

Grants and opportunities

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, a new \$US 150 million fund designed to better safeguard the world's threatened biological hotspots, was launched on 1 September 2000 as a joint initiative of Conservation International (CI), the World Bank, and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). It is a new major source of international funding directed primarily to non-governmental, community and grassroots organizations. The funding has been designed to complement opportunities available to governments and official agencies in developing countries.

The Fund builds upon CI's strategic focus on the global biodiversity hotspots. Combined, these 25 locations cover 1.4 per cent of the earth's land surface, yet account for an estimated 60 per cent of all terrestrial species diversity. This biogeographic focus recognizes that biodiversity knows no geopolitical boundaries. Instead, for species protection to be successful, conservation plans must embrace the full scope of natural ecosystems. In order to qualify for funding, projects must be:

1. located within a biodiversity hotspot region, and
2. within a developing country that has ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Fund's areas of focus during its first year of operations will be on the hotspot regions of Madagascar, West Africa and the tropical Andes. In each subsequent year, the Fund will invest in a minimum of five additional critical ecosystems.

The Fund is also designed to expedite assistance where it is needed most and when it can bring the greatest benefits, i.e. *before* a biodiversity threat escalates into permanent devastation. In emergency situations, Fund alliance managers based in the field are able to assess needs and disperse funding to local partners best suited to respond immediately.

By design, the Fund is quick and flexible. It offers organizations a streamlined procedure to apply for and receive funds. All information and guidelines are available on the internet and application forms can be submitted online (See contact details below).

As far as dissemination of results is concerned, the Fund provides access to data collected from field projects so that organizations can readily share best practices and lessons learned from projects it has funded.

To find out more about the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, or to receive application criteria and

procedures, visit the website at www.cepf.net or contact Jorgen B. Thomsen, Vice-President, Executive Director, Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, Conservation International, 1919 M Street, NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20037, USA. e-mail: j.thomsen@conservation.org.

For further information about Conservation International, the World Bank or the Global Environment Facility and their programmes, visit the following websites:

www.conservation.org (CI)

www.worldbank.org/biodiversity (World Bank)

www.gefweb.org (GEF)

Tortoise Trust Global Emergency Fund

Tortoise Trust UK/International is launching a new initiative to deal with the increasing demands on resources resulting from international animal seizures, crisis situations and global emergencies. The objectives of the Tortoise Trust Global Emergency Fund are as follows:

1. to maintain a list of volunteer experts who are prepared to assist in emergency field projects whenever or wherever the need arises. Qualified persons include veterinarians, vet technicians, zoo personnel or others with related or relevant experience;
2. to maintain an emergency fund to provide immediate help for confiscated animals;
3. to provide immediate technical support and advice in the event of emergency/rescue situations.

The Fund is seeking volunteers in different geographical areas to take on the tasks of raising funds, co-ordinating efforts to obtain corporate sponsorship and donations, maintaining the register of active specialized assistance, and acting regional contact persons. Specific roles for which help is sought include: establishing the database of expert resources; raising corporate sponsorship; general fund-raising activities; and recruitment of a panel of specialist advisers.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please contact the Fund by e-mail at ttrust@globalnet.co.uk

Madras Crocodile Bank Volunteer Program

The Madras Crocodile Bank is setting up a volunteer programme and invites applications from students,

researchers and colleagues who are interested in working in the following areas:

- enclosure design and landscaping
- education, interpretation and interaction with approximately 1.2 million visitors from around the world
- development of in-house research programmes, e.g. veterinarian, behaviour, breeding biology, captive husbandry
- field surveys: crocodiles and specific endangered helps
- assistance with laboratory work, library, curating and feeding 3000 reptiles

- development of the volunteer programme to make it productive to both the Bank and the volunteers.

Volunteers would have to pay their own airfare and contribute a small sum for food and lodging at the Crocodile Bank (\$US10 per day). The volunteer period can be from 3 months to 1 year.

Further details are available from Rom Whitaker, Nikhil Whitaker and Harry Andrews, Madras Crocodile Bank and Trust, Post Bag no. 4, Mamallapuram, TN 603 104, India. e-mail: sthiru@giasmd01.vsnl.net.in