

TRAFFIC Recommendations on the Proposals to Amend the CITES Appendices at CoP15

	Species	Comment	Recommendation
21	Coralliidae spp. (<i>Corallium</i> spp. and <i>Paracorallium</i> spp.)	<p>CoP15 Prop. 21 [Sweden and the USA] Inclusion of all species in the family in Appendix II.</p> <p>There are more than 30 species in the family Coralliidae found throughout the world in tropical, subtropical and temperate oceans. Several species of the genera <i>Corallium</i> and <i>Paracorallium</i> are harvested in the Mediterranean and the Western Pacific, primarily for the manufacture of jewellery and objets d'art. Four of these species are listed in CITES Appendix III (China). The products made from Coralliidae command high prices and near-global market demand. As a result, the trade in these corals is extensive and profitable and provides ample incentive for their harvest. Many Mediterranean populations of Coralliidae spp. have declined as a result of over-harvesting and overall the average size of Coralliidae colonies in the Mediterranean has been significantly reduced with a correlated reduction of reproductive capability. In the Pacific, discovery of commercially viable beds has at times led to rapid exploitation and subsequent exhaustion of the resource. Identification of Coralliidae to species level is difficult, especially when manufactured into finished products.</p> <p>There are challenges in applying the criteria for inclusion in Appendix II provided by <i>Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP14)</i> to Coralliidae in a straightforward way, largely because the criteria were clearly not established with widely distributed, colonial marine organisms in mind. However, it can be argued that <i>Corallium rubrum</i>, the only species found in the Mediterranean, may meet the criteria for inclusion in Appendix II by virtue of regulation of trade being necessary to prevent the species becoming eligible for inclusion in Appendix I in the near future, as described in Annex 2 a A. of <i>Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP14)</i>, applying the decline criterion for Appendix-I listing.</p> <p>The other species of the family would then qualify for listing in Appendix II as "look-alikes" in accordance with criterion A. in Annex 2 b of <i>Resolution Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP14)</i>, because of the difficulty in identifying Coralliidae products to species level; and because inclusion of some and not all species in the Appendices would add to the enforcement problems that already exist owing to the listing of four species in CITES Appendix III.</p>	ACCEPT

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	Despite confusion about how to apply the listing criteria for these species, there is a clear case that regulation of trade in Coralliidae spp. under CITES would provide important safeguards in support of better management of these valuable species.	