

List of questions and answers received during the webinar and by email. Last update July 30,2024
 For any questions contact: cepfproposals@iucn.nl

Eligibility for this CfP and general

Q	Which countries are eligible for this call?
A	Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles are eligible
Q	What are the eligible areas?
A	For investment priority 1, i.e. 1.1 and 1.2, only eligible priority KBAs listed in the letter of Inquiry are eligible (1.2 only for Large grants in Seychelles et Comoros and only Seychelles for small grants).
Q	Can we propose a multi-KBA project or each project must relate to only one KBA?
A	Yes a project can have activities in several KBAs
Q	Can we define what a regional project is?
A	A regional project is a project with activities in several countries and sites eligible for this CEPF call
Q	Is the handling of agents of the State and local authorities eligible during activities?
A	Yes, we can cover their travel, accommodation and food costs with a clear preference for the handling of these costs directly by the project leader rather than by per diems.
Q	Is approval still required for any use of chemicals such as rodenticide in a project?
A	Yes. For the use of rodenticides (or any chemicals) the safeguard protocol of CEPF would need to be complied with. For large grants a question on this aspect comes up in the ConservationGrants online system
Q	Is it possible for a parastatal institution to apply solely? Or do we need to work in collaboration with a cooperative or NGO or private organization?
A	<p>A parastatal institution will only be eligible if it can demonstrate that it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has a legal personality independent of any government agency or actor. ○ Has the authority to apply for and receive private funds. ○ May not assert a claim of sovereign immunity. <p>If these three points are not demonstrated, the parastatal organization will not be eligible to receive CEPF funds even if it applies with other organizations.</p>
Q	What is the maximum duration of the project?
A	<p>The project should not have any activity after December 31, 2026 for Small Grants. There is no minimum duration.</p> <p>The project should not have any activity after December 31, 2029 for Large Grants. There is no minimum duration. However, every project will need to be designed in such a way that intermediate results towards the CEPF targets will be achieved by 31 December 2026.</p>

Budget and Finance

Q	What is the maximum amount authorized for a Large Grant?
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A	There is no maximum amount allowed for Large Grants. The average grant for this hotspot, historically, has been around \$150,000 but higher budgets are not excluded. The budget should match the anticipated impact of the project. Your budget should depend on your activities.
Q	What are the indicative amounts available for the two strategic directions?
A	We have approximately USD 8,000,000 available for investment priorities 1.1 and 1.2 combined (in all four countries).
Q	Can CEPF funding be used as co-funding for another project?
A	Yes CEPF grants can be used for part of co-funding for other project. CEPF itself does not require co-funding.
Q	Regarding the budget distribution of the grant, can we know the percentage granted for the staff and the percentage for the implementation of the project?
A	In terms of budget allocation, there is no percentage limit for the staff versus the implementation of the project. The only limit is for the administrative costs (or management support costs) which are limited at 13% of the direct costs for large grants.
Q	Can an NGO use a bank account for different projects?
A	A dedicated bank account is preferred to receive CEPF funds, but it is usually not mandatory.
Q	Could a project be as simple as funding the recruitment of a critical resource we are missing?
A	CEPF can cover the costs of recruiting critical resources missed within an organization. In this case, the project proposition should clearly explain how critical these resources are and what activities will take place thanks to the presence of these human resources and with which funding. Demonstration should be made how this would strengthen the capacities of your organization.
Q	How are the sub-grants organized between partners?
A	The grantee is the one who signs the contract with CEPF, is responsible for CEPF funds and reporting. If there are sub-grants (or services providers) it must be reasonable in number and amount, but these elements are left to the grantee to propose. Sub-grantees, as opposed to service providers, should be seen in the contexts of partnership (win-win situation).
Q	Can the costs of environmental and social impact studies of activities be included in the project budget?
A	Yes, this is possible for projects where this is a necessity, for example regarding the eradication of invasive species
Q	Are there recommendations for exchange rates to be used on the project budgets?
A	For the moment there is no recommendation, these will come after selecting your project and writing it. You need not worry about this for your Lol.
Q	Is the mileage reimbursable, for the use of a vehicle for the CEPF project? Can the CEPF project purchase a vehicle?
A	Yes, provided that you have a vehicle logbook for monitoring the use of it. You can find information on the CEPF website Managing your grant's financial requirements , vehicle logbook part.

Application

Q	On what date do we receive the response (favorable or not) of our application for the call for projects?
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A	An answer will be provided to you in October-November, we will respond to all the letter of Inquiry submitted.
Q	Will there be a period of review for full proposals?
A	Yes, the selected organizations will be required to work on their full proposals from November/December to around February 2025 with several iterations of their full proposals based on comments from CEPF and its reviewers. CEPF strives to get all grant agreements signed before April 2025.
Q	Is there a limit to the number of grants an NGO can have?
A	There is no limit on the number of projects an applicant can submit, nor is there a limit on the number of grants funded for an applicant. Having said this, be sure that you remain reasonable in what you are asking and rather combine projects' applications.
Q	Is a newly created organization/company eligible for grants?
A	Yes, any organization with a legal status is eligible, as long as it is not government-owned.
Q	Is an international NGO based outside Madagascar eligible for grants?
A	Yes international organization are eligible for this call, if their project activity is located in the eligible areas
Q	Is there a template for this letter of support from actors already working in an area?
A	No, we do not have a specific template
Q	Should we coordinate activities with this actor already present in the area of the proposed project?
A	No unless this organization is the manager of the area (example of national parks). However, CEPF encourages consultation and coordination among actors in the same area.
Q	If we are going to submit a project in a particular KBA where there is a managing actor who is already working there, should we contact this manager for the submission of our project?
A	Yes, if the organization is the official manager, you should provide a support letter, if not, synergy of actions and partnership between both of you must be proven.
Q	If we have a good project but we can't get this letter of support for some reason, is that negotiable?
A	It depends on the case, so explain why it is difficult to get the support letter.
Q	Should a project require clearance from authorities (working in river or mountain reserves, for example), is there a time limit for obtaining such authorizations?
A	Ideally the relevant authorities should allow the activity to take place. So we invite you to discuss with the authorities in your country, early on in the CEPF application process. At least the applicant should demonstrate that the proponent tried to obtain such clearance or otherwise explained why it didn't.
Q	Should the partner or lead organization in the proposal automatically intervene in conservation?
A	Any organization can propose a project, whatever their field of expertise. But projects supported by competent organizations on the proposed activities will enhance the quality and sustainability of the outcomes.
Q	Would a project proposal with collaboration and partnership be an advantage?
A	In principle yes. Partnerships that will enhance the impacts of the CEPF investment are encouraged
Q	Should the number of partners be limited and preference given to identified service providers?
A	The numbers of partners (here understood as being sub-grantees) should make sense from the project's objectives / the desired outcomes.

Q	How do I get the formats/template for the budget and Lol for large grants?
A	A template is available on Google Drive via this link: Template ConservationGrants This template only provides you with a working document, but you must submit your LOI via the ConservationGrant portal. Only applications submitted via the portal will be eligible.
Q	How did CEPF reach the decisions on which KBA's would become priority KBA's?
A	The technical reports of the Ecosystem Profile are published on the CEPF website which include a section on the methodology for the selection of priority sites. https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/kbaplus-analysis-for-madagascar-2022.pdf https://www.cepf.net/sites/default/files/kbaplus-analysis-for-indian-ocean-islands-2022.pdf
Q	What are the key indicators that we must put in our project proposal?
A	It is important to refer to the objectives (targets) of the CEPF for this investment which are found in the logical framework of the ecosystem profile, chapter 15.
Q	We would like to know what % chance a Lol invited to the master class training would have to be successful?
A	When we shortlist an LOI to move to the proposal stage (and therefore to the Masterclass stage), it's because we will work together with applicants to reach the end goal of a grant agreement. Therefore the percentage is really high, probably 95% or so.

General

Q	Do you have lists of experts to work with?
A	We don't have an official list, but if you contact the country focal points of the RIT, they may be able to recommend some people. However the RIT and CEPF will not be responsible for these experts and for establishing contact with them on your behalf.
Q	Regarding the CSTT, would we complete pre and post data for each of our beneficiary organizations? And the goal is for them to score 80% on the tool?
A	Yes, it is one of CEPF targets/objectives for this call. However, not all beneficiary organizations are expected to reach 80% (it would be fantastic though!). CEPF will expect to see a drastic increase in their CSTT scores with at least a total of 12 reaching 80% or more at the end of the investment. Not every project will need to reach a total of 12 organizations at 80%. Each project is expected to contribute towards this target though. The CSTT can be found HERE .
Q	Is it possible to make a modification after submitting the LOI?
A	Once you have submitted the LOI, it is no longer editable. Should your LOI be selected, there will be a phase of writing the complete proposal where certain modifications can be made or would be required even.
Q	Can we answer this call if we have already answered the previous call for 'large grants'
A	yes, the call is open to everyone, even if you already have a project with CEPF
Q	How many calls are planned for the entire investment period?
A	We have not defined a number of specific calls. But all strategic directions will be offered in the four eligible countries at least once. Mostly likely at least six calls will be made (2022). This call for strategic direction 1 maybe be the last on for this investment (until December 2026).

Q	Do we need a local NGO as a partner? Or can we make a proposal only with a private company and a foreign-based NGO for a project related to coral restoration in a technique that is not present locally?
A	There is no obligation to involve any NGO in your Project, being local or International. You could, for instance, work exclusively with the private sector, and/or universities. However, involving/ consulting local stakeholders, so including NGOs, will be requested by CEPF, where and if relevant for the proposed Project and location.
Q	Do you have a rough estimate of the time it takes to implement the CSO tracking tools (CSTT) with a single partner?
A	For the CSTT, one partner will take between 1h- 3h depending on the size of the group and if filled in with a representative set of the organization. Groups of multiple CSOs can fill in their CSTT at the same time if in the presence of 2-3 representatives of their organizations and of a facilitator. For the GTT, it's about 20 min since it's much shorter.