

#### Title

*Kigali, Rwanda, 21 February 2013* – Two major donors for conservation action, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) and the MacArthur Foundation, launched their new calls for proposals during a joint event yesterday evening in Kigali, Rwanda.

In the context of the Regional Great Lakes Stakeholders Forum, organized by the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS) on 21 and 22 February 2013 in Kigali, Rwanda, representatives of CEPF and the MacArthur Foundation announced their new calls for proposals.

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is looking for proposals that aim to mainstream biodiversity into wider development policies, plans and projects to deliver the co-benefits of biodiversity conservation, improved local livelihoods and economic development in the Eastern Afromontane biodiversity hotspot. CEPF is also interested in proposals that aim to initiate and support sustainable financing and related actions for the conservation of priority KBAs (Key Biodiversity Areas) and corridors in the hotspot. The hotspot runs from Yemen in the Arabian Peninsula, to Mozambique and Zimbabwe in southern Africa, and includes 14 countries that are eligible for funding under this call for proposals.

“This hotspot is extremely important for its biodiversity – it is home to more than 500 mammal species of which more than 100 are endemic,” said Pierre Carret, CEPF Grant Director for the Eastern Afromontane hotspot. “About 1,300 bird species occur in the hotspot, 350 reptile species, 230 amphibian species, and more than 890 species of fish - and a large number of these are unique to the region. Protecting this biodiversity is a key priority for CEPF, as this region is among the most important, most diverse and most threatened places in the world. The hotspot also provides a wide range of ecosystem services which are of immense value to local development and the lives and livelihoods of the people – water, soil, clean air... It is also home to inspiring sceneries of great cultural value.”

The MacArthur Foundation is looking for projects in the Great Lakes Region of East and Central Africa that understand and respond to increased environmental pressures from development and climate change impacts; that create and expand incentives to conserve ecosystems; and that will assist the rural poor in managing their resources for multiple benefits - with special attention to vulnerable and marginalized groups (including women and ethnic minorities). Geographic focus will be on the Omo/Turkana, Tanganyika, and Malawi/Nyasa Lake Basins.

“The fact that both calls for proposals are launched at the same time, at the same place, with aligned application and assessment processes, shows the good intention of these two donor agencies to coordinate their approaches to supporting conservation in this African region,” said Dr Julius Arinaitwe, Africa Regional Director for BirdLife International, which – together with IUCN and the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society - coordinates the CEPF Regional Implementation Team for the Eastern Afromontane hotspot. “This can only be a good thing, as it will enhance donor collaboration, programmatic synergies, and more and better opportunities for civil society in this region to find the financial resources needed to address the increasingly severe threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services in Africa. We very much welcome this joint initiative.”

Eligibility criteria and more information about both calls for proposals are available at (for CEPF):

[www.cepf.net/grants/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.cepf.net/grants/Pages/default.aspx) and (for MacArthur Foundation)

[www.macfound.org/press/publications/conservation-sustainable-development-program-priorities/](http://www.macfound.org/press/publications/conservation-sustainable-development-program-priorities/)

**About the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund** - The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund is a joint initiative 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. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation. [www.cepf.net](http://www.cepf.net)

**About the MacArthur Foundation**—MacArthur's conservation grantmaking, through the Conservation and Sustainable Development Program, aims to preserve ecosystems and species and to promote development that

respects the environment. [www.macfound.org](http://www.macfound.org)