forests, controlling soil erosion, conserving wildlife and more. All materials are available at no cost, and are offered in English, Spanish and French.

In conjunction with The Nature Conservancy, the Rainforest Alliance has also developed an [Introductory Curriculum on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and Conserving and Enhancing Forest Carbon Stocks \(REDD+\)](#). This curriculum, consisting of three, self-paced, online courses, provides a basic level of understanding of the basics of climate change, deforestation and forest degradation, and the REDD+ concept. These materials are also available free of charge, in English and Spanish.

## Update on CEPF Grants

### Grant approvals April – July 2015

To date, CEPF has approved 77 grants in the Caribbean region totalling more than USD 6.8 million. During the period April - July 2015, 2 new grants were contracted:

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Grantee	Country	Grant (US\$)	Title/ Description
<b>Strategic Direction 3: Support Caribbean civil society to achieve biodiversity conservation by building local and regional institutional capacity and by fostering stakeholder collaboration</b>			
Kiunzi	Dominican Republic	19,965	Final Assessment of the CEPF Caribbean Islands Programme in the Dominican Republic
The CARIBSAVE Partnership	Haiti and Jamaica	63,791.24	Final Assessment of the CEPF Caribbean Islands Programme in Haiti and Jamaica

To see a full listing including project summaries of all 77 grants in the region, you can view the link on the CEPF Caribbean webpage here: <http://www.canari.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Contracted-CEPF-grants-as-of-12.08.15-ENGLISH.pdf>

## Creating Change in the Dominican Republic through Sustainably Sourced Chocolate

- Mandy Devine, Communications Manager, CEPF



Did you know that creating change toward positive environmental action and sustainable consumption could start with something as small as a bar of chocolate? Every year, people consume more than 3 million tons of cocoa beans. And the demand for organic or sustainably produced cocoa is increasing as consumers become increasingly concerned about environmental issues and food quality.

The Dominican Republic is the eleventh largest cocoa producer in the world and the number one producer of organic cocoa. Here, a consortium of Critical; Ecosystem, Partnership Fund (CEPF) grantees – Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano, Fundación Loma Quita Espuela and the Sociedad para el Desarrollo Integral del Nordeste – have taken innovative steps to link chocolate companies from North America with

landowners in the Dominican Republic to address climate change through reforestation activities and establish a sustainable financing mechanism for protected areas.



Reforestation with native plants in Reserva Privada el Zorzal, the Dominican Republic's first private protected area.

©Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano

By selling the Dominican Republic's first forest carbon credits under its carbon offsets strategy, the grantees were able to establish the country's first private protected area in 2012. The Plan Vivo carbon credits give landowners, especially small-scale farmers, an added incentive to restore the forest through planting a mix of cacao and native wood species. This is


because local landowners receive payments from a revolving fund to cover the costs of planting and maintaining native species when agreeing to enter their land into the carbon offset program. The fund is then reimbursed through the sale of the carbon offsets.

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So far three chocolate companies (Blue Bandana, Chocosol and Dandelion Chocolate) have joined and the local smallholder farmers involved are receiving a premium price on their organic cocoa beans, on top of the payments received for planting and maintaining native species. This demonstrates how climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation and income generation can go hand-in-hand.

According to Charles Kerchner, the project lead, without funding from CEPF through its investment in the Caribbean Islands biodiversity hotspot, the project would not have had the necessary capital to move from the planning phase to on-the-ground implementation of payments for ecosystem services or establishment of the first private reserve.

This sustainable financing mechanism not only provides a return on investment to the chocolate makers and improves local farmers' livelihoods, it is also helping ensure the entire region's water quality and protecting habitat for threatened species, including the Bicknell's thrush (*Catharus bicknelli*), a migratory songbird. 



A view of the Dominican Republic's first private protected area, the Reserva Privada Zorzal. Zorzal is the name of the Bicknell's Thrush, *Catharus bicknelli*, (see inset) in Spanish. The area is one of this migratory bird's important wintering grounds in the Greater Antilles. ©Consortio Ambiental Dominicano



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### We want to hear from you!

All grantees are invited to contribute updates on their projects to Capacité.  
Please share Capacité with others in your network and send us your comments and feedback.

### 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.



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TRINIDAD

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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