

Grants & opportunities

The Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund was initially announced at the World Conservation Congress in Barcelona in October 2008, and was established in the form of an endowment through a donation by Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. The Fund has been accepting applications since mid March 2009 for grants of up to USD 5,000 and between USD 5,000 and 25,000. By the end of 2010 just over USD 5 million had been disbursed to c. 380 projects in almost 100 countries.

The Fund was established on the basis that in the broader environmental debate direct species conservation has lost out to wider concerns such as climate change, sustainability, poverty alleviation and other matters, and is now seen as a by-product of larger issues. This has led to fewer resources going to support species conservation directly, resulting in underfunded field biologists, wardens and conservationists, as well as leading to a loss of expertise and experience in this field: all to the detriment of global biodiversity.

It is the objective of the Fund to work towards a well-supported community of conservationists and experts, helping to reaffirm the importance of species conservation

as a discipline and encouraging direct species conservation in the field. The Fund aims to achieve this by providing grants to dedicated individuals and organizations who genuinely make a difference in the field and to in situ conservation work that really helps a species. The Fund will support projects on species that are threatened (generally according to the IUCN Red List), data deficient or locally important, covering work such as surveying, direct conservation action, scientific research and local awareness.

The grants will be awarded to individuals and organizations who will actually improve the long-term survival chances of a given species in situ. This is on a genuinely global level, including any species of animal, plant or fungus.

For more information about the Fund, and to apply, please go to the Fund's website at <http://www.mbzspeciesconservation.org>, or write to the Fund Manager (nicolas.heard@mbzspeciesconservation.org). It is intended that as the number of projects the Fund supports increases, the website will also become a forum for species conservationists and a site on which grantees can highlight the work they have done.