

Australian Government Coral Triangle Initiative Support Activities

Regional

Establishment of a permanent regional secretariat

Australia is assisting the Coral Triangle countries to establish a permanent Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) Regional Secretariat. This assistance is being provided through the CTI Coordination Mechanisms Working Group and is responsive to the needs and progress of the countries. To date, Australia's support has included:

- drafting of the agreement to establish a permanent secretariat, regulations to govern financial and human resource management by the Secretariat, and rules to govern the operation of the Initiative.
- assisting countries with the ratification of the agreement to establish a permanent secretariat.
- developing operation plans, staffing structures and budgets for the regional secretariat, including scenarios for its growth over time
- facilitating a recruitment process for the inaugural executive director of the CTI Regional Secretariat.
- developing financial and human resource management systems for the secretariat.

A financial resources strategy for the CTI

Australia is co-investing in work led by the Asian Development Bank to assist the Financial Resources Working Group to prepare a long-term financial resources strategy for the CTI.

The strategy will identify medium and long-term resourcing needs of the CTI as it works to achieve its goals, and put forward options for fund generation and mobilisation mechanisms. The work will also support a business development unit within the regional secretariat tasked with generating funding support for the implementation of CTI projects.

Building capacity for integrated marine planning and management

Working with Conservation International, Australia is building understanding of, and capacity for, integrated marine planning and management. This support is being provided under the Seascapes Goal of the CTI Regional Plan of Action.

Seascapes, and other similar approaches, seek to integrate different policy and management efforts across a geographically-defined area. They present an opportunity to consider a holistic approach that can best utilise and draw together tools such as MPAs, livelihood development strategies, fisheries management etc, to achieve biodiversity, fisheries, adaptation, development and other objectives.

Generating knowledge for regional policy and planning

The Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) is collating ecological and socio-economic datasets. The information CSIRO gathers will help to enhance the understanding of regional-scale and trans-boundary issues important to the CTI goals and objectives. This will support the work of the Seascapes Working Group to identify priority seascapes, assist with the further development of the Coral Triangle Atlas, and inform regional policy and planning through improved knowledge of the marine assets of the Coral Triangle, and the threats to those assets.

Sub-regional

Arafura and Timor Seas

Australia is working with Indonesia and Timor-Leste to cooperatively manage the shared ecosystems of the Arafura and Timor seas, and is co-investing in the Global Environment Facility-funded Arafura and Timor Seas Ecosystem Action project as part of this work.

To date, this project has produced a trans-boundary diagnostic analysis, which identifies marine environmental issues that go across the borders of the countries sharing the Arafura and Timor seas. The project has also developed a strategic action program which identifies shared goals, strategies and actions to address the issues identified under the analysis.

In addition, the project has been running a number of on-ground activities that demonstrate the value of working together through pilot programs. Examples of these activities include:

Coordinating workshops across fishing communities

Loss of fishing gear is a serious economic and environmental issue because it damages the economic sustainability of the fishery and results in 'ghost-fishing'—which poses a major threat to turtles and other threatened species.

Through this project, a series of workshops were conducted across fishing communities in eastern Indonesia, which have helped fishers identify the causes for the loss of fishing gear. This has resulted in potential solutions being identified, with actions addressing the issue built into the new Indonesian Government Arafura Sea Fisheries Management Plan.

Learning exchange visit

Australia hosted a learning exchange visit by communities in Indonesia and Timor-Leste to Indigenous Australian communities in Arnhem Land. The visit focused on sharing experiences and approaches to community-based marine and coastal planning, management and livelihoods. A focus of the project was on piloting the effectiveness of such exchanges as a way of learning and enabling change. The project provided a number of useful recommendations in this regard.

Papua New Guinea

National Marine Protected Areas Planning

The Australian Government Department of the Environment, with support from the University of Queensland and The Nature Conservancy, is working with the Papua New Guinea Department of Environment and Conservation to undertake a gap analysis to help identify priorities for future work on marine protected area planning.

The project is supporting work to: define design criteria for marine protected areas; develop an updated bioregionalisation of Papua New Guinea waters; map existing marine protected areas; and undertake a national-scale analysis identifying priority areas for conservation management.

The project is also helping to build the skills and capabilities of the Papua New Guinea Government in conservation planning and data management by using a partnership approach to implementation.

A national and provincial learning and training network

In Papua New Guinea, community-based resource management is identified as the most commonly used and the most successful approach for marine and coastal management. Through this project, Australia is working to better understand and promote what makes that approach so effective.

Led by Conservation International, and carried out with the help of the Centre for Locally Managed Areas, the activity has brought together resource management organisations across the country to form a Learning and Training Network for community-based marine resource management.

The network held a series of provincial and national workshops that resulted in the formation of network hubs in five maritime provinces, and the development of a code of good practice for community-based marine resource management.

The national network and the provincial hubs are now working to promote good practices through disseminating outreach and guidance materials, delivering training and mentoring, and hosting learning exchanges.

The ultimate goal of the network is to strengthen ongoing community-based management and to support the growing number of coastal communities that want to maintain the major benefits they receive from marine resources including food security, livelihoods, and a healthy environment.

Strengthening in-country capabilities for marine resource management training

The Nature Conservancy, the Australian Tropical Marine Alliance and the Coral Triangle Centre have formed a partnership to bolster capacity in marine resource management training in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

The partnership has developed tailored training materials and provided hands-on training of trainers in four subject areas:

- Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management.
- Integrated Coastal Zone Management.
- Marine Area Management Effectiveness.
- Community-Based Marine Resource Management.

Training sessions have been followed by mentoring.

The project complements Australian support to establish a Learning and Training Network (detailed above). Both these initiatives are working to increase in-country availability and quality of training in key marine resource management topics.

Supporting the Centre for Locally Managed Areas

The Papua New Guinea Centre for Locally Managed Areas works with communities to support marine and coastal conservation and management through a network of Locally Managed Marine Areas. In 2010, the centre was established as an independent community-based organisation. Australian support was provided to help the centre develop its capabilities to deliver core activities, including community-based training. This investment specifically supported training in establishing mangrove nurseries and mangrove re-vegetation.

Enhancing livelihoods for coastal communities in Milne Bay Province

In Milne Bay, the largest maritime Province in Papua New Guinea, Conservation International is working to develop institutions and governance frameworks that foster sustainable management of marine resources at multiple scales.

At the site level, work is focusing on the island communities of Wiyaloki and Ware. The neighbouring island communities of Nuakata, Iabam and Pahilele are providing community-to-community mentoring in the areas of management and monitoring. Socio-economic studies are also being undertaken in these locations. This will inform livelihood development activities and the development of management plans for larger island groups.

At the provincial level, Conservation International is establishing the Milne Bay Learning and Training Network for community-based marine resource management. The Milne Bay network is part of a national program (see above), which is working to advance successful approaches to community-based marine management. The network has aligned its program with the Provincial Government Development Plan. It will work to strengthen existing community-based resource management projects and to provide easy to use outreach and management advice to the ever-growing number of communities that want to ensure the sustainability of their marine resources.



Developing livelihood adaptation strategies in Kimbe Bay

The CSIRO carried out a participatory planning process with representatives from provincial government, non-government organisations, community groups and industry. The planning process put together a wide range of information—such as projections of climate change, economic modelling, ecosystem services and socio-economic change—to identify appropriate livelihood adaptation strategies for vulnerable communities and their natural resources in Kimbe Bay. The project complemented support provided by The Nature Conservancy and the Papua New Guinea Centre for Locally Managed Marine Areas in Kimbe Bay.

Solomon Islands

Implementation Planning for the Solomon Islands National Plan of Action

This project supported work by Dr Hugh Govan to assist the Solomon Islands Government to undertake prioritised implementation planning for their CTI National Plan of Action. A finalised Implementation Plan is available to guide efforts by the National Coordination Committee, donors and implementing organisations.

A national strategy, and data and information management capabilities, for community-based resource management

The Nature Conservancy is working with the Solomon Islands Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster and Meteorology and Ministry of Fisheries to improve the quality, accessibility and use of information on inshore habitats and community-based resource management activities taking place across the country.

Information on coastal and inshore marine habitats, and community-based resource management efforts, will be collated and mapped. This project will also help to build capabilities within the Solomon Islands Government to maintain and utilise this database and spatial information, including for monitoring and reporting of national progress.

Using this information, a national strategy for community-based resource management will be developed with the national and provincial governments, communities and other stakeholders. The strategy will form a basis for prioritising work and guiding donor/external funding to areas where the largest gaps and needs have been identified.



Strengthening the role of provincial governments in the implementation of community-based marine and coastal resource management

A considerable focus of the Solomon Island National Plan is to support and strengthen community-based resource management. Provincial-level governments are widely considered to be a fundamental authority for such support.

This project reviewed the capacity of the Guadalcanal and Central Islands provincial governments to support community-based resource management. Based on this, a national strategy for strengthening the role of provincial governments in the implementation of community-based resource management was developed. The strategy is now informing other investments, including Australian-supported work in Western and Guadalcanal provinces.

Expanding the reach of community-based marine resource management support

There are more than 4,000 coastal communities in the Solomon Islands, many of them experiencing challenges in marine resource management. In this context, it is not cost-effective to provide support for marine and coastal management on a community-by-community basis. There is a need to develop lower-cost and more sustainable approaches.

This project supports communities to implement marine and coastal resource management by:

- sharing easy-to-use outreach and management materials through radio, video and print
- training of key government officers and community leaders
- piloting of learning centres in focal locations.

The project will provide ongoing distance learning support and advice to motivated communities in remote areas as they trial management approaches.

The project is piloting this approach to expand the reach of support in Guadalcanal Province initially, with the potential to expand to other provinces.

Supporting community-based marine and coastal resource management in Western Province

This project is supporting WorldFish to lay foundations for a coordinated network of communities in Western Province that will receive support from their provincial government to implement community-based marine and coastal resource management. Building on previous investments by others, this project is:

- reviewing the capacity of the Western Province Government to support implementation of community based resource management
- analysing the governance context for coastal resource management in Western Province
- developing systems for provincial monitoring of community-based resource management
- analysing socio-economic and catch data associated with near-shore fish aggregating devices to inform livelihood planning
- supporting implementation of the climate change adaptation action plans of Gizo communities.

Supporting community-based marine resource management Central Islands Province

This project is supporting the work of the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International to facilitate community-based natural resource management in the Central Islands Province. Specifically, the project is supporting:

- the development of a provincial natural resource management plan, based on community-based resource management approaches
- learning and training activities to support community-based resource management
- strengthening of the GERUSA (Gela, Russell, Savo Islands) Natural Resource Management network
- building of capabilities to support sustainability livelihood development, including training in livelihood assessment
- a feasibility study on the establishment of a fishers association.

Supporting the Tetepare Descendants Association

The Tetepare Descendants Association oversees the management of marine and coastal areas on and around Tetepare Island. This project has supported the association to undertake a range of marine surveys, including of fish stocks and other marine species, water quality, climate change indicators and turtle breeding habitat.

Supporting sustainable coral reef management through economic valuation

This project, implemented by WorldFish, aimed to support coastal communities and others to make more informed decisions about coral reef management through economic valuation.

The project was run across four communities that were selected as case studies. The observations across these communities showed that Solomon Islands' coral reefs provide a variety of ecosystem goods to its rural coastal communities, including food products, trade products and construction materials.

Sustainable coral farming training was undertaken with people from 12 communities that are currently involved in the wild harvest of corals. Information gathered during and following the training demonstrated that the majority of coral harvesters in the focus communities were willing to change practice from wild harvest to farming corals if they received training, knowledge and an appropriate price incentive.

The results of the study can be found on WorldFish' website at:

www.worldfishcenter.org/publications/coral-reef-economic-value-and-incentives-coral-farming-solomon-islands.

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Timor-Leste

Building national government capacity for marine and coastal management

To assist the integration of ecologically-based goals with social, economic and political needs and realities, Conservation International is working with the Timor-Leste Government to strengthen legal, policy and planning frameworks for marine and coastal management in Timor-Leste.

Information from scientific surveys and related activities are being formulated into materials to best communicate key information to support decision-makers in the process of reviewing and updating laws and regulations concerning the management of Timor-Leste's marine and coastal resources.

Conservation International is engaged across relevant national government ministries and agencies to develop the linkages and understanding necessary to establish an integrated, sustainable and collaborative approach to the stewardship of marine resources.

Enhancing livelihoods in Nino Konis Santana National Park

Conservation International is working with local communities and government officers to establish improved systems for management of marine and coastal resources in the Nino Konis Santana National Park.

Work is focusing on the communities of Com, Tutuala and Lore. There, Conservation International is working to integrate land-based threats into existing community marine management structures, and developing livelihood diversification strategies. The project is also supporting work towards planning at a national park scale, including through threat-solution modelling.

Mapping and assessment of coastal and near-shore marine habitats

This project produced the first national-scale map with descriptions and environmental assessment of the marine and coastal habitats and biodiversity of Timor-Leste. Building on work previously done on the north coast of Timor-Leste, scientists from Charles Darwin University conducted field surveys and broad-scale mapping of the marine and coastal habitats on the south coast of the country. This work was done jointly with Timor-Leste Government officials in order to enhance their mapping and remote sensing skills.

Supporting adaptation in Timor-Leste's coastal communities

With the exception of those in urban areas, almost all households on Timor-Leste coastline depend directly on agriculture and natural resources to meet their income and subsistence needs. For most, this involves a combination of farming, livestock-rearing and fishing.

This project, implemented by WorldFish, worked with focus communities to assess existing strengths and greatest vulnerabilities in livelihood systems. While focus communities differed considerably, vulnerabilities were common. The study identified heavy seasonal reliance on dwindling reef resources; low agricultural productivity; seasonal water supply issues; and a lack of access to credit as the major issues.

The project worked with communities to explore intervention options in select areas and map pathways to implementation. This work was supplemented by national-level research looking at indicators of vulnerability and integration of these actions into existing policy frameworks.

Indonesia

Supporting sustainable livelihoods in Rote-Ndao District

The sustainable use of coastal and marine resources is at the heart of Rote-Ndao District development goals. This project, implemented by The Nature Conservancy, aims to support the district to pursue this goal through the:

- development of a district-scale marine plan to guide the sustainable use of marine resources for social and economic benefits, and biodiversity conservation.
 - once developed, this plan will form a part of broader Savu Sea Marine National Park planning in addition to it being adopted by the district government.
- running a pilot program on the Territorial User Rights Fisheries management approach
- provision of training and technical support to improve mariculture practices
- development of a coastal and marine tourism strategy for the district government.

Images: Fishing boats near Senggigi, Lombok, Indonesia – James Butler, CSIRO
Timor Leste coastline – Sara Russell

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