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# the Coral Triangle newsletter

Updates from WWF's Coral Triangle programme

April 2010

## On the Trail of Climate Witnesses in the Coral Triangle

From July 2009 to March 2010, WWF offices in the Coral Triangle took part in an effort to document the impacts of climate change in the region. With funding from Hewlett Packard and using tools developed by the WWF Climate Witness programme, staff and consultants for WWF-Indonesia, WWF-Malaysia and WWF-Philippines collected testimonials by individuals who have been affected by strong climatic impacts.



Pak Mat, Climate Witness from Terengganu, Malaysia ©WWF

Climate Witnesses are important spokespeople in the fight against climate change, as they provide detailed, often dramatic evidence of the current impacts of climate change at a personal level.

Over the course of 8 months, WWF-Indonesia (Verena Puspawardani, Chrisandini, Ari Muhammad), WWF-Malaysia (Angela Lim, Melissa Chin) and WWF-Philippines (Denise Galvez) facilitated the collection of Climate Witness stories with their consultants in the field and with backstopping from the Climate Witness programme.

The personal and sometimes poignant testimonials from people such as [Mario Magayon](#), a fisherman in the Philippines, and La Beloro, a seaweed farmer in Indonesia, will now be used by participating WWF offices to further bolster their climate change programmes.

Find out more:

- ▶ [WWF Climate Witness programme](#)
- ▶ [WWF Climate Witness blog](#)

### In the news

#### President Arroyo Recognized for her Support to the Coral Triangle Initiative

Ms Arroyo was given the award for her "forefront efforts and advocacies in support of the CTI".

▶ [Full article](#)

#### Visayan Islands first Victims of Sea Level Rise

Portions of Danajon Bank, one of the world's most significant double-barrier reefs, are now below sea level.

▶ [Full article](#)

#### Coral Triangle to Preserve Marine Treasure

During the workshop "The Next Frontier: Forests to Reefs, Challenges & Opportunities" in Brunei, participants discussed the Coral Triangle and Heart of Borneo initiatives within the Brunei context.

▶ [Full article](#)

#### Dwindling numbers of turtles raise concern

Malaysia might witness the permanent loss of the leatherback and the olive ridley if people and the authorities do nothing to protect them now.

▶ [Full article](#)

WWF's vision for the Coral Triangle is to protect its unique wildlife, conserve its natural resources, and create sustainable economic opportunities for the people and communities of the region. Our work addresses tuna, live reef fish, turtles, bycatch, protected areas and climate change.

▶ more at [panda.org/coraltriangle](http://panda.org/coraltriangle)



Source: Coral Geographic (Veron et al., unpublished data)

## Two WWF Initiatives Take Stage in Brunei

Dr Lida Pet Soede, WWF Coral Triangle programme leader, and Dr Adam Tomasek, WWF [Heart of Borneo programme](#) leader, recently participated in "**The Next Frontier: Forests to Reefs, Challenges & Opportunities**" workshop, which was organized by Brunei Darussalam's Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources on 22-23 April.

The workshop was an opportunity to discuss recommendations and observations of both WWF initiatives within the Brunei context with other guest speakers. Dr Pet Soede discussed the outcomes of the [Coral Triangle Initiative Business Summit](#) which was co-organized by WWF and the Philippine Government in January 2010 in Manila, and which saw a flurry of commitments by fisheries companies towards more responsible fishing practices in the Coral Triangle.

During the workshop it was announced that Brunei will host a BIMP-EAGA (Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines - East ASEAN Growth Area) ministerial conference on July 7 on the Heart of Borneo and on marine conservation and fisheries management issues that could be relevant to the Coral Triangle Initiative.

► [WWF Coral Triangle Business Summit](#)

## A Snapshot of the Use of Natural Resources by Indeterminate People in Semporna, Sabah

A University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) and WWF-Malaysia survey conducted on 6 islands in Semporna provided a snapshot of the use of natural resources by indeterminate people. These communities are highly marginalized and are forced to extract marine resources (such as live reef fish) unsustainably, and often with destructive techniques.

In March, UMS and WWF conducted a workshop including community leaders, a representative from the Chief Minister's Office, the Semporna District Office, Humana Child Aid Society (NGO), Marine Conservation Society (NGO), and local authorities including the Department of Immigration, Sabah Parks and the Department of Fisheries to discuss the multi-dimensional issues to address legal and immigration policies, poverty, education and sustainable marine resource use.

**71%** fishermen have monthly incomes below the poverty line (RM500).

## Species of the Month

Meet the **blue whale** (*Balaenoptera musculus*), at 33 m the largest species ever known to exist. Despite its massive size—up to 180 tons—this animal eats almost exclusively tiny crustaceans called krill. Its heartbeat can be detected from 3 km away and its heart is the size of a Volkswagen Beetle. In the Coral Triangle, blue whales can be found in the Savu Sea, which was declared as a National Marine Park by the Indonesian Government in 2009.

## The month ahead

### INFOFISH Tuna Conference

May 20-22  
Bangkok, Thailand  
► [Find out more](#)

### Malaysian Seafood Expo

May 20-22  
Matrade Exhibition and Convention Centre  
Kuala Lumpur  
Malaysia  
► [Find out more](#)

### WWF Annual Conference

Kota Kinabalu  
May 11-13

## Staff profile

Jennifer Utama is Finance Officer at WWF-Indonesia for the Coral Triangle and Heart of Borneo programmes. On a day-to-day basis, she ensures that these initiatives operate smoothly by processing project-related payments, a key element in keeping both of them moving towards their goals.



©Jennifer Utama

Jennifer is no stranger to the world of non-profits, having worked before at The Nature Conservancy, and before that with a UNDP-funded project entitled Partnership Government Reform in Jakarta. This is consistent with her dedication to social and environmental causes, and also with what she describes as being a 'better fit' with NGOs compared to the corporate world. In fact, she enjoys the variety of experiences that come with her work at WWF, and the ability to contribute to the vision of the WWF Coral Triangle programme. This single thirty-something enjoys reading, watching movies and looks forward to her first snorkelling experience...



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## Leader corner

### Adam Tomasek, WWF Heart of Borneo Network Initiative

We have become so used to hearing buzzwords and catch phrases, we often don't stop to think what they actually mean to our daily work. Added value. Transformation. Leverage. Adaptive management. WWF's lexicon is littered with examples. We use them on websites, reports, proposals, presentations... even in newsletters!

Since late 2007, I have had the pleasure of working closely with Lida and a number of the WWF Coral Triangle programme staff as they roll out their work. The past year has brought WWF many shining examples of the power of the approach of the WWF Coral Triangle programme team: a Heads of State declaration, an eye-opening climate risks report, a forward-looking business summit.

From my point of view, this programme offers many examples of what the buzz words should actually represent. Expanding the reach of WWF's offices and programmes = added value. Developing innovations to put destructive industries on a sustainable pathway = transformation. Bringing independent donors and partners together to work toward a common goal = leverage. Quickly responding to opportunities in new policy frameworks = adaptive management. These approaches can be risky. They don't always follow traditional Network approaches, and require dedicated collective action.

The Heart of Borneo team benefits from working in the same region as the Coral Triangle programme. It allows our team members to regularly exchange ideas, talk through common challenges, brainstorm on responses, develop joint policy approaches and campaigns, and even gossip! This is a benefit for our teams but importantly also for the offices within which we work.

This is definitely a region where the buzzwords are being put into action.

► [Heart of Borneo](#)



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## WWF news

### WWF Hails Act to Protect First and Only Marine UNESCO World Heritage Site in Coral Triangle

Republic Act 10067 or the Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park Act provides more permanent local management structures, fiscal autonomy and steeper penalties for violations of the Park's rules.

► [Full article](#)

### WWF-Malaysia urges PM to Support Federal Laws for Turtles in Memorandum

WWF-Malaysia calls for better legal protection through Federal laws for Malaysia's endangered turtles in a Memorandum to the Prime Minister handed over on 7 April 2010.

► [Full article](#)

### New Study Says Increased Enforcement is Cheapest Way to Save SE Asia's Coral Reefs from Blast Fishing

The authors of the study in *Conservation Letters*, including Helen Fox from WWF-US, find that using marine patrols and enforcement to prevent blast fishing can be 70 times more cost-effective than rebuilding those reefs after the damage is done.

► [Download paper](#)

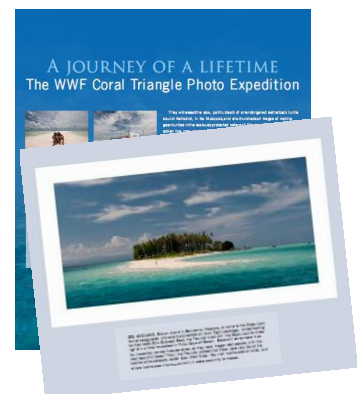
### Western Pacific Island States Taking Back Control of their Fisheries

A group of western Pacific nations is showing the way in making major fisheries both environmentally and economically sustainable, WWF said as the world's leading seafood fair opened in Brussels, Belgium.

► [Full article](#)

## Coral Triangle Photo Exhibit set for WWF Annual Conference

Photos taken by Jürgen Freund during the WWF Coral Triangle photo expedition will be sold during the conference so bring extra cash! In the meantime, follow the Freund's [latest photos and blog posts here](#).



(Exhibit design by Felix Mago Miguel)

## WWF Singapore and Friends/Coral Triangle Photo Expedition Hit Regional Dive Business Expo

WWF Singapore had a great presence at ADEX (a regional dive show), with a variety of WWF activities going on throughout the 3-day event.

The WWF Singapore information stand was positioned at the Conservation Zone, and the Conservation Gallery displayed a collection of beautiful photographs of the Coral Triangle by internationally-acclaimed photographer Jürgen Freund. Jürgen and his wife Stella attended the show as guest speakers and gave a fantastic presentation on each day of the show, sharing their latest photos and stories from their WWF-funded photo expedition in the Coral Triangle.

The new Singapore Seafood Guide was distributed at the show and across the region as an insert in the publications “Asian Diver” and “Scuba Diver Australasia”. In addition, the famous panda mascot was on hand to help distribute copies to visitors at the show. The seafood guide also featured in a presentation by Abi Virjee, WWF Coral Triangle Partnership Manager, entitled “Sustainable Seafood and How You Can Make a Difference”, which helped raise awareness about the ongoing WWF Singapore Seafood Campaign.

We look forward to attending ADEX 2011 next year, where the show will be dedicated to turtles!



© WWF

Photographer Jürgen Freund was in for a surprise at ADEX, when he was unexpectedly handed a handwritten note. It read: “I write to you from the beautiful country of Timor-Leste to invite you to consider becoming an Ambassador of the Environment for our country's first underwater photography contest, which will be held later this year in October.” Who signed it? Mr José Ramos-Horta (President of the Republic of East Timor).

### Recent publications

#### Global Patterns of Marine Turtle Bycatch

This study by Bryan Wallace and colleagues provides the first global perspective of fisheries bycatch for marine turtles and highlights region-gear combinations that warrant action and reporting/observation efforts.

Bryan P. Wallace *et al.* 2010. Global patterns of marine turtle bycatch. *Conservation Letters*, 1–12

► [Download](#)

#### The Loss of Species: Mangrove Extinction Risk and Geographic Areas of Global Concern

To study the impact of mangrove area loss on individual mangrove species, Polidoro *et al.* compiled species-specific information on global distribution, population status, life history traits, and major threats for each of the 70 known species of mangroves. Eleven of the 70 mangrove species (16%) are at AN elevated threat of extinction.

Polidoro BA *et al.* 2010. The Loss of Species: Mangrove Extinction Risk and Geographic Areas of Global Concern. *PLoS ONE* 5(4)

► [Download](#)

### WWF Coral Triangle Contacts

Dr Lida Pet-Soede  
Programme Leader  
[LPet@wallacea.wwf.or.id](mailto:LPet@wallacea.wwf.or.id)

Paolo Mangahas  
Communications Manager  
[pmangahas@wwf.org.my](mailto:pmangahas@wwf.org.my)

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