



Solomon Islands Government

Country Statement delivered by Rosalie Masu, Deputy Director, Inshore Fisheries Division, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources at the 7th Ministerial Meeting held in Makati City, Philippines, 14th December 2018

*Your Excellences and distinguished representatives of CT6 countries.
Development partners
Interim Executive Director and staff of the RS
Ladies and gentlemen*

It is indeed a great honor for me, to represent the Government and people of Solomon Islands.

I extend to you, on behalf of the Government and people of Solomon Islands- greetings.

A decade ago, we observed the declaration of the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, fisheries and food security, by six of our Coral Triangle Leaders. A common vision was declared to protect and safeguard the world's marine epicenter – our six countries pledged to collectively manage marine and coastal resources of the Coral Triangle region.

We remain gratified that our Coral Triangle Region hosts three quarters (75%) of known coral species, 37% of reef fishes, more than half of the world's coral reefs (ie. 50%), large extent of mangroves forest and sea-grasses meadows, and home to many endangered mammals and turtles. These biological resources contribute significantly to our region's economy and wellbeing.

Over the past decade, we have strived together as a region to safeguard one of the world's most diverse marine center- the Coral Triangle Area and its peoples.

Today, I am humbled to note the tremendous progress this regional framework has created for the six countries both regionally and nationally.

Being part of this Initiative, has paved our path, has built our foundation and has supported us to re-enforce our commitments as a Nation, towards achieving stronger governance and management of our oceans.

We recognize that 98 percent (%) of Solomon Islands is ocean. Thus we are committed to ensuring the sustainable management and protection of the ocean for now and the future of Solomon Islands. This will always be our ongoing responsibility.

The Solomon Islands Government is fully committed to integrated planning and management for its ocean. We are also committed to strengthening our provinces, our communities and peoples, through our community based resource management framework. These commitments are part of the announcements that our Government had made at the United Nations Ocean Conference in New York in June of 2017.

Ladies and gentlemen, the ocean and its resources are of great value to the people of Solomon Islands. They provide the basis for people's

livelihoods and food security, and contribute significantly towards the economy of Solomon Islands.

The OCEAN is extremely valuable to us all – in terms of:

- our strong cultural connection to the sea,
- the rich fisheries resources that our communities rely upon,
- the greatest diversity of marine plants and animals in the world,
- income we derive from marine-related economic activities, such as tourism
- Government revenue, for example, from tuna fishing and deep sea mineral exploration.
- our ecosystem services deliver benefits estimated at more than \$2.51 billion SBD per year.

However, these comes with its challenges. These valuable services are under threat from multiple and conflicting uses, overuse, destructive uses and pollution. Global pressure on our ocean from climate change is bringing increases in sea surface temperatures, increases in storm intensity, sea level rise and the acidification of the seawater.

We do recognize that serious problems threatening the valuable marine resources of the Coral Triangle are not restricted to any single country but affect all, either directly or because of the connection of the seas. Therefore it is critical that the Coral Triangle countries and our neighbors continue to take a regional approach to dealing with these challenges.

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Moreover, the world is watching the Coral Triangle and how we are cooperating and progressing. Therefore the work of the CTI-CFF is playing a very important role on a global stage in showing how coastal and marine resources can be managed sustainably and contribute very significantly to food security and livelihoods. **CTI is playing on centre stage with the world as its audience- this is an important responsibility and this remains our challenge!**

Finally, let us be reminded, that our children dream of a better tomorrow and so our actions and our decisions we make today should always be to reflect that for a better future.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen, with these remarks, we thank you. *Tagio tumas.*