



FACTSHEET

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Assessment of the legal and policy framework for the Live Reef Food Fish Trade in the Coral Triangle Initiative countries

4 key areas investigated in the report



ecosystem approach to fisheries management



trade and market measures



port state measures



combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing

Background

The Coral Triangle covers more than 6 million km² of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Timor Leste. These countries have agreed to establish a common regional approach to improving the management of the Live Reef Food Fish Trade (LRFFT). The LRFFT involves the capture of reef fish kept alive for sale and consumption mainly in Hong Kong and China and includes a wide variety of species, mainly groupers, but also the CITES Appendix II listed Humphead wrasse. The consensus is that these largely unregulated LRFF fisheries are heavily over-exploited and in urgent need of better management recommendations to support this.

International frameworks do not adequately cover the application of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM), nor port measures within local (state and provincial) waters. Despite the lack of a specific framework devoted to the LRFFT, there are a range of measures under international fisheries law that CTI countries can use individually, or cooperatively to support the implementation of regional objectives to promote the sustainable management of the LRFFT in support of domestic fishery governance.



Humphead wrasse © Darren Jew / WWF-Canon

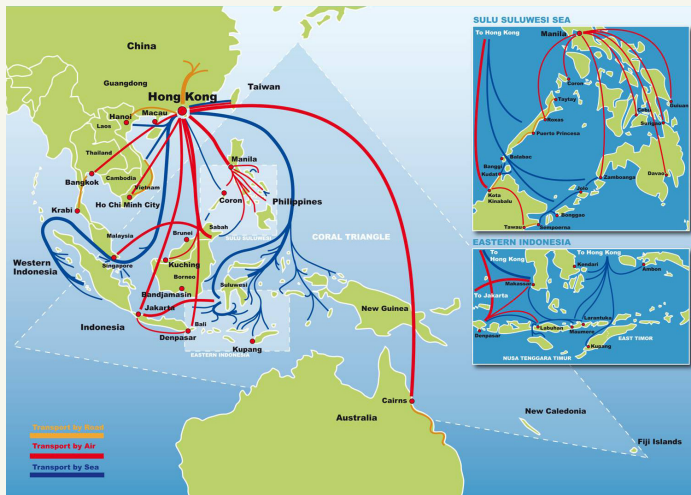
What you will find in the report:

This report examines the legal and policy framework for the LRFFT in the Coral Triangle, and specifically:

- Compares domestic implementation of LRFFT using benchmarks established under relevant international instruments and CTI management goals
- Highlights trends and gaps in domestic legal frameworks
- Presents options for CTI countries to adopt for improving LRFFT management

Download the report from: wwf.panda.org/coraltriangle/reefseafoodtrade

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Recommendations

There is an urgent need to establish a management framework to address threats to the LRFFT in CTI countries, including fish capture, culture, handling and transport and trading.

The report outlines options to align domestic implementation with international requirements and trade measures on imports and exports, and also shores up CTI objectives for better management of the LRFFT.

Specifically, measures are proposed for:

1. The capture of LRFF: The measures touch on seriously overlooked issues such as destructive fishing methods, the targeting of juvenile fish and spawning aggregations, and establishing licensing systems.
2. The management of LRFF aquaculture: The measures proposed address the need to expand sources of hatchery reared fry, adoption and compliance of best practices for fish feed, food safety and fish health and environmental impact, among others.
3. The handling and transport of LRFF: The measures focus on the need for improved transportation of live fish (e.g. using air-only modes of transport), and making sure transshipments only occur in designated areas.
4. Systems related to the trade and consumption of LRFF: Measures here target traceability and the need for strengthened licensing and registration systems for active and legal traders.

The success of these measures hinge on cooperation between CTI countries to:

- strengthen collaboration with destination countries traders,
- develop and adopt a best practice code across the LRFFT chain of custody,
- negotiate with international governments and partner with non-governmental organizations involved in the LRFFT, and
- harmonize collective application of CITES measures.

Trends & Gaps

Four key trends and gaps in the management of LRFF fisheries in the Coral Triangle region have been observed:



CTI members' fisheries laws and regulations promote an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries which is directly relevant to protecting target reef fish, habitats and associated ecosystems; establishing marine protected areas and fisheries refuges; regulating the capture and trade of endangered species; prescribing closed seasons and areas; and proscribing destructive fishing methods.



CTI countries have adopted general regulations on the trade of live reef food fish based on licensing systems albeit mostly covering live fish coming from aquaculture. Wild-capture fisheries remain highly unregulated.



Legislative measures are in place in CTI countries, mainly to regulate the trade of Napoleon wrasse under Appendix II of CITES.



CTI countries have adopted numerous flag, port and market measures to combat IUU fishing, however such measures do not specifically address LRFF fisheries. For example, regulations applying to major commercial fishing vessels do not cover the smaller vessels involved in the capture of LRFF species.