



**Call for Letters of Inquiry (LOI)
Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot**

Small Grants

Opening Date: 17 May 2021

Closing Date: 13 June 2021 (midnight GMT)

Eligible Countries:

Cameroon, Sao Tome & Principe

Eligible Applicants:

This call is only opened to the Civil Society Organizations (referred to as “Mentees”), who has signed an agreement under the CEPF’s mentorship program, implemented by Fauna & Flora International (Sao Tome and Principe) and Tropical Biology Association (in Cameroon) jointly referred to as Mentors.

Eligible Budget:

The maximum budget for this call is **US \$25,000.00 per project**. Budget exceeding US \$25,000.00 will not be considered.

Eligible Timeframe:

The estimated earliest project start date should be 2 August 2021. All project activities must be completed, and final report approved by **31 January 2022**. Project duration exceeding 31 January 2022 will not be considered.

Eligible Strategic Directions:

The scope of this call is limited to certain Investment Priorities of CEPF’s **Strategic Direction 1** (*Empower local communities to engage in sustainable management of 40 priority sites and consolidate ecological connectivity at the landscape scale*), and **Strategic Direction 4** (*Build the capacity of local civil society organizations, including Indigenous People’s, women’s and youth groups, to conserve and manage globally important biodiversity*).

Projects should address only one Strategic Direction but can cover one or more Investment Priorities within it. Please see further guidance below:

- Strategic Direction 1: Under this Strategic Direction, we are looking for projects that will:
 - Strengthen the elaboration and/or implementation of land-use planning, land tenure and forestry reforms to facilitate good governance in the management of community and private reserves and concessions.
 - Promote preparation and implementation of participatory management plans that support stakeholder collaboration in protected area management. **Priority will be given to NGOs that can demonstrate the following,**

- have already initiated this process and can be achieved within the project time frame and budget.
- Have engaged all the relevant stakeholders and gotten their endorsement
- At least one of the action plans can be implemented within the project time frame and budget.
- Demonstrate sustainable livelihood/job creation activities for local communities **focused on Non-timber Forest Products (NTFP)** which will act as incentives for the conservation of priority sites.
- Strategic Direction 4: Under this Strategic Direction, we are looking for projects that will:
 - Establish and strengthen **women-led conservation** and development organizations, associations, and networks to foster gender equality in natural resource management and benefit sharing
 - Strengthen the **communication capacity** of local civil society organizations in support of their mission and to build public awareness on the importance of conservation outcomes. This should be focused on strengthening your own organization's communication capacity. Example can be, but not limited to; developing a communication strategy and implementing it, setting up a website or social media handles to communicate your work, support training for a communication person within your organization etc.
 - Establish networks or partnerships between civil society groups, **government, and private sector actors to facilitate capacity building, avoid duplication of effort and maximize impact.** Examples of networks/partnerships include but are not limited to:
 - a partnership with government/private sector and alliance of fisher folk to promote sustainable fisheries practices,
 - a partnership between one or more NGOs with one or more private sector partners to improve biodiversity management on private/public lands,
 - a national working group focusing on KBA monitoring and conservation including representative from different sector.

How to Apply:

Before submitting a Lol, applicants are encouraged to discuss proposal ideas and eligibility with their respective mentors.

All applicants for this call must submit a Lol in either English, French, or Portuguese. The Lol templates for small grants are available in English [here](#), in French [here](#), in Portuguese [here](#) and application guidelines are available [here](#).

Completed Lols for small grant projects should be sent as an email attachment to cepf-gfwa-sgp@birdlife.org. Receipt of the application will be acknowledged by email. Hardcopy Lols are not acceptable.

Applications can be made at any time within the stipulated time frame. Applications will be assessed upon submission and final decision to be communicated no later than 6 weeks from submission date. Upon successful application, applicant should expect approximately 4 weeks between project approval and contracting the grant.



Kindly note that only one application will be considered per organization. Multiple applications from an organization will not be considered.

More information:

More details on how to apply are available on the CEPF website [here](#) and Tips for getting your grant idea funded can also be found in English [here](#). All potential applicants should refer to the ecosystem profile and the following references:

- Priority Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and Conservation Corridors listed in the ecosystem –profile here in [English](#) and in [French](#))
- CEPF projects database: Available on [this link](#)

Applicants are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the complete investment strategy for the Guinean Forests of West Africa (GFWA) Biodiversity Hotspot, which is summarized in English [here](#), in French [here](#) and in Portuguese [here](#).

Please note that preference will be given to projects that are the closest fit to the investment strategy and demonstrate a leading role for local civil society organizations.

Grant funds cannot be used for: (i) purchase of land; (ii) removal or alteration of any physical cultural property (including those with archaeological, palaeontological, historical, religious or unique natural values); (iii) relocation of people or any other form of involuntary resettlement; or (iv) capitalization of trust funds. All activities must comply with CEPF's social and environmental safeguard policies, which can be found [here](#).

CEPF and BirdLife International are committed to integrating gender into its portfolio. Applicants should design projects and write proposals that consider gender issues in the achievement of their conservation impacts. CEPF has developed several resources that can help applicants to design, implement and evaluate gender-aware projects ([CEPF Gender Toolkit](#)) and understand what CEPF seeks in a proposal ([CEPF Gender Fact Sheet](#)). Visit the [CEPF and Gender webpage](#) to learn more about how CEPF addresses gender in the projects it supports.

Contacts

Before submitting an LoI, applicants can contact; the RIT cepf-gfwa-sgp@birdlife.org, Paul Ngafack paul.ngafack@birdlife.org for projects in Cameroon and Mariana Carvalho Mariana.Carvalho@birdlife.org for projects in Sao Tome and Principe, to inquire about the eligibility of their project concept and site.

General information:

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is designed to safeguard Earth's biologically richest and most threatened regions, known as biodiversity hotspots. CEPF is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation. *More information on CEPF can be found at www.cepf.net.*



The Guinean Forests Biodiversity Hotspot covers 621,705 sq. km and can be divided into two sub-regions: the '**Upper Guinean Forests**' from Guinea in the west, through Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo and, marginally, into Benin and the '**Lower Guinean Forests**', from much of southern Nigeria, into south-west Cameroon, and São Tomé & Príncipe and the offshore islands of Equatorial Guinea. The Guinean Forests support impressive levels of biodiversity, having high levels of species richness and endemism. It also faces many ongoing threats to biodiversity which have resulted in the loss of more than 85 percent of the native vegetation cover.

CEPF's investment niche in the Guinean Forests is therefore to provide Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) at grassroots, national and international levels with the tools, capacity, and resources to establish and sustain multi-stakeholder partnerships that demonstrate models for sustainable, pro-poor growth and achieve priority conservation outcomes. CEPF's niche for investment in the Hotspot was formulated through a participatory process that engaged civil society, donor, governmental stakeholders, the private sector, and other actors throughout the region. The results of this process and the five-year (2016-2021) strategy that CEPF has identified for supporting biodiversity conservation in the Guinean Forest of West Africa region are outlined in the Ecosystem Profile, available [here](#)