



**CORAL TRIANGLE
INITIATIVE**
ON CORAL REEFS, FISHERIES
AND FOOD SECURITY



**Opening Remarks from General Directorate of Fisheries, Aquaculture and
Marine Resources Timor-Leste,
At
The 18TH Senior Official Meeting of CTI-CFF
(Timor Plaza, Dili, Timor-Leste, 6-7 November 2023)**

*Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates and partners,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

Distinguished delegates from the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF) member countries and development partners, it is an honor and a privilege to welcome you to the 18th Senior Official Meeting.

First of all, on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Forestry of Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to the Regional Secretariat of CTI-CFF for successfully organizing and make this event happen.

Today, I stand before you on behalf of Timor-Leste, brimming with pride as we take on the significant responsibility of chairing the Council of Ministers and Senior Officials for CTI-CFF this year and next, in 2024. This is a remarkable opportunity for our nation, one that we embrace with enthusiasm and commitment.

The Chairmanship provides us with a unique platform to strengthen our engagement with the Regional Secretariat and the Coral Triangle Five (CT5). Through this collaboration, we aim to exchange knowledge and experiences that will be invaluable in our ongoing efforts to safeguard our precious marine resources.

We gather to reinforce CT6 countries' unwavering commitment to the protection and preservation of our precious marine ecosystem. Our nation, with its stunning marine biodiversity, stands as a testament to the incredible natural beauty and resources that we are entrusted to safeguard. We acknowledge the collective responsibility of the CTI-CFF member countries to address the challenges facing our coral reefs, and Timor-Leste is fully dedicated to this cause.



We understand the vital role that coral reefs play in the balance of our ecosystems, in supporting our fisheries, and in ensuring food security for the communities that depend on them. We recognize the need for a united front in addressing climate change and the various threats to our marine environments. We pledge to continue our active involvement in CTI-CFF initiatives aimed at conserving and rehabilitating our coral reefs, as a legacy to be passed on to future generations. Timor-Leste also firmly to continue to partnership with CTI since the organization is regional in nature with strong commit for the environmental conservation and for the sustainability of fisheries resources, food security and enhanced household economy.

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As Chair of the CSO, I am thrilled to report that our progress in implementing the decisions made during SOM-17 has been immensely positive. The dedication and commitment of our CT6 member's countries and development partners have propelled us forward, bringing us closer to our shared goals.

As we look ahead to SOM-18, we are filled with hope that the resolutions arising from this pivotal meeting will lead to even better outcomes. We believe that through our collective efforts, we can continue to enhance the well-being of the communities we serve and the ecosystems we protect.

Furthermore, it is heartening to witness the growing collaboration among the member countries of the Coral Triangle Six (CT6) nations that steadily improved. This spirit of unity is key to achieving our collective vision of a sustainable and vibrant Coral Triangle.

In conclusion, we stand united in our mission to protect the invaluable coral reefs of the Coral Triangle. Timor-Leste's commitment is resolute, and together with our fellow member countries, we will continue to work diligently towards this noble cause. Let us embark on this 18th Senior Official Meeting with enthusiasm and determination, embracing our shared responsibilities, and shaping a better, more sustainable future for all.

Thank you, and let the discussions begin.



Closing Remarks from General Directorate of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Resources Timor-Leste.

The 18th Senior Official meeting has been a resounding success, marked by productive discussions, meaningful collaborations, and a shared commitment to addressing critical global challenges. Over the past two days, we have come together to forge consensus on important issues, paving the way for a brighter future. The meeting showcased the power of diplomacy and multilateral cooperation in the face of complex problems.

Furthermore, I wish to seize this opportunity to convey our profound gratitude for the exceptional contributions of the present Executive Director of the CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat, Dr. Mohd Kushairi Mohd Rajuddin, and the current Deputy Executive Director for Corporate Services, Mr. Gustaaf Lumiu, who will conclude their tenure by the close of today. Your unwavering commitment and guidance have been significant in furthering the objectives of the organization and attaining significant milestones in the preservation of the marine ecosystem. We shall forever hold their contributions in high regard, and we extend our sincere appreciation.

As we embark upon a new phase, we extend a warm welcome to the incoming Executive Director and the DED-CS into the CTI-CFF community. We look forward to working closely with both of you, drawing upon your considerable expertise and leadership to guide our organization. Your vision and dedication will be essentials in addressing the challenges that lie ahead as we strive to safeguard our coral reefs and uphold food security within the Coral Triangle.

As we conclude these two days of fruitful discussions, thank you Regional Secretariat, CT6 Countries and Development Partners for your participation and cooperation for the past two days. We look forward to the tangible results and positive impacts from this gathering, reflecting our collective dedication to a more peaceful and prosperous world.
