Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot

Palestine

Factsheet about future investment in biodiversity conservation projects in Palestine by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)
WHAT IS CEPF?

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) provides grants to non-governmental and private sector organizations to help protect biodiversity hotspots. Since its establishment in 2000, CEPF has awarded more than 2,120 grants in 92 countries and territories. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

WHAT IS THE MEDITERRANEAN BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOT?

Stretching from Cabo Verde to eastern Turkey, the Mediterranean Basin is identified as one of the world's 35 biodiversity hotspots, earth’s most biologically rich, yet threatened, areas.

CEPF has been active in the hotspot since 2012, and has begun a new 5-year investment phase in 2017, with US$ 11.2 million to invest until September 2022.

CEPF’s initial investment phase demonstrated that through funding, along with mentoring, partnerships and innovative communication strategies, civil society groups play an important role in conservation efforts.

A map of the Mediterranean hotspot

WHAT IS CEPF’S INVESTMENT STRATEGY?

Before providing funding to a hotspot, CEPF develops an “Ecosystem Profile” that informs its investment strategy. In the Mediterranean, more than 500 civil society organizations and other stakeholders in the region were consulted over a period of 6 months for this in-depth analysis, helping to develop a shared strategy from the outset that has a bigger impact for nature.

When developing an Ecosystem Profile for a biodiversity hotspot, CEPF decides on a few priorities, which are known as “strategic directions.” These are important to grant applicants because each project must address a strategic direction and one or more of its investment priorities. For the Mediterranean, these are the current strategic directions:

1. Support civil society to engage stakeholders in demonstrating integrated approaches for the preservation of biodiversity in coastal areas.
2. Support the sustainable management of water catchments through integrated approaches for the conservation of threatened freshwater biodiversity.
3. Promote the maintenance of traditional land use practices necessary for the conservation of Mediterranean biodiversity in priority corridors of high cultural and biodiversity value.
4. Strengthen the engagement of civil society to support the conservation of plants that are critically endangered or have highly restricted ranges.
5. Strengthen the regional conservation community through the sharing of best practices and knowledge among grantees across the hotspot.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR A GRANT?

All NGOs, community groups, private enterprises and other civil society organizations may apply for funding. Our grant recipients range from small farming cooperatives and community associations to international organizations. What do they all have in common? They are dedicated to protecting biodiversity. For more details, please visit our page: https://www.cepf.net/grants/eligibility

HOW DO I APPLY?

For information on how to apply, please visit: https://www.cepf.net/grants.

Calls for Proposals are announced on the CEPF website at: https://www.cepf.net/grants/open-calls-for-proposals.
Why is CEPF investing in Palestine?

To protect priority Key Biodiversity Areas and species

Regardless of its small area, the biodiversity of Palestine has been a continuous source of fascination to the human inhabitants of the area and beyond. This is true since it is suited at a unique spot on the globe, an important meeting point at the junction between three continents: Europe, Africa and Asia continents, which created unique topography and ecosystems which entertained endemic plants that do not exist in any other place in the world. This position placed the country in one of the major flyway for migratory birds within the Eurasian African region.

Palestine, as part of the Eastern Mediterranean region, constitutes one of the richest ecosystems in the world, with a large variety of wildlife resources and rich base of flora and fauna. Extreme geographical, lithological, and climatic heterogeneity account for shaping the natural resources and their relationships.

This diversity is nurtured by the abruptness with which climatic zones, deserts, steppe plains, Mediterranean woodlands, and even oases join one another in this compact geographical area. There are places where, because of topographical peculiarities, the buffer zone between desert and woodland is so narrow that it is virtually indistinguishable.

Fourteen Key Biodiversity Areas have been identified in Palestine, representing about 25 percent of the land area. Such high figure can be put in relation to the high level of endemism and the situation of “refuge for wildlife” of uninhabited lands in these densely inhabited regions.

Today, Palestine’s biodiversity is threatened from agricultural intensification, unsustainable hunting, urbanization and development that undermines nature conservation. CEPF investments in the country will play a part in combating the negative impact of such challenges. Future projects will focus on developing well-managed protected areas by including more local communities in conservation actions, and target conservation actions to globally threatened species.

Eligibility of projects in Palestine:

CEPF investment in Egypt will focus on the following investment priorities:

Strategic Direction 3: Production of Landscapes: Promote the maintenance of traditional land use practices necessary for the conservation of Mediterranean biodiversity in priority corridors of high cultural and biodiversity value. (in Lebanon, priority KBAs for this strategic direction are those within the ‘Orontes Valley and Levantine Mountains Corridor’).

- 3.1: Support local communities to increase the benefit they receive from maintaining and enhancing traditional, biodiversity-friendly land-use and agricultural practices.
- 3.2: Promote awareness of the value of traditional, biodiversity-friendly land-use practices among local community and government decision makers, to secure their recognition and support.
- 3.3: Encourage business actors in the trade chain to support and promote traditional, biodiversity-friendly land-use practices.

Strategic Direction 4: Plants: Strengthen the engagement of civil society to support the conservation of plants that are critically endangered or have highly restricted ranges through supporting the following investment priorities:

- 4.1: Increase knowledge and skills to support assessment and planning for the conservation of plants, and foster the emergence of a new generation of young professionals in plant conservation.
- 4.2: Support integration of plant conservation into the management of protected areas.
- 4.3: Support innovative actions for the conservation of important populations of plants, working with landowners and managers.

How can I get involved?

Contact Information

For questions specific to Egypt grants, contact:
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Web & Social Media

www.birdlife.org/cepf-med
www.cepf.net
Facebook: @CEPF.MED / Twitter: @CEPFmed #CEPFmed

A map of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in the Mediterranean hotspot of Palestine

Iris haynei (Vulnerable)
A map of draft Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in the Mediterranean hotspot of Palestine

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<tr>
<th>KBA Code</th>
<th>KBA Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>PS08</td>
<td>Al Quds</td>
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<td>PS05</td>
<td>Dead Sea Coast</td>
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<td>PS05</td>
<td>'Ein el 'Auja and Wadi el Qilt</td>
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