



OCEANA AND MARVIVA WORK TOGETHER TO RESTORE MARINE ECOSYSTEMS AND ELIMINATE ILLEGAL AND OVER-FISHING

PRESS RELEASE

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OCEANA AND MARVIVA ACKNOWLEDGE EU MOVES TOWARDS BLUEFIN TUNA TRADE BAN

However both organizations regret that the member States' support is weakened by a number of conditions

The international bluefin tuna trade ban will be discussed as from next week in the CITES Conference of the Parties

Today EU Member States reached a common position on controversial issues like bluefin tuna and corals for the upcoming session of the Conference of the Parties of CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

The marine conservation organizations Oceana and MarViva acknowledged the efforts of the EU to support a ban on the international trade of bluefin tuna by listing the species in Appendix I of the Convention. However, the organizations are concerned about some conditions and implementation delays that were agreed in the proposal, which differ substantially from the immediate and direct ban proposed by the Principality of Monaco and openly supported by the USA.

Xavier Pastor, Executive Director of Oceana in Europe remarked: *"This support means that 27 countries will be voting in favour of this endangered species, joining a number of countries, such as the United States, that have already acknowledged the bluefin tuna trade ban as the only measure to preserve the Atlantic stocks".* Pastor added: *"However, we regret that the EU's support has been conditioned with a number of measures that could seriously weaken this measures' entry into force."*

The EU also confirmed its support for the listing of read and pink corals in Appendix II of CITES. This would regulate trade of corals to avoid further threats to the survival of these species. The agreement reached by the diplomatic representatives of the EU Member States will have to be formally sealed by Ministers at one of the upcoming European Council meetings.

OCEANA will be present at CITES Conference of the Parties in Doha, Qatar (March 13-25) to support the listing of bluefin tuna in Appendix I and several species of sharks and red corals on Appendix II. A group of scientists and campaigners of the international marine conservation organization will follow up with the scheduled meetings and other opportunities that may arise to defend this endangered species.

For further information on CITES and the marine species proposed www.oceana.org/cites

About CITES

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) is an international UN agreement entered into force in 1975 to prevent species from becoming extinct as a result of international trade. There are approximately 5,000 species of animals and 28,000 species of plants

included in the three CITES appendices. Proposals to include species in Appendices I and II are considered by the 175 CITES countries at a Conference of the Parties every two to three years.

Appendix I is the most stringent inclusion, banning commercial international trade for species who are most threatened with extinction.

Appendix II is for species that may become threatened with extinction if trade of the species is not strictly regulated. In addition, species that look similar in appearance to other species included in Appendix II may also be included. International commercial trade of included species requires an export permit.

Appendix III includes species that an individual Party has asked other parties to assist in the regulation of trade. Trade of the included species requires an export permit or a certificate of origin.

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Oceana campaigns to protect and restore the world's oceans. Our teams of marine scientists, economists, lawyers and advocates win specific and concrete policy changes to reduce pollution and to prevent the irreversible collapse of fish populations, marine mammals and other sea life. Global in scope and dedicated to conservation, Oceana has campaigners based in North America, Europe and South and Central America. More than 300,000 members and e-activists in over 150 countries have already joined Oceana. For more information, please visit www.oceana.org.

*MarViva is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation that collaborates with local communities, private companies and various social sectors to protect coastal and marine resources. The organisation has offices in Costa Rica, Colombia, Panama and Spain. MarViva has coproduced *The End of the Line*. For more information, visit www.MarViva.net*