

*11th Coral Reef Task Force Meeting
February 24-25, 2004
Washington, D.C.*

Resolution 11-2: Proposal on International Leadership, Policy Work and Management Support to Reduce Impacts on International Coral Reefs

WHEREAS, Executive Order #13089 for the Protection of Coral Reefs mandates that the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force "...assess the U.S. role in international trade and protection of coral reef species and implement appropriate strategies and actions to promote conservation and sustainable use of coral reef resources worldwide," and;

WHEREAS, there is a continual need to gather accurate information on the United States' role in the global extraction and trade in most coral reef species, and;

WHEREAS, the National Action Plan to Conserve Coral Reefs calls for efforts to reduce global threats to coral reefs and to reduce the adverse impacts of international trade in coral reef resources, through exercising global leadership in the international arena, strengthening international conventions, providing assistance and strengthening international research and management, and;

WHEREAS, the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force has identified national Focal Areas that have relevance to international coral reefs, and have developed Local Action Strategies as the centerpiece of new efforts to improve integration of national and local strategies to address key threats to coral reef ecosystems, and;

WHEREAS, coral reef conservation and sustainable development of small island developing States have long been associated both in the practice of sustainable island management and development of international conservation policy, and the Barbados Global Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in 1994 was an important turning point in the emergence of international attention to coral reef ecosystems and their essential role in the economic and social development of many small island States, and;

WHEREAS, the ten-year review of implementation of the Barbados Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island States (SIDS) will occur at the upcoming Second Global Conference on the SIDS in September, 2004, and will provide an important opportunity to highlight the contribution of conservation and sustainable use of coral reef ecosystems to sustainable development in small island developing States, and;

WHEREAS, there are several other upcoming opportunities for the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force to exercise international leadership, learn from and share technical and management experience with other countries, and share the progress and processes of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that

1. Prior to the 13th meeting of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES COP13), the United States Coral Reef Task Force members should engage other

nations on the significance of international trade in reef conservation, and advocate U.S. positions on such issues through the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) and other fora.

2. United States Coral Reef Task Force members should strengthen their assistance to exporting countries in developing sustainable management plans and effective monitoring programs for groupers and other food fish, ornamental and medicinal fishes, stony corals and other invertebrates in international trade. Members should also assist exporting countries in meeting their obligations under CITES. Task Force agencies responsible for the collection of wildlife trade data should explore means to analyze U.S. trade data for marine ornamental species to fill large data gaps and improve global understanding of the trade in coral reef organisms, most of which are not monitored by CITES.

3. United States Coral Reef Task Force members should participate in and support the objectives of the White Water to Blue Water Initiative and Miami Conference (March 21 – 26, 2004) to strengthen integrated watershed and marine ecosystem management, reduce land-based sources of marine pollution, and promote sustainable tourism and fisheries. To promote coral reef protection and conservation in the Wider Caribbean, U.S. Coral Reef Task Force members should share lessons learned during the development of Local Action Strategies with other countries in the region, foster development of integrated watershed management plans, and encourage efforts to develop a governance regime for Caribbean fisheries resources. In addition, Task Force members should share United States' experience and lessons learned in integrated management with coral reef countries in other regions, and demonstrate strong regional leadership in the implementation of all aspects of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Protocol to the Cartagena Convention and the South Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP).

4. United States Coral Reef Task Force encourages its members to participate in and support the 10th International Coral Reef Symposium in Okinawa, Japan (June 28 – July 2, 2004) which will explore the urgent need to save coral reef ecosystems from further degradation, examine practical solutions and assess the state of scientific information on coral reefs. U.S. Coral Reef Task Force members are especially encouraged to engage in mini-symposia directly related to international trade and management issues, including coral bleaching.

5. United States Coral Reef Task Force members are encouraged to actively participate in the Second Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Islands Developing States (September, 2004, in Mauritius), including the U.S. island jurisdictions. U.S. Coral Reef Task Force members agree to provide the U.S. delegation to the Second Global Conference a brief summary of the contribution of the USCRTF to both international and national efforts to promote coral reef conservation and sustainable use. U.S. Coral Reef Task Force members are encouraged to expand technical assistance to SIDS, share lessons learned in developing and implementing the Local Action Strategies, explore the potential benefits of establishing coral reef conservation funds and raise awareness of potential benefits of such funds to coral reef countries at the upcoming SIDS meeting.

6. United States Coral Reef Task Force endorses the preparation and submission of a proposal for the United States to host the 11th International Coral Reef Symposium in 2008. Task Force members are encouraged to participate in the preparation of the proposal.