



CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM
PARTNERSHIP FUND

Summary Report for the Regional Workshop

**Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)
Caribbean islands Biodiversity Hotspot investment
(2010 - 2015)**

Mid-term Evaluation

Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), July 2013

1. Introduction

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) [Caribbean Islands Programme](#) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank. The goal of the CEPF is to support the work of civil society in developing and implementing conservation strategies, as well as in raising public awareness on the implications of loss of biodiversity. The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), in its capacity as the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) for the Caribbean Islands Biodiversity Hotspot, is managing a US\$6.9 million grant fund to support civil society's contribution to biodiversity conservation in eleven Caribbean islands for 2010-2015. Countries eligible for CEPF support in the region are: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, The Bahamas, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts & Nevis and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

A mid-term evaluation of the CEPF Caribbean Islands Programme is required. A [framework](#) was developed for the mid-term evaluation and guided the analysis of reports to assess relevance, results, efficiency and effectiveness of the process, and sustainability. This evaluation is being conducted by CANARI in collaboration with the CEPF Secretariat during the period May – September 2013. This report summarises key findings from a desk review and three national focus group meetings (in the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica) conducted as part of this mid-term evaluation process.

2. Relevance

Findings from reports were analysed to assess relevance, i.e. the extent to which the CEPF Caribbean Islands Programme that was conceived and the activities that were planned were consistent with the needs, expectations and capacities of the various stakeholders and responded adequately to identified needs, goals and objectives in the region.

Generally the CEPF Caribbean Islands Programme and the activities that were planned were felt to be consistent with the needs, expectations and capacities of the various stakeholders and responded adequately to identify needs, goals and objectives. The following areas were identified where the CEPF was felt to be relevant:

1. ***Supporting institutional strengthening of civil society:*** CEPF is building capacity in local and regional civil society organisations in several areas: core organisational development (e.g. strategic planning, financial management); technical competencies for biodiversity conservation (e.g. invasive species management); competencies for protected area management (e.g. sustainable financing, management planning); and communication and advocacy. Absorptive capacity of NGOs at the local and regional levels limits their ability to easily take on new short-term project work in biodiversity conservation. Additional, in Haiti Local organisations were felt NOT to be a priority.
2. ***Supporting institutional strengthening and networking of local civil society:*** CEPF is facilitating networking at national, bi-national (in the case of Haiti and the Dominican Republic) and regional levels.

3. **Supporting biodiversity conservation action:** There is very limited funding currently being directed to the Caribbean and at the national level within countries to support biodiversity conservation, especially funding that is committed to civil society. CEPF is filling an important niche in a number of areas not always supported by donors, for example, collecting baseline data, and supporting communication for development as part of a biodiversity conservation agenda.
4. **Focusing work on biodiversity priorities:** The Ecosystem Profile and KBA approach focuses attention on specific areas of biological importance. Areas chosen were felt to be generally relevant. However, nomenclature of KBAs is in some cases different to national nomenclature. For example, a few of the KBAs as listed in the Ecosystem Profile and other CEPF documents are not “known” in Jamaica by the names used. It was suggested that most Jamaicans would be hard pressed to identify or locate Peckham Woods, for example. In addition, some KBAs have no civil society organisations working in or near them, so while the importance of some areas may be known or acknowledged the absence of a civil society organisation with a mandate to work in these areas and the absorptive capacity of existing organisations and the parameters of their interests and mandates mean that some KBAs are unlikely to see a wellspring of action.
5. **Complementing other efforts:** CEPF complements the work and strategies of donors which are supporting biodiversity conservation in the Caribbean at the national and regional level.
6. **Building knowledge about biodiversity:** CEPF is facilitating the collection of baseline data which is broadly important to conservation efforts beyond CEPF.

However, CEPF was not felt to be relevant in the context of the Dominican Republic in several areas:

1. **There is sometimes a mismatch between CEPF priorities and priorities of a country:** In the Dominican Republic, there are several protected areas that do not fall within the CEPF focus. There is also an urgent need for research to gather information on species. However, projects that focus on species, including nationally endangered species, are not acceptable to CEPF. However, they are an integral component of the ecosystem. Further, CEPF does not accept educational programmes because they do not directly target conservation.
2. **CEPF priorities are perceived as constraining the types of actions for projects:** Grantees feel the pressure to only work on a management plan and “sometimes this feels like a straightjacket”.
3. **CEPF does not support existing processes:** CEPF does not want to give funds for following processes in place and define a methodology for this; a process of systematisation is needed.
4. **There are gaps in the KBAs identified in the Ecosystem Profile:** In the Dominican Republic there are more protected areas than are mapped in the CEPF KBAs; the areas mapped in the Ecosystem Profile do not fully reflect the reality of the country and full information on biodiversity and threats.

3. Results

Findings from reports were analysed to assess results, i.e. what are the measurable (quantitative and qualitative) outputs and outcomes.

a. Portfolio Status

As of 30 June, 2013, a total of 55 grants have been contracted with a total value of US\$5,242,333, equivalent to 76 percent of the total allocation for the Caribbean islands Biodiversity Hotspot (US\$6.9 million). Of this sum, US\$4,497,157 (89 percent) has been committed to local and regional civil society organisations (i.e. registered in a Caribbean country and with their primary focus and scope of work within a Caribbean country or the Caribbean region) with the remainder committed to international organisations (i.e. organisations registered outside of the Caribbean and with a scope of work extending beyond the Caribbean) (this includes funds committed to local organisations through sub-grants).

Table 1: Status of CEPF Caribbean islands grant portfolio, as at 30 June, 2013.

Strategic Direction	Allocation (USD)	Number of grants	Committed Funds	Balance
SD1: Improve protection and management of 45 priority Key Biodiversity Areas	\$3,050,000	25	\$2,673,169	\$333,374
SD2: Integrate biodiversity conservation into landscape and development planning and implementation in six conservation corridors	\$1,900,000	15	\$1,076,953	\$823,047
SD3: Support Caribbean civil society to achieve biodiversity conservation by building local and regional institutional capacity and by fostering stakeholder collaboration	\$900,000	12	\$581,013	\$362,444
SD4: Provide strategic leadership and effective coordination of CEPF investment through a regional implementation team	\$650,000	1	\$729,217	- \$79,217
SD5: Provide emergency support to Haitian civil society to mitigate the impacts of the 2010 earthquake	\$400,000	2	\$181,981	\$218,019
TOTAL	\$6,900,000	55	\$5,242,333	\$1,657,666

b. Most Significant Change

Participants in the national focus group meetings were asked what they thought were the most significant (positive or negative) changes as a result of the CEPF Caribbean islands programme.

Key points that arose from participants' stories and from the ensuing discussion included the following **positive** most significant changes where CEPF has:

1. **Filled a niche in biodiversity conservation:** The CEPF has made it possible for civil society organisations to do work in areas of need, some of which are not always readily supported by other donors. For example: collection of baseline data; the application of communication for development theory and practice to biodiversity conservation; enabling policy advocacy work related to conservation; and support for organisational capacity building. Significant support is being provided to protected areas that previously had little support.

2. ***Provided new information to inform on the ground action:*** The lack of up-to-date baseline data and other information about conditions in KBAs hampers the effectiveness of conservation activities. Where CEPF grants allow for the generation of new information, this has usefulness beyond the scope of the funded activity/suite of activities.
3. ***Improved capacity of civil society organisations:*** CEPF has improved the capacity of civil society to identify donors, develop proposals and to mobilise funds for biodiversity conservation. CEPF has reinforced the capacity of local civil society organisations to implement projects on biodiversity conservation.
4. ***Facilitated networking at national and regional levels:*** CEPF has built partnerships and strengthened synergies to develop common goals among civil society organisations, government agencies, local and national government, and private sector. Networks have been created at national and regional level. CEPF has contributed to the creation of a regional vision and stakeholders in the Dominican Republic said that “we are beginning to see ourselves as CARIBBEAN”. CEPF made links with initiatives that are taking place; communicating with others on actions has amplified impact. It has promoted working in an integrated manner towards the same goal. More joint work in the Dominican Republic with government agencies has in turn strengthened management policies.
5. ***Strengthened participation of key stakeholders in biodiversity conservation:*** Projects have promoted participatory processes including taking into account communities in and around the protected areas.
6. ***Brought new actors into the biodiversity conservation field:*** Civil society organisations working on environmental issues but not directly involved in biodiversity are now entering the field because funds are available.
7. ***Built understanding of the importance of biodiversity conservation and valuing it:*** CEPF contributed to a better understanding of where the most critical biodiversity of the island is located. The Ecosystem Profile is a resource and potential communication tool guiding conservation planning and action. It has also improved awareness in civil society and communities linked to protected areas about biodiversity conservation. It has raised the voice of organisations working in biodiversity at the national level and increased communication and awareness about the work they are doing.
8. ***Strengthened actions to achieve conservation of biodiversity and supported civil society initiatives that add value to the work of government agencies:*** CEPF support for activities in KBAs where government agencies are active, or have an interest, is a useful complement and supports national priorities. CEPF enabled the development and implementation of management plans that ensure better performance of KBAs, supported established management plans taking into account all users and community groups in a participatory way.
9. ***Supported innovative approaches to conservation:*** CEPF supported exploration of Payments for Environmental Services (PES) and climate change adaptation which are key initiatives for future improvement in biodiversity conservation. It also supported development of sustainable livelihood alternatives.

Key points that arose from participants’ stories and from the ensuing discussion included the following **negative** most significant changes:

1. ***Drained capacity of civil society:*** The time consuming application review and approval process hampered the capacity of civil society organisations to develop other projects and to implement activities in the field. The CEPF application process is more involved (overly detailed and

lengthy) than proposal writing processes for other donor agencies that grantees have been part of.

2. ***Provided too small amounts of funding:*** Considering the length of the projects and the activities to be implemented the size of grants was inadequate.

c. Results under the Logframe

Significant progress has been made on achieving results under the CEPF Caribbean islands programme from October 2010 - June 2013 as it pertains to the targets and indicators set in the [Caribbean islands Hotspot Ecosystem Profile: Logical Framework for CEPF Investments](#) under the general objective and each outcome.

Objective: Engage civil society in the conservation of globally threatened biodiversity through targeted investments with maximum impact on the highest conservation and ecosystem services priorities.

- 52 civil society organisations are directly engaged and benefiting from CEPF support.
- Development plans, projects and policies are being developed for enhancing watershed management, sustainable/eco-tourism, and sustainable agriculture.
- 50% of under-protected key biodiversity areas (14 priority KBAs in the Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti and Jamaica) to be brought under new protection status.
- Management in the production landscape in 3 conservation corridors is being improved through forest carbon, reforestation, integrated management plans, agroforestry and sustainable tourism.
- Current activities are complementing MacArthur Foundation projects and grants are complementing investments by 12 other donors.

Outcome 1. Improve protection and management of 45 priority Key Biodiversity Areas.

- 691,506 hectares are undergoing improved protection and management across 19 KBAs.
- 27,649 hectares are being brought under new or upgraded protection across 7 sites in 4 countries.
- 6 sustainable funding schemes are being implemented across 3 countries.
- 4 co-management arrangements are being established or supported in 3 countries.
- Effective stewardship by local communities for biodiversity and ecosystem conservation is being supported in 80% of CEPF grants.

Outcome 2. Integrate biodiversity conservation into landscape and development planning and implementation in six conservation corridors.

- 8 grants in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines integrating climate change, forest carbon and water resource management into policies, projects and plans.
- 132,871 hectares across 9 production landscapes in the Dominican Republic and Haiti are undergoing improved management for biodiversity conservation via reforestation, sustainable tourism and livelihood development and sustainable agriculture.
- Policy initiatives are underway to improve the EIA process in Jamaica and for the development of private protected areas in the Dominican Republic.
- 7 grants in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti and Jamaica are contributing to public-private partnerships that mainstream biodiversity in the tourism sector.

- 2 projects in the Dominican Republic and 2 in Haiti located outside protected areas are integrating biodiversity conservation in management practices.

Outcome 3. Caribbean civil society supported to achieve biodiversity conservation by building local and regional institutional capacity and by fostering stakeholder collaboration.

- Over 30 civil society organisations are benefitting from institutional capacity building in strategic planning, financial management, development of sustainable financing strategies and feasibility action plans, improvement of governance structures, development/improvement of websites, training and mentoring in proposal development and scientific writing, and effective communication, networking and outreach.
- 15 grants are supporting local initiatives focusing on networking for biodiversity conservation in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.
- 8 regional networking initiatives are being supported on amphibian conservation, invasive alien species management, communications and networking for biodiversity conservation.

Outcome 4. A Regional Implementation Team provides strategic leadership and effectively coordinates CEPF investment in the Caribbean Islands Hotspot.

- The RIT is fulfilling performance targets.

Outcome 5. Emergency support provided to Haitian civil society to mitigate the impacts of the 2010 earthquake.

- An environmental network resource centre has been established with detailed activities and an implementation plan for conservation efforts in Massif de la Selle and Massif de la Hotte developed in consultation with the Haitian NGO sector.

Areas where **progress is slow or absent** are:

Outcome 2. Integrate biodiversity conservation into landscape and development planning and implementation in six conservation corridors.

- No co-management arrangements have been reported established or supported.
- Baselines for the CEPF Civil Society Tracking Tool have been completed by 9 organisations have completed baselines but no final assessments have yet been reported to gauge any changes in the level of satisfactory scores.

Outcome 5. Emergency support provided to Haitian civil society to mitigate the impacts of the 2010 earthquake.

- No progress reported to date in preventing destruction of forests in Massif de la Selle and Massif de la Hotte.
- No progress reported to date on reconstruction and development policies and plans that incorporate environmental concerns.

d. Results under the Outcome Map of changes in behaviour and relationships

Generally, for **civil society organisations**:

1. ***Biodiversity conservation***: Some organisations are demonstrating the behaviour changes outlined, including identification of priorities, negotiation of co-management roles, implementing initiatives and monitoring impacts, and communicating to influence policy. In

some cases, because of CEPF organisations are better at implementing projects and they are able to evaluate and report the impact of the conservation actions.

2. **Project development and management:** Many organisations have applied to the CEPF Caribbean Islands Programme. Over 28 percent of organisations who have applied to the CEPF Caribbean programme have been successful in securing funds to contribute to their work in biodiversity conservation. Through specific components within some of its grants, CEPF has supported organisations in developing proposals for other donors to contribute to their work in biodiversity conservation. Some issues have been identified in terms of delivering results within budget and time for some grantees.
3. **Other aspects of internal capacity:** Some organisations have enhanced human resource capacity, good management of financial systems and are able to communicate the results to donors, beneficiaries and other target groups. However, capacity gaps still exist and several organisations have accessed CEPF support to build internal capacity in areas such as strategic planning and financial management.
4. **Networking:** Several organisations have demonstrated strong ability to network effectively and are able to identify potential partners, potential synergies and areas of collaboration with partners and to develop formal and informal partnerships. For example: many grantees brought on partners to implement CEPF projects; networking across civil society, government and increasingly some private sector partners is strong in the Dominican Republic; some bi-national networking between Haiti and the Dominican Republic; and networking at a regional level is taking place on invasive species management and among IUCN members. One area of critical need identified was to further strengthen bi-national networking between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Donors are more or less aware of the CEPF program in the Caribbean islands and the priorities and strategic outcomes. But there has not been adequate: sharing of relevant information with the CEPF; identification of potential synergies with programmes; collaboration with the CEPF through initiatives for biodiversity conservation; and development of financing priorities and programs that meet the strategic priorities of the CEPF.

e. Other outputs, outcomes, impacts reported

Conservation of IUCN Red List Critically Endangered (CR) and Endangered (EN) Species: Even though conservation of specific species was not identified as a Strategic Direction or investment priority for the CEPF Caribbean programme, some projects have been able to have a positive impact on CR and EN species. For example, the International Iguana Foundation (IIF) has focused efforts in the Massif de la Selle KBA in Southern Haiti in the Anse-a-Pitres municipality where the critically endangered *Cyclura ricordi* Iguana resides. Through a site-based conservation approach, IIF is supporting local communities in the creation of a municipal wildlife reserve which will help to reduce poaching of the species. A key component of this project is also to train local community organisations and individuals in collecting data and monitoring the critical wildlife habitat to ensure longer term protection.

4. Effectiveness and efficiency

Findings from reports were analysed to assess effectiveness and efficiency, i.e. the extent to which CEPF processes have been executed as planned and have produced the desired outputs, as well as the extent

to which they have been implemented with the optimal use of financial, human and technical resources and in a timely fashion, looking also at the suitability of project management arrangements.

Issuing calls for proposals: Generally this is felt to be effective and with adequate call times, although more is needed to reach community and small organisations.

Technical review and selection of proposals: This was widely felt to be too long a process. Applicants have commented that the CEPF LOI template does not allow for a logical approach to project design and proposal development. In addition, reviewers have noted that the LOI is also not conducive to efficient reviews and often, more information is needed from the applicant. Another concern was expressed that “One has to accept the ideas of CEPF to be considered, and not the ideas of the institutions themselves.”

Supporting the application process: The proposal development process is widely felt to be especially burdensome due to the length of time it takes to get approval and the need to rework and revise proposals and respond to requests for clarification. Civil society organisations have noted that CEPF requirements for proposals are much more involved than those of other grant programmes. This comes at a huge cost to organisations which mostly have limited staff and resources to begin with and has been a barrier to applications and successful completion of proposals, even where the organisation had capacity and the project ideas were sound and approved. On the other hand, some organisations have noted that the CEPF proposal development process has helped them to build their capacity in project design and development. Some applicants have been confused by the many interfaces for the project in the RIT and CEPF Secretariat. Many criticisms of the online Grant Writer system were received, although some applicants were satisfied with it.

Monitoring projects, supporting project implementation (including financial management), supporting project evaluation and reporting: In general the process was felt to be constructive and supportive, with good support being provided by the RIT although too many reports are being asked for. In terms of reporting, some grantees find the online Grant Writer system helpful and systematic, while others find it limiting in terms of not being able to capture the full story and unexpected project results. In addition, some of the sections in the reporting templates are found to be repetitive.

Communication about CEPF and the work being achieved: Although the work of the RIT via the newsletter was recognised, it was widely felt that communication needed to be improved by the RIT and more funds needed to be provided to grantees to communicate about their own work.

Catalysing and facilitating networking amongst grantees: It was widely felt that CEPF was successful in facilitating this, both at the national and regional levels. More bi-national networking between the Dominican Republic and Haiti was recommended, as well as greater use of information and communication technologies for networking among grantees across the region.

Facilitating relationship building between CSOs and government, other key partners: CEPF was successfully facilitating this among civil society, local and national government, and private sector, especially in the Dominican Republic. One recommendation to further enhance this was to establish a formal mechanism to take the CEPF’s work government agencies/policy makers and keep them abreast of developments through its grants.

Building capacity of civil society organisations for sustainability: The support provided by CEPF was good and achieving this.

Managing portfolio investment: The desk review highlighted that the portfolio was being well managed, with most conservation outcomes being addressed, targets for grant allocation being met and a good spread of grants across CEPF countries. The bulk of funds are going to the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica as the three priority countries.

Catalysing additional support: This needs to be improved, including via identifying areas of complementarity. Donor roundtables to share information were recommended.

Providing strategic leadership on how civil society can play a role in biodiversity conservation: CEPF was providing important strategic leadership in this area, and further work can be done to enhance the role of local organisations.

Policy influence: More work on this is needed, including using CEPF donors, particularly those that are very influential nationally (e.g. The World Bank), to leverage influence towards changing some of the government policies and practices that are inimical to biodiversity conservation and sound environmental management. Haitian stakeholders noted that “Although there is some capacity to influence policy, however, the CSOs are not able to influence the politics.”

Internal learning and improving performance within the CEPF: A need to streamline communications between the CEPF Secretariat, RIT and Grantees was highlighted. Due to the complexities of the Caribbean portfolio, including 11 eligible countries, 4 languages and the challenges of communication in the region, grantees are often confused as to exactly who within the RIT or the CEPF Secretariat should be the point person for a particular communication. Lines of communication need to be streamlined to increase efficiency and effectiveness and to better support grantees in implementation.

5. Sustainability

Findings from reports were analysed to assess sustainability, i.e. the extent to which the outcomes and outputs have been, and are likely to remain, sustained beyond the time frame of the project and its various activities, as well as the requirements for future activities that can help build such sustainability.

As the CEPF Caribbean investment programme is still at its mid-way point and the vast majority of projects are still in various stages of implementation, many of them having only just been contracted, it is too early in most cases to draw meaningful conclusions on the sustainability of results.

However, a number of contextual issues and challenges were identified that have implications for the CEPF's ability to meet its objectives and have sustained results over the long term. These included:

1. **National policies and practices that work against biodiversity conservation, including in protected areas:** Economic development imperatives continue to trump longer term environmental concerns, resulting in such things as proposals for large port development, quarrying, and the granting of prospecting licences for mining in KBAs.
2. **There are constraints to the absorptive capacity of civil society organisations in the short term:** Civil society organisations cannot build their capacity (for example in terms of staffing) for short term projects and this affects their ability to develop proposals and implement projects.

3. ***Although progress in some cases is being made on development of policies, implementation is weak or lacking.*** For example, biodiversity continues to be lost due to the lack of regulation of protected areas.
4. ***Weak and poor governance are fundamental and are hampering biodiversity conservation:*** For example, laws and regulations are inadequate for the protection of the protected areas.
5. ***It is critical to address the issue of people living in and around protected areas in order to achieve biodiversity conservation outcomes.***

Key recommendations for contributing to sustainability of CEPF were identified including:

1. ***Advocacy programmes and building the advocacy capacity*** of civil society organisations.
2. ***Enhanced communication of results, best practices and key issues*** to increase effectiveness of biodiversity conservation efforts and public demand for conservation and environmental protection outcomes in the national interest.
3. ***Focus on ecosystem services/payment for ecosystem services*** as a vehicle to translate the importance of biodiversity conservation into economic terms.
4. ***Strengthening the organisational and technical capacity of individual civil society organisations*** to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. Stronger organisations will increase capacity for sustained efforts in biodiversity conservation.
5. ***Information and databases created by CEPF projects and housed in key national institutions*** to help inform management planning and implementation as well as policies and plans to help to facilitate longer-term efforts in ecotourism and other ecological projects.
6. ***Extend support especially for small projects*** by extending the time frame and/or encouraging and/or supporting follow-up of the activities implemented in previous phases.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

Recommendations on future CEPF investments to achieve conservation results identified were:

1. ***Improve communication about CEPF funded projects:*** It is difficult to access information, including via CEPF website, which is only available in English. Greater visibility of our projects is needed, so that grantees feel more recognised and results, lessons, best practices and policy recommendations are communicated. Projects need to stronger environmental education and awareness elements.
2. ***Encourage conservation action at priority sites (KBAs):*** In cases where no civil society organisation clearly exists with a mandate covering a specific KBA, encourage local, national and regional actors to consider conservation action to address identified biodiversity priorities.
3. ***Focus on catalysing and supporting development of sustainable livelihoods:*** Enhancing livelihood opportunities for local people in the KBAs can be an important strategy towards achieving biodiversity conservation outcomes. CEPF needs to increase its social vision. There is a close relationship between social and economic components of the community and the conservation of biodiversity. Sustainable livelihood alternatives for community groups need to be developed.
4. ***Mainstream biodiversity conservation at the policy level:*** Many of the threats and challenges to biodiversity conservation have their roots in policy and decision-making processes that undermine conservation and sound environmental management. Policy influencing action needs to be taken and civil society capacity to take such action needs to be strengthened to address

fundamental contextual issues hampering biodiversity conservation. One area highlighted by participants was that of legal capacity/environmental law and advocacy. In particular, there is a need for more policies, projects and plans to be developed and implemented that incorporate ecosystem services, climate change and biodiversity conservation. Along with projects that are focused on policy influence, there is a need to build the capacity of civil society organisations to effectively work within this space and have an impact at the policy level.

5. ***Facilitate bi-national cooperation and coordination in the Dominican Republic and Haiti:*** There is an opportunity for CEPF to contribute to increased bi-national coordination and collaboration in terms of conservation efforts between the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Local organisations in both countries have called for this and it is evident in both the threats identified to biodiversity conservation as well as the opportunities being presented for increased exchange of knowledge, experience and technical expertise.
6. ***Reinforce and consolidate current and past investments to ensure sustainability:*** CEPF has invested in a lot of planning efforts - whether it be participatory development of management plans, data gathering to inform decision-making and action for conservation or feasibility assessments in various areas. There is a need to follow up on these investments at the implementation phase, to ensure concrete conservation results can be achieved within the high priority KBAs. The remaining time of the CEPF investment in the Caribbean is a relatively short period and so investing in efforts that will have long-term impacts and ensuring the relevant frameworks and structures are in place to safeguard biodiversity, will be important.
7. ***Provide strategic capacity building support and networking for local civil society organisations:*** There are a few core areas of capacity building that have been recognised as a need across the region for CEPF grantees and other key organisations working in the priority KBAs. For example, the need for organisations to have more diversified, innovative and sustainable funding streams and the need for increased communication of best practices and lessons learned from the region. Strengthening civil society capacity for policy advocacy is another cross-cutting need in the portfolio.
8. ***Accept protected areas annual operating plans for the management of KBAs by CEPF as a basis for implementing a project:*** Waiting for management plans improvement is a bureaucratic process that takes time.
9. ***Provide more strategic support to access funding or counterpart funds from other donors to ensure project continuity and sustainability:*** CEPF could create a platform to raise funds by promoting an event in which other potential donors participate and become familiarised with the current projects. It is also important to include the private sector as future and strategic donors.
10. ***Be more flexible and contribute more financially to control and surveillance activities in the proposals:*** These are important aspects of resource management and key for reducing threats in the KBAs (for example deforestation). Strengthening of community groups in this management activity is essential.