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

Seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties
Johannesburg (South Africa), 24 September – 5 October 2016

Interpretation and Implementation of the Convention

REVIEW OF PRECIOUS CORALS IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE

1. This document has been prepared by the United States of America.

Discussion

2. International trade in precious corals (black, red, and pink coral species including species within the order Antipatharia, and family Coralliidae) has occurred since ancient times. The species’ natural hard skeleton is prized in its unworked form and also when made into carvings and jewelry. Harvest and trade have adversely affected harvested populations of precious black coral (Order Antipatharia) and red and pink corals (Family Coralliidae). The slow growth, fragmented population structure and limited dispersal ability make precious corals vulnerable to over-exploitation. International trade in raw and worked coral has expanded and market demand for precious corals has increased. Media reports from 2015 indicate prices have risen 500% in the last 3 years in the Chinese market. Some species of precious coral are protected on national levels in some countries but illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing for precious coral species still occurs, including reports of foreign nationals fishing in the Japanese Exclusive Economic Zone in 2014 and 2015 and ongoing illegal harvest of red coral off the coast of Portugal, which was reported in 2016.

3. International trade in black corals has been regulated since 1981, when the order Antipatharia was listed in CITES Appendix II at CoP3. This Appendix-II listing should have done a great deal to ensure that harvest of black coral for international trade is legal and sustainable. At its twenty-fifth meeting (AC25, 2011) the Animals Committee selected all species of Antipatharia for review under the Significant Trade Review process and the review is still ongoing for Taiwan following AC28. Nonetheless, we believe it would be beneficial to review the Antipatharia species regionally and across their ranges to understand whether the CITES listing of black coral has been implemented effectively to achieve its intended results.

4. In 2008, China included four species of red coral (Corallium spp.) in CITES Appendix III. In 2011, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) instituted rules in the Mediterranean Sea limiting the regional harvest of one species of red coral (Corallium rubrum). The GFCM has facilitated the production of standard national management plans to help ensure a sustainable harvest of C. rubrum and allow for the regrowth of previously overharvested coral beds. Some range States may have instituted national management measures for some red and pink coral species. An assessment of the conservation status of red and pink corals and the effectiveness of management measures for these species would inform CITES Parties whether additional measures are needed to ensure that harvest for international trade is sustainable. Additionally, lessons learned from the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Appendix-II listing of black coral could inform current and future management and regulation of red and pink corals subject to international trade.

5. We ask that the Conference of the Parties consider the information presented in this document and adopt the draft decisions attached in Annex 1.
DRAFT DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

This document has been prepared by the United States of America.

Directed to the Secretariat

17.xxa The Secretariat, subject to external funding, is requested to:
   i. issue a notification that invites precious coral range States to complete a questionnaire/survey (Annex 2) to report data on their precious coral resources (black, red, and pink coral species including species within the order Antipatharia, and family Corallidae), especially current and historical abundance, biological status, management, and any known harvest for domestic or international trade; and
   ii. compile range States’ data into a report for submission to the 29th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC29) for its consideration.

17.xxb The Secretariat, subject to external funding, is requested to contract with FAO to undertake a study by species experts on CITES and non-CITES listed precious coral species (black, red, and pink coral species including species within the order Antipatharia, and family Corallidae) including:
   i. consideration of any responses received to the Notification issued in response to 17.xxa;
   ii. compilation of available data and information on the biology, population status, use and trade in each species, as well as identification of gaps in such data and information;
   iii. comparison of the management and harvest regulation schemes for black and red and pink coral species; and
   iv. preparation of a report for consideration at the 30th meeting of the Animals Committee (AC30), on the conservation status and trade of precious corals, including guidance, if appropriate, on the actions needed to enhance the conservation and sustainable use of precious corals.

Directed to the Animals Committee

17.xxc The Animals Committee is requested to:
   i. review the outcomes of the precious coral survey and the FAO study and prepare recommendations, as appropriate, on actions needed to enhance the conservation and sustainable harvest and use of all precious corals in international trade.
   ii. report these recommendations to the Standing Committee at its 70th meeting (SC70).

Directed to the Standing Committee

17.xxd The Standing Committee is requested to consider the information and
recommendations of the Animals Committee, made in accordance with Decision 17.xxc, and make its own recommendations, as appropriate, for communication to the Parties or for consideration at the 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
Draft questionnaire on the conservation of and trade in precious coral species including

(Black, red, and pink coral species within the order Antipatharia, and the family Coralliidae)

The term ‘specimen’ as used in this questionnaire is as defined in Article I, paragraph b) i) and ii) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora⁶

A. GENERAL INFORMATION AND POPULATION STATUS

Please provide as much information as possible, to the species or population level, in answer to the questions below – the information should cover at least the last five years⁷

Information is requested from precious coral range States.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Function of agency/agencies completing this questionnaire (CITES Management Authority, CITES Scientific Authority, Wildlife Authority, Police, Customs, Other)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact details of agency/agencies completing this questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact person(s) (name, email, job title, function)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is your country a range State for precious corals?</th>
<th>Yes ☐ No ☐</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If ‘Yes’, please indicate which species occur in your country. If ‘No’, please proceed to Section B. If there is uncertainty regarding which species occur in your country, indicate ‘unknown’.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
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⁶ (b) “Specimen” means:
   (i) any animal or plant, whether alive or dead;
   (ii) in the case of an animal: for species included in Appendices I and II, any readily recognizable part or derivative thereof; and for species included in Appendix III, any readily recognizable part or derivative thereof specified in Appendix III in relation to the species

⁷ Please use additional sheets for any question, if needed.
### A.2
Does recent information, not already available, exist about the conservation status of each precious coral species in your country?
- Yes ☐
- No ☐

If 'Yes', please provide a link, reference or additional information about the species’ status.

### A.3
Based on the best available information, did the precious coral population(s) in your country over the last 5 years:
- increase ☐
- remain stable ☐
- decline ☐
- data deficient ☐

Please indicate on what source of information your answer is based (e.g. indicate the reference and the date of reference).

### A.4
If available, please provide data or information on the impact of (international and domestic) legal trade, and, if possible illegal trade, on the precious coral population(s) in your country.
### B. LEGISLATION / REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

#### B.1
Has your country adopted legislation, or other measures, to manage harvest and regulate international trade in precious coral(s), or specimens of precious coral?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

If 'Yes' go to question B.1.1

#### B.1.1
If your answer to B.1 is 'Yes', specify the titles and provisions of such measures for each species

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>International trade measures</th>
<th>Title and relevant provisions of these measures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Yes ☐ No ☐</td>
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<td>Yes ☐ No ☐</td>
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#### Additional Information

#### B.2
What penalties can be imposed, in accordance with your national legislation or trade measures, for illegal activity concerning harvest and/or trade in precious coral, or specimens of precious coral?
C. MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C.1</th>
<th>Is harvest of precious coral managed in your country?</th>
<th>Yes ☐ No ☐</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If your answer to the question above is 'Yes' please go to question C.1.1</td>
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</table>

| C.1.1 | Please provide detailed information on how harvest is managed. Do you have management plans or management measures to address harvest? |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C.2</th>
<th>Do you monitor the amount of raw coral used in the production of jewelry and decorative items?</th>
<th>Yes ☐ No ☐</th>
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<tr>
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<td>If your answer to the question above is 'Yes' please go to question C.2.1</td>
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| C.2.1 | Please provide detailed information on how the amount of raw coral used in the production of jewelry and decorative items is monitored. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C.3</th>
<th>Is domestic trade in precious coral, and specimens of precious coral, regulated in your country?</th>
<th>No known domestic trade ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If your answer to the question above is 'Yes' please go to question C.3.1</td>
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</table>

| C.3.1 | Please provide detailed information on how domestic trade is regulated. |
### D. INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Have any precious coral, or precious coral specimens been legally **imported** into your country since 1 January 2010 that are not reflected in the CITES annual reports submitted? 

- Yes ☐  
- No ☐

Please indicate information about each import separately and refer to CITES codes for source and purpose.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Specimen (i.e. Jewellery, decorative, live, coral sand or other)</th>
<th>Quantity*</th>
<th>Unit of measure**</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Country of last re-export</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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- For jewelry and decorative items, quantity should be the number of items AND the weight of raw coral used to produce these items.

- For jewelry and decorative items, unit of measure should identify the number of items AND a unit of weight as either wet weight or dry weight.

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8 Data already provided in CITES annual reports do not need to be included.

Have any precious coral, or precious coral specimens been legally **exported** or **re-exported** from your country since 1 January 2010 that are not reflected in the CITES annual reports submitted?  

- **Yes** [ ]  
- **No** [ ]

Please indicate information about each export or re-export separately **11**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Specimen (i.e. Jewellery, decorative, live, coral sand or Other)</th>
<th>Quantity*</th>
<th>Unit of measure**</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
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- * For jewelry and decorative items, quantity should be the number of items AND the weight of raw coral used to produce these items
- ** For jewelry and decorative items, unit of measure should identify the number of items AND a unit of weight as either wet weight or dry weight

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**10** Data already provided in CITES annual reports do not need to be included.

### E. ENFORCEMENT

*For the following please provide as much information as possible, covering at least the last five years*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E.1</th>
<th>Is the illegal harvest or illegal trade of precious corals, or precious coral specimens, an issue in your country?</th>
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<td>Yes ☐</td>
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<td>No ☐</td>
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If your answer to the question above is ‘Yes’ please go to question E.1.1

| E.1.1 | Please describe the problem and what solutions are needed to address the problem. |
### F. CURRENT OR PAST RESEARCH ON PRECIOUS CORAL POPULATIONS

*For the following please provide as much information as possible, covering at least the last five years*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Study objective</th>
<th>Primary findings</th>
<th>Conservation benefits identified</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
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Additional information
## G. STOCKPILES

### G.1

Do stockpiles of precious coral specimens exist in your country (government or privately held)?

- Yes [ ]
- No [ ]

If yes go to question G.1.1

### G.1.1

If your answer to G.1 is ‘Yes’, please include as much information as possible in the columns below.\(^\text{12}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Specimen (i.e. Jewellery, decorative, live, coral sand or Other)</th>
<th>Volume</th>
<th>Source (i.e. when the stock was constituted)</th>
<th>Privately held</th>
<th>Government held (federal, regional, local)</th>
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Please provide detailed information on how the amount of raw coral harvested and used in the production of jewelry and decorative items is managed and accounted for in your country.

### G.2

\(^{12}\) Please tick the relevant column to indicate if the stockpiles are government or privately held.
**H. MARICULTURE ACTIVITIES**

*For the following please provide as much information as possible, covering at least the last five years*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H.1</th>
<th>Are precious corals maricultured in your country?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes □</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No □</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

If yes go to question H.1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H.1.1</th>
<th>If your answer to H.1 is ‘Yes’, please complete the columns below</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Number of facilities</th>
<th>Production per year</th>
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Additional information