



# CAPACITÉ

CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM  
PARTNERSHIP FUND

## Ringing out the old with something new!

In this edition of Capacité we introduce a new feature, *Hot Tips and Topics for Good Grant Management*. The Regional Implementation Team (RIT) will use this column to address key grant management themes to help Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) grantees in the Caribbean ensure they are adhering to the CEPF's policies and procedures, and implementing their projects effectively. Please give us your feedback and feel free to suggest topics for future issues.

In this issue of the newsletter we hear from the Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation in Jamaica, where planned developments in a CEPF Conservation Corridor are causing concern among civil society stakeholders in the environmental community. The Haiti Audubon Society tells us about its work in Haiti's Massif de la Hotte and shares the exciting news of finding a species of magnolia previously thought to be extinct. From the National Parks, Beaches and Rivers Authority in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, we learn about a pilot integrated watershed management plan that will be model for other watersheds in the country.

The Convention on Biodiversity highlights invasive alien species as one of the main direct drivers of biodiversity loss worldwide. A number of grants in the CEPF Caribbean Islands Hotspot portfolio are addressing this problem. In this issue, CAB International invites stakeholders to get involved in their regional invasive alien species networking and capacity building initiative.

As we come to the end of what has been a full and exciting year for the CEPF Caribbean Islands Hotspot programme, we wish you a season of peace and a fulfilling 2014.

*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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## Protected Area Strategy and Ecosystem Sustainability in the Massif de la Hotte Key Biodiversity Area, Haiti

- Jean Mary Laurent, Project Coordinator,  
Haiti Audubon Society



SOCIÉTÉ AUDUBON HAÏTI

The Massif de la Hotte Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) is among the 17 highest priority sites in the CEPF's Caribbean Islands Hotspot investment strategy. Despite its unique and rich biodiversity, the Massif de la Hotte has suffered the consequences of the chronic and widespread deforestation that has ravaged Haiti. Concerned by the situation, the Haiti Audubon Society, together with partners that include Penn State University and the University Quisqueya, decided to take action in the area by developing a three-pronged project targeting two sites of significant biological importance within the KBA, Grande Colline and Grand Bois.



Haiti Audubon Society's Joel Timyan and guide in front of a young *Magnolia ekmanii*.  
© Jean Mary Laurent/HAS

The three components of the project are as follows:

- *Development of local conservation strategies.* The project aims to put in place conservation strategies that are adapted to local conditions and capacities, and which engage surrounding communities.
- *Development of environmental protection policies.* The Haiti Audubon Society is committed to assisting and supporting the Haitian Government in its efforts to develop ecosystem management and protection policies. As part of this initiative, the areas' biodiversity will be documented and the government provided with detailed information on vertebrate species in the study sites, as well as on forest ecosystems including dominant plant species. The project is also cataloguing information about ecosystem-level threats in the study sites.
- *Environmental education strategies.* Various approaches and tools are being used to ensure the general public knows about the richness of Haiti's biodiversity and the threats it faces.



Inventories conducted under the project have confirmed the positive things said about species diversity and richness in Grande Colline and Grand Bois. Sixteen species of amphibians, 10 of which are endemic to the Massif de la Hotte, 11 species of reptiles including four that are endemic to KBA, and more than 30 species of birds, including 14 found only on the island of Haiti, have already been inventoried under the project. And very excitingly, the Ekman Magnolia (*Magnolia ekmanii*) that was thought to be extinct has been rediscovered. The project began in June 2013 project will end in September 2015.



*Sagraea polychetea (Melastomataceae)*, a Massif de la Hotte endemic.  
© Joel Timyan/HAS



## New on the Eco-Index!

- **Melissa Norman, Rainforest Alliance**

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

All grantees in the Caribbean 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 Dipika Chawla at [dchawla@ra.org](mailto:dchawla@ra.org).

### Projects recently added to the Eco-Index

- Strengthening the Legal Protection of the Mount Hartman National Park and Beausejour/Grenville Vale Key Biodiversity Areas in Grenada - <http://eco-index.org/search/results.cfm?projectId=1571>.  
Grenada Dove Conservation Programme.





## Hot Tips and Topics for Good Grant Management: Conflict of Interest

- Nicole Brown, RIT Country Coordinator, Jamaica and Anna Cadiz, RIT Manger

Through this new column, the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) will be tackling some key grant management topics to help CEPF grantees ensure they are adhering to CEPF's policies and procedures and implementing their projects effectively. Each issue of Capacité will zoom in on a different area. Let us know if there are any particular policies or grant management issues you would like us to focus on in future issues.



### What is a conflict of interest?

The CEPF Grant Agreement states that:

*Grant funds (including any interest thereon) shall not be expended for payments that are, or give the appearance of, a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest is defined as a transaction in which an employee's personal or financial interests conflict or appear to conflict with her/his official responsibility. Examples include, but are not limited to, such transactions as payments to the business partner(s) of the project director, co-project director, or members of their immediate families for salaries, expense reimbursement, or any other type of compensation, or payments to organisations in which the project director, co-project director, or member(s) of their immediate families have a financial interest.*

In plain language, this means a conflict of interest is a situation where the private interests of an individual who is employed to a CEPF grantee stand to gain or benefit financially from a transaction using grant funds. This doesn't necessarily mean that the individual her/himself could benefit, it could be a member of the individual's family or household, a business associate, or even a very close friend. For example, hiring a family member to do a piece of work under a CEPF project is a no-no. Sourcing goods from a relative's shop would indeed be considered a conflict of interest. In small societies like ours in the Caribbean it can be hard to avoid doing business with friends, but in a situation where a staff member with decision-making power in administering a CEPF grant finds her/himself confronted with having to assess a bid from a 'BFF' or football buddy for the provision of a particular good or service, s/he should remove her/himself from the decision-making process and avoid influencing the outcome.

### Handling possible conflicts of interest

The CEPF takes conflict of interest violations very seriously and where this occurs a grant can be suspended with immediate effect. Grantees with sub-grantees have a duty to make sure that there is no conflict of interest in their sub-grants. If there is *any possibility* of conflict of interest, CEPF asks that a grantee disclose this to the RIT or Secretariat before hiring or entering into a formal contract with an individual or a firm. Grantees should feel free to reach out to the RIT to ask for support in deciding whether or not a potential conflict of interest may arise in a given situation.



Now take the quiz below and test your understanding of the CEPF's conflict of interest rule.

### QUIZ

Are the following examples of situations where a CEPF grantee may experience a conflict of interest?

[See page 12 for the answers.](#)

- a) Funds from a CEPF grant are used to buy a vehicle from Best Cars Company Limited. The owner of Best Cars Company Limited is the brother-in-law of the Executive Director of the grantee organisation.
- b) A staff member takes part in the selection of suppliers of GIS equipment for a CEPF project and one of the bidders under consideration is her close personal friend.
- c) The son of the project manager is volunteering his time to do surveys for the project.
- d) A staff member accepts frequent and expensive dinner invitations from one of the media companies that the organisation has hired to handle the project's communications.
- e) A staff member on the project's recruitment committee is the sister of one of the candidates who is applying to be the project's new accountant. The staff member told the organisation about this relationship and voluntarily removed herself from the recruitment committee for this particular job posting.

Is there a grant management topic that you would like us to tackle in the next issue of Capacité?

Drop up a line at: [cepf-rit@canari.org](mailto:cepf-rit@canari.org)



### Grant Approvals October — December 2013

To date, the CEPF has approved 59 grants in the Caribbean region totalling more than USD 5.5 million. During the period October - December 2013, three new grants were contracted:

Grantee	Country	Grant (US\$)	Title/ Description
<b>Strategic Direction 2: Integrate biodiversity conservation into landscape and development planning and implementation in six conservation corridors</b>			
Jamaica Environment Trust (JET)	Jamaica	19,910	Building Support for the Portland Bight Protected Area in Jamaica
Société Audubon Haïti (SAH)	Haiti	6,500	Building Local Management Capacity to Save Endangered Frogs in Massif de La Selle/Forêt des Pins, Haiti
<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>			
Dispute Resolution Foundation (DRF)	Jamaica	7,048	Registration of Accompong Maroons as a Legal Entity to Undertake Conservation Initiatives and Actions to Protect a Key Biodiversity Area – The Cockpit Country in Jamaica

To see a full listing of all 59 grants in the region, including project summaries, go to the CEPF Caribbean webpage: <http://canari.org/documents/ContractedCEPFgrantsasof17.12.13.pdf>





## Challenges to Conservation in the Portland Bight Conservation Corridor, Jamaica

### **Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation**

In August 2013, the Government of Jamaica announced it was in discussions with a Chinese investor about the development of a transhipment port in the Portland Bight Protected Area/Conservation Corridor (PBPA/CC) of Jamaica, as part of a larger national strategy to establish Jamaica as the premier logistics node within the Americas, joining global nodes such as those in Dubai, Rotterdam, and Singapore. The proposed transhipment port and other associated developments have the potential to negatively affect ecosystems in the PBPA/CC, which includes three CEPF key biodiversity areas (KBAs) – Braziletto Mountains, Hellshire Hills, and Portland Ridge. It appears the investors are particularly interested in the Goat Islands, two near-shore islands in the vicinity of the Hellshire Hills KBA that have long been at the core of conservation strategies in the PBPA.

#### **Importance**

In 2010, the CEPF Ecosystem Profile for the Caribbean Islands Hotspot identified the PBPA/CC as one of the most important areas for biodiversity in the region. It includes the only remaining habitat for the Jamaican Iguana (*Cyclura collie*), one of the hundred most threatened animals in the world, and provides refuge for other rare or endangered species of plants and animals, such as an endemic tuna cactus (*Opuntia spinosissima*) and the Portland Ridge Cave Frog (*Eleutherodactylus cavernicola*). It is home to reptiles and amphibians that are found only in the Portland Bight, including the Blue-tailed Galliwasp (*Celestus duquesneyi*) and the Portland Ridge Thunder Snake (*Trophidophis stuliae*). Globally threatened species such as the American Crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*), Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and West Indian Manatee (*Trichechus manatus*) are also found there.

The PBPA/CC includes the best example of dry limestone forest in the Caribbean. But perhaps even more importantly, the functional juxtaposition of healthy and relatively undisturbed dry forests, coastal woodland, mangrove wetlands, sandy beaches, sea grass beds, and coral reefs and cays, is very rare in Jamaica and the Caribbean. One of the many important ways in which these ecosystems contribute to the local economy is by supporting inshore fisheries.



Salt Island Lagoon, a focus for biodiversity in the heart of the Hellshire Hills.  
© Ann Sutton



Hellshire coast with the Goat Islands in the distance.

© Jeremy Francis/Jamaica Environment Trust

The area's importance has been recognised in national and local planning and protection regimes. And in 2012, the Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation received a grant from the CEPF to develop management plans for two of the three KBAs located in the PBPA/CC, namely the Hellshire Hills and Portland Ridge KBAs.

### ***The development proposal***

It was a major surprise to protected area stakeholders when the government announced its intention to enter into a framework agreement with China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) to construct a transhipment port on 6,000 acres on and around the Goat Islands, before conducting a strategic environmental assessment (SEA), or even an environmental impact assessment (EIA). While details of the investor's plans remain unclear and largely unknown by the general public, there are potentially very serious implications for the PBPA/CC. These include the direct and indirect environmental and social impacts of construction, such as dredging channels and the harbour area in the vicinity of Old Harbour Bay, filling wetlands in a Ramsar site, and destroying an established fish sanctuary. Associated quarrying, road construction, and infrastructure development could result in loss and disturbance of forests, including iguana habitat in the nearby Hellshire Hills. Broader concerns include the long-term undermining of national planning processes and the protected area system, as a result of overriding the safeguards they provide to environmentally sensitive areas.



### The response

A coalition of civil society partners, which includes C-CAM, the Jamaica Environment Trust, scientists from the Department of Life Sciences at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus and other local and overseas groups, responded quickly to the announcement of the proposal and the scoping study that followed it. They have sought to provide accurate information about the irreplaceability, importance, and vulnerability of the area, the potential direct and indirect impacts to the area, as well as how this proposal could undermine Jamaica's protected area system and planning framework if established procedures are not followed.



The Old Harbour Bay Fishing Beach

© Ann Sutton

In advocating for a more transparent and collaborative approach to decision-making, environmental civil society organisations have attempted to foster informed discussion of the issues. These include participating in press conferences, promoting field visits to the area by a wide cross-section of society, educating the public about the costs and benefits of the proposed development, and making presentations to the media and in public fora. C-CAM is currently seeking funding for an independent analysis of development options and alternatives, and the potential impact of the proposed transhipment port on the area's ecological services.

For related information about C-CAM's work to develop management plans for the Hellshire Hills and Portland Ridge KBAs in the Portland Bight Protected Area/Conservation Corridor, see [Capacité Issue 6, September 2013](#).

For information about the Caribbean Wildlife Alliance floristic survey, see [Capacité Issue 3, December 2012](#).

### CEPF investment in the PBPA/CC

The support that CEPF has provided for the PBPA/CC has been of great importance in providing critical baseline information about the area. In addition to the 2012 grant to C-CAM to prepare participatory management plans for the Hellshire Hills and Portland Ridge KBAs, support has included funding for a floristic survey of the Hellshire Hills and the Goat Islands by the Caribbean Wildlife Alliance and partners in 2012. This survey resulted in a 54% increase in the known flora of the Hellshire Hills (including the Goat Islands), and added eight endemic plant species records.

The CEPF is currently supporting the Jamaica Environment Trust to increase public awareness of the importance of the PBPA/CC. Support to the World Resources Institute, which is partnering with the Jamaica Environment Trust and C-CAM, is helping communities and other stakeholders to engage in Jamaica's EIA process. 



## Watershed Management Planning in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

*- Andrew Wilson, Director, National Parks, Rivers, and Beaches Authority*

The Cumberland Forest Reserve in St. Vincent and the Grenadines protects the watershed that supplies approximately 20 per cent of the country's potable water. It is one of six watershed areas in the Central Mountain Range Conservation Corridor, but it is the only one that has official protected area status. It is also where the St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Parks, Rivers, and Beaches Authority (NPRBA) has embarked on a thirteen-month project to develop an integrated watershed management plan (IWMP), the first of its kind in the country and one that will serve as a model to be replicated in other watershed areas that require a multi-stakeholder, multi-agency approach to management.



View of the upper Cumberland Reserve rainforest.

© Casmus Mcleod/Forestry Department, SVG

The CEPF-supported “Integrated Watershed Management Planning and Forest Reserve Protection in the Central Mountain Range Conservation Corridor” project will improve land and water use planning in the watershed and take action to protect IUCN Global Red Listed species within the Central Mountain Range Conservation Corridor. The project area covers 1,075.9 hectares of predominantly secondary forest on steep, sloping mountains. Farming and fishing are the main socio-economic activities within the Cumberland Reserve, and farming is the major land use in the upper watershed areas. The project area also supports a number of

socio-economic sectors including tourism, water, and energy (hydroelectricity). This means the area has to be managed to support a variety of uses and users, including the agencies that manage and extract resources in the watershed, such as the NPRBA, the Forestry Department, the Environmental Management Department, the Central Water and Sewage Authority, and the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Electrical Company. The work of these agencies is often not well coordinated and sometimes overlaps.

In order to foster acceptance and ownership of this project by key stakeholders who use the Cumberland Watershed, members of the stakeholder agencies listed above were invited to sit on a Project Steering Committee. The Committee also includes the Cumberland Eco-tourism Organisation, which represents the community-based organisations in the area. The IWMP is addressing the need for coordinated management. In developing the plan, the NPRBA is identifying priority land, biodiversity, and water-related issues in the watershed. Appropriate strategies and actions to address them are being determined, along with management actions to be carried out collaboratively by a range of stakeholders.





Aquatic species sampling in the Cumberland River in November 2013 also served as a useful staff training exercise.

© Casmus Mcleod/Forestry Department, SVG

The project has benefited from collaboration with Global Parks ecologist Keith Langdon, who, since November 2013, has been conducting a Rapid Biodiversity Assessment of the Cumberland Watershed, including sampling of the aquatic ecosystem, along with the staff of the NPRBA, the Forestry Department, and watershed specialist Marie-José Edwards. This work will contribute to the preparation of a wildlife conservation strategy plan for the protection of the KBA trigger species, including the St. Vincent Parrot (*Amazona guildingii*), the Whistling Warbler (*Catharopeza bishopi*), St. Vincent Frog (*Pristimantis shrevei*) and the Black Snake (*Chironius vincenti*).

Work continues on the upper watershed assessments. This includes GIS mapping, the preparation of a zoning plan with forest types, critical habitats and biodiversity distribution within the Cumberland watershed. This information is being supplemented with socioeconomic data. The project is slated for completion by June 2014, with agency and stakeholder endorsement and acceptance of the IWMP. ↗



## Mainstreaming Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Issues in CEPF Priority Key Biodiversity Areas

*- Rafique Bailey, Regional Project Coordinator and Nairam Ramnanan, Regional Representative and IAS Coordinator*



As a result of its geography and climate, the Caribbean is one of the world's greatest centers of unique biodiversity. The region's diversity is not restricted to its plants and animals. The wider Caribbean region (the islands and continental countries bordering the Caribbean Sea) comprises 35 political units, including independent nations, and British, Dutch, French and U.S. dependent and overseas territories. These many countries with their numerous points of entry predispose the region to invasion by invasive alien species (IAS), which puts its biological richness at risk.

Since 2003, CAB International (CABI) Caribbean and Central America (CCA) centre has been playing a lead role in mitigating the threats of IAS in the wider Caribbean. In 2002-2003, we collaborated with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) on a project to identify invasive alien species threats in the Caribbean. ↗





This project compiled a database of IAS in the Caribbean and made recommendations for prevention, eradication, control and management of IAS at both the national and regional levels. CABI is now implementing a follow-on Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project, “Mitigating the Threats of Invasive Alien Species in the Insular Caribbean (MTIASIC).” Through MTIASIC, which will end in March 2014, CABI and partners have developed a regional IAS policy that has also been supported by the initiative’s five participating countries’ national IAS strategies and action plans .

In 2013, CABI signed an agreement with the CEPF to undertake a project that will build on the virtual network of invasive alien species professionals and organisations — Caribbean Invasive Alien Species Network (CIASNET) — to form a hub or portal for invasive species. The project will facilitate exchange of experiences between CEPF key biodiversity areas (KBAs); actively strengthen NGOs working on invasive alien species issues; support the implementation of a regional IAS strategy; and enhance policy advocacy for both IAS and biodiversity conservation in general. This will allow for better co-operation and collaboration among Caribbean stakeholders who work to protect the region’s rich biodiversity. The project will enhance local and regional networking, as well as share best practices and build capacity. We also hope to catalyse joint conservation actions among members.

The project will target the CEPF KBAs in five countries: St. Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, the Bahamas, and the Dominican Republic. However, the online networking and information sharing will indirectly benefit all eligible CEPF countries in the region and by extension the wider Caribbean.

Anyone interested in being part of this project should contact Nairam (Bob) Ramnanan, Regional Representative and IAS Coordinator via email on: [n.ramnanan@cabi.org](mailto:n.ramnanan@cabi.org).

All ministries of government, NGOs and agencies involved in biodiversity conservation and invasive species prevention and management in the KBAs in each target country are considered stakeholders in this project and their input and cooperation is being actively sought. The long term impact of this project will be the conservation of species and genetic diversity in the 45 priority key biodiversity areas in the Caribbean through enhanced collaboration via regional networking, and management of invasive alien species. 



The endangered Rhinoceros Iguana (top) and Ricord's Iguana, *Cyclura ricordii* (bottom) are native to Isla Cabritos in the Enriquillo Lake, Dominican Republic. Their habitat is threatened by donkeys and cattle, while feral cats prey on the juveniles.

© Kirsty Swinnerton , Island Conservation

**Answers to Conflict of Interest Quiz (page 5)**

- a) Yes, this is a conflict of interest. No transactions as payments can be made to organisations or firms in which the project director, co-project director, or members of their immediate families have a financial interest.
- b) Yes, this is a conflict of interest.
- c) No, this is not a conflict of interest as no project funds are being used to pay the son. The grantee should ensure that no funds are being used to reimburse any of the son's expenses as well.
- d) Yes, this is a conflict of interest. CEPF's procurement policy states that "Employees shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favours, or anything of monetary value from providers of goods/services or parties to sub-agreements".
- e) No, this is not a conflict of interest. Since the staff member disclosed the fact that her sister was applying to be the accountant and then removed herself from the decision-making process, the conflict of interest was avoided. Many organisations have protocols that require such a situation to go their Board for approval, in such cases, CEPF would expect grantees to follow their internal protocol as well.

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

**About CANARI**

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

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

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



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