



# CAPACITÉ

CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM  
PARTNERSHIP FUND

## Innovation in CEPF grants in the Caribbean

Many Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) grantees in the Caribbean are using innovative tools, methods, or approaches in project implementation. In some instances, these tools or approaches have been developed expressly for the CEPF-funded projects, in others, tools, methods, or approaches that have been used in other initiatives are being adapted. The innovations that we are seeing in grants are as varied as the grants themselves. But what is significant is that they offer a rich pool of good practice and lessons learnt that can be shared among CEPF grantees in the Caribbean and with other partners, both in and outside the region.

In this issue of *Capacité* we celebrate the innovation of grantees and highlight work being done under five grants. The Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation in Jamaica tells us about its efforts to develop and test an ex-situ germ bank and engage people in plant conservation through their love of gardens and gardening. The World Resources Institute's The Access Initiative and Panos Caribbean share how they are using web-based platforms to improve information sharing for citizen participation in the development approvals process and networking and collaboration between civil society, the media and academia respectively. The efforts of the International Iguana Foundation (IIF) in Haiti have resulted in that country's first municipal protected area as part of an initiative to protect the only subpopulation of Ricord's iguanas currently known to exist there. The Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano (CAD) has notched up a number of firsts through its work to protect the habitat of a migratory bird: the establishment of the Dominican Republic's first private protected area and its first sale of forest carbon credits.

These are, of course, not the only grants that are blazing new trails across the region and we hope to feature others in future issues of *Capacité*. As ever, we hope you find this issue of *Capacité* informative.

*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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## Testing Conservation Gardens as an Approach to Ex Situ Conservation in the Portland Ridge KBA, Jamaica

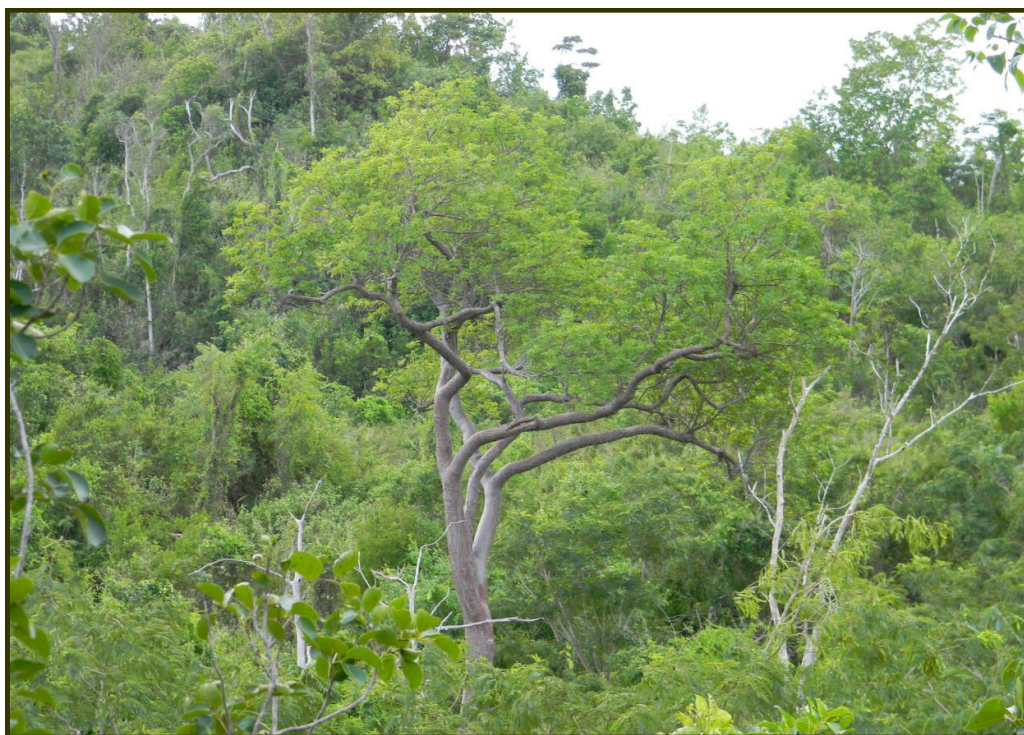
- **Brandon Hay, Scientific Officer and Angeli Williams-Hayman, Community Development Officer Conservation, Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation**



### **The challenge of forest regeneration in the Portland Ridge KBA**

Dry forests are slow growing by nature. In 2005, a single forest fire destroyed more than 60 per cent of the dry limestone forest in the Portland Ridge Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) in Jamaica. Almost a decade later the forest is yet to recover fully. While there has been some regeneration, areas remain bare. The Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (C-CAM), an NGO located in the Portland Bight Protected Area (PBPA), has come up with a novel approach to support the reforestation of the area with native and rare or threatened species by engaging people from nearby communities in plant conservation through their love of gardens and gardening.

Portland Ridge and the other dry limestone forests of the PBPA (Hellshire Hills and Braziletto Mountain) are unique in Jamaica because of the combination of the relatively dry climate and karst limestone geology. Rugged, hot and dry with poor soils, these forested areas are unsuitable for agriculture, unlike the surrounding fertile plains, but are host to many native plant species that are specially adapted to the areas' harsh growing conditions. Despite the damage caused by the fire in Portland Ridge, surveys show there are still important tree species in the forest, but many of these are simply not available as seedlings to support reforestation efforts and boost natural regeneration.



The very rare, endemic Hollick's Birch (*Bursera hollickii*) shown here is one of 21 known trees in Jamaica. Eleven were identified during field work in Portland Ridge in 2012. With its large size and smooth silver-gray bark on long, often curving branchless trunks, it is one of the most outstanding and attractive trees in the forest. This is one of the tree species that will be grown in the C-CAM conservation gardens.


©Andreas Oberli

### **Community-based ex situ germ banks**

C-CAM is currently establishing a nursery to propagate seedlings of the native and rare species found in the Portland Ridge. But its vision goes beyond simply restoring the forest; it includes building resilience in the face of future natural or manmade disasters and preventing the total loss of threatened or endemic species found in the Portland Ridge KBA. Enter the concept of “conservation gardens.” Seedlings propagated in the nursery will be used in reforestation efforts and will be distributed to volunteer “conservation gardeners” in communities neighbouring the Portland Ridge KBA, including Rocky Point, Portland Cottage, and Mitchell Town, and other areas a little further afield in the PBPA such as Salt River. These gardeners and their gardens will effectively function as an ex-situ germ bank.

Gardeners will be part of a volunteer network that will allow for the exchange of horticultural tips, news and views and provide conservation education. As the gardens become established, C-CAM will be able to contact network members to access these plants in the event of a threat to the wild populations.

Community members are attracted by the prospects of assisting with the conservation of the plants that are unique to their area and enhancing the beauty of their own gardens using plants that are adapted to local conditions and therefore need minimal care. Over time, some community members may be able to develop a source of revenue from plants or plant products from their gardens.

The nursery is under construction and the collection of seeds from the forest is about to begin. C-CAM expects that the first seedlings will be ready for transplanting by April 2015. This initiative is supported by a grant from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) through the investment in the Caribbean Islands biodiversity hotspot to implement the management plans for the Portland Bight and Hellshire Hills KBAs. The preparation of the management plans by C-CAM and its agency and community partners was also supported by the CEPF under a previous grant. 



The West Indian Mahogany (*Swietenia mahagoni*) is exceedingly rare in the wild in Jamaica. Finding isolated wild populations is of particular importance since the introduction and distribution of the South and Central American Big Leaf Mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) is threatening the native Mahogany with extinction through hybridization. This is one of the tree species that will be grown in the C-CAM conservation gardens.

©Andreas Oberli

## Development Alert! A Tool for Public Participation and Access to Information in Environmental Decision-Making

- **Carole Excell, Project Director, The Access Initiative, World Resources Institute and Danielle Andrade, Legal Director, Jamaica Environment Trust**

Guided by Principle 10 of the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which states that "environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level," the Jamaica Environment Trust (JET) and the World Resources Institute (WRI), The Access Initiative have teamed up to create *Development Alert!*, an interactive website that provides easy-to-understand information about proposed developments in Jamaica and their environmental impacts. *Development Alert!* is currently in beta testing and will be launched at a regional meeting in Jamaica in November 2014.

### **Informing communities**

Using a GIS platform, JET and TAI have populated a map of Jamaica with large-scale developments from 2014 onwards such as highways, housing projects, hotel developments, energy projects, water abstraction, forest removal, and mining that are likely to have significant health, environmental, social or cultural impacts. Users can click on a proposed development to get basic information about it, including the name of the project's proponent, its exact location, the date of the development application, and the status of the application or permit. More detailed documents, including copies of Environmental Impact Assessments, are also available on the website. The map includes areas determined to be in need of protection for scientific, environmental or cultural reasons, along with general information about declared marine and terrestrial protected areas.

### **Empowering communities**

Members of the public can use the website to access supporting documents prepared by the Government of Jamaica or the developer before a decision is made to approve or reject projects. Having accessed and reviewed the documents, users can provide comments to the relevant authorities. The website provides e-mail addresses of public officials who can be contacted with questions, comments and concerns about development projects. The website also includes dates of public meetings in which community members and other stakeholders can participate.

JET will maintain the Jamaica *Development Alert!* site and update it as new developments come on stream. However, it has been conceptualised as a people's platform; this means anyone can upload information on developments that they are concerned about in their community. The site also allows users to sign up for alerts on specific locations, including protected areas.

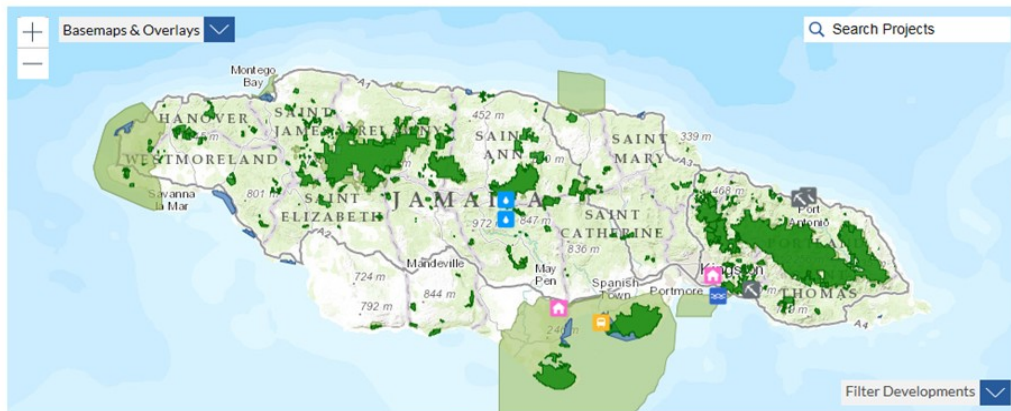
### **Putting access to information into action**

The information available through *Development Alert!* was obtained from the Government of Jamaica through access to information requests under Jamaica's Access to Information Act. It also includes publicly available sources of information, as well as "crowd sourced" information from members of the public. These sources of information will continue to be used to update the web site.

→



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### Development Alert!

Development Alert! is an online tool for increasing transparency and public engagement on projects that impact the environmental and public health.

The public can submit reports on projects they are concerned about or track information about new and existing high-impact developments.

### Featured Project



#### [Goat Islands Transshipment Port \(geotechnical survey\)](#)

Port development [Learn More >](#)

### News Feed

#### [Six reasons against port on Goat Islands](#)

The Jamaica Civil Society Coalition (JCSC) on Monday issued a statement in which it registered its...

#### [JET Butts Hub Plans: Environment lobby says Goat Islands development would betray pact with government](#)

One civil-society group yesterday declared it feels "less optimistic" about the prospects of the...


#### [Save Goat Islands Campaign](#)

The Portland Bight Protected Area contains significant environmental assets. The coastline...

### ***A tool for active citizenry and transparency***

*Development Alert!* sets the stage for new ways to formally engage in the public review process for developments and to connect with environmental groups to lobby for people's inclusion in decision-making processes. JET and WRI's The Access Initiative hope *Development Alert!* will also reduce secrecy in decisions made about the use of natural resources and stimulate greater public discourse and participation in development issues. WRI has plans to support the expansion of the website to other countries if this project is successful .

Development Alert will be launched on 20 November 2014. Visit the Jamaica Environment Trust's website [www.jamentrust.org/](http://www.jamentrust.org/) for a link to *Development Alert!* after the launch date.

*Development Alert!* is being supported through the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund's (CEPF) investment in the Caribbean Islands biodiversity hotspot under a grant to WRI to mainstream biodiversity conservation into development decision making. It is also funded by The Transparency and Accountability Initiative (Open Society Foundation) and the WRI. 

## Protected Area in Haiti to Conserve Critically Endangered Iguana

- *Masani Accimé, Project Coordinator, International Iguana Foundation and Mandy DeVine, Communications Manager, CEPF*



A small community in Haiti has taken a landmark step towards saving the last of the Critically Endangered Ricord's iguana (*Cyclura ricordii*). The municipal government in Anse-a-Pitres, Haiti, recently created a Municipal Protected Area, legally protecting 3,000 hectares of dry forest for the conservation of a small population of Ricord's iguanas.



A female Ricord's iguana leaving the nesting site during nesting season.  
©Pierre Richard Sanon

### ***A species under pressure***

One of only nine iguanas of its kind in the world, this species of large rock iguana has an extremely limited distribution. Only four small isolated subpopulations exist in the south-central part of the island of Hispaniola. Three of the subpopulations can be found in the Dominican Republic, where significant conservation efforts have been taken based on a Species Recovery Plan outlined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Iguana Specialist Group.

The species was thought to be extinct in Haiti until Ernst Rupp, working with the International

Iguana Foundation (IIF) and Grupo Jaragua, discovered a small strip of beach where a pregnant female was sighted. Ricord's iguana nests were then found in Anse-à-Pitres in 2007 on the edge of the town, which is adjacent to the southern Haitian-Dominican border, and falls within the Massif de La Selle-Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo bi-national corridor. This is the only subpopulation currently known to exist in Haiti, but it is threatened by hunting and nest poaching activities.

Habitat degradation also threatens the Ricord's iguana; deforestation for charcoal production and live-stock grazing are destroying sections of the dry forests of Anse-à-Pitres. These iguanas are also hunted, which further increases the pressure on them. As the largest endemic herbivore in Haiti, Ricord's iguanas help alleviate deforestation by playing a vital role in dispersing plant seeds.


□

/ →

### **Municipality and community support**

With support from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) through their investment in the Caribbean Islands biodiversity hotspot, IIF worked with community members in Anse-à-Pitres to create the Arrete Communal, the first municipal reserve in Haiti.

When IIF first met with community members to educate them about Ricord's iguanas and their importance to the environment, they learnt about community needs and perspectives and were able to factor this into their work. In response to the community's interests, IIF is working to develop a management plan integrating the needs of local herdsman, and has provided awareness raising activities and environmental education for the communities of Anse-à-Pitres.

Conserving the small population of Ricord's iguana in Anse-à-Pitres is not only about saving the species from extinction in Haiti, it is also about introducing the concept of wildlife and biodiversity conservation to the Haitian public. Investing in the community and the future of Ricord's iguanas by building a successful biodiversity conservation program in Anse-à-Pitres will provide community members with the resources they need to become effective stewards of their environment. 



*Above and left:* Local organizations and volunteers participate in habitat restoration activities. ©MasaniAccimé

## Panos Caribbean Unveils New Online Database

- *Petre Williams-Raynor, Senior Programme Officer, Panos Caribbean*



Panos Caribbean recently launched its dynamic, new online database, designed to enhance networking and advance partnerships for biodiversity conservation in the region. Called the Panos Information Portal (PIP), the database, which also has video conferencing capabilities, was developed by Dr Maurice McNaughton and a team from the Centre of Excellence at the Mona School of Business and Management at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica.

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) and the International Development Research Centre provided the funding support for the system, which has been some two years in the making.

### **Features of the PIP**

The PIP is an online database management system with various categories of individuals and institutions that include NGOs, CBOs, journalists, media worker networks, researchers, experts and policy makers from the sectors in which Panos works, including agriculture, biodiversity conservation, child rights, climate change, communication, data journalism, environment, education, fisheries,

gender, HIV/AIDS, insurance,

and public health. The PIP also features an indexed, searchable catalog of electronic resource materials and a contact constituency management system.

The system currently has more than 690 individual contacts, 100 media contacts, some 44 institutional contacts and 13 documents.

### **A portal for the region**

More than 60 civil society actors, media players and members of academia from across the Caribbean have already been granted access to the system to facilitate networking. And Panos is keen for other interested stakeholders to gain access. /→



Dr. Maurice McNaughton, developer of the Panos Information Portal, speaking at the launch ceremony. ©Emma Lewis



La-Jean Powell (left) of the Manchester Parish Council makes a point during the June 20 launch of the PIP. Listening (from second left) are Ingrid Parchment of the Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation, Keisha Spencer of the Negril Area Environmental Protection Trust and journalist Horace Hines of the Jamaica Observer newspaper. ©Emma Lewis



**Welcome to Panos Information Portal**  
The portal is designed to integrate and manage Panos' media and communications portfolio, and provides access to the following information resources:

- Institutions** - Research Institutions, Local Expertise Network, CSOs and CBOs
- Media** - Media Houses, Journalists and Journalistic Networks
- People** - Researchers and Policy makers
- Electronic Catalog** - Newsletters, Reports, Publications and other Multimedia content

Panos Regional Coordinator, Indi Mclymont Lafayette, has urged stakeholders to use the system, noting that feedback is welcomed and, in fact, essential to the effective operation of the system over the long term.

“This system has been set up, not for Panos but for stakeholders in the region who are interested in learning and sharing, whether on biodiversity conservation, climate change or a related subject,” she said.

“Ultimately, the success of this system will depend on the stakeholders who use it. Responsibility for periodic personal contact information updates will fall on them and they are whom Panos, as administrators of the system, will rely on to ensure the sharing of documents and engagement on the issues that emerge from those documents,” she added.


The launch ceremony was held on June 20 at the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort in Montego Bay, Jamaica during a workshop to establish Panos as a regional hub for climate change information, under its Adaptation Fund NGO Network Project.

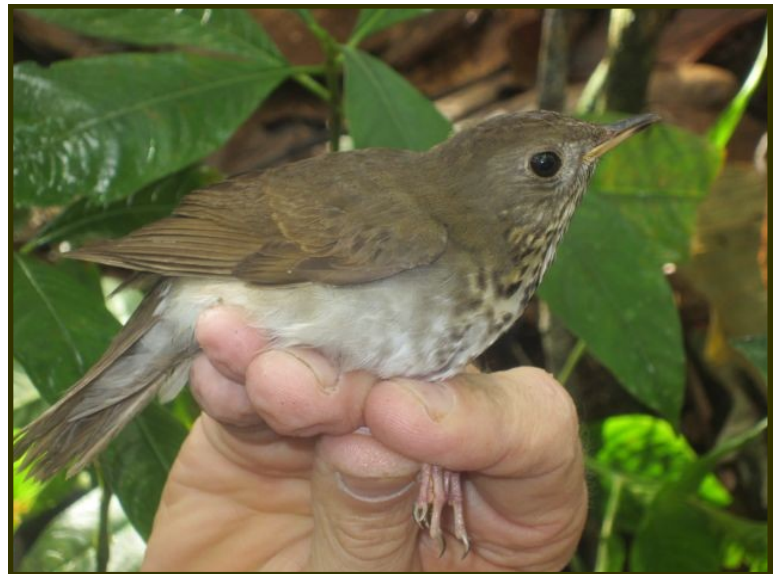
To become a registered user of the Panos Information Portal and access the searchable database of electronic resource materials and media and civil society resource persons, contact Petre Williams-Raynor by email on [petre@panoscaribbean.org](mailto:petre@panoscaribbean.org).

## Innovative Partnerships for Conservation in the Dominican Republic

The work of the Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano (CAD) has led to a number of “firsts” in the Dominican Republic and shown how preserving the habitat of a vulnerable migratory bird can stimulate new linkages between private landowners, cocoa growers, chocolate makers, and the international carbon credit market.

In May of this year CAD signed an agreement with Canadian organic chocolate maker, ChocoSol Traders, for the first sale of forest carbon credits in the country. Under the five-year agreement, ChocoSol Traders will purchase organic cacao produced in the country's first private protected area, along with carbon credits for each tonne of cacao bought. This is the second such agreement CAD has signed with an artisanal chocolate maker. A similar agreement was signed between CAD and San Francisco-based Dandelion Chocolate in July. The first shipment of organic cacao under the carbon credit arrangement left the Dominican Republic on 30 June. If all goes as planned, these carbon schemes will generate \$250,000 per year for conservation in ten years.

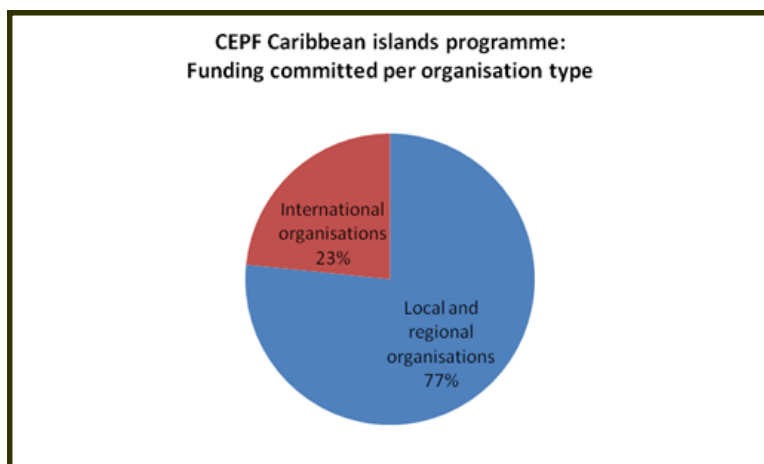
These efforts are part of an initiative supported by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) in the Caribbean to protect the habitat of the vulnerable Bicknell's Thrush (*Catharus bicknelli*). Several new partnerships have emerged as result of this project. In addition to the arrangements for the sale of organic cacao and forest carbon credits, Dominican businessmen, a US-based philanthropic organisation and local communities have partnered to create La Reserva Privada Zorzal, the Dominican Republic's first private protected area, which enhances connectivity between two existing protected areas — Loma Quita Espuela and Loma Guaconejo. 



The Bicknell's Thrush (*Catharus bicknelli*) has one of the most restricted breeding and wintering ranges of any North American bird. It breeds exclusively in the forests of the northeastern USA and southeastern Canada and winters in broadleaf mountain forests in the Greater Antilles, like those of Loma Quita Espuela and Loma Guaconejo in the Dominican Republic.

©CAD

## CEPF in the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot: Supporting Local Civil Society



Support to local and regional organisations in the Caribbean has been a hallmark of the investment by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) in the Caribbean Islands biodiversity hotspot. Of the US\$6,676,364.24 committed in grant funding to the region to date, US\$5,114,133.70 or 77% has been awarded to local and regional organisations while US\$1,562,230.54 or 23% has gone to international organisations.

### Grant Approvals July —September 2014

To date, CEPF has approved 74 grants in the Caribbean region totalling over USD 6.6 million. During the period July - September 2014, 1 new grant was contracted:

Grantee	Country	Grant (US\$)	Title/ Description
<b>Strategic Direction 1: Improve protection and management of 45 priority key biodiversity areas</b>			
Fundación José Delio Guzmán Inc.	Dominican Republic	83,187	Strengthening Management and Promoting Ecotourism in Valle Nuevo National Park

To see a full listing including project summaries of all 74 grants in the region, you can view the link on the CEPF Caribbean webpage [here](#):

## Building the Capacity of Caribbean Civil Society through Mentoring

- Loiza Rauzduel, Technical Officer, CANARI



In 2011, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) launched a mentorship programme as one of the components of a multi-year project, *Consolidating the role of civil society in biodiversity conservation in the Caribbean islands*, funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

The mentorship programme was designed to develop a pool of individuals throughout the region who can help strengthen the capacity of Caribbean civil society organisations (CSOs) to play a larger and more effective role in biodiversity conservation. Through the mentorship programme, CANARI's capacity to provide effective and sustained support to other CSOs through its role as the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) programme in the Caribbean Islands biodiversity hotspot and other work, was also enhanced.

### **Helping people and communities help themselves**

There are many definitions of a mentor, but CANARI views mentorship as a process of sharing knowledge, skills, experiences, insights and opinions to provide strategic advice and guidance to help people make decisions to achieve their desired objectives. Mentors are also trusted counsellors or advisors.



Participants and resource persons at the 2011 CANARI mentor training workshop in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. ©CANARI

Twenty 20 mentors from 12 countries were carefully selected to be part of the programme, based on their experience and involvement in the management of natural resources and sustainable natural resource-based livelihoods. Other criteria for the selection of mentors included their ability to build the capacity of CSOs in their countries, and their experience in training, coaching and mentoring civil society organisations. /→

***Learning by doing over time***

Following an orientation workshop in late 2011, mentors had the opportunity to test their mentoring skills as they worked directly with civil society organisations in their respective countries to support them in identifying and developing biodiversity conservation projects in protected areas in the Caribbean islands. In 2012, a total 60 people representing 40 civil society groups benefitted from mentor-led national workshops. Sessions were thought to be useful and informative as participants increased their knowledge and understanding of the key elements of capacity building needed to contribute to their work in the areas of natural resource management and sustainable natural resource-based livelihoods.


In 2013-2014, mentors continued to work with CSOs in their countries by responding to the specific needs previously identified in the national workshops. Proposal writing, project management, communication, organisational strengthening and monitoring and evaluation were the main focus areas of activities designed and facilitated by the mentors in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Barbados and Grenada in particular. Mentors did not require much assistance from CANARI, and only sought advice and guidance as needed for specific exercises or methodologies they were planning to use such as: participatory video, drafting a news release, ice-breaker exercises, field/study visits etc. These activities allowed mentors to make use of some of the skills and methods they had been exposed to during the mentor training.

Over the 2013-2014 period, a total of 82 participants from 24 organisations were supported by mentors under the programme.

***Feedback and lesson learnt***

Feedback from participants over the life of the initiative was usually encouraging. Most felt the structure and delivery of the activities were good and appreciated the clarity of objectives, content, materials, facilitation and relevance to their needs. They also enjoyed the opportunity to interact and share information and knowledge with their peers.

Mentors also shared a number of lessons learnt through their interaction with CSO groups in their countries. Their role allowed them to appreciate the need for mentors to be able to communicate effectively, as well as to be active listeners. They also found time management and flexibility when facilitating sessions to be key skills. Notwithstanding their varying levels of experience in workshop facilitation, all mentors agreed that knowing the audience is critical, and that ice-breakers and energizers are useful tools for building a rapport.

Although the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation-funded project has come to an end, its legacy lives on in a pool of trained individuals across the region with an arsenal of skills, tools, and methods they can use to help build Caribbean people and communities. 

## Capacité Newsletter Archive

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[French](#) and [Spanish](#) supplements

### We want to hear from you!

All grantees are invited to contribute updates on their projects to Capacité.

Please share copies of 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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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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