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AND CONSERVATION**

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**BUREAU DE LA PROTECTION DE
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MrMichel
Djokovic,
Ambassador

Dear All.

Subject: Invitation to CEPF Vanuatu CEPF Grantee and Partners Exchange, 22 February 2017

CEPF is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, the MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank.

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is designed to safeguard Earth's biologically richest and most threatened regions, known as biodiversity hotspots. CEPF 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. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), in its role as the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) for the East Melanesian Islands, and CEPF, invite Letters of Inquiry (LoIs) from community groups, non-government organisations, academic institutions, private companies and other civil society organisations for biodiversity conservation projects in the East Melanesian Islands Hotspot.

The East Melanesian Islands, which include Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands as well as the islands region of Papua New Guinea (PNG), qualify as a hotspot due to their high levels of plant and animal endemism, and accelerating levels of habitat loss. Chief threats to biodiversity include widespread

commercial logging and mining, expansion of subsistence and plantation agriculture, human population increase, and impacts of invasive species, and climate change.

Natural habitats in the East Melanesian Islands include coral reefs, mangrove forests, freshwater swamp forests, lowland rainforests, seasonally dry forests and grasslands, and montane rainforests. In many places, natural habitats extend from mountain ridge to reef, although fragmented by agricultural conversion and logging in many places. These "ridge-to-reef" ecosystems are important for their resilience to the effects of climate change, and because they deliver a wide range of ecosystem services to human communities.

As well as being rich in biodiversity, the islands of the hotspot also hold exceptional cultural and linguistic diversity. Because many languages are spoken by only a few hundred people, they are disappearing quickly, leading to a rapid erosion of traditional knowledge and practice. This is highly significant in a region where most land and resources are under customary ownership, and local people are true stewards of biodiversity.

In July 2013, CEPF launched an eight-year investment phase in the East Melanesian Islands Hotspot, focusing on 20 priority sites spread across the three countries, and addressing threats to 48 priority species. The CEPF investment strategy will support biodiversity conservation in ways that deliver significant, meaningful benefits to local communities, while making a sustained contribution to the development of local, national and regional capacity for conservation.

More information is available on the website: <http://www.cepf.net/>

also from the link:

http://www.cepf.net/SiteCollectionDocuments/east_melanesian_islands/EMI_ecosystem_profile.pdf

also at:

<https://www.iucn.org/regions/oceania/our-work/critical-ecosystem-partnership-fund-cepf>

we cordially invite you to attend the Vanuatu CEPF Grantee and Partners Exchange from

time: **1:00pm -3:00pm**

date: **Wednesday 22/02/17.**

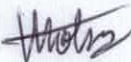
Venue: **Chantilly's Conference room.** (refreshments provided)

This event provides an opportunity for our grantees and partners to be introduced to CEPF's Executive Director; Mr *Olivier Langrand* & EMI Grant Director Mrs *Michele Zador* and CEPF team and exchange information on CEPF & the work they do. They are visiting Vanuatu through the week of 18-25/02/17, and will be meeting CEPF grantees, donor partners, national stakeholders, throughout the week.

Attached is Executive Director; Mr Olivier Langrand's bio for your reference

We humbly request your presence during Meeting.

Sincerely,



Vatu Molisa,

IUCN Project Liason Officer

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Mr. Olivier Langrand
Executive Director - Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)



Olivier joined CEPF as the new Executive Director in January 2015.

With 27 years of experience in international conservation, Olivier is an expert on environmental policy and governmental sector engagement as well as the implementation and coordination of on-the-ground conservation projects.

Prior to joining CEPF, Olivier worked most recently as the director of global affairs for Island Conservation, a California based non-profit organization, where he spent three years working on the international policy framework and the public funding stream necessary for governments and NGO partners to prevent species extinction from islands.

Before working for Island Conservation, Olivier spent eleven years with Conservation International, where he served as Executive Vice President in charge of the Center for Conservation and Government. His division was responsible for public funding, engaging with governments and multi-lateral institutions in environmental policy, and working with indigenous and traditional peoples. In his previous position with Conservation International, Olivier led the Africa and Madagascar Division.

Prior to joining CI, Olivier held similar positions in Madagascar and Central Africa with World Wildlife Fund where he worked for 14 years. Over the course of his career, of which seventeen have been spent in the field in various countries of Africa, Olivier has developed a wealth of experience and global relationships in support of his lifelong passion and commitment to protecting biodiversity.

Olivier received his Masters of Science (MSc) from the Department of Zoology at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. He is an avid birder, an expert on the birds of southwestern Indian Ocean islands, and author and/or co-author of over 100 scientific publications, including three authoritative books on the avifauna of Madagascar, the Comoros, the Mascarenes, and the Seychelles Islands.

This is Olivier's first official mission to Vanuatu in the East Melanesia Islands hotspot region and he looks forward to learning more about the CEPF's stakeholders, donor partners, grantees and the work they each are implementing on the ground.