

# SPECIAL REPORT

Coral Commission



Yerevan, Armenia  
26-28 October 2016

## Coral Commission significantly upgrades Coral Blue Book and is to begin work on comprehensive coral guide

**By Vincenzo Liverino, President  
CIBJO Coral Commission**

**B**efore elaborating on the efforts and endeavours that have taken place in the Coral Commission and as regards to the Coral Blue Book, CIBJO gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the professionals who have dedicated much of their time over the past year as active members of the commission's Steering Committee. Their input and insights have been crucial to the successful planning and

implementation of draft resolutions, changes to existing clauses and definitions in the Blue Book, and also to the addition of new content.

The Steering Committee will again review amendments and additions to the Coral Book during its meeting in Yerevan, Armenia, and subsequently they will be presented during the formal session of the Coral Commission at the 2016 CIBJO Congress.

Once the changes have been finalised and ratified, the updated version of the Coral Book will become available for general distribution,



and it will continue to serve as an excellent source for relevant trade and consumer information, covering all forms of precious coral.

**One year later, upgrading the Coral Book**

A milestone was achieved last year in Salvador, Brazil, when the ratified Coral Book took its place alongside CIBJO’s other Blue Books of industry standards and nomenclature. It was the culmination of many years of hard work. But since then we have laboured on improving the document substantially, so that it serves an essential tool in the coral business and in the preservation of our natural resources. It does this through codified regulations and standards that defend consumer confidence and promote fair trade.

Extensive work has been put into making the Coral Blue Book an even better resource for its users and various stakeholders.

Among the upgrades, complete new sections have been added, dedicated to coral sustainability and regulations for harvesting in the Mediterranean

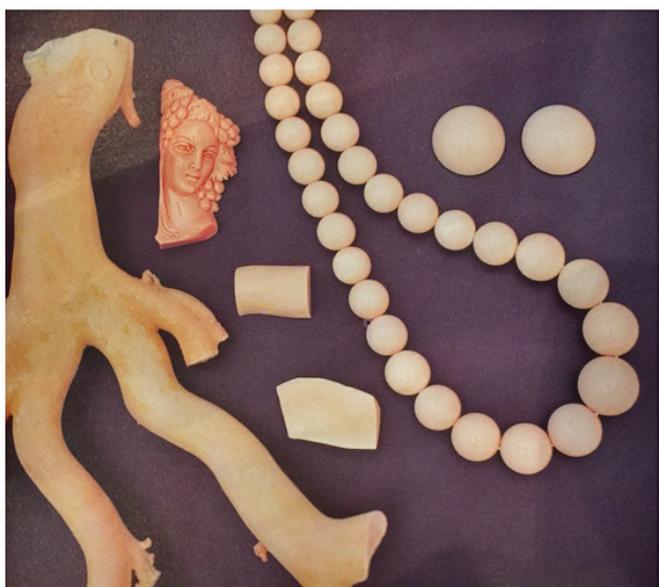


*Vincenzo Liverino, President of the CIBJO Coral Commission.*

Sea and Atlantic Ocean. We also have updated existing clauses that cover the specific situations in Japan and Taiwan.

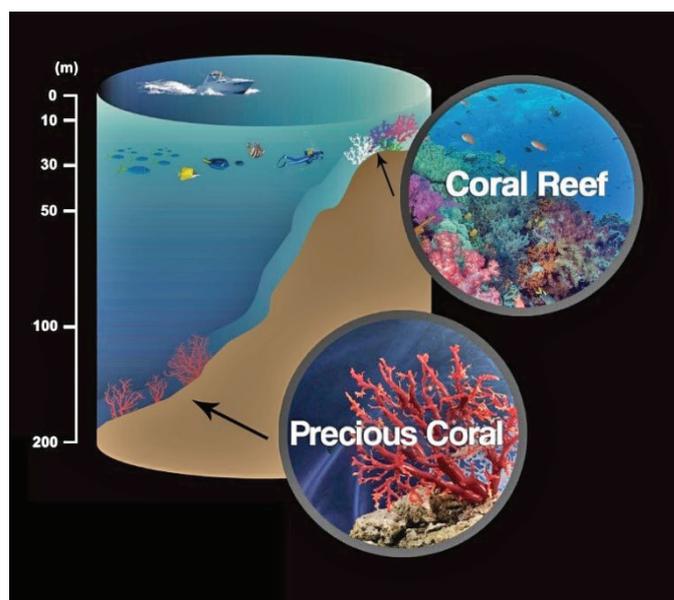
Maps have been revamped and there are further plans to make informative annotations associated with each specific coral location.

To promote clarity, the new draft of the Coral Book includes images, such as one seen in Figure 1. The ultimate aim of this approach is to help clarify descriptions and to assist when translations



CITES Classification	<i>Corallium secundum</i>
New genus name	<i>Pleurocorallium elatius</i>
Commercial name	Angel skin, Boké and Magai
Colour	Flesh pink with different colour intensity.
Fishing area	Japan, Taiwan, Hainan and Hong Kong
Depth	150–300 m
Shape	Fan-shape
Average height	35 cm
Average diameter of trunk	25 mm
Avg. weight	500g

*Figure 1: An image appearing in the new draft of the Coral Book, which includes photographs and tables to assist users. In addition to a quantitative table, a qualitative paragraph will also be added for each species.*



*Figure 2: An illustration in the new draft of the Coral Book depicting the difference in locations between common corals, which are usually found between zero to 15 metres, and precious corals, which are found much lower in deep-sea coral banks.*

from English into other languages are required.

Similarly, new charts have been included. These contain a table presenting the phylogeny of coral.

Illustrations have been added, such as the one seen in Figure 2. It is meant to visually show some of the differences between common coral and precious coral, which is one of our key objectives.

We also proposed a complete re-organisation of all coral definitions, for the purposes of improved clarity. Lastly, the Coral Book draft has also been formatted and proofread extensively, so as to abide by the highest professional standards.

### **A guide to coral for consumers and the trade**

We have come a long way in a little more than a year, and there are numerous plans ahead for further progress. There are current proposals to introduce many more charts, graphs and illustrations to the Coral Book, including ones that visually depict the alternative treatments of coral, specifying which require general disclosure and which require more specific disclosure.

There are also plans to create a dedicated guide

for classifying precious and common coral. It will be developed from the Coral Book, but will feature considerably more images, detailed information and input from experts.

This comprehensive and well-illustrated guide will provide descriptions of all types of precious coral, and deliver information on how to assess various traits and qualities, such as colour, surface appearance, shape, size and more.

### **Responsible environmental management**

A cornerstone of CIBJO's sustainable business approach is responsible environmental practices throughout the gemstone and jewellery industry. This is most certainly the case in the coral sector, where the essential elements include the protection of the biosphere, the sustainable use of natural resources, production transparency and product disclosure, and committed management and compliance with local laws.

Our commitment to these principles was on display at a seminar in March 2016 at the Hong Kong International Diamond, Gem & Jewellery Show. The event was organised by CIBJO in conjunction with



*Participants at the responsible coral harvesting and pearl farming seminar in Hong Kong (from left): George Lu, Vice President of the CIBJO Coral Commission; Aurelio Cavalieri; Dr. Cristina Del Mare; Vincenzo Liverino, President of the CIBJO Coral Commission; Paola Guida, Italian Trade Commissioner in Hong Kong; Dr. Gaetano Cavalieri, CIBJO President; Russell Hanigan, Paspaley Pearling Company; Laurent Cartier, Project Manager at the Swiss Gemmological Institute SSEF; and Jacques Christophe Branellec, Vice President of the CIBJO Pearl Commission.*

the Italian Trade Commission. It focused on the implementation of environmentally sound practices in the coral harvesting and pearl farming sectors, not only as a means of protecting the marine ecosystem, but also as a way of presenting the members of our industry as responsible corporate citizens.

Greeting participant at the well-attended event was CIBJO President Gaetano Cavalieri. "The long-term viability of both the pearl and coral sectors in the jewellery industry is dependent on the development and implementation of responsible practices, which both protect and facilitate the renewal of a bio-diverse marine environment, promoting higher quality and more sustainable resources," he said. "Our efforts in this respect are part of a comprehensive program to promote sustainable environmental policies in the sector."

Among the many distinguished speakers at the seminar was George Lu, Vice President of the CIBJO Coral Commission, who described in great detail

the environmental aspects of coral harvesting in the South Asia Seas.

Vincenzo Liverino, President of the CIBJO Coral Commission, provided an overview of corporate social responsibility and sustainable marine practices in the coral industry.

Making proper information available to the trade and the consuming public is an essential component in the campaign to enhance environmental awareness. Since 2015 an informative website called Sustainable Coral has been publicly accessible online at [www.sustainablecoral.org](http://www.sustainablecoral.org).

The Sustainable Coral website is continuously updated to properly inform consumers, media and the trade about the different types of corals, where they come from and what treatments they may be subject to.

Spreading our message via the Internet with websites like this will be increasingly important moving forward.

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