



US Support to the Coral Triangle Initiative

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Photo: USAID Philippines

More than 100 million people are directly dependent on the Coral Triangle for their livelihoods.

BACKGROUND

The Coral Triangle is an area encompassing almost 4 million square miles of ocean and coastal waters in Southeast Asia and the Pacific surrounding Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Timor Leste, and the Solomon Islands. The Coral Triangle is also home to some 363 million people and encompasses economic zones in which each country has exclusive rights to marine resources. Recognized as the global center of marine biological diversity, the region serves as the spawning and juvenile growth areas for five species of tuna, comprising the largest tuna fisheries in the world. The biological resources of the Coral Triangle directly sustain the lives of more than 120 million people living within this area, and benefit millions more worldwide.

The natural environment of the Coral Triangle—and the many goods and services it provides—are at risk from a range of factors including over-fishing, land-based sources of pollution, and climate change. These factors have a negative impact on food security, employment opportunities, and the standards of living of people dependent on marine resources for their livelihoods.

On May 15, 2009, the leaders of the six Coral Triangle countries met for a summit in Manado, Indonesia and signed the declaration launching the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) and endorsed its Regional Plan of Action. This event marked the culmination of a process launched by Indonesian President Yudhoyono in 2007 and supported by the United States to bring the six countries together to preserve the threatened marine, coastal, and small island ecosystems of the Coral Triangle region.

Member nations of the Coral Triangle have committed to implement the five goals of the CTI Regional and National Plans of Action:

- Designating and effectively managing “priority seascapes”;
- Applying an “ecosystem approach” to the management of fisheries and other marine resources;
- Establishing networks of marine protected areas;
- Implementing measures to strengthen resilience and adaptation to climate change, and
- Strengthening measures to protect threatened marine species.





The Coral Triangle provides a major source of protein to more than 1 billion people in Southeast Asia.



The Coral Triangle is home to six of the seven species of marine turtles.

APPROACH

Sustaining the natural productivity of the Coral Triangle for current and future generations requires a new vision. The Coral Triangle Initiative is transforming marine resource management in the region through an inter-agency, holistic approach that respects the interrelated character of ecological systems and incorporates migratory pathways, entire life cycles of species, ocean currents and financial flows.

In view of CTI's potential for far-reaching environmental and economic benefits, the United States offers support through national and international channels. USAID promotes an integrated US response to the CTI through partnerships with the US Department of State, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), a consortium of environmental NGOs, and a Program Integrator contractor. In addition, USAID coordinates closely with other CTI donors, such as the Asian Development Bank, Global Environment Facility and the Australian government.

Major activities under the US Support Program to the CTI include the following:

- Assistance to the governments and stakeholders in implementing the CTI Plan of Action;
- Support in establishing and developing the CTI Secretariat and national coordinating committees;
- Providing access to US science and research capabilities; and
- Sharing best practices among the six Coral Triangle countries.

PARTNERS

World Wildlife Fund for Nature, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy, Associates in Rural Development, Inc., US Department of State, and US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Contact: Rene Acosta

US Agency for International Development
Regional Development Mission for Asia
GPF Witthayu Tower A, 93/1 Wireless Road
Bangkok 10330 Thailand
Office: +662-263-7972
Fax: +662-263-7499
E-mail: racosta@usaid.gov
Web: <http://asia.usaid.gov>