



## **CTI/ABNJ Reception Remarks**

**Monique Barbut, CEO and Chairperson  
Global Environment Facility**

Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) and Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)  
Reception

Date: 9 November 2011,

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Venue: IMF Atrium (HQ1) outside Nov 2011 GEF Council Meeting Venue

I would like to welcome everyone this evening as we celebrate two unprecedented and ambitious marine partnership programs that bring together countries, international organizations, the private sector, and NGOs. They are the *Coral Triangle Initiative*, and *Global Sustainable Management and Biodiversity Conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) Program*. To help celebrate these programs, we are honored to have special company including: the Minister of Environment and Conservation of Papua New Guinea, His Excellency Minister Thompson Harokaq'veh; FAO Assistant Director-General, Mr. Árni M. Mathiesen; and WWF Board's Chairman Emeritus, Mr. Roger Sant.

Tonight, the Coral Triangle Initiative is celebrating a GEF program that was launched over three years ago, but cooperation among countries in the region dates back many more years. And today the GEF Council approved \$50 million, together with over \$270 million in partner financing, towards improving the management of fisheries and biodiversity conservation in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction. Like the CTI, this endeavor will rely on collaboration not just from countries, but also public and private sector organizations.

Partners in the CTI and ABNJ programs, are respectively coordinated by ADB and FAO, and include UNEP, UNDP, the World Bank, the private sector, and NGOs, such as CI and WWF. It is partners that make the ABNJ program unique and opportune for the GEF family, through willingness from industry leaders, such as the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation and Bumble Bee Foods, to help bring responsible fishing to all points along the line.

The CTI has succeeded in bringing together the economic and political interests in one of the most biological diverse regions of the globe. The High Seas or Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, often called the “iconic last frontier” and the last “global commons”, cover more than half of the surface of the earth and is worth well over \$10 billion dollars annually, and that is just for fisheries.

The Coral Triangle Initiative and the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Program might seem to be unrelated programs, but are, in fact, very much part of the larger effort of GEF and its partners to address global issues related to biodiversity and international waters. Losses of marine biodiversity, declines in fish stocks, and threats to marine ecosystem health and services are best addressed through well coordinated programs like CTI and ABNJ, which

present a unique opportunity for diverse groups of stakeholders to come together.

The CTI and ABNJ program not only share common goals, but also share functionally connected ecosystems. Highly migratory fisheries, such as some species of tuna, which inhabit marine ABNJ rely on the healthy ecosystems within the Coral Triangle to forage and spawn. Without managing all the environments that these commercially important species rely throughout their life history, conservation cannot be fully successful. It is these ecosystem approaches towards management that GEF sees as essential to a successful project or program.

I would like to congratulate the CTI and ABNJ programs for the high level of cooperation that existed among program partners. This is especially true among the many countries which are lucky enough to call the Coral Triangle their home. The spirit of these programs exemplify GEF programmatic approaches and showcase the amount of collaboration needed to have transformational impacts and address global environmental benefits.

As we look forward to the sixth GEF replenishment, we will need to rely on each other for cooperation more than ever. To meet the targets set forth in

the Convention on Biological Diversity and accomplish the objectives of the biodiversity and international waters focal areas, the GEF family will need to work together, to draw upon each other's comparative advantages, and more than ever in these uncertain times to be cost-effective. Based on the success and ambition I see in the room this evening, I am confident that we will not falter.

Thank you and have a good evening.