

TRADE IN MARINE ORNAMENTAL FISHES

SUPPORT CoP18 Doc. 94

Conservation and management of and trade in marine ornamental fishes Submitted by Switzerland, the European Union and the United States.



CORAL REEFS

- Coral reefs are often called the 'rainforests of the seas'. They are among the most species-rich ecosystems on earth.
- Coral reefs are seriously threatened by pollution, climate change as well as overfishing by the marine aquarium industry.
- Almost 20% of the original coral reef area has already disappeared and another 35% will disappear within 20-40 years. 9,10,11,12,22



TRADE IN MARINE ORNAMENTAL FISHES

- Currently, the trade comprises of over 2,300 species of marine ornamental fishes, a trade that is scarcely regulated or monitored. 1,2,3,4,17,18,20
- There are about 1,000 public aquariums worldwide, and 2 million private-held aquariums, zoos, shops and restaurants that display marine fishes. 7,21
- The precise number of marine ornamental fishes traded worldwide is unknown but estimates indicate that between 24 and 40 million specimens are traded each year. 14,15,19,20,21
- Mortality estimates prior to export are not included in trade volumes. 14,15,19,20,21
- Globally, the primary exporting countries are Indonesia, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka, with the main consumer countries being the United States of America followed by the European Union and Japan.13,18,21,23





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PROBLEM – LACK OF DATA, LACK OF CONTROL

- There is no adequate system for monitoring the international trade in marine ornamental fishes. This impedes effective management and, in turn, limits the sustainability of the aquarium industry. 1,2,3,17,18,20
- The collection of trade data is an essential tool to better understand the influence of the trade on species and ecosystems, and to be able to quantify • Illegal cyanide fishing is still widely practiced. volumes of traded species. 1,2,3,17,18,20
- Limited knowledge regarding the dynamics of exploitation has raised concerns from stakeholders - fishermen, diving and other tourism opera-

THE EXAMPLE OF THE BANGGAI CARDINAL FISH

The Banggai cardinalfish (Pterapogon kauderni), traded. Attempts to restrict trade through CITES endemic to Eastern Sulawesi Indonesia, is a very in 2007 and 2016 failed, although in 2016 the CITES member States decided that Indonesia will have to popular marine ornamental fish. In 2007, the IUCN listed the species as ,endangered', while the implement protection and management schemes European Union collects trade data on a voluntary that will be discussed at the next CoP19 (CoP18 basis. As of 2016, the United States included Doc. 82). P. kauderni in its Endangered Species Act ESA thus enabling protection through US laws. It has been estimated that the abundance of *P. kauderni* within its natural range (~23 km²) has suffered an approximate 90% decline compared with its pre-harvest level. Some local *P. kauderni* populations have been overexploited and others extirpated. Furthermore, mortality is very high between post-import and consumer stages. Although captive breeding *P. kauderni* is possible, wild caught fishes are considerably cheaper and, therefore, preferably

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torsand environmentalists - that fishing is having a negative impact on targeted populations and associated coral reef habitats. ^{2,16,17}

- The conservation status of almost half of all known coral reef fishes has not been evaluated by the IUCN Red List.²
- The method is used to stun marine ornamental fishes for easier collection. This is especially the case in the primary coral reef fish exporting countries. 5,6,8,21



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CITES AND MARINE ORNAMENTAL FISHES

- There are few management or protection schemes in place for coral reef fishes – very few species are listed in the Appendices of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
- Under CITES only *Cheilinus undulatus, Holacanthus clarionensis* and *Hippocampus spp*. are under the appendices trade regulations.
- CITES should play its role in preventing the destruction of habitats and extinction of marine species due to trade. A first step is to enable
 better data collection and control of the trade in marine ornamental fishes.





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SUPPORT COP18 DOC. 94: CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF AND TRADE IN MARINE ORNAMENTAL FISHES

This document, submitted by **Switzerland, the European Union and the United States**, recommends the adoption of draft decisions **to assess the conservation impacts of the international trade in live marine ornamental fishes.**

In particular, it asks that the Secretariat, with the help of the Animals and Standing Committees as well as third Parties and technical experts, to convene a **technical workshop** to consider the conservation priorities and management needs related to the trade in marine ornamental fishes worldwide with a specific focus on data from importing (consumer) countries and from exporting countries. It requires that the findings and recommendations of this workshop should be prepared by the Secretariat for the Animals and Standing Committee, which shall then make its own recommendations at the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

