



Coral Triangle Initiative

SUMMARY

Designing and Operating MPA Networks and “Systems” in the Coral Triangle Countries

A Regional Exchange and Workshop in Support of the Coral Triangle Initiative

June 17-20, 2010; Phuket, Thailand

The *CTI Designing and Operating MPA Networks and Systems Workshop* launched regional-level collective actions to improve the management of critical marine resources in the Coral Triangle through the use of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as identified by the *CTI Regional Plan of Action* which was endorsed by the leaders of the six Coral Triangle countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste) at the CTI Summit in Manado in May 2009. The workshop resulted in:

- a collective review of the current principles, objectives, models and regional case studies of MPA networks;
- the practical application of common network principles through the parallel designs of national MPA network pilot sites in each country;
- the drafting of priority objectives for a CTI Regional MPA System that could eventually be managed cooperatively by the Coral Triangle countries; and
- the identification of next steps towards collective efforts on MPAs and MPA networks.

This event was the first opportunity for the six countries and their partners to convene for focused coordination and planning on the substantive content regarding MPAs and MPA Networks under the *CTI Regional Plan of Action*.

The Coral Triangle Initiative’s Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) Goal 3 (*Marine Protected Areas established and effectively managed*) has one Target, to have a *Region-wide Coral Triangle MPA System in place and fully functioning*. RPOA Action 1 (*Jointly establish overall goals, objectives, principle, and operational design elements for a CT MPA System centered around priority MPA networks*) was prioritized at the May 2010 *CTI Regional Priority Actions and Coordination Workshop*, with the following activities defined:

- Conduct workshop(s) to establish the goals and operational design for a CTMPAS (Preparation includes National workshops, Regional workshops, CT6 focal points, Collaboration between regional scientists and CT6). First event is the Regional Exchange to Phuket, followed by national workshops.

This MPA Workshop was that first defined activity: a regional exchange/workshop that focuses on the design and operation of MPA networks and systems.

1. Workshop Background

The regional exchange and workshop was conducted from 17 to 20 June 2010 in Phuket, Thailand in association with the 2nd Asia and Pacific Coral Reef Symposium. The workshop was hosted and supported by the US CTI Support Program and the Symposium. More than 25 participants from the Coral Triangle countries were joined by more than 15 experts and resource persons and CTI partners during the workshop. Participants were invited to the first day of the Symposium, and several stayed for the full program through 24 June to give presentations and attend sessions.

The purpose of the workshop was to support CT6 countries as they work to advance MPA networks nationally and to initiate the design of a regional CTI MPA Network or System that addressed benefits that could not be achieved by individual countries. The workshop was structured simply with a mix of plenary sessions to present new information on MPA network design principles and criteria, case studies and results of break-out sessions; and several break-out session by either country (to apply, review or adapt design principles to their present context) or by topic to discuss individual regional network design elements or outputs (See agenda in Appendix 1).

2. Workshop Objectives

The workshop objectives aimed to achieve a few specific outputs and results as follows:

- Provide participating teams from CT6 countries with concepts, models, lessons and approaches for the development and operation of marine protected area networks and systems in their countries and at a regional scale
- Share experiences and learn from other CTI countries about development and implementation of MPAs and MPA networks
- Support participants to identify immediate steps and develop plans for the design and/or making operational MPA Networks or systems at various scales within their countries
- Identify the purpose, objectives, and design principles for the Coral Triangle Marine Protected Area System (CTMPAS) and develop a road map and working group for development of the CTMPAS creation
- Participate in the 2nd Asia Pacific Coral Reef Symposium hosted by the Government of Thailand in Phuket to learn about challenges and opportunities related to coral reef conservation and management in the region
- Develop an activity design or draft next steps based on the lessons learned that will guide the second Regional Exchange training activity on MPA Management Effectiveness to be conducted in early 2011 in a Coral Triangle country.

3. Workshop Summary

The first day and a half of the CTI regional workshop focused on Creating MPA Networks and Systems, defining and discussing common vocabulary and principles based heavily on the IUCN/World Commission on Protected Areas criteria and guidelines that could be applied to a CTI system. Sessions included presentations from all six Coral Triangle countries on their individual status and approaches for MPA networks, and presentations from MPA experts on

the benefits of networks, case studies of social, biophysical and governance types of networks. The sessions included mentored country discussion on applying the guidelines to their national context and identifying a process to incorporate adaptations into their national systems or to initiate a new pilot MPA network as a learning site. The country sites proposed as learning sites for which country roadmaps were developed included:

Indonesia: *Savu Seas*

Papua New Guinea: *Kimbe Bay*

Solomon Islands: *Central Island Province*

Malaysia: *Tun Mustapha Park*

Philippines: *Cape Verde Passage*

Timor-Leste: *Nino Konis Santana National Park*

The second day focused on *Operationalizing MPA Networks and Systems*, including presentations on the general case of what is “operational”; further case studies from other regions; and discussions on a CTI MPA work plan and tool kit for both designing and operating MPA networks.

The third day focused on the mandate from the CTI from the May 2010 Regional Priority Actions workshop, and taking the first steps towards a *CTI Regional Framework for an MPA system*, including defining and prioritizing the benefits of a regional system and identifying objectives on which to base a network design. The workshop closed with agreements on next steps, how the group should coordinate, and the overall design of a Regional Exchange on improving MPA implementation and effectiveness.

4. Draft Priority Benefits and Objectives of a CTI Regional MPA Network

From the eleven benefits and objectives identified by the workshop participants, the following six benefit and objective sets were given the highest priority for a regional (vs. national) MPA network.

Benefit 1: Regional Food Security

Objective 1: To improve sustainable management and use of marine resources

Benefit 2: Management of Migratory/Threatened Species

Objective 2: To manage and protect a large percentage of the full range of critical habitats required by these species throughout their life cycles.

Benefit 3: Resilience of critical marine habitats and resources at the regional level

Objective 3: To develop a regional system of MPAs resilient to climate change and other threats

Benefit 4: Efficiency of scale and opportunity for synergies

Objective 4: To collaborate on key projects such as research, capacity development, and knowledge management tools, for the design of MPA networks and their implementation.

Benefit 5: Knowledge of resource status and MPAs in the CT area (countries) from a regional perspective.

Objective 5: Decision makers, stakeholders and supporters have sufficient knowledge to commit to improved design, implementation and management of MPAs and networks, for policy development and maintaining political will.

Benefit 6: Consistent standards for MPA management and effectiveness

Objective 6: To adopt common principles for effective MPAs and network management that can be implemented according to the needs of each CT6 country.

5. Proposed Coordination Mechanisms for establishing the CTI-Wide Network

The workshop defined some short term and longer term mechanisms for coordinating the regional MPA activities; these are understood to be interim measures until the CTI has formally established other mechanisms. The mechanisms included the following four elements:

- Six ad-hoc MPA coordinators were identified, one from each country from the workshop participants who agreed to serve as interim Focal Points on this issue, in parallel with their NCC formal Focal Points. These are:
 - *Indonesia:* Tommy Hermawan
 - *Malaysia:* Nadiah Fatin Mohd Ikhsan
 - *Papua New Guinea:* Kay Kalim
 - *Philippines:* Pablo De Los Reyes
 - *Timor Leste:* Aleixo Leonito Amaral
 - *Solomon Islands:* Jointly Sisiolo
- The interim MPA Focal Points, collectively through the Indonesian MPA Focal Point, will contact the Regional Secretariat to request that the Regional Secretariat follow up on identifying formal MPA Focal Points, and that the CT6 NCCs be polled to see which Coral Triangle countries would be interested in serving as the interim MPA Theme leader or co-leader on coordination.
- An informal working group with these country leads and interested partners was agreed to continue joint efforts, until the Regional Secretariat is formally established, at which point it may take up the coordination role.
- The interim, informal group agreed to use the jointly drafted “road map” to guide their next steps.

6. Road Map forward

In addition to the other activities proposed and agreed to under GOAL 3 of the RPOA during the May 2010 Regional Priority Actions Workshop, the participants developed a plan for the

next steps along this work stream of a CTI MPA network design and operation. The major milestones include:

July 2010: Report to NCCs and Agencies

- Workshop CT6 Focal Points sent email to their NCC and MPA country Working Groups
- US CTI Team sends Executive Summary, followed by Report to all participants
- US CTI Reports general results of meeting to the Regional CTI interim Secretariat

August 2010: CT6 and partners verify their MPA Focal Points, and an overall Coordinator

August 2010: CT6 Conduct preliminary national technical and policy reviews on the Regional Draft Plan (Roadmap, Network Benefits and Objectives, plans for next Regional Exchange), and share results with each other through MPA Interim Coordinator:

- CT 6 are ready to approve continued engagement
- CT6 Draft a Decision Memo for SOM 6 on Regional MPA Networks

TBD: CT6 Conduct a preliminary internal technical review of their National Network plan (optional)

Nov/Dec 2010: National MPA Network Policy Reviews are complete and ready for comparison with other CT6 countries, and next steps for collective action

Jan/Feb 2011: A small CTI Regional Network Design team is formed and meets to propose first CTI network sites based on SOM-approved objectives and CT6 national feedback, and work plan for year.

Dec 2011: One site in each country in officially registered in CTI MPAS

7. Planning for the MPA Management Effectiveness Regional Exchange

The group discussed and agreed on the focus topic of the workshop/regional exchange, its objectives, and options for location; criteria for participants and a schedule of tasks to achieve the regional exchange. These are summarized below.

- Focus Topic of Workshop: Methodologies to measure and promote improvement of MPA management effectiveness
- Objectives of the workshop derived from discussion are summarized below:
 - To share lessons being learned in the development of management effectiveness assessment (MEA) tools in CT6 countries
 - To develop a general compatible framework and process to allow the CT6 countries to adapt and apply an MEA tool that is suitable for each CT6 country and can be adapted or amended differently between and within countries with different contexts
 - To assess gaps of existing of MEA tools and in their current use, and to find options to address the gaps
 - To identify additional specific capacity needs, identify immediate sources of relevant training and to help countries develop longer term approaches to fill those needs.
 - To provide training of trainers for the development and application of an MEA tool in each country
- Suggested participants: Participants from multiple sectors and from multiple levels (national, district, local), including national department technical representative

concerned with MPA monitoring, technical persons from NGOs responsible for assisting MPA implementation, local decision makers and community representatives.

- Location: There were expressions of interest from PNG to use Kimbe Bay and from Malaysia to use Sabah based Tun Mustapha Marine Park or an equivalent area in Sabah. There was interest in testing the framework/tool in an MPA that already has complete management as a learning opportunity for the workshop participants and master trainers.
- Inputs:
- Timing: January or February 2011
- Timeline and Tasks to Prepare:
 - *Engage CT6 countries in the design of the regional exchange/workshop*
 - *Insert the planning for this event into the MPA Roadmap*
 - *Conduct a technical review of what is needed in each country to apply an MPA Effectiveness Tool*
 - August 2010: Communicate with CT6 agencies/NGOs to get feedback (via a survey) on expected outcomes from and contributions to the workshop and determine to what extent each country has experience with or interest in developing an MEA tool.
 - August to November: Each country to identify high priority capacity building that is needed to improve MPA Effectiveness. The organizing team should develop a way to support countries to pursue this. Please note, some countries are already working on Capacity Building Strategies (Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Solomon Islands) while others may need some support to prepare for this exchange.
 - September 2010: Develop draft design for the workshop and circulate to potential participating agencies/NGOs for feedback.
 - October 2010: Refine and circulate workshop design.
 - November 2010: Create a working group composed of NCC Focal point of each country on MPA management effectiveness (possibly separate from MPA general Focal Points or MPA Network Focal Point, as persons would be tasked to organizing committee of this event)
 - December 2010: Finalize workshop design, plan, participants and materials for workshop implementation
 - January 2011: Disseminate key materials to participants and assign homework templates and guidance prior to workshop. Provide draft MEA tool prior to workshop.

8. Workshop Closing

Overall the discussions in closing were quite positive as most participants felt the event had met or exceeded its objectives and expectations. The workshop organization and materials and the range and quality of the experts were noted with appreciation. Participants noted that outputs from discussions on days 1 and 2 were exceptional given the limited time which was attributed to the generally good guidance provided by the facilitators, the interactive format and overall good organization of the workshop. Participants felt the task ahead was large, and although many of the concerns about “going regional” were clarified and addressed, additional discussion time would have been welcomed. One of the primary constructive comments received from the participants was that the workshop could have been four days.

The workshop participants agreed that the development of the Coral Triangle MPA System would be a long term undertaking which had now been catalyzed by this workshop. All also agreed that it would be critical to follow up on key steps to begin the process such as the initial actions laid out in the road map developed and presented herein.