

Media release

Two million dollars granted by CEPF for biodiversity conservation in Indochina

Less than one year after the first deadline for applications to the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) in Indochina, over \$US two million has been granted to a total of 14 civil society organisations to conserve biodiversity in the region.

To date, 19 grants have been approved from the 166 applications received, with eight grants to projects in Cambodia, five to Vietnam, one to Lao P.D.R., one to Thailand, and four to projects working in more than one country.

“A great foundation has been built in the first year of CEPF funding in Indochina,” said Jack Tordoff, CEPF Grant Director. “We are particularly excited to see the large number of national applicants, showing increasing interest in, and capacity for, biodiversity conservation by local groups in the region.”

CEPF began a \$9.5 million five year investment plan in Indochina in July 2008, with BirdLife International acting as its Regional Implementation Team. Guided by an ecosystem profile, the CEPF investment strategy focuses on the Northern Highlands Limestone (Vietnam and southern China), and Mekong River and Major Tributaries (Cambodia, Lao P.D.R., and Thailand) biodiversity conservation corridors.



The Srepok River in Cambodia, under threat of impacts from dam construction projects. Photo: 3SPN

“Freshwater habitats are particularly threatened in Indochina, so we're very happy to have already funded local organisations in both Cambodia and Vietnam to research and raise awareness on the value of freshwater biodiversity,” said John Pilgrim, Manager of the BirdLife International CEPF Regional Implementation Team. “In Cambodia, the 3S Rivers Protection Network was funded to raise awareness among local communities of possible impacts from dams on the Srepok, Sesan and Sekong rivers, and in Vietnam the Center for Water Resources Conservation and Development (WARECOD) has been funded

to build capacity of local villagers near the Nang River, Tuyen Quang Province, to research their local aquatic species.”

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

Further information is available at www.cepf.net or www.birdlifeindochina.org/cepf. An up-to-date list of funded projects is available at http://cepf.net/grants/project_database/indo-burma and an interactive map of project locations is at <http://birdlifeindochina.org/cepf/Project-database>

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