



CRITICAL | **ECOSYSTEM**
PARTNERSHIP FUND

Summary Report for the Mid-term Evaluation

**Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)
Caribbean islands Biodiversity Hotspot investment
(2010 - 2015)**

Executive Summary

Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), January 2014

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Executive summary

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) [Caribbean Islands Programme](#) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank. The goal of the CEPF is to support the work of civil society in developing and implementing conservation strategies, as well as in raising public awareness on the implications of loss of biodiversity. The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), in its capacity as the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) for the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot, is managing a US\$6.9 million grant fund to support civil society's contribution to biodiversity conservation in eleven Caribbean islands for 2010-2015. Countries eligible for CEPF support in the region are: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, The Bahamas, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts & Nevis and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

A mid-term evaluation of the CEPF Caribbean islands programme was required and a participatory mid-term evaluation was conducted by the RIT with support from the CEPF Secretariat during the period May to October 2013. A [framework](#) was developed to guide the assessment of relevance, results, efficiency and effectiveness of the process, and sustainability. The evaluation included: a desk review of reports prepared by the RIT and CEPF Secretariat; three national focus group sessions held with grantees, key partners, and RACC members in Haiti, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic; an online survey; interviews with grantees and members of the Regional Advisory Committee for CEPF (RACC); a regional workshop with grantees, RACC members, donors, government partners, the CEPF Secretariat and the RIT; and a focus group session with RIT staff based in Trinidad.

Overwhelmingly, stakeholders felt that the CEPF Caribbean islands programme was very relevant in addressing the needs, expectations and capacities of Caribbean stakeholders particularly in supporting strengthening of civil society, networking, biodiversity conservation action on priorities, complementing other initiatives, and building knowledge about biodiversity.

Stakeholders also felt that the CEPF Caribbean islands programme is making excellent progress with the portfolio and achieving strong results. Although at the mid-term in programme implementation, excellent or good progress is being made in all result areas except for CEPF Strategic Direction 5 (emergency support to Haitian civil society to mitigate the impacts of the 2010 earthquake), especially with improved protection and management of 45 priority key biodiversity areas. However, little or no change with respect to the CEPF Global Goal Matrix was made in the opinion of the few stakeholders who examined this in the regional workshop. This was seen to be a useful tool but one that would require systematic assessment via national consultation processes in each of the countries before any reliable assessments could be made.

Stakeholders assessed what results were being seen in terms of the contribution of CEPF to changes in behaviour and relationships of Caribbean civil society organisations (CSOs) and donors. Significant positive changes were identified for CSOs in terms of: enhanced biodiversity conservation actions and project development and management; improved organisational development and management; increased networking with other CSOs, government agencies, and the private sector; and more engagement of local communities. Some positive changes were also identified for donors including

increased awareness of the CEPF Caribbean islands programme, improved grant making practices and enhanced collaboration.

The most significant changes identified by stakeholders were that the CEPF Caribbean islands programme:

- Put biodiversity conservation on the agenda
- Filled a niche in biodiversity conservation
- Provided new information to inform on the ground action
- Facilitated knowledge sharing and enhanced awareness
- Improved capacity of CSOs, including local groups
- Facilitated networking and building partnerships at national and regional levels
- Strengthened participation of local communities in biodiversity conservation
- Brought new actors into the biodiversity conservation field
- Built understanding of the importance of biodiversity conservation and valuing it
- Achieved positive results for conservation of biodiversity and supported civil society initiatives that added value to the work of government agencies
- Supported innovative approaches to conservation
- Supported a rigorous regional Caribbean-owned approach
- Enabled CANARI to build its capacity, to expand its work and to influence implementation of a grant programme in the Caribbean

In general, stakeholders felt that the processes used by the CEPF Caribbean islands programme were effective, and in some cases very effective. However, many critical recommendations were made for improving administrative processes, especially in terms of the application process and also for enhancing monitoring and reporting. The need to clarify roles of the CEPF Secretariat and the RIT was highlighted. Improvement in communication about the work being done under CEPF projects is needed to raise awareness, facilitate collaboration, and influence policy. More support should also be given for catalysing and facilitating networking amongst grantees and building capacity of civil society organisations for sustainability. More collaboration is needed with other regional initiatives in the Caribbean.

Stakeholders gave recommendations to help ensure that the results of the CEPF Caribbean islands programme are likely to remain sustained beyond the end of the project in September, 2015. These included:

- Enhancing communication of results, best practices and key issues
- Conducting advocacy programmes and building the capacity of CSOs to use results of CEPF projects to influence policy
- Strengthening the organisational and technical capacity of individual CSOs
- Facilitating networking among civil society, government and private sector partners
- Building a strong knowledge base
- Extending the timeframe for support to allow more or better assimilation of key concepts and delivery of results
- Providing a phase of follow-up funding to build on and consolidate results achieved
- Assisting civil society to develop sustainable financing mechanisms
- Facilitating evaluation and learning on what works best in financing and supporting initiatives by and with CSOs in the Caribbean

Strategic recommendations on future CEPF investments to achieve conservation results were also identified and included focusing on sustainable livelihoods, mainstreaming biodiversity conservation, and supporting continued strategic civil society capacity building and networking.

Follow this link to read the complete report Summary Report of the CEPF
<http://www.canari.org/documents/SummaryreportCEPFCaribbeanmid-termeval130214.pdf>