

Requests for Proposal

Tourism Development and/or Marketing and Branding

Terms of Reference

WWF is seeking expressions of interest from suitably qualified and experienced consultants or experts in the field of Tourism Development and/or Marketing and Brand Development to carry out activities to support a new project in the Coral Triangle Region.

Position(s): Experts for the project: *“Developing and promoting sustainable nature-based tourism in the Coral Triangle”*

Period: Various short term contracts between October 2015 and June 2017

Specifics: Suitably qualified persons are invited to submit short proposals and an indication of budget for all or parts of the activities described below. WWF has a strong preference for experts from one of the focal countries or with extensive evidential experience living and working in: Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Timor L’Este.)

Summary

Given the ecological and cultural diversity of the Coral Triangle, there is much interest in Coral Triangle countries around tourism development. This presents a strong opportunity to develop a Coral Triangle brand that delivers regional value from the CTI, sustainable economic benefits, and an incentive for better environmental management.

WWF has been awarded a project: *‘Developing and Promoting Sustainable Nature-Based Tourism in the Coral Triangle’* which is supported through funding from the Australian Government’s Coral Triangle Initiative Support Program.

The project will help to establish the enabling architecture to analyze and present the business opportunity to Coral Triangle governments and the private sector of a CTI nature-based tourism brand and the arrangements necessary to support and promote it. The project will work to showcase the Coral Triangle's extraordinary natural and cultural values, and provide a path to its sustainable development.

The long term vision to which this project will make a significant initial contribution is that: *"The Coral Triangle region is a renowned sustainable tourism destination with economic benefits flowing to communities, governments and private enterprise, providing a strong incentive to protect and sustain the region's natural environment."*

The long term goals to be supported by this project include:

- Governments invest in enabling conditions for sustainable tourism
- Communities take stewardship over managing marine habitat and resources
- Private sector invests in best tourism practices in the Coral Triangle

This document provides brief descriptions of the tasks. WWF welcomes brief proposals (4 pages maximum) for each task, or 10 pages total for all of the tasks described below.

Please submit your proposal(s) with an indication of the budget(s) by **close of business Tuesday 20th October 2015 to Ms Kathryn King, Manager, Human Resources, WWF Pacific**, either via email to kking@wwfpacific.org or deliver to WWF Pacific, Private Mail Bag, 4 Ma'afu Street, Suva, Fiji.

Please include a CV or business profile and credentials of your experience in this field of work and in the region.

Further questions for clarification of substantive aspects of the tasks can be sent to Dr Lida Pet-Soede via lidapetsoede@gmail.com.

Brief description of Expert Task Statement and Deliverables

Task A - Baseline (situation) analysis

Work with WWF and relevant stakeholders to conduct assessments and facilitate consultations as needed that will result in an increased understanding of the business opportunity for a regional brand by CTI proponents, key officials from relevant government agencies, and nature-based marine tourism operators and investors. Particularly, support data gathering and analysis for a baseline of the current situation as relevant to making a business case for conservation of natural capital for sustainable economic development.

The assessment will review:

- Current existing brands relevant to nature based marine related tourism in the region;
- The reach and attitudes around the term "the Coral Triangle"; different institutional models including those from other parts of the world (such as Australia's National Landscapes Program, Central American Tourism Council (CCT), National Geographic Society (NGS) International Geotourism Program, The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), The Mediterranean Experience of Ecotourism (MEET) initiative, and others);
- The current approach to marketing of marine destinations in the Coral Triangle countries;
- Recent market and destination characteristics (origin of travellers, purpose and frequency of travel, budget spent etc.);
- Relevant stakeholders;
- Future growth potential of nature based tourism.

Deliverables and Outputs:

- Contribute facts and figures and major sections of content for all assessment topics described above to the "Baseline report" (i.e. a situation analysis to ascertain what the shape of the opportunity is).
- Contribute data and arguments to support the "Business case for conservation of natural capital".
- Provide advice and feedback on outcomes of stakeholder consultation processes with regards the "Criteria and guidelines for a CTI sustainable nature based tourism brand"
- Identify areas for deeper analysis and promotion for the overall project.
- Deliver all contributions in close collaboration with the WWF project team as well as in a dedicated stand-alone report for this task.

Timing: Immediate – December 15, 2015

Task B - Business planning

Work with WWF and relevant stakeholders to consider the distinctive positioning and hero experiences of three of the selected sites (and surrounding area) in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Timor L'Este and link these with current and potential markets and their needs. Support the screening assessment of selected sites, including identification of threats and management issues in order to link findings with the identification of new opportunities and products that can deliver on the positioning for the whole seascape and what is required to bring them to market.

Particularly, support a destination development and destination management planning process with CTI seascapes of varying scales and levels of maturity and provide major support for destination market plans for three sites in the seascapes covered by the project (Timor L'este, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea) with the option for an additional three sites in other seascapes (depending on resources being made available by CT countries (Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia)).

Deliverables and Outputs:

- Contribute to the development of a prospectus indicating opportunities for nature based tourism development in CTI
- Support development of destination management plans for three sites
- Identify areas for deeper analysis and promotion for the overall project.
- Deliver all contributions in close collaboration with the WWF project team as well as in a dedicated stand-alone report for this task.

Timing: Immediate – December 2016

Task C - Brokering/socialisation

Work with WWF and relevant stakeholders to identify potential investors and to engage potential investors in the destination development process. Specifically, develop an investment prospectus for their specific interests. Support development of communication products to promote the project and the investment opportunity to potential investors.

Deliverables and Outputs:

- Communication materials, platform and strategy to situate the investment opportunity and brand in key media and business and political fora
- Investment prospectus
- Identify areas for deeper analysis and promotion for the overall project.
- Deliver all contributions in close collaboration with the WWF project team as well as in a dedicated stand-alone report for this task.

Timing: March 2016 – May 2017

Background to the project and contracts

A key objective of the CTI-CFF is to encourage industries that depend on the Coral Triangle's resources to co-invest in the ocean's natural capital, thereby securing their business and supporting food and jobs for coastal societies. Within this context, there is much interest in Coral Triangle countries around tourism development. A wide variety of in-country initiatives under various tourism banners already exists. To date there has been a narrative of "responsible tourism" (footprint reduction) within the NGO community but the CTI-CFF has not been strongly focused on tourism development.

In recent years, tourism related coastal developments have been increasing rapidly across the region, particularly in areas of high conservation value that are appealing to the growing nature-based visitor sector, culturally focused tourism sector, and dive-related tourists. This is due to many factors, including increased accessibility of some areas, due to associated airport or shipping related infrastructure developments; and the demographic growth of financially-able domestic and international travellers. However, rapid and poorly planned coastal development is putting pressure on available resources and polluting coastal ecosystems. The very developments that are being established to entice visitors oftentimes can damage the very resources the visitors are coming to see.

Nevertheless examples do exist of low impact, low volume, sustainable, high value or high profile nature based tourism in the Coral Triangle. These range from small-scale local enterprises catering to the backpacker market, to high-end eco-lodge, cruise and live aboard operations. The low-end local enterprises tend to serve a small not-well organised market of backpackers and more adventurous travellers that go to great lengths to visit remote areas where the nature and wild life is relatively untouched. Some of these enterprises are initiated by local communities or engage local communities throughout the enterprise. Conversely the higher-end operations existing in the region have generally been developed with international investment, establishing their brand through marketing the unique high value nature and community related experience for elite travellers.

There is an important opportunity to consider how such low volume, high value enterprises can be supported and encouraged, to contribute to improved stewardship over marine and coastal ecosystems, support local livelihoods, and contribute to a growing understanding of the importance for governments and private sector to invest in protecting the natural capital of the Coral Triangle. This will help the CTI-CFF progress significantly towards achieving the higher level goals in the CTI-CFF Regional Plan of Action (RPoA) with regards to healthy ecosystems, sustainable fisheries and livelihoods¹.

One mechanism to achieve this would be the effective branding and marketing of the Coral Triangle as a (The) premier destination for sustainable marine and coastal tourism. Through such branding and marketing the region can effectively increase its appeal to both: (i) sustainably-minded tourists (thus promoting tourism enterprises that meet appropriately selected criteria (see below), and can provide direct and indirect benefits to communities in the CT and support the management of areas of high conservation value in the region); and (ii) sustainable tourism investors, who will benefit from the increased profile of their investment(s), and who will, in turn, ensure coastal and marine tourism development maximally benefits the people and nature of the CT region.

¹ This RPoA highlights that healthy marine resources also contribute to a growing nature-based tourism industry in the region, generating tens of millions of dollars (US) annually and thousands of jobs. Specifically tourism is identified as an important sector that contributes to MPA and threatened species goals. Public /private partnerships that engage relevant industries can support the Coral Triangle MPA System by helping to mobilize new private sector financial and in-kind support for MPAs; as well as promoting industry best practices (e.g., minimizing "footprints" of tourism facilities on nearby MPAs, supporting community-based tourism and community benefits from marine-based tourism around MPAs) (Goal 3, Target 1, Regional Actions 4 & 6). Sustainable tourism is also identified as a sector that can help to improve the status of threatened species such as marine mammals (Goal 5, Target 1, and Regional Action 5). A number of the CT6 countries include national activities in relation to tourism i.e. Timor Leste's aim to strengthen tourism sector's contributions to MPAs and sustainable management of marine and coastal resources.