



CAPACITÉ

CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM
PARTNERSHIP FUND

Ecosystem Services, Communication and Networking

Welcome to our first e-newsletter for 2014. In this issue of *Capacité*, we hear from the Dominican Republic, where the concept of ecosystem services is gaining currency, and support from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is helping advance that agenda through a range of projects.

Panos Caribbean and Rainforest Alliance, two grantees with regional capacity building and networking projects, share information about recent communication support activities they carried out under their projects. Rainforest Alliance provides a link to its social media training activity for those who missed it, while Panos Caribbean tells us about a recent workshop with civil society organisations and the media.

In the interest of supporting increased networking among protected areas professionals across the region, we share information about a new networking platform – Parks Caribbean – that was launched by Eco Tech Inc. Ltd at the beginning of the year. Although EcoTech is not a CEPF grantee, the Parks Caribbean website offers a learning and networking space for our grantees who work in protected areas.

We continue our *Hot Tips and Topics for Good Grant Management* column, this time demystifying the CEPF procurement policy. Be sure to follow the link at the end of the article to download the handy procurement decision tree developed by the CEPF Secretariat as a quick reference guide for your procurement decisions.

It wouldn't be *Capacité* without the usual updates and round-ups. Check out our new grants for the quarter and the new listings on Rainforest Alliance's Eco-Index. If you have not yet seen the *Summary Report of the CEPF Caribbean Islands Mid-term Evaluation*, you can read about it here in *Capacité* 8 and follow the link to the full report.

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.

CAPACITÉ – ISSUE 8

March 2014

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Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Management in the Dominican Republic: A Relationship Intrinsicly Linked to Human Well-being

- Leida Buglass, RIT Country Coordinator, Dominican Republic



Biodiversity is intrinsically related to the functioning of ecosystems and the multiple environmental goods and services derived from them. Biological diversity is gaining in importance as society begins to understand and appreciate how nature supports human well-being. The benefits include the quality and quantity of water, clean air, soil retention, natural remedies and pharmaceuticals, opportunities for recreation, pollination, protection from natural disasters, and resilience to climate change. There is also growing awareness that collaborative and effective management of protected areas are critical for maintaining these services. A symposium on *Experiences in the Management of Ecosystem Services in Central America and the Caribbean* held earlier this year in the Dominican Republic underscored how the management and conservation of natural resources to support ecosystem services encourages alliances that go beyond the traditional conservation community (see text box).




Sierra Bahoruco National Park is a hotspot for biodiversity in the Dominican Republic and has a high level of endemism. It provides several critical ecosystem services for the surrounding areas, including climate regulation, water and aquifer recharge for both the Dominican Republic and Haiti, soil formation and the regulation of nutrients.

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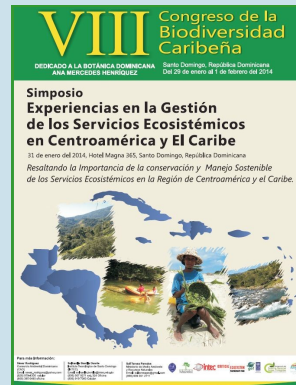
- The **regulation of ecosystem functions** through the:
 - ◇ control of invasive species - Grupo Jaragua, Island Conservation, and Fondo Pronaturaleza Inc. (PRONATURA);
 - ◇ carbon sequestration – Consorcio Ambiental Dominicana (CAD); and
 - ◇ analogue forestry - PRONATURA .
- **Improved livelihoods and pollination** through crop diversity and promotion of beekeeping – Centro para el Desarrollo Agropecuario y Forestal (CEDAF) and Grupo Jaragua.

- **Valuing vital public goods by promoting a payment for environmental services** scheme through the economic valuation of water resources in key biodiversity areas - Instituto Técnico de Santo Domingo (INTEC).
- **Social and cultural services** through:
 - ◊ Ecotourism - the Sociedad Ornitológica de la Hispaniola (SOH), Instituto Dominicano de Desarrollo Integral (IDDI), Sociedad para el Desarrollo Integral del Nordeste (SODIN);
 - ◊ *Communication and environmental awareness* – Fundación Loma Quita Espuela, Panos Caribbean and Rainforest Alliance.
- Support in **developing environmental policy** by:
 - ◊ establishing private reserves for biodiversity conservation - CAD;
 - ◊ preparing and implementing management plans and/or conservation agreements - PRONATURA, IDDI, SOH and Conservation International (CI).

The integrated management of biodiversity and ecosystem services represents a paradigm shift in the approach to biodiversity conservation. The ways in which these projects have addressed various management models and mechanisms, policy advocacy, and communication has brought biodiversity to the attention of the wider society and begun to create a constituency for it. Managing biodiversity comprises various processes, including integrated efforts for restoring habitats and ecosystems, the sustainable use and preservation of biodiversity, as well as creating a knowledge base by collecting, analysing and sharing information, and networking.

Civil society organisations in the Dominican Republic have recognised their strategic role in promoting biodiversity conservation to safeguard the supply of ecosystem services that strengthen Dominican society at large and are essential for the development of the country and ensuring its long-term competitiveness. 

Highlighting the Importance of the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Ecosystem Services



At the end of January 2014, more than 80 participants from five countries and 31 institutions came together in Santo Domingo during the VIII Caribbean Biodiversity Congress for a one-day symposium

on managing ecosystem services organised by CEPF grantees – Consorcio Ambiental Dominicana (CAD) and the Instituto Técnico de Santo Domingo (INTEC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources.

Discussions during the symposium on *Experiences in the Management of Ecosystem Services in Central America and the Caribbean* highlighted that the management of ecosystem services not only stops the degradation of natural resources and biodiversity, it also helps makes biodiversity visible by focusing interest on the goods and services provided to citizens, the public and private sectors, as well as local authorities.

Follow this link to access the conference book with papers by presenters. http://www.cad.org.do/publicaciones/archivos/Libro_Resumenes_Simposio.pdf

High Praise for Panos Caribbean’s Media — CSO Workshop, Jamaica

- *Petre Williams-Raynor, Project Coordinator, Panos Caribbean*



Civil society participants in a recent communication training workshop in Jamaica walked away with high praise for the event, which brought them together with media practitioners to debate, collaborate, network and strategise around communicating conservation.

The workshop, organised by Panos Caribbean through funding from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), was implemented under the project ‘Strengthening the Engagement of Caribbean Civil Society in Biodiversity Conservation Through Local and Regional Networking and Effective Sharing of Learning and Best Practices’.

Held at the Hotel Four Seasons in Kingston on 28 February and 1 March, 12 representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs) working on biodiversity conservation island-wide and seven media practitioners

turned out. Workshop presenters introduced participants to the strategic use of video and social media to achieve better outcomes in communicating biodiversity conservation.



Media and CSO participants at the recent Panos Caribbean workshop in Jamaica exchange ideas during a group session.


© Emma Lewis

At the end of the two days, the accolades were many even as participants agreed on concrete next steps, including sharing information with each other and jointly developing an environmental education campaign.

“I found the interactions with fellow workshop participants dynamic and the outcomes that I am involved with extremely important, necessary and urgent,” said filmmaker Dr. Esther Figueroa.

Her sentiments were echoed by Ingrid Parchment, head of the Caribbean Coastal Area Management (C-CAM) Foundation, who said it was “a good learning experience” and facilitated “good networking.”

The Jamaica workshop was the second of three implemented under the project. The first was staged in Haiti in February and the third in the Dominican Republic on 13 and 14 March.

Project goals include strengthening the capacity of CSOs to use communication to enhance the protection of endemic, threatened and globally important species, assisting in the sustainable management of key biodiversity areas; and enabling local and regional networking on species. In addition to the workshops, Panos will achieve these outcomes through a series of webinars (see page 5), journalist fellowships, a video and brochure documenting learning and best practice, as well as an online database for key partners. 

Developing CEPF Grantees' Social Media Communication Skills

- *Dipika Chawla, Rainforest Alliance*

On 10 March 2014, CEPF grantees Rainforest Alliance and Panos Caribbean presented an informative webinar on social media strategy and best practices for conservation NGOs. The webinar covered several important topics including an overview of social media platforms, the role of social media in your overall communications strategy, creating compelling content for your audiences, and best practices for frequency and timing of posts.

A recording of the webinar and links to the presentations given are available on the Rainforest Alliance's Eco-Index website at <http://www.eco-index.org/cepf/webinars/>. 




New on the Eco-Index!

CEPF has given a grant to the Rainforest Alliance (RA) to work with fellow grantees to publish profiles of their projects on the Eco-Index. In addition, RA also features a select number of projects in the Eco-Index's "Stories from the Field" and *Eco-Exchange* publications, and will also organize and facilitate a number of webinars among grantees and with recognized experts (see related article above).

All grantees in the hotspot are encouraged to participate; to add your project to the Eco-Index database, please visit: www.eco-index.org/add, or contact Dipika Chawla at dchawla@ra.org.

Projects recently added to the Eco-Index:

- *Management Planning in the Hellshire Hills and Portland Ridge and Bight Key Biodiversity Areas of Jamaica*: <http://eco-index.org/search/results.cfm?projectID=1582> An article about this project was featured in our Eco-Exchange newsletter: <http://ecoindex.wordpress.com/2013/12/23/goat-islands-jamaica/>
- *Regional Networking and Strategy Development for Invasive Alien Species in the CEPF Priority Key Biodiversity Areas in the Caribbean*: <http://eco-index.org/>
- *Feasibility Analysis, Operational Planning, and Capacity Building to Eradicate Invasive Alien Species and to Expand Protection in The Bahamas and Dominican Republic*: <http://eco-index.org/search/results.cfm?projectID=1584>
- *Participatory Implementation of the La Humeadora Mountain National Park Management Plan in the Dominican Republic*: <http://www.eco-index.org/search/results.cfm?projectID=1581>
- *Strengthening the Engagement of Caribbean Civil Society in Biodiversity Conservation Through Local and Regional Networking and Effective Sharing of Learning and Best Practices*: <http://www.eco-index.org/search/results.cfm?projectID=1589>
- *Building Capacity for Sustainable Tourism and Livelihoods for the Long-Term Conservation and Management of Key Biodiversity Areas in Grenada*: <http://www.eco-index.org/search/results.cfm?projectID=1585> 

Hot Tips and Topics for Good Grant Management: Demystifying the CEPF Procurement Policy



It may seem cumbersome, but CEPF's procurement policy has been put in place to promote fair and open competition, while minimising exposure to fraud and collusion. The policy is part of the small and large grant contracts with the CEPF and is intended to guide grantees in decisions about purchasing goods, professional services or works from an external source to ensure fairness, transparency and accountability. The elements of CEPF's procurement policy are explained below.

1. The US\$5,000 procurement threshold: If you buy goods, professional services or works with a total unit cost of *less than US\$5,000*, you do not need to go through a competitive bidding process and you do not need prior approval from the CEPF. This is an "off the shelf" purchase.

If your purchase is *greater than US\$5,000 but less than US\$50,000* you must either go through a competitive bidding process or follow the sole source procurement procedure. CEPF also has a specific procedure for buying vehicles.

2. When prior approval for purchases is needed from CEPF: You need the CEPF Secretariat's prior approval in the following four instances:

a. Sole source procurement. If you want to buy a good, professional service or work with a total unit cost of *US\$5,000 or more without going through the competitive bidding process* described in 4 and 5 below, you will need prior approval from the CEPF. You will have to submit a sole source justification using the CEPF's template; you must get written approval before proceeding.

b. Inability to obtain three suitable bids. If you go through a competitive bidding process and are unable to get three bids but have nevertheless identified a suitable supplier or provider, this is also considered sole source procurement. You must then follow the procedure in 2 (a).

c. Vehicle (car) purchase. See 5 below.

d. Goods, services or works equal to or more than US\$50,000. CEPF has another threshold at the US\$50,000 mark. Contact CEPF for written instructions for the additional bidding requirements.

3. When prior approval for purchases is not needed from CEPF: You don't always need the CEPF's say so to go ahead with a purchase. If the good, service or work costs US\$50,000 or less and is in your original project budget, the CEPF Secretariat does not need to give prior approval, unless you are unable to get at least three bids or price quotes, or are specifically requested by CEPF to do so. However, you must follow the competitive bidding process explained in 4.

CEPF's procurement policy applies to small and large grants. The RIT provides prior approval on behalf of the CEPF Secretariat for small grants.

4. Steps for a competitive bidding process:

a. Goods with a total unit cost of US\$5,000 or more

- Develop a clear written description of the technical requirements for the good to be procured (i.e., acceptable characteristics, minimum acceptable standards).
- Obtain *at least* three price quotes based on your specifications. It is not enough to merely request three quotations; you must get them in hand. Having less than three price quotes becomes sole source procurement and you will need to follow the procedure in 2(a).
- You must get price quotes from a reputable business that buys and sells the good in question as part of its day-to-day business operations. Quotations must respond to all requirements in the request for bids, and include the description and quantity of the goods, as well as the delivery time and place.
- Once you have all your quotations and have made a decision, write a justification memo explaining your selection based on the technical specifications.
- Keep all documentation of this process on file so you can make it available to CEPF or any of its donors, if asked to do so.

b. Professional services with a total unit cost of US\$5,000 or more:

- Prepare Terms of Reference (ToR) that set out:
 - ◇ Details of the project, your organisation and CEPF.
 - ◇ Details of the job for which help is needed.
 - ◇ Desired qualifications of the ideal candidate.
 - ◇ Expected outputs and delivery schedule.
 - ◇ Method for monitoring performance and quality.
 - ◇ Explanation on the selection process.
- Obtain *at least* three CVs based on your person specifications. It is not enough to merely request three CVs; you must get them in hand. Having less than three CVs becomes sole source procurement and you will need to follow the procedure in 2(a).
- Once you have all your quotations and have made a decision, write a justification memo explaining your selection based on the person specifications.
- Keep all documentation of this process on file so you can make it available to CEPF or any of its donors, if asked to do so.


5. Purchasing a vehicle (cars only) with CEPF funds: When purchasing any type of car you must go through a competitive bidding process and request written approval from the CEPF Secretariat *prior* to buying it.

The procedure is generally similar to the competitive bidding process for goods, but has the following specific requirements:

- a. Requests for quotations must be based on the technical requirements for the vehicle (i.e., required characteristics, minimum acceptable performance standards) and not on a desired make and model.
- b. You must get price quotes from a reputable automobile dealer, that is to say a business that buys and sells cars as part of its day-to-day operations. Quotations must respond to all specifications in the request for bids, include a description of the vehicle, and specify the price, delivery time and place.
- c. You must have the CEPF Secretariat's written approval before making the purchase.

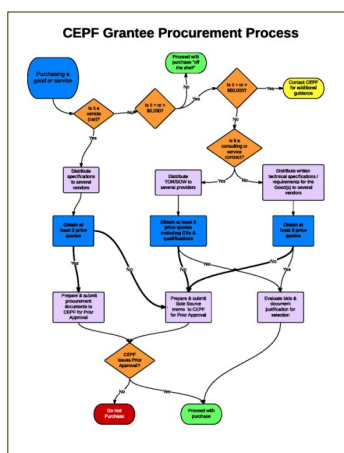
6. Procurement templates available from the CEPF Secretariat or the RIT:

- Sole source justification form
- Selection rationale memo

7. Record keeping: No matter what procurement procedure you use (even when making “off the shelf” purchases for less than US\$5,000), it is important to keep all documentation on file so you can make it available if asked to do so. 

The CEPF has developed a decision tree to help with the procurement process.

 [Click here to download it.](#)



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

Drop us a line at: cepf-rit@canari.org

Parks Caribbean: A Resource for Protected Areas Management



- *Lloyd Gardner, Director, Ecotech Inc. Limited*

Protected areas provide a range of economic, social, and environmental benefits to communities, yet those benefits are not always easily seen or understood by decision-makers or stakeholders, including communities adjacent to protected areas. In an effort to increase public awareness of the benefits of protected areas while simultaneously providing support to professionals involved in protected areas management, Ecotech Inc. Limited launched Parks Caribbean (<http://parkscaribbean.net>) in January 2014.

The Parks Caribbean website highlights the multiple economic, social, and environmental benefits derived from protected areas. It provides information on sites, programmes, and projects. It includes general information for a wide audience, as well as more technical information and publications for use by decision-makers and protected areas professionals.

The Parks Caribbean website and associated services can be used in the following ways:

1. Display of Country Profiles – Countries can post profiles of their protected areas programme on the website. Country profiles are prepared by Parks Caribbean Associates under the direction of the relevant authorities in the respective countries. Countries are required to underwrite the cost of the review and preparation of the associated products (e.g., the review report, country profile, and profiles of selected sites).

2. Display of Site Profiles - Protected area managers within the Caribbean can provide site profiles for display on the website. Site profiles are prepared by site managers, and the content must be in keeping with the approved guidelines (<http://parkscaribbean.net/country-profiles-2/guidelines-for-submission-of-site-profiles/>). There is no charge for submitting site profiles, but management institutions are responsible for updating the profiles periodically.

For more information about Parks Caribbean, contact:
Lloyd Gardner, Director
Ecotech Inc. Limited
Email: info@parkscaribbean.net

3. Post News and Events - Managers or staff of protected areas can submit general news or information about events. There is no charge for posting general news and information, but submissions should be of interest to a Caribbean audience.

4. Upload Publications – Reports and other documents can be submitted for placement on the website. Those documents should either be in the public domain or owned by the submitting entity.

5. Receive Protected Areas News - Persons who wish to receive news circulated by Parks Caribbean Associates and Members can subscribe to the news feature of the website.

6. Become a Parks Caribbean Member - Experts in protected areas management can apply for membership in Parks Caribbean. The primary role of members is advisory. There is no charge to become a member, but applicants must agree to provide technical guidance to, or share experiences with, protected areas managers and other professionals as requested. The membership guidelines can be found on the website.

7. Consulting Services and Project Management – Parks Caribbean Associates also provide consulting services, which can be for delivery of specific project outputs or assistance in programme/project design and implementation. Information for posting to Parks Caribbean must be submitted in English to:


info@parkscaribbean.net

Summary Report of the CEPF Caribbean Islands Mid-term Evaluation Now Available

The *Summary Report for the Mid-term Evaluation of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot Investment (2010 - 2015)* is now available. The report was prepared by CANARI and reflects the analysis and recommendations of a multi-stakeholder review that assessed progress of the CEPF Caribbean investment at the half-way mark of the programme in 2013.

Stakeholders from among CEPF grantees and partners in civil society and government felt that the CEPF Caribbean islands programme is achieving strong results. The programme has helped put biodiversity conservation on the agenda in countries of the region; provided new information to inform on the ground action; and facilitated networking and partnership building at national and regional levels.

To help ensure that the results of the CEPF Caribbean islands programme are likely to be sustained beyond the end of the project in September 2015, stakeholders recommended putting a strong emphasis on communicating results, best practices and key issues. They also pointed to a need for the programme to build the capacity of CSOs to use results of CEPF projects to influence policy and facilitate networking among civil society, government and private sector partners.

As the programme seeks to consolidate the gains of its first two and a half years and fill the portfolio gaps identified, the focus of new investments during the remainder of the programme will include: supporting the development and implementation of management plans; mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in policy and development planning; and supporting continued strategic civil society capacity building and networking. 



The CEPF Caribbean programme has helped put biodiversity conservation on the agenda in countries of the region.

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[Click here for the Executive Summary of the report.](#) (PDF)

[Click here to access the full report.](#) (PDF)

[Click here to see all the reports of the review process that fed into the summary report.](#)

Grant Approvals January - March 2014



To date, CEPF has approved 58 grants in the Caribbean region totalling over USD 5.7 million. During the period January – March 2014, five new grants were contracted:

Grantee	Country	Grant (US\$)	Title/ Description
Strategic Direction 1: Improve protection and management of 45 priority key biodiversity areas			
Instituto Dominicana de Desarrollo Integral (IDDI)	Dominican Republic	\$125,000.00	Improving Management and Promoting Eco-Tourism in the Bahoruco Oriental Wildlife Refuge in the Dominican Republic
Strategic Direction 2: Integrate biodiversity conservation into landscape and development planning and implementation in six conservation corridors			
Grupo Jaragua	Dominican Republic	\$19,924.00	Integrating the corridor communities in the Jaragua - Bahoruco- Enriquillo/Massif de la Selle Biosphere Reserve through sustainable livelihoods that support biodiversity conservation in the Dominican Republic and the Republic of Haiti
Sociedad Ornitológica de la Hispaniola Inc. (SOH)	Dominican Republic	\$19,989.00	Forging and empowering local alliances for the conservation of the Sierra de Bahoruco National Park and the Loma Charco Azul Biological Reserve Parke through the formation of municipal environmental promoters
Strategic Direction 3: Support Caribbean civil society to achieve biodiversity conservation by building local and regional institutional capacity and by fostering stakeholder collaboration			
Instituto Dominicana de Desarrollo Integral (IDDI)	Dominican Republic	\$19,962.00	Technical Assistance for Sustainable Financing to Non-Governmental Organisations Working in Biodiversity Conservation in the Dominican Republic
Kiunzi	Dominican Republic	\$19,940.00	Strengthening the communication and networking capacity of organisations working in the Dominican Republic's key biodiversity areas

You can see a full listing, including project summaries, of all 58 grants in the region on the CEPF Caribbean webpage: http://www.canari.org/documents/ContractedCEPFgrantsasof280314English_000.pdf

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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 your comments about the newsletter to us at 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.



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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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