



## Call for Proposals: Regional Implementation Team for the Cerrado Biodiversity Hotspot

**Opening date:** 16 December 2015

**Modified closing date and time:** 7 February 2016, 11pm Eastern Time

**Location:** CEPF, 2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 500, Crystal City VA 22202, USA

**Electronic submission:** [cepfcerrado@conservation.org](mailto:cepfcerrado@conservation.org)

### 1. INVITATION

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank designed to help safeguard the world's biodiversity hotspots. As one of the founding partners, Conservation International administers the global program through a CEPF Secretariat.

The pre-qualified parties named below are invited to apply for a five-year grant to implement a Regional Implementation Team (RIT) that will oversee an \$8 million CEPF investment strategy for the Cerrado Biodiversity Hotspot. The maximum funding available for this grant will be \$1,000,000.

The Cerrado Biodiversity Hotspot is the largest hotspot in the Western Hemisphere, covering more than 2 million square kilometers in Brazil and extending marginally (about 1%) into Bolivia and Paraguay. The Cerrado is extremely rich in plant species (about 12,000 cataloged native species) and its great diversity of habitats gives rise to remarkable transitions among different vegetation types. Almost 250 species of mammals live in the Cerrado, along with a rich avifauna comprising 856 species. Fish (800 species), reptile (262 species) and amphibian (204 species) diversity is also high. Many of these species and varieties are endemic, not only to the hotspot but also to single sites within it. For these reasons, the Cerrado is considered the biological richest tropical savanna region in the world.

Besides its biodiversity values, the Cerrado has great social importance. The hotspot includes the headwaters of three of South America's major river basins (the Amazon/Tocantins, São Francisco and Plata), thus making it of high importance for regional water security. Many people also depend on its natural resources, including indigenous groups, *quilombolas* (descendants of escaped slaves), *geraizeiros* (traditional people living in savannas of northern Minas Gerais), *ribeirinhos* (traditional artisanal fishers) and babassu crackers (groups of women who extract the fruit of the babassu palm tree), who all share traditional knowledge of its biodiversity.

CEPF's investment strategy will be in line with the new directions for CEPF's third phase, which emphasize biodiversity conservation mainstreaming into public policies and private practices and dealing with the drivers of environmental degradation. The CEPF investments will focus on four priority corridors representing about 16% of the hotspot (32.2 million hectares): Veadeiros-Pouso Alto-Kalungas;

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Central de MATOPIBA; Sertão Veredas-Peruaçu; and Mirador-Mesas. Within these corridors, CEPF investments at the site scale will focus on 62 Key Biodiversity Areas of very high relative importance for conservation, totaling 9 million hectares.

A final draft of the full CEPF ecosystem profile can be found at the link shared by email with the organizations that submitted their expression of interest (see list below). The document describes the five-year investment strategy and includes maps identifying priority sites for investment. The CEPF Donor Council is expected to formally approve this document in mid-January. In order to ensure expediency of process, this call for proposals is being issued with the ecosystem profile in final draft, as no major changes are expected.

The following organizations submitted an expression of interest by the previously announced closing date and are thus **the only one eligible to bid in a lead role**. There is no obligation for these organizations to submit a bid nor to bid as the lead entity should they prefer to be a subordinate partner as part of a consortium for the RIT. These pre-qualified organizations listed below are free to form partnerships with other organizations, regardless of whether those other organizations submitted an Expression of Interest.

Applicant Organization	Lead Contact	EOI received from	Country	Area of Interest
Associação Guardiões do Cerrado (AGC)	Douglas Santos	<a href="mailto:douglasdss@hotmail.com">douglasdss@hotmail.com</a>	Brazil	Araguaia Valley corridor
The Neotropical Waterbird Census (CNAA)	Gislaine Disconzi	<a href="mailto:gisdisconzi@gmail.com">gisdisconzi@gmail.com</a>	Brazil	Whole hotspot
Fundo Brasileiro para a Biodiversidade (FUNBIO)	Rosa Lemos de Sá	<a href="mailto:rosa.lemos@funbio.org.br">rosa.lemos@funbio.org.br</a> or <a href="mailto:manoel.serrao@funbio.org.br">manoel.serrao@funbio.org.br</a> or <a href="mailto:fernanda.marques@funbio.org.br">fernanda.marques@funbio.org.br</a>	Brazil	Withdrawal
Paranoa - Environmental Planning and Consulting (Paranoa)	Roberto Tramontina	<a href="mailto:roberto@paranoaconsult.com.br">roberto@paranoaconsult.com.br</a>	Brazil	Whole hotspot
Conservation International (CI) - Brazil	Tatiana Souza	<a href="mailto:TSouza@conservation.org">TSouza@conservation.org</a> or <a href="mailto:RMedeiros@conservation.org">RMedeiros@conservation.org</a> or <a href="mailto:DBenke@conservation.org">DBenke@conservation.org</a> or <a href="mailto:cmesquita@conservacao.org">cmesquita@conservacao.org</a>	Brazil	Whole hotspot
Instituto Internacional de Educação do Brasil (IEB)	Maria José Gontijo	<a href="mailto:mjgontijo@iieb.org.br">mjgontijo@iieb.org.br</a> or <a href="mailto:magda@iieb.org.br">magda@iieb.org.br</a> or <a href="mailto:ailton@iieb.org.br">ailton@iieb.org.br</a>	Brazil	Whole hotspot
Evaluation Institute (Instituto Avaliação) (IA)	Guilherme Abdala	<a href="mailto:guilherme@avaliacao.org.br">guilherme@avaliacao.org.br</a>	Brazil	Whole hotspot

## **2. CONFERENCE AND CLARIFICATIONS**

A conference call will be held on 4 January 2016 at 11:30 am Eastern Standard Time, at which time CEPF representatives will briefly describe the expectations for the Regional Implementation Team and respond to participants' questions. A written account of the questions and answers and a full audio recording of the call will be posted on [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net) by 12 January 2016.

CEPF will accept written questions at any time during the application process via e-mail to [cepfcerrado@conservation.org](mailto:cepfcerrado@conservation.org). CEPF will also accept telephone calls during the application process. Applicants must request a time for the call via e-mail to [cepfcerrado@conservation.org](mailto:cepfcerrado@conservation.org). CEPF will post all questions received and responses for public viewing on [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net) on a weekly basis. We may also use [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net) to release other explanatory documents that may assist applicants in completing their proposals.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

The Ecosystem Profile for the Cerrado Hotspot was developed by a consortium comprising Conservation International Brazil and the Institute for Society, Population and Nature (ISPN). The development of the profile engaged more than 170 people representing civil society, government, private sector and donor partners from Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay.

The ecosystem profile presents an overview of the hotspot in terms of its biological importance, climate change impacts, major threats to and root causes of biodiversity loss, socioeconomic context, and current conservation investments. It provides a suite of measurable conservation outcomes, identifies funding gaps, and opportunities for investment, and thus identifies the niche where CEPF investment can provide the greatest incremental value.

The ecosystem profile also contains a five-year investment strategy for CEPF in the Cerrado Hotspot. This investment strategy comprises a series of strategic funding opportunities, termed strategic directions, broken down into a number of investment priorities outlining the types of activities that will be eligible for CEPF funding. The ecosystem profile does not include specific project concepts, as civil society groups will develop these as part of their applications for CEPF grant funding.

The CEPF investment niche in the Cerrado is designed to have an enduring impact on the ability of civil society to influence positively public policies and private initiatives, aimed at conservation and sustainable development of the hotspot. The Cerrado being one of the planet's leading areas for agricultural and livestock production with about 50 per percent of its land already converted, the investment niche focuses on the impact of a single sector: agriculture. The ecosystem profile identifies seven strategic directions for an investment of \$8 million:

1. Promote the adoption of best practices in agriculture in the priority corridors
2. Support the creation/ expansion and effective management of protected areas in the priority corridors
3. Promote and strengthen supply chains associated with the sustainable use of natural resources and ecological restoration in the hotspot
4. Support the protection of threatened species in the hotspot

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5. Support the implementation of tools to integrate and to share data on monitoring to better inform decision-making processes in the hotspot
6. Strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations to promote better management of territories and of natural resources and to support other investment priorities in the hotspot
7. Coordinate the implementation of the investment strategy of the CEPF in the hotspot through a Regional Implementation Team

The RIT is responsible for Strategic Direction 7, but implicitly becomes a critical partner of the CEPF Secretariat based in Washington, D.C., as well as to CEPF's global donors.

The purpose of this Request for Proposals is for interested organizations to demonstrate their approach to Strategic Direction 7 within the context of the objectives presented in the ecosystem profile and the other six strategic directions.

The Terms of Reference for the RIT are sent together with this request for proposals.

## 4. ELIGIBILITY AND EXCLUSIONS

Nongovernmental organizations and other civil society applicants with substantial experience in biodiversity conservation, sustainable development, or capacity building may apply for funding. Government-owned enterprises or institutions are eligible only if they can establish that the enterprise or institution (i) has a legal personality independent of any government agency or actor; (ii) has the authority to apply for and receive private funds; and (iii) may not assert a claim of sovereign immunity.

Private and for profit firms, including consultant groups, as members of civil society, are eligible to apply.

Provided an organization meets the above description, groups that participated in the ecosystem profiling process, as a stakeholder, participant, author, or consultant are eligible to apply. Any potential advantage gained as a result of involvement in creating the CEPF ecosystem profile for the region will not be considered during selection of the winning bid.

The Regional Implementation Team can consist of a single entity or a consortium of eligible entities. If a consortium is submitting a proposal, then one organization must be clearly identified as the lead. The lead organization will have final responsibility for submitting the consolidated proposal, and if successful, will be responsible for leading implementation, reporting to CEPF, receiving and disbursing funds, and coordinating the other members of the consortium.

**Organizations that are members of the selected RIT will not be eligible to apply for other CEPF grants within the same hotspot.** Applications from formal affiliates of those organizations that have an independent operating board of directors will be accepted and subject to additional external review.

## **5. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE**

The period of performance is five years from the date of award, currently expected to be 1 June 2016 through 31 May 2021.

## **6. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE**

The place of performance is predominantly within Brazil. It is possible that work could take place in Bolivia and/or Paraguay or that CEPF will require staff from the RIT to travel to CEPF headquarter and other CEPF regions for trainings and exchanges.

## **7. SEPARATE AWARD OF REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION TEAM GRANT AND SMALL GRANTS FUND**

The result of this competitive process will be two separate grant agreements between Conservation International, acting on behalf of CEPF, and the lead entity of the RIT.

The first agreement, with a ceiling of \$1,000,000, will be to conduct the role of the RIT as described in the Terms of Reference and as based on the proposal of the lead entity.

As described in the Terms of Reference, the RIT will be responsible for managing and disbursing a small grants fund. This fund will be for grants of less than \$20,000. The total amount of money for small grants will be determined by the winning applicant and the CEPF Secretariat, but could be in the range of \$800,000. This amount is separate from the RIT agreement. For administrative and contractual reasons, the organization/consortium which receives the RIT grant will receive a second, separate grant agreement that consists only of money for the small grants fund.

Applicants should include all labor, managerial, and administrative expenses associated with the small grants fund in their proposal for the RIT.

In summary, this solicitation is for one proposal that will lead to two separate agreements with one organization.

## **8. SOLICITATION, REVIEW AND AWARD**

This call for proposals is being distributed to all organizations that have expressed their interest as part of the request that was widely distributed by the CEPF Secretariat last November 2015, including direct distribution to all stakeholders who participated in the final consultation workshops for the ecosystem profiling process, and via the CEPF global Web site.

The CEPF Secretariat is responsible for the analysis and ranking of applications. The Secretariat will present this analysis and all responsive applications to the CEPF Working Group, which consists of representatives from each donor. The Working Group will make the final recommendation to the CEPF Donor Council, which will formally approve the selection of the RIT.

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The review and selection process for the Regional Implementation Team is expected to be completed within 3-4 months from the application period close date.

## 9. COST CEILING FOR STRATEGIC DIRECTION 7

As stated in the logical framework of the ecosystem profile, the maximum amount of money allocated to Strategic Direction 7, which includes the role of the RIT, is \$1,000,000. The two investment priorities in Strategic Direction 7 reflect, in a shorter form, the full terms of reference of the RIT sent together with this request for proposals.

Applicants are expected to put forward proposals reflecting any of the following arrangements:

- a) A proposal for \$1,000,000 where a single entity performs all components and functions described in the terms of reference and all investment priorities in Strategic Direction 7.
- b) A proposal for \$1,000,000 where a lead entity and named sub-agreement partners perform all components and functions described in the terms of reference and all investment priorities in Strategic Direction 7.
- c) A proposal where a lead entity and some number of named sub-agreement partners perform fewer than all components and functions described in the terms of reference and all investment priorities in Strategic Direction 7, and consequently, propose a total cost less than \$1,000,000. The lead entity would then propose a strategy to find sub-agreement partners or experts or to make separate grant awards in the future, as needed, to complete remaining components/functions, such that the total amount does not exceed \$1,000,000.

CEPF anticipates that the amount of money for Strategic Directions 1 to 6 may increase due to successful fundraising efforts by the Secretariat and/or the RIT. However, this will not necessarily lead to an increase in the allocation for Strategic Direction 7. The \$1,000,000 allocated for Strategic Direction 7 has been purposefully set in anticipation of an eventually larger grants pool.

## 10. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PREPARATION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals must be submitted in English.

The application process for the RIT involves completion of several separate elements, described below. Please consult the CEPF Operational Manual, as the RIT will be responsible for helping CEPF fulfill the policies and procedures contained therein. The CEPF Operational Manual is located on the CEPF Web site at <http://www.cepf.net/resources/publications/Pages/default.aspx>.

If a consortium of organizations is submitting a proposal, at least initially, only the lead organization need to submit the items specified in 10.1. However, the lead organization must incorporate relevant material from its sub-agreement members. In other words, the proposal should reflect the inputs and capabilities of the entire consortium. Subsequent to evaluation and prior to grant award, CEPF may require some of the documents detailed below from each consortium member.

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Applicants are advised to read this section carefully in conjunction with Section 14 (Evaluation Criteria) in order to understand the relative weighting CEPF will use in evaluating proposals.

## 10.1 Proposal Files in Microsoft Word, Excel, or PDF

Applicants should provide Microsoft Word, Excel, or PDF files that address all the items below.

- 10.1.1 Applicants should include a **cover note** to their proposals listing all documents submitted. The cover note should clearly list the name of the organizational chief executive, and, if different, the name(s) of all parties with the ability to legally bind the organization and the name(s) of all parties whom CEPF should contact for clarifications and negotiations. The cover note should also provide complete mailing address, street address (if different), electronic mail address(es), and telephone and fax numbers.
- 10.1.2 **Organizational experience** related to the tasks described in the RIT terms of reference and ecosystem profile, including demonstrated experience in the following areas:
- i) Playing a leadership role in biodiversity conservation and civil society capacity building in the hotspot.
  - ii) Working with diverse civil society organizations, including providing technical assistance for project proposal development and implementation.
  - iii) Conducting performance, programmatic, and financial management monitoring.
  - iv) Working with donors, governments, communities, the private sector, and other stakeholders on conservation and development issues, including building alliances and networks of stakeholder groups to achieve conservation goals.
  - v) Managing multi-faceted programs and grants of similar size, scope, and complexity as the RIT and small grants fund.
  - vi) Trans-boundary collaboration on conservation initiatives.
  - vii) This section should also include such basic information as:
    - a. History and mission Statement
    - b. Year organization established
    - c. Total permanent staff
- 10.1.3 Project rationale and project approach demonstrating a clear understanding of the ecosystem profile, including the conservation issues in the hotspot, the strategic directions and investment priorities, and overall mission and strategic approach of CEPF; the role of civil society to achieve the investment strategy set out in the profile; and the constraints and opportunities of working in a diverse and broad political, socioeconomic, and geographic environment. Applicants should demonstrate a clear approach to working with civil society and an understanding of the different contexts/challenges facing civil society organizations in the hotspot. Applicants should include a general approach to integrating gender considerations into CEPF investments.



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- 10.1.4 Supplemental text to the project approach that explains how applicants will:
- i) work with grantees and other important stakeholder groups to build a grant portfolio that encourages collaboration and synergy to implement the CEPF investment strategy;
  - ii) ensure the sustainability and ability to replicate their efforts;
  - iii) and ensure synergy and collaboration across national borders, particularly in bi-national conservation corridors and hotspot-wide initiatives.
- 10.1.5 If a consortium of organizations is applying, applicants should explain the contractual arrangements that will be made between the lead applicant and sub-agreement partners.
- 10.1.6 If the organization/consortium is proposing to undertake anything less than the entire terms of reference, then it should discuss how it will ensure the completion of remaining components/functions.
- 10.1.7 Management systems and/or approach to the requirements of the terms of reference. This includes systems or demonstration of administrative capacity and systems for monitoring grants and for managing a small grants fund (including solicitation, award, monitoring and evaluation, and modification and/or resolution of non-performing grants). Furthermore, given the challenge of working in this vast area that is the Cerrado, applicants should be specific about their proposed placement of personnel; their ability to work in multiple languages; and their understanding of constraints for implementing the CEPF strategy and managing a small grants program. Applicants should further describe their plan for engaging personnel and mobilizing the program.
- 10.1.8 An organizational chart describing the lines of authority between individuals or organizational relationships between consortium members to achieve desired results. This figure should show where individuals are placed (e.g., city, country) and relationships between the RIT, the CEPF Secretariat, and other relevant stakeholders.
- 10.1.9 As appropriate, work flow diagrams (e.g., for soliciting and awarding grants), work plans (e.g., Gantt charts), or any other visual element better explaining how technical activities will take place, when they will take place, and who will be responsible for leading them.
- 10.1.10** Curricula vitae of all principal technical personnel making up the RIT. **Applicants must propose, by name, a single, dedicated team leader** with appropriate managerial and technical experience and who is fluent in English and Portuguese. CEPF's expectation is that this person will be recruited now and named in the proposal. Applicants that do not name a team leader – but intend to recruit one after project award – must then name similarly qualified full-time organizational staff who will fill this role until the permanent team leader is engaged.  
Applicants should name all other principal personnel, including, for example, **geographic or thematic-specific coordinators, financial officer, or specialists in capacity building, communications, policy, or private sector engagement.**



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10.1.11 **Budget in Microsoft Excel** (CEPF will provide a sample budget template as an attachment to this RfP). If a consortium of organizations is applying, each organization should have a parallel budget on a separate worksheet, all of which feed into the lead applicant's worksheet.

Each worksheet should have subtotals for salaries/benefits, professional services, rent and storage, telecommunications, postage and delivery, supplies, furniture and equipment, maintenance, travel, meetings and special events, miscellaneous, and management support costs. Worksheets should show all calculations, including unit costs, total units, and totals per year over five years.

Technical proposals should clearly state the applicant's assumptions regarding translation, in part based on your own capabilities, if deemed necessary. Budgets for translation should correspond to those assumptions.

CEPF allows for a maximum management support cost of 13 percent. Management support costs must be justified with supporting documentation such as audited financial statements, organizational policies, or precedent contracts.

Budgets should **not** include costs for actually holding the mid-term and final assessment (Terms of Reference 7.7). The CEPF Secretariat will cover these costs through a separate grant agreement which may or may not be awarded to the RIT.

As stated previously, the maximum budget for the RIT is \$1,000,000 over five years. This amount pertains to all organizations working over the entire CEPF investment region.

The proposed budget should incorporate all costs associated with implementing the terms of reference, including the labor associated with managing the small grants fund. However, the RIT grant budget should be only for the RIT award and not the separate small grants fund. The small grants fund will consist of only the money for the small grants themselves, and perhaps small associated amounts related to bank fees or exchange costs.

## 10.2 Financial Questionnaire

All shortlisted applicants, including members of a consortium, will be requested to complete a financial questionnaire as part of their full application. The questionnaire itself requests further documentation about your organization, including financial statements, auditor statements and registration/incorporation certification.

## 10.3 Anti-Terrorism Screening

The highest rated applicant will subsequently be required, per United States law, to complete forms demonstrating compliance with anti-terrorism statutes.

## 11. APPROACH TO THE RIT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Items 10.1.3 through 10.1.11 above, all refer to the applicant's approach to completing the job of the RIT. Good proposals will address the following issues:

- **Number of grantees** (consider in terms of Components 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9). CEPF is setting aside \$1,000,000 for the RIT and \$800,000 for small grants, leaving \$6,200,000 to be awarded as grants

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larger than \$20,000. The average size of a grant is \$100,000, meaning the RIT could expect about 60 grantees over the life of the portfolio. The maximum size of the small grants is \$20,000, meaning the RIT could expect a minimum of 40 small grants over the life of the portfolio. That is an expected total of about 100 different relationships with grantees.

- **Ratio of applicants to grantees.** Consider the sophistication of applicants, how well they write proposals, and how well they respond to the goals of the ecosystem profile. Project how many proposals would yield 100 award-worthy grants as a factor in the approach to Components 5 and 6. The RIT might review 300 or more proposals over five years to yield 100 awards.
- **Timing of solicitations, awards, and monitoring.** All CEPF grants must be fully complete one month prior to the close of the RIT grant, so by 28 February 2021. By that logic, the last award should be made no later than 1 May 2020. Consider, then, the solicitation processes occurring in Years 1, 2, and 3; the awards processes in the latter part of Year 1 through Year 4; and the monitoring processes in Years 2, 3, 4, and 5.
- **Review processes.** CEPF expects a competitive and transparent grant review process. Consider how proposal reviews will occur. Will the RIT convene a panel of external experts, or a subpanel, to assist in reviews? Will the RIT screen proposals and only submit a short-list of those to the experts? Will the RIT decide on its own which proposals should move forward and, instead, use a panel of experts to advise on the overall direction of the program?
- **Geographic or technical plan for awards.** One “approach” to making grant awards is to accept proposals from any priority geography for any strategic direction, starting immediately. In that sense, the “approach” of the RIT is to accept what applicants put forward. Alternatively, the RIT could have a geographic plan, focusing on one sub-region in the first year; or, a technical plan, focusing on one strategic direction in the first year. The RIT could opt to focus on the lowest capacity groups early in the portfolio, or it could focus on the “easy victories” first. In some hotspots, RITs have created “cornerstone” grants around which other activities, and grantees, are built. There is no correct answer, and certainly, strategies evolve, but the successful RIT applicant will suggest an approach and a rationale for doing so.
- **Approach to capacity building.** Component 4 requires the RIT to build the capacity of applicants and grantees. This is complementary and distinct from Strategic Direction 6 in the ecosystem profile. The successful RIT applicant will show an understanding of what this implies with appropriate allocations for one-on-one training, workshops, mentoring, and facilitation.
- **Approach to public policy and private sector engagement.** Component 2 requires the RIT to take a leadership role on behalf of CEPF, the grantees, and broader civil society in relation to the public and private sectors. This could require presence in national and/or provincial capitals, or other locations that are not necessarily in priority KBAs, and will require working with individuals who are not grantees. The successful RIT applicant will anticipate the direction such work might go, particularly in terms of Strategic Directions 1, 2, 3, and 6, each of which discuss links to CEPF’s long-term goals and sustainability.
- **Approach to donor outreach.** Given the ambitious scale of the CEPF investment strategy and presence of private foundations and public donors, Component 1 expects the RIT to forge collaborative relationships with other conservation donors, particularly with CEPF partner donors. The successful applicant will provide an approach to collaborate with CEPF and other conservation donors to ensure successful outreach and complementarity of investments.
- **Approach to the long-term vision development.** The preparation of the long-term vision (Component 8) requires a participatory process engaging representatives of civil society,

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government, private sector and donors from across the hotspot. The successful applicant will provide a clear approach to adequately engage and consult with stakeholders

- **Ability to operate in multiple languages.** The RIT will serve as the interface between the CEPF Secretariat and applicants. As such, the RIT, as a team, must be multilingual. CEPF will always accept proposals and reports in English and Portuguese, so the RIT must be comfortable with this. The agreement for large grants will always be in English, so that the RIT may need to help explain the agreement provisions to the grantee. During grant implementation, the CEPF Secretariat will provide administrative instructions to grantees in English, and again, the RIT will be called upon to explain these to grantees. The successful RIT applicant will propose a team that meets these requirements.
- **Staffing strategy.** Based on the above, the successful RIT applicant will anticipate what type of personnel it needs and where they need to be placed, physically. Propose a plan for staff placement, travel, and communication (with grantees and with other members of the RIT) that reflects the approach to the items above.

Applicants are free to propose a team in whatever fashion and with whatever commitment of time they like as long as at least the team leader is a full-time position for at least three years. However, the Secretariat has found that successful RITs have, at a minimum a financial manager and project officer/administrator with a committed percentage of time for small grants management.

## 12. CEPF DONOR COUNCIL APPROVAL AND NEGOTIATIONS

The CEPF Secretariat will rank the bids it receives and submit its recommendation for award to the CEPF Donor Council consisting of representatives from the seven CEPF partners. Upon receiving no objection from the Donor Council, the Secretariat will engage in negotiations with the top-ranked organization/consortium. At the time of negotiations, CEPF will ask the top-ranked organization/consortium to prepare a logical framework that corresponds to the terms of reference listed above and that reflects the approach and targets of the proposal.

## 13. KEY PERSONNEL

The team leader and country coordinator positions are considered key personnel. Applicants that do not name a permanent team leader or country coordinator now must submit the name and resume of the candidates to CEPF for approval in advance of his/her engagement. CEPF must approve of the team leader and country coordinators prior to their engagement and must approve any replacement of these positions during the period of engagement.

## 14. EVALUATION CRITERIA

CEPF will use the attached scorecard for evaluating proposals. The scorecard shows the questions that reviewers will use and the relative weighting of each category. Applicants should ensure that each of these points is adequately addressed in either their proposal files (discussed in Section 10.1) or financial questionnaire (discussed in Section 10.2.)

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<b>1</b>	<b>Organizational Experience: Technical</b>	<b>Points: 5</b>
1.1	Is the organization’s mission statement congruent with the objectives and priorities identified for the region in the ecosystem profile?	
1.2	Does the applicant present experience working with potential partner NGOs, academic institutions, local and national government agencies, and donors?	
1.3	Does the organization have an existing conservation or development program in the region, demonstrated by its duration and record of support by other donors?	
<b>2</b>	<b>Organizational Experience: Management</b>	<b>Points: 15</b>
2.1	Does the organization demonstrate experience managing programs of similar size, scale, and complexity as that of the Regional Implementation Team?	
2.2	Does the organization have a monitoring and evaluation system or methodology that it has used to manage its own or other programs?	
2.3	Does the applicant have proven financial and administrative system?	
2.4	Has the organization managed both the technical and financial elements of a small grants program in the past, and was this program of a size (e.g., total amount of money, total number of grants) and complexity (e.g., technical components and recipients) that is comparable to what it will undertake with CEPF?	
<b>3</b>	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Points: 30</b>
3.1	Does the applicant propose a clear and viable personnel plan, including names, resumes, position titles, job descriptions, level of effort, work location, and reporting lines of authority?	
3.2	Does the applicant submit the name and resume of a single, dedicated team leader, and does this person have the appropriate technical skills/experience and appropriate managerial skills/experience?	
3.3	Does the applicant propose, by name and resume, personnel other than the team leader, and do these people have appropriate technical skills/experience and appropriate managerial skills/experience?	
3.4	Do the proposed team members have, individually or collectively, the language skills necessary to operate effectively in the hotspot?	
3.5	Does the applicant propose a plan for recruitment and/or mobilization of “to be determined” personnel, including job descriptions, job qualifications, and curricula vitae of personnel from the applicant’s organization who will perform relevant duties while recruitment is pending?	
<b>4</b>	<b>Understanding of the Ecosystem Profile</b>	<b>Points: 5</b>
4.1	Does the applicant demonstrate its understanding of the strategic directions in the Ecosystem Profile and the associated Investment Priorities and outcomes, targets, and indicators (other than the RIT strategic direction)?	
4.2	Does the applicant discuss the differing challenges of conservation and engagement with civil society in the countries in the hotspot, demonstrating an anticipation of the types of grants to be funded, the viability of targets, and the capacity of potential grantees?	
4.3	Does the applicant describe how its own organizational strategy will be advanced by serving as the lead entity for CEPF in the region and how this will help to ensure sustainability of results beyond the CEPF implementation period?	
<b>5</b>	<b>Proposed Technical Approach</b>	<b>Points: 15</b>
5.1	Does the applicant address all components of the RIT as described in the terms of reference?	

# CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM PARTNERSHIP FUND

5.2	Does the applicant demonstrate its plans to work with partners or with civil society organizations that have very different levels of capacity from one corridor or country to the next?	
5.3	Does the applicant propose a method to effectively communicate and coordinate the funding opportunity, results and lessons learned?	
5.4	Does the applicant propose a system for soliciting proposals for projects conforming to the strategy described in the ecosystem profile and establish an effective, transparent review process to evaluate these applications?	
5.5	Does the applicant propose a system to monitor and evaluate individual projects and assist in monitoring portfolio performance overall?	
5.6	Does the applicant propose a system to directly award and manage all small grants for civil society of up to \$20,000?	
<b>6</b>	<b>Proposed Managerial Approach</b>	<b>Points: 25</b>
6.1	Does the applicant demonstrate its understanding of the legal requirements to make grants in the hotspot countries, employ people or engage organizations in these countries, and foreign exchange restrictions?	
6.2	Does the applicant have defined administrative/financial roles demonstrating a segregation of duties and a chart indicating the leadership and employee structure of the organization?	
6.3	Does the applicant propose a method to track, record, and account for funds received and disbursed, and does it propose a method for regular completion of reconciliations of money received and disbursed in comparison with bank statements?	
6.4	Does the applicant propose a system for internal controls and objective criteria that guide the review of payment requests and other invoices, systematic record keeping, and fraud and embezzlement safeguards?	
<b>7</b>	<b>Proposed Financial Approach</b>	<b>Points: 5</b>
7.1	Is the budget complete and within the allocated amount named in the request for proposals?	
7.2	Are all costs mathematically justified through the clear presentation of unit costs, total units, and total costs?	
7.3	Are all unit costs, total units, and total costs appropriate in relation to the proposed technical and managerial activities?	
7.4	Are proposed unit rates in accord with market rates in the region?	
7.5	If the applicant claims indirect costs, does it clearly show the base of application and is this distinct from any previously enumerated direct costs; does the applicant provide an explanation of how the indirect cost rate has been determined (e.g., historical averages, audited financial statements, precedent contracts); and does the applicant provide supporting documentation with its financial questionnaire?	
7.6	If the applicant proposes to work in only a subset of the eligible countries, is the total budget proportionately less than the maximum allowable amount and is this amount adequately justified?	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100 Points</b>

**END OF CALL FOR PROPOSALS**