

## USAID/DOI-ITAP 2014 HIGHLIGHTS

## LATIN AMERICA

DOI-ITAP helped to establish an innovative public participation roundtable process that relies on the active collaboration between all sectors to address governance and law enforcement challenges in protected areas. In 2014, Guatemala's Vice President, Roxana Baldetti, officially designated the roundtable as a formal part of the government decision-making process and reaffirmed her commitment to work through this process to best respond to local needs.

#### DOI-ITAP Recognized by the Guatemalan Government

Baldetti publicly recognized the successful partnership between the Guatemalan and U.S. governments on natural resource management, saying "We are thankful for the United States and the Department of the Interior's cooperation with the Guatemala government on this process." The successful roundtable model was established in the northern Petén with USAID funding and DOI-ITAP technical assistance, and is currently supported with a congressional earmark to DOI-ITAP in addition to funding from the State Department.

## Public participation ensures natural resources conservation in Guatemala



A meeting of the Maya Biosphere Reserve Multi-Sector Roundtable draws representatives from all levels of the public, private and community sectors, including Guatemala's Vice-President Roxana Baldetti (left standing). Also at the meeting were DOI Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and International Affairs Lori Faeth (second from right); and DOI-ITAP Deputy Director Cynthia Perera (far right). Credit: Guatemalan Presidential Social Communication Department.



U.S. DEPARTMENT  
OF THE INTERIOR  
INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM





During field exercises, the students obtain biophysical data to measure the impacts of mining activities on surface water. Credit: Lenin Fernando Riaño

## Sharing mining best practices between Colombia, Peru and the U.S.

DOI-ITAP and the Government of Colombia co-sponsored a three-week certification training program on monitoring and enforcing mining laws and standards. Participants from both Colombia and Peru, representing government agencies, NGOs and indigenous associations, exchanged technical expertise to help minimize the negative impacts of mining. Al Whitehouse, a former leader within DOI's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, was featured as an expert trainer, imparting his 10 years of experience working on mining issues in Indonesia as well as 30+ years working as both a miner and mining regulator in the U.S.

### Linking in Local Universities

After successfully completing the required classroom and field exercises, twenty-six participants received a certification from the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, a Colombian university. Linking in local universities in these efforts will help to sustain and institutionalize capacity building efforts. This workshop was funded by USAID's Initiative for the Conservation of the Andean Amazon.

## South American agreement signed between DOI and USAID

DOI-ITAP signed a three-year (2014-2017) Inter-Agency Agreement with the USAID South America Regional Program. This agreement enables DOI to continue its conservation efforts in two Andean Amazon countries —Colombia and Peru— as well as provide a simplified mechanism with which the continent's bilateral missions can tap into DOI's technical expertise. USAID senior leadership has encouraged DOI-ITAP to establish similar agreements with all USAID regional missions as a streamlined and efficient way to deliver DOI technical expertise to USAID initiatives.



Students participate in a three-week course titled Certification Training Program on Enforcing Mining Laws. This training curriculum was designed and implemented through a partnership between DOI-ITAP, the Government of Colombia and a local university to enhance in-country capacity building over the long term. Credit: DOI-ITAP

## ASIA

### DOI-ITAP and USAID launch support program in Asia

Under a five-year regional agreement (2013-2018) with USAID's Regional Development Mission Asia (RDMA), DOI-ITAP provides critical technical assistance to various regional initiatives and, as requested, country-specific activities.

RDMA is responsible for providing a wide range of assistance for up to 24 Asian countries. The regional agreement currently focuses on three themes: Smart Infrastructure for the Mekong; the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security; and anti-wildlife trafficking.

USAID/Indonesia has also joined the agreement, securing DOI support to enhance management of the country's protected areas system.

### Environmental and social safeguards for smart infrastructure development in the Lower Mekong region

In the past year, DOI-ITAP technical experts spent six months in the Lower Mekong region designing and launching the Smart Infrastructure for the Mekong (SIM) initiative in partnership with USAID's RDMA. SIM is a five-year program that provides rapid-response, demand-driven technical assistance on environmental and social safeguards for large infrastructure development in the countries of Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam.

After completing program design and planning, DOI and its partner, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, fielded the first teams of engineers to provide technical assistance in Laos in August and September of 2014. These teams initiated development of technical guidelines on dam safety and dam sediment flow. The following six additional projects have been approved under the SIM program:

- Dam safety and flood control (Laos)
- Dam sediment flushing (Laos)
- Mekong River fish biology information gap analysis (Laos)
- Friendly hydropower (Laos)
- Sustainable hydropower assistance and policy workshop (Thailand)
- Technical assistance to the Mekong Delta study (Vietnam)



View of the Mekong River from the crest of the Nan Ngum Dam, Laos. Credit: DOIT-ITAP

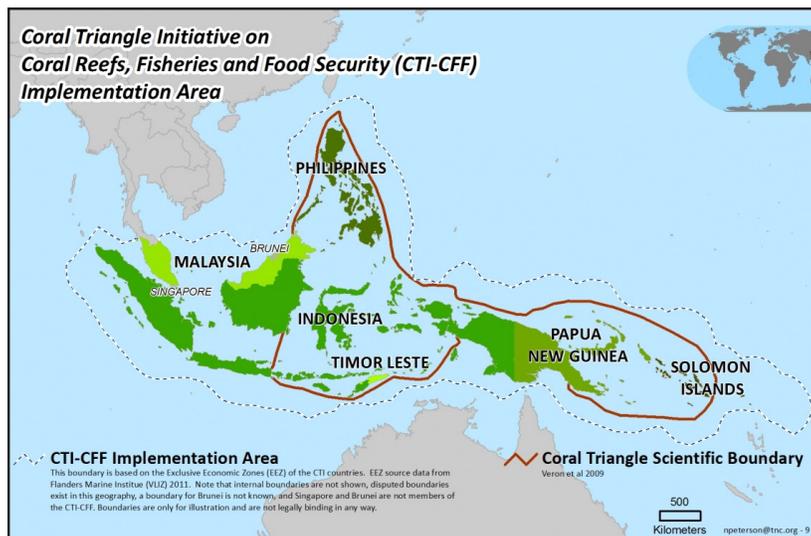
## Women Leaders' Forum strengthens marine management throughout Coral Triangle

DOI-ITAP, in partnership with USAID and the Coral Triangle Center (CTC), launched a Women Leaders' Forum in May 2014 in Indonesia. The Women Leaders' Forum is an initiative dedicated to recognizing the important role women play in marine conservation and promoting the participation of women in marine resource management.

The Forum serves as a peer-learning network for women working to sustain the marine resources of the Coral Triangle region, which includes Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Timor Leste. The Forum recognizes the grassroots achievements of women leaders as marine conservation champions and builds the capacity of women to take leadership roles in preserving and sustaining the region's unique marine and coastal resources.



Piwen Langarap from Papua New Guinea receives a plaque of recognition from USAID Asia Regional Environmental Office Director Alfred Nakatsuma at the launch of the Coral Triangle Initiative Women Leaders' forum in Manado, Indonesia on May 13, 2014. Credit: Jermemy Pivor/CTC



Map of the Coral Triangle region. Red line represents the protected area; dotted line represents the united Exclusive Economic Zones of all the countries in the region. Credit: The Coral Triangle Initiative

Commenting on her experience with the Forum, one of the participants, Piwen Langarap, of Papua New Guinea remarked: "The CTI Women Leaders' forum is a great opportunity that brought us together and enabled us to discuss and share what we are doing as well as share some of our ways forward for promoting women in conservation leadership in our communities, provinces and countries."

### U.S.-based peer exchange for Coral Triangle Women Leaders

As a pre-launch activity, DOI-ITAP hosted a U.S.-based peer exchange for 13 women leaders from all of the six Coral Triangle countries in April-May 2014. During the exchange participants met with counterparts in Washington, D.C and developed the roadmap that will guide the implementation of the CTI Women Leaders' Forum. The group was hosted by DOI's National Park Service in the U.S. Virgin Islands and received leadership training at DOI's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia.

## Multinational peer-exchange to improve management of marine protected areas system in the Coral Triangle



Participants at the regional exchange learn how to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of a marine protected area at a local site in Mactan. Credit: Philippine Department of Environment and Natural Resources Biodiversity Management Bureau

DOI marine protected area experts based in the U.S. Virgin Islands provided technical assistance during a regional exchange on marine protected areas held in Cebu, Philippines in July 2014. Although hundreds of protected areas have been established in the Coral Triangle, less than one percent of these are effective in reducing threats such as overfishing and destructive fishing practices.

During the exchange, 40 representatives from the Coral Triangle Initiative member countries and partner organizations developed roadmaps to improve the management of their marine protected areas. The roadmaps will be implemented from 2014 to 2020 by government agencies and non-governmental organizations in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Timor Leste.

“We have created a roadmap that is ambitious and strategic but realistic. We will continue to develop the management effectiveness tool that we have already begun to formulate and we aim to soon implement it on the ground. In this regional exchange, we have found synergies between strategies to put forward in the plans for each site,” noted Senoveva Mauli, a participant from the Solomon Islands.

## Regional Tourism Business Forum

DOI-ITAP, in partnership with the Coral Triangle Center, is leading the organization of the CTI-CFF Regional Tourism Business Forum that will be held in summer 2015. The Forum will engage roughly 150 participants from communities, the business sector, the public sector, and the tourism industry in the Coral Triangle.

### Key objectives include:

#### Best Practices for Responsible Tourism

Showcase best practices for responsible tourism in marine and coastal areas of the Coral Triangle.

#### Marketing

Promote Coral Triangle ‘branding’ and cross-nation marketing endeavors to effectively market the Coral Triangle as a global sustainable tourism destination; provide greater platforms for exposure, media, product packaging and networking among coastal and marine tourism service providers.

#### Leadership from Coral Communities

Stimulate and encourage marine and coastal tourism enterprises and associated payment for ecosystem services approaches that engage, collaborate with, and provide tangible benefits for associated coastal communities; and provide support and guidance for the tourism business sector to maximize those benefits.

#### Private Sector Leadership

Encourage and support leading private sector representatives to take a greater role in supporting sustainable and responsible tourism in the Coral Triangle.



The Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food Security protects coastal and marine resources like this reef. Credit: Coral Triangle Initiative

## Local Government Network Forum brings together government officials from six countries

DOI-ITAP, in partnership with the Coral Triangle Center (CTC) is taking the lead in organizing the third CTI-CFF Local Government Network Forum held in Papua New Guinea in November 2015.

The Forum will provide an opportunity to:

- Assess progress on the implementation of the CTI-Local Government Network roadmap
- Agree on CTI-CFF Local Government Network strategic purpose
- Review and discuss the CTI-CFF Local Government Network organizational setup
- Provide for leadership and technical training to network members
- Engage female local government executives to be part of the CTI-CFF Local Government Network
- Encourage and support twinning and mentoring programs among network members.

## Assessment of illegal wildlife trade in Indonesia

DOI-ITAP conducted an assessment of illegal and unsustainable trade of terrestrial and marine wildlife in Indonesia in February 2014. A team of DOI's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (US FWS) special agents and wildlife biologists reviewed relevant literature and data; interviewed government officials, academic experts, and non-governmental organizations; and conducted site visits. The team produced a report with recommendations to inform USAID Indonesia's five-year Country Development Cooperation Strategy, and presented its findings to mission and headquarters staff.



Signing ceremony agreement between US FWS and the Government of the Philippines. Signatories were: FWS Director Dan Ashe (middle), and DENR Under Secretary Analiza Teh (to his right). Witnesses were: USAID's Forestry and Biodiversity Director Cynthia Gill (to Teh's right) and DOI's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and International Affairs Lori Faeth (to Ashe's left). Credit: DOI-ITAP

## Phillipine wildlife crime investigations supported by U.S. forensics lab

A decade-long partnership between DOI, the Republic of the Philippines, and USAID/Philippines began a new phase with the signing of an agreement that will significantly boost the ability of the Philippines Government to combat wildlife trafficking. The agreement enables the Philippine Government to access the services of DOI's US FWS National Wildlife Forensics Laboratory—the only accredited wildlife forensics lab in the world. Under this agreement, samples of wildlife and biota collected by Philippine law enforcement officials can be tested at the lab. The lab's results will be considered admissible evidence in Philippine courts, which will lead to greater success in the prosecution of wildlife traffickers.

## ASIA and AFRICA

### Mapping land cover to monitor the effects of climate change in Southeast Asia and Africa

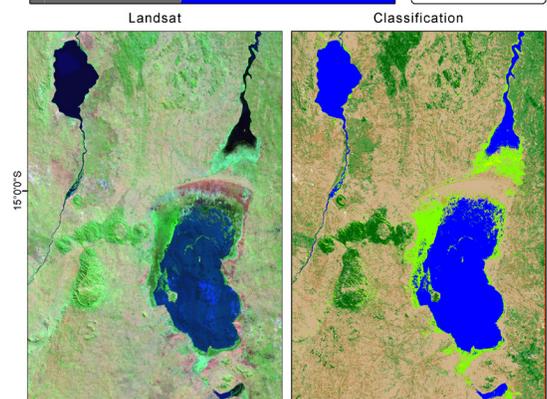
DOI-ITAP has partnered with USAID's Global Climate Change team to collaborate with government counterparts in Southeast Asia and Africa to build capacity in producing land cover maps that will help monitor changes in forests, calculate greenhouse gas emissions, and predict food security. DOI-ITAP achievements in 2014 included:

#### Southeast Asia:

- In collaboration with Silvacarbon and Lower Emissions Development Strategies, organized an eight-country (Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Philippines, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan) Integrated Land Cover and Greenhouse Gas Symposium in Southeast Asia. The outcome of the Symposium is a roadmap to integrate capacity building with these various USAID initiatives.
- Trained 25 specialists from Vietnam on land cover mapping methods, providing a foundation for monitoring changes to forested, agricultural, and urban areas.

#### Africa:

- Established the Group on Earth Observations Working Group for Land Cover for Africa which contributes to the development of a consistent land cover data product for the entire African continent.
- Partnered with the USAID SERVIR Regional Visualization and Monitoring System hub located at the Regional Center for Mapping Resources for Development in Kenya, to host a workshop for 15 African countries to evaluate DOI's U.S. Geological Survey's regional land cover dataset.
- Conducted an assessment of land cover datasets that have been produced by international organizations in Malawi to identify a baseline for future analyses.



Examples of land cover maps for Africa. Credit: DOI-ITAP

## MIDDLE EAST

### Developing best practices in resource management for Jordan

Over the past five years, DOI-ITAP has provided support to the Kingdom of Jordan to enhance protected areas management and promote environmentally compatible tourism development. Under this effort, DOI specialists provide technical assistance focused on engaging gateway communities, informing visitors, and managing protected areas as sustainable tourism destinations. Activities are performed in partnership with Wadi Rum Protected Area, Petra Archaeological Park, Aqaba Marine Park, and the reserves of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN). DOI-ITAP has provided training on: fire management, search and rescue operations, ranger skills training, animal care, management of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, sign design, communications and outreach, and environmental education.

#### Nation-wide protected area management workshops

This year, DOI-ITAP has convened a series of national-level workshops to address issues critical to the management of all of Jordan's protected areas. These workshops constitute the final phase of DOI-ITAP's work with USAID in Jordan, and are structured to bring together the many national agencies and NGOs that take part in resource conservation.



Two children who live near Petra Archaeological Park wear traditional dress at the Petra Junior Ranger Program supported by DOI-ITAP and Petra National Trust. Credit: Rana Safadi, DOI-ITAP

The first of these workshops, on climate change adaptation and mitigation, brought together ecologists and natural resources managers to develop capacity to prepare for the effects of climate change. This workshop was followed by a workshop at Al-Azraq Reserve on land use planning, which marked the first time that Jordanian government and non-government partners convened under one roof to coordinate at the ecosystem and landscape levels. A third workshop focused on concessions management, with the guidance of specialists from DOI's National Park Service. Presenters covered the legal, financial, operational, and customer service aspects of concessions in and near natural and cultural protected areas.

#### Engaging young people for sustainable development

In November 2014, DOI-ITAP hosted a fourth and final national-level workshop on youth engagement with RSCN. More than 70% of Jordan's population is under 30 years of age, and the unemployment rate for this group is more than twice the national unemployment rate. The workshop brought together educators, protected area managers, and civil society, including youth leaders and DOI experts in education, outreach, and tourism to generate strategies for meaningful engagement of Jordanian youth in conservation and associated income generating activities.

## CAUCASUS

### Taking final steps to help establish a sustainable system of protected areas in Georgia



View of a visitor's camp and bungalows, with Caucasus mountains in the background, taken during DOI-ITAP's hydrological study at Vashlovani National Park in southeastern Georgia. Credit: Ken Mabery, NPS

DOI-ITAP has had a longstanding partnership with the Government of Georgia, focused on developing a protected area system that serves the twin goals of conservation and sustainable economic growth. The partnership has laid a strong foundation, including:

- A protected area system that has grown from 36 units to 84 in a 7-year period (2007-2013), and that reflects the diversity of natural and cultural treasures of Georgia.
- A cadre of senior staff with core strengths and capabilities in the Agency for Protected Areas.
- Field staff better equipped to manage the resources in their protected areas.
- Strengthened transboundary management and cooperation.
- Increased international and local visitation in the protected area system from 7,700 to more than 350,000 in the same 7-year period.

As part of this ongoing effort to sustainably develop Georgia's protected areas, DOI-ITAP infrastructure design specialists visited Tusheti Protected Landscape, Sataplia-Prometheus Cave Protected Area, and Mitralla National Park in the summer of 2014 to assess existing trails, buildings, and signs currently serving park needs. The specialists —both architects— made recommendations concerning current operational and maintenance programs and next steps in developing management plans, which will be included in a best practices manual for Georgia's Agency for Protected Areas that DOI-ITAP is developing.