

# TERMS OF REFERENCE

## STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS EXPERT WORKSHOP

A 1.5-day meeting to prepare a strategic communications approach in support of the RPOA 2.0

### 1.0 BACKGROUND

PT. Hatfield Indonesia has been appointed to facilitate and engaged to develop the renewal of the Regional Plan of Action (RPOA 2.0). PT. Hatfield Indonesia has prepared a team with highly relevant experience for the purpose of optimizing engagement of key stakeholders across different countries. The team will divide the consultation tasks across team members in the CT6 to improve time- and cost-effectiveness.

A coordinated participatory approach will be utilized to deepen the level of analysis required for effective planning and development of the RPOA 2.0. Strategic communications can support engagement of new partners and motivate change with different actors and stakeholders towards the CTI-CFF vision, goal and objectives.

During the review of the RPOA 1.0, a brief review was conducted of the communication landscape surrounding the messages and outreach activities of the CTI-CFF which may be relevant in shaping the CTI-CFF over the next 5 years. The supporting document aimed at compiling information for a more fore-ward looking approach to effective communications in support of the goals of the CTI-CFF and is available through the Regional Secretariat of the CTI-CFF.

The RPOA review suggested that 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 and that inclusion of the CTI in the budget of other Ministries or national planning agencies is also needed so that it is viewed as part and parcel of the mandate of these agencies. This will require work to communicate the logic of working at a regional level clearly and more effectively to specific target audiences and individual decision makers. More effort is needed 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).

It was recommended that 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. This clarity will help more people understand the actual value of the CTI and support it to achieve its full potential.

The review of the communications context to the CTI-CFF listed some key findings:

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

Digital channels make 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, a non-profit organization 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.

Everyone is competing for everyone's attention. While it may be easier for CTI-CFF advocates to inform people about the Coral Triangle, their voices are just among the thousands that audiences see and hear every day. **In a crowded communication space, it has become more imperative for CTI-CFF to produce compelling communication and marketing materials that would stand out and resonate with target audience. 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, higher by 12% compared to 2011.

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

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

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

Stakeholder prioritization is a tricky thing for the CTI-CFF, given the extent of the program, the geographical area covered by the Coral Triangle, 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 that stakeholder prioritization must be done according to the RPOA's Thematic Area, while 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-CFF must take a multi-stakeholder approach for it to be most effective.

Among the key stakeholder groups identified are the following:

1. **Communities** including resource owners, marine protectors, and consumers;

2. **Government**, both at the national and local government levels;
3. **Business** sector which is not only represented by the fishing/ seafood industry but all other related industries including among others tourism, manufacturing, etc.;
4. **Knowledge sources** comprised of the academe, non-profit groups, development partners, and other civil society organizations; and
5. **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 Coral Triangle, such a channel 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-CFF-related discussions. These issues include the following:

1. **Climate change.** Rising temperature impacts marine biodiversity. The Coral Triangle, harboring more marine species than anywhere in the world, is most threatened.
2. **Plastic pollution.** Millions of tons of plastic end up in the ocean and is poisoning coral reefs and other marine species.
3. **Human trafficking at sea.** Run-away migrants, fishermen, and laborers fall victim to human trafficking and are forced to fish in seas within the Coral Triangle region. Monitoring of fishing activities on the ocean, and transparency in terms of business practices at sea, are demanded by stakeholders.
4. **Sustainable tourism.** Amid growth in the tourism industry, destinations within the Coral Triangle region are threatened due to the volume of tourists and activities detrimental to the ocean and marine biodiversity. Calls for sustainable tourism get louder.
5. **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 Coral Triangle 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-CFF advocates to integrate Coral Triangle initiatives and ocean-related conservation efforts into the discussion space at the regional and inter-government levels.**

### **Key Finding No. 5. Technological advancements offer multiple opportunities for CTI-CFF 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-CFF program. Such tools are also creative ways to call attention to and increase interest about Coral Triangle conservation and other related programs.**

### **Key Finding No. 6. Authenticity is a must.**

In the era where social media abound and consume most of 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-CFF messages, given their natural connection with target audiences, particularly communities and consumers. However, identifying the specific person/s to serve as CTI-CFF 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 appreciates 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 this, 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-CFF program is hinged on people's action or response on the calls to conserve and protect the Coral Triangle 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 it is supportive of and will drive desired behavior and action as stipulated under the CTI-CFF Regional Plan of Action (RPOA). Documentaries about Coral Triangle, creative videos and illustrations, likes and shares on social media, opinion articles published in widely circulated newspapers are important but should not be the sole performance indicators.

**CTI-CFF 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 infrastructures that will give target audience 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-CFF's 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-CFF partners, without foundational directives from the region. Project ownership is attributed to the NGO-partner, i.e., WWF instead of the CTI-CFF's inter-government body. Others thought that CTI-CFF was just an 'ad hoc' project.

**Communication leadership at the CTI-CFF must be strengthened. There is a need for the CTI-CFF Secretariat to strengthen its capability to plan, conceptualize, implement, and evaluate communication and marketing campaigns at the regional level. It 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 Coral Triangle Region as a destination and a regional brand. Unfortunately, the region is yet to pursue a strong and strategic branding program for the Coral Triangle.

**The CTI-CFF may wish to invest in a cohesive and strategic destination branding program not only to help create awareness about the Coral Triangle 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 Coral Triangle region that can be dubbed as CT's "best of the best". In this campaign, the values of the Coral Triangle as a destination would be highlighted through memorable experiences unique to the region.**

These key findings will form the context to a strategic communications expert workshop where experts will help draft a strategic communications plan in support of the RPOA 2.0. This Terms of Reference (ToR) describes the objective of the strategic communications expert workshop and tentative agenda.

## **2.0 WORKSHOP OBJECTIVE**

The expert workshop will comprise a 1.5-day workshop with the participants as recommended by the NCC. The objectives are to provide relevant expertise to draft a strategic communications plan in support of the RPOA 2.0. and to compile further recommendations and relevant information.

## **3.0 DETAILS AND AGENDA**

Details and agenda of the meeting are as follows:

Date : May 22 – 23, 2019

Venue : to be confirmed in Metro Manilla, Philippines

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<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
<b>Day 1 Sharing information on CTICFF and communication context</b>	
12:30 – 13:30	Networking/introductory lunch
13:30 – 14:00	Introductions by workshop facilitator (Nini Santos) and lead consultant (Lida Pet-Soede), restating the objectives
14:00 – 15:00	Background information sessions with presentations on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CTI-CFF – history and characteristics (20 minutes - RS)</li><li>• RPOA 2.0 direction (10 minutes - Lida Pet-Soede)</li><li>• Communications context to the CTI-CFF (30 minutes Nini Santos)</li></ul>
15.00 – 15.30	Q&A and General Discussion
15.30 – 15.45	<i>Tea and coffee break</i>
15:45 – 16:45	Expert presentations (2-3), Q&A
16.45 – 17.00	Plan for next day
18.30 – 20.00	Group dinner

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<b>Time</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
<b>Day 2 – expert workshop – design of strategic communications for RPOA 2.0</b>	
08.30 – 08.30	Assembly / Registration
08.30 – 09.00	Recap of Previous Day Discussions Introductory Lecture
09.00 – 10.30	Workshop Exercise 1: Mapping out Communication Issues and Stakeholders
10.30 - 10.45	<i>Tea and coffee break</i>
10.45 – 11.00	Brief Lecture: Tips in Developing Messages
11.00 – 12.30	Workshop Exercise 2: Developing Stakeholder-Specific Messages
12.30 – 01.30	<i>Lunch break</i>
01.30 – 02.30	Plenary Discussion: CTI-CFF Key Messages
02.30 – 04.00	Workshop Exercise 3: Ideas! Ideas! CTI-CFF Communication Strategies
04.00 – 04.15	<i>Afternoon break</i>
04.15 – 04.45	General Discussion – Next Steps and ‘feel the pulse’
04.45 – 05.00	Wrap-Up / Closing

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