CORAL TRIANGLE INITIATIVE
ON CORAL REEFS, FISHERIES AND FOOD SECURITY

CHAIR'S SUMMARY

FINANCIAL RESOURCES WORKING GROUP MEETING

23 June 2025

Manila, the Philippines

Adopted on
23 June 2025

by the Governments of Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste

INTRODUCTION

1. The Financial Resources Working Group (FRWG) Meeting was conducted on 23 June 2025 in Makati, Metro Manila, Philippines via hybrid mode.
2. **Ms. Alita D. Sangalang**, Senior Ecosystem Management Specialist, Officer-in-Charge, on behalf of the Ms. Mariglo Rosaida I. Laririt, Assistant Director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Biodiversity Management Bureau, Chair of the Financial Resources Working Group (FRWG) chaired the meeting.
3. The objectives of the meeting were as follows:
    - To provide updates from the CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat, including progress on:
      i) FRWG Focal Points,
      ii) Follow-up on FRWG Chair's Summary and SOM-19 Decisions,
      iii) Coral Triangle Conservation Fund (CTCF),
    - To present and discuss the proposed FRWG Budget 2026, in preparation of SOM-20,
    - To update from CTI Partners on their ongoing and planned contribution to CTI-CFF,
    - To explore ways on improving the Regional Secretariat's ability to mobilize resources,
    - To address other relevant matters raised by Member Countries or CTI Partners,
    - To facilitate the transition of FRWG Chairmanship to the new selected Chair.

CHAIR SUMMARY: DECISIONS

SESSION 1: OPENING

1.1 Acknowledged the Welcome Remarks by Dr. Frank Keith Griffin, the Executive Director (ED) of the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF) Regional Secretariat, who emphasized the continued importance of sustainable financing for the Coral Triangle;

1.2 Acknowledged the Opening Remarks delivered by Ms. Alita D. Sangalang, who highlighted the milestones since the last meeting and welcomed continued cooperation among CT6 Member Countries and CTI Partners and Collaborators;

1.3 Appreciated the keynote address by the Special Envoy of the President of Seychelles to ASEAN, H.E. Ambasador Nico Barito;

SESSION 2: INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS AND APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEUR

2.1 Acknowledged the participation of representatives from the Governments of Indonesia (ID), Malaysia (MY)–joined virtually, Papua New Guinea (PG), Philippines (PH), Solomon Islands (SB), and Timor-Leste (TL) and CTI Partners, i.e., Conservation International Global Environment Facility (CI-GEF), Conservation International (CI) Philippines, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Rare, *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH* (German International Cooperation Society–GIZ), Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN);

2.2 Appointed Ms. Monique Lydia Sengkey as the Rapporteur of the meeting.

SESSION 3: ADOPTION OF AGENDA

3.1 Adopted the Provisional Agenda for the meeting, with a suggestion from Indonesia to emphasize on the efforts toward obtaining observer status for CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat pending United Nations accreditation *(Annex 01)*;

SESSION 4: RS UPDATES

4.1 Acknowledged and appreciated the updates from the Regional Secretariat on:
- FRWG Focal Points *(Annex 02)*;
- FRWG Tasks and SOM-19 Decisions *(Annex 03)*;
- Coral Triangle Conservation Fund (CTCF) *(Annex 04)*;

4.2 Noted the resignation of CTCF CEO Dr. Yang Mee Eng in January 2025, as well as the termination of U.S. foreign aid through the U.S. Department of the Interior (US DOI) on 26 February 2025.

4.3 Acknowledged the operational challenges of CTCF and encouraged continued efforts of the Regional Secretariat to advance the CTCF's development;

4.4 Acknowledged the Initiative from the Conservation International Global Environment Facility (CI-GEF) in advancing the CTCF and tasked RS to have a close coordination with CI-GEF;

SESSION 5: CTI PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS' UPDATE

5.1 Acknowledged the presentations of CTI Partners, i.e., Conservation International Global Environment Facility (CI-GEF), Conservation International (CI) Philippines, Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH* (German International Cooperation Society–GIZ), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), Rare, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) *[Annex 05-11]*;

5.2 Acknowledged and appreciated the support of GIZ in assigning two full-time personnel, one based in Jakarta to support coordination with the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF), and one in Manado to be embedded within the CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat to provide technical support on Seascape-related work under the SOMACORE project, as well as to contribute to the broader Seascape Working Group activities of the CTI-CFF;

5.3 Acknowledged and appreciated the support of IUCN in assigning one personnel to serve as Marine Protected Area (MPA) Officer, who will contribute to the implementation of MPA-related activities under SOMACORE and provide technical support to the broader work of the CTI-CFF MPA Working Group;

SESSION 6: UPDATE ON 2025 FRWG WORK PLAN AND 2026 FRWG WORK PLAN

6.1 Acknowledged and appreciated the Report of the 2025 FRWG Work Plan prepared by the Regional Secretariat *(Annex 12)*;

6.2 Acknowledged and approved the proposed FRWG 2026 Budget for endorsement at the 20th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM-20) *[Annex 13]*;

SESSION 7: IMPROVING REGIONAL SECRETARIAT'S RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

7.1 Appreciated the Government of Timor-Leste for its remittance of the 2024 Country Contributions on 11 March 2025 and the Government of the Philippines for its remittance of the 2025 Country Contribution on 8 May 2025;

7.2 Acknowledged that Indonesia is currently undergoing internal process within its ministries to facilitate its contribution for 2025;

7.3 Acknowledged the presentation from the Regional Secretariat on the current challenges and proposed strategies for improving its capacity to mobilize financial resources, in response to the termination of key donor support including funding from the United States Department of the Interior (US-DOI) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) *(Annex 14)*;

7.4 Tasked the Regional Secretariat to provide a summary matrix of all CTI Partners' support to the CTI-CFF including the detailed activities and timeline.

7.5 Acknowledged the 2024-2025 Partners' support matrix presented by the Regional Secretariat covering the support areas and funding received by the CTI-CFF *(Annex 15)*;

7.6 Acknowledged and appreciated the voluntary contribution by the Member Countries and CTI Partners in supporting activities conducted by the CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat;

7.7 Appreciated the initiation of CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat to connect with Embassies and other potential donor agencies in Jakarta to promote the needs of CTI-CFF in collaboration with Indonesian Government;

7.8 Encouraged CT6 Member Countries and CTI Partners to support the Regional Secretariat in implementing the proposed resource mobilization plan, which includes CT6 Member Countries and CTI Partners voluntary contribution and direct support to the Regional Secretariat;

7.9 Endorsed the Regional Secretariat's proposed action areas, including the establishment of a dedicated Resource Mobilization Unit, the development of a multi-year fundraising strategy aligned with RPOA 2.0, the enhancement of donor engagement capabilities, and improvements to the Regional Secretariat's visibility and digital presence;

SESSION 8: OTHER MATTERS

8.1 Acknowledged the presentation from the Regional Secretariat on CTI-CFF's efforts with the support from the Government of Indonesia to pursue accreditation as an Intergovernmental Organization (IGO) within the United Nations' framework and recognized the benefits of achieving IGO status, including formal legal identity under international law, the ability to participate independently in UN processes, and improved eligibility for international funding and partnerships *(Annex 16)*;

8.2 Noted that the June 2025 deadline for the submission of application for observer status at the United Nations General Assembly (Option 1) cannot be met, thus RS will pursue application through the United Nation Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (Option 2) to allow the Regional Secretariat and CT6 Member Countries enough time to prepare all relevant documentations;

8.3 Encouraged continued consultations among CT6 Member Countries to identify appropriate steps forward and supported the ongoing efforts of the Regional Secretariat to clarify and strengthen the legal and institutional foundation of CTI-CFF at the international level;

8.4 Tasked the Regional Secretariat to collaborate with the Government of Indonesia as the Chair of the CTI-CFF Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) and the Chair of the CTI-CFF Council of Ministers (COM) on drafting the template of the support letter to help expediting the observer status application process;

8.5 Acknowledged the 2024 audited surplus for USD 526,531 and endorse the use of USD 198,500 from the 2024 surplus to support the Governance Budget (e.g., SOM-20, IRC) *(Annex 17)*;

SESSION 9: CHANGE OF CHAIRSHIP

9.1 Acknowledged and appreciated the leadership of the outgoing FRWG Chair from the Philippines, which has served in this role for the past three years and extended sincere gratitude to Assistant Secretary Marcial C. Amaro, Jr., who recently retired, for his dedicated service as the FRWG Chair.

9.2 Agreed that the new Chair and Co-Chair are from Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste, respectively, who will assume the role from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027 subject to the SOM-20 endorsement;

SESSION 10: SOM-20 RECOMMENDATION

10.1 Approved the Financial Resources Working Group (FRWG) Chair's Summary to be brought to the 20th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM-20) for endorsement;

SESSION 11: CLOSING

11.1 Appreciated the excellent chairing of the FRWG Chair, as well as the participation of CT6 Focal Points, representatives, and CTI Partners and Collaborators;

11.2 Expressed sincere gratitude to the Government of the Philippines, particularly the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Biodiversity Management Bureau (BMB) and the Department of Agriculture Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) for hosting the meeting and acknowledged and appreciated the financial support provided by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the Blue Institute;

11.3 Appreciated the efforts of the Regional Secretariat staff both those who support physically in Manila and virtually from Manado, in collaboration with NCC Philippines, that ensured the success of the meeting.