



## NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

No. 2006/063

Geneva, 14 November 2006

CONCERNING:

### Fossil corals

1. At its 13th meeting (Bangkok, 2005), the Conference of the Parties adopted proposal CoP13 Prop. 36, amending the annotation for Helioporidae spp., Tubiporidae spp., Scleractinia spp., Milleporidae spp. and Stylasteridae spp. to define the fossil specimens that are not subject of the provisions of the Convention. Following this, the Conference adopted these complementary Decisions:

#### Directed to Parties

*13.95 The Parties that are involved in the trade in stony corals should, by the end of 2005, determine how they will interpret the annotation exempting fossil corals from the provisions of the Convention and provide this interpretation to the Secretariat for distribution to the Parties.*

#### Directed to the Animals Committee

*13.96 The Animals Committee shall proceed with an analysis of the Parties' interpretation of the annotation on fossil corals and other tasks necessary to undertake a review of Resolution Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP12) and report to the Secretariat by the end of 2006.*

#### Directed to the Secretariat

*13.97 The Secretariat shall communicate the report of the Animals Committee regarding the interpretation of the annotation exempting fossil corals to the Parties via a notification before the 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

2. The Secretariat reminded Parties of these Decisions in Notification to the Parties No. 2005/065 of 22 November 2005.
3. In compliance with Decision 13.96, the Animals Committee at its 22nd meeting (Lima, July 2006) analysed the information received from Parties. Its report of the analysis was submitted to the Secretariat and is provided as an Annex to this Notification, in accordance with Decision 13.97.

## Annex

Report of the Animals Committee to the Secretariat in compliance with Decision 13.96

1. Summary of responses from China, Mexico, Switzerland, the United States of America and the European Commission (on behalf of the 25 Member States of the European Union) on their interpretation of the annotation exempting fossil corals from the provisions of the Convention:

China:

- Fossil corals are remains of coral skeleton buried by natural process and subsequently permanently preserved, that has or has not undergone changes in appearance and does not fall under the definition of coral fragments, coral rock or dead coral.

European Community:

- Fossils, namely all categories of coral rock, except live rock (meaning pieces of coral rock to which are attached live specimens of invertebrate species and coralline algae not included in the Appendices and which are transported moist, but not in water) are not subject to the provisions of the Convention.

Mexico:

- No specific definition.

Switzerland:

- Fossils are all petrified corals that are as a rule enclosed in or part of geological rock formations (e.g. in the chalk of the Jura mountain range in Switzerland).

United States of America:

- Fossil corals are part of limestone deposits with extinct species of corals and other marine invertebrates. These rock deposits are from several thousand to 500 million years old. Limestone can be cut and polished for jewellery and lapidary articles.

Note: i) limestone (fossil coral) often lacks complete and recognizable coral skeletons and structures (i.e. corallites, septa) but consists of a matrix of lime cement and broken pieces of reef rock and mollusc shells; and

ii) cavities in limestone and the spaces between coral and mollusc shell structures are filled with a lime cement and often are not porous.

2. These responses should be made available to the Parties and to all Parties involved in the trade in corals through a Notification to the Parties and through the CITES website so that Parties are aware of the approach taken by the various Parties. Any further contributions submitted by Parties should be added to this summary document.