

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



Seventy-eighth meeting of the Standing Committee
Geneva (Switzerland), 3 - 8 February 2025

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO
RESOLUTION CONF. 11.10 (REV. COP15) ON *TRADE IN STONY CORALS AND DRAFT DECISIONS ON
TRADE IN STONY CORALS*

This document has been prepared by the Secretariat at the request of the Standing Committee on the basis of document SC78 Doc. 60 and reflect amendments proposed by Oceania and North America Region.

DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO
RESOLUTION CONF. 11.10 (REV. COP15) ON *TRADE IN STONY CORALS*

New text is underlined and deleted text is in ~~strike through~~.

New text proposed by the North America Region [NAR] and Oceania is **highlighted** and underlined

Conf. 11.10 Trade in stony corals
(Rev. CoP15)

AWARE that stony corals (~~in the orders Scleractinia, as well as non-scleractinian corals within the genera Distichopora, Heliopora, Millepora, Stylaster and Tubipora, Helioporacea, Milleporina, Scleractinia, Stolonifera, and Stylasterina~~) are in international trade as live or dead specimens ~~intact specimens for aquaria and as curios~~;

RECOGNIZING that coral rock, skeleton fragments, sand and other coral products are also traded;

NOTING the unique nature of corals, namely that their skeletons are persistent, that they may become mineralized in time and that they are the foundation of reefs, and that, following erosion, fragments of coral may form part of mineral and sedimentary deposits;

NOTING also that coral rock may act as an important substrate for the attachment of live corals and that the removal of rock may have a detrimental impact on coral reef ecosystems;

AWARE, however, that coral rock can ~~not only~~ be readily identified ~~other than~~ to the order Scleractinia, or in the case of non-scleractinian corals, to the genus level (Distichopora, Heliopora, Millepora, Stylaster or Tubipora), and that accordingly non-detriment findings under Article IV, paragraph 2 (a), of the Convention cannot be readily applied;

NOTING however, that for practical purposes of implementing the Convention, all coral rock can be reported in trade as "Scleractinia spp." irrespective of whether the coral rock contains scleractinian corals, non-scleractinian corals, or a mixed composition, for ease of identification and reporting.

NOTING that Article IV, paragraph 3, requires the monitoring of exports of specimens of each species in Appendix II, in order to assess whether the species is being maintained at a level consistent with its role in the ecosystem;

NOTING that assessments under Article IV, paragraph 3, of the impacts of harvesting corals on the ecosystems from which they are derived cannot be adequately made by monitoring exports alone;

ACCEPTING that coral skeleton fragments and coral sand cannot be readily recognized;

RECOGNIZING also that it is ~~frequently~~ usually difficult to identify live or dead corals to the species level owing to the lack of a standard nomenclature and the lack of comprehensive and accessible identification guides for the non-specialist;

RECOGNIZING that stony corals that are fossilized are not subject to the provisions of the Convention;

NOTING that it has been difficult to apply and enforce the provisions of the Convention to trade in corals;

THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION

1. ADOPTS the working definitions of coral sand, coral skeleton fragments, coral rock, live coral and dead coral provided in the Annex to this Resolution;
2. RECOMMENDS that Parties give much greater emphasis to the implementation of Article IV, paragraph 3, when permitting the export of corals and that they adopt the principles and practice of an ecosystem approach, rather than relying on the monitoring of exports alone; and
3. URGES:
 - a) interested Parties and other bodies from range and consumer States to collaborate and provide support, coordinated by the Secretariat, to produce as a priority accessible and practical guides to recognizing corals and coral rock in trade and to make these widely available to Parties through appropriate media; and
 - b) Parties to seek synergy with other multilateral environmental agreements and initiatives to work for the conservation and sustainable use of coral reef ecosystems.

Annex

Definitions

Coral sand – material consisting entirely or in part of ~~fine sediments finely crushed fragments~~ of dead coral ~~origin~~ no larger than 2 mm in diameter and which may also contain, amongst other things, the remains of Foraminifera, mollusc and crustacean shell, and coralline algae. Not identifiable to the level of genus. In accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev. CoP16) on Trade in readily recognizable parts and derivatives, coral sand is not considered readily recognizable, and is therefore not covered by the provisions of the Convention.

Coral skeleton fragments (including gravel and rubble) – unconsolidated fragments of ~~broken finger-like~~ dead coral and other material between 2 and 30 mm measured in any direction, which is not identifiable to the level of genus. In accordance with Resolution Conf. 9.6 (Rev. CoP16) on Trade in readily recognizable parts and derivatives, coral skeleton fragments are not considered readily recognizable, and are therefore not covered by the provisions of the Convention.

Coral rock¹ ~~is (the collective term used for also live rock and substrate)~~ –hard consolidated material, >3 cm in diameter, formed of fragments of dead coral and which may also contain cemented sand, coralline algae and other sedimentary rocks. The term 'coral rock' should not be used on permits; which should instead refer to 'live rock' and 'substrate'.

'Live rock' is the term given to large pieces of coral rock (usually > 0,5 kg each) to which are attached live specimens of invertebrate species and coralline algae not included in the CITES Appendices. Live rock should not have live specimens of CITES-listed coral species attached. Live rock is used as decoration and habitat in aquariums and is usually and which are transported in moist condition, but not in water, in crates. Live rock is

subject to the provisions of the Convention and should be reported as *Scleractinia* spp.

'Substrate' is the term given to small pieces of coral rock (usually < 0.5 kg each), to which are attached invertebrates (of species not included in the CITES Appendices). Substrate is used as pedestal (base) for attached invertebrates, such as sea anemones or soft corals and is therefore ~~and which are~~ transported in water to keep these organisms alive, like live corals. Substrate should not have live specimens of CITES-listed coral species attached. Coral rock is not identifiable to the level of genus but is recognizable to the level of order. ~~The definition excludes specimens defined as dead coral.~~ Substrate, when readily recognizable as coral, is subject to the provisions of the Convention and should be reported as *Scleractinia* spp.

Dead coral – pieces of coral that are dead when exported, but that may have been alive when collected, and in which the structure of corallites (the skeleton of the individual polyp) is still intact; specimens are therefore identifiable to the level of species or genus.

Live coral – pieces of live coral transported in water and that are identifiable to the level of species or genus. **A piece of live coral is a fragment of the hard, stony skeleton that can be artificially or naturally attached to a base consisting of natural or synthetic material. When multiple coral pieces are attached to a single base, each piece is regarded as an individual specimen (e.g., 1 base with 2 pieces attached are considered 2 specimens), regardless of whether they belong to the same species [NAR].**

DRAFT DECISIONS ON TRADE IN STONY CORALS

Directed to the Animals Committee

19.177 (Rev. CoP20) The Animals Committee shall:

- ~~a) taking into account document CoP19 Doc. 46 and its Annex, provide advice on possible amendments to Resolution Conf 11.10 (Rev. CoP15) on Trade in stony corals, in consultation with coral reef nations and coral reef experts, and report with recommendations to the Standing Committee;~~
- a) consider the information in the Annex to document AC33 Doc.24 and in consultation with coral reef nations and coral reef experts [Oceania], provide advice on the conversion factors used to analyse trade in corals for the CITES Review of Significant Trade process and report to the 21st^{20th} meeting of the Conference of the Parties.**

Directed to the Standing Committee

19.178 (Rev. CoP20) The Standing Committee shall:

- ~~a) review any proposed amendments to Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP15) on Trade in stony corals from the Animals Committee; and~~
- a) taking into account the progress made at AC33 and in consultation with coral reef nations and coral reef experts [Oceania], make further [Oceania] recommendations, as necessary, to revise the Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports and Guidelines for the preparation and submission of the CITES annual illegal trade report, to ensure that they provide sufficient clarity on the use of appropriate terms and units for trade in stony corals; and**
- b) report their findings to the 21st meeting of the Conference of the Parties [Oceania]**

Directed to the Parties [NAR]:

20.AA Parties are invited to:

- a) implement the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports*; and the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports on illegal trade* adopted at CoP20 regarding the use of appropriate terms and units for trade in stony corals, when**

issuing CITES documents and drafting their CITES annual reports and CITES annual reports on illegal trade [NAR].

- b) respond to the Notification to Parties under Decision 20.BB, particularly those involved in the trade in stony corals.[NAR]

Directed to the Secretariat [NAR]:

20.BB The Secretariat shall:

- a) issue a Notification to the Parties, inviting Parties to share experiences and challenges in implementing the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports*; and the *Guidelines for the preparation and submission of CITES annual reports on illegal trade* regarding the use of appropriate terms and units for trade in stony corals. [NAR]