



4TH CTI-CFF REGIONAL BUSINESS FORUM NUSA DUA, BALI, INDONESIA, 27-29 AUGUST 2015



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Six Entrepreneurs Recognized for Promoting Sustainable Marine Tourism in the Coral Triangle

Bali, Indonesia – Six entrepreneurs from the Coral Triangle countries that have successfully integrated sustainable marine tourism practices in their operations were recognized for their efforts to actively support the conservation of coastal areas, marine habitats, and marine wildlife and engage and support local communities in marine conservation activities.

The six businesses from Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Timor-Leste were recognized during the 4th Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF) Regional Business Forum, held in Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia from August 27-29, 2015.

The event was attended by more than 300 participants from over 20 countries, including high-ranking government officials such as the Minister of Tourism and Culture Malaysia Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz, Minister of Tourism Solomon Islands Bartholomew Parapolo, and Honorary Advisor to Minister of Tourism in Indonesia Indroyono Soesilo.

Government leaders at the conference also expressed support to enable private businesses to pursue sustainable marine tourism practices. “Businesses in marine and coastal tourism in the Coral Triangle must receive adequate attention and commitment from all related stakeholders: governments, private sector, academia and communities. This can be in the form of support for infrastructure development, a roadmap for sustainable marine tourism and promotion and market access,” said Mr. M. Eko Rudianto, Director of Marine and Coastal, Indonesia Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries in a speech delivered on behalf of Minister Susi Pudjiastuti during the conference.

During his keynote speech at the conference, U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia Robert Blake commended the efforts of the private sector that have led the way in sustainable marine tourism across the region. “I acknowledge the visionaries and leaders who have paved the way for sustainable marine tourism in the region and I hope more will follow your footsteps,” he said.

He underscored the importance of long-term vision in promoting sustainable marine tourism practices. “It is my hope that by planting the seeds in developing the Coral Triangle as a sustainable marine tourism destination, future generations 100 years from now, will stand amongst the shores of the Coral Triangle, and be in awe of the legacy of a pristine coastal and marine environment that we will have left behind.”

“This recognition affords an opportunity to profile the important contributions that entrepreneurs are making to realize the goals of the Coral Triangle Initiative in ensuring that marine resources in the region are sustainably managed. Profiling the work of these businesses in this way will help underscore the importance for the Coral Triangle Initiative to act as a vehicle to promote equitable resource management and forging robust and resilient local communities centered around sustainable marine tourism,” said Rili Djohani, Executive Director of the Coral Triangle Center, during the awarding ceremonies.

The winners were the following:

- **Reef Seen Divers’ Resort, Pemuteran, Bali, Indonesia:** Reef Seen has three ongoing projects that support marine tourism and local communities such as the Reef Gardeners project which trains and creates jobs for young fishers to actively protect the coral reefs, a sea turtle conservation project and a cultural dance project for local school children.

- **Scuba Junkie, Mabul, Sabah, Malaysia:** Scuba Junkie works with local schoolchildren to raise their awareness in marine conservation and marine mammal protection, runs a sea turtle hatchery program together with the local government authorities, conduct weekly beach clean ups and use renewable energy at their resort and provide waste management facilities for the local community.
- **Madang Resort Hotel, Madang, Papua New Guinea:** The company promotes sustainable management of marine and forest resources by the local communities to foster community tourism as a sustainable development agenda.
- **Evolution Diving, Malapascua, Cebu, Philippines:** The company helped set up the Malapascua Marine Protection Fund which is used to fund three patrol boats and 14 sea wardens to patrol local marine protected areas and helped in the installation of mooring buoys and viewing areas to lessen the impact of direct diver damage to reefs, The company also helped raise funds for the community after typhoon Haiyan struck in 2013.
- **Oravae Cottage, Gizo, Solomon Islands:** The company has helped establish a locally managed marine area around their premises and relies on solar power and tank water and provide a low environmental impact. They are looking into creating a more sustainable waste system. They also have coral and clam farming projects and works with local schools to raise awareness on marine conservation.
- **Dive Timor Lorosae, Dili, Timor-Leste:** The company is one of the first dive shops in Timor-Leste. The company collaborates with local organizations to organize regular beach clean ups and raise awareness about marine debris and to mark World Oceans Day and Coral Triangle Day. The company also works with various organizations to help in underwater scientific expeditions and monitoring.

The six businesses were chosen from 12 nominees submitted by various organizations across the Coral Triangle. There were judged based on their ability to achieve the following criteria:

- Actively support the conservation of coastal areas, marine habitats, and marine wildlife
- Engage local government and empower communities regarding planning and decision making about sustainable marine tourism in their areas
- Support local enterprises to promote and develop sustainable products under fair trade principles. These products may include food and beverages, crafts, agricultural products, etc.
- Improve the quality of life in local communities by providing social, economic, and other opportunities
- Provide training for staff and communities to raise awareness of the special qualities and sensitivities of the local natural and cultural heritage
- Utilize energy efficient technology and innovative means to reduce waste generation therefore minimize negative impacts to the natural environment

During the forum, business and government leaders from the six countries Coral Triangle also called for the adoption sustainable tourism guidelines and standards for developments and investments in the Coral Triangle's marine protected areas. In the policy roundtables, the participants agreed that guidelines for sustainable tourism in the Coral Triangle could be largely built upon existing globally available guidelines, but with some tailored components specific to local conditions and revised to become relevant to all potential tourism related sectors, and accessible by all. These guidelines include those established by international organizations such as the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.

By adopting standards, investments are not only conserving marine resources but also creating value "Value creation, recognition, integration, management and realization, are imperatives to sustainability, as they are to development," said Francis Lee, president of Raffles Marina and one of the forum speakers.

They also urged the government to work with the private sector and offer appropriate incentives remove disincentives to encourage them to utilize sustainability standards investment in marine sustainable tourism. "The private need to understand that no tourism without sustainability but when the government lack resources, the private should stand hand in hand protecting the area," Ismail Ning, Chairman of the Indonesian Marine Tourism Association (GAHAWISRI) said.

The participants also endorsed a plan to create a tourism branding and marketing mechanism for specific areas in the Coral Triangle that meet sustainable marine tourism standards that reflect the values of the Coral Triangle as well as ensuring quality visitor experience.

We hope that this three-days forum will provide solid recommendations that allow more stakeholders to be more committed in practicing sustainable marine tourism at their respected countries, for the long run,” said Dr. Widi Pratikto, Executive Director of the CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat.

The event was hosted by the Indonesia Coordinating Ministry of Maritime Affairs, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Marina Affairs and Fisheries, and co-organized by the CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat, US Agency for International Development, the US Department of the Interior, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Coral Triangle Center, and supported by WWF, The Nature Conservancy, Administration, the Coral Triangle Center, and supported by WWF, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation International, Tone, XL Axiata, and BNI.

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