

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Twenty-fourth meeting of the Animals Committee  
Geneva, (Switzerland), 20-24 April 2009

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON CORALLIIDAE

1. This document has been submitted by the United States of America\*.
2. The family Coralliidae, consisting of the genera *Corallium* and *Paracorallium* and commonly known as pink and red corals, contains the most valuable and rarest taxa of precious corals in commerce. Seven species in this family have been intensively fished for use in jewelry, amulets, art objects, and homeopathic medicines. There is a well-established pattern of discovery, exploitation, and rapid depletion of stocks, with fisheries moving on to new beds as old ones are depleted. Because of concerns over the sustainability of these fisheries used to supply the international market for precious coral jewelry and the role of the United States in this trade, the United States is again considering proposing the Coralliidae family for listing in CITES Appendix II.
3. In response to issues raised at CoP14 in relation to the Appendix-II listing proposal, the United States agreed to convene two workshops on the science of and management of and trade in Coralliidae species. The First International Workshop on the Science, Management and Trade in *Corallium* was held March 16-20, 2009, in Hong Kong. This workshop, funded by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program, was convened to address challenges to implementing and enforcing a potential CITES Appendix-II listing, and to assess available biological data to identify gaps and determine whether these taxa meet the criteria for listing under CITES. International experts from governments, academia, NGOs, and the CITES Secretariat shared information on biological, fisheries, and trade data. The participants discussed approaches to make certain that precious corals are sustainably harvested and traded, the feasibility of a CITES listing, and mechanisms to ensure the effectiveness of a CITES listing. Recommendations coming out of the workshop focused on: 1) possible steps to improve national management; 2) feasibility of identifying Coralliidae products in trade; 3) approaches to reduce illegal harvest and trade; 4) information gaps and research needs to better understand the status and trends of wild populations; and 5) measures to reduce administrative burdens and enforcement challenges associated with a potential CITES Appendix-II listing. The group also identified potential benefits of a CITES Appendix-II listing. The outcomes of the workshop will serve as a framework for the Second International Workshop on the Science, Management and Trade in *Corallium*, to be held in Italy in the summer of 2009.

---

\* The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat or the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.