



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

ED'S ADDRESS

The 17th Senior Official Meeting

Thursday, 24 November 2022

1. Excellency, Dr. Melchior Mataki, Chair of CTI-CFF Committee of Senior Officials,
Head of Delegations of CT6 Member Countries,
Distinguished Representatives, Colleagues, Strategic Partners
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Assalamualaikum,
A pleasant morning and afternoon to each and everyone.
2. I am excited to welcome you all to this Senior Officials' Meeting. Although we are still meeting virtually, but we are glad that some level, you are now able to be in a physical meeting. We should be thankful to be able to survive the Pandemic COVID-19 that lasts almost three years, and we hope we are now approaching the end of it, that we'll resume to have face-to-face encounters starting next year.
3. This year, we have seen more international events are carried out physically. As a representative of the Regional Secretariat, I have attended several international events ensuring the visibility of the CTI-CFF at the global level. I was present at the Our Ocean Conference 2022 in Palau and in the UN Ocean Conference 2022 in Lisbon, in which I spoke about our commitment to establish the Regional Trust Fund. The audience response was inquisitive due to not knowing or only to hear of the presence of CTI-CFF. I realized that following two UN conference RS had attended, the visibility of CTI-CFF organization is low and needs to be broadcasted. However, several organizations such as Bloomberg, potential donors and philanthropist have opened up a friendly discussion and had had meaningful conversation with me.

4. For the whole year of 2022, the Regional Secretariat was holding up very well and were able to conduct a number of meetings with all 7 Working Groups, and in a number of discussions fora through the web. In addition, we strengthened with various partners as well as engaged with institutions such as through their visits to Manado by the USAID team, the Malaysian government represented by the Embassy from Jakarta, the Consul General of the Philippines in Manado, and the First Secretary of the Embassy of Canada.
5. Excellencies, I am grateful for the impressive building in Manado that hosts the Regional Secretariat. All partners visiting the building showed admiration and that made us very proud. As a complement to the beautiful office, we hope to finalize the Host Country Agreement soon to become a strong base for the Regional Secretariat to function and provide the best services. I, on behalf of the staff of the Regional Secretariat, convey our gratitude to the Government of Indonesia, and we wish to make you proud of the Secretariat in return. We also contributed to the decoration of the garden in front of the building on our side of the compound as well as small repairs to the guard post.
6. One of the largest components of the RS responsibilities is the establishment of the Regional Trust Fund. We are pleased to say that we are advancing now to the formation of the Board of Directors after going through a number of meetings and discussions with the Technical Committee comprising CT6 Member Countries since 2021, following which, the formation of the Steering Committee beginning 2022. Many thanks and appreciation to the commitment of WCS and CFA.
7. Simultaneously, the Regional Secretariat is in the process of improving the University Partnership and Scientific Advisory Group. The Rector of IPB University had kindly approved the request made by RS for Dr. Budy Wiryawan, a lecturer and fisheries scientist of his university to be appointed to look into this matter together with the present Coordinator of CTI-CFF UP, Prof Grevo Gerung of Sam Ratulangi University.

8. Today, I am proud to share that the visibility of CTI-CFF at the global level is increasing a little with the participations made in a number of international fora such as UN Ocean Conference, Our Ocean Conference, UNFCCC as well as the coming CBD convention. During this attendance, the Partners (WCS, CFA, WWF, CTC to name a few) were there with me giving support to RS and bring RS to be introduced to potential donors elaborating the CTI-CFF Regional Conservation Trust Fund in the making. During the meeting in Lisbon and at COP27, NCC of Solomon Islands and the Chair of CSO were there with RS, boosting further the spirit to push RS CTI-CFF to the peak of visibility.
9. After attending UNFCCC COP27 early this November, the Regional Secretariat will also participate in CBD COP15 in Montreal, where RS had already secured a joint event with ICRI, GFCR and other big coral reef institutions on 14 December. In this event, RS hopes that the Ministers of CT6 Member Countries who will be attending, to attend and convey speeches at the event to enhance CTI-CFF visibility.
10. The Regional Secretariat had also secured the commitment from USAID amounting to at least USD 12 million; and such support has already begun. This includes the support for the period of one year for the Coordinator of CTI-CFF Regional Conservation Trust Fund, with possible extension for another year, and the support for a proposal writer to assist preparing the 3 main project papers of CTI Partners endorsed in SOM-16, for an initial period of three to six months. In addition, USAID is considering to fund projects on capacity building which will be carried out by RS for CT6 with the help of CTC and WWF.
11. Excellencies, we have the RPOA 2.0 before our eyes. In this new 10-year plan of action, we see new sets of goals and indicators that the 6 countries will need to work on. With the coming of the new Deputy Executive Director Program Service at the Regional Secretariat, this will add to a smoother progress of RPOA 2.0.
12. Last month, we welcomed on board three new staffs in the Regional Secretariat; the Communications and Information Manager, the Data Compilation and

Documentation Officer, and the NCCs/Partners/Private Sectors Relation Officer. They should have come earlier but their intake was delayed for RS needed to accommodate the urge to prioritize financial commitment. I thanked them for their patience. While awaiting for their appointment, the present staff of RS at that time had voluntarily put more than 100% of their effort in carrying out the workload in RS.

13. We are aware of challenges we continue to face, beside the ones brought about by Covid-19 pandemic where we had many postponements of meetings due to several factors like insufficient quorum, internet challenges, lack of quorum and others.
14. Despite all challenges, including the adjustment of today's SOM-17 Agenda which RS initially assumed that it will go well since the agenda had been circulated before and during the Pre-SOM, with no comments from CT6 delegates.
15. The Regional Secretariat wishes to reaffirm to the Committee of Senior Officials in this meeting, that the Regional Secretariat remain consistent in its effort to achieve the mutual goals and objectives of the CTI-CFF.
16. I thank you for your support.