



CTI Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) Review Report - Final

October 2018

Prepared for:
CTI RPOA Review Committee

CTI REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION (RPOA) REVIEW REPORT - FINAL

Prepared for:

CTI RPOA REVIEW COMMITTEE

Prepared by:

PT HATFIELD INDONESIA
LIPI BUILDING 3RD FLOOR
JL. IR. H. JUANDA NO. 18
BOGOR 16122
INDONESIA

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACB	The ASEAN Centre For Biodiversity
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATSEA	Arafura and Timor Seas Ecosystem Action Program
BSSE	The Bismarck Solomon Seas Ecoregion
CBRM	Community-Based Resource Management
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBI	Congo Basin Initiative
CCI	Caribbean Challenge Initiative
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CI	Conservation International
COASTFISH	Sustainable Coastal Fisheries and Poverty Reduction Initiative
COBSEA	Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia
COM	The Council of Ministers
COP	Conference of Parties
CSO	Committee of Senior Officials
CT	The Coral Triangle
CTC	Coral Triangle Center
CTI	Coral Triangle Initiative for Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security
CTMPAS	Coral Triangle Marine Protected Areas System
CTSP	Coral Triangle Support Program
DED	Deputy Executive Director
DOI	Department of the Interior
EAFM	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management
EBA	European Business Association
EU	European Union
ED	Executive Director
FRTWG	Financial Resources Technical Working Group
FRWG	Financial Resources Working Group
FAO	The Food and Agriculture Organization of The United Nations
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i> – German agency for international development cooperation
IUU	Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEWG	Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group
MMAF	Marine Affairs and Fisheries
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NCC	National Country Committee

NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NPOA	National Plans of Action
PEMSEA	Partnerships in Environmental Management for The Seas Of East Asia
PIF	Pacific Island Forum
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RDMA	Regional Development Mission for Asia
REX	Regional Learning Exchanges
RPOA	Regional Plan of Action
RS	Regional Secretariat
SEAFDEC	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center
SGDs	Sustainable Development Goals
SSME	Sulu Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion
SOM	Senior Officials Meeting
SPREP	Secretariat of Pacific Regional Environment Program
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TWGS	Technical Working Group
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on The Law Of The Sea
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change
UNDP	The United Nations Development Program
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USCTI	U.S. Coral Triangle Initiative Support Program
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WF	World Fish
WG	Working Group
WPC	World Parks Congress
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature


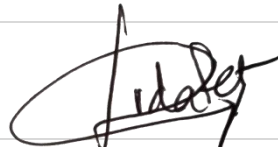
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AMENDMENT RECORD

This report has been issued and amended as follows:

Issue	Description	Date	Approved by	
1	First version the draft Review of the CTI RPOA	2018-07-31		
2	Second version of the draft Review of the CTI RPOA	2018-08-28		
3	Final version of the Review of the CTI RPOA	2018-10-08	 Bambang Tri Sasongko Adi Project Director	 Lida Pet-Soede Project Manager

FOREWORD & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This review has been a large undertaking in a relatively short period of time and this would not have been possible without the support and attention of many individuals and organizations. The responses provided a wealth of information, opinions and suggestions for improvements. I have tried to capture and represent them all in an unbiased fashion, and improvements are always possible.

The presentation of the information shared here is the full responsibility of me as team leader, mistakes and misunderstandings are solely mine. It is important to note here that the report presents opinions conveyed by respondents to the review.

This final report includes feedback and additional suggestions from all National Coordinating Committees (NCCs) for each of the CTI country members and development partners. The careful consideration of the draft findings and constructive comments are greatly appreciated.

Upon submitting this final version, I'd like to share that the prevailing feeling that remains after having received suggestions for improvement, is hope and enthusiasm. Enthusiasm stemming from the passion, the care, and the ambition of so many of the stakeholders who, at different levels and with different responsibilities, all want the CTI to be successful. Hope, that this review helps support the many experts, partners and government officials to motivate their leaders for a re-newed commitment to preserving the very foundations of the livelihoods and beauty of the shared CT coastal ecosystems in order to sustain the hugely diverse communities who call this special place home.

Specific acknowledgements are due to the associate expert team who worked in a very short timeframe to support in-country interviews with stakeholders who have very busy schedules. The responses from the associate experts as well as their swift and high-quality delivery of results and information have been extremely important to this review. Thank you so much Marissa, Nick, Nini, Geoff, David, Paul, Kevin, Nabila and Melissa, it has been a great experience working and learning with you all.

The financial support of the Australian government, of USAID-RDMA, of USAID-DOI, of WWF, of TNC, and of WCS for this review, and the financial support of the ADB for strengthening the team with the associates are much acknowledged. The very forthcoming support for secondary information and official introductions to CTI stakeholders from the leadership and staff of the Regional Secretariat, as well as the professional administrative support by the Coral Triangle Center are all greatly appreciated.

Lida Pet-Soede

October 8, 2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

First endorsed in 2009, the 10-year Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) provides the guiding framework for the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI or CTI-CFF) and has led to a wide range of accomplishments in the CTI region. However, much has changed over the past nine years.

This robust, transparent, independent evaluation of the RPOA was designed to support improved synergies with the priorities and needs of the member countries and strengthen overall regional marine governance. The Review has three primary purposes:

- to provide an evidence-based assessment of the influence and effectiveness of the RPOA as the guiding framework for the CTI and its current utility as a framework for meeting the priorities and needs of the member governments, development partners and local stakeholders at the regional, sub-regional and national levels;
- to promote institutional and operational improvements, learning and knowledge sharing and improved communication and partnerships between the six CTI member countries (CT6), development partners, collaborators and other key stakeholders; and
- to provide the CTI members and stakeholders with guidance on how the RPOA might be reshaped or revised prior to 2020 to build on the accomplishments of the past nine years and to take strategic advantage of any new regional and global drivers that have emerged or are emerging and which might generate a positive influence and impact on the future achievement of CTI goals.

An inception report was developed in response to the Terms of Reference for a Review of the CTI RPOA explaining the purpose, requirements and outputs of the review, and describing the details of the approach and methods employed during the review.

The review team consisted of a team leader and nine associate experts. The team conducted a review of documents and online resources, one-on-one interviews and small group consultations, and distributed online questionnaires. To the extent possible, information gathered during the interviews was verified from different sources and by asking some similar, yet slightly different, questions to the respondent.

To optimize the potential use of the review for different current stakeholders and actors as well as for potential future and new actors, we consulted with a sample of respondents for each stakeholder group/category that had been identified as part of the current CTI institution. We also interviewed individuals and groups that appear to sit at the “emerging periphery” of the current CTI framework, particularly those actors that drive economic development in this region.

In total, 74 respondents completed the stand-alone online questionnaire, and 80 one-on-one interviews were conducted, resulting in just over 4500 combined responses on various questions. We held five small group consultations, and compared structures and approaches from reports and publications and by interviewing three key experts of other multi-lateral collaborative platforms. We described the current context for each of the CT6 and the region as a whole using published statistics, other secondary information and from conducting interviews with regional experts.

From late August through early October, each of the CT6 member country NCCs and development partners provided feedback on the draft findings through partner meetings. The consultations clarified and improved the draft report, provided feedback on the proposed roadmap towards a revised RPOA, and also strengthened and validated the RPOA review and the CTI-CFF in general. All feedback received was used to create this final report.

The preparatory meeting for the Senior Officials' Meeting (planned during the second week of October in Jakarta), is seen as the most significant opportunity to discuss the main issues summarized in the RPOA review and address suggestions regarding the review, and the activities proposed in the roadmap to the revised RPOA that were proposed by the interview respondents, the NCCs and the development partners. As several countries are still in the process of revising their NPOAs, it must be noted that the outcomes of these NPOA revisions should be considered when revising the RPOA and agreeing on its priorities.

Prior to reading the summary of responses on the effectiveness of the RPOA, it is important to consider that the effectiveness of any project or initiative in achieving desired change and planned impact depends only partially on the people and resources dedicated to it. External factors can have a profound influence on the level of impact of a specific intervention. Considering the complex and dynamic geopolitical context of the region, growing pressures from economic development and growing populations in the CT6, and the external demands placed onto the region, this is certainly not different for the CTI.

The influence and effectiveness of the RPOA as guiding frameworks for the CTI and its current utility for meeting government and partner priorities.

The review built on the perceptions and opinions of different stakeholders on various aspects of the implementation of the RPOA for the CTI. The overarching finding is that respondents feel that it is important, ambitious, a bit dysfunctional, somewhat stagnant, rather bureaucratic, and somewhat outdated. In addition, the RPOA appears to not have a huge amount to show for the amount of investment that has gone into the regional level. From the respondents that sit slightly more at the periphery, the CTI as a whole is said to appear research- and policy-oriented and not overly inclusive, and some mention a perceived imbalance between the Asian countries and the Pacific members in receiving attention and support for the needs that relate to what is described by several as different levels of in-country capacity.

The most important beneficiaries of the CTI are considered to be national and local governments and coastal communities. Government agencies that are not directly involved in the CTI do not fully understand the history and opportunity provided through the RPOA; hence while implementation of National Plans of Action (NPOAs) are starting to show some significant results, the initiative lacks broad-based support for regional action in the government sector. The coastal communities and local governments of the CT region are not fully aware of the programs and how they will benefit from them. This is why it takes significant effort to get their support and involvement in the CTI.

There is, however, significant appreciation that such a situation is not unique, particularly in relation to the challenge of getting such countries together around the CTI shared goals. By analyzing the differences in progress between the five goals and the impacts of various changes throughout the evolution of the CTI (particularly on the effectiveness of the different components of the institution implementing the RPOA) we can draw some lessons that are relevant to a revised RPOA:

1. Where the workings of the CTI RPOA were directed to generate or strengthen a policy framework with tools and guidelines, and support examples of success, then the benefits of the RPOA were easily evident to different stakeholders.
2. Where national strategies were already initiated for concepts that would benefit from regional collaboration and joint action, then the potential added benefits of the CTI RPOA were most easily understood and supported.
3. Where funding was made available to support a series of Regional Learning Exchanges (REXs) that were open to broad groups of decision makers, actors, and stakeholders from different levels (international, national and local) the adoption and application of frameworks and tools generated through the CTI RPOA was positive.
4. Where the narrative around the CTI RPOA targets and goals could be flexible and made relevant to the main beneficiaries of governments and communities, support for regional action and adoption at local levels was positive in most countries.
5. Where regional action on frameworks and tools for the CTI RPOA goals were successfully adopted and applied at national levels, regional collaboration on these goals could focus on communicating the impacts for sustainability and magnifying the investments.
6. Where the relevance of the CTI RPOA to higher level impacts such as resilience and food security is well presented at international events, the thought leadership gains positive global following.
7. Where key stakeholders, particularly National Country Committees (NCCs), in the countries are open and inclusive to collaborate with various actors and initiatives, partnerships that could be supportive for the CTI RPOA also emerge.

Now that each member country is considering the relevance of collaborating through the CTI-CFF to also effectively achieve national priorities, the importance of applying the experiences and lessons learned in each country since the CTI-CFF was initiated to improve the RPOA for the next 10 years is clear. In addition, the RPOA must consider the current contexts for each country and development member within the CTI as well as the different capacities of each country in marine and fisheries development. It is acknowledged that country priorities and national strategic direction will take precedence over regional collaboration, and as such any NPOA revisions should direct the RPOA revision by seeking common issues and concerns where collaboration on a bilateral, sub-regional, or regional level provides added benefits.

Most of the stakeholders and experts consulted provided recommendations. The below reflects a summary of most recommendations in four main categories.

Institutional Improvements

Firstly, focus on fixing the impasse with the Regional Secretariat (RS) by providing an interim solution while initiating a process for revision of the RPOA. The revised RS should be designed to serve the revised RPOA for the next 10 years. In working on an interim solution, task managers and supporting CTI stakeholders should consider the findings and suggestions from the GIZ-sponsored capacity assessment that pertain specifically to the RS. Any interim solution should be primarily focused on preparing relevant decisions to be taken at SOM in December 2018 for the new RS.

When the re-organization of the RS is conducted, facilitation around effective leadership and team work between the staff, between the leadership and the senior managers, as well as between the RS and the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) and Technical Working Groups (TWGs) will be required. This requires definition and agreement on the tasks of the RS, which should be clearly defined in an updated Terms of Reference, and should also include clearly defined processes for performance review and supervisory mechanisms for the ED and staff of the RS. In preparation, the SOM needs to consider that this will require dedicated resources and a mid-term view on the scope and type of organizational development that best suits the effective delivery of the tasks undertaken by the RS. The relationship between the RS and the NCCs is equally important in order for the countries to feel that they gain capacity to collaborate regionally and to ensure that the burden on national government staff is manageable. Contracting some of the functions of the NCCs and/or working groups can reduce their workload. The consultant recommends that CTI as an organization would benefit most from a more explicit adoption of an adaptive management and learning approach, and could consider some targeted coaching to develop talent and leadership in the short term.

In addition to directing the focus toward regional matters for the CT6 members, and lessening the bureaucratic process of reporting on past progress, the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) host country (NCC) could be enabled to pick a theme relevant to them (which is linked to the RPOA) and the RS could work with the TWGs to prepare for that. In addition, having a more diverse representation of CT countries in the RS could enhance understanding of the different needs and priorities of each country. This could stimulate different countries to think about each other's priorities and allow for some innovative discussions to enter the SOMs. This must be well prepared by the TWGs and the RS so that it is valuable for all countries.

Operational Improvements

Secondly, focus on the challenges related to insufficient financial resources. These challenges were raised by numerous respondents during the review, particularly in relation to the lack of a sustainable finance mechanism and in relation to ad-hoc requests by the RS to developing partners to chip in for regional activities. Examples were provided of other initiatives with financial independence and stability due to the establishment of a trust and a mechanism for decisions on disbursements. This structure supports valuable regional processes as well as the flow of finance to NPOAs of different member countries to address their priority needs. These immediate needs could be capacity- and/or opportunity-driven, but could be discussed with the forum to enhance the strength of the members as a whole.

It was suggested that the next version of the RPOA should clearly spell out what can be realistically achieved at national and regional levels. This should include a resource mobilization strategy to support the implementation of the various activities, projects, and programs that support the achievement of targets and goals.

Specific to the calculation, allocation and prioritization of financial contributions by CT member countries, most NCCs provided detailed suggestions for improvement. This is a priority matter that requires significant attention, as the new contribution payments are due and all NCC secretariats reflected on how difficult it will be to convince their ministers and national budget agencies of the beneficial value of the regional components of the CTI-CFF.

Providing more clarity on the financial contributions from development partners so that gaps can be more easily reviewed and addressed at SOMs was suggested as a potential improvement. This would

enhance effective adaptive action and decisions on fund raising and allocation. Having development partners be formally integrated into the CTI structure will allow for this and provide additional opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of operations.

Operational improvements require several steps. The first step is immediate and part of the interim RS task. The second is related and closely linked to the revision of the RPOA. The third can be initiated in parallel:

1. Address trust issues, conduct a financial audit and complete financial and administrative obligations, also ensuring future budgets are in-line with agreed workplans, with the country contributions clearly assigned to priorities.
2. Support a shift in regional purpose related to recent shifts in funding availability, i.e., the resilience and food security narrative.
3. Work diligently with partners to set up a trust or other sustainable finance mechanism, looking at lessons from other initiatives like the Caribbean Challenge Initiative (CCI) and Congo Basin Initiative (CBI).

Learning and Knowledge Sharing

The need to revive the MEWG and ensure a fully functional M&E system was mentioned by many. Indicators should go beyond biophysical measures and include food and nutrition security and improved well-being as examples, and be streamlined with indicators used in other regional commitments or global agendas that countries are party to (e.g., CBD, SDGs). Review of the usefulness and practicality of tools developed for M&E is considered a priority. Actively reviving the CT Atlas will allow it to serve the function of: i) sharing information to researchers, media and students; and ii) profiling the work of all CTI actors to engage new partners and grow constituency and positive energy.

Improved Communications and Partnerships

The CTI is viewed by many as a stand-alone project with limited ability to link to other projects, especially socio-economic development projects related to the SDGs. Closer integration of the CTI program into the activities of the lead government agencies involved in the program as well as other government agencies is needed; inclusion of the CTI in the budget of the Ministries or agencies is also needed so that it is viewed as part and parcel of the mandate of these agencies.

Improved communications are needed so that the CTI can avoid duplicating work that is already done by other regional organizations and focus on its core competencies or where it holds a competitive advantage. Aligning more strategically with other organizations will also allow the CTI to work towards better complementing work done by others.

To support this, it will be important to allocate greater effort to clarifying where the delivery of the CTI lies, i.e., mostly at the NPOA level and at sites where local actors are enabled by the national leaders within the guiding and positive regional CTI framework for shared goals. This clarity will help more people understand the actual value of the CTI and support it to achieve its full potential. In addition, the actual core role of the RS should be simplified.

In parallel, work to communicate the logic of working at a regional level clearly and more effectively to specific target audiences and individual decision makers. Make more effort to engage and to gain the

support of Planning and Finance Ministries and higher decision-making bodies of governments (including those ministries related to foreign affairs and law enforcement). The end-goal of investment in such regional collaboration should be made clear from the beginning in order to gain support from these high-level officials. Once the support is initiated, it will be important to evidence and share early positive examples of the likely impact of the investment in order to sustain the attention and support for the time required to fully formalize and implement the required changes. This is an important role for the RS (supported by the M&E system) that requires communicating the CTI's needs alongside relevant, intermediate impact/benefit indicators.

Systematically open up the development partner group for other partners such as UNDP, United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), FAO, World Bank, etc. and actively and structurally engage the private sector to increase effective joint action in a number of areas.

While it was acknowledged that some of the national projects have successfully contributed to making a difference in the lives of coastal communities, many respondents considered that the implementation of the RPOA as a whole has not achieved its original concept of improving the well-being of coastal communities through improved livelihoods and improved management of resources. There is therefore a need to revisit discussions on the original intent of the CTI program and other substantive areas in the next version of the RPOA. Socializing the benefits of the CTI needs to be done to clearly articulate it reaches beyond just conservation and resource management to food security, higher incomes, improved health and well-being, contribution to sustainable development, etc. Finally, considering the findings and suggestions, guidance for the revision the RPOA includes:

- Initiate the RPOA revision, utilizing this review and consider systematically what requires regional action. In addition, confirm what regional action is relevant to contribute to progress on each goal in order to streamline the RPOA and reduce the burden of the working groups. Moving forward, this can be done every two or three years to stay relevant and make the best use of new opportunities.
- Prioritize selection and agreement on regional actions 1-2 firstly, which are core to the regional aspect of the CTI and reflect threats faced either by all countries or by a sub-combination of countries. Consider a closer look at the delivery of food security as a goal. Discuss what the measures system should look like for such goal at the regional level of the CTI. Strategically check and think about how these priority regional actions would affect and strengthen national policy with benefits for the region and the countries in a global context. Identify what technical expertise is available in each region and which products need to be created to project the CTI's thought leadership and underpin commitments by country leaders and partners. Organize workshops and/or present at global forums to increase support. Involve national policy makers and gain resources for implementation.
- Prepare for the second CTI summit.

From the review, it appears that most respondents consider that the structure of the institution of the CTI is suitable for the delivery of processes towards the goals of the RPOA but that some components could improve somewhat on effectiveness. Also, the RPOA would benefit from revisions to make it more agile. Such revisions could include the duration for which the RPOA will be in effect, mechanisms to support adaptive management, and outlining opportunities for focusing efforts to a subset of goals for a prescribed period of time, etc.

Looking forward, there is strong acknowledgement of the fact that CTI brings together managers and stakeholders in one of the most ecologically and economically significant areas of the world. As global policy for oceans, sustainable development and climate change progresses, there is likely to be an increased focus on regional groupings to increase the potential for the change needed for global impact. With some improvements, the CTI could sit right in the middle of that and share its thought leadership on resilience and food security for coastal systems and communities with the world, in order to forge stronger partnerships for delivery of impacts that benefit the communities and coastal areas in this globally outstanding region.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

First endorsed in 2009, the 10-year Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) provides the guiding framework for the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI or CTI) and has led to a wide range of accomplishments in the CTI region. However, much has changed over the past nine years. At the 13th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in November 2017, consideration was given to a study commissioned by GIZ (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit*) - a CTI Development Partner - which highlighted differing perspectives and aspirations amongst CTI delivery implementation institutions and stakeholders. Subsequently, a decision was made to build on the findings of the GIZ study (but not replicate these) by undertaking a review of the RPOA as a precursor to its revision in 2020.

A robust, transparent, independent evaluation of the RPOA was designed to support improved synergies with the priorities and needs of the member countries and strengthen overall regional marine governance. The Review has three primary purposes:

- to provide an evidence-based assessment of the influence and effectiveness of the RPOA as the guiding framework for the CTI and its current utility as a framework for meeting the priorities and needs of the member governments, development partners and local stakeholders at the regional, sub-regional and national levels;
- to promote institutional and operational improvements, learning and knowledge sharing and improved communication and partnerships between the CTI member countries, development partners, collaborators and other key stakeholders; and
- to provide the CTI members and stakeholders with guidance on how the RPOA might be reshaped or revised in 2020 to build on the accomplishments of the past 9 years and to take strategic advantage of any new regional and global drivers which have or are emerging and which might generate a positive influence and impact on the future achievement of CTI goals.

In the short term, the results of the Review will help identify potential changes in strategic priorities and direction, implementation approaches, structures and resourcing to improve the synergies with priorities and needs of the member countries through strengthened regional marine governance. In the longer term, the recommendations will foreshadow the revision of the RPOA in 2020, acting as a scoping analysis that can narrow the inquiry and consultation for the production of the new RPOA for 2020.

The CT region sits at a crossroads of rapidly expanding populations, economic growth and international trade. The CT6 countries' administrations balance the domestic needs of today with investments required to sustain future economic growth within a very dynamic regional geopolitical context. In this region, this will always involve exploitation of maritime resources. Without sound information, tools, implementation capacity and inclusive collaboration that allows for appropriate and full consideration of current and future ecosystems services values, the regions marine resources and diverse ecosystems, the very foundations of the "blue economic engine" remain under threat. In facilitating regional collaboration around sustainable development policies and practices, which combine solid conservation actions with good governance, the CTI can help its members consider the relevance of different trade-offs for achieving more comprehensive outcomes that go beyond and enhance individual country targets. This review can underpin the development of an effective, realistic and relevant CTI version 2.0.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Coral Triangle (CT) as the global epicenter of biodiversity includes six countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea (PNG), the Philippines, the Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste. The CT is home to a population of more than 370 million, with roughly 120 million people relying directly on the region's marine and coastal resources for income and food¹. The countries in the Coral Triangle ("the CT6") hold some of the greatest cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity in the world and represent an array of different governance systems.

Prior to the launch of the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI) in 2009, individually, most countries in the CT region were implementing strategies for conservation of marine diversity and resource management at varying degrees. Responding to growing concerns related to risks to coastal livelihoods and related food security, Indonesian President Yudhoyono and his neighbors determined there was a need to increase collaboration for regional action, and the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) was subsequently launched.

Acknowledging this unique regional² leadership platform and considering the high strategic potential leverage of this initiative for multiple agendas (including biodiversity conservation, regional stability, sustainable economic development and climate change adaptation), several international development partners provided very significant financial support and technical expertise to develop a Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) and implement programs to achieve its five goals: i) priority seascapes are designated and effectively managed; ii) an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) and other marine resources is fully applied; iii) Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are established and effectively managed; iv) climate change adaptation measures are achieved; and v) the status of threatened species is improving. The RPOA further has ten specific targets for 2020 (Appendix A1) and 38 regional actions that followed a prioritization workshop in 2012.

The RPOA is essentially implemented through five Technical Working Groups (TWGs) which mirror the RPOA Goals and comprise technical experts from both member countries and Development Partner organizations³ as well as specialists drawn from other interested stakeholder organizations, institutions and groups. RPOA implementation is also supported by three sets of cross-cutting actions, including Coordination Mechanisms and Implementing Partners, Financial Resources and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). The CTI is governed through a Committee of Senior Officials and a Council of Ministers with the Chair currently held by the Philippines. A Regional Secretariat (RS) located in Manado, hosted by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) of Indonesia, is the intergovernmental regional body mandated to promote regional cooperation, sharing of lessons and facilitate learning across the member countries. The RS also coordinates and monitors progress in achieving the goals mentioned above.

The October 2013 final evaluation report of one of the most comprehensive projects aimed at developing CTI implementation capacity - the U.S. Coral Triangle Initiative Support Program (USCTI)

¹ Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2014). Regional state of the Coral Triangle—Coral Triangle marine resources: their status, economies, and management. Mandaluyong City, Philippines. 94 pp.

² CTI is unique in geographic scope with Southeast Asia and Pacific countries although they have common membership in other regional organizations.

³ Development Partners include the Governments of Australia and the USA, the Asian Development Bank, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Conservation International (CI), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Coral Triangle Center (CTC).

Support Program - listed as its first main finding the high potential of the collaborative mechanism for promoting awareness on the need for conservation and the advancement of policies related to MPAs, EAFM and Climate Change Adaptation specifically:

“What may be transformative in USCTI is the creation of a regional system of ocean governance ..., which shows potential for a collaborative mechanism that motivates the CT6 countries to work together despite differences in capacity and resources, and could be effective given the opportunity (would take more than five years) and resources (of which relying on only donor money would be insufficient)”.

The 2013 USCTI evaluation also mentioned the value of building trust between countries, despite administrative and bureaucratic challenges, through the many meetings of the TWGs, Regional Learning Exchanges (REX) and the SOMs. Five years since that evaluation, and two years since the formal implementing structure, including the RS, was made operational, **a review on the collaborative implementation mechanism is timely.**

The 2014 report on the Regional State of the Coral Triangle commissioned by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), provides a baseline for the status of the biophysical, governance, and socio-economic attributes of CT6 and establishes a framework for tracking progress of the CTI toward the goals set out in the RPOA.

As the awareness of the economic importance of healthy oceans and coastal ecosystems and the geopolitical relevance of stable, socially-cohesive coastal communities increases around the world, even more conservation funding and expert attention has been focused on supporting projects in CT countries. Many of these support national level targets to increase the area of sensitive ecosystems under protection, to improve management of coastal and pelagic fishing activities, and to promote more sustainable levels of coastal- and marine-related economic development. At the same time, most of the CT6 countries continue to depend highly upon protein from the ocean to feed their people. With growing populations, calculations indicate that current fish protein production must grow significantly to meet the growing future demands for fish. Building on this, and considering that nearly 10 years have passed since the CTI was launched, **a review of the relevance of the Five Goals in the current regional geopolitical and socio-economic development context is timely.**

At its start, the CTI was not the first regional platform for collaboration around marine issues. Since it was launched, even more global, regional, and bi-lateral partnerships have been created to exchange knowledge and increase collaboration for improved management of sensitive coastal ecosystems and shared fishing stocks. Also, consumer-driven market demand for environmentally friendly and socially responsible products combined with a rapidly developing environmental and socially aware middle class in many of the CT6 countries incentivizes more active and participative private sector actors to apply good practices in exploiting coastal and marine resources.

Despite all this, the need for transformative change remains urgent and the complexity of the challenges faced, appears to mount. The mounting global outcry over the obvious huge amounts of plastic waste in our oceans highlights the significant contribution to this threat by various countries in the CT region, which is being fueled by rapidly modernizing economies. The ever-growing global demand for healthy fish protein, is starting to cause shifts among countries searching to purchase affordable seafood and those that support the trade of traceable, ecologically sustainable and socially equitable seafood. Increasing interest in exploring and enjoying the CTs coastal beauty continues to

fuel rapid growth in visitor numbers to places that lack efficient infrastructure and capacities to deal with the challenges that come with tourism expansion.

Despite having achieved much during its relatively short existence, the CTI currently faces some internal challenges. Country leadership has changed over time, the abovementioned external pressures cause new negative impacts on the state of the resources that must be countered, and other new and seemingly exciting environmental programs compete for funding. Considering **the future relevance of the CTI as a delivering mechanism for marine stewardship and governance through regional collaboration is timely.**

3.0 ASSESSMENT OF RPOA IMPACT

Several reviews of the CTI have been conducted during the past nine years. These reviews mostly considered the “internal aspects” of the CTI, with a focus on progress against targets in the RPOA and to some extent on capacity needs related to effective functioning of the institutional structures. It is important to note that this current review does not assess progress against the RPOA targets, which is the role of the Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group (MEWG)⁴. The MEWG published the Monitoring and Evaluation System Operations Manual in 2014. This Manual was the result of several regional workshops and summarizes the core elements of the CTI M&E System, which was endorsed by the SOM and Council of Ministers in 2012. The Manual prescribes a process for facilitating regional collaboration among the countries to track progress towards the CTI goals and higher-level outcomes.

The current review aims to support both short-term and longer-term objectives of identifying potential changes in strategic priorities and direction, implementation approaches, structures and resourcing, with the goal of improving the synergies with the priorities and needs of member countries through strengthened regional marine governance. Therefore, the assessment did not just look back at historical performance and at factors internal to the CTI only, it also assessed aspects relevant for future performance and aspects from the “periphery” of the CTI.

An inception report was developed in response to the Terms of Reference for a Review of the CTI RPOA explaining the purpose, requirements and outputs of the review and describing details on the approach and methods employed during the review⁵.

The review team consisted of a team leader and nine associate experts (see Table A2.1 in Appendix A2). The team conducted a review of documents and online resources, one-on-one interviews and small group consultations, and distributed online questionnaires. To the extent possible, information gathered during the interviews was verified from different sources and by asking some similar, yet slightly different, questions to the respondent. All evaluative judgements are backed up by the detailed responses of several respondents on each issue and justified where deemed necessary with references and citations. Documents reviewed are listed in the bibliography of this report (Appendix A3) and in footnotes to the text. The review schedule is provided in Table A4.1 in Appendix A4.

⁴ Hence, results from the stand-alone interviews that reflect perceptions of respondents on impact of the RPOA on different goals – while available for study – are not used in this report as this assessment did not use the official MEWG approach to report on progress against the specific CTI-CFF RPOA targets.

⁵ The inception report and Terms of Reference are available via <http://files.hatfieldgroup.com>

The online stand-alone questionnaire with 38 multiple choice and open-ended questions took respondents approximately 45-60 minutes to complete and was structured around the five key elements of the review: i) Impact; ii) Effectiveness; iii) Efficiency; iv) Sustainability; and v) Relevance. This survey was 'perceptions-based' and contained descriptive, normative and impact questions to help draw out the information required (Appendix A5). As some of these terms are used across this review, we provide brief descriptions here:

- **Impact:** With Impact we mean the impact on the environment created by a plan, or project, or actors.
- **Effectiveness:** With Effectiveness we mean the adequacy to accomplish a purpose, producing the intended result. Being effective is about doing the right things, while being efficient is about doing things right.
- **Efficiency:** With Efficiency we mean performing the function in the best possible manner with the least waste of time and effort. Being efficient is about doing things right, while being effective is about doing the right things.
- **Sustainability:** With Sustainability we mean the ability to be sustained, supported, and upheld.
- **Relevance:** With Relevance we mean the degree to which something is related or useful to what is happening or being talked about.

Some of the respondents of the online stand-alone questionnaire were also invited for more in-depth one-on-one interviews and additional key respondents that had not responded to the stand-alone questionnaire were also consulted in-depth.

The goal of the one-on-one interviews – which took between one and two hours to complete between 20 and 35 selected open-ended questions - was to obtain more detailed information on the key aspects identified in the questionnaires, and to acquire a range of opinions on how the RPOA might be reshaped or revised in 2020. For some respondents this was combined with the forward-looking component of the review. We designed the interviews to include general questions that were relevant to each respondent and included specific questions and issues for discussion that were specific to different types of stakeholders. The list with guiding questions followed 11 key elements: i) strategic leadership; ii) structure; iii) program planning and management; iv) human resource management; v) financial resources management; vi) monitoring and evaluation; vii) infrastructure and administration support; viii) history and purpose; ix) culture; x) incentives and rewards; xi) and stakeholders (tables with all questions are available in Appendix A5).

To optimize the potential use of the review for different current stakeholders and actors as well as for potential future and new actors, we consulted with a sample of respondents for each stakeholder group/category that had been identified as part of the current CTI institution. We also interviewed individuals and groups that appear to sit at the “emerging periphery” of the current CTI framework, particularly those actors that drive economic development in this region. Table A6.1 in Appendix A6 provides respondent details.

An evaluation matrix was used as the framework for sorting the questionnaire data around the original objectives of the review. Quantitative data was analyzed using basic statistics, while qualitative responses were analyzed for content and categorized according to themes and patterns that emerged

during the analyses. The data was weighed to consider how many respondents provided the same answers, whether the information was confirmed across different stakeholder groups, and whether it was confirmed or denied by external sources. To simplify the large amounts of qualitative information shared during the consultations, arbitrary categories were created during the analysis of the data. For example, the term “most respondents” reflects the opinions of at least 70% of the people consulted on the matter; “many respondents” means more than 50% of respondents; “several respondents” means between 20-50% of respondents; and, “some respondents” means less than 20% of respondents. Notes that all issues were deemed relevant, even if less than 10% of the respondents brought it up. Results can be disaggregated by respondent categories, e.g., nationality, gender, position, stakeholder group (government, non-government organization [NGO], academic, other), and familiarity with the RPOA but this was not done for all responses.

In total, 74 respondents completed the stand-alone online questionnaire, and 80 one-by-one interviews were conducted, resulting in just over 4500 combined responses on various questions. We held five small group consultations, compared structures and approaches from reports and publications and by interviewing three key experts of other multi-lateral collaborative platforms. We described the current context for each of the CT6 and the region as a whole using published statistics, other secondary information and from conducting interviews with regional experts. Information was gathered by phone, skype and in person and recorded through online forms, transcribed from tape recorders and shared amongst team members through a shared dedicated “Google Drive” workspace.

From late August through early October, each of the CT6 member country NCCs and development partners provided feedback on the draft findings through partner meetings (Table A6.2 in Appendix A6). The consultations clarified and improved the draft report, provided feedback on the proposed roadmap towards a revised RPOA, and also strengthened and validated the RPOA review and the CTI-CFF in general. All feedback received was used to the following sections.

3.1 STAND-ALONE ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

Of the 74 respondents to the stand-alone online questionnaire, 55% were still actively engaged with the CTI through workshops, participating in regional meetings, learning exchanges and national meetings. The gender ratio of the respondents was 56% male to 42% female. Most respondents (22) were from the United States (US). The Philippines, Indonesia, and Australia each had 12 respondents; Canada, Malaysia, and the Netherlands each had three respondents; and PNG had two respondents. Denmark, Germany, Timor-Leste, and the UK each had one respondent, with one respondent listing themselves as “Global”. The majority of respondents were NGO staff (41%) followed by government staff (26%).

Half (52%) of the respondents were somewhat familiar with the RPOA, 27% were very familiar, 7% were extremely familiar and the rest (14%) had very little familiarity or were not at all familiar with the RPOA. When asked which of the RPOA goals they were most familiar with (multiple choices were permitted), the highest proportion of respondents (32%) selected “Goal 3 - MPAs established and effectively managed”, followed by “Goal 2 - EAFM fully applied” (24%). Respondents were least familiar with “Goal 4 - Climate Change Adaptation measures achieved”. Of the Technical Working groups, respondents were least familiar with the Financial Resources Working Group (FRWG), the Local Government Forum and the Scientific Advisory Group. In addition to the multiple-choice question results, we received a combined total of 1,457 individual answers to the 24 open-ended

questions, the results of which are summarized in Section 4.0. Answers to a selection of “forward-looking” questions from the questionnaire are provided in Appendix A7.

3.2 ONE-BY-ONE INTERVIEWS

A total of 70 respondents were selected for one-on-one interviews, based on their familiarity with the CTI institution and RPOA. Of these, 50% were female. In addition, five small group interviews were held, the largest with the 12 members of the Indonesian National Country Committee (NCC). In total, 44% of the respondents (for both the one-on-one and group interviews) were government officials, and 32% were NGO or development partner staff. The remaining respondents were primarily scientists, or other experts in relevant fields. A total of 13 communication and marketing experts were consulted, and 15 regional natural resource experts and managers of other multi-lateral collaboration platforms. Most interviewees from the one-on-one and group interviews were asked a selection of questions from several of the 11 key elements around capacity, motivation and external context. The responses are summarized in Section 4.0.

Figures 1 through 9 provide information on the interview respondents, their familiarity with the CTI-CTF RPOA, and their current engagement with the program.

Figure 1 Nationality of interview respondents.

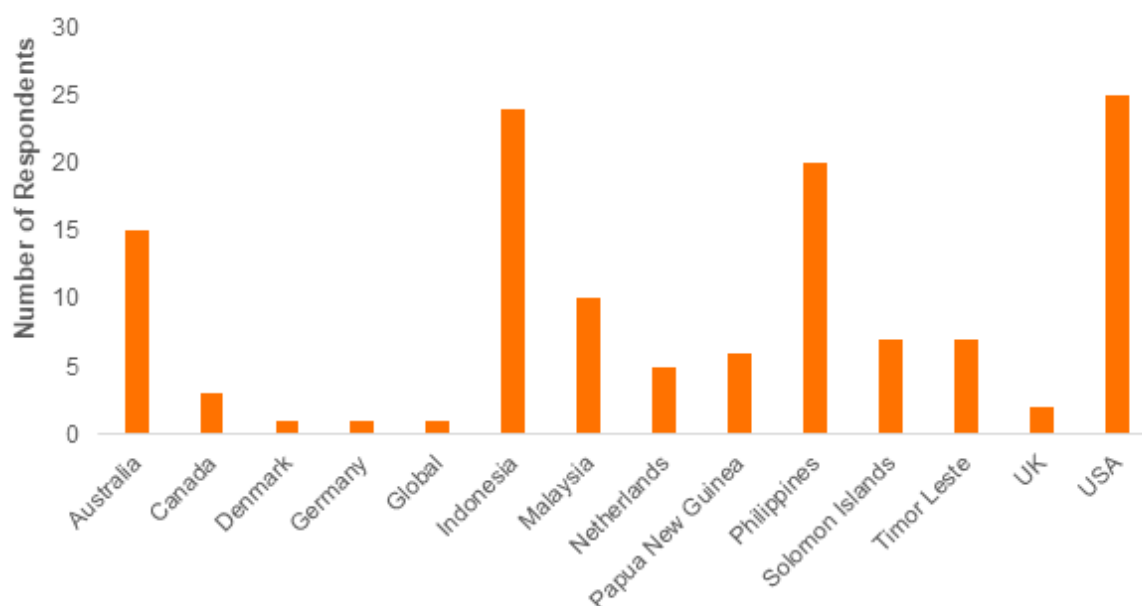


Figure 2 Gender distribution of respondents.

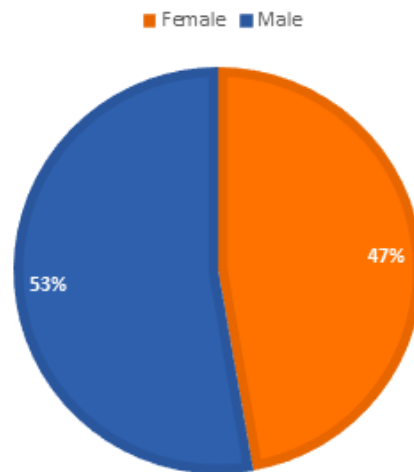


Figure 3 Occupations of respondents.

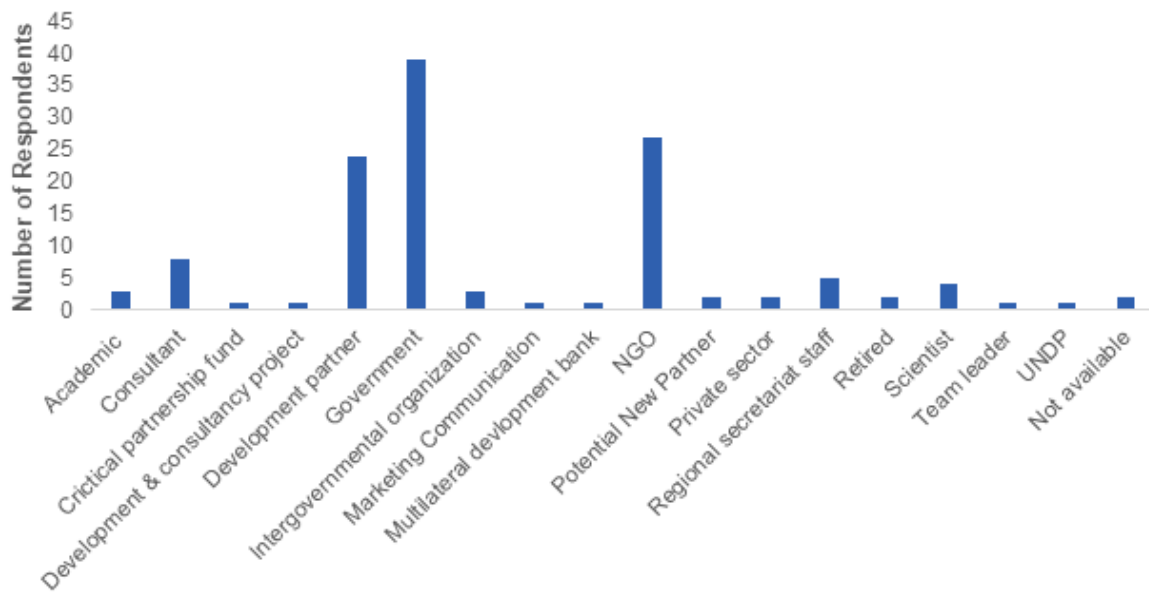


Figure 4 Familiarity of the respondent with the RPOA.

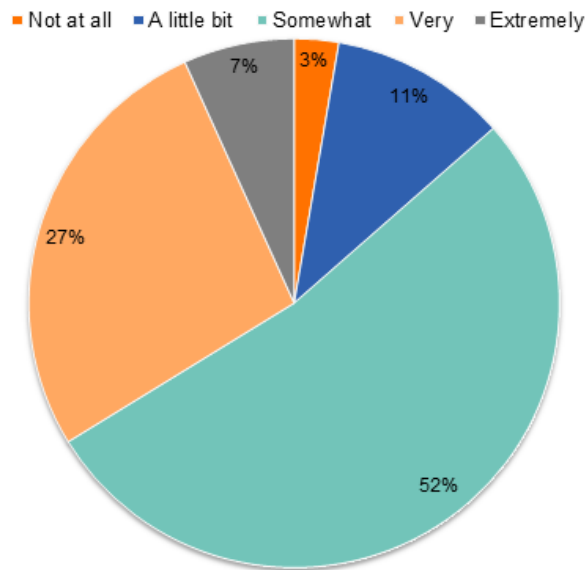


Figure 5 Which of the RPOA’s goals the respondent was most familiar with (multiple selections allowed).

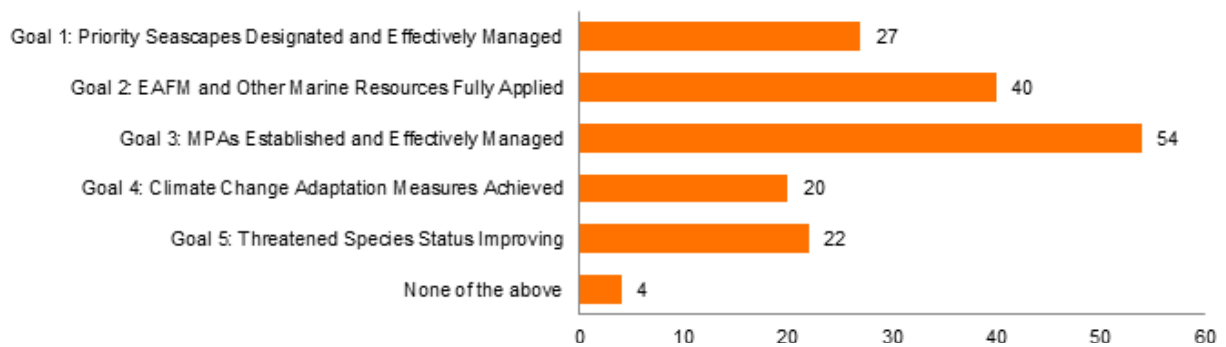


Figure 6 Which of the RPOA’s working groups the respondent was most familiar with (multiple selections allowed).

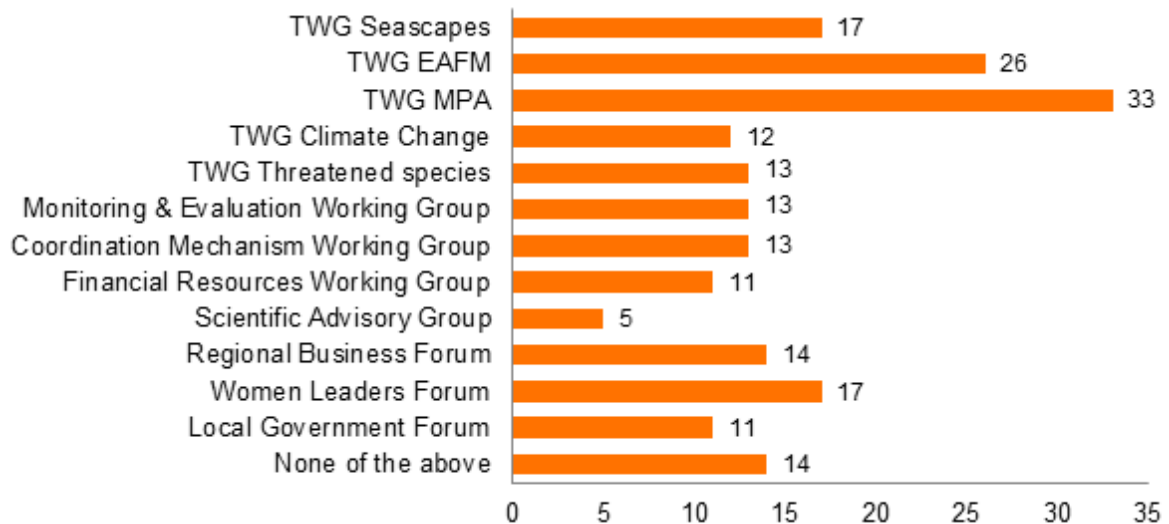


Figure 7 The percentage of respondents that actively engage with the CTI-CFF.

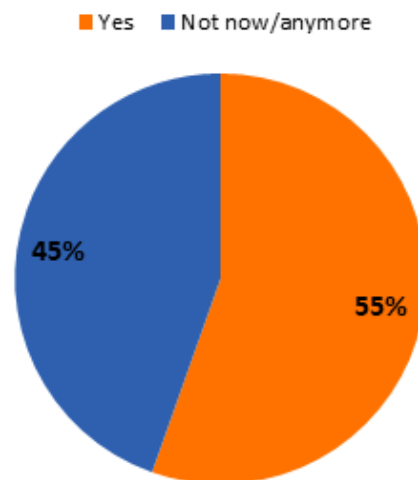
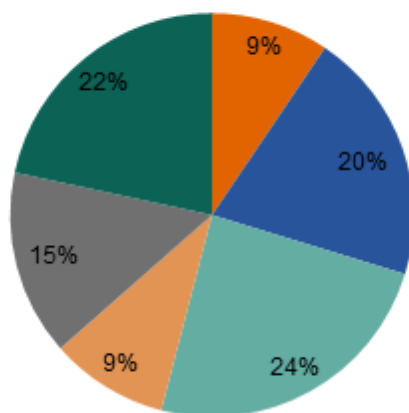


Figure 8 The methods in which the respondent engages with the CTI-CFF (multiple selections allowed).



Figure 9 Amount of time spent by respondent on CTI-CTF Program.

■ Zero ■ 1 - 10 days per year ■ 1 - 3 days per month
■ 2 - 3 days per week ■ 1 day per week ■ Every day



4.0 RESULTS

4.1 OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Prior to reading the summary of responses on the effectiveness of the RPOA, it is important to consider that the effectiveness of any project or initiative in achieving desired change and planned impact depends only partially on the people and resources dedicated to it. External factors can have a profound influence on the level of impact of a specific intervention. Considering the complex and dynamic geopolitical internal context of the region, growing pressures from economic development and growing populations in the CT6, and the external demands placed onto the region, this is certainly not different for the CTI.

The 2014 Regional State of the Coral Triangle Report⁶ suggests that macroeconomic factors such as economic development, corruption and poverty are arguably the most important and strongest drivers of threat to the region. In addition, Fox and Luna (in prep since 2016)⁷ offer some input to the European Union (EU) strategic approach to wildlife conservation in Asia and the Coral Triangle. They introduce some geopolitical factors that are relevant for collaboration in the CTI: *“The Coral Triangle encompasses a diverse and complex political landscape, ranging from one of the world’s newest democracies and post-conflict nation, Timor-Leste (independent in 2002), to the only federation in Southeast Asia, Malaysia’s federal constitutional elective monarchy. The countries are generally grouped into the Southeast Asian countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines) and the Pacific (Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands), while Timor-Leste is beginning to join regional discussions and become a signatory to numerous conventions. In general the eastern side of the Coral Triangle (PNG and Solomon Islands) is at an earlier stage of development from the western side (particularly Malaysia and Brunei). Within individual countries, there can be an asymmetry as well; depending on where investments have been made already, locations may be much more advanced in terms of capacity and skills”.*

⁶ Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2014). Regional State of the Coral Triangle—Coral Triangle marine resources: their status, economies, and management. Mandaluyong City, Philippines.

⁷ Fox, H.E. and Luna, M. In prep. Unpublished 74 pp.

Prior to commenting on the effectiveness of the CTI, respondents were asked to reflect on the achievements and milestones of the CTI. Those that were immediately listed by respondents included the achievement of having the six leaders sign on to the regional forum to support common goals. This, together with the fact that the actual CTI institution has been created and mostly well-regarded is considered by many as a huge achievement. The actual feat of achieving the permanent secretariat and acquiring country contributions to support collaboration is also considered very significant. The very significant funding provided by the US and Australian governments, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) followed next, along with the processes that resulted in the RPOA and National Plans of Action (NPOAs). The role that the CTI has played in bringing environmental portfolios together is very positive and unlikely to have happened without the CTI. The more recently, and somewhat organically, created WGs especially the women's leaders group are considered very positive in bringing gender issues and private sector considerations to different parts of the CTI and RPOA.

The Coral Triangle Marine Protected Areas (CTMPAs) and Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) regional frameworks were frequently mentioned as real examples of regionally relevant outputs. That they are used in legislation for protected areas and fisheries regulations by lead agencies of several countries is considered an important outcome. As a result, MPA declarations were stimulated or accelerated.

At the country level, many milestones were mentioned by the respondents. For Timor-Leste, signing on in 2009 to collaborate around its highly diverse ocean and reefs was significant, as well as the establishment of MPAs in fisheries regulations. For Malaysia, the bringing together of federal and state agencies around a shared goal was significant, along with the Tioman CTMPA award, and Tun Mustapha park establishment. For the Philippines, the very active workings of the NCC were considered positive, along with the adoption of the annual CTI Day on June 9, when many partners gather to support broad society engagement and awareness across the country. For Indonesia, the donation of the Manado CTI building was recognized as significant, and amongst other things, demonstrating good leadership by ratifying after Malaysia for the RS considering there were two candidates for the Executive Director (ED) position. For Solomon Islands the linkage between the CTI NPOA and the new the Fish Management Act was very significant, as well as the highlight of CBRM being included in the Act, as well as their leadership at the women leader's forum. For PNG, the protected areas law and policies were very significant and related to regional learning, along with the climate change adaptation discussions through the CTI, which were also positively reflected in the Climate Change Act.

The regional M&E system and particularly the CT atlas and the Regional State of the Coral Triangle report, gets a lot of kudo's and interest appears very high from many respondents to revitalize these as tools to track progress on the impact of the CTI.

The current global discussions around blue economy and blue growth – introduced as a narrative by the CTI at Rio+20 – were mentioned by some respondents as an example of significant global resonance of the regional thought leadership displayed by the CTI. In relation to CTI events at such global forums, global awareness of the CT as an epicenter of marine biodiversity and an important blue-engine for food security has grown rapidly.

Moving on to the more evaluative part of the consultations, several respondents mentioned that there was work underway around marine conservation in most countries before 2009 and that other entities (United Nations Development Program - UNDP, WorldFish - WF, Food and Agricultural Organization

of the UN – FAO, Norwegian government, etc.) that do not directly work with CTI also achieved many milestones since 2009.

Overall, many respondents commented on the high level of ambition that is enclosed within the goals and targets of the RPOA and several reflected on the importance of the first and only priority setting workshop, which resulted in the approval of only 38 regional actions through to 2020. However, mobilization of financial and human resources would need to be very significant, and the management of these regional actions pivotal, for most effective achievement of results. Several respondents commented on the relatively short timeframe that the CTI had been fully operational, particularly when compared to other multi-lateral collaborative platforms. These same respondents commented however, that the CTI must now capitalize on the investments made towards CTI institutional capacity during the first 5-10 years, and on the resulting strong and wide network of conducive relations. It was noted that several issues require improvement in order to bring to fruition the original intent and urgency of collaborations around the shared marine diversity and connected productive ecosystems.

Several of the respondents also commented how they find it difficult to point to real impact on the biodiversity and ecosystem targets. This is partially related to the relatively long time that is required for natural systems to react to conservation and management interventions but it is also a result of a delayed decision to allocate financial resources to sustain active implementation of a key and integral part of the M&E system, the Coral Triangle Atlas. This was the information base where change at the national and regional scale for several indicators was tracked and several respondents pointed to the critical importance of continuing this function in the CTI. Respondents argued that this would enable unbiased descriptions of the value and achievements of the CTI as well as underpin strengthened outreach and CTI profiling efforts that could grow the number of partners and supporters from CTI societies.

In addition to referring to difficulties in attributing changes in management of many coastal and marine areas to the CTI RPOA only, there appear to be two areas where a renewed effort in measuring and reporting on progress by the CTI would be highly strategic and possibly guide increased effectiveness of the RPOA:

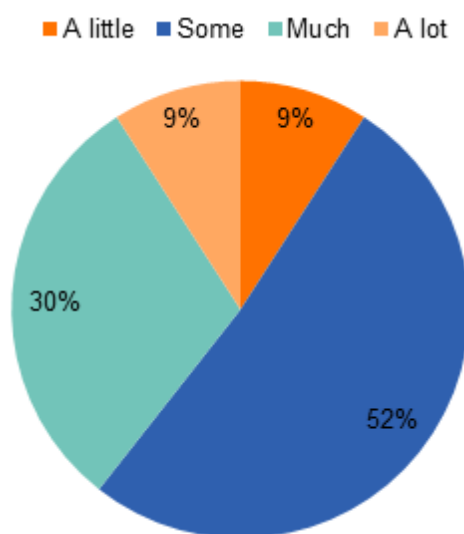
- Many participants reflected that the RPOA stimulated national action and that the increased capacity from investment in past programs – particularly for the MPA and EAFM goals – created enabling conditions for the impacts to become increasingly evident in the future. As some of the most important factors for effective management of natural resources include political will and capacity to implement, the investments motivated by the CTI for the RPOA and reflected in formalization of tools and targets at national levels, already resulted in national government officials actively advocating for EAFM at national levels and supporting MPAs to reach higher levels of effective management. Indicators such as the allocation of more national budget for MPAs and fisheries management are an important reflection of the change, as well as the active participation of an increasing number of stakeholders in learning exchanges. Fortunately, there are now some examples in the CT region of the positive impacts of reducing fishing pressure and effective community-based management in MPAs. These results need to be sustained and the profile of sustained and expanded community-based management should be raised in the strong enabling framework of the CTI that now exists.
- Several respondents added that the MEWG does not specifically measure indicators for food security, and there are strategic arguments to start considering this. Most respondents who

mentioned this, admitted that it is hard to measure this, but that it is probably one of the most relevant values that further investment in the RPOA could contribute to. This was explained by several respondents by pointing to the fact that external threats continue to mount from population pressures and the need to eat fish, particularly in countries such as the Solomon Islands. While EAFM is slowly adopted in countries such as PNG and the Solomon Islands, there is still a long way to go and the relevance of this matter for the CTI should be investigated.

4.1.1 Effectiveness of the RPOA in Catalyzing National and Regional Action, including joint Action with Other Stakeholders

Many respondents reflected on the significant **national action** that was catalyzed by the CTI in member countries (Figure 10). While the development of the RPOA was initiated first and resulted in guiding principles and goals, some of the NPOAs were developed and completed prior to the final RPOA. The RPOA is said by most to have been well adopted as the framework for CT countries to plan their national actions, but there are differences in the level of priority given to each goal by each country.

Figure 10 Extent of Catalyzed, Additive, and Joint Action by key stakeholders through RPOA.



Respondents from the Philippines and Indonesia mention explicitly and frequently that the NPOAs are legally documented with the competent authorities, which means they are always considered in national level decision-making. The Solomon Islands also reference the NPOA during decision-making, and use the NPOA to facilitate the introduction of specific activities that align with government priorities into ministerial work plans. In Malaysia, for Sabah Parks, the RPOA and NPOA are always considered for alignment with the Sabah Parks Strategy. In Timor-Leste, the NPOA is often used in the WorldFish program. PNG has reflected the CTI goals to some extent in their national policy agendas and refer to their NPOA accordingly.

Many suggest the value of the regional work is not so clear and some refer to requests from senior officials to develop a Cost-Benefit-Analysis. Changing leadership at the regional level was also said to create lack of clarity, particularly in terms of changing the message from a focus on coral reef diversity

towards food security and resilient communities. Most respondents pointed to the country governments as the main stakeholder of the RPOA, which highlights the need for country leaders to view the CTI as a delivery mechanism that can add value and improve progress on their national agendas. It was again mentioned that different governments have different goals as priorities, and that needs to be considered when motivating regional collaboration as not each goal carries the same weight with key stakeholders. Interesting remarks were made about previous and current “champions” in the government, and it would be beneficial to consult these “champions” to better understand their strategic efforts. Supporting more explicitly the agendas of current champions can help improve regional collaboration for national agendas, and assist with growing a group of new champions in the CT countries.

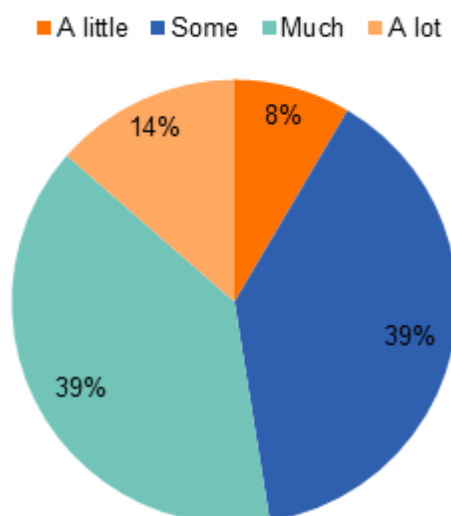
Focusing specifically on the regional actions, most respondents said that true **joint regional action** is limited to exchanging learnings and presenting issues relevant for CT countries at global forums such as those for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the World Parks Congress (WPC). One respondent suggested that it is easier to talk about “preconditions for joint action”, rather than about true “joint action”. However, respondents suggest that because the RPOA is one of only few regional platforms where this combination of countries comes together on these issues, it has been important in triggering better exchange of information and instigating joint planning between and amongst governments, NGOs and donors. The CTI also stimulated different government agencies within some countries to collaborate more, for example in the Philippines and Solomon Islands.

Where funding was provided to stimulate regional gathering and exchanges, the resulting relationships were considered useful for some purposes by some respondents. There is a shared concern that a future lack of funding will reduce the opportunity for more regional joint action.

Not every respondent referred to the RPOA and NPOA as strategic plans for the initiative. This may be a matter of understanding the difference between a strategic plan and a plan of action at the different levels. Some say that the NPOAs mirror the RPOA, or are interpretations of the RPOA, and such perceptions likely discount the opportunity for regional level collaborative actions. Corroborating the results from a GIZ-sponsored capacity review, several respondents mentioned the difficulties faced by countries with less technical capacity in contributing effectively to regional discussions. The starting point for a revision of the RPOA should be that difference in capacity between the countries according to some respondents, but the significance of considering external sources of funding for a revised RPOA must be considered.

Some respondents considered the development of the current RPOA to be quite donor driven. Others considered the RPOA to be a catalyst for regional funding because it provides validation and a framework for programs (that were previously of a more bilateral nature) to expand and support broader regional collaboration and capacity development for the CTI objectives, which arguably requires regional collaboration. According to 39% of the respondents to the stand-alone questionnaire, the RPOA has influenced investment decisions by donors either “much” or “a lot” (Figure 11). During the consultations, development partners and donors mentioned that enhanced collaboration with other partners such as implementing NGOs, and regional and other technical expert organizations, were considered important additional benefits of investing in the regional capacity for implementing the RPOA.

Figure 11 Extent that investment decisions in the CTI by donors have utilized or been influenced by the RPOA.



Looking forward, several respondents mentioned that the current amount of funding made available for regional work seems to be less, and that donors may still reference the CTI RPOA but many potentially important donors appear to be focusing their funding support on single country initiatives instead. Some factors potentially influencing that perceived shift were suggested, including the difficulty in demonstrating clear on-the-ground impacts from the RPOA, the difficulty in showing significant financial investments for regional action by country members, the lack of systematic engagement of other new development partners, perceived changes in focus of some of the implementing NGOs, and trust challenges caused by outstanding financial and administrative processes and perceived related lack of clarity in finance planning by the RS. Also, the limited communication and profiling of the CTI regional opportunities and issues by the RS is mentioned as factor that does not particularly facilitate true joint regional action.

Lastly, the opportunity of the RPOA to stimulate collaboration with other stakeholders was considered to be one of the main areas for improvement of the overall effectiveness of the CTI, while anticipating some potential shifts in support of regional activities from current development partners⁸. During the Coral Triangle Support Program (CTSP) period, regional travel expenses and participation at events for collaborative delivery of regional agendas was reimbursed, which allowed more participation at that time. Several respondents would like to promote a more inclusive approach to engaging partners and actors in the CTI for the RPOA. Some suggested a need to shift more attention towards engaging additional Pacific stakeholders, but that attention to engage new partners does not always appear equal across the region.

Many said that new partnerships need to be strengthened with support from the RS, but several also reflected on the NCCs as critical linkages in-country for partnerships, as they can clearly outline what they prefer to partner on and ensure that those collaborations contribute effectively to achievements of the RPOA. A two-way targeted partnership development effort was deemed valuable.

⁸ Several respondents stated that there appear to be some shifts at the regional level, for example, development partners with ADB seeming to drop off, and a lack of clarity on the continuation of US government support. Some new NGOs are joining (WCS). Local NGOs are engaging at the NPOA levels.

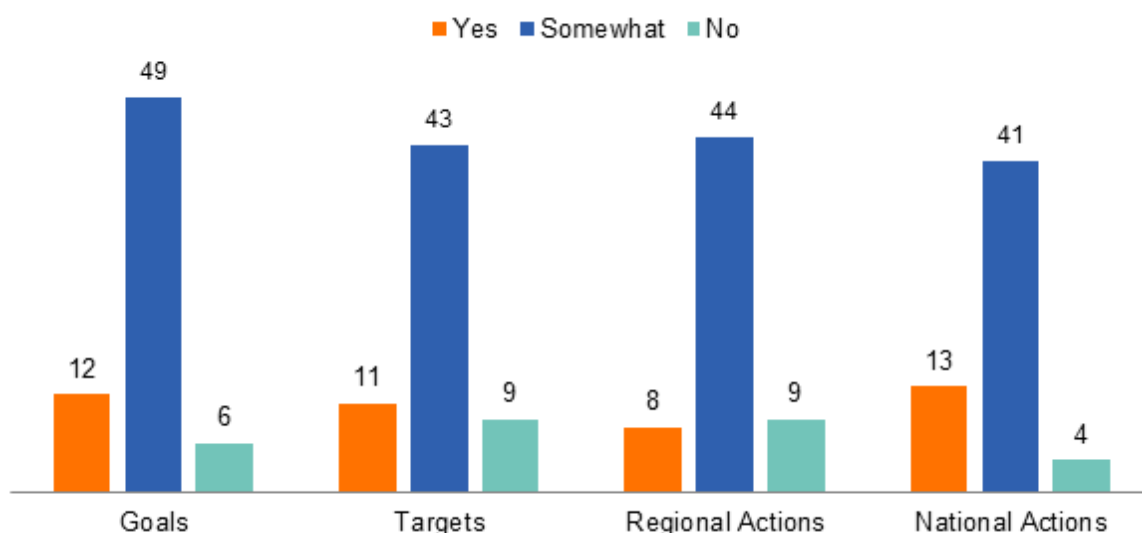
When questioned about significant stakeholder groups, many reflected that the actual communities in coastal areas are the key beneficiaries, and there were many remarks that benefits don't trickle down to these communities. However, where the respondents understood the focus of the review to be on the RPOA particularly, several respondents said that it must be possible to consider how regional collaboration can add value to the NPOAs of national governments so that links between regional enabling conditions can be more explicit for national leaders working to achieve national agendas for their citizens locally.

Several respondents suggested that the private sector should become more structurally engaged and involved as a key stakeholder for the RPOA, and include also large private donor foundations and impact investment initiatives by working explicitly on profiling economic and social impacts of good ocean governance. Aspects linking productive coastal ecosystems with investment security would be useful as well as pointing out how a multi-lateral arrangement like this could help stabilize situations as a network of actors is more resilient than an individual unconnected set of things. Discussing topics such as blue bonds and related innovations would easily attract attention. Also, when private sector actors become connected to a place they can really provide significant financial support, often through supportive tourism developments, but also by providing access to technological innovations that could benefit capacity development across the CTI, for EAFM for example.

4.1.2 The Effectiveness of the Current Structure of the RPOA (Goals, Targets, Actions)

From the stand-alone questionnaire respondents, most (73%) find that the RPOA components (Goals, Targets, Regional Actions, and National Actions) are somewhat structured to maximize the coherence and effectiveness of its implementation (Figure 12).

Figure 12 Respondent's opinions on whether RPOA components are structured to maximize the coherence and effectiveness of its implementation.



From the stand-alone questionnaire, 69% of respondents said that the implementation of the RPOA resulted in reduced pressure on marine resources and increased food security; however, most considered the impacts to be small (either "some" impact or "a little" impact). 49% of respondents suggested that "Goal 3 - MPAs established and effectively managed" contributed the most to reduced pressure on marine resources, followed by 27% by "Goal 2 – EAFM fully applied". It must be noted

that many respondents also claimed to have the highest familiarity with these same goals. Goal 2 was considered to have contributed most to increased food security (44%), followed by Goal 3 (36%). The respondents attributed the RPOA with catalyzing “some” (52%) or “much” (30%) of the additive, joint action by key stakeholders in the CT.

As respondents considered the effectiveness of its components, several also provided comparisons with other initiatives noting that the CTI is still relatively young. In most comparisons, the difference was said to lie in the level of bureaucracy and the lack of a sustainable finance mechanism, which currently causes CTI progress to stagnate or waver. Many suggested that this might have been different with a different leadership or - priorities of the RS. Further, that the CTI should be communicated better by the RS, with greater transparency on several aspects.

Many respondents reflected that in hindsight the RPOA as a whole is overly broad and ambitious. Although countries would otherwise not have worked together and national programs would not have been as strong as they are today, the countries see the transactional costs of working on all the goals equally as too high. Instead, they find it more relevant to focus on those aspects of the RPOA that align with their national priorities. This is especially important in those countries where customary law and tenure systems are strong, as those conditions lessen the direct influence of central government legislation or policies on changing behavior. Something that is said to further contribute to this is the perception that the CTI is mostly a fisheries conservation initiative with unclear links to long-term economic development benefits. Lastly, the continuing financial resource gaps are mentioned as hindering effective progress across the CTI.

Goals

Terms that were shared when reflecting on “goals” in the open-ended questions included:

Outdated, must be implementable, varying capacity of countries to achieve, countries must decide, overlapping, some are unrealistic, must be more SMART, they were the best in 2009 and must be improved now, missing a theory of change, not holistic, don't address food security, new issues as pollution and technology must be considered, relevant but ambitious, straddling too many ministries, overly complex, hard to navigate and observe progress, good but not holistic enough to support effective implementation, missing clear goal statement, too sectoral undermining need for sustainable development focus, complementary, need to be more specific, they are fine, they must be changed, must be better consolidated, hard to communicate easily.

If the workings of the CTI RPOA are intended to generate a strengthened a policy framework with tools and guidelines and examples of success, then it is easy to understand that the RPOA MPA and EAFM goals were considered by many to be benefiting the most from the RPOA approach, with positive impacts already noted.

One of the reasons that the MPA goal progressed so well is that most countries already had some form of MPA strategy, and the MPA goal was well communicated globally so donors and partners were at the ready to help CTI in their regional framework approach. In addition, the logic behind EAFM had already gained some recognition in the region. People with biological or fisheries backgrounds easily understand that reducing fishing and other activities in protected areas, and designing fisheries management around securing the functionality of the productivity and connectivity

of coastal and marine ecosystems, will naturally result in healthy productive ecosystems and will result in biological changes and results on food security and biodiversity.

The TWGs for these two goals were therefore well resourced and could effectively focus on engaging actors and stakeholders from various levels to learn, share and shape a regional framework for relevant locally-applicable approaches to scale up effective and collaborative MPA management across multiple countries. With the TWGs creating toolkits, guidelines, the CTMPAs framework, and actively engaging many different stakeholders through different types of meetings, the adoption of similar approaches was stimulated and the creation of related national policies with allocated budget was facilitated.

Considering this in the context of aiming to positively affect food security, we can take a closer look at the other three goals and list some opportunities to address some of the challenges faced for gaining traction and gaining better results.

The seascape goal was considered by respondents to be following the MPA and EAFM goal well, partially due to dedicated resources and related increases in activities, and dedicated technical expertise. Also, the Sulu Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion (SSME) and the Bismarck Solomon Seas Ecoregion (BSSE) were existing collaboration forums. If – from our learnings around the MPA and EAFM goals – understanding of the benefits of using a seascape approach to conservation and management planning is important, and if the practical application of regional tools and frameworks can be envisioned by practitioners and local decision makers (and is critical to creating something successful through the CTI RPOA for this goal), we should again consider the biological logic as an argument. A seascape approach to management benefits those natural resources that utilize the entire seascape, such as marine mammals, sea turtles and migratory pelagic fish species such as tuna. The SSME and BSSE in their original action plans had the protection of threatened species listed as a high priority and the RPOA stimulated a focus on BSSE turtle management. The CTI has strengthened the issues highlighted years ago by the BSSE related to customary law and tenure systems for spatial planning and conservation in countries such as PNG, the Solomon Islands, and Indonesian Papua. Furthermore, the SSME had identified the live reef fish trade as a threat shared by each of the three countries, indicating that a shared approach to better manage that trade would result in shared benefits for each of the countries individually. When the CTI work on the seascape goal takes this logic into account, the best approach may be to increase progress on goal 5 relating to threatened species. One development partner consistently highlighted the relevance of working on tuna management amongst CTI countries, following the logic that some of the CT countries facilitate nursery and grow-up areas for tuna in their waters (the broken triangle concept); however, at some point in the CTI priority setting discussions, working collaboratively on a CTI tuna management framework was not supported and rather some targets were developed under the EAFM goal. With the Solomon Islands, PNG, the Philippines, and Indonesia being strong tuna producing countries, Malaysia offering increasingly useful landing and processing facilities, and Timor-Leste considering how to develop a small national fleet, this topic may require some fresh attention within the Seascape goal action plans.

Although the climate change goal fits well with the initial ambitions of the CT6, many respondents were unsure about the practicalities of working on it through the CTI RPOA.

Targets

Terms that were shared when reflecting on targets in the open-ended questions included:

Overly ambitious, possibly not feasible, too rigid, not of similar relevance to each country, too descriptive which makes them hard to measure, not achieved, not always clear, outdated, clear, no need for change except for climate change, must be smarter, achievable and measurable, very concrete and actionable except for threatened species, numerous, too many, some not measurable, missing role of community, wording is too much traditional conservation approach, process-based instead of outcome based, not all regional.

4.1.3 Possible Improvements for More Efficient Implementation and Improved Coherence between RPOA Components

This review saw some valuable ideas for improvements by some key stakeholders. Some were very specific with clear details, others were more process-oriented.

What stands out across most responses is that the logic between EAFM, MPAs and food security is clearly understood. The positive adoption by countries of the regional frameworks supported with the various toolkits may mean these frameworks warrant lesser attention for resource allocation and action at the regional level, with the exception of profiling the progress and supporting strategic events and related communications to support⁹ the countries at their various levels of implementation against their national targets on these goals. Specific to such strategic communications support, some respondents suggested that framing the MPAs within the EAFM context and towards a food security narrative is something that communities accept better and feel more empowered to take an active role in, particularly in countries that have strong local tenure systems relevant for governing access and use of natural resources and areas.

A seemingly increasing relevance of the seascape goal comes from those responses that consider the importance of the regional collaboration in supporting transboundary and large marine ecosystem area marine planning and -development. This is argued with reference to SDG Goal 14 and topics that were mentioned explicitly and frequently as having relevance to this Goal include: i) Blue carbon; ii) Climate change mitigation; iii) Resilience; iv) Marine debris; and v) Maritime security and sovereignty. Bringing in those currently emerging and very relevant topics is likely to be easier if the terminology in the RPOA is flexible enough for the seascapes goal (and possibly for several of the other goals) and could be rephrased to be focused more on outcomes that reflect healthy, sustainable, and productive coastal and marine ecosystems.

Importantly, one respondent reflected that food security depends on other aspects outside of the influence of the CTI, and others suggested this topic, and the various complexities around it, must be better discussed in the CTI forums. There was some mention that the funding made available to CTI was triggered by arguments related to food security and this warrants a closer look now that the CTI has been operational for a while. It was noted by several respondents who have a close understanding of the M&E system that the emphasis is on higher level outcomes instead of targets under each goal. It was suggested that – particularly at the regional level – it would be more effective and easier to communicate the value of the CTI if the revised RPOA were to consider how the combination of goals best contributes to higher level impacts, such as those on food security and other important resilience conditions – as linked to biodiversity preservation. These aspects were considered by most respondents to be the real benefits to society and the marine environment.

⁹ With regards to providing support, several respondents suggested that at the national level, work against the EAFM goal should naturally contribute more, but the MPAs should be a part of the EAFM in the matter of food security, through more and larger fish for increased spawning biomass resulting in more fish available for harvesting.

Consequently, consideration should be given to rephrasing the targets and focusing on addressing threats.

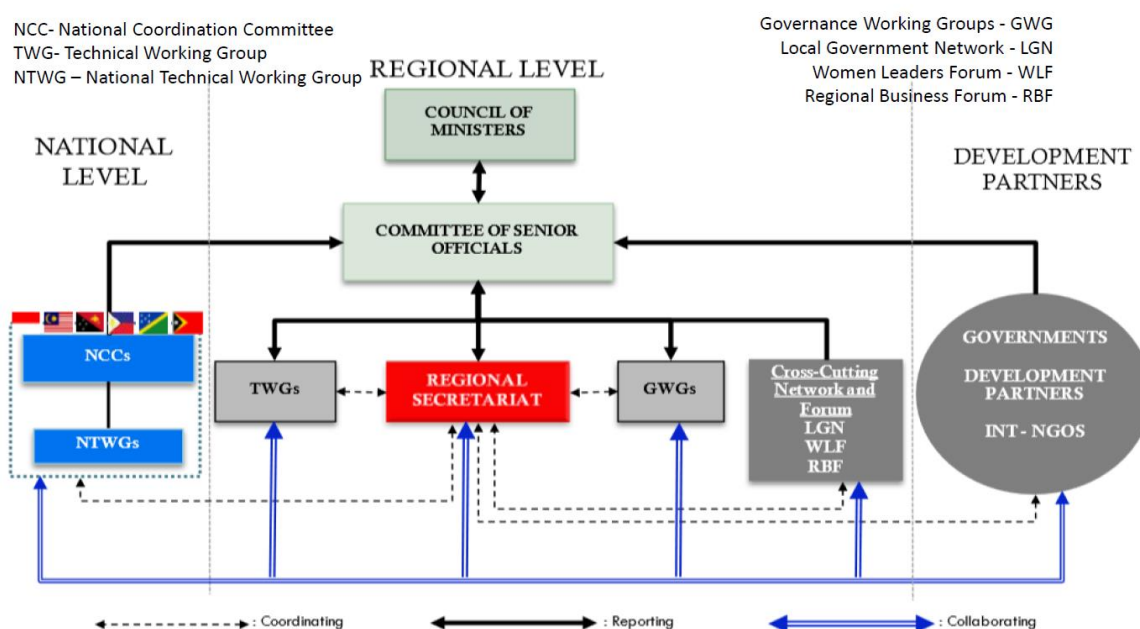
This links to the many suggestions offered on improving the way the RPOA is packaged in order to also improve the effectiveness within the CTI institution. In particular, within the TWGs, which are considered to be currently operating in silos and following single goals.

4.2 GOVERNANCE AND OVERALL INSTITUTIONAL EFFICIENCY

The review was designed to build on the GIZ-supported assessment of the key factors that contribute to, or hinder, performance on the RPOA achievements as it pertains to capacity. Due to some imminent and significant changes in the RS following the recent resignation of the Executive Director, these key factors are even more urgent to consider. The current review provided an opportunity to consult more respondents and add to the findings of the GIZ-sponsored assessment, while also focusing on the ability of the CTI to deal with external factors and trends relating to regional economic- and geo-political developments that appear increasingly relevant to the institutional efficiency and structure of the RPOA. The current and anticipated near-future context in which the CTI institution operates was therefore an important part of the review.

The structure of the CTI (Figure 13) was considered by most respondents as good but the management and leadership of some key components in the structure, particularly the RS, were mentioned by many respondents as problematic and in need of change to work efficiently towards achieving the RPOA goals. Some factors for this were offered by respondents as well as a variety of details on the impacts resulting from the challenges faced within the institution and from the RS.

Figure 13 The institutional structure of the CTI.



4.2.1 Efficiency of the CTI Governance

From the stand-alone interview respondents, 45% find the CTI governance “somewhat efficient” and 32% find it “a little bit efficient”. 14% find it “very” efficient.

Many respondents mentioned the word *bureaucratic* in relation to CTI governance. The Council of Ministers (COM) is essential for many purposes of the CTI but requires a tremendous effort to convene, and there appear to be concerns that they have not been engaged in recent years and have been disconnected from the real needs of the RS, possibly due to frequent changes in members. Respondents also suggested that broader engagement should be considered for COM membership (i.e., beyond the environmental ministries) in order to enhance the effectiveness of the RPOA.

At the senior officials' level, participation and decision-making is through consensus. Some decisions that can be taken by the Chair are executed accordingly. Senior officials rely on the feedback of the National Coordinating Committees (NCCs). Therefore, NCCs are mentioned by many as very critical. Senior officials ask for the advice of the NCCs but at SOMs, senior officials have the authority to change the decisions of the NCCs. Pre-SOM meetings therefore are critical.

The CTI comprises three governing bodies: i) the Coordination Mechanism; ii) Financial Resources, and iii) Monitoring & Evaluation Working Groups, which are chaired by elected countries. Several respondents mentioned that these bodies functioned at lower levels than expected given the importance of their roles in facilitating regional processes, working on sustainable long-term finance, and tracking and reporting important progress to illustrate the relevance and value of the CTI. Several suggested that these bodies have proper tools and mechanisms. The design of the M&E system is quite good as the system was designed with support across the countries. There exists a finance mechanism to guide decision-making on country contributions, and the structure and schedule of meetings of the various TWGs and higher-level components of the regional structure are clear. Most respondents who reacted to these issues suggested that the energy allocated to these bodies was less than optimal and offered several reasons.

At the surface, it appears that people in the various bodies have little time available. While it was clear from the GIZ-sponsored review that CTI work is often added on top of the existing, extensive workloads of government officials, in part, the decision to allocate time and attention to the CTI tasks is also seen by some as being influenced by a combination of other factors such as: i) a lack of recognition, reward and incentive; and ii) a lack of technical competency. Rewards and incentives come in various forms such as the interest in learning about substantive matters, the interest in meeting and collaborating with peers, and/or the feeling that one contributes to making the world a better place. Some respondents offered that to enable and facilitate the CTI managers at all different levels in such way required a particular type of vision and leadership in addition to continuous improvements in technology and systems to reduce time spent on the more administrative and perhaps less motivating work.

The effectiveness of tools and mechanisms available to these bodies can be considered in some more detail.

There were a variety of different responses related to the need for the MEWG to report progress on activities or report change in impact indicators. Some of the M&E systems indicators have been finalized for the RPOA only recently and some are not yet endorsed. At the country level, some countries apply a process to report progress at the TWG level by target, but many of those turn into activity reports. As an example, the indicators for the threatened species goal were just discussed this year but have not yet been endorsed, and indicators for the EAFM goal are not finalized. Several mentioned how the CT Atlas and the regional State of the Coral triangle report are such key assets in the M&E system and for the CTI as a whole, but these are losing value rapidly as there are no actions to maintain and follow up on these regularly.

At the surface, it appears that funding is the challenge. The support provided by CTSP to WorldFish for the CTI spatial database was subsequently discontinued due to the perceived unrealistic cost of outsourcing the work and a lack of capacity to support this work internally through the RS. Again, in part, the decision to allocate resources to continue this work is seen by some as being influenced by other factors such as: i) lack of explicit evidence of the use of the tools beyond the internal institution of the CTO only; and ii) lack of an entrepreneurial spirit to mobilize resources for multiple users and contributors to the system.

The financial mechanism was agreed upon to support decision-making on spending country contributions to the CTI, but several respondents mentioned that some countries are considering withdrawing with their funding commitment due to the perception that there may have been inefficiencies or even irregularities in financial management (pending financial audit findings) by the RS. This causes a lot of inefficiencies and stagnates the effective operations of the RS.

As mentioned by several respondents, at the surface, it appears that transparency is the challenge. As expected, respondents acknowledge that it wasn't easy to facilitate countries to contribute and transfer funds following their pledges. Funding did not arrive at once and when the RS became permanent there was no sufficient funding for it to be fully operational and professional. Once money was transferred from member countries, the financial reporting by the RS was not considered by senior officials to be in order, and responses by the RS were not deemed sufficient over the course of several senior officials' meetings. Again, in part, agreement on where to allocate funds was seen by some of the respondents as being influenced by other factors as well such as: i) disagreement on priorities; ii) varying perceptions on the performance of RS ED and staff; and iii) little early evidence of the added value of regional activities to national agendas.

The coordinating mechanism is clearly described and has been implemented relatively systematically since the RS became permanent in 2016. In the development of the CTI, it was essential that senior government was involved and their opinions and preferences were formally reflected. The original structure was important to ensure everybody would be onboard and the country leaders could provide a unanimous and clear, positive intent for the collaboration, and their ministers had specific roles in signing off on the RPOA and the institution. In the following years, however, several respondents reported that face-to-face meetings were hard to convene even at an annual or bi-annual frequency. Meetings were also deemed very bureaucratic, reflecting a more a treaty-style convention rather than a collaborative meeting to decide on collaborative actions. Several respondents attributed a large proportion of the challenges faced within and because of the RS to this.

At the surface, it appears that the high demands on time of senior officials and for diplomatic representation of country leaders is the challenge. Again, in part, decisions to send senior representatives who can make decisions on matters that are not of particular diplomatic concern¹⁰, is seen by some as influenced by factors such as: i) change in leadership and loss of related historic understanding of the CTI; ii) vision and management style of the leadership in the RS with regards to the priority roles of the RS; iii) high level of government authority through the CTI; and iv) lack of open review and evaluation mechanisms for adaptive management.

¹⁰ For example, some respondents state that communication efforts are wasted when the RS sends administrative matters to Personal Secretaries and Ministers, when they can instead be handled more readily by government staff members.

4.2.2 Efficiency of the CTI Institutional Structure

Some respondents said the structure as a whole is not flexible enough but don't see that it hinders the initiative. Many suggested that there is scope for improvement of the overall CTI effectiveness and efficiency now that the leadership in the RS is undergoing change. Many considered that the institutional structure, if it was implemented more effectively, would be very supportive of achieving the RPOA.

Most of the stand-alone questionnaire respondents (73%) considered the Council of Ministers to be either "slightly" or "moderately" efficient in facilitating the implementation of the RPOA; and 73% considered the SOM to be "moderately" or "very" efficient. The RS was considered "slightly" or "moderately" efficient by 68% of respondents, while 23% of respondents found the RS to be "very efficient". The TWGs were considered either "moderately" or "very" efficient by 85% of the respondents and the Coordination Mechanism WG was deemed "moderately" or "very" efficient by 75%. The Financial Resources WG was considered "slightly" or "moderately" efficient by 80% of the respondents and the MEWG was considered "slightly" to "moderately" efficient by 79%. There were several respondents that suggested some of these groups were not efficient at all.

Specific to the SOMs: The CTI makes decisions by consensus through the SOM and several respondents mentioned that the low frequency of SOMs creates challenges. It was mentioned that this is particularly seen as problematic since the most recent SOMs appeared to deal with reporting progress against the RPOA and stagnating over concerns related to perceived financial mismanagement of country contributions. In addition, even when all the decisions items are prepared by the RS and the TWGs in advance, the SOM cannot always endorse them due to uncertainty about the availability of resources. As part of this, the slowest TWGs are said to slow down the progress of the others also.

Various contributing factors were mentioned. Sometimes diplomatic protocol appears to hinder decision-making. Improved communication between lead Government Agencies and the National Secretariat was considered very important to improve efficiency at the SOM level. Others stated that communication among the SOM members and the RS is not optimal across the region, and insufficient votes are provided to evidence consensus. Also, delays by country officials when providing responses to preparatory documents for the SOM causes a lot of inefficiencies during the actual SOM.

Specific to the NCCs: Several respondents mentioned that the NCCs work efficiently. Respondents from each country gave clear examples of how the NCCs currently work with multiple ministries in their countries. Most respondents appear to regard this as increasingly effective in achieving progress on the NPOAs and RPOA. Suggestions to increase participation from other additional stakeholders in the NCCs came up repeatedly, perhaps through installing an advisory committee at the national level (Indonesia and Philippines already have these) and also at the regional level, with varying topics related to the annual regional events or priority collaborative actions.

Specific to the TWGs: While some suggested that the RS hampers effective progress in the TWGs, there were remarks that the country members to the TWGs do not really prepare and peruse the materials prepared by the RS prior to coming to a TWG meeting, which leads to less than optimum preparation of matters for annual decisions at the SOM. When senior officials meet, they need to deal with strategic and administrative matters that are deemed not effective, and further delays on important matters that require sign off by the COM who meet even less frequently (once every two

years only). Some respondents linked these delays to possible reduced levels of interest of government officials to actively engage in some of the CTI TWGs.

Several respondents mentioned that there is need to revisit the role of the TWGs against the RS in order to enhance effectiveness. Some reflected that at the time of the interim secretariat, the Financial Resources Working Group (FRWG) and the Coordinating Mechanism Working Group (CMWG) appeared more effective because they had to put in place arrangements to get the CTI up and running, which are perhaps less ambitious targets to achieve than those of the five RPOA goals. In this regard it is relevant to note that a financial business plan as envisioned for the FRWG would improve its effectiveness and in fact several mention the need for a sustainable finance mechanism to significantly increase the sustainability and effectiveness of the CTI.

Several respondents spent quite some effort describing how there has been a lot of energy and interest in the Women Leaders' Forum, although it is not a working group as such and was not developed to support the implementation of a specific component of the RPOA but rather to increase the equity, inclusion and impact of the whole CTI. In a similar fashion, some respondents highlighted the important roles of the University Partnership, the Local Government Network, the CT Fishers Forum, and CT Regional Business Forum in supporting various regional priorities of the RPOA and facilitating communications with different stakeholder groups. There is a concern that these groups, which could significantly increase support for the CTI RPOA, are not recognized properly nor properly resourced.

Specific to the RS: Several respondents did not consider the RS as supporting effective implementation of the RPOA. Others said the RS still needs to find its niche and become more valued by member countries and donors to motivate continued investments in the CTI. Some suggested that if the RS was a lean and cost-effective organization it could be a thought leader and cheerleader group that facilitates partnerships on new issues relevant to the goals.

As mentioned earlier, many respondents reflected on the bureaucracy that crept into the structure as a partial result of the style of the leadership in the RS, resulting – as perceived by several respondents – in the RS facilitating processes in a treaty style rather than as a collaborative inclusive and action-oriented forum. The cross-cutting forums (LGN, WLF, RBF), for example, were perceived by some respondents as requiring more focus by the RS, given the forums enable private sector, women leaders and local government leaders to support or even lead towards tangible CTI on-the-ground impacts as well.

As recommended in the GIZ: *“First and foremost, the RS suffers from discrepancies between ambitions and corresponding resources, in particular for financial management and resource mobilization.”* The review summarized a recommended RS Capacity development response to address this capacity matter.

In the current review, considering some of the additional and more specific concerns shared by many respondents on the effectiveness of the RS to implement its role, and also considering the current situation where the RS lacks an elected ED, many respondents offered ideas for improvements.

Overall, considerable time and effort were said by some to have been wasted due to unpredictable and sometimes only partial country contributions, the need for government officials to always check their national agenda priorities, disagreement and lack of clarity of RS roles, the disconnect between the expertise required and the competency and knowledge of the RS staff, staff turnover, the need to

administer within often complex laws of the hosting country, and some unclarity regards compliance with CTI rules and regulations by RS staff and leadership, leading to perception of low accountability of the RS and the request for an audit. To try and summarize these matters as described by respondents in such a way that improvements can be considered, we analyzed the interviews for those factors which arose that are relevant to consider when discussing the effectiveness of the institution. In short these include:

Agreeing about roles – In management terms, usually form should follow function. So, the composition of the RS team and its location should follow more clearly the function that it serves. When countries are asked to contribute funds for functions that supersede their own activities, they will first consider the additional value of having someone in the RS perform the function. As conceived in the beginning, the CTI it is seen by most to be about promoting cooperation among countries. In bilateral collaborations, foreign affairs agencies can facilitate and lead exchanges. Regarding the underpinning nature of the shared resources and concerns, it is only to a certain extent that CT countries agenda's will be met. So, the RS, guided by the RPOA, has a unique role in establishing and promoting cooperation in thematic areas under the RPOA with multiple countries inside the CT region as well as with countries and partners external to the region to enhance the CT6 benefits. The relevance of this in strengthening management capacity was demonstrated previously through regional learning exchanges (REX) and through the development of regional frameworks for effective MPA management and EAFM.

To some extent, disagreeing about the role of the RS was said by respondents, to have also resulted in different visions of what type of leadership was required. Many respondents suggested that an entrepreneurial spirit is needed. A future recruitment process should be careful to specify such competencies, to avoid focusing only on the competencies of candidates that can be gained through formal education and to ensure to look into the more "softer" competencies by conducting a solid reference check with previous employees and supervisors of candidates. Serving and segmenting the CT6 membership and feeding knowledge and information out accordingly, as well as having an entrepreneurial spirit to attract partners that bring value to the countries individually and as a group, could bring more capacity and resources to the CTI. However, the RPOA perhaps does not reflect these issues and the leadership might have been implementing the tasks too literally. The job responsibilities and required technical competencies may have been explicit, but the character and soft competencies preferred for implementing this position may not have been explicit. Several factors behind this were mentioned, including: i) the different approaches to hiring staff between corporate organizations, NGOs, and government; and ii) the vision of the ED to serve something more like a treaty rather than a collaborative platform for action that considers emerging issues and the entirety of the region, not just one country.

Going forward, the geopolitical relevance needs to be clear and understood by the ED in order to gain the high-level support for the CTI from the CT region, both internally and externally. This is something that was deemed important by the respondents that were involved at the start of the CTI and also by those that are actively engaged in other, similar regional collaborative initiatives. Also, as highlighted above, the need and benefits of working regionally versus locally must be understood and reiterated again and again, and the focus on the region should not be something that competes for attention. Country leaders will not justify working together across the regional system if they cannot see what it delivers on larger than local, political priorities. The role of an ED and the ED's support team in reporting to the senior government officials is key, and should be agreed by COM and clearly articulated in the ED position description.

Being clear about roles – The government knows their role but the RS appears to be less clear about their role. From the start, opinions were not aligned about the role of the RS, neither among the members of the CTI nor among the partners. An example of this was provided by a few respondents by considering the CTI RS office building in Manado. The ambition and potential of the building appears to have been much larger than serving solely the purpose of facilitating the core work of the RS operating under a limited budget. Also, the GIZ sponsored capacity review report was mentioned by some respondents who had valid concerns about the capacity of particular staff¹¹ in the RS to fill certain roles. Some expressed concerns that the ED was a capable professional but not a good fit for the role envisioned and was very process oriented. Several respondents suggested that what the initiative really needs is a person that has a vision, with a good skill set to articulate that vision and engage partners and donors about what CTI could do for all of the countries.

The GIZ sponsored review considered the following roles and related capacity for the RS¹²:

- **Capacity to engage stakeholders** – Identify, motivate and mobilize stakeholders / Create partnerships and networks / Promote the engagement of civil society and the private sector / Manage large group processes and open dialogue / Mediate divergent interests / Establish collaborative mechanisms.
- **Capacity to assess a situation and define a vision and mandate** – Access, gather and disaggregate data and information / Analyze and synthesize data and information / Articulate capacity assets and needs / Translate information into a vision and/or a mandate.
- **Capacity to formulate policies and strategies** – Explore different perspectives / Set objectives / Elaborate on sectoral and cross-sectoral policies / Manage mechanisms for prioritization.
- **Capacity to budget, manage and implement** – Formulate, plan and manage projects and programmes, including the capacity to prepare a budget and to cost capacity development / Manage human and financial resources and procurement / Set indicators for monitoring and monitor progress.
- **Capacity to evaluate** – Measure results and collect feedback to adjust policies / Codify lessons and promote learning / Ensure accountability to all relevant stakeholders.

Having the mandate and capacity to implement roles – The RS staff take instructions from the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) general and specific instructions, but the RS can also suggest that new cross cutting issues be taken up into the CTI. General guidance is available through standard procedures and protocols that have been created recently, but there is a lot of space for interpretation, which can result in outcomes falling short of expectations.

The operational plan (i.e., rules and procedures) are now being fixed by the Philippines Chair of the COM. Improving the efficiency of the RS in their day-to-day management, and ensuring it has the right capacity, allows the Chair of the senior officials and the ministers to focus on the more salient issues such as the RPOA and projects.

¹¹ It must be noted that several of the RS staff that was referred to by respondents, are no longer in active position at the writing of this draft report

¹² It is not clear that these have been agreed upon by the CTI institution/SOM

One of the ways that this could be strengthened is by prioritizing activities and the upcoming revision of the RPOA provides a clear milestone for this. This prioritization activity should be part of the role of the RS and should be done annually to determine whether the CTI is moving forward in achieving the RPOA targets and whether the countries are moving forward in achieving their NPOA.

Supporting a learning environment and adaptive management – Considering that the CTI is a relatively young organization and that the permanent RS has only been operational since 2016, it is to be expected that efficiencies and performance could be improved. However, the environment in which performance is stimulated is very important for the results. Going forward, it is important to conduct formal capacity and performance assessments that are systematic and well recorded. Combining the observations from RS interviews, however, it appears that several individuals felt they had little control over their own role and contribution to the organizations progress.

For the staff in the RS, staff meetings are held to update each other on what is happening. Only this year, was there budget planning that involved key staff, and joint strategic planning as well as supporting specific staff- and organization development is considered by several to enhance the RS effectiveness.

About 50-60% of staff positions were considered to be mismatched in terms of fitting the staff to the function of the role. Staff are perceived by some respondents as not understanding that the RS works for the six countries, and this may have partially been caused by the hiring process, which did not consider fully the need for RS staff to be aware of aspirations of all countries, beyond their own national background. Some respondents that work directly with the RS staff suggest that most junior staff lack the skills, knowledge, training and experience to work at the regional level. The previous ED appears not to have supported much of an evaluative learning and adaptive management environment for the staff and instead was focused much on gaining financial support to hire more staff and fill the vacancies of the large organizational structure of the RS.

4.2.3 Possible Improvements and Strengthening of Efficiency

Probably the main issue that requires immediate attention is the rebuilding of the RS with clear roles that are agreed upon by the CTI members. The RS need to be cost-effective and include positions filled with competent professionals who can implement the RS priority tasks effectively and with a positive team spirit.

Many respondents familiar with the situation mentioned that the biggest gain in effectiveness going forward would be having staff that fit their roles confidently. The special SOM called in July and convening again in September could establish a sub-commission to look at the matter and present a solution to move forward. Such an approach, often taken by NGOs, allows board meetings to be formalities, because the sub-committees prepare the scenarios for decision. Once matters are up for approval, the board does not need to be in the same space to vote - it can be done by referendum.

Importantly, and prior to creating a new RS, clarity on the roles should be achieved through formal processes with country agreements and the list from the GIZ-sponsored review should serve as a starting point. For effective implementation, form should follow function. In addition to the formal list of roles and related capacities, some respondents suggested that the RS should shift its focus more on facilitating collaborative action rather than on reporting individual country progress against their NPOA and trying to add them up to contributions against the RPOA. Lastly, several respondents suggested that throughout this process of rebuilding an RS, the CTI should find a way to re-energize. Given that

personalities are considered to be an important part of this, RS should be assisted to become more effective with clear roles and functions to guide future leadership recruitment.

When the re-organization of the RS is conducted, facilitation around effective leadership and team work between the staff, between the leadership and the senior managers, as well as between the RS and the CSO and TWGs will be required. This requires definition and agreement on the tasks of the RS, which should be clearly defined in an updated Terms of Reference, and should also include clearly defined processes for performance review and supervisory mechanisms for the ED and staff of the RS. In preparation, the SOM needs to consider that this will require dedicated resources and a mid-term view on the scope and type of organizational development that best suits the effective delivery of the tasks undertaken by the RS. The relationship between the RS and the NCCs is equally important in order for the countries to feel that they gain capacity to collaborate regionally and to ensure that the burden on national government staff is manageable. Contracting some of the functions of the NCCs and/or working groups can reduce their workload. The consultant recommends that CTI as an organization would benefit most from a more explicit adoption of an adaptive management and learning approach, and could consider some targeted coaching to develop talent and leadership in the short term.

Beyond the importance of supporting the new RS, some respondents suggested that the institutional structure is overly driven by governments and now misses potential benefits from a structure that involves the private sector, the NGO sector and Government as equals in the initiative, given that all three are essential for achieving the goals. Clearly, it would have taken a lot more time to bring the private sector and NGOs in at the beginning in a more equal structure, but with the upcoming revision of the RPOA and considering lessons and strengths of other multilateral collaborative initiatives, creating something more like an inclusive assembly could support enhanced achievements of the RPOA.

4.3 SUSTAINABILITY AND REPLICATION

Many of the respondents believe that results at the national level will be sustained, particularly where national legislation has been improved around establishing and effectively managing MPAs and application of EAFM. However, several also mentioned how the value proposition for the CT6 to keep engaging at the regional level is less clear. Some suggested that this is because CTI started with lot of hope and resources but in the eyes of new leaders and donors it has not fully lived up to its potential. For sustained attention and support, also from new partners, the relevance of promoting the CTI as a delivery mechanism must be considered in the funding environment and as relevant to private sector actors and communities.

The CTI missed out on Green Climate Fund (GCF) international funding. Even when national funding is forthcoming in some of the countries, the opportunity to strengthen regional capacity and voices in the climate change arena lies with global platforms. The outcomes of previous regional investments could be better communicated and highlighted to motivate other donors to invest at that level as it had real benefits for creating enabling conditions that will have positive impacts at national and local levels. There are diverging perceptions on funding trends, where some perceive that donors give larger amounts to multi-country initiatives that perform and have clear benefits for SDGs, while others talk about how more attention goes to bi-lateral support again, perhaps due to a lack of clarity about the benefits of investing in regional platforms.

The focus in the early days on biodiversity and MPAs fit with a broader narrative at that time, and there have been good achievements through CTI work relevant to those issues. Clearly, that work continues at a national level. Looking forward, several suggest that the human development work could be tied better to the CTI and link to concerns about ecosystem- and community resilience. The women leadership forum having emerged and being very active is a good example of the relevance of such more socially oriented matters.

4.3.1 The Probability of Continued Long-Term Results and Impact

Of the stand-alone questionnaire respondents, more than 50% considered that long-term results and impacts are probable when certain conditions are in place, 15% thought that long-term impacts are not likely, and 20% were convinced of continued results and impacts. Several suggested that it would be relevant for the CTI to consider lessons learned from other more mature multi-lateral collaborative platforms. A short summary can be downloaded from <http://files.hatfieldgroup.com>, which could be the start of such review.

Allocation of attention and resources, along with formalization of agreements and approaches were thought to be some of the most important factors to secure continued results. Also, as mentioned before, if the context of an initiative undergoes significant change, the sustainability of impacts is less certain. Being able to adjust the narrative and to display flexibility, inclusiveness and evidence effective delivery are often highly valued in global and national contexts.

From the review, it appears that donors and partners perceive the CTI products as valuable but are less sure about impact performance currently, possibly because the implicit geopolitical benefits are not measured. An example given by one respondent was the run up to the Paris Agreement reached at the 21st Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), where – following the regional opportunity for which the CTI was established – the RS should have worked very closely with the six countries so that the environmental protection and other adaptation commitments would have been very explicitly included in the country COP commitments. The CTI could have organized a dedicated meeting inviting potentially new partners. That did not happen, which possibly signifies one of the most important things that the CTI should have done in the past five years because all donors are now working to help all countries implement their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), for example through the green climate fund.

This requires a good understanding of global processes relevant to the CTI and in the past, the development partners (international NGOs specifically) supported the CTI in those matters. Currently, and with respect to the role of some of the international NGOs, some respondents at the periphery of the CTI, consider that current profiling efforts are essentially “following the money” rather than projecting regional thought-leadership. This may be one reason why some respondents suggested that the sense of purpose between CTI actors varies between topics/goals and particularly on the “regional-ness” of the CTI.

Concerted effort, to refocus the CTI on resilience and food security at the regional level, perhaps towards a CTI 2019 (launch+10) summit, were suggested by some respondents as a strategy to ensure continued engagement for results and impacts.

4.3.2 Factors Undermining and Contributing to Sustainable Outcomes

Terms that were shared in the open-ended questions on factors undermining or contributing to sustainable outcomes included:

Funding, leadership, political change, stakeholder willingness, declarations, high level commitments and policies, local buy in to co-fund, knowledge and funding, government budget allocation, visionary and talented leadership at RS, enforcement, meeting community aspirations, incentives for buy-in also private sector, energetically vibrating RS that radiates energy into the region, passion, alignment with country priorities, RPOA alignment of support to national level capacity needs, improved relation of CT6 with RS and less bureaucracy, multi-stakeholder participation in the RPOA, documentation of good outcomes, less wieldy governance system, demonstrability and replicability of actions, engaging more regional and local institutions, reduce conflicting views of what success looks like, more consideration of market demands, measured demands to reduce burden on government officials, support mainstreaming with national priorities, country stability, interest of highest level in country for collaboration, engagement of finance ministries.

To summarize the extensive explanation behind some for these terms we consider some factors that either contribute or undermine sustainable outcomes of the CTI.

Sense of purpose – Responses differed mostly due to people referring to NPOAs or the RPOA. Some referred to a shift in regional purpose that should occur relative to shifts in funding availability, while others focused on matters that benefit from real regional collaboration. The benefits of that will trickle down to support enabling conditions at the national level also. The indicators are said by some not to match with the overall regional opportunities, which are food security and resilience in the face of climate change. This was particularly mentioned in relation to the lack of a sustainable finance mechanism. Several respondents considered it unnecessary for the RS to send ad-hoc requests to developing partners for various regional activities if the big picture of what is required for regional priority action is clear to all.

Respondents provided examples of other initiatives that had greater financial independence and stability due to the establishment of trust funds and mechanisms for decisions on financial disbursements. Frustration is shared with regards to this matter and some reflected back to some of the factors that contributed to this. Under the interim RS, the financial working group was clear what they were supposed to do and they had good representation. Once the permanent RS came in it was not clear where the role lay with the RS. Some mention a perceived lack of transparency and engagement in decision-making for what to spend the country contributions on. Now it is not clear to several respondents what the Financial Resources Working Group (FRWG) focusses on. An audit was proposed as a means to clear things up, and allow the group to start clean and afresh, with the country contributions clearly assigned to priorities. The group could then work diligently with partners to set up a trust of sorts, looking at lessons learned from other initiatives like the Caribbean Challenge Initiative (CCI) and the Congo Basin Initiative (CBI).

Innovation – From the start it was recognized that the uneven capacity, resources, and appreciation across the CT6 meant that innovation should not be a strategic approach as the CTI was focused on scientifically validated interventions. However, innovation is relevant to processes that enable and strengthen the region's capacity to implement those interventions/approaches, such as the M&E

system, communications projecting progress, engaging private sector for stronger compliance or support, broadening the engagement of significant government actors, etc.

Some respondents feel there is fatigue amongst the partners due to circular discussions on the sufficiency of resources. According to some, the window of opportunity to access funding that has been reserved for regional work is closing. Others suggested that public buy-in is just not there. This may change when engaging ministries other than fisheries and environment. While this is not innovation *per se*, it was something that was identified since early on. For example, mobilizing development funds for development reasons would make a lot of sense if the treasury ministries were actively considering the CTI in that light, and some consider that such would be needed to get to the next level of funding, and next level of institutional buy-in. The focus on livelihoods and food security may have been prominent in some peoples' perceptions, but the outward looking communications were about beauty and corals and species, rather than livelihoods.

Inclusiveness and connectedness – Several respondents are engaged with the CTI through other programs and projects and mention how continued support would benefit from clearer and more explicit efforts to support communications with other projects and initiatives. There should always be opportunities for linkages (vertical and horizontal) and it was considered by some that adequate linkages depend on the willingness of the person responsible for the program/projects to communicate.

The study by Christie (2014) that resulted in the US CTI learning report, looked at linkages and communications within the CTI. It used a number of measures to reveal how key persons in the countries connected with new information and new people. Some respondents expect that the level of connectedness has weakened somewhat. There is a great opportunity for the RS to work on this after some learning to facilitate CTI champions and stakeholders to reconnect and re-establish ways to gain and peruse relevant information. A question asked is how the RS could strengthen those linkages and have them less depending on individuals.

The respondents seemed to think that many projects are linked to the CTI, especially at the national level where integration may be already taken care of by the NCCs. At the sub-regional/regional level, respondents suggested that there is a lot of scope for improvement and strengthening inclusiveness and connections to other initiatives. Being inclusive with other stakeholders who may be developing projects and programs is said to be very valuable in this matter as it stimulates awareness and connections in periods where things are still in the development stage.

Commitment and morale – Across the respondents, several mentioned that the RPOA seems dated and an injection of current relevance is important to improve morale across governments and supporters. An added value or cost-benefit study would be helpful in gauging the morale as things are not clear now. Bureaucracy was mentioned many times by several respondents as something that needs to be addressed in order to regain morale. Some mentioned that a smaller, more strategically located headquarter of the CTI might be more conducive to staff engagement and morale. Various things could be done about that and some suggestions were made.

Respondents currently active at the periphery of the CTI all considered their commitment to achieving the CTI goals as high because their enthusiasm for conservation has not waned. Country commitments – when the RS concerns can be addressed – were also considered high, but to several this relates to the NPOA mostly.

Several respondents expressed concern that donor commitments are uncertain and that the RS impasse be turned into something positive. Trust was mentioned as an important factor by some. The shifts in funding priorities towards resilience, food security and human security are perceived to be relevant to some of the changes in donor commitment.

Staff commitment was said to vary and morale was considered very low at the time that the ED resigned and the Deputy Executive Director (DED) was asked to step in as interim. Some of the staff interviewed found there was not much incentive and opportunity to contribute to the bigger picture in the past, which reflects a need for HR processes and career support.

Monthly development partner calls are considered somewhat boring, and could be more effective with a more interactive format that is less bureaucratic. It was mentioned by some that there is not a lot of space for excitement. However, the partners are viewed by many as still being very committed to the CT region. While committed to the region, partners are worried and are losing confidence in parts of the CTI, and worry about the state of the RS. Some mention that morale of some partners is low, partially because it appears the engagement of countries is low at the regional level, while it differs between countries at national levels and arguments for development partners and donors to fund regional work are quite dependent on partner government wishes.

Competition – Several respondents listed PIF, ASEAN, SPREP, PEMSEA, UNDP (e.g., ATSEA, Building Shoreline Resilience Project), the large marine ecosystem project of FAO, SEAFDEC, ASEAN Center for Biodiversity, World Fish Center, South Pacific Commission, Academia, COBSEA, some of ASEAN, ACB to some extent, and the “50-reefs initiative” as potential competitors for the same funds and attention, in case they are not aware of, or feel included in the CTI. If that is the case, these important platforms may not explicitly contribute to achieving the RPOA. Some of the platforms, especially ASEAN, are seen to focus specifically on economic development, industrialization, cultural enhancement, and that may make them a more strategic choice for several countries than CTI.

Most respondents do not see those other platforms as real competitors but more as potential partners. One of the CTI strengths is considered to be the strong links in government. While that has challenges as mentioned by several and described above, it is seen as significant. One respondent worded it interestingly, *“Our competitor is ourselves. Whether we would like to have or not, it is up to us. We have the biggest resources and people so we have the opportunity to make a difference.”* Many suggest there is a risk of losing the niche and the opportunity for long-term continued results if the CTI does not refresh.

4.4 STRATEGIC RELEVANCE

At the start of the CTI, there were many reasons why different stakeholders considered this six-country collaboration around marine and coastal issues relevant. Geopolitical and socio-economic issues were not explicit in the narrative of the CTI, which has its reasons and benefits; however, it is important to understand that these issues play a very important role in the allocation of time and financial resources by governments. For many, supporting the CTI is not just about preserving biodiversity. From the start, some member countries also saw potential benefits in meeting with neighbors over issues that each could support, and were not as complex as bi-lateral disputes and issues of concern.

In a way, the CTI has started to show its relevance on those broader issues, for example by introducing the relevance of a blue economy at the Rio+20 events and by following up with related narratives on food security and livelihoods. While the concept of a blue economy and blue growth were not coined by the CTI, it was the CTI who brought it into the lime-light and stimulated some real thinking around it, resulting in many initiatives and entities around the world now utilizing these terms to guide their strategic interventions and partnerships.

While confidence in using the CTI for international negotiations and discussions may have decreased due to high levels of bureaucracy and a perception that regional collaborative action has become less relevant, support by the international community is considered by some to be even more important for the initiative today. Somehow, it appears that many of the CT countries are looking more inwards today.

Many respondents said that the TWGs and cross-cutting WGs are the places within the CTI structure where current context and relevant new issues and opportunities can be brought into the discussion. Several respondents would like the CTI as a whole to perceive such issues and act as platform to address those emerging problems and work with new partners through new opportunities. For example, marine debris is a very important emerging issue for the Southeast Asia part of the CTI, but there is concern about the inflexibility of the RPOA and the question remains about how to formally include such new issues in the RPOA. Also, sensitive issues related to election periods may be relevant to consider in certain contexts as strong government positions may make it difficult to discuss such matters or to support the CTI to adopt new relevant issues in a timely manner. The structure of the CTI also does not allow for quick decision making, despite the importance of acting quickly to issues as they arise.

In addition, several people recognized that when you work in one country it is easy to get sidetracked with local village issues for example. So, the geopolitical relevance needs to be clear and understood in order to regain the high-level support. The regionalism versus locality argument comes back to having clarity about measuring progress on certain indicators.

Considering the past years, several respondents suggested that if – in the short term – the CTI could focus its communications on the top one or two things that are relevant for regional collaboration and to the wider global audience, the work on other matters would still continue alongside but the regional efforts would be focused more effectively in the mid-term and that would probably cause donors and other countries to pay attention to the voice, leadership and needs of the CTI members in the long-term.

Food security is perhaps the one key issue that will be relevant for many around the globe and a strong narrative on how the productive CT systems and its people are threatened by climate change and uncontrolled infrastructure development is something that the CTI can provide well. Through this focused narrative, the CTI could gain leadership positions in global international forums, resulting in further support and shifted trajectories from outside pressures and trends towards benefits to CT6 societies.

Many respondents said that the goals and strategies are not very innovative; however, despite some need to reword and refocus, they are the right strategies and goals to work on. The gender work was mentioned as innovative and relevant to the emerging global and regional issues, but it is still not fully considered part of the formal RPOA.

4.4.1 The Validity of the RPOA

From the stand-alone questionnaire respondents, all goals received very high marks on their current validity, but the number of respondents that were not sure varied for the different goals, with relatively high uncertainty for “Goal 1 – priority seascapes designed and effectively managed”, for “Goal 4 – climate change adaptation measures achieved”, and “Goal 5 – threatened species status improving”. This may reflect the relatively high familiarity and engagement of these respondents with the other two goals, but the detailed comments and arguments provide more insight.

Firstly, many respondents considered that some of the goals, as stated currently, are methodologies or tools, while others are desired outcomes, and only a few are highly and broadly politically relevant. It was suggested to simplify the mix of issues around the current focus, structure, and implementation arrangements of the current goals.

The five goals are mostly seen as still valid; however, several respondents reflected that some are now more valid at a country level rather than in a regional context, and also that not all goals are prioritized equally by all countries. Considering the regional work to create the CTMPAs framework, for example, the MPA goal could now be dropped for more follow up at the national level. The CTI MEWG could still support measuring of progress and the CT Atlas would serve to report progress to various stakeholders and strategic target audiences, with the work occurring in country on-site. This serves as an example of a goal that remains relevant but where it is not immediately clear what additional regional action would be required.

Considering what requires regional action was mentioned by some respondents as a helpful process for streamlining the RPOA. Several considered that the CCA and EAFM goals are more relevant for a regional approach or a priority geographic unit (i.e., seascape) in which to organize and schedule certain actions. Also related to this, several respondents suggested talking about resilience rather than climate change adaptation (CCA). Several suggested that a single top-level resilience goal could be the umbrella under which the other goals converge to form the tools and approaches. In that way, food security and resilient ecosystems could be the primary two targets. This would also support the linkages between the targets, something that was mentioned in previous reviews and again in this review but for which there has not been an effective mechanism yet.

Many respondents considered how national actions continue to contribute to the CTI, and the RPOA focuses more on regional collaboration for the CTI targets. CCA goals are critical for the CT due to its inherent vulnerability, and the region needs a mechanism for applying the most up-to-date strategies for mitigating and dealing with impending CCA impacts. In that resilience context, several respondents highlighted the need to consider more explicitly human welfare and gender issues.

Some also suggested that an additional reason to merge goals is to reduce the burden on the working group members. For example, the threatened species with the MPAs as targets are somewhat similar, or goal 1 could merge with goal 3 or goal 5 with 3. Some suggested that engagement of other government ministries is especially relevant for the seascapes goal as it is the goal that links mostly closely with economic impacts of the CTI to CTI people. The importance of focusing on goals that deliver food security was mentioned by several people, and that can also be a lens through which the RPOA is refocused.

4.4.1.1 Alignment with National Priorities

Much of the relevance of the RPOA depends on the policy environments in the CT6. The policy environment in turn depends on how advanced the legal environment for marine management and conservation is in each country. The legal environment affects how research findings are translated to policies, regulations and enforcement, and affects the efficiency of implementing projects and programs. Operationalizing the CTI in country is voluntary but if there is conducive legislation, then there will be funds to sustain the programs. If there is no basis to support the CTI within relevant legislation, there is less of an enabling environment to compel a country leader to support implementation of the initiative.

The report by Fox and Luna (in prep since 2016), provides very comprehensive descriptions of those country characteristics that are commonly shared by the CT6, and those that set them apart. They also touch upon the legal and administrative environment and from our respondents it was noted that some consider these factors to partially explain differences between countries with regards to their attention to the RPOA.

A more comprehensive summary of national priorities for the counties is available through the current review as a supporting document¹³ but some quick examples are provided for some countries here. Timor-Leste was described by one respondent as an interesting case, as in some ways it is more similar to the Asian countries, and at other times to the Pacific countries. Administratively it appears to follow an Asian template, but on fisheries management it appears to follow the Pacific approach. Nevertheless, Timor-Leste is committed to collaboration at the CTI regional level and has signed on to global and regional commitments. Timor-Leste is strengthening its laws and regulations accordingly but lacks technical capacity in national human resources with the knowledge and skills to support implementation. Although their human capacity is developing, there are challenges between different ministries having different mandates, and only one ministry sits in the CTI. In the Philippines, the above matter is less of an issue as the enabling policy environment is very strong; however, some respondents mentioned that implementation is the main issue, as the current leadership appears to prioritize other issues for regional collaboration. A respondent for the Solomon Islands considered that national legal changes are unlikely to have major effect on how the Solomon Islands collaborates on the CTI. Meanwhile, PNG can remain committed to the CTI from a legal and policy perspective because new laws, such as the one on protected areas as well as the Climate Change Act, are positively related to priorities in the CTI.

4.4.1.2 Alignment with Regional Priorities

The CT region is characterized by strong economic forces, specifically those that conservation organizations seek to challenge and transform. The products and services that the ecosystems and waters provide across the region and indeed the world, are affected by market drivers that allow these forces to flourish. This is further compounded by challenges posed by the rapid expansion of urban areas, the related infrastructure development in coastal areas, and continued growth of sectors that impact the quality of the coastal and marine areas, such as tourism, coal mining, agriculture, aquaculture, shipping, and the oil and gas sectors that are pushed by other ministries to contribute and retain positive economic growth for their countries. Anyone aiming to improve ocean governance and ocean resource exploitation will need to build strong arguments for powerful regional and national

¹³ From <http://files.hatfieldgroup.com>

alliances capable of exerting strong influence and driving 21st century reform. Within the region, several regions face challenges from instability and security issues rooted in historical and ethnic conflicts and amplified by increasing resource scarcity. A supporting document¹⁴ is available that summarizes some of the current regional context relevant to the CTI-CFF. This must be considered when planning for magnification of successes in one area compared to other areas. As reported by several global and regional studies, in some parts of the region, corruption fueled by decentralization of power and fragmentation of institutions has led to poor governance, limited transparency, and inadequate involvement of civil society in decision-making and policy dialogue related to marine resource management and conservation. This in turn has left some national institutions unable to carry out the management duties required to build back and maintain the ecological productivity of the system over the long-term. Also, several countries in the CT region face rapid social change – change that may influence how people view the role of conservation organizations.

With that as context, for most environmental interventions to be successful, a number of enabling conditions are needed across the region:

- **Political will is arguably the single most important foundation required for the profound and lasting changes needed to ensure long-term outcomes.**

As a result of strong national political will over the past decades, most countries have a comprehensive set of policies and regulations in support of conservation and sustainable use of the coastal and marine resources. The effective implementation of these policies and regulations across the region, however, varies greatly and is generally insufficient.

- **Private sector transformation to reduce impacts initially where they are most immediate – on the water and in the communities.**

As a result of growing pressure over the past five years from international markets to source sustainable, responsible, and legal products from countries in the CT region, some private sector players have also started to transform their harvest practices. The scale at which this results in required change, however, remains very limited.

- **Public awareness provides growing pressure to follow through on public and private sector commitments and the constituency to move to lifestyles that are more within the boundaries of our one living planet.**

As a result of explosive growth in the use of social media over the past five years to share information about nearly everything, awareness of the need to conserve natural systems is high in the younger generation, who are generally well-educated and enjoy a modern lifestyle. The link between limiting access to fish and sustainable livelihoods, however, remains misunderstood by most. There are important differences between the CT countries, which are further described in the Section 4.4.2.

Considering lessons from decades of ocean conservation action, it has become clear that for conservation in this region to be successful, it must yield both ecological and socio-economic benefits. The commitment of CT governments to sustainable fisheries and conservation while building a “blue economy” is premised on their belief that conservation actions can and must have dual functions of

¹⁴ From <http://files.hatfieldgroup.com>

conserving biodiversity and supporting economic development and food security, especially through sustainable fisheries and tourism.

Unfortunately, leadership does not yet connect this belief to a solid understanding of the relevance of spatial management across multiple sectors. Instead, conservation and development continue to be addressed by different national entities in most countries. Furthermore, the agendas and priorities of other ministries and empowered local and provincial governments sometimes stand in the way of accelerating sustainable blue economic growth.

For the region to sustain its much-needed ocean production values, three main conditions are required:

1. A deep understanding - across sectors and countries - of the key drivers of resource loss and inter-connectedness of these in the region;
2. The capability to demonstrate what success looks like for an interconnected and shared set of multiple agency strategies; and
3. A collective commitment by government agencies to compromise on several single-sector approaches towards a few shared strategies that can address key foundational challenges faced in the countries of the CT region.

4.4.1.3 Alignment with Global Priorities

There are many global and regional conventions and treaties that have relevance for the CTI¹⁵. At the start of the CTI, the Convention on Biological Diversity¹⁶, known informally as the Biodiversity Convention, was often referred to. The Convention has three main goals including: i) the conservation of biological diversity (or biodiversity); ii) the sustainable use of its components; and iii) the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources. The CBD COP in 2020 is set to adopt a new set of conservation targets with high relevance for the CTI. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982¹⁷ (UNCLOS 1982) is also mentioned in deliberations of the CT countries regarding opportunities and restrictions for collaboration across boundaries. This Convention contains provisions on state rights and obligations to the territory and legal basis for establishing territorial boundaries. These conventions continue to be of high relevance for the CTI but there are others that are suggested to be currently more relevant. The first includes the Paris Agreement¹⁸, which builds upon the United Nations Climate Change Convention and brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so. As such, it charts a new course in the global climate effort and the CTI could be an important delivery mechanism for several of the region's national commitments.

¹⁵ From <http://files.hatfieldgroup.com>

¹⁶ [Convention on Biological Diversity](#)

¹⁷ [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982 \(UNCLOS 1982\)](#)

¹⁸ [Paris Agreement](#)

4.4.2 Emerging Trends, Communication Issues and Profiling Opportunities

One of the associate experts reviewed the communication landscape in the context of the CTI¹⁹, which also provides an interesting summary of some of the emerging issues in the region. She summarized nine Key Findings:

Key Finding No. 1: The communication space has become more crowded, making it harder to effectively communicate and engage.

Digital channels made information sharing much easier. In just a click, a conservation advocate can share photos of dying whale sharks from his part of the world to as many people globally. Thanks to Facebook or Instagram, Coral Triangle Day celebrations from different countries can easily be broadcasted live. Armed with creativity and a YouTube channel, an NGO can produce and show documentaries without going through film producers or television networks.

Ironically though, amid increasing communication platforms, it has become harder to effectively communicate and engage audiences - because access to communication platforms is everywhere, information and messages are also everywhere! Today, people are bombarded with a tsunami of announcements, advertisements, news, and stories. Experts estimate people are exposed to about 4,000 ads daily.

As such, everyone is competing for everyone's attention. While it may be easier for CTI advocates to inform people about the CT, their voices are among thousands that audiences see and hear every day. In a crowded communication space, it has become more imperative for CTI to produce compelling communication and marketing materials that stand out and resonate with target audiences. Messages must touch on issues or topics that are relevant to the audience's day-to-day lives.

Key Finding No. 2: In today's digital age, the rise of social media on mobile phones boosts people's overall media consumption.

The rise of digital – online and mobile – channels has not significantly dethroned television as king of media. It has, instead, boosted overall media consumption. A Zenith Media Consumption Report shows the average person will likely spend 479 minutes a day consuming media in 2018.

Improved access to smart mobiles triggers increases in content search or a desire to talk about, listen, or watch certain topics not only from mobile phones but across different media. Information first sourced on mobile phones are validated and re-told by traditional media, while content aired by television is either streamed live online or talked about in social media platforms, i.e., topics trending on twitter, people posting about TV shows, etc.

There is a rise in overall media consumption as people consider information to be more credible when these are seen on more than one channel. Tapping multi-channels, and tweaking content depending on the characteristics of such channels, will prove beneficial for CTI communication and marketing initiatives.

¹⁹ Nini Santos' full report is available via <http://files.hatfieldgroup.com>

Key Finding No. 3: There is no fixed hierarchy among CT stakeholders. The most important stakeholder group varies, and depends on specific communication objectives.

Stakeholder prioritization is a tricky thing for the CTI, given the extent of the program, the geographical area covered by the CT, and the wide array of industries and sectors that are at present, and could be, directly and indirectly involved in the initiative.

Some experts suggest the stakeholder prioritization must be done according to the RPOA's Thematic Area, others believe it should be done vertically, either per CT6 country or per target industry. All however agree that the communication and marketing campaign for CTI must take a multi-stakeholder approach for it to be most effective.

Among the key stakeholder groups identified are the following: i). Communities including resource owners, marine protectors, and consumers; ii) Government, both at the national and local government levels; iii) Business sector which is not only represented by the fishing/seafood industry but all other related industries including tourism, manufacturing, etc. iv) Knowledge sources comprised of the academics, non-profit groups, development partners, and other civil society organizations; and v) Funders and donors.

It is important that communications are done and customized per each of the stakeholder groups above. Each initiative must take into consideration the unique characteristics of each type of stakeholder and the dynamics within each category. A 'one size fits all' or 'plug-and-play' type of campaign will not yield significant outcomes.

While social media may help create general awareness and appreciation for the CT, such channels may not necessarily work with high-level stakeholders. One-on-one communication and meetings with regulators and policy makers could be useful. Engagement with local communities, meanwhile, must be aligned with their customary laws and gain the nod of village chiefs and traditional/informal leaders.

Key Finding No. 4: Several issues across the region and the world can be used to anchor conversations about the Coral Triangle.

A review of the political, economic, and social landscape in Southeast Asia and Oceania showed there are several hot topics that can serve as entry points for CTI-related discussions. These issues include the following:

- **Climate change.** Rising temperature impacts on marine biodiversity. The Coral Triangle, harboring more marine species than anywhere in the world, is most threatened.
- **Plastic pollution.** Millions of tons of plastic end up in the ocean and it's poisoning coral reefs and other marine species.
- **Gender.** The role of women and minority groups in developing or supporting local level stewardship over natural resources - including coastal – is increasingly being considered as of high additional and strategic value.
- **Human trafficking at sea.** Run-away migrants, fishermen, and laborers fall victims to human trafficking and are forced to fish at seas within the CT Region. Monitoring of fishing activities on the ocean and transparency in terms of business practices at sea are demanded by stakeholders.

- **Sustainable tourism.** Amid growth in the tourism industry, destinations under the CT Region are threatened due to the volume of tourists and activities detrimental to the ocean and marine biodiversity. Calls for sustainable tourism get louder.
- **Wildlife trade.** Policies are being crafted, including those at bilateral and multilateral levels, in relation to fishing and selling of protected marine species. In Southeast Asia and Oceania, these activities happen within the CT area.

Most of the issues above demand inter-government collaboration. Calls for improved actions and interventions to address the above issues provide windows for CTI advocates to integrate CT initiatives and ocean-related conservation efforts into the discussion space at the regional and inter-government level.

Key Finding No. 5: Technological advancements offer multiple opportunities for the CTI to be more creative in its communication tactics.

The exponential growth of technologies has led to innovations that may prove useful for communication and marketing practitioners. In the realm of social media alone, creative apps and gimmicks abound.

Technologies such as AI-supported chat boxes, content using augmented reality, ad-blocking technologies, voice search, ad-ons and face filter apps, live streaming, and videos on social media are trending tools that can be maximized to improve engagement with target audiences of the CTI program. Such tools are also creative ways to call attention to and increase interest about CT conservation and other related programs.

Key Finding No. 6: Authenticity is a must.

In an era where social media abound and consume most people’s waking hours, transparency and authenticity in communication is a must. “People like me” are rated as more credible and trustworthy than CEOs, government leaders, and experts because they reflect the attitudes, perspectives, and experiences of individuals that organizations target to communicate with and engage. The more natural they are, the truer they are to themselves, the better. Many of these types of people become online celebrities and are considered influencers in their respective space of expertise.

Social media influencers could help push CTI messages, given their natural connection with target audiences, particularly communities and consumers. However, identifying the specific person/s to serve as CTI brand ambassador/s or champions requires careful study. Some celebrities are more effective in one community but not in other parts of CT6 countries. As one interviewee remarked, community members “adore” certain social media influencers or celebrities but they don’t necessarily “respect” them.

Different parameters may apply per community and/or country, but one thing is sure: the target audience appreciate spokespersons and communication messages that are authentic, natural, and sincere. Communication practitioners must stay away from “staged communication” and “over-produced content” as today’s target audience can spot such, resulting in distrust, and therefore failed communication.

Key Finding No. 7: Communication and marketing should go beyond creating awareness and getting buy-in for Coral Triangle efforts. It should result in behavior change.

The success of CTI program hinges on people's action or response on the calls to conserve and protect the CT and its marine treasures. While awareness is a good start, it is not the end goal.

Communication and marketing campaigns therefore must endeavor to ensure that they support and will drive desired behavior and action as stipulated under the CTI RPOA. Documentaries about the CT, creative videos and illustrations, likes and shares on social media, and opinion articles published in widely circulated newspapers are important but should not be the sole performance indicators.

CTI communication must revolve around the concept of behavior change communication - from conceptualization, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Communication initiatives should be done in parallel with institutional- and program-driven infrastructure that will give target audiences opportunities and platforms to act on the messages delivered.

Key Finding No. 8: There is growing recognition of the role of communication in conservation efforts but the discipline is yet to be part of the sector's core.

Experts call for the strategic integration of the discipline of communication in the core fabric of the CTI RPOA. Communication should support each RPOA thematic area, with realistic objectives and clear milestones. Communication must be present as early as the strategic planning stage, and should not be considered only for tactical purposes.

There were observations that communication initiatives are mostly driven by CTI partners, without foundational directives from the region. Project ownership was attributed to the NGO-partner i.e., WWF instead of the CTI's inter-government body. Others thought that CTI was just an 'ad hoc' project.

Communication leadership in the CTI must be strengthened. There is a need for the RS to strengthen their capability to plan, conceptualize, implement, and evaluate communication and marketing campaigns at the regional level. These efforts should be able to rally and inspire the CT6 countries, together with partners, to collaborate and support communication efforts both at the regional and domestic levels.

Key Finding No. 9: creating a regional brand for the Coral Triangle is important.

Marketing experts support the proposal to raise the profile of the CT Region as a destination and a regional brand. Unfortunately, the region is yet to pursue a strong and strategic branding program for the CT.

The CTI may wish to invest in a cohesive and strategic destination branding program not only to help create awareness about the CT but more importantly to push needed regulatory policies and programs. Some experts suggested to kick start the branding campaign by identifying at least six destinations within the CT region that can be dubbed as CT's "best of the best". In this campaign, the value of the CT as a destination would be highlighted through memorable experiences unique to the region.

5.0 ASSESSMENT FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The first purpose of this review was to provide an evidence-based assessment of the influence and effectiveness of the RPOA as the guiding framework for the CTI and its current utility as a framework

for meeting the priorities and needs of the member governments, development partners and local stakeholders at the regional, sub-regional and national levels.

The review built on the perceptions and opinions of different stakeholders on various aspects of the implementation of the RPOA for the CTI. The overarching finding is that respondents feel that it is important, ambitious, a bit dysfunctional, somewhat stagnant, rather bureaucratic, and somewhat outdated. In addition, the RPOA does not have a huge amount to show for the amount of investment that has gone into the regional level. From the periphery, the CTI as a whole appears research and policy oriented and not overly inclusive, and there is a perceived imbalance between the Asian countries and the Pacific members in receiving attention and support.

The most important beneficiaries of the CTI are considered to be national and local governments and coastal communities. Government agencies that are not directly involved in the CTI do not fully understand the history and opportunity provided through the RPOA; hence while implementation of NPOAs are starting to show some significant results, the initiative lacks broad-based support for regional action in the government sector. The coastal communities and local governments of the CT region are not fully aware of the programs and how they will benefit from them. This is why it takes significant effort to get their support and involvement in the CTI.

There is, however, significant appreciation that such a situation is not unique, particularly in relation to the challenge of getting such countries together around the CTI shared goals. By analyzing the differences in progress between the five goals and the impacts of various changes throughout the evolution of the CTI (particularly on the effectiveness of the different components of the institution implementing the RPOA) we can draw some lessons that are relevant to a revised RPOA:

1. Where the workings of the CTI RPOA were directed to generate or strengthen a policy framework with tools and guidelines, and support examples of success, then the benefits of the RPOA were easily evident to different stakeholders.
2. Where national strategies were already initiated for concepts that would benefit from regional collaboration and joint action, then the potential added benefits of the CTI RPOA were most easily understood and supported.
3. Where funding was made available to support a series of REXs that were open to broad groups of decision makers, actors, and stakeholders from different levels (international, national and local) the adoption and application of frameworks and tools generated through the CTI RPOA was positive.
4. Where the narrative around the CTI RPOA targets and goals could be flexible and made relevant to the main beneficiaries of governments and communities, support for regional action and adoption at local levels was positive in most countries.
5. Where regional action on frameworks and tools for the CTI RPOA goals were successfully adopted and applied at national levels, regional collaboration on these goals could focus on communicating the impacts for sustainability and magnifying the investments.
6. Where the relevance of the CTI RPOA to higher level impacts such as resilience and food security is well presented at international events, the thought leadership gains positive global following.

7. Where key stakeholders, particularly NCCs, in the countries are open and inclusive to collaborate with various actors and initiatives, partnerships that could be supportive for the CTI RPOA also emerge.

Looking forward, there is strong acknowledgement of the fact that CTI brings together managers and stakeholders in one of the most ecologically and economically significant areas of the world. As global policy for oceans, sustainable development and climate change progresses, this might increase focus on regional groupings to increase the potential for the change needed for global impact. The CTI could sit right in the middle of that and share its thought leadership on resilience and food security for coastal systems and communities with the world, in order to forge stronger partnerships for delivery of impacts in the communities and coastal areas of this globally significant region. There is always a bit of a “winner-picking” phenomenon, where those organizations that get things done effectively get support, while others get polite brush-offs. The current review motivated many of the stakeholders and experts that were consulted to provide ideas and recommendations on how to enhance the effectiveness of the RPOA for delivering impacts that matter. When some of its current difficulties are addressed, the CTI could be an important “winner”. It just needs a boost to reach its potential of a globally outstanding platform that is achieving something spectacularly. This could be prepared alongside the presentation of the imminent revision of the RPOA at the second CTI summit on its 10th anniversary in 2019.

Now that each member country is considering the relevance of collaborating through the CTI-CFF to also effectively achieve national priorities, the importance of applying the experiences and lessons learned in each country since the CTI-CFF was initiated to improve the RPOA for the next 10 years is clear. In addition, the RPOA must consider the current contexts for each country and development member within the CTI as well as the different capacities of each country in marine and fisheries development. It is acknowledged that country priorities and national strategic direction will take precedence over regional collaboration, and as such any NPOA revisions should direct the RPOA revision by seeking common issues and concerns where collaboration on a bilateral, sub-regional, or regional level provides added benefits.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The second and third purposes of the review were:

- to promote institutional and operational improvements, learning and knowledge sharing and improved communication and partnerships between the CTI member countries, development partners, collaborators and other key stakeholders; and
- to provide the CTI members and stakeholders with guidance on how the RPOA might be reshaped or revised in 2020 to build on the accomplishments of the past nine years and to take strategic advantage of any new regional and global drivers which have or are emerging and which might generate a positive influence and impact on the future achievement of CTI Goals.

Most of the stakeholders and experts consulted provided recommendations and the raw data are available anonymously are available for reference via <http://files.hatfieldgroup.com>. Some were already introduced in Section 4.0 (Results). The following sections provide a summary of most recommendations in four main categories: i) institutional improvements; ii) operational improvements; iii) learning and knowledge sharing; and iv) improved communications and partnerships.

6.1 INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

Firstly, focus on addressing the operational requirements and leadership vacancy in the RS by providing an interim solution while initiating a process for revision of the RPOA. The revised RS should be designed to serve the revised RPOA for the next 10 years. In working on an interim solution, task managers and supporting CTI stakeholders should consider the findings and suggestions from the GIZ-sponsored capacity assessment that pertain specifically to the RS. Any interim solution should be primarily focused on preparing relevant decisions to be taken at SOM in December 2018 for the new RS.

When the re-organization of the RS is conducted, facilitation around effective leadership and team work between the staff, between the leadership and the senior managers, as well as between the RS and the CSO and TWGs will be required. This requires resources and a mid-term view as well as a clear vision on the type of organizational development that the CTI would like to pursue. The consultant recommends that CTI as an organization would benefit most from a more explicit adoption of an adaptive management and learning approach, and could consider some targeted coaching to develop talent and leadership in the short term.

In addition to directing the focus toward regional matters for the CT6 members, and improving the process of reporting to be less bureaucratic and less focused on past progress, the SOM host country (NCC) could be enabled to pick a theme relevant to them (which is linked to the RPOA) and the RS could work with the TWGs to prepare for that. This would motivate different countries to think about each other's priorities and allow for some innovative discussions to enter the SOMs. This must be well prepared by the TWGs and the RS so that it is valuable for all countries.

6.2 OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

Secondly, focus on the challenges related to insufficient financial resources. These challenges were raised by numerous respondents during the review, particularly in relation to the lack of a sustainable finance mechanism and in relation to ad-hoc requests by the RS to developing partners to chip in for regional activities. Examples were provided of other initiatives with financial independence and stability due to the establishment of a trust and a mechanism for decisions on disbursements. This structure supports valuable regional processes as well as the flow of finance to NPOAs of different member countries to address their priority needs. These immediate needs could be capacity- and/or opportunity-driven, but could be discussed with the forum to enhance the strength of the members as a whole.

It was suggested that the next version of the RPOA should clearly spell out what can be realistically achieved at national and regional levels. This should include a resource mobilization strategy to support the implementation of the various activities, projects, and programs that support the achievement of targets and goals.

Specific to the calculation, allocation and prioritization of financial contributions by CT member countries, most NCCs provided detailed suggestions for improvement. This is a priority matter that requires significant attention, as the new contribution payments are due and all NCC secretariats reflected on how difficult it will be to convince their ministers and national budget agencies of the beneficial value of the regional components of the CTI-CFF.

Providing more clarity on the financial contributions from development partners so that gaps can be more easily reviewed and addressed at SOMs was suggested as a potential improvement. This would

enhance effective adaptive action and decisions on fund raising and allocation. Having development partners be formally integrated into the CTI structure will allow for this and provide additional opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of operations.

Operational improvements require several steps. The first step is immediate and part of the interim RS task. The second is related and closely linked to the revision of the RPOA. The third can be initiated in parallel:

1. Address trust issues, conduct a financial audit and complete financial and administrative obligations, also ensuring future budgets are in-line with agreed workplans, with the country contributions clearly assigned to priorities.
2. Support a shift in regional purpose related to recent shifts in funding availability, i.e., the resilience and food security narrative.
3. Work diligently with partners to set up a trust, looking at lessons from other initiatives like the CCI and CBI.

6.3 LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

The need to revive the MEWG and ensure a fully functional M&E system was mentioned by many. Indicators should go beyond biophysical measures and include food and nutrition security and improved well-being as examples, and be streamlined with indicators used in other regional commitments or global agendas that countries are party to (e.g., CBD, SDGs). Review of the usefulness and practicality of tools developed for M&E is considered a priority. Actively reviving the CT Atlas will allow it to serve the function of: i) sharing information to researchers, media and students; and ii) profiling the work of all CTI actors to engage new partners and grow constituency and positive energy.

6.4 IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The CTI is viewed by many as a stand-alone project with limited ability to link to other projects, especially socio-economic development projects related to the SDGs. Closer integration of the CTI program into the activities of the lead government agencies involved in the program as well as other government agencies is needed; inclusion of the CTI in the budget of the Ministries or agencies is also needed so that it is viewed as part and parcel of the mandate of these agencies.

Improved communications are needed so that the CTI can avoid duplicating work that is already done by other regional organizations and focus on its core competencies or where it holds a competitive advantage. Aligning more strategically with other organizations will also allow the CTI to work towards better complementing work done by others.

To support this, it will be important to allocate greater effort to clarifying where the delivery of the CTI lies, i.e., mostly at the NPOA level and at sites where local actors are enabled by the national leaders within the guiding and positive regional CTI framework for shared goals. This clarity will help more people understand the actual value of the CTI and support it to achieve its full potential. In addition, the actual core role of the RS should be simplified.

In parallel, work to communicate the logic of working at a regional level clearly and more effectively to specific target audiences and individual decision makers. Make more effort to engage and to gain the support of Planning and Finance Ministries and higher decision-making bodies of governments

(including those ministries related to foreign affairs and law enforcement). The end-goal of investment in such regional collaboration should be made clear from the beginning in order to gain support from these high-level officials. Once the support is initiated, it will be important to evidence and share early positive examples of the likely impact of the investment in order to sustain the attention and support for the time required to fully formalize and implement the required changes. This is an important role for the RS (supported by the M&E system) that requires communicating the CTI needs alongside relevant, intermediate impact/benefit indicators.

Systematically open up the development partner group for other partners such as UNDP, United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), FAO, World Bank, etc. and actively and structurally engage the private sector to increase effective joint action in a number of areas.

While it was acknowledged that some of the national projects have successfully contributed to making a difference in the lives of coastal communities, many respondents considered that the implementation of the RPOA as a whole has not achieved its original concept of improving the well-being of coastal communities through improved livelihoods and improved management of resources. There is therefore a need to revisit discussions on the original intent of the CTI program and other substantive areas in the next version of the RPOA. Socializing the benefits of the CTI needs to be done to clearly articulate it reaches beyond just conservation and resource management to food security, higher incomes, improved health and well-being, contribution to sustainable development, etc.

6.5 GUIDANCE FOR REVISION OF THE RPOA

Considering the findings and suggestions, guidance for the revision the RPOA includes:

- Initiate the RPOA revision, utilizing this review and consider systematically what requires regional action. In addition, confirm what regional action is relevant to contribute to progress on each goal in order to streamline the RPOA and improve effectiveness and efficiency of working groups, including converging working groups where appropriate. Moving forward, this can be done every two or three years to stay relevant and make the best use of new opportunities;
- Prioritize selection and agreement on regional actions 1-2 firstly, which are core to the regional aspect of the CTI and reflect threats faced either by all countries or by a sub-combination of countries. Consider a closer look at the delivery of food security as a first goal and resilience as second. Discuss what the measures system should look like for such goal at the regional level of the CTI. Strategically check and think about how these priority regional actions would affect and strengthen national policy with benefits for the region and the countries in a global context. Identify what technical expertise is available in each region and which products need to be created to project the CTI's thought leadership and underpin commitments by country leaders and partners. Organize workshops and/or present at global forums to increase support. Involve national policy makers and gain resources for implementation; and
- Prepare for the second CTI summit.

7.0 ROADMAP TO 2020

From the review, it appears that most respondents consider that the structure of the institution of the CTI is suitable for the delivery of processes towards the goals of the RPOA but that some components could improve somewhat on effectiveness. Also, the RPOA would benefit from revisions to make it more agile. Such revisions could include the duration for which the RPOA will be in effect (e.g., perhaps five years), mechanisms to support adaptive management (i.e., performance evaluation and adjustments during the five-year period), opportunity for focusing efforts to a subset of goals for a prescribed period of time, etc.

Once the RPOA is revised, following due and formal process, the SOM would call for the RS to facilitate the TWGs to initiate a revision process. Once the operational ability of the RS can be secured, even in an interim set-up, recommendations on the revision of the RPOA could be turned in actions and milestones into a roadmap to support the launch of the new RPOA.

There are important steps and decisions that need to be taken before initiating such actions, but some of these actions and milestones could include:

Action 1: Month 1 – 6. Work on the link between effectiveness and relevance. Consider aspects of the regional level CTI-CFF profile and the opportunities for significant partnerships for policy development that benefit country agendas and regional needs.

Potential milestones:

- Needs/conditions and likely timing of progress understood for the revised RPOA to be facilitated for adoption through the institution and to be finalized for publication.
- One or two regional actions prioritized for the next three years based on a set of criteria flowing from CTI-CFF lessons learned (i.e., this and other reviews considering criteria for real regional value) and the engagement of other sectors within the CT6.
- Communications strategy created for those two regional actions above with audience, products, tools and calendar of events identified and agreed upon to spread the word about/profile the CTI's strategy refresh (e.g., **Our Oceans conference in October 2018**) and also for the launch of the revised RPOA.
- Terms of reference for organising the Second CTI-CFF Leaders' Summit (in 2019 or 2020) prepared and adopted on issues that show how the enabling conditions and "assets" in the CTI-CFF can be utilized for the next big thing after CT MPAs and EAFM. Is it for plastics, wildlife trafficking, resilience, for IUU fishing, or for something else, perhaps aligned with other sectoral agendas, such as security or trade.

Action 2: Month 6 – 12. Work on the link between effectiveness and institution: Consider findings from this and other reviews to improve the CTI-CFF combined institutional abilities to enhance achievement of RPOA and NPOA targets.

Potential milestones:

- Strawman document created of what the regional CTI-CFF is and does, as distinct from what the national CTI-CFF is and does, and signed off by the SOM.

- Clarify and publish the mandate, functions, authority and responsibilities of the RS in enough detail so that all participants (RS staff, TWG members, Partners) know where the bounds are for requests and action (and donors understand what exactly the RS is envisioned to grow towards, e.g., principally a project packaging pipeline and/or funds channel, an information exchange platform, a light-touch forum for collaboration).
- Other parts/actors/groups of the institution identified for increasing activity and progress on matters that fall outside the RS core role. Revise role of development partners to be more structural and integrated part of the CTI-CFF. Obtain Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) from other parts and consider mentoring potential from other multi-lateral initiatives.
- Rebuild the RS accordingly with recruitment and coaching support and clarity on the roles of all other parts of the institution. Particularly for the CT Atlas and M&E system, outsource an agreement to reactivate these.
- Clear the measuring framework established with intermediate impact/benefit indicators and key performance indicators (consider also accountability mechanisms) to aid the RS in implementing its agreed-upon core roles and to allow communication of attributable impacts of the RPOA. Possibly include two-year reviews in line with reviewing opportunities for the CTI-CFF to report against SDGs and/or other relevant global indicators.

Action 3: Month 1 – 12. Work on the link between effectiveness and operations. Consider and address financial management and mechanisms challenges to enable effective focus of senior government and technical experts on substance and, where needed, innovation.

Potential milestones:

- Address trust issues, conduct a financial audit and complete financial and administrative obligations, also ensuring future budgets are in-line with agreed workplans, with the country contributions clearly assigned to priorities.
- Consider effectiveness and efficiency (cost, time, coordination) returns from housing leadership and core administrative capacity in a centrally located city as part of defining RS role.
- Shift in regional purpose and “packaging” supported and aligned with funding availability – for example a stronger emphasis on the resilience and food security narrative – but consider other input on relevance from Action 1 (above) on other headline topics to be confirmed.
- Consideration of trust fund and other potential innovative/sustainable finance mechanisms that may be applicable to the CT context based on experience from elsewhere, e.g., the CCI and CBI, debt for adaptation swap in the Seychelles, ‘Green Fees’ that link protection with tourism like in Palau etc. this should come with with recommendations for necessary supporting institutional revisions as well as a strong clear precise value proposition that was tied to plausible possibility of achievement and/or some very clear past achievements and required some key institutional reforms.

APPENDICES

Appendix A1
Goals and Targets of the RPOA

Table A1.1 The five Goals and ten specific targets of the RPOA.

Goal	Target
Goal 1: Priority Seascapes Designated and Effectively Managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target 1: “Priority Seascapes” designated, with investment plans completed and sequenced. ▪ Target 2: Marine and coastal resources within all “Priority Seascapes” are being sustainably managed.
Goal 2: Ecosystem Approach to Management of Fisheries (EAFM) and Other Marine Resources Fully Applied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target 1: Strong legislative, policy and regulatory frameworks in place for achieving an ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM). ▪ Target 2: Improved income, livelihoods and food security in an increasingly significant number of coastal communities across the region through a new Sustainable Coastal Fisheries and Poverty Reduction Initiative (“COASTFISH”). ▪ Target 3: Effective measures in place to help ensure exploitation of shared tuna stocks is sustainable, with tuna spawning areas and juvenile growth stages adequately protected. ▪ Target 4: A more effective management and more sustainable trade in live-reef fish and reef-based ornamentals achieved.
Goal 3: Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) Established and Effectively Managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target 1: Region-wide Coral Triangle MPA System (CTMPAS) in place and fully functional.
Goal 4: Climate Change Adaptation Measures Achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target 1: Region-wide Early Action Plan for Climate Change Adaption for the near-shore marine and coastal environment and small islands ecosystems developed and implemented. ▪ Target 2: Networked National Centers of Excellence on Climate Change Adaptation for marine and coastal environments are established and in full operation.
Goal 5: Threatened Species Status Improving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target 1: Improved status of sharks, sea turtles, seabirds, marine mammals, corals, seagrass, mangroves and other identified threatened species.

Appendix A2

RPOA Review Team

Table A2.1 The RPOA review team.

Team Member and Role	Biography
<p>Lida Pet-Soede. International team leader to lead all aspects of the review, to provide Indonesian context, to deliver and present report and recommendations and initiate change-maker process.</p>	<p>Lida Pet-Soede is a senior strategic conservation and fisheries management professional with practical, policy, technical and management skills. She is a leader in developing new programs, initiating multi-partner platforms and a strong and effective motivator for the related required organizational change. She has extensive experience in developing effective collaborative networks, capable motivated global teams and strategic partnerships (government, private sector, academia, and NGOs). She also boasts a proven track record in achieving conservation and natural resource management agenda, and is known to her colleagues as a passionate high achiever and strong team builder.</p> <p>She holds graduate degrees (BSc., MSc., and a PhD) in Tropical Fisheries Biology and Management all from Wageningen Agricultural University, The Netherlands. Her major disciplines were fisheries biology and management, socio-economics of developing countries, and fish culture. She is an avid diver with tropical marine and coastal habitat survey expertise. She conducted her PhD research in Indonesia, supervised more than 100 students over the years, many of which have jobs in conservation and fisheries management and she co-authored more than 40 papers and publications. She is a specialist in tropical fisheries management, marine conservation, program development, organizational development, training, fundraising, strategy development, networking, and professional development coaching.</p>
<p>David Sheppard. International expert to support Pacific Island consultation and provide relevant context on Pacific Island current and future issues relevant for the CTI such as economic development and funding/finance prospects</p>	<p>David Sheppard is an innovative and experienced manager with a track record of results. His professional experience ranges from executive and CEO level to practical, "on ground" field management. He has worked in more than 60 countries on a range of issues relating to climate change, organizational governance and change, environmental and natural resource management, ocean/marine conservation and management, protected areas; and World Heritage conservation. He is recognized as a global expert in a number of these areas and has extensive experience in programme and project management.</p> <p>David completed the Executive Development Programme at the Harvard Business School and has a degree in Science and post graduate qualifications in Natural Resource Management. He has outstanding communication and networking skills, and has been appointed to a number of Honorary Positions, including as Adjunct Senior Fellow, University of the South Pacific; and Representative of the International Council of Environmental Law (ICEL) to the United Nations in Geneva. He has experience on high level boards and committees and represented his organizations on many international and national Boards and Committees, included Member of the UNEP SIDS Foresight Panel (comprising global leaders on small island issues), Co-chairing the CEOs of Pacific Regional Agencies Climate Change Group, Co-Chairing the Yeosu Ocean Forum, Global Expert Panel on Ocean Management and Co-Chairing Islands and Oceans Net, Global Expert Group on Ocean Conservation and Management, convened by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation.</p>
<p>Paul Lokani. Pacific Island international expert for follow up interviews (Papua New Guinea) and local information gathering on Pacific Island Countries fisheries context.</p>	<p>Paul Lokani is an environmental consultant with more than 20 years of experiences in coastal fisheries management planning, monitoring, policy and management advice, and marine conservation. Paul is a member of International Coral Reef Society and Member – SPC Special Interest Groups. He holds a Master's of Science from James Cook University, and Bachelor of Science from Papua New Guinea University of Technology. He also has a Diploma in Fisheries Technology from Papua New Guinea University of Technology and Diploma Certificate in Economic Policy Analysis from National Research Institute. Paul has a wealth of experience in developing, implementing and administering coastal/marine projects as well as coordinating, and configuring resources, capacity, and</p>

Team Member and Role	Biography
	<p>programs to address the most critical organization-wide projects, threats and strategies.</p> <p>As a self-employed consultant, Paul has been involved in various marine/fisheries projects for international institutions including PNG National Fisheries Authority, PNG Center for Locally Managed Areas, PNG Mama Graun Conservation Trust Fund 2016 & 2017 & 2018, WWF Australia, IUCN OCEANA, the Nature Conservancy - MARSH Project, East Sepik Provincial Administration, Cofrepeche - Fish II, Funded by European Union, Conservation International, and University of Queensland. Previously Paul worked with TNC as Director of the Melanesia Program - PNG & Solomons and South Pacific Coastal/Marine Projects Manager. His geographic experience includes Papua New Guinea (East Sepik, West Sepik, Manus, New Ireland, Bougainville, East New Britain, West New Britain, Morobe, Madang, Milne Bay, Western Provinces), Australia, USA, Fiji, Tonga, Solomon Islands and Indonesia.</p>
<p>Geoffrey Dews. International expert for follow up interviews (Solomon Islands and information gathering on national context.</p>	<p>Geoffrey Dews is an independent environmental consultant with extensive experiences working with international development institutions e.g., ADB, the World Bank, UNDP, FCG ANZDEC, UNEP, WWF, NZAID, and AusAID. He is a certified Environmental Practitioner from Environmental Institute of Australia New Zealand, and holds a Master in Environmental Management & Natural Resource Management, Diploma of Science in Agriculture and Graduate Diploma in Fisheries Technology. Geoffrey also has Professional Certificate in Understanding Development, certified in Climate Change Diplomacy: Negotiating Effectively under the UNFCCC, and Project Design, Monitoring and Evaluation (PDME).</p> <p>He has been working in Tonga, Cook Islands, Maldives, Papua New Guinea, East Timor, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Samoa, Torres Strait, Australia, United Kingdom, Kenya, Mauritius, Philippines and Libya. Recently he is assigned as Technical Advisor for ADB Solomon Islands, his main responsibilities are to review the investment plan of the Solomon Island National Plan of Action (NPOA) for the Coral Triangle Initiative Coral Reefs Fisheries and Food Security program (CTI-CFF). He has conducted many projects in Pacific fisheries programmes; developed capacity building training; provided mentoring and technical advice to counterparts on fisheries and coral reef management; formulated needs assessments for Blue Economy Campus; developed guidance on climate change adaptation and livelihood; and developed interventions framed on effectively assessing the criteria of sustainability, economic viability, technical feasibility and effectiveness of climate change impacts.</p>
<p>Marissa Garcia. Philippines expert for follow up interviews (Philippines, Indonesia) and information gathering on other regional collaborative platforms.</p>	<p>Marissa Garcia is an agricultural and resource economics specialist with over 25 years of extensive experience in project/program planning and development, administration, implementation and management, M&E, and regional cooperation. Her sector experience includes environment and natural resources management, agriculture, food security, climate change, economics and sustainable finance (including private sector development and partnership), and trade facilitation and integration.</p> <p>She was Coordinator and M&E Specialist of the ADB Regional Technical Assistance for Coastal and Marine Resources Management in the Coral Triangle – Southeast Asia (TA 7813-REG) and also served as the Regional Climate Change Coordination Specialist of the ADB-funded Institutional Development for Enhanced Sub-regional Cooperation in the ASEAN region. She was Environment Specialist and Coastal and Marine Resources Management Specialist for the Regional Technical Assistance for Strengthening Sound Environmental Management in the BIMP-EAGA (TA 6446-REG), where she supported the completion, funding application, approval, implementation, and M&E of the ADB/Global Environment Facility/Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction technical assistance and/or loan projects on the BIMP-EAGA, CTI, Heart of Borneo, and integrated coastal marine resource management projects.</p> <p>Marissa was recently involved in ADB’s GMS Core Environment Program in Bangkok as Regional Program Coordinator, where she</p>

Team Member and Role	Biography
	<p>responsible for coordinating and facilitating the development of a five-years GMS CEP Strategic Framework and Action Plan 2018–2022 that culminated with endorsement of the CEP Strategic Framework at the GMS Environment Ministers’ Meeting on 30 January–1 February 2018 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. She also consulted with ADB’s food security unit as M&E Specialist responsible for the M&E of the Operational Plan for Agriculture and Natural Resources: Promoting Sustainable Food Security in Asia and the Pacific in 2015–2020 and food security work plan and supporting its coordination and implementation. She served as a supply and value chain analyst for the WWF-Philippines’ Blue Swimming Crab Fishery Improvement Project.</p>
<p>Kevin Hiew. Malaysian expert for follow up interviews (Malaysia) and information gathering on national context.</p>	<p>Kevin Hiew is an independent marine and fisheries consultant with specializations in Fisheries Management and MCS, marine turtle conservation, and marine habitats conservation. He holds a Bachelor of Fisheries (Fisheries Management) from Kagoshima University and Diploma in Japanese Language from Japanese Language School, Tokyo. He has diverse and adaptable competencies and skills in project management, policy strategies and conservation, resource management, governance, and public awareness programs.</p> <p>Kevin has extensive experiences in management position, formerly he was Head of the Marine Parks Division of the Department of Fisheries, Malaysia; State Director of Fisheries in Johore; State Director of Fisheries in States of Malacca and Negri Sembilan; and Head of the Malaysian Fisheries Enforcement Division; State Director Fisheries of Selangor. In recent years, Manager of the Peninsular Malaysia Seas Program with WWF. He also has consulting experience as a Senior Advisor to the Coral Triangle Initiative for the US CTI Program and WWF-Malaysia, Principal Consultant for the East Malaysia Bio-region on the Malaysia ‘State of the Marine Environment’ Project, Marine Park Management Consultant to Malaysia Department of Marine Park/UNDP/GEF. He has worked as a consulting advisor to US CTI PI and WWF-Malaysia in CTI linked projects and subjects. He is Team Leader for a WWF/US CTI PI Program for a Study on the Possibility of setting up a CTI Regional Forum for LRFFT.</p>
<p>Nick Piludu. International expert for follow up interviews (Timor-Leste).</p>	<p>Nick Piludu is a conservation biologist, currently working with Blue Ventures Conservation in Dili, Timor Leste. Nick first started working in conservation in his native Sardinia, where he focused on conservation policy and wildlife monitoring. He holds a Master of Science in Forest Ecosystems, Nature and Society, Master of Science in Conservation and Land Management, and Bachelor of Science in Environmental and Land Engineering. His role in Timor Leste is focused on building partnerships with local and international stakeholders and ensuring Blue Ventures’ projects in the country run smoothly. He is responsible for developing the Blue Ventures strategy for Timor-Leste; running community-based conservation, ecotourism, and marine management projects; building partnerships with local and international stakeholders.</p> <p>Nick is passionate about working in community-based conservation, coastal conservation and artisanal fisheries. He has been involved in numerous conservation works in Italy, Cape Verde and Turkey, forests conservation in Madagascar, sea mammals in Turkey, and most recently on wildlife crime in Malta. He has joined the conservation programme that supports coastal communities to develop their own locally managed marine areas, designed to sustain local fisheries and safeguard marine biodiversity. Since 2015, Nick is a Member of the Scientific Committee at Legambiente Sardegna, Cagliari, Italy where he provides scientific advice on conservation biology and forest management.</p>
<p>Melissa Langridge. International expert for support to a “change-maker” process.</p>	<p>Melissa Langridge is a senior environmental specialist with ten years of practical experience in the environment sector. She is a Canadian Registered Professional Biologist, and holds a Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology and Ecology and a Master of Disaster Preparedness and Reconstruction. Melissa has a wealth of experience in the management and coordination of complex projects and</p>

Team Member and Role	Biography
	<p>her attention to detail, and commitment to exceeding client expectations, are reflected in each project she manages. She has a diverse, adaptable skill set in freshwater, estuarine, and marine ecosystem monitoring, and a wide range of experience in the mining, oil and gas, maritime, hydropower, tourism, linear infrastructure, waste management, and government sectors.</p> <p>Melissa has been involved in over 50 environmental projects including aquatic ecology monitoring, environmental impact assessments, fisheries assessments, development of aquatic biodiversity offsets, environmental audits, flow monitoring, aquatic fauna salvages, ecotoxicology assessments, environmental incident investigations, environmental training/community engagement, and legal cases. She has developed strategies, in consultation with local, non-government agencies, to avoid conflicts with conservation priorities for freshwater and marine ecosystems. Melissa is passionate about working with local communities to build capacity through environmental training programs. Her geographic experience includes Western Canada, Australia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Antarctica.</p>
<p>Nini Santos. Regional expert for marketing/communications trends.</p>	<p>Nini Santos has more than a decade of experience in strategic communication, branding, and public relations. She holds a BA in Communication Research from University of the Philippines and Leadership Training for PR Practitioners from Edelman University. Her working experiences include a seven-year stint in the government, specializing in project management and policy research. She is an entrepreneur and co-founder of The Pinnacle, a training and public relations company, and has extensive experience in facilitating high-level workshops and training, leading projects for accounts requiring corporate reputation management, branding, development communication, research, as well as international and regional conference management. She has knowledge and familiarity with development topics including ASEAN Economic Community, trade and investment, climate change, Filipino migration, and overseas absentee voting.</p> <p>Nini also had experience in International work include consulting for the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta. Her international travels include stakeholder consultations in several ASEAN countries, workshop facilitation in Hong Kong SAR, and conduct of overseas absentee voting training in Europe, Middle East, and Asia. She is competent in communicating consulting work for environmental related projects by provided communication support. She has completed consulting work for several environment-related projects, e.g. Watershed Management: Communication Planning and Message Cascade, Strengthening Coordination for Effective Environmental Management (STREEM) Project, MDG-F Climate Change and Adaptation Project, Coral Triangle Regional Business Summit.</p>
<p>Nabila Yunita. Indonesian-based assistant for data management and other backstopping support to all team members.</p>	<p>Nabila Yunita holds a Bachelor degree in Industrial Management Business. Her educational background is in Quality Management Systems, procedures for environmental and social management system, data analysis and reporting and she is familiar with environmental regulation and laws. Recently a quality assistant for PT Hatfield Indonesia, she is involved in the company's Quality Management System (QMS) process and documentations including maintaining Hatfield QMS to ISO 9001:2015 standards. She has been involved in Hatfield's environmental projects since 2017, her main responsibilities were to provide administrative and document management support for the technical team.</p>

Appendix A3

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Appendix A4

The Review Schedule

Table A4.1 The review schedule

Date	Activities
May 1 – 31	Project planning, literature gathering and study, preparation of inception report.
June 1 – 30	Inception report submitted, stand-alone online questionnaire developed and initiated, associate experts identified, contacted and contracted.
July 1 – 31	In-depth interviews implemented, information analyzed and organized, first draft review report.

Appendix A5

**Communication and Outreach
Tools Used to Support the Review**

Table A5.1 The online stand-alone questionnaire.

Evaluation Element	Questions
N/A. Background information on respondent	Name, Nationality, Gender, Position, Category of Respondent (Government, NGO, Academic, other)
N/A. Familiarity with RPOA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How long have you been engaged with CTI? ▪ Did you read the material that we sent you? ▪ How familiar are you with the RPOA? ▪ Which Goal(s) are you most familiar with? ▪ Which Working group are you most familiar with? ▪ Do you actively engage with the CTI? How exactly? ▪ How much time do/did you spend on the CTI per week, month, year?
Impact on the environment by the RPOA.	<p>Has implementation of the RPOA resulted in reduced pressure on marine resources and increased food security? How?</p> <p>How much has implementation of the RPOA resulted in reduced pressure on marine resources and increased food security? How do you know this?</p> <p>Which goal has contributed most to the reduced pressure on marine resources? Why is this so? What is the main reason that the mentioned goal has contributed most?</p> <p>Which goal has contributed most to increased food security? Why is this so? What is the main reason that the mentioned goal has contributed most?</p> <p>Would you like to share any other information about the impact of the RPOA?</p>
Effectiveness of the RPOA in terms of producing the intended impacts.	<p>How much has the RPOA catalyzed additive, joint action by Key Stakeholders?</p> <p>If a lot, which stakeholders are collaborating more because of the RPOA? Why do you say this? Please expand on your answer.</p> <p>How much has the RPOA been utilized, or influenced investment decisions, by donors in CTI regional action? Why do you say this? Please expand on your answer. Do you know why this is the case?</p> <p>Are the RPOA components (Goals, Targets, Regional and National Actions) structured to maximise the coherence and effectiveness of its implementation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Goals ▪ Targets ▪ Regional Actions ▪ National Actions <p>If yes, why do you say this? If no, do you think this should change? Please expand on your answer.</p>

Evaluation Element	Questions
Efficiency of implementation of the RPOA.	How efficient has the CTI governance been in facilitating the implementation of the RPOA?
Efficiency of implementation of the RPOA. (Cont'd)	<p>How efficient has the institutional structure been in facilitating the implementation of the RPOA?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council of Ministers & Ministerial Meeting ▪ Committee of Senior Officers and Senior Officials Meeting ▪ Regional Secretariat ▪ Technical Working Groups ▪ Coordination Mechanism Working Group ▪ Financial Resources Working Group ▪ Monitoring & Evaluation Working Group ▪ Any other group? <p>Please expand on your choices.</p> <p>How can efficiency and effectiveness be improved?</p>
Sustainability of the RPOA.	<p>Do you think that the results achieved by implementation of the RPOA are sustainable?</p> <p>What are the major factors that impact on the sustainability of results achieved through implementation of the RPOA?</p>
Relevance of the RPOA to current issues in the CTI.	<p>Are the goals of the RPOA still valid?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Goal 1: Priority Seascapes Designated and Effectively Managed ▪ Goal 2: Ecosystem Approach to Management of Fisheries (EAFM) and Other Marine Resources Fully Applied ▪ Goal 3: Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) Established and Effectively Managed ▪ Goal 4: Climate Change Adaptation Measures Achieved ▪ Goal 5: Threatened Species Status Improving <p>Please expand on your choice(s) of answer.</p> <p>How can RPOA retain and/or improve relevance in the coming decade, to 2030?</p>

Table A5.2 The deep dive questions for the one-on-one interviews.

Evaluation Element	Questions
<p>Strategic leadership (mostly to be answered by member country representatives)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does the Initiative have a strategic plan to guide its work? ▪ Who participated in its elaboration? ▪ Is it aligned with the overall CTI RPOA strategy? ▪ Is it known to and supported by the members or constituents of the Initiative? Is it used regularly for decision making? ▪ Is there a process in place for monitoring the implementation of the strategic plan? ▪ How effective is senior staff (government and RS) in carrying out their strategic leadership role? ▪ How participatory is the leadership style of the Initiative (government)? ▪ Does the leadership and management of the Initiative understand and use ‘niche’ management to help it to achieve its results (between government and RS)? ▪ Does the leadership / senior management ensure that the Initiative undertakes regular situation analysis in order to make strategic choices about its program and the institutions with which it works? ▪ What governance bodies or mechanisms are in place and how well do they function? (national or regional member’s advisory committees, or equivalent). ▪ What internal review and organizational development processes are in place and what impact are they having?
<p>Structure (mostly to be answered by member country reps and development partners)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does the structure of the Initiative (management, decision making) facilitate or hinder the Initiative in achieving its results? ▪ Are roles and responsibilities clearly defined? ▪ Are there adequate linkages or opportunities for linkages when needed across programs and projects? ▪ Is decision making clearly defined and decentralized appropriately? ▪ Do government reps and RS staff have the authority to set agendas and act accordingly?
<p>Program planning and management (mostly to be answered by donors and development partners)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do RS staffs at different levels receive proper guidance from the member government managers/chairs in the Initiative? ▪ Are the programs and projects linked to other Initiatives and Programs? (integration – horizontal and vertical). ▪ What is the involvement of country members and development partners in the implementation of the Program? ▪ How innovative are the programs and projects? ▪ Did programs and projects deliver the committed products on time? ▪ Does the Initiative have the appropriate resources and management systems and structures to effectively deliver its planned program?
<p>Human resources management (mostly to be answered by RS staff as relevant)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How well do RS staff profiles fit program and project needs? ▪ Are there incentives in place to support good performance and career advancement?

Evaluation Element	Questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What behaviors are supported by incentives? ▪ Is there a training program for the RS staff? ▪ Is the working environment adequate? ▪ Is there a gender balance mechanism in place and is it used effectively? ▪ Are there unresolved issues of equity of pay? ▪ Is there an ombudsman function? ▪ Is it used? ▪ Are there appropriate RS staff recruitment and orientation procedures in place? ▪ Is there an effective and supportive RS staff appraisal system in place and being used? ▪ How well are RS staff being managed, supervised and mentored?
<p>Financial resources management (mostly to be answered by FTWG and RS staff as relevant)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there an explicit CTI financial strategy or business plan? ▪ Is there an appropriate budgeting mechanism? ▪ Is it participatory? ▪ Do managers/NCCs/TWGs at different levels receive timely and accurate financial information? ▪ Are project/RS resources spent on time? ▪ Is there an auditing mechanism in place? ▪ What are its results? ▪ Are financial services being effectively provided to sub-Initiatives (e.g. projects).
<p>Monitoring and Evaluation (mostly to be answered by METWG and RS staff as relevant)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are staffs trained and skilled in monitoring and evaluation? ▪ What types of M&E processes are in place – for purposes of learning, accountability, control? ▪ Which programs and processes are doing M&E? ▪ Are there major gaps? ▪ How do M&E results feed into reporting and decision-making?
<p>Infrastructure and administration support (mostly to be answered by RS staff)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are the (RS) offices and equipment (vehicles, computers) adequate to deliver the expected results – and are they managed well? ▪ Is the communication technology (information management, internet, phone lines) adequate to support effective delivery of the program?
<p>Other capacity factors to consider (mostly to be answered by country reps, development partners and RS staff as relevant)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Process management – Are problem solving processes in place and do they work to the satisfaction of member countries and RS staff? ▪ Inter-institutional linkages – Does the Initiative work well with partners, donors and other organizations?

Evaluation Element	Questions
History and purpose (NCC members and development partners)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the milestones in the history of the Initiative? ▪ How has the Initiative evolved over time? ▪ Is there a clear sense of purpose in the staff and the partners of the initiative? ▪ Is that purpose consistent with the CTI Mission/Goals? ▪ Is that unique to the CTI and if yes, how and why and does this get reflected/ communicated?
Culture (all respondents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the main characteristics of the Initiative as perceived by different groups within and outside the Initiative and how do such characteristics affect the Initiatives performance? ▪ How is staff/member/partner/donor morale? ▪ What is the level of commitment of staff and managers/ members and donors?
Incentives and rewards (RS staff and NCC focal point)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is the staff/member perception of the incentives and related mechanisms (such as those related to communications/profiling)? ▪ How does the staff/member perceive the status of the Initiative regarding their own interests and career and their countries'/ministries political priorities? ▪ How does the staff/member perceive the level of equity within the Initiative?
Stakeholders (associate expert assessments and development partners)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who are the key stakeholders for the Initiative today? ▪ How do the stakeholders value the Initiative's products and services today? ▪ How responsive has the Initiative been to its stakeholders needs and requests? ▪ Who are the Initiative partners in delivering work today? ▪ How do they perceive the partnership with the Initiative now? (value added?) ▪ Who are the Initiative competitors? ▪ Why are they competitors and not partners? ▪ Are they taking over the Initiative's niche? Why? ▪ How do donors and funders perceive the value of the Initiative's products and services today? ▪ How is the Initiative affected by donor trends in funding? ▪ How does the political and socioeconomic environment of today and anticipated near future affect the Initiative? ▪ How is the Initiative affected by the administrative and legal environment of the country, region?

Table A5.3 Guidance questions for comparison of other multi-lateral collaboration initiatives.

Description Element	Questions
Strategic leadership & structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What triggered the regional initiative? ▪ Who participating in the initiation and why? ▪ Did member countries support the Initiative all from the start or were there differences between members? Why? ▪ How participatory is the leadership style of the government in the Initiative? ▪ Are programs and projects linked to other strategic initiatives, in country or multi-lateral? ▪ What governance bodies or mechanisms are in place and how well do they function? (national or regional member's advisory committees, or equivalent). – <i>they can send a structure diagram or related documents if they like.</i> ▪ What internal review and organizational development processes are in place and what impact are they having?
Program planning and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How innovative and flexible are the programs and projects?
Financial resources management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there an explicit financial strategy or business plan? ▪ Is the budget process participatory? ▪ Is there an auditing mechanism in place? ▪ Are financial services being effectively provided to sub-Initiatives (e.g. projects).
Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What types of M&E processes are in place – for purposes of learning, accountability, control? ▪ How do M&E results feed into reporting and decision-making?
Other capacity factors to consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Process management - Are problem solving processes in place and do they work to the satisfaction of member countries and Secretariat? ▪ Inter-institutional linkages – Does the Initiative work well with partners, donors and other organizations?
History and purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the milestones in the history of the Initiative? ▪ How has the Initiative evolved over time?
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the main characteristics of the Initiative as perceived by different groups within and outside the Initiative and how do such characteristics affect the Initiatives performance? ▪ How is staff/member/partner/donor morale? ▪ What is the level of commitment of staff and managers/ members and donors?
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who are the key stakeholders for the Initiative today? ▪ How do the stakeholders value the Initiative's products and services today? ▪ How responsive has the Initiative been to its stakeholders needs and requests?

Description Element	Questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who are the Initiative partners in delivering work today? ▪ How do they perceive the partnership with the Initiative now? (value added?) ▪ Who are the Initiative competitors? ▪ Why are they competitors and not partners? ▪ Are they taking over the Initiative's niche? Why? ▪ How do donors and funders perceive the value of the Initiative's products and services today? ▪ How is the Initiative affected by donor trends in funding? ▪ How does the political and socioeconomic environment of today and anticipated near future affect the Initiative? ▪ How is the Initiative affected by the administrative and legal environment of the country, region?

Table A5.4 Questions for pacific regional experts.

Questions

- Are you aware of the CTI and its Regional Plan of Action?
 - What are the major future challenges facing the Pacific region relevant to the mandate of the CTI?
 - What are the major issues in the Pacific region that the CTI should be addressing?
 - What do you feel is the added value of the CTI in the Pacific region?
 - On what areas would Pacific countries like to work with the CTI in the future?
 - Do you have any other comments regarding the CTI and its Regional Plan of Action?
-

Table A5.5 Questions for each country context.

Questions

- Does the X country government refer to the national strategy a lot?
 - Is it something that is relatively well known by X country citizens?
 - Does the popular media refer to it?
 - How much does conservation and sustainable development live with X country people outside those directly engaged by NGOs or the donor projects?
 - Would communicating more about the CTI and the special biodiversity and nature features of the region be something that might interest the “general X country public more to step behind sustainable development?
 - What are communities worried about, if anything, related to conservation and sustainable development projects?
 - What is the general X country government attitude on regional or bi-lateral collaboration?
-

Table A5.6 Questions used to guide the communications and marketing context task.

The umbrella questions that the interviews seek to answer; not the actual questions to be asked during the interviews.

- What are the opinions of stakeholders on the level of awareness and understanding about the coral triangle, CTI, and ocean/ marine conservation in the region? How aware or unaware are the public and stakeholders about it?
 - How do the interviewees perceive / view the coral triangle and the status (i.e., success or areas for improvement) of efforts to protect, conserve, and manage it?
 - What factors impact the region’s partnership and communication efforts about the coral triangle, CTI, and marine/ ocean-related conservation in general?
 - What do stakeholders suggest to improve efforts to conserve the coral triangle and make ocean/ marine resources in the region more sustainable?
-

Table A5.7 A guide to follow-up questions that may have been asked to help the consultant dig deeper into the thoughts of interviewees and gain more insights from his/her experience.

Target Sectors	Non-Profit Organizations	Government Agencies	Communications Experts
Profile	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Name and designation Number of years in the organization and in the industry Years of experience in CTI/ ocean-related conservation program 		
Awareness and Understanding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have you heard about the coral triangle? How about the Coral Triangle Initiative? <p>If yes,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What is your level of familiarity with the initiative/ program? How did you learn about the CTI? From whom and/or from which event/ platform? What do you know about the coral triangle and the CTI? What do other people know about CTI? What do you think is their perception, and perhaps attitude and behavior, about it? What can you say are the strengths of the initiative or the activities done in relation to CTI? How about weaknesses? What can be improved? <p>If no,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have you heard of any ocean-related conservation programs in the region? What are some of these ocean-related conservation programs that you know of? What do you think are the people's perception, and perhaps attitude and behavior, about these conservation programs? What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of such programs? What can we learn from these programs? 		
CTI Communication	<p>Interviewees are familiar w/ CTI</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What communication tactics, platforms, and tools you know are being used to communicate about CTI? Which of these have been effective so far? How did target audience respond to these initiatives? Did it create greater awareness? Understanding? Stirred action? Influence key stakeholders? What can we learn from current CTI communication initiatives? What are the successes to date? What can be replicated in other NCCs? How about areas for improvement? Do social media platforms help communicate about CTI? Can you share to us your experience in utilizing social media for CTI? Would you have any data/ analytics that you can share? 	<p>If familiar with CTI</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have you seen any communication initiatives for the CTI? What are these? Website? Social media? Posters? Conference? How did each of these impact on your level of understanding/ awareness about the CTI? In your opinion, which of these are effective and not effective? Why? Can social media help improve CTI communication? How can social media be utilized for this advocacy? 	<p>If familiar with CTI</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have you seen any communication initiatives for the CTI? What are these? Website? Social media? Posters? Conference? How did each of these impact on your level of understanding/ awareness about the CTI? In your opinion, which of these are effective and not effective? Why?
		<p>If NOT familiar with CTI</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have you seen any communication initiatives of the government in relation to ocean / marine resource conservation? Have you been involved in any of these conservation efforts, especially the communication aspect? What can you say about it? What are the usual successes and gaps in communicating about ocean / marine resource conservation? Can social media help improve communication about CTI or any other ocean-related conservation programs? How can social media be utilized? 	<p>If NOT familiar with CTI</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have you seen any communication initiatives in relation to ocean / marine resource conservation? What can you say about these? In your opinion, which of these are effective and not effective? Why?

Target Sectors	Non-Profit Organizations	Government Agencies	Communications Experts
CTI Communication (cont'd)			<p>For both those aware and unaware</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your opinion about the marketability of ocean-related conservation initiatives? How can ocean-related conservation initiatives be more marketable / enticing to target audience in the region? 2. What could drive target audience awareness/ acceptance/ involvement/ about these kinds of initiatives/ programs? 3. Does culture and differing environment landscape (political, social, economics) affect communication initiatives for CTI? How can this be addressed? 4. How can and how should we utilize social media to help improve communication about CTI or any other ocean-related conservation programs? What are its advantages and disadvantages?
CTI Stakeholder Collaboration/Partnerships	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who do you think are the critical stakeholders of CTI? Who should NCCs prioritize in terms of relationship building and information and education? 2. Would you remember any success story on how partnerships have helped push the CTI cause? Please talk about this. 3. What can we learn from previous CTI partnerships and stakeholder collaborations? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who do you think are the critical stakeholders of CTI? Who should be prioritized in terms of relationship building and information and education? 2. What are critical drivers in establishing partnerships and building/ nurturing relations with organizations in terms of ocean-related conservation initiatives such as the CTI? 3. How does government approaches/ style/ culture/ leadership of the NCCs impact partnership initiatives within a country and across the region? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who do you think are the critical stakeholders of CTI? Who should be prioritized in terms of relationship building and information and education? 2. What are critical drivers in establishing partnerships and building/ nurturing relations with organizations in terms of ocean-related conservation initiatives such as the CTI? 3. How does culture and varying landscape among NCCs impact partnership efforts?
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you suggest should be done to improve regional governance on coral triangle? 2. Do you have any ideas/ views/ suggestions in terms of improving communication and stakeholder collaboration for CTI? 3. What can non-profit organizations do? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you suggest should be done to improve regional governance on coral triangle? 2. Do you have any ideas/ views/ suggestions in terms of improving communication and stakeholder collaboration for CTI? 3. How can government help push for the CTI cause? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you suggest should be done to improve regional governance on coral triangle? 2. Do you have any ideas/ views/ suggestions in terms of improving communication and stakeholder collaboration for CTI? 3. Who should be tapped to help improve efforts for CTI?

Appendix A6

List of Stakeholders Consulted

Table A6.1 List of stakeholders consulted.

Category	Name
Academic	Mrs. Dr. Augustine Mungkaje, Mrs. Maurice Knight, Mrs. Prof. Dato Dr. Noraieni Hj. Mokhtar, Mr. Prof. Simon Saulei, Mr. Thomas Gloerfel-Tarp
Consultant	Mrs. Arlene N. Satapornvanit, Mr. Candido da Conceicao, Mrs. Catherine Plume, Mr. Geoff Dews , Mr. Guillermo L. Morales, Mrs. Haezel Barber, Mr. Len Garces , Mrs. Nives Mattich, Mr. Raul Roldan, Mr. Richard Plumpton, Mrs. Stacey Tighe
Development Partner	Mr. Andrew Chek, Mr. Arunkumar Abraham , Mrs. Auxiliadora dos Santos, Mr. Jay Roop, Mr. Joseph Lufkin, Mr. Kiki Angraini, Mr. Michael Crispino, Mrs. Monique Somampouw, Mrs. Patricia Bickley, Mr. Pedro Aquino, Mrs. Rebecca Guieb, Mr. Renerio Acosta, Mrs. Villsite Tamani, Mr. Willie Atu
Donor	Mrs. Franca Sprong, Mr. Zola Sangga
Government	Mrs. Agnetha Vave-karumui, Mrs. Aimee T. Gonzales , Mr. Albert Apollo Chan, Mr. Alfred Nakatsuma, Mr. Amehr Hakim, Mrs. Anne Nelson, Mr. Bernard Suruman , Mr. Celestino da Cunha, Mrs. Celly Catharina, Mr. Dr. Chris Merritt, Mr. Dr. Christain Ramofafia, Mr. Craig Kirkpatrick , Mrs. Gabrielle Johnson, Mrs. Heidi Schuttenberg, Mr. Hendra Yusran Siry, Mr. Horácio Amaral Dos Santos Guterres, Mr. Jacob, Mrs. Jessica Munoz, Mr. Kangayatkarasu Nagulendran, Mr. Kumaras Kay Kalim, Mr. Leban Gisawa, Mrs. Lim Ai Gak, Mrs. Lorel Dandava, Mrs. Luanne Losi, Mr. Mamimpin Napitupulu, Mr. Mario Cabral, Mr. Nasrul Hakim Maidin, Mrs. Nicole Coombe , Mrs. Nilda S. Baling, Mrs. Nilfa Rasyid, Mrs. Nuraeni Tahir Ali, Mrs. Norasma Dacho, Mr. Okto Irianto, Mrs. Sharifa Nora Ibrahim , Mr. Peter Fricke, Mr. Rahim bin Gor Yaman, Mr. Rizki Andhitya Yunanto , Mr. Ronn Astillas, Mrs. Rosalie Masu, Mrs. Sandra Arcamo, Mrs. Sarah Burgess-Herbert, Mrs. Siti Kamarijah, Mr. Vagi Rei, Mrs. Sri Atmini, Mrs. Yvonne Tio
NGO	Mr. Alick Misibini, Mr. Allard Blom, Mr. Andrew Smith, Mr. Arwandrija Rukma, Mr. Aryo Tjiptohandono, Mrs. Astrid Lim, Mrs. Barbara Masike, Mr. Carel Drijver, Mr. Cepy F. Syahda , Mr. Charles Bedford, Mrs. Chrisma Salao, Mr. Constancio dos Santos, Mr. Dan Ramirez, Mr. Delta Prabuning, Mr. Delvene Boso, Mrs. Evangeline Miclat, Mr. Gunther Joku, Mr. Hayden Redhead, Mrs. Helen Fox, Mr. Imam Fitrianto, Mr. Imam Syuhada, Mr. Imran Amin, Mrs. Ivory Akao, Mrs. Jacqueline Thomas, Mrs. Janet Polita, Mrs. Jasmin Mohd Saad, Mr. Joel Palma, Mr. John Langenheim , Mr. John Tanzer, Mr. Jose Ingles, Mr. Jose Padilla, Mrs. Kate Newman, Mr. Keith Symington, Mr. Ken Kasseem, Mr. Kevin Austin, Mrs. Laura Whitford , Mrs. Laurence McCook, Mrs. Luz Baskinas, Mrs. Marion Daclan , Mr. Meinard Teves, Mr. H.E. Dr. Melchior Mataki, Mr. Nick Piludu, Mr. Niquole Esters, Mr. Paolo Mangahas, Mr. Richard Leck, Mrs. Rili Djohani , Mr. Roy, Mr. Shannon Seeto , Mr. Sheldon Cohen, Mr. Stuart Campbell, Mr. Sven Blankenhorn, Mrs. Trudiann Dale, Mrs. Tundi Agardy, Mr. Todd Wassel, Mr. Veda Santiadji, Mr. Victor Nikijuluw,
Potential New Partner	Mr. Alex Tilley
Private Sector	Mr. Alan White, Mr. Carl Solomon, Mrs. Kitty Courtney. Mr. Marc-Antoine Dunais
Regional Secretariat	Mr. Alvin Pahlevi, Mrs. Destyariani Liana Putri, Mr. Dr Widi Pratikto
Retired	Mrs. Marea Hatziolos, Mr. Rodney V Salm
Scientist	Mrs. Judi Lowe, Mrs. Karen Edyvane Nicole Glineur

Note: Name with bold font participated in both CTI-CFF Evaluative and Analytical Framework questionnaire and Deep Dive and Forward-Looking interview.

Table A6.2 Stakeholder meetings and participants.

Country, Date	Names of Participant
Brisbane, Australia 22 – 23 August 2018	Andrew Chek, Aurelia Micko, Jackie Thomas, Klaas J. Teule, Laura Whitford, Nicole Coombe, Niquole Esters, Rili Djohani, Stacy Jupiter.
Bogor, Indonesia 30 August 2018	Agus Dermawan, Agus Sapari, Andriyanto Hilmawan, Anka Farita, Arinta Dwi Hapsari, Arwandrija Rukwan, Danang Widodo, Dinan Yunitawati, Grace Tri A, Imam Syuhada, Ita Sualia, Joko Hardono, Lida Pet-Soede, M.Faisal Reza, Marissa Garcia, Marta Sari R Sitanggang, Nabila Citra, Nilfa Rasyid, Rita Rachmawati, Sandra Afifah, Siti Annisa Mardhatillah, Sri Atmuni, Sugeng Harmono, Tiny G Pratama, Veda Santiadji, Windy Rizki, Yudit Tia L.
Quezon City, Philippines 11 September 2018	Antonio D. Salozor, Armida P, Evangeline Miclat, Filbert Ian Tan, Jane Desiree Andal, Janice M Tiante, Jenevive Lontok, Marion Daclan, Marissa Garcia, Nic AndradaNilda S Baling, Pablo G, de los Ryos Jr, Paul Salvador, Raul G. Roldan.
Putrajaya, Malaysia 18 September 2018	Jasmin Mohd Saad, K. Nagulendran, Lida Pet-Soede, Marissa Garcia, Nor Hasmayana Binti Yahaya, Salwa Binti Abdul Latiff Al-Yamani, Zarinah Waheed,
Solomon Islands 25 September 2018	Agnetha Vave Karamui, Anja Nicolay, Assaneth Buarafi, Delvene Boso, Duta Bero, Geoff Dews, Marissa Garcia, Matthew Walekoro, Paul Tua, Peter Kenilorea, Rex Filia, Rieka Kwalai, Ronnelle Panda, Rosalie Masu, Shannon Seeto, Trevor Ramoni.
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea 27 September 2018	Barbara Masike Lin, Christina Salcato, David Lucock, Iki Peter, Lida Bun, Lida Pet-Soede, Marissa Garcia, Martin Teine, Matha Wamo, Micheal Tesoro, Modi Pontio, Ordy Wefin, Rei Vagi, Simon Saulei, Yvonne Tio.
Timor Leste 2 October 2018	Acacio Gutteres, Alexio L Amaral, Alsira F, Antonio Qe Ja, Celestino da C Bareto, Fernando de Silva, Julio Da Cruz, Lida Pet-SoedeLino Je Jesus, Mario M Cabral, Orlando H, Priska Widyastuti, Sabino L Adonia, Saturnino da Cesta P.

Appendix A7

Example Responses to “Forward-Looking” Questions from the CTI-CFF Evaluative and Analytical Framework Questionnaire

Table A7.1 Responses to ‘forward-looking’ questions in the CTI-CFF Evaluative and Analytical Framework questionnaire (raw results).

Q22. Any other comments on the impact of RPOA?	Q33. How can effectiveness and efficiency be improved?	Q38. How can RPOA retain or improve relevance in next decade?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes. the sea more interactive. ▪ Secretariat has yet to have ways to deliver and present the tangible outcome and output on ground to share with the wider audience. ▪ it has allowed a clear focus of collaboration between countries that would not collaborate on these matters otherwise. ▪ RPOA for community livelihood. ▪ Need more ground activities specific for Food Security. ▪ Yes, I do not mean to sound skeptical by my comments above. I just believe that it is truly very difficult to separate out what can be honestly and specifically tied to the RPOA. There were many initiatives already underway before the RPOA at the local and national levels and led by community members, local, regional or national gov'ts or NGO partners. ▪ Improved management capacity, better awareness of community and stakeholders on the resource sustainability. ▪ The RPOA has raised awareness across the CTI as to what are primary threats, what policies are essential to address the threats and what types of actions need to be planned nationally and locally to stem the threats. The RPOA has had an influence on national plans and also assisted to connect local actors with international sources of technical and financial support. ▪ Direct impact of the RPOA is difficult to quantify and studies designed to better evaluate the contribution of the RPOA on the progress of good governance, food security and livelihood needs to be designed. It is important to note that many of the activities in the RPOA are already being done at the country level. The success at the national level has yet to reach a level of significantly appreciated at the regional level. The real value lies in being able to present the collective regional outcome, and developing a strong awareness from CT stakeholders the value of national achievements projected at the Coral Triangle Region level. ▪ Additional marine areas are in some form of protection/ management. ▪ Provided regional or sub-regional platform for planning and management of transboundary resources such as the Sulu Sulawesi Seascape. ▪ I think the message I would like to provide, is that each country involved are different in many ways in regard to conservation initiatives. In Melanesia, the main difference from other developed countries that needs to be recognized, is the fact that Customary law and tenure of land and coastal areas, including coral reefs and mangrove forests, are recognized in the Solomon Islands' constitution. This can be a positive, but also can be very challenging, as sometimes there is conflict between traditional law and government law. ▪ It has created collaboration across countries, groups, agencies, NGOs and others that haven't worked together before. ▪ RPOA was well-intentioned and fairly well-conceived. It is overly ambitious to think that CTI-CFF could achieve measurable impact on these areas within just a few years. I think it is time to review, re-assess, and determine a much more humble agenda that focuses on a smaller set of achievable goals. It usually takes regional platforms a decade or longer to start achieving real impact. CTI-CFF is off to a pretty good start and should continue to build and develop, and tackle concrete objectives like those in RPOA, but can't spread itself too thin at the beginning of its existence. ▪ RPOA has contributed to capacity building improvement, partnerships establishment, learning and expert exchange. ▪ Yes. ▪ I think with the benefit of hindsight, the RPOA has been overly broad which has made clear advancement in relation any one of the goal difficult to see and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More leadership and empowerment of the secretariat and binding regional agreements around goals and targets. ▪ To improve communication in CT6 Area. ▪ Efficiency shall be improved with more commitments, initially from countries and then to stakeholders (i.e. Partners, collaborators etc.) However, as long as countries did not make any step forward, then efficiency and effectiveness based on institutional structures could not be fulfilled ▪ I think that the tasks under the RPOA should be reduced by strengthening the focus of the RPOA on a few lesser things ▪ By having leader summit, decided the level of representatives who attend regional activities ▪ To overcome most of the above in point 32. ▪ More self-funded of the activities held ▪ Have a long term systematic programs, including monitoring and evaluation and adaptive management at side (field) levels. ▪ Efficiency can be improved within the CTI Secretariat through the Secretariat better understanding its role in the CTI system. Expertise is needed as well as more equal participation from the countries. Unfortunately, the CTI Secretariat building in Manado has probably been more of a hindrance in this process than a facilitator due to its distance and cost. Better a small office in Jakarta or Manila! ▪ Improve management of Secretariat; get a working leader; hire skilled and experience staff; move the office to a city (where skilled and experienced staff will be more likely want to be based) ▪ The decision-making process both downward and upward from the COM to the working groups is long, labored, and inefficient. Momentum is lost when decisions are held hostage to once-per-year events such as the SOM, and organizations like the Regional Secretariat are left without autonomy to implement activities without approvals granted at the SOM or COM. In addition, with the Regional Secretariat, there are structural issues (can be expanded upon elsewhere) that keep it from being an efficient actor. ▪ As said earlier, permanent membership to the delegation, be it for to the TWGs, to the support staff of the SOM needs to be required. There is no institutional memory around. Delegates need to also do their homework and read before coming to the meetings. Such unpreparedness has resulted in more meetings, more emails to be circulated and more reminders to prompt delegates to perform their duties well. It might be an idea to have a private manager operate the regional secretariat. Also the decision making process should be given a serious thought in the light that one government could kill a very good program. This is why private business and stakeholders need to be part of the decision making process. Not just governments, NGOs and country partners. ▪ Strengthen capacity of the regional secretariat. ▪ Can't answer these questions - I am not familiar with current governance. ▪ I'm happy to speak in more detail based on previous assessments regarding the organizational capacity of the Secretariat. I think addressing the leadership void and empowering staff would contribute greatly to the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. I can also provide drafts of previous administrative assessments conducted by DOI-ITAP administrative experts back in 2016. The goal at the time of these assessments was to evaluate the Secretariat's ability to properly manage USG financial assistance (grants). During those assessments our team picked up on additional challenges during interviews with staff, which we felt could be inhibiting their effectiveness on the job. ▪ That especially the smaller countries would re-visit their respective NPOAs and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Look at other examples from other regional initiatives, strong focus on potential resourcing, tap into increased focus on ocean health issues globally. ▪ It must improve according to the recent situation. ▪ The high level commitments of countries need to be delivered to push thing forward. Currently the commitments from the last summit in 2009 is slowing down and high level donors such as ADB and GEF has a new project cycle for further consideration. RPOA need to catch up in terms of correlations with UN Goals as well as global goals to retain and improve the relevance of the implementation of the goals and targets of CTI. ▪ By focusing more on providing services to the members on those matters that bother them all or at least more than one, and by being more focused so that the burden to the country members staff is less. ▪ There should be the monitoring and evaluation system within the RPOA. ▪ RPOA to be in tandem with NPOAs. RPOA and NPOAs to be reviewed periodically, say every 5 years to right the course. Evidence-based. To be also in tandem with regional and international instruments, binding and non-binding, including guidelines and SDGs, etc. ▪ By demonstrating shared goals that are implemented by each member state at its own and sustainable pace and by its contextually appropriate way as dictated by capacity and culture. ▪ Should be adaptive and evaluated every 5 years. ▪ Take account of changes, including advanced climate change; emergence of China as regional power, esp. Belt and Road initiative; economic changes; technological changes (e.g. uptake of smart phones & social networking). ▪ Build on lessons learned, listen to the countries, streamline the RPOA in line with that is currently a priority and working well, employ good leadership in the Secretariat and market. Much of the CTI work is marketing what needs to be done at many levels. The CTI doesn't do it alone but helps set the agenda and encourages action through many organizations and people including donors. ▪ Cultivate more active partnerships. ▪ As per above - implement new technologies. Also, raise the profile of the Coral Triangle as a destination for nature based tourism and increase coverage of bioregion and its peoples in general. This popular approach to marketing the bioregion helps validate the RPOA goals and by association shines a light on the challenges the bioregion faces. ▪ Keep momentum going on effectively managed MPAs. ▪ Short answer: streamline the decision process from technical recommendations to policy implementation. Examine the levels of existing bureaucracy (outside those of the national governments) and evaluate the necessity and efficacy of each level. ▪ THE CTI CFF needs to show significant results that translate in changes in the water. It needs to cater to the poor people of the region, improving their social and economic wellbeing. It needs to assess its success against the development goals particularly SD 14 and SD 2. ▪ I suggest to focus on a subset of the RPOA and develop and implement sustainability measures. ▪ It's hard to answer this question without knowing how the main proponents - the 6 countries view CTI-CFF at this point. ▪ Focus on some fundamental policy changes like EAFM before embarking on other activities that rely on such policy to be in place. ▪ Strengthen collaboration or joint implementation of actions with other regional

Q22. Any other comments on the impact of RPOA?

quantify. In turn, I think this has led to the CT Member country governments losing some interest/political will (in both the RPOA specifically and a regional approach in general) and donors failing to see it as the most effective vehicle for achieving their desired deliverables. The RPOA might have had more impact if it had a single, quantifiable goal, such as the Micronesia Challenge.

- The impact of the RPOA has not been well measured, evaluated or monitored.
- I have not been directly involved in the implementation of the RPOA.
- The RPOA has been an important vehicle for bringing together stakeholders with a shared vision for channeling resourcing, effort, awareness, communications and action on the ground and regionally. It has been a guiding framework, but the problem is there are too many priorities and varying levels of capacities within the CT6 govts to be able to address the Goals and priorities.
- These are impressions only, I doubt good data exist.
- RPOA has given a guidance for CTI Country members to develop NPOA
- I think it is very timely to review it in the light of experience and also the adoption by all the countries of the SDGs. Also the impacts of climate change and increasing coastal development in some key places.
- The actions and proposed impacts of the RPOA are too coarse to allow easy assessment of the effectiveness. The theory of change ought to step out the expected intermediate outcomes so that countries and others could see progress along that pathway toward the eventual impacts. In other words, it's in general a long(er) road to changes in food security and fisheries and there need to be some signposts along the way plausibly connected to those longer term impacts. Similarly some of the outputs and outcomes expected in the RPOA are too great to be achieved on the indicated timescale. This means that countries typically are reporting meetings and workshops and often not having a measure of substantive progress in modest but tangible ways toward those eventual outcomes. Importantly it is also not possible to show the pathway to new or existing donors. The implicit TOC is one based on the effectiveness and "whole greater than sum of the parts" of multilaterals - but this in the last years has been a much questioned article of faith. A pathway toward that emergent property of the CTI as a multilateral institution needs also to be spelled out.
- To honest, I have not received any information on results or impact over the years since I first engaged on the tourism side of things.
- I am not really in a position to say anything that is based on evidence about the realization of CTI Goals.
- I regard the RPOA as a frame that helped direct funding toward various efforts at a regional scale (such as focus on seascapes and MPA models). But it probably has had its greatest 'impact' by initiating individual member states' development of their national plans of action. I am confident that this process helped some of the members organise their efforts in the marine space more than was likely without the RPOA to drive it. But the 'transformational' actions hoped for under the RPOA, and hoped for through the organisation of the CTI has not eventuated.
- The RPOA has just barely begun implementation except for some early institutional and ad hoc actions due to several delays such as establishing the secretariat, getting it formally adopted by the countries and fund raising. However it has very much provided a resilient platform for donors, scientists, governments and others to use as opportunities (e.g., regional and global conferences, funding sources) and issues (marine debris, coral bleaching) arise. Despite numerous starts and delays, I believe that it can strengthen into a strong organization such as SPREP or the Pacific Islands Forum and programs. Although I was a key resource person from 2007-2015, and less so since, working primarily in Indonesia, I can personally attest to the professional growth the CTI meetings and dialogs and training and frameworks/policy discussions have built individual and institutional capacity in most of the CT 6 countries. I am personally working

Q33. How can effectiveness and efficiency be improved?

check for relevance - and not just include former/old project proposals.

- A technical staff for each Goal assigned at the Regional Secretariat with the Technical Director providing oversight to coordinate the various TWGs.
- The measurable indicators could be written in a way to better reflect the success and extent of implementation activities as opposed to only a quantitative values.
- The Financial Resources working group could develop some key targets, indicators, activities linked to priority goals - my opinion is that these should be MPAs and EAFM.
- However it has occurred, the Secretariat has a wrong-headed view of its role. It seems to want to "lead" things and is constantly disappointed that it doesn't have the funding to build technical expertise in each of the five goals. But the Secretariat should rather, I believe, be "supporting" or "facilitating" things, particularly at the national level, while keeping an eye on regional goals. That is, the Secretariat should be working to make sure that capacity is built at the national level (though national systems) and that the CT6 are, individually, taking actions in line with the RPOA. Then, the COM or SOM is the level at which this is all stitched together, where individual national plans are brought into alignment. As such, the Secretariat should be a supremely lean organization, very nimble. At present, it is lumbering and surprisingly ossified for an organization so young. (Also, there should be a group, like the WLF or LGN, for private sector engagement. Don't rely just on government action. Enlist the private sector in the achievement of RPOA goals as well. Not to do so is inefficient and ineffective).
- Streamlining groups and structure to simplify things.
- Answer is too long for my available time. Apologies.
- The CTI goals should be linked up with the government's structure which will enable government to program and budget CTI activities.
- Revise the RPOA into a more practical term. Redesign the Secretariat function. PArtners need to be given more role not just as a "cheers group" for government.
- Streamlining the multiple goals and working groups to reduce demands on CT6 member country government officials and reduce the number of processes in which they need to engage. This would also allow for a simpler and clearer articulation of the vision/added value of the CTI-CFF, which I think would translate into fundraising benefits.
- More information on lesson gained and the cost benefits of each goal.
- Not familiar to provide an informed answer.
- Streamline the RPOA goals, look at how the TWGs can be reduced and where there is natural synergies.
- Consolidate & streamline (e.g. TWG meetings).
- Regional secretariat should help consolidation of the RPOA and facilitating to monitor NPOA implementation to ensure impactful actions achieved and contribute to RPOA Targets.
- I would like to see a trusted, influential person leading the Regional Secretariat with more transparent processes in place.
- Development of centralised (across all members) of investment and allocation mechanisms e.g. a CTI-CFF Development Fund with allocation based on the agreed (revamped) RPOA or its replacement.
- Tighten up the RPOA, Make it more achievable and realistic (ie. more modest short term goals and measures of success) with a more transparent pathway to impact. Devolve most admin to out of session of SOM - ie not at the meetings. Put mainly strategic considerations before SOM - which means having someone with a strategic vision and capacity to frame things. Decrease the number of TWG. Develop capacity around workshop planning that sets clearer objectives and outcomes - too many workshops are expensive consultations that revisit old ground with new participants. Develop a strategy for re-branding the CTI in terms that matter to powerful govt agencies and political actors to increase interest and

Q38. How can RPOA retain or improve relevance in next decade?

programs/initiatives; exploring the seascape or sub regional approach in integrating actions on EAFM, MPA, species and climate change adaptation.

- continue to strive to develop tools and strategies that address threats that are relevant region-wide, thus building a means to track progress.
- Funding, leveraging work of other NGOs and government partners, structure less bureaucratic, and more pilot programs linking fisheries and MPAs with financial mechanisms that incentivize community and private sector stakeholders to support and invest in best practices.
- Incorporate the private sector. That is, we need a "blue economy" that provides for people's livelihoods and a healthy profit margin and food security while at the same time conserving biodiversity, for the Coral Triangle to be sustainable. (That of course includes a robust regulatory framework.) Businesses are our allies. I'm not talking about "public-private partnerships" in which governments design big infrastructure projects and then let contracts with private sector construction firms. I'm talking rather about using the power of markets, the power of entrepreneurship, to obtain our development objectives.
- Update the targets to be streamlined and relevant to the countries/policies/regulation - not so much to partners.
- First, they need to become a stronger organization before they get pulled into too many directions.
- To link RPOA/NPOA goals with the CTI country members programming and budgeting system.
- Need to also address the issue of partnership otherwise government and partner will have their own separated program.
- Better alignment with policy frameworks including SDGs, UNFCCC and thematic areas including women's empowerment, food and water security, carbon capture and storage. Closer collaboration with development/humanitarian sector partners. Examination of new potential funding streams and finance instruments specifically to finance regional level work e.g. debt for nature/adaptation swaps, engagement with corporate actors such as insurance sector etc., impact investing etc.
- Build country confidence that costs are delivering benefits to communities & and also delivering benefits over a large scale BUT also assist with countries achieving their (NPOA) goals.
- Link the RPOA to SDGs as the latter are to be achieved by 2030 although earlier for some SDG14 targets.
- The RPOA needs to be more focused, clearly demonstrate a quantifiable and qualitative value add for the CT6, existing and new development partners and donors. Demonstrate how it is going to benefit people. It needs an effective RS model that has the confidence and commitment of the CT6 and partners. The RS needs to get out of Manado - the HQ is a liability in terms of costs and location; the RS structure needs to be smaller, with an ED who is strategic in outlook, a good communicator, is focused on the CTI-CFF; not bureaucratic; looks to build effective collaborations.
- Perhaps have a process to incorporate emerging issues/refine goals as indicated.
- It need to be consolidated to get more effective and efficient actions.
- As noted, I would prefer a clearer statement of the goals. I consider Goals 2-5 more important than Goal 1.
- See above. Also ensure relevance to the political and social aspirations of the region(s) and communities. Consider approaching in terms of Melanesia and Sth East Asia or more developed and less developed categories.
- It needs to leverage agendas and institutional arrangements that have more political currency in the region and outside it. Potentially, climate change, national/regional security and stability, and (blue) economic development/trade.

Q22. Any other comments on the impact of RPOA?

with Indonesia on their MPA policy strengthening and we are using the CTMPAS and some tools learned from various sharing workshops as a benchmark for design and compatibility to help guide the development of revised regulations and the design and establishment of 14 new MPAs and 3 MPA networks. This familiarity with the CTMPAS and increased capacity developed during its design and implementation has made our work much simpler and streamlined.

- Impact depends on country level implementation, based on the focus of their NPOAs.
- Probably we need more enabling policies so that it can facilitate work and resources on the ground.
- Impact is more long term - so it is difficult to say that there is any. Perhaps at outcome and output levels there are some advances. Part of my concern is that with the changes in leadership in the CT6, the importance of the goals expressed in the RPOA have become diluted or sidelined. There are a number of reasons for this - principal among which is that the CTI-CFF is viewed as a fisheries conservation initiative, with unclear links to longer term economic development at the national and sub-national levels. Another related concern are the evident financing gaps in the RPOA.
- Can be a strong guiding document to galvanize regional collaboration and implementation but needs to be updated every 3-5 years with stronger KPI's and accountability mechanisms.
- Although it may be a long and rough journey, the implementation of a joint regional action plan is the only way national economies and communities will eventually be able to secure tourism- and seafood benefits from the ocean over time.
- I apologize, my interaction with CTI-CFF was too tangential to understand impacts of the RPOA.
- Many national governments had no prioritization scheme for marine management prior to negotiation of the RPOA and RPOA IUU. The establishment of the RPOAs provided prioritization and focus, catalyzed funding, and anchored national government action. While countries may have gotten to the same place 'eventually', the RPOA definitely accelerated these.
- It has helped catalyse and focus activities by the national governments and NGO partners. Within Solomon Islands the NCC has been a useful body for sharing information.
- Seascape priority for SSME, BSSME and Lasser Sunda will give opportunity to develop joint programs in the future.
- Have to do more; impactful projects / programs to benefit the region (national and regional communities).
- I think countries, at this stage, are still pre-occupied with their national interests. While they may understand the value of working together through the RPOA, limitation in financial and human resources limit them to giving priorities to national programs. I believe that more effort should be exerted to gain the support of Planning and Finance Ministries and higher decision-making bodies of governments (including those that may have something to do with foreign affairs and law enforcement).
- Thorough the regional cooperation and lessons learned and sharing.
- The RPOA has brought the countries of Asia and the Pacific together and has forced government agencies in the country to work together. We are also able to interact more with the Asian countries and play a more active role in the leadership of regional issues.

Q33. How can effectiveness and efficiency be improved?

buy in and show the value add of the CTI and its distinctiveness from all the other marine initiatives. It won't be successful because it is the right thing to do - it must deliver political and economic advantage to institutions and actors even while it benefits nature and vulnerable people. Leverage the achievements the CTI has made -e.g., good relations across agencies in multiple countries, a set of rules for doing business.

- Better engagement after the plans were made. Since the project was here a few years ago this is the first contact I have had with it.
- Not sure if regional officers have influence or close interaction with national offices, except for Luz who acts as National focal point and holds an M&E responsibility.
- Just in general, I would really try to focus on national priorities and incentives that drive behavior in each country and try to build action plans around these that collectively can help advance regional goals. The activities may be different in each country but may contribute to overall goals if structured well.
- Indonesia has graciously provided a home base for the CTI - CFF as well as leadership since its inception. To truly be a regional entity, it is important that other countries be allowed to take a turn at leading the entity with competent leadership.
- Probably lots, including having a clearer, more focused 'focus'. Architecture in support could then also be streamlined. If you can achieve a focus that members see as meeting some important national agenda, they are more likely to prioritise its resourcing themselves. And once you have member 'investment' (of both time, funds), efficiency will follow. If you remove donor support for attendance and participation in working groups and meetings, I think you would quickly have members' determine more effective and efficient ways of having their membership, attendance and participation work better for them. People quickly respond to return on investment, and as long as donors are propping up attendance, participation, architecture can 'afford' to be inefficient or ineffective. As soon as the focus and the architecture facilitates good returns for members, and members are able to see a return on their own investment, things get more efficient.
- a) TWG technical chairs should/could meet jointly to plan annual/2yr workplan of REXs to be more strategic and to increase impact. MPA TWG twice in a row on ecotourism and not on MPA management or SOPs or community engagement is not clear logic, for example; linking a FISHERIES and MPA REX on key issues would be more effective. b) I am not sure of the recent SOM and TWGs, but early SOM meetings were so formal, there was little open dialog or facilitated brainstorming to allow for innovation. c) The CTI REG SEC and program MUST balance Indo and other CT5 voice in leadership. d) Link with a Fulbright or other program to bring in top notch short term secondments to accomplish key outputs with Reg Sec or various TWGs.
- Update RPOA to become more relevant, improve capacities of governments, provide opportunities for regional actions.
- More streamlined Regional Secretariat; very hierarchical, Summit; SOM; Thematic WG; National Process.
- Review lessons and re-define options for the Regional Secretariat model. Cultivate strong leadership. Invite dialogue with more potential DPs. Streamlining of operations. Launch concerted efforts for resource mobilization.
- Strong leadership in Regional Secretariat, MM and SOM; Support to NCC's and cross cutting initiatives such as LGN, WLF and RBF to engage key stakeholders across the region including local government, women and private sector. CTI-CFF also needs a youth forum.
- Perhaps consider clearer engagement process or structure for external parties and regional experts. Again, have limited knowledge to be able to comment fully.

Q38. How can RPOA retain or improve relevance in next decade?

It could frame the better management of the CT marine estate's values (e.g., maintenance of ecosystem function, identification of key resilient sites to climate change) as fundamental to achieving those "mainstream" national objectives. This doesn't mean abandoning the values of biodiversity or food security - it means reframing the larger narrative of the CTI so that a broader array of decision makers and donors can see the self interest in supporting programs (on say, coral reef MPA, integrate marine planning = seascapes) under those mainstream headlines and therefore lend political support = time, money, people, decisions - all essential to clearing a path to ultimately realise objectives around the marine environment.

- Better follow up with stake holders on implementation, blockages, successes and results.
- Work with other regional institutions to collaborate on initiatives.
- More timely and better resourced implementation of the activities in the CT6 and among their relevant departments; improved capacity and resources for Reg Sec; stronger measures for accountability among CT6 leads etc. (NCC) in terms of timely and effective delivery of outputs.
- To continue to be relevant, I believe the RPOA will need to link closely with national priorities related to food security, regional trade, tourism and climate change adaptation. Conservation objectives can also be linked to these priorities, as well as to the future of coral reefs, and slowing biodiversity loss in one of the most biodiversity rich regions of the world during the 6th global extinction event on the planet.
- I believe that a 3-5 year regional CT project could formalize the CTI-CTFF and its RPOA as a key regional entity. And, to be recognized as a regional entity, it is important for the CTI to be under the leadership of other countries besides Indonesia.
- I think the RPOA could benefit from a focus on the institutional barriers to the mainstreaming of sustainable development principles and practices into national government decision-making. How could the CTI, through its framework for investment and effort, help the most marginalised government agencies (environment and fisheries) become agents of change for the wider national government decision-making?
- Revise goals in how they are stated and in some cases, can advance to next step if actions plans are already in place. Allow HOT TOPIC section at SOMs to discuss emerging issues like Marine Debris as both critical topic for CTI members as well as possible opportunity for funding that could leverage other targets as well. Integrate Goals/TWGs as relevant. Partner with a THINK TANK or Univ system to allow "home" for white papers for CTI to advocate for in global forums.....even though CTI is to help self, outreach and advocacy can play a role if carefully and strategically done. Also to serve as better "home" for CTI data, etc. Offer/create some CTI common messages for communications initiatives across CT6 with communities to become part of a larger community/purpose.
- Must be practical for all countries. Find ways to make the seascapes functional - it might help in the efficiency concerns.
- Need to factor in the active and real engagement of the private sector, may it be the commercial fishing sector, coastal tourism, aquaculture sector, small scale fishers. Also the role of importing and market countries is vital in influencing sustainability for the CTI CFF.
- Recast strategic framework. Communicate it well. Engage national and sub-national leaders. Support integrated approaches. Strengthen and expand alliances. Mobilize resources. Improve local level implementation and focus on / replication / scaling up.
- Need to be aligned with SDG's and add goals on marine pollution and cross cutting initiatives such as LGN, WLF and RBF and enabling conditions such as

Q22. Any other comments on the impact of RPOA?**Q33. How can effectiveness and efficiency be improved?****Q38. How can RPOA retain or improve relevance in next decade?**

- Implement recommendations of its Evaluation Report and full time leadership by professional managers with sufficient mandate and budget.
- Since you cannot be effective without being efficient, I think that the main need of the organization as it currently stands is to improve its leadership and perhaps its governance, not necessarily its long-term plan -- unless that plan was not developed in coordination with the national interests (which I do not know). I do know that the perception that there is competition for donor dollars within the coordinating units does not help efficiency and implementation.
- I'm not certain about this, but I believe that increased support to the regional secretariat to increase professionalism, capacity, focus, etc., might contribute to greater efficiency. Seconded experts, if not already in place, would help. However, the nature of regional mechanisms can be somewhat inefficient due to the nature in international coordination.
- The Secretariat should be held more accountable. Donor countries should consider secondments of technical personnel to facilitate advancement towards RPOA goals and targets, and the work of the working groups.
- Better mechanism to be developed to maximise participation from CSOs and technical resource persons and NCCs; e.g. coordination, finance and monitoring components to be embedded in the respective TWGs and presented at pre-SOM governance WG meetings prior to SOM for decisions. At the present time, there is a disconnect between TWGs and governance WGs and cross cutting themes.
- The structure should be changed.
- Know the real situation at the local level.
- Political will and cooperation, funding support and communication.
- Agree on a general work and financial plan and give designated institutions in each country some rooms for decision-making, particularly those that are related to technical matters. Select items that could be decided upon by member countries through communications and items that need face-to-face meetings.
- We need good and sustainable funding. See also answers in Q32. RS must be improved and same with National CTI secretariates. My view is that we have improved national coordination but RS has somewhat faces recent challenges.

- capacity building, financing, policy and regulations.
- Re-elevation of the political commitments to the CTI.
 - Undertaking this review is a good step – if it leads to a renewed focus on simplified and aligned goals and objectives for the RPOA. And if suitable levels of resources are committed over the next 12 years.
 - 1) Add a regional sustainable tourism Goal and Programme, since poorly guided coastal development and demand for seafood is exploding due to the rapid tourism growth in the region.
 - 2) Add a regional Plastic Free Ocean Goal and Programme, since not one country can solve this alone.
 - 3) Add Innovation components in all of the goals.
 - focus on achieving outcomes/targets and ensuring sustainability (but restructuring of the organization likely needed, as is strong and respected leadership).
 - The first thing that comes to mind is the continued increase in the participation of the private sector as active implementers and funders of activities that contribute to CTI-CFF goals. The second may be the revalidation of the RPOA and CTI-CFF itself at the presidential level. Perhaps, another idea would be to increase the influence of science and research on the way that RPOA is implemented. Not sure what I mean by this but just a thought. Many of the countries participating in the CTI-CFF are data poor countries and increasing shared research and information would make arguments for action in line with the RPOA strong in domestic circles.
 - It needs to focus on showing implementation and achievement towards outcomes. We can have countries adopt EAFM principles or create MPAs but if they aren't enforced or there is no meaningful impact on marine health or food security, then what's the point.
 - Unfortunately, it needs to include more goals - especially plastics. But, it needs to help maintain a focus on the Coral Triangle as a vital and globally important region.
 - Ensure flexibility. Focus on long-term sustainability. Requires updating.
 - RPOA have to be structured so that it is easily relatable to other international goals and aspirations such as the CBD and SDG goals and also be flexible enough to include emerging issues (e.g. marine debris issues).
 - RPOA should be improved.
 - Spend less time to traveling out but more on member countries experience.
 - Leadership from CT6 and support from partners to revisit and plan collaboratively / cohesively for the coming years. In line with SDGs particularly SDG14.
 - Focus more on the implementation, giving more chance to coastal communities and local governments to participate.
 - More consultation with the countries on the relevance of the goals of the countries and linking more with the priority policies of the country. We need to address the need for the long term sustainability for the countries perspective. Need the ministers and the som to look into how we can provide for the sustainability form the countries. Countries need to recognize their policy priorities and the linkage to the room.
 - We need to improve funding and the sustainable financing issues at the country level. Countries need to make and involve the provincial governments and local governments at CTI at both the planning and implementation level. If we can address internal country budgeting and funding for the national actions we will achieve a lot more.
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Appendix A8

List of Supporting Documents Available to Download

Table A8.1 List of the supporting documents available to download

No.	File Name	Description
1.	Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) Review - Inception Report_v2.0	The inception report of Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) submitted in June 2018.
2.	Final TOR-CTI-RPOA Review	Terms of Reference for a Review of the Coral Triangle Initiative - Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF) Regional Plan of Action (RPOA).
3.	RPOA Review_Raw Data	Responses for the stand-alone online questionnaire and deep dive interviews.
4.	Nini Santos_Full Report	The review of communication landscape in the context of the CTI and a summary of some emerging issues in the region.
5.	Examples of Other Regional Initiatives	A document combining some details on three other regional initiatives.
6.	Summary of CT6 National Priorities	Comprehensive summary of national priorities for the CT6 countries.
7.	Global and Regional Conventions and Treaties	List of global and regional conventions and treaties that have relevance for the CTI

