REPORT IN-BRIEF

Empowering Women, Peace and Security in the Coral Triangle: Bridging Civil-Military and State Boundaries to Tackle Maritime Environmental Crimes

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About the Cross-Border Cooperation on WPS and Maritime Environmental Crimes in the Coral Triangle Project

This Report In-Brief is a summary of the Major Report *Empowering Women, Peace and Security in the Coral Triangle: Bridging Civil-Military and State Boundaries to Tackle Maritime Environmental Crimes* (English only). This report provides a brief overview of the Cross-Border Cooperation on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) and Maritime Environmental Crimes in the Coral Triangle Workshop Series Project ('the Project') produced by Pacific Forum International, a Honolulu-based think tank, in partnership with the Office of Women, Peace & Security (WPS) at the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM).

The Project featured this research project and two workshops held in 2024: an introductory two-day virtual workshop, followed by a two-day hybrid/in-person workshop. The workshop series brought together representatives from CSOs, militaries, governments, and law enforcement agencies from Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Timor-Leste to explore the intersections of gender and maritime environmental crimes. The workshops aimed to develop an understanding of how maritime environmental crimes and insecurity uniquely impact women and girls in the Coral Triangle, and to identify best practices for a gender-sensitive approach when responding to maritime environmental crimes. Additionally, the workshops sought to foster civil-military collaboration within each country, and connections between civil society organizations and military organizations across State boundaries.

Published July 2024

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Disclaimer: This report reflects the views and opinions of the authors, as well as those who are directly quoted, and should not be construed as a consensus document. Neither the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command nor the Pacific Forum take an institutional position on the issues discussed herein.

How to Use This Report In-Brief

This Report In-Brief is a summary of the Major Report *Empowering Women, Peace and Security in the Coral Triangle: Bridging Civil-Military and State Boundaries to Tackle Maritime Environmental Crimes Major Report*. This report is a guide for navigating the complexities of applying a gender perspective to address maritime environmental crimes in the Coral Triangle within civilian-military contexts. This 'how-to' section provides a quick overview for leveraging this *Report In-Brief*, which was developed to aid CSOs, defense and security forces, and government policymakers in co-creating more collaborative and inclusive maritime environmental security responses. Recognizing the importance of accessible gender equality programming tools, this *Report In-Brief* represents a succinct version of the Major Report, and is therefore a practical tool for addressing harmful gender norms and advancing gender equality in maritime environmental security work.

Chapter 1: Introduction to Maritime Environmental Crimes: Maritime environmental insecurities significant threats to coastal communities and the blue economy, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region. This section notes that as environmental degradation -- such as illegal fishing, wildlife trade, and pollution, among other threats -- intensifies in marine contexts, there is an increasing need for thoughtful, gender-responsive approaches to tackling the challenges..

Chapter 2: Gender Dynamics in Maritime Environmental Security: Understanding the intersection of gender, maritime environmental health, and national and international security is crucial for addressing human security concerns. This section addresses human insecurities that are frequently tied to national and international security issues.

Chapter 3: WPS and Maritime Environmental Crimes Implementation: The WPS agenda provides a framework for understanding a variety of gendered insecurities. This chapter explores how to apply the WPS agenda to the challenges faced within the maritime environment.

Chapter 4: Civil-Military Partnerships for Managing Maritime Environmental Crimes in the Coral Triangle: Advantages of Working with Women's Organizations: An effective, if underexplored pathway for integrating an intersectional gender perspective into disaster management planning is through civil-military cooperation which elevates the knowledge and leadership of women and women's CSOs. This chapter explores the vital need for ensuring inclusive, effective, and human security focused maritime security strategies, and offers suggestions for best practices.

Chapter 5: Gender in Regional Architecture and Cross-border Cooperation: This chapter provides an overview of existing regional maritime environmental security frameworks, and discusses which currently contain gender perspectives and which require revision to take gendered considerations into account.

Chapter 6: Women, Customary Law, and the Maritime Security Environment: This section draws on international laws and frameworks in underscoring policy avenues for integrating a gender perspective into maritime security planning.

Chapter 7: Action Items and Recommendations to Advance Integration of Gender-Sensitive Cross-Border Civ-Mil Cooperation towards Combating Maritime Environmental Crimes: The report concludes with a list of action items and recommendations developed over the course of the project and committed to by the new Community of Practice established by the participants.

Introduction to Maritime Environmental Crimes

The fisheries and marine ecosystems of the Coral Triangle directly support the food security and livelihoods of over 120 million people in the region,[1] and indirectly support an additional 350 million people.[2] Maritime environmental crimes such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, fisheries convergence crimes, plastic pollution, habitat destruction, and wildlife trafficking jeopardize the health of fish stocks, marine habitats, and biodiversity in the Coral Triangle. These crimes undermine the livelihoods of communities reliant on these resources and diminish their resilience to climate change-induced shocks. The following is a brief overview of some of the most egregious and common marine crimes taking place within the Coral Triangle.

Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and Converging Fisheries Crime

Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing is a multifaceted issue encompassing various illicit fishing practices impacting marine environments globally. It affects both small-scale and industrial fisheries and occurs in coastal and international waters. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defines "illegal" fishing as activities conducted by national or foreign vessels in a country's jurisdictional waters without authorization or in violation of its laws. It also includes activities breaching national laws or international commitments, such as those agreed upon by States cooperating with a regional fisheries management organization (RFMO). "Unreported" fishing refers to activities not reported or inaccurately reported to national authorities, undermining fisheries management by skewing fish stock assessments. "Unregulated" fishing occurs in areas without any management measures, including the high seas.[3] Practices under IUU fishing include using poisons, noxious chemicals, or explosives, employing illegal gear, exceeding quotas, and poaching.[4]

Fisheries crime extends beyond IUU fishing to include money laundering, tax crimes, document fraud, food fraud, identity fraud, bribery, corruption, and wildlife trafficking.[5] These crimes often attract additional illicit activities like piracy, human trafficking, drug smuggling, and small arms trafficking. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), these crimes of convergence are frequently perpetuated by organized transnational criminal

[1] "Coral Triangle | Facts," World Wildlife Fund (WWF), accessed June 6, 2024, https://www.worldwildlife.org/places/coral-triangle.
[2] UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "The Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF)," United Nations, accessed June 10, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/coral-triangle-initiative-coral-reefs-fisheries-and-food-security-cti-cff.
[3] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "What Is IUU Fishing? | Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing," accessed June 7, 2024, https://www.fao.org/iuu-fishing/background/what-is-iuu-fishing/en/.i
[4] Gohar A. Petrossian, "Preventing Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing: A Situational Approach" 189 (September 2015): 39–48.
[5] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Fisheries Crime: Transnational Organized Criminal Activities in the Context of the Fisheries Sector" (Vienna, Austria: UNODC), accessed June 26, 2023, https://www.unodc.org/documents/about-unodc/Campaigns/Fisheries/focus_sheet_PRINT.pdf.

networks.[6] The FAO estimates global economic losses from IUU fishing range from $10 billion to $23 billion annually, with 11-26 million metric tons of fish harvested illicitly, representing roughly one in five fish worldwide.[7]

IUU Fishing and Converging Fisheries Crimes in the Coral Triangle

Indonesia, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Timor-Leste together comprise approximately half of the Coral Triangle region.[8] IUU fishing and converging fishery crimes in their waters harm the food, economic, and ecological security of each country. Destructive fishing practices such as fishing with poison, explosives, and illegal gear damage the region's critical marine habitats, such as coral reefs, seagrass beds, and mangroves, that serve as spawning grounds and migratory stopovers for commercially important fish stocks, charismatic megafauna, and keystone species.[9] The Arafura and Timor Seas Ecosystem Action Phase 2 (ATSEA-2) Project estimated economic losses from IUU fishing for Indonesia at approximately $70.26 million from 2015-2019, PNG at $8.84 million in 2016 and 2018-2019, and Timor-Leste at $30 million in 2018.[10]

The governments of these countries exhibit varying levels of political will and enforcement capacity to combat these crimes. Indonesian former Minister Susi Pudijastuti (2015-2019) took a strong stance, blocking 90% of IUU fishing by foreign vessels, sinking 556 illegal foreign fishing vessels .[11] In contrast, PNG and Timor-Leste struggle with limited monitoring, control, surveillance (MCS), and enforcement capabilities, making them attractive targets for foreign fishing companies with histories of IUU violations, particularly from China.[12]

Wildlife Trafficking in the Coral Triangle

Wildlife trafficking, a highly profitable maritime environmental crime, involves harvesting and selling wildlife and their products for food, medicine, pets, and apparel. It is often linked to poaching and other illicit activities, such as IUU fishing, human trafficking, drug smuggling, and document forgery. The Coral Triangle's biodiversity and porous maritime borders make it a hotspot for these activities.[13] Specifically, Indonesia, PNG and Timor-Leste are source markets for highly coveted fish maw, sea cucumbers, giant clams, sea turtles, sharks, rays, rare birds, reptiles, and terrestrial

[6] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Fisheries Crime: Transnational Organized Criminal Activities in the Context of the Fisheries Sector."
[7] United Nations, "International Day for the Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing: The Toll of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing," United Nations (United Nations), accessed June 7, 2024, https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-illegal-fishing-day.
[8] Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security, "The Coral Triangle Atlas," accessed June 8, 2024, http://ctatlas.coraltriangleinitiative.org/About.
[9] Sukanan Darunee, "Illegal Fishing Endangers Both Ecosystems and Food Security," July 18, 2019, https://www.sustainability-times.com/environmental-protection/illegal-fishing-wreaks-havoc-with-marine-ecosystems/.
[10] Arie Afriansyah et al., "Baseline Estimates Of RPOA-IUU Participating Countries" (Indonesia: Faculty of Law Universitas Indonesia, March 2021), https://atsea-program.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Final-Report_Baseline-Estimates-RPOA-IUU_FIN__organised_2.pdf.
[11] Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), "Legacies, Lessons and Lobsters: Indonesia's Maritime Policy in a Post-Susi World," January 15, 2020, https://www.csis.org/analysis/legacies-lessons-and-lobsters-indonesias-maritime-policy-post-susi-world.
[12] ATSEA, "Wave of Collaborations: Joint Actions in Enhancing Coastal Communities Livelihoods," Newsletter, ATSEA Newsletter (ATSEA, March 2023), https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-04/2023-Q1_E-newsletter_draft_Final.docx_compressed.pdf.
[13] T.R. Sobha, C.P. Vibija, and P. Fahima, "Coral Reef: A Hot Spot of Marine Biodiversity," *Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Bioresources*, Sustainable Development and Biodiversity, 30 (January 6, 2023): 171–94.

mammals, as well as keystone species that have significant impact on their environment relative to their abundance. The region's rich marine life is targeted through illegal means or sold on illicit markets, with legal harvests frequently underreported. Maritime transport is crucial for wildlife trafficking operations in the Coral Triangle and operations are conducted by actors operating on a variety of scales, from familial and artisanal trade to large-scale organized criminal networks.[14]

Marine Pollution in the Coral Triangle

Marine pollution in the Coral Triangle stems from various sources, including plastic waste, oil spills, and chemical runoff, severely impacting marine ecosystems and coastal communities.[15] Pollutants can flow from inland areas to the ocean via wind and rivers, particularly during rainy seasons. Inland logging, mining, farming, and development can create upstream chemical pollutants and sediment, damaging critical marine ecosystems such as coral reefs and seagrass beds.[16] Fertilizer pollutants can increase phosphate and nitrate levels, leading to algae blooms that can be toxic to marine life and people. Invasive species can be introduced through the aquarium trade and aquaculture and mariculture operations with insufficient biosecurity.[17] Plastics, in particular, pose a significant threat, entangling marine life and disrupting habitats.[18] Oil spills contaminate water and marine organisms, while chemical runoff from agriculture and industry leads to eutrophication, creating dead zones devoid of marine life. These pollutants not only harm biodiversity but also affect the livelihoods of communities dependent on marine resources, exacerbating food insecurity and economic instability in the region.

Gender Dynamics in Maritime Environmental Security

Women serve as the often unseen yet essential backbone of fisheries operations in the Coral Triangle, playing pivotal roles in every aspect from resource management to post-harvest processes. Women's extensive, albeit frequently overlooked, contributions span various sectors, including wild-caught fisheries and aquaculture, sales and marketing, conservation, and tourism, significantly bolstering the region's sustainable blue economy. Despite their integral involvement, policies and interventions in maritime security seldom recognize or address the unique challenges and critical input of women, underscoring the need for a more inclusive approach to maritime governance.

Women and the Marine Environment

Women play a significant role in the stewardship, management, and use of marine resources in the Coral Triangle, and women occupy important roles in the Coral Triangle's sustainable blue economy, providing paid and unpaid labor in

[14] The Asia Foundation, "Trade in the Sulu Archipelago: Informal Economies Amidst Maritime Security Challenges" (San Francisco: The Asia Foundation, October 2019), https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Trade-in-the-Sulu-Archipelago-Informal-Economies-Amidst-Maritime-Security-Challenges.pdf.
[15] Asian Development Bank, "State Of The Coral Triangle: Indonesia" (Mandaluyong City, Philippines: ADB, 2014), https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/42409/state-coral-triangle-indonesia.pdf.
[16] National Geographic Society, "Marine Pollution," National Geographic, February 22, 2024, https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/marine-pollution.
[17] Asian Development Bank, "State Of The Coral Triangle: Indonesia."
[18] International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), "Plastic Pollution," *IUNC Issues Brief* (blog), May 2024, https://www.iucn.org/resources/issues-brief/plastic-pollution.

capture fisheries, aquaculture, conservation, and the tourism sector. However, women's contributions are routinely overlooked in policy research, design, and implementation, law enforcement operations, and development interventions.[19]

Women are involved in every part of the fishing industry and fisheries value chain, although their roles are often devalued and ignored due to perceptions that fisheries are a masculine industry. Worldwide, approximately half of fishery workers are women.[20] While men dominate offshore and foreign distant-water fishing industries, women are heavily involved in nearshore and coastal fishing, gleaning[21] (coastal and nearshore resource harvesting with basic or no gear), and aquaculture and mariculture operations. In the post-harvest sector, women work as processors, mongers, business marketers, and buyers. Women manufacture and repair gear and provide financing and loans to others in the fisheries sector, and are overwhelmingly responsible for unpaid care and domestic work within the home, including raising children and managing finances.

Crucially, women in the fisheries and aquaculture sector contribute significantly to household and community food security. For example, research conducted in coastal villages in Timor-Leste demonstrates that women gleaners have a higher catch rate (100 percent) than men (84 percent). Gleaning provides critical sources of protein for family consumption in a country where approximately 75 percent of the population is food insecure.[22]

Women are highly involved in the management and stewardship of marine resources and habitats and therefore may have specialized knowledge that men do not. Women fishers and gleaners interact with the environment every day,[23] and notice species' size and abundance, reproduction, and distribution, as well as habitat health, which may inform their harvesting processes.[24] As harvesters, mongers, marketers, and purchasers, women may also be aware of maritime environmental crimes based on their engagement with fishers, middlemen, and other mongers. As a specialized form of security intelligence, such knowledge would be incredibly valuable if passed on to authorities. Women processors and mongers can also use their purchasing power to enforce conservation and management measures. For example, women processors in Indonesia's blue swimming crab fishery have been known to only purchase crabs over the allowed take size and do not purchase breeding females in accordance with the fishery's catch regulations.[25]

[19] U.S. Agency for International Development Sustainable Fish Asia Technical Support Activity, "Gender and Inclusive Development Action Plan (GIDAP)" (USAID, August 2022), https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00ZJZG.pdf.
[20] U.S. Agency for International Development Sustainable Fish Asia Technical Support Activity, "GIDAP."
[21] According to *Gender in Fishing*, gleaning is a fishing method used in shallow coastal, estuarine and freshwaters or in habitats exposed during low tide.
[22] Jenny House et al., "Women's Experiences of Participatory Small-Scale Fisheries Monitoring in Timor-Leste," *Maritime Studies* 23, no. 9 (February 5, 2024), https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40152-024-00352-6.
[23] Nireka Weeratunge, Katherine A. Snyder, and Choo Poh Sze, "Gleaner, Fisher, Trader, Processor: Understanding Gendered Employment in Fisheries and Aquaculture," *Fish and Fisheries* 11, no. 4 (October 29, 2010): 405–20.
[24] Weeratunge, Snyder, and Sze, "Gleaner, Fisher, Trader, Processor: Understanding Gendered Employment in Fisheries and Aquaculture."
[25] United Nations Development Programme, "Women Spearheading Sustainable Production of Blue Swimming Crab in Indonesia," UNDP, June 7, 2019, https://www.undp.org/indonesia/news/women-spearheading-sustainable-production-blue-swimming-crab-indonesia.

The Gendered Impacts of Maritime Environmental Crimes

Maritime environmental crimes threaten the food security of coastal communities and the women and girls who live in them in a variety of ways. In terms of family health, IUU fishing, fisheries crime, and habitat destruction directly and indirectly lead to a reduction in protein sources for household consumption and sale. Women may choose to skip meals to give protein to their children, putting these women at risk of malnutrition. Economically, marine crimes may result in the loss of commercially important fisheries and marine resources, and subsequently the elimination of women's jobs or significant reduction of their revenue. As household income and resources dwindle, women may struggle to have enough funds for their children's education, medical care for family members, or household savings. Reduced household income and resources can also lead to increased mental and economic stress in the household, which may contribute to increased sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).[26]

Women also play a critical role in supporting household economic activities through work within the maritime economy, such as weaving and repairing nets, cleaning, processing, marketing, and selling fish, gleaning, and supporting aquaculture and mariculture operations.[27] Much of this work is unpaid and can be dangerous. In Indonesia for instance, women who make and mend nets may suffer injuries, such as cuts or burns to their hands or bodies, from unmanaged plastic waste.

Maritime environmental crimes leading to the decrease of fish stocks also increases fishing effort, like traveling further distances to find fish and staying away from their families longer, with diminishing returns. As a consequence , the unpaid labor undertaken by women that supports this fishing effort also increases. This adds additional time and workload burden on top of housework, childcare, family duties, and paid labor -- all which can negatively impact women's health and wellbeing through the addition of extra mental, physical, and emotional stressors.[28]

Maritime environmental crimes also impact the livelihoods of men in the fisheries and marine resource sectors, disrupting family and community structure and stability.[29] In many communities in the Coral Triangle, gender norms dictate that men reach specific culturally ascribed milestones such as getting married, having a good job, owning a home, and having children. The impacts of maritime environmental crimes on fisheries, natural resources, and coastal tourism may reduce employment opportunities for men, thereby blocking them from achieving these masculine milestones. In such circumstances, men, young men in particular (and sometimes young women), may seek out other

[26] Kumara Anggita, "How the Fisherwomen of Java Rise above Climate Change and an Increase in Gender-Based Violence," Women's Resilience To Disasters Knowledge Hub, *Case Studies* (blog), October 31, 2021, https://wrd.unwomen.org/explore/insights/how-fisherwomen-java-rise-above-climate-change-and-increase-gender-based-violence .

[27] Arlene Nietes Satapornvanit, "The Importance of Gender in Fisheries: The USAID Oceans Experience," *Fish for the People* 16, no. 2 (2018), https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00WK6D.pdf.

[28] UN WomenWatch, "Women, Gender Equality and Climate Change" (United Nations, 2009), https://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/climate_change/downloads/Women_and_Climate_Change_Factsheet.pdf.

[29] Faith Ngum and Radha Barooah, "Impact of Biodiversity Loss and Environmental Crime on Women from Rural and Indigenous Communities Evidence from Ecuador, Mexico, Cameroon, and Indonesia" (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, October 2023), https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Faith-Ngum-Radha-Barooah-Impact-of-biodiversity-loss-and-environmental-crime-on-women-from-rural-and-indigenous-communities-GI-TOC-October-2023.v3.pdf.

forms of employment, such as agriculture or mining, engage in criminal activity, or migrate to urban areas or abroad to reach these milestones, such as owning a home and start a family.[30]

Under such circumstances, both women and men may become victims of trafficking in persons or forced labor.[31] Men who remain in the fisheries sector may be subject to unscrupulous recruitment practices and hired under false pretenses. Specifically, men may be trafficked on to foreign distant-water fishing vessels, where they may be forced to work at sea for years at a time in unsafe and inhumane working conditions, subject to slave-like circumstances and abuse without pay or legal redress.[32] The 2015 Benjina Island case illustrates these challenges. Over 4,000 foreign fishermen were trafficked, stranded, and enslaved on Benjina Island. Some fishers had been trapped on Benjina Island for over 20 years and had families with local women. When Indonesian authorities rescued and repatriated the trapped fishermen, they removed men from their families. Separating families not only disrupted relationships and family structures, but it also left many families without their primary breadwinner.[33]

Women may also seek employment in industrial fish processing operations, where they may also be subject to unscrupulous or fraudulent hiring practices, the withholding of wages and documents, physical and sexual abuse, and unsafe working conditions.[34] This notably occurs in Indonesia, which is home to a robust domestic fishing and fish processing industry, and has over 2.3 million nationals working onboard foreign fishing vessels.[35] Women from inland provinces can be particularly vulnerable to labor and human rights abuses in the fish processing industry as they have migrated away from their social safety net.

Maritime environmental crimes reduce the resilience of marine habitats and species to climate change-induced shocks such as severe storm damage, coral bleaching, and fish stock collapse. These can further exacerbate the unique threats and vulnerabilities faced by women and girls to climate change and disasters such as increased SGBV, displacement, and limited access to health care. Climate shocks affect the economic viability of women-heavy maritime industries such as seaweed farming. In Indonesia, women are the primary contributors to the seaweed farming industry, which employs

[30] Elizabeth Jones, “The Environmental and Socioeconomic Effects of Overfishing Due to the Globalization of the Seafood Industry” (Thomas Jefferson University | College of Science, Health, and the Liberal Arts), accessed June 10, 2024, http://www.philau.edu/collegestudies/Documents/Elizabeth%20Jones.pdf.
[31] United States Department of Justice, “Task Force on Human Trafficking in Fishing in International Waters” (United States Department of Justice, January 2021), https://www.justice.gov/crt/page/file/1360366/dl?inline#:~:text=Beyond%20the%20significant%20human%20costs,13%20and%20the%20international%20community.
[32] Environmental Justice Foundation, “Blood and Water: Human Rights Abuse in the Global Seafood Industry” (London, United Kingdom: EJF, May 6, 2019), https://ejfoundation.org/reports/blood-and-water-human-rights-abuse-in-the-global-seafood-industry.
[33] Associated Press, “4,000 Foreign Fishermen Stranded on Remote Indonesian Islands,” The Guardian, March 28, 2015, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/28/4000-foreign-fishermen-stranded-on-remote-indonesian-islands.
[34] National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, “Human Trafficking in the Seafood Supply Chain,” Report to Congress, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, December 23, 2020, https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2020-12/DOSNOAAReport_HumanTrafficking.pdf.
[35] International Organization for Migration, “Report on Human Trafficking, Forced Labour and Fisheries Crime in the Indonesian Fishing Industry” (coventry university, 2016), https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl486/files/country/docs/indonesia/Human-Trafficking-Forced-Labour-and-Fisheries-Crime-in-the-Indonesian-Fishing-Industry-IOM.pdf.

over one million Indonesians. However, warming ocean temperatures and erratic weather patterns are leading to disease and crop death, which are reducing individual and household profits from farms.[36]

Intersectional identities[37] can exacerbate all of these insecurities. Women who live in rural areas; are members of indigenous, stateless, or marginalized communities; have mental or physical disabilities; or are elderly are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of maritime environmental crimes on their livelihood and wellbeing as they are even further outside social and governmental safety nets.[38]

Importantly, women are not only victims or intelligence sources of maritime environmental crimes, they are also perpetrators of such crimes. Like men, the reasons for women to engage in maritime environmental crimes are complex.[39] Women may engage in or finance maritime environmental crimes such as IUU fishing and wildlife trafficking to provide food for their families. Similar rationale may lead women to engage in smuggling activities or serve as recruiters or middlewomen for human traffickers. It is therefore important to balance robust enforcement and prosecution of maritime environmental crimes with a nuanced understanding of the socioeconomic factors that compel individuals, women, men, and non-binary individuals to partake in such activities.[40]

WPS and Maritime Environmental Crimes Implementation

Introduction to the WPS Agenda

The United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) was adopted as the Women, Peace and Security agenda on October 31, 2000.[41] This resolution emphasizes the crucial role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response, and in post-conflict reconstruction while stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. UNSCR 1325 also urges all member states to codify national policies for their own WPS implementation through WPS National Action Plans (NAPs). Additionally, it calls on all member states to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspectives in all UN peace and security efforts, and take increased measures to protect women and girls from SGBV during crises and conflicts.[42]

[36] UN Women, "How Gender Inequality and Climate Change Are Interconnected," *Explainer* (blog), February 28, 2022, https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/explainer/2022/02/explainer-how-gender-inequality-and-climate-change-are-interconnected.

[37] "Intersectional identity" refers to the complex and multifaceted nature of an individual's social identity, which is shaped by various factors such as race, gender, class, sexuality, disability, nationality, and other dimensions of identity. Coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, intersectionality highlights how different forms of discrimination and oppression can intersect and overlap, resulting in unique experiences of privilege or marginalization for individuals who embody multiple identities.

[38] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Tackling Crimes That Affect Our Ocean" (UNODC, May 30, 2024), https://www.unodc.org/documents/Maritime_crime/UNODC_Tackling_Crimes_that_Affect_our_Ocean.pdf.

[39] Jessica S. Kahler and Marisa A. Rinkus, "Women and Wildlife Crime: Hidden Offenders, Protectors and Victims," *Oryx* 55, no. 6 (November 2021): 835–43, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0030605321000193.

[40] Kahler and Rinkus, "Women and Wildlife Crime: Hidden Offenders, Protectors and Victims."

[41] United Nations Security Council, "Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security," United Nations, October 31, 2000, https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/.

[42] United Nations Security Council, "The Four Pillars of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325," United Nations, accessed June 12, 2024, https://www.un.org/shestandsforpeace/content/four-pillars-united-nations-security-council-resolution-1325.

While this resolution issued a broad application of these principles mainly focused on post-conflict situations, the application has expanded significantly in the last 24 years. For example, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which combats transnational organized crime at sea through its Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP) initiative, has sought to apply UNSCR 1325 to the planning and implementation of its operations.[43] The WPS agenda has also grown to emphasize the need to consider the diverse ways in which gender influences security issues by integrating a gender perspective. More than including women equally at all leadership levels, a gender perspective enhances approaches to combating environmental crimes and illicit maritime activities like human trafficking, drug trafficking, labor trafficking, and weapon smuggling. Recognizing gendered dynamics is crucial for effective intervention and policy development in the Coral Triangle region.

As global awareness grows regarding the critical links between maritime environmental health and national security, attention has turned to the pressing challenges posed by resource competition. Marine degradation fuels instability, impacting both terrestrial and maritime communities, particularly in the Coral Triangle. Despite women constituting a significant portion of fishery workers, their distinct vulnerabilities to maritime environmental crimes remain underappreciated. Addressing the complexities of maritime environmental crimes becomes more effective when incorporating WPS principles. Integrating a gender perspective into security strategy and operational planning fosters inclusivity, resulting in more comprehensive solutions. Such an approach enhances community stability and security by recognizing the unique contributions and vulnerabilities of all society members. Gender-transformative strategies in tackling maritime crimes will not only improve national security but also bolster the safety and resilience of the Coral Triangle region.

Gender-Transformative Approaches

Transformative approaches go beyond a focus on "gaps" and simply acknowledging gender differences or adding women to a process. "Structural change" is the keyword in gender-transformative programming. Evidence shows that gender transformation needs sustained investments over time to change individual agency; gender roles, norms, and structural power dynamics; as well as legislative and institutional structures. Empowering women and girls and promoting them in positions of social and political influence is intrinsic to transformative change. People of all genders, in particular men and boys, can and should be actively involved as gender equality allies and agents of transformative change. Combined action across scales from the individual level through communities to systems is imperative.

[43] United Nations, "Oceans and the Law of the Sea," United Nations (United Nations), accessed March 26, 2024, https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/oceans-and-the-law-of-the-sea.

Applying the WPS Agenda to Maritime Environmental Security

Incorporating principles from the WPS agenda is vital for addressing maritime environmental crimes in the Coral Triangle, as it promotes inclusive participation, strengthens protection for vulnerable groups, advances sustainable development, and supports gender equality and community resilience. The WPS agenda's four pillars -- Participation, Protection, Prevention, and Relief and Recovery -- provide a comprehensive framework for addressing these challenges inclusively, and more effectively, with a gender-transformative approach.[44]

The WPS Participation Pillar and Maritime Environmental Security

The participation pillar advocates for women's inclusion in decision-making processes at all levels. In the context of maritime environmental crimes, this means involving women in the governance and management of marine resources. Women in coastal communities often have valuable traditional knowledge about marine ecosystems and are heavily involved in fisheries and aquaculture. Empowering women through capacity-building programs and leadership opportunities can enhance the effectiveness of environmental policies and enforcement mechanisms. The following are some specific ways the full report explores the Participation pillar in the context of maritime environmental security:

- Empowering Women in Law Enforcement and Conservation
- Women in Decision-Making
- Women-Led Marine Protection and Conservation Initiatives
- Public Awareness and Advocacy

The WPS Protection Pillar and Maritime Environmental Security

The protection pillar focuses on safeguarding women's rights and ensuring their safety in conflict and post-conflict settings. Applying this to maritime environmental crimes involves protecting women from the violence and exploitation associated with IUU fishing and wildlife trafficking. Women in coastal communities are at risk of human trafficking and labor exploitation within illegal fishing operations. Strengthening legal frameworks and enforcement, along with providing support services for victims, can mitigate these risks. The full report goes into details of the following ways in which the Protection pillar applies to maritime environmental crimes:

- Livelihoods and Food Security
- Health Impacts
- Sexual- and Gender-Based Violence
- Unsafe Working Environments

The WPS Prevention Pillar and Maritime Environmental Security

The prevention pillar aims to address the root causes of conflict and insecurity. For maritime environmental crimes, this involves tackling factors such as poverty, lack of education, and weak governance that contribute to illegal activities. Empowering women through education and economic opportunities can reduce their vulnerability to exploitation and involvement in environmental crimes. Community-based surveillance programs that involve women can also enhance the detection and prevention of illegal activities. The full report delves into the following ways to apply the Prevention pillar to maritime environmental security:

[44] United States Institute of Peace, “What Is UNSCR 1325? An Explanation of the Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security,” accessed June 11, 2024, https://www.usip.org/gender_peacebuilding/about_UNSCR_1325.

- Direct Prevention through Engagement and Education
- Direct Prevention through Enforcement
- Gender-Responsive Legal Frameworks and Enforcement
- Technology and Innovation
- Preventing Erosion of Women's Resilience

The WPS Relief and Recovery Pillar and Maritime Environmental Security

The relief and recovery pillar focuses on ensuring that women's needs are met in recovery and rebuilding efforts. In the context of maritime environmental crimes, this means supporting women in affected communities to rebuild their livelihoods and restore marine ecosystems. Programs that provide financial assistance, training, and resources for sustainable fishing and aquaculture can help women recover from the economic impacts of environmental crimes. Additionally, involving women in habitat restoration projects can enhance community resilience and promote sustainable resource management. A full discussion of the following applications of the Relief and Recovery pillar to maritime environmental security can be found in the full report:

- Women Leadership in Recovery Efforts
- Targeted Human Security Relief and Support
- Addressing Long-Term Resilience

Applying the WPS Agenda's four pillars when addressing maritime environmental crimes in the Coral Triangle ensures that the protection of marine ecosystems and the well-being of women in these communities are prioritized. Women's participation in law enforcement and conservation, coupled with targeted protection, prevention, relief and recovery strategies, can significantly enhance the effectiveness of these efforts, while promoting gender equality and sustainable development.

Civil-Military Partnerships for Managing Maritime Environmental Crimes in the Coral Triangle: Advantages of Working with Women's Organizations

Addressing transnational maritime environmental crimes requires collaboration across civil society, government, and defense sectors. The gender-blind nature of many regional maritime frameworks and civil-military (civ-mil) partnerships presents an opportunity to integrate a gender perspective into states' strategies for combating crimes, humanitarian assistance, and disaster response (HA/DR) initiatives. Leveraging civ-mil partnerships enhances prevention, mitigation, and empowerment efforts crucial for an effective response.[45] Collaboration between civilian organizations (such as CSOs, governmental agencies, and local communities) and military forces may generate more results when addressing these complex challenges because of the use of a whole-of-society approach, which is important for maritime environmental crimes and border-fluid conflicts. These partnerships enhance response effectiveness and promote

[45] Allard-Jan tan Berge, "Best & Bad Practices on Civil-Military Interaction" (The Netherlands: Civil-Military Cooperation Centre of Excellence, June 2014), https://nllp.jallc.nato.int/IKS/Sharing%20Public/Civil-Military%20Interaction%20Best%20and%20Bad%20Practices%20Handbook.pdf.

sustainable solutions by leveraging both sectors' unique strengths and resources. Civilian organizations provide expertise in community engagement, humanitarian aid, and long-term development, while military forces offer logistical support, security, and crisis management capabilities.[46]

Limitations and Challenges for Civ-Mil Relations

While civ-mil partnerships offer significant benefits, they face challenges rooted in historical and contemporary dynamics. A crucial issue is maintaining the neutrality of civilian organizations in such collaborations to uphold CSO integrity and ensure they serve the broader public interest above political goals. Problematically, humanitarian actors, including militaries, often access populations affected by the crisis but may struggle to localize HA/DR strategies to meet their needs.[47] Therefore, effective and non-harmful maritime and environmental law enforcement requires sustained dialogue and interaction among civ-mil actors.[48] Strained civ-mil relationships from past conflicts, especially states in the Indo-Pacific region with histories of military intervention, challenge meaningful partnerships. Additional civ-mil cooperation obstacles include that civilian and military actors often "adopt different goals and principles, they compete over domains of responsibility, and they have incongruent ideas about the need for militarized approaches in emergencies and disasters."[49]

Drawing on a feminist perspective of peace and security, civ-mil partnerships might risk embedding hierarchical relationships of power, resulting in the exploitation of the knowledge, time, labor, and/or wellbeing of women and women's CSOs. Indeed, it has been argued that "the militarization of crisis response is not in the interest of armed forces, nor in that of civilian crisis organizations or society at large."[50] Overcoming these challenges requires a delicate balance of transparency, accountability, and a commitment to upholding democratic principles and addressing diverse human security needs to begin bridging gaps between the military and civilian spheres.

Best Practices for Civ-Mil Cooperation

Over the course of the Project, participants engaged in dialogue about how to foster open and productive civ-mil partnerships based on their own experiences. The following is a list of best practices developed by the participants for civ-mil cooperation which focuses on building trust:[51]

- Foster an inclusive environment in which women, men, and non-binary people, as well as other vulnerable populations, can freely communicate their needs and concerns.
- Establish clear and easy communication channels and coordination mechanisms to facilitate information sharing and decision-making processes.
- Respect each other's mandates, roles, and expertise, while recognizing the importance of collaboration and complementarity.

[46] US Department of Defense, Joint Force Development, "Civil-Military Operations," Joint Publication 3-57, July 9, 2018, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3_57.pdf?ver=2018-09-13-134111-460.
[47] Cook & Yogendran, "Conceptualising Humanitarian Civil-Military"
[48] Cook & Yogendran, "Conceptualising Humanitarian Civil-Military"
[49] Myriame Bollen and Jori Pascal Kalkman, "Civil-Military Cooperation in Disaster and Emergency Response Practices, Challenges, and Opportunities," *Journal of Advanced Military Studies* 13, no. 1 (2022): 79–91.
[50] Bollen and Kalkman, "Civil-Military Cooperation in Disaster and Emergency Response Practices, Challenges, and Opportunities."
[51] Berge, "Best & Bad Practices on Civil-Military Interaction."

- Conduct joint training and exercises to enhance interoperability and mutual understanding of respective capabilities and limitations.
- Establish clear, and safe from retaliation, reporting mechanisms for labor abuse and sexual and gender based violence in the military, law enforcement agencies, and within civil society.
- Prioritize the protection and welfare of affected populations, especially with regard to humanitarian assistance and disaster response planning, ensuring that response efforts are conducted in accordance with humanitarian principles and international law, while integrating a gender perspective.
- Promote transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in partnership activities, and engaging with local communities and stakeholders to ensure their meaningful participation and ownership of response efforts.
- Establish sufficient and sustainable budgets to support civ-mil cooperation over the long-term.

By integrating a gender perspective, civ-mil partnerships can enhance the effectiveness, inclusivity, and sustainability of their response efforts, ultimately contributing to more equitable outcomes for all affected populations. Incorporating a gender perspective into civ-mil partnerships involves recognizing and addressing the specific needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities of people of all genders in crisis-affected contexts. Such incorporation can include ensuring the participation of women and marginalized gender groups in decision-making processes, mainstreaming gender considerations into program design and implementation, and addressing gender-based violence and discrimination. Significantly, civ-mil partnerships adopting gender-transformative approaches can maximize the potential for gradual disruptions and structural changes in harmful gender norms as they manifest in and inform institutions and systems.

Gender in Regional Architecture and Cross-border Cooperation

Many maritime environmental crimes in the Coral Triangle are transboundary in nature, necessitating cooperative efforts in monitoring, control, surveillance, enforcement, and prosecution among regional States.[52] While cross-border cooperation often occurs through bilateral agreements, it is also facilitated by regional and international organizations and multilateral frameworks. Below is a summary of relevant regional governance frameworks, highlighting existing gender elements and areas for improvement.

Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF)

The Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF) is a multilateral partnership that aims to alleviate poverty through economic development, food security, and sustainable livelihoods.[53] Member countries collaborate to safeguard marine and coastal resources in the Coral Triangle, addressing critical regional challenges such as declining fish stocks, climate change, food security, and biodiversity loss. It also supports efforts to combat maritime environmental crimes beyond IUU fishing, including wildlife trafficking and pollution. In a data-sparse environment,

[52] Sarah A. Heck, "Ocean Governance in the Coral Triangle: A Multi-Level Regulatory Governance Structure," *Politics and Governance* 10, no. 3 (July 14, 2022): 70–79.
[53] UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "The Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF)."

CTI-CFF collects data on species abundance, marine habitats, threats, and protected areas, some of which are available through the Coral Triangle Atlas.[54]

CTI-CFF includes the Women Leaders' Forum, a peer-learning network for women in leadership roles within Coral Triangle marine conservation. The forum promotes the inclusion of women's and girls' perspectives in the regional action plan and builds the capacity of women, especially at the grassroots level, to lead efforts in protecting marine and coastal biodiversity. This initiative supports CTI-CFF's commitment to integrating gender, equity, and social inclusion considerations into institutional and country programming.[55]

Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices including Combating IUU Fishing (RPOA-IUU)

The Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices including Combating IUU Fishing (RPOA-IUU) is a voluntary and non-binding initiative to prevent and eliminate IUU fishing in Southeast Asia's regional water bodies. It publishes movements and sightings of vessels suspected of IUU fishing. Its Secretariat is within Indonesia's Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (KKP) in Jakarta.[56] Problems arise from the fact that member states are not obligated to program or implement regional priorities in domestic laws and policies as RPOA-IUU is a voluntary organization.[57] For example, the IUU Vessel Movements and Sightings List is outdated, with the most recent entries from 2021. Also, it does not have specific initiatives on women or gender. However, it is an important convening body bringing ministers from Southeast Asia together, including the Coral Triangle, and connects regional activities with other international organizations. The Secretariat's "big tent" approach encourages membership and participation, even if members cannot or will not implement policies or priorities.

ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGFi)

The ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGFi) supports ASEAN Senior Officials Meetings between ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Fisheries to provide technical and policy support on fisheries issues.[58] ASWGFi combats IUU fishing efforts through different mechanisms such as the ASEAN-SEAFDEC [Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center] Joint Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Combating IUU Fishing.[59] However, it lacks subgroups focusing on

[54] Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security, "The Coral Triangle Atlas."
[55] Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security, "CTI Women Leaders' Forum," November 6, 2017, https://www.coraltriangleinitiative.org/wlf.
[56] RPOA-IUU, "The Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices Including Combating IUU Fishing," accessed June 10, 2024, https://www.rpoaiuu.org/.
[57] Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Singapore's Contributions to Combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing," United Nations, Sustainable Development, accessed June 12, 2024, https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/singapores-contributions-combating-illegal-unreported-and-unregulated-iuu-fishing.
[58] The ASEAN Secretariat, "Fisheries Cooperation," Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), accessed June 10, 2024, https://asean.org/our-communities/economic-community/enhanced-connectivity-and-sectoral-development/asean-food-agriculture-and-forestry/fisheries-cooperation/.
[59] The ASEAN Secretariat, "Fisheries Cooperation."

incorporating gender perspectives in its solutions. However, it does look for guidance from other initiatives that do, like the Small-Scale Fisheries guidelines from FAO, and lists gender issues for consideration in its strategic action plans.[60]

Partnership in Environmental Management for the Seas of Asia (PEMSEA)

The Partnership in Environmental Management for the Seas of Asia (PEMSEA), the regional coordinating body for the Sustainable Development Strategy for Seas of East Asia (SDS-SEA), aims to develop the region's blue economy while protecting biodiversity and designing adaptation measures to climate change. Member states support programs on marine plastic pollution and integrated coastal management.[61] PEMSEA is unique from other regional organizations as it convenes national and local government organizations with NGOs and academic institutions; however, it lacks specific programming on gender or maritime environmental crimes.

Women, Customary Law, and the Maritime Security Environment

Balancing customary laws with national and international frameworks is critical for effective marine management in the Coral Triangle, where traditional practices rooted in ecological knowledge and cultural values are vital. Modernization erodes traditional knowledge, making efforts to blend these frameworks necessary. Women, as custodians of indigenous knowledge, play crucial roles in resource management, yet customs often constrain their participation in decision-making. Integrating women's perspectives and ensuring their active involvement is essential for sustainable marine conservation. Collaborative efforts among governments, civil society, and local communities are needed to bridge the gap between traditional and modern laws. Creating a legal environment that respects customary laws while evolving to meet modern gender equity and inclusion expectations will empower women (even through informal leadership roles) and strengthen social bonds, ensuring the sustainable protection of marine resources in the Coral Triangle.

[60] ASEAN Secretariat, "AMAF's Approach to Gender Mainstreaming in the Food, Agriculture and Forestry Sectors" (Ha Noi, Viet Nam: ASEAN Secretariat, October 11, 2018), https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/AMAF-Approach-to-gender-mainstreaming.pdf.
[61] PEMSEA, "Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA)," accessed June 10, 2024, https://www.pemsea.org/.

Action Items and Recommendations to Advance Integration of Gender-Sensitive Cross-Border Civ-Mil Cooperation towards Combating Maritime Environmental Crimes

A Community of Practice comprises participants in the Cross-Border Cooperation on WPS and Maritime Environmental Crimes in the Coral Triangle Workshop series. The Community has committed to reconvene virtually in late July 2024 to discuss next steps. In the interim, and to facilitate progress, recommendations were made for participants to do the following:

- Report back to their respective organizations the outcomes of the Project and share the feedback with the Community.
- Gather the information needed to assess their organizations' interest in becoming active members of this Community.[62]
- Identify the resources their organizations may or may not be willing to allocate:
    - Time
    - Finance
    - Labor
- Search for and identify tools and resources available to them that they may not have previously recognized. Share available tools and resources on gender and maritime environmental security with all other Community members.
- Gather questions and feedback on the key findings and final report documents.
- Participate actively in group chats and organized discussions.
- Communicate to workshop organizers suggestions for people to add to the Community in the future.
- Maintain connections between civil society and defense / security personnel.
- The Coral Triangle Center (CTC) to request CTI-CFF consider inviting members of this Community to participate in the WLF meetings.
- Collect ground-sourced data on gender and maritime environmental security within local communities.
- Prepare for the next Community of Practice meeting with a list of recommendations for best practices.
- Workshop organizers to share the key findings and final report with the Community, which will be re-shared by Community members in the following venues:
    - Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices including to combating Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Practices in the Region (RPOA-IUU) Secretariat [Re-shared by Pedro Rodrigues, General Directorate of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Resources, Timor-Leste, and member of the RPOA-IUU Secretariat].

[62] If some Community Members are unable to gather all the necessary information by the meeting, that is acceptable; the goal is to collect as much data as possible to understand the current landscape. Even a lack of information can provide insight into the resources available for addressing these critical issues.

- Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security (CTI-CFF) Technical Working Group (TWG) and Women Leaders Forum (WLF) [Re-shared by Leilani Gallardo, Regional Communications and CTI Program Coordinator for CTC, Indonesia and member of the WLF].
- The ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum (AFCF) [Community members encouraged to volunteer to re-share with AFCF]
- The ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), and the ASEAN Women Peace Security Advisory Group [Re-shared by the USINDOPACOM Office of WPS].
- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) [Re-shared by the USINDOPACOM Office of WPS].
- United States Institute of Peace (USIP) [Re-shared by the USINDOPACOM Office of WPS].
- Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) SEA-IUU Fishing Program.

The upcoming discussions in late July 2024 will focus on determining the feasibility of establishing a formal Community of Practice with a mission statement and dedicated resources to continue the work initiated during this workshop series. Such a Community of Practice would elevate the integration of gender-sensitive approaches and the enhancement of cross-border civil-military cooperation to more effectively combat maritime environmental crimes. Recommendations for the Community's agenda for this meeting include:

- Determine feasibility of formalizing the Community.
- Develop a Community Action Plan that suits the Community's capacity.
- Consider expansion of the Community to all six Coral Triangle countries.
- Event organizers and Community members to collaborate to source funding for future in-person engagements.
- Develop practical recommendations that account for the diverse contexts within the Coral Triangle, ensuring that strategies are inclusive and reflect the needs of local populations, particularly women. This collaborative effort will help bridge gaps in current practices, promote shared learning, and foster a cohesive approach to maritime environmental security that leverages the unique strengths of both civil society and military actors. The commitment to regular meetings and continuous dialogue underscores the Community's dedication to advancing these goals, setting the stage for innovative and impactful initiatives in the region.

CONCLUSION

This Project emphasized the paramount significance of integrating a WPS agenda into strategies aimed at combating maritime environmental crimes in the Coral Triangle. It also revealed a strong commitment from both military and civilian sectors in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, and Timor-Leste to embrace this approach while working collaboratively across the civil-military sectors and cooperating across state boundaries. This report has examined various facets of combating maritime environmental crimes, from the intersection of customary laws with modern legal

frameworks and the role of women in decision-making processes and leadership roles, to the challenges and opportunities presented by civil-military partnerships and transnational cooperation.

One of the key takeaways is the need for better integration of gender perspectives in all aspects of marine environmental management and governance. Women are crucial stakeholders, not only as custodians of traditional ecological knowledge but also as active participants in resource management and environmental stewardship. Empowering women and ensuring their inclusion in decision-making processes are essential steps toward achieving comprehensive and sustainable marine conservation and management.

Furthermore, the importance of enhanced civ-mil collaboration across state borders is essential for in combating maritime environmental crimes. By fostering partnerships between governments, civil society organizations, and local communities, it becomes possible to bridge the gap between traditional and modern legal frameworks, promote gender equality, and strengthen enforcement efforts.

Moving forward, it is imperative to prioritize the implementation of the recommendations outlined in this report. These recommendations include investigating the potential of a formalized Community of Practice with funding and resources necessary to facilitate ongoing dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders. Additionally, efforts should be made to raise awareness about the WPS Agenda and how its application can positively impact marine environmental security within the Coral Triangle region.

By embracing the WPS agenda and non-traditional collaboration opportunities, development of more effective strategies to combat maritime environmental crimes in the Coral Triangle becomes more realistic. The challenges ahead are significant, but with concerted efforts and collective action, work towards a future where oceans are protected, sustainable, and resilient for generations to come is possible.