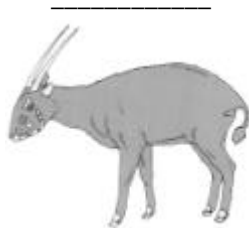


CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Seventeenth meeting of the Animals Committee  
Hanoi (Viet Nam), 30 July-3 August 2001

Trade in Hard Corals

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP

This document has been prepared by the Chairman of the working group on trade in hard corals.

1. Since the 17th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC17), the group has been in contact by e-mail regarding the tasks described in its Terms of Reference (see Annex).
2. Most debate has centred on the subject of which coral taxa should be identified to species level and which to genus level only when in trade. Debate has focused on those genera with large numbers of species many of which are difficult to identify to specific level but which include a number of species that which can be readily identified in trade. The group hopes to come to a final conclusion on this topic at the AC17, including assessing the risks and benefits of identifying taxa to the genus level only.
3. Other topics which have been discussed by the working group, and which are close to resolution, include the recommendation of a standard reference for the nomenclature of corals in trade. Research has also been commissioned (by the United Kingdom) into the means by which fossilized coral rock can be distinguished from non-fossilised coral rock in trade. The preliminary report of this research will be available in time to be distributed to members of the Animals Committee and of the coral working group in Hanoi. This should enable any recommendations arising from this work to be formulated. The issue of identification guides, and how these may be integrated or expanded, has also been considered.
4. In April 2001, an International Workshop on the Trade in Stony Corals was held in Jakarta, Indonesia. Organized by the authorities of the United States of America and Indonesia with the assistance of the Indonesian Coral, Shell and Ornamental Fish Association (AKKII), this workshop aimed to develop guidelines for the sustainable management of coral harvests, for best collection practice and for the monitoring of coral resources. This workshop was attended by a number of members of the Animals Committee working group on trade in hard corals and it was possible to hold some informal discussions at the meeting. The meeting was also noteworthy for the good representation of countries which are harvesting and exporting corals and for the output from its working groups which are to be published in due course. The outcome of these sessions will be of particular assistance to the

Animals Committee's working group on trade in hard corals in considering the application of Article IV.3 to corals. Indonesia, the United States of America USA, Indonesia and AKKII are to be congratulated on this initiative.

5. Links to other initiatives have been made due to working group members attending meetings of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the International Coral Reef Initiative (CBD and ICRI) or by them providing briefings on CITES coral issues to their delegations. The development of certification by the Marine Aquarium Council will also be of considerable assistance in contributing to the sustainability of the international trade in corals.
6. The tasks given to the group are on target to be completed for the 18th meeting of the Animals Committee in April 2002.

Terms of Reference for the working group on trade in hard corals

Tasks

This working group of the Animals Committee is charged with the following mandatory tasks:

- to consider, in collaboration with exporting countries, the application of Article IV.3 as an alternative to Article IV.2.a in making non-detriment findings for corals in trade;
- to advise the Secretariat, for dissemination to the Parties, on which genera of corals it is practical to recognize to species level and which genera may be acceptably identified to genus level for the purposes of implementing Resolution Conf. 9.4 and Conf. 10.2 (early resolution of this task is desirable to enable the Secretariat to issue interim and final guidance to Parties).

Additional discretionary tasks the group may also want to consider, to address various difficulties and priorities identified by the working group in Nairobi (but for which there is no formal mandate from the Conference of Parties), include the following:

- following on from bullet point 2 above, for those taxa that can only be identified to genus, to consider whether their retention on the CITES appendices can be justified;
- to determine whether it is possible to advise the Nomenclature Committee of a standard taxonomic reference to corals which could be adopted by the Parties (linked to second task above);
- to consider whether there are any practical means by which fossilized corals (which are exempt from the provisions of the Convention), can be distinguished in trade from non-fossilized corals (especially regarding coral rock);
- to explore the scope for improved synergy with other initiatives and agreements regarding coral reefs and their exploitation;
- recognizing existing efforts at producing identification guides by Spain, Australia, the CITES Secretariat and the United States of America, to consider whether these guides can be integrated or improved upon and to encourage the wide dissemination of such guides.

The working group will provide a final report to the Chairman of the Animals Committee in time for submission to the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

## Composition

The group will aim to have a balanced range of interests and expertise derived from Parties and observers, and exporting and consuming nations. Priority will be given to participants involved in discussions at CoP11 and in the previous Animals Committee working group but the aim will be to keep the group as small as possible. The structure of the group is as follows:

- Chairman – United Kingdom
- Exporting countries – 2 or 3 representatives from Parties
- Importing countries – 2 or 3 representatives from the major consuming Parties
- Other range states using corals for internal trade only if at all – one Party
- Traders – representative of industry / trade organizations, one each from exporting and consuming blocks.
- IGO / NGO involvement – UNEP-WCMC and TRAFFIC representative.

## Membership of the working group

- Scientific Authority of the United Kingdom: Vin Fleming (Chair) (vin.fleming@jncc.gov.uk)
- Scientific Authority of Fiji: Manasa Sovaki (biodiversity@suva.is.com.fj)
- Scientific Authority of Indonesia: Suharsono (shar@indo.net.id)
- Scientific Authority of the Philippines: to be confirmed
- Scientific Authority of the United States of America: John Field (John\_Field@fws.gov)
- Scientific Authority of Australia: Tom Kaveney (tom.kaveney@ea.gov.au)
- Scientific Authority of Japan: to be confirmed.
- Representative of the European Community – to be confirmed.
- UNEP-WCMC: Ed Green (ed.green@unep-WCMC.org)
- TRAFFIC North America: Craig Hoover (craig.hoover@wwfus.org)
- Indonesian Coral, Shell & Ornamental Fish Association: Yuni Yarman (akkii@cbn.net.id)
- Ornamental Aquatic Trade Association (OATA) Ltd: Keith Davenport (Keith@Oata.demon.co.uk)