



**Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia
2020 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20036**

**Tel : (202) 775-5200
Fax : (202) 775-5365**

PRESS RELEASE

Coral Triangle Initiative Aims to Protect 75% of World's Coral Species and the Largest Extent of Mangrove Forests

January 22-24

An Indonesian delegation on Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security Research visited Washington, D.C. on 22-24 January to follow-through on the commitment made by the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) at the September 2007 Summit in Sydney, Australia.

The delegation headed by Prof. Dr. Indroyono Soesilo, Chairman, Agency for Marine and Fisheries was in Washington, D.C. to consolidate work and realize the leaders' goals to enhance the conservation of marine biological resources in the Asia Pacific region.

While in Washington, D.C. Prof. Soesilo and Ambassador Hasyim Djalal, Senior Advisor to the Indonesian Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Member of the Indonesian Maritime Council also participated in the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) General Meeting.

The delegation also held a number of bilateral meetings with the United States Government officials from USAID, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of State, and a number of NGOs such as the World Wide Fund for (WWF), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and Conservancy International (CI). The various meetings explored initiatives and cooperation on a number of priorities for actions: seascapes, ecosystem approach to managing fisheries, marine protected areas, climate change adaptation, and threatened species status.

To celebrate the Coral Triangle Initiative and take part to launch the 2008 International Year of the Reef, a global effort to increase awareness and understanding of coral reefs, and support conservation, research and management efforts, the Embassy of Indonesia, Washington, D.C. together with the WWF, TNC, and CI hosted a reception in the U.S Congress. The reception was well attended by about 70 guests including staffer of congress, US Government officials, and NGO representatives.

In the reception, Congressman Mark Kirk (R-III) stressed the importance of the coral reef and the Coral Triangle region as the global treasure and encouraged global action to protect it against threats of over-fishing, illegal fishing, and climate change. Ambassador Sudjadnan Parnohadiningrat highlighted that The U.S Government has been instrumental from the beginning of the inception of the Coral Reefs Triangle Initiative, citing the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Coral Triangle Initiative proposal, which was endorsed by President Bush and 20 other leaders of APEC. Ambassador Sudjadnan also welcomed the U.S. pledge made in Bali of around 4.3 million dollars for the initiative.

Prof. Soesilo highlighted that the human benefits of this unprecedented diversity and abundance of marine life are enormous. The Coral Triangle is an expanse of ocean covering an area of 2.3 million square miles (5.7 million km²), the equivalent to half of the entire United States. This area, sometimes referred to as the “Amazon of the Seas”, is the epicenter of marine life abundance and diversity on the planet. In some areas, it has more than 600 coral species (more than 75% of all known coral species), 53% of the world’s coral reefs, 3,000 fish species, and the greatest extent of mangrove forests of any region in the world. In addition, the Coral Triangle serves as the spawning and juvenile growth areas for what is the largest tuna fishery in the world.

In December of 2007, during the Coral Triangle Initiative meeting in Bali, the six countries of the CTI which consists of Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste agreed on a plan of action to move the initiative forward and ensure the region’s marine resources sustainability.
