

Mediterranean Hotspot

Economic Resilience through Biodiversity Preservation



Stretching from Morocco to eastern Jordan, the Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot is one of the world's 36 biodiversity hotspots – Earth's most biologically rich, yet threatened, areas. CEPF has been actively involved in 13 countries in the Mediterranean hotspot to support conservation efforts and biodiversity protection through awarding 188 grants for conservation, organizational strengthening and sustainable development.

Nature is a key asset for the Mediterranean Economy: the region's economy relies greatly on the 220 million tourists who come to the region each year – and enjoy its natural landscapes, from the reefs to the ridges of mountains. Rivaling with tourism, agriculture and food production rely on the genetic diversity of crop-relatives, on the variety of seafood, access

to water and preservation of the soils which have built the quality of Mediterranean products. Natural areas and biodiversity provide a wealth of ecosystem services necessary for Mediterranean people to thrive.

But these assets are under **growing threats**: Poorly planned urban development, pollution of freshwater bodies and the marine environment, overexploitation of resources and climate change are driving ecosystems to the edge – and with them the ecosystem services they provide to citizens.

At CEPF, we know that people need Nature to thrive, and we provide means and support to locals to engage and tackle the biodiversity challenge.



Traditional wheat harvest by hand, Morocco © Louis Marie Preau

Investment Summary (2017 - 2023)

The CEPF portfolio in the Mediterranean consists of:



USD
11.2
million
granted



188
projects
granted



131
Small Grants
with an average grant
size of USD 21,261



57 Large
Grants
with an average grant
size of USD 147,986

Within the portfolio, CEPF grantees:

A total of **51** grants are still active,
including **37** small grants.

- Have been working with
27 private sector
entities



to create or improve
biodiversity-friendly activities

- Have supported
790 & **1355**
men



women



with direct cash benefits derived from
CEPF-funded projects

- Have indirectly benefited
160 local
communities
representing
185,000
people



How CEPF supports civil society.

CEPF supports civil society through funds and tailor-made technical, administrative and organizational support with the aim to get stronger, better capacitated and more autonomous. CEPF monitors its capacity strengthening efforts through a dedicated tool which measures organizational development along five dimensions: human resources; financial resources; management systems; strategic planning; and delivery. The overall trend is strongly positive, with 80% of grantees in the Mediterranean hotspot showing increased capacities.

CEPF also works to strengthen partnerships and networks among civil society organizations, at national and transnational level. In the Mediterranean hotspot, more than 100 partnerships and networks have been newly developed or strengthened, as a direct result of CEPF's investment in the region since 2017.

CEPF grantees support a wide range of income-generating economic activities across the Mediterranean hotspot. Examples include the following:

Morocco



Engaging young people in Agroecology in Morocco.

In the Rif Mountains, Barbary Macaque Conservation improved the participatory management of Bouhachem National Park by supporting the local communities to adopt agroecological practices and increase revenues from biodiversity-friendly practices. This helped reduce threats to mountain forest habitats and the barbary macaque population. Through this project:

- **2 cooperatives** promoting the products around Bouhachem Nature Reserve, such as essential oils, herbs, honey, and other local products.
- **10 young people** from the local community received training on ecotourism activities, including monkey-watching and birdwatching in the forest.
- **3 households** were rehabilitated as “guest houses” for the park visitors.
- **10 households** benefited from cultivating Saffron (1ha per household) as a new income-generating activity.
- **105 farmers** (60 men and 45 women) received training on agroecology aspects of cultivating Saffron and other nuts trees.



Restoring Barbary macaque's habitat, Morocco © Louis-Marie Préau

Involving economic partners in the development of a Marine Protected Area in Montenegro.

Through supporting the local organisation “Zeleni Dom Green Home”, locals were engaged from the beginning in the establishment of Katič Nature Park, the second Marine Protected Area in Montenegro. The support of communities was facilitated through new economic opportunities for the local people:

Montenegro



- **2 ecotourism products** were developed: bird-watching activities and diving along underwater trail, creating at **least 5 jobs**.
- **2 jobs** were created by opening and equipping the Marine Visitor Centre.
- The local fishermen are benefitting from increased income due to improved management of the available fish resources.
- **1 new Association of Professional Fishermen** in Katič, consisting of eight members, supports and conserves marine life and manages fishing and tourism activities around the year.



Albania



Boosting locally-led ecotourism industry in Albania. CEPF support Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania (PPNEA), the oldest environmental NGO in the country, to enhance ecotourism opportunities along Albania's beautiful, yet highly threatened coastline. Through this project:

- **12 people** received training and created new businesses as birding guides, bird research assistants, etc.
- **1 new alternative livelihood activity** was created, employing over 50 people, in the field of sustainable tourism and local products transformation around protected areas.
- **16 'guest houses'** were established through the project, whose success motivated further investments by local communities. Today, at least 30 guest houses operate in the area of Narta.
- The project developed **tourism brands for 3 natural areas** to advertise tourism products nationally and internationally.

Other economic activities supported by CEPF in the hotspot support the cultural practices and value chains related to nature-based products, such as:

Empowering communities in agricultural landscapes in Jordan. The company Enviromatics, supported by agricultural experts, worked with ten farm owners in the buffer zone of Dibeen Forest Reserve to improve yields, pest control and land management in an environmentally friendly fashion. Thanks to this project:

Jordan



- **11 farming plots** owned by 8 families were improved.
- **30 families** benefitted from training on biodiversity eco-friendly agricultural practices.
- **21 community members** benefitted from the value chain training, of which **14 are women**.
- **21 job opportunities** were created for the local communities of Najdah and Sakeb villages.
- **40 women** received training on food production and marketing.
- **1 small production workshop** was established for women in Najda, including a section for food processing and another for soap production.



Traditional agricultural practices, Jordan © Enviromatics

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