

CTI-CFF Ministerial Meeting
Session 6. Statement by CTI Partners
December 5th 2024
10:55 – 11:00 a.m. Dili time

Thank you, Mr. Chair, Regional Secretariat Executive Director Dr Frank Griffin, distinguished CT6 Country Delegates, esteemed colleagues, and friends of the Coral Triangle Initiative. It is both an honour and a privilege to address you on behalf of the CTI Partners.

We are grateful for the opportunity to address this Ministerial Meeting.

First, we congratulate Dr. Frank Keith Griffin on his appointment as Executive Director of the CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat. We also commend Mr. Hanung Cahyono for assuming the Deputy Executive Director for Corporate Services role and recognise Mr. Christovel Rotinsulu for his exemplary service as Acting Executive Director during the transition period. We also take this opportunity to commend the CT6 countries for their leadership and collaboration in addressing the urgent challenges facing the Coral Triangle—biodiversity loss, climate change, overfishing, and ocean pollution.

The **Coral Triangle, our “centre of marine biodiversity”** and its marine biodiversity significance cannot be overstated—it serves as a lifeline for millions of people, providing food security, livelihoods, and climate resilience.

The CTI Partners remain fully committed to supporting the CTI-CFF through impactful programmatic work:

The Coral Triangle Center reaffirms its commitment to supporting the six Coral Triangle countries in conserving their marine ecosystems, promoting sustainable fisheries, ensuring food security, and safeguarding biodiversity. As a partner of the CTI-CFF since 2014, the recent renewal of our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat strengthens our dedication to advancing the Regional Plan of Action 2.0. This includes establishing effective marine protected areas (MPAs) and threatened species protection and conducting training, workshops, and learning exchanges. The MOU also prioritises gender equality, youth engagement, and sustainable financing initiatives. CTC further supports regional goals by co-chairing the Women Leaders Forum and implementing the CTI-CFF Capacity Building Roadmap, designed to scale up, accelerate, and sustain skills development across the Coral Triangle. Committed to inclusivity, CTC ensures its programs benefit all stakeholders, reinforcing efforts to secure a sustainable future for the Coral Triangle.

GIZ would like to highlight the continued commitment of GIZ and the SOMACORE Implementing Partners to support the regional topics of high priority, specifically referring to the mainstreaming and implementation of the CTI-CFF Capacity Building Roadmap, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) policies and the ongoing support for CTI-CFF Technical Working Groups with emphasis on EAFM, CCA, MPA,

Threatened Species and the Seascape Sub-Working Groups for the Sulu- Sulawesi Seascape (SSS), Lesser Sunda Seascape (LSS) and Bismarck Solomon Sea Ecoregion (BSSE). GIZ is committed to integrating the CTI-CFF GESI Policy and the GESI Policy Implementing Guidelines across all SOMACORE components, recognising specifically the Women Leaders Forum's role in monitoring and evaluating the GESI Policy.

IUCN is proud to join the CTI-CFF family following the signing of the MOU in September 2024. As a committed partner, IUCN continues to support the CT6 Member Countries in strengthening the effectiveness of MPAs and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) to align with the GBF Targets, particularly the 30x30 goal. Through the CBD-recognised IUCN Green List Standard for Protected and Conserved Areas, the effectiveness of MPAs will be enhanced, fostering ecosystem health, protecting threatened species, and promoting equitable governance to benefit both people and nature. IUCN remains dedicated to advancing global policy and advocacy efforts within the Coral Triangle and is committed to supporting the implementation of the CTI-CFF RPOA v2.

WWF has been a long-term partner of the CTI-CFF since 2009. WWF recognises the challenges of the member countries in achieving 30/30 with the need to engage with thousands of coastal communities as partners in conserving the marine and coastal resources of the CT region. The first MOU between CTI-CFF and WWF strengthens the continuing collaboration towards implementing the CTI-CFF Regional Plan of Action 2.0. The main scope of the MOU includes the coordination and implementation of the CTI-CFF Capacity Building Roadmap to support the countries in achieving 30x30, to enhance migratory corridors for threatened marine species that will connect the CT region and will spearhead targeted actions within the three CTI-CFF priority seascapes, and scaling solutions for plastic waste management in MPA/OECM as a basis for resilient communities and habitats.

Conservation International

CI aims to focus on strengthening the resilience of the local communities, protecting corridors of the threatened species, and increasing the MPA management effectiveness through close engagement with verticals in national, provincial and local levels of Indonesia and Timor Leste governments in the establishment of MPAs and building capacity of the authorities and related stakeholders in the following years.

U.S Agency for International Development (USAID)

USAID is honoured to be a longstanding partner of the CTI-CFF, reflecting our deep commitment to sustainable fisheries, marine biodiversity conservation, and regional collaboration. Over the years, USAID's support has fostered meaningful engagement, strengthened technical capacity, and advanced effective resource management practices across the region. Through initiatives like USAID Sustainable Coral Triangle and other efforts, USAID continues championing regional leadership and partnership as critical drivers of sustainable development. USAID remains dedicated to working with CTI-CFF and its member countries to preserve and protect the Coral Triangle's invaluable marine and coastal resources for future generations.

USAID Sustainable Coral Triangle (USAID SCT)

USAID Sustainable Coral Triangle (SCT) is a direct grant to the CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat, which exemplifies our support for and belief in the power of regional leadership. Regional leadership is vital in advancing sustainable fisheries and biodiversity conservation, fostering authentic engagement, and implementing effective resource management practices. Through this grant, USAID reaffirms its commitment to empowering the CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat and its member countries to strengthen technical expertise, promote collaborative partnerships, and ensure the long-term sustainability of marine and coastal resources in the Coral Triangle region.

USAID Sustainable Fish Asia Technical Support (USAID SuFIA TS)

USAID SuFIA TS expresses gratitude for its partnership with CTI-CFF over the past three years, highlighting contributions to the CTI-CFF Regional Plan of Action 2.0, including support for the Coral Triangle Conservation Fund, Technical Working Groups (TWGs) and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) initiatives. As the program nears completion in 2025, USAID SuFIA TS looks forward to implementing the remaining 2025 activities in collaboration with other CTI programs and CTI Partners.

WCS reaffirms its support for strengthening engagement and coordination with CTI-CFF and partners, building on a legacy of groundwork in five out of the six CTI countries. Currently, WCS programs in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines focus on area-based conservation in the Sulu-Sulawesi Seascape. Similarly, the upcoming partnership between WCS Papua New Guinea and GIZ-SOMACORE in the Bismarck Solomon Seascape aims to advance conservation priorities. Both regional works reinforce local and regional efforts to protect critical biodiversity and enhance community livelihoods. Through the Coral Triangle Conservation Fund (CTCF), WCS will continue to support inclusive and innovative financing mechanisms aligned with national priorities and the Global Biodiversity Framework.

CTI Partners also applaud the progress made with the Coral Triangle Conservation Fund (CTCF) as a sustainable financing vehicle for CTI-CFF RPOA 2.0 implementation. This mechanism represents a critical step toward securing long-term resources for conservation efforts.

We believe that the following actions should be prioritised to strengthen CTI-CFF's workplan and coordination:

Annual CTI Partners Meeting

Establishing an annual in-person meeting of Partners, facilitated by the Regional Secretariat and CT6 NCCs, would enhance coordination, improve synergy, and foster shared accountability. Such a forum would allow partners to discuss progress and identify emerging priorities.

Integration of Capacity Building Roadmap

Ensuring the Capacity Building Roadmap is incorporated into National Plans of Action, Technical Working Groups, and Cross-Cutting Initiatives would align training efforts with regional priorities.

Sustainable financing for RPOA 2.0 implementation

Accelerating efforts to secure sustainable financing mechanisms for implementing the RPOA 2.0 is essential. This includes operationalising the CTCF and leveraging other possible financial instruments.

Global policy and advocacy for the Coral Triangle

We will further support the CTI-CFF's visibility in global policy and advocacy dialogues. We acknowledge your efforts at the CBD COP-16 to advocate for the CTI-CFF work on marine conservation, and we encourage you further to promote CTI work at the other key global convenings. These platforms provide opportunities to showcase the Coral Triangle's unique value and secure international support.

Support for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

We continue the implementation of the CTI-CFF GESI Policy and monitor its impact through the Women Leaders Forum (WLF) to ensure that conservation efforts remain inclusive and equitable.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We continue to support the improvement of the CT Atlas for substantial data collection, analysis, and reporting to strengthen adaptive management and demonstrate measurable conservation outcomes, particularly on marine spatial planning work.

Conclusion

As we look ahead, the CTI Partners remain committed to supporting the CT6 countries and the Regional Secretariat in achieving the RPOA 2.0 goals and advancing the 2030 Global Biodiversity Framework, notably Target 3 (30x30).

Let's foster collaboration, align joint efforts, and leverage our collective knowledge and expertise to secure the Coral Triangle's sustainable and resilient future.

We thank you again for your collaboration.