



# NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2024/041

Geneva, 4 March 2024

CONCERNING:

Technical workshop on *Marine ornamental fishes*  
(7 to 10 May 2024, Brisbane, Australia)  
Registration, submission of documents and application for financial support

1. At its 19th meeting (CoP19; Panama City, 2022), the Conference of the Parties adopted Decisions [19.237 and 19.238](#) on *Marine ornamental fishes*. The Secretariat is organizing a technical workshop in accordance with these Decisions, the Terms of Reference of which can be found in Annex 1.
2. The workshop on *Marine ornamental fishes* will consider the conservation priorities and management needs related to the trade in non-CITES listed marine ornamental fishes worldwide, with a particular focus on data from importing and exporting countries.
3. This technical workshop is made possible due to the generous contributions from Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

## Date and venue

4. The Secretariat hereby informs Parties that the technical workshop will be held in person from **Tuesday 7 to Friday 10 May 2024** in Brisbane, Australia (exact venue to be confirmed).

## Working languages

5. Plenary sessions during the workshop will have interpretation into English, French and Spanish, while working group sessions during the workshop will primarily be conducted in English.

## Agenda and documentation

6. All relevant documentation, including the workshop agenda and background information (in English only), as well as a logistics note with practical information about travelling to Australia, will be made available on this [webpage](#) as it becomes available.
7. Parties and organizations that would like to submit any additional documentation or information that may be of relevance to the discussions are invited to submit such information to the Secretariat ([karen.gaynor@cites.org](mailto:karen.gaynor@cites.org)) by **27 March 2024** at the latest.

Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

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## Registration

8. Members of the Animals Committee, representatives from range States, exporting, and importing countries, fishery stakeholders, industry representatives and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are invited to register to participate in this workshop. The participation of women representatives is encouraged.
9. All participants must register in advance for this workshop, by writing an email to the CITES Secretariat ([karen.gaynor@un.org](mailto:karen.gaynor@un.org)) with copy to [species@unep-wcmc.org](mailto:species@unep-wcmc.org) by **20 March 2024**. In their email to register to the workshop, participants should include their full name and affiliation, a copy of their passport, and a passport-sized photograph. No late registrations will be accepted.
10. For Party participants seeking financial assistance, the deadline for registration is **15 March 2024**. Please see the section on financial assistance below for details (paragraphs 13-14).
11. Early registration is highly recommended for participants who require an entry visa to Australia and for Party representatives who are seeking financial support as sponsored workshop participants. All participants will be confirmed as soon as possible following registration, and no later than 27 March 2024. In the event that the total number of registrations exceeds the capacity of the venue, the Secretariat may need to limit participation taking into consideration geographic representation, the size of the delegation per Party and observer organization, as well as relevant expertise to achieve a balanced participation.

## Hybrid sessions

12. Online participation in plenary sessions of the workshop will be possible via Zoom, with interpretation into the three official languages of the Convention. Parties, observer organizations and individuals wishing to participate online can do so via a link that will be shared with registered participants only.

## Financial assistance

13. The Secretariat has funding available to support a limited number of workshop participants. Criteria for selecting sponsored workshop participants are closely aligned with those adopted by the Conference of the Parties in [Resolution Conf. 17.3 \(Rev. CoP19\)](#) on *Sponsored Delegates Project*, and in [Decisions 18.12 and 19.10](#) on *Sponsored Delegates Project*. Due to the smaller size of the event, only one participant can be sponsored for each selected Party. In addition to the criteria defined for CoP meetings, the relevant related expertise of applicants will be taken into account for the selection of sponsored workshop participants. As UN Member States seek to achieve goal 5 of the SDGs regarding gender equality, the Secretariat will also consider gender diversity and nomination of women representatives is encouraged.
14. Parties seeking to receive financial support to participate in the workshop are requested to submit the following forms by **15 March 2024** to [species@unep-wcmc.org](mailto:species@unep-wcmc.org) with copy to [karen.gaynor@cites.org](mailto:karen.gaynor@cites.org) **in addition to** registering for the workshop:
  - Application for financial assistance form (Annex 2)
  - Supporting documentations outlined in Annex 2:
    1. scanned copy of passport
    2. copy of official nomination letter from the CITES Management Authority
    3. document supporting their expertise related to the workshop.

### **Visas to Australia**

15. The Secretariat reminds Parties and organizations that their representatives may require visas. All participants are responsible for arranging their own visas on time and covering the related costs. A visa assistance letter will be emailed when participation is confirmed by the Secretariat. Participants are strongly encouraged to apply for their visas upon confirmation of participation.

### **Accommodation**

16. Participants are requested to make their own hotel bookings. Information about the venue and accommodation options will be made available on the workshop [webpage](#) as soon as the venue is confirmed.

### **Contacts**

17. Inquiries related to workshop registration and application for financial assistance, and visa assistance letters should be directed to [species@unep-wcmc.org](mailto:species@unep-wcmc.org) with copy to [karen.gaynor@cites.org](mailto:karen.gaynor@cites.org)

### **Annex 1 – Terms of reference and *modus operandi* for the technical workshop on marine ornamental fishes**

### **Annex 2 – Application for financial assistance**

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND *MODUS OPERANDI* FOR  
THE TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON MARINE ORNAMENTAL FISHES

TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Workshop scope and activities**

1. The technical workshop will, *inter alia*:

- a) focus on international trade in live specimens of non-CITES listed marine ornamental fishes, with a particular focus on data from importing and exporting countries, specifically on coral reef fishes (fish which live amongst or in close relation to coral reefs that are found in the tropical and subtropical Western Atlantic and Indo-Pacific oceans, typically occurring between 30°N and 30°S latitudes), and on those species (including sharks and rays) that are caught and traded for display in public or private aquariums;
- b) share information about the nature and scale of the international trade in specimens of non-CITES listed marine ornamental fishes and identify knowledge gaps;
- c) consider the limitations of existing data;
- d) provide a platform for the exchange of information relating to international trade in marine ornamental fishes and its potential impact on species conservation;
- e) identify and consider examples of best practices to manage trade in marine ornamental fishes in a sustainable way, including trade originating from captive-bred sources;
- f) consider the biology, conservation priorities and management needs related to the trade in non-CITES listed marine ornamental fishes worldwide;
- g) consider the potential benefits of sustainable harvest on species conservation and livelihoods; and
- h) make recommendations to ensure the conservation of marine ornamental fishes taxa that may be negatively impacted by international trade.

**Outcomes**

2. The workshop will contribute to the following outcomes:

- a) identification of non-CITES listed marine ornamental fish species in international trade;
- b) an understanding of the scale and dynamics of this trade, including the degree to which data are available at a national or population scale; and evidence of captive breeding;
- c) identification of potential options for monitoring of species trade volumes;
- d) a better understanding of the biology, conservation status and intrinsic vulnerability to extinction for all non-CITES marine ornamental fish species identified as being in international trade;
- e) prioritisation for further research into the potential impact of international trade on species considered to be at higher risk of extinction as a result of international trade;

- f) improved management measures and best practices to ensure the conservation of the marine ornamental fish species identified; and
- g) improved regulations for international trade in non-CITES listed live coral reef fishes and their enforcement.

## **Outputs**

3. The workshop will generate the following outputs:

- a) recommendations to address the conservation priorities and management needs of non-CITES listed marine ornamental fishes; and
- b) strategies and proposed actions to ensure that international trade in marine ornamental fishes does not threaten their survival, to be presented to the Animals Committee in accordance with Decision 19.237, paragraph c), for its consideration.

A workshop report will be prepared by the Secretariat and circulated to participants for review before submission to the Animals Committee.

## *MODUS OPERANDI*

### **Prioritization of Parties and marine ornamental fishes taxa**

- 4. To make the workshop as practical and constructive as possible, the Secretariat will initiate a process of prioritization to identify Parties for participation in the workshop and to determine the marine ornamental species most affected by international trade for the workshop to focus on. The prioritization of Parties will be based primarily on the results of the thematic studies prepared under paragraph c) of Decision 18.296. These thematic studies were made available at CoP19 in information document [CoP19 Inf. 99](#) and its [Annex](#).
- 5. The studies referred to in paragraph 4 above gathered information on marine ornamental fish trade, conservation status, management and legislation from a survey that was circulated via a Notification to the Parties on 30 March 2021 (Notification to the Parties No. 2021/030). Further information on marine ornamental fish species was compiled from species databases (e.g. IUCN Red List, FishBase), trade databases (e.g. US imports in LEMIS, EU imports in TRACES, TRAFFIC Wildlife Trade Portal and GMAD), expert consultation, relevant management plans and legislation in key countries of export, and the wider published literature.
- 6. The workshop prioritization will also make use of additional available relevant material such as the recent IUCN Red list assessments, research carried out by [Species360](#), information document [CoP19 Inf. 68](#), reports from FAO and any verified information from other credible data sources such as academic field research concerning marine ornamental fishes.
- 7. The prioritization of Parties will include:
  - a) range States of non-CITES-listed marine ornamental species identified as being most significantly affected by international trade, based on available trade data;
  - b) Parties identified as key exporters of marine ornamental fishes; and
  - c) Parties identified as key importers of marine ornamental fishes;

The Secretariat will issue a Notification to the Parties concerning this prioritization and announce the workshop dates.

- 8. In accordance with Decision 19.237, the workshop will be convened by the Secretariat and include representatives from the Animals Committee, representatives from range States,

exporting, transit and importing countries, fishery stakeholders, industry representatives and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

9. To ensure that maximum benefit is derived from the workshop, Parties most affected by international trade in marine ornamental fishes and identified through the prioritization process described in paragraphs 4 to 8 above are encouraged to make every effort to participate in the expert workshop.
10. Subject to available funding, the Secretariat may be able to support the participation of at least one representative from eligible key Parties identified as affected by international trade in marine ornamental fishes who are not in the position to cover their costs. These Parties may wish to nominate additional representatives at their own expense. To ensure broad stakeholder participation, the representatives that these Parties nominate should be from CITES authorities, wildlife and fishery agencies or be recognised experts on marine ornamental fish conservation or trade. The nominated representatives should have relevant expertise on the subject matter and be able to contribute to the activities and outputs of the technical workshop.
11. Other organizations and experts with relevant experience or knowledge, or that work actively on marine ornamental fish related matters will be identified and engaged. This could for example include organizations or individual experts that have shown a long-standing interest in marine ornamental fishes, civil society organizations, industry representatives and entities such as the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Secretariat, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the Ornamental Fish International (OFI). Subject to the availability of funds, the Secretariat may be able to support the participation of one representative from some of these entities, to be determined on a case-by-case basis.
12. Parties and organizations are encouraged to take into consideration gender diversity in the nomination of representatives.
13. To maximize transparency and participation, the Secretariat will endeavour to provide, if possible, means for interested Parties and stakeholders that are unable to attend the workshop in person to participate or view online.

### **Meeting agenda**

14. The meeting agenda and summary of available documentation will be developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair of the Animals Committee and the lead(s) identified in the AC workplan 2023-2025. Participants will be invited to submit any supplementary documentation in advance and documents will be made available 30 days in advance of the workshop.

### **Format and conduct of the workshop**

15. Ideally, the technical workshop should take place in a face-to-face setting. This will however be influenced by identification of a host country and venue.