



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



PRESS RELEASE

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CTI-CFF SOM-13 Generated Significant Program Actions for 2018 and Beyond

The 13th Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM-13) of Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reef, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF) was held in Makati City, Manila, Philippines on 29-30 November 2017, which generated important commitments and programs for 2018 and beyond.

SOM-13 was preceded by Pre-SOM13 activities which include meetings of Technical Working Groups (TWG), Governance Working Group (GWG), Budgets and Financial Matters, Cross Cutting Initiatives, as well as University Partnership and Science Advisory Group that were conducted 27-28 November 2017.

MAKATI CITY, MANILA, Philippines, 30 November 2017 – A series of CTI-CFF Pre-SOM-13 and SOM-13 events generated some significant decisions: CTI-CFF 2018 working programs; the Official new appointment of Deputy Executive Director (DED) of Program Services; acknowledgement and consideration of the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) application as a new CTI-CFF Development Partner (subject for approval in the upcoming Ministerial Meeting); and status of the progress of Technical Working Groups and Cross Cutting Themes in achieving Regional Plan Of Action goals and targets.

Previously, the meeting acknowledged the activities and efforts of each CT6 member state in achieving the goals of their National Plan of Actions (NPOA), agreed to encourage those member states who have not revisited their NPOAs to review and update the action plans, recognized the differences among the CT6 in terms of capacities and expertise on the areas of climate change, threatened species and Ecosystem Approach for Fisheries Management (EAFM), thus encouraged the more advanced member countries to share their knowledge and expertise through regional exchanges and trainings. These will be coordinated by the CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat (RS).

The 16th Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary of the Philippines/Environment Secretary, who is also the current Chair of CTI-COM Roy A. Cimatu, in his keynote speech delivered by Undersecretary and Chief of Staff, Rudolfo Garcia, emphasized the importance of the 13th SOM: “Every gathering of countries that prioritizes the protection of marine and coastal resources is a welcome opportunity to do our share to improve the lives of people who depend on these resources”. In his speech, he also mentioned the importance of this SOM to measure the progress of the RPOA which runs from 2010 up to 2020, in which he also noted the

need to look beyond 2020 to implement the long-term goals and alignment with the existing commitments and conventions.

The TWG which is the backbone of CTI-CFF RS in coordinating the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) activities across the six member states has made some impacts with its achievements, *inter alia*:

- In the Seascapes Working Group, the CTI-CFF seascapes general model and regional framework for priority seascapes which contain seascapes monitoring and evaluation indicators have been developed and adopted.
- In the EAFM Working Group, the 3rd CT Fishers Forum Communique was adopted.
- In the Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) Working Group, the CT6 countries adopted the regional work plan on blue carbon initiative.
- In the Threatened Species (TS) Working Group, the Sulu Sulawesi Seascape Project established the first network of MPAs on the Philippines side of the transboundary Marine Turtle Protected Area Network (MTPAN) as a safe haven for the Green Turtles (*Chelonia mydas*).

The GWG has generated some notable achievements, which include the Coordination Mechanism Working Group (CMWG) to provide assistance to the RS with the development of the draft Recommendations on the use of CTI-CFF for Project Development Pursuits and Other Related Fund-Raising Initiatives to be ready by SOM-14. The Cross-cutting Themes, several decisions were made which include recommending NCCs and partners to support the 5th Regional Business Forum (RBF) in 2018. The Women Leaders Forum (WLF) incorporated gender equality and women empowerment elements, and the Government Network (LGN) agreed to include Maritime LGN as part of the RPOA review process, respectively. University Partnerships are encouraged to seek their own funds for their activities.

Meanwhile, Widi A. Pratikto, Ph.D, the Executive Director of CTI-CFF, said: “The decisions made representing the emerging challenges and solutions to safeguard the Coral Triangle region from climate change, acceleration of marine environment degradation, decreasing fish stock are enormous”, noting the urgency of immediate and strategic actions to address the challenges.

“It is essential that each respective CT6 member state to work hand-in-hand to formulate and agree on the applicable programs or policies on the ground – not only to intervene against the accelerating destructive processes, but also to mitigate the impacts on the local communities’ livelihoods. That’s why the SOM-13 decisions are essential to uplift the emerging issues into actions.”

Further, SOM-13 highlighted the importance in reevaluating the current Regional Plan of Actions (RPOA) that will expire in 2020. For the RPOA review, CT6 member states are urged to work together with CTI-CFF Development Partners and collaborators led by the Australian Government.

The meeting also discussed the progress of cooperation agreements with the CTI-CFF Development Partners, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Australian Government, Conservation International (CI), Coral Triangle Centre (CTC), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

CTI-CFF collaborators Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) also presented their progress on the updates for the existing collaboration arrangement.

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About CTI-CFF

The Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF) is a multilateral partnership of six countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste (CT6). The CT6 countries work together to preserve marine resources and coastal, and focus on some key issues such as food security, climate change, and marine biodiversity. CTI-CFF was established formally in the Leaders' Summit in 2009 with approval of the leaders of the CT6 countries and they adopted the CTI Regional Plan of Action (CTI RPOA) which is a strategic action plan that consists of several working groups that deal with (i) Management of seascapes, (ii) an ecosystem-based fisheries management, (iii) marine protected areas, (iv) climate change adaptation, and (v) management of the threatened species.

About Regional Secretariat

The Regional Secretariat (RS) of the CTI-CFF is mandated to promote regional cooperation, knowledge sharing, and learning facilities within the six member countries of the Coral Triangle. The RS coordinates and monitors the progress of the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) goals. The RS coordinates and supports official meetings and events linked to the CTI-CFF process, including cross-cutting services in support of monitoring and evaluation, financial coordination, information management and outreach. It also coordinates the implementation of CTI-CFF RPOA and provides support to, and coordination with, NCCs, including advising the CTI-CSO on emerging opportunities and priorities to reaching the goals and targets of the RPOA. The RS also acts as channel of communication and information sharing and foster networking among the Parties, CTI Partners and other organizations and donors in the efforts to promote the objectives of the CTI-CFF. The Regional Secretariat is currently based at the RS permanent office in Manado, North Sulawesi, Indonesia.

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