



Minutes

Virtual Coral Commission Meeting

Wednesday November 17th.

Time – 16:00 Central European Time (CET)

Location – Virtual Zoom Meetings

President: Mr. Vincenzo Liverino

Vice-President: Mr. Kenneth Scarratt

Vice-President: Mr. Rui Galopim de Carvalho

Coral Commission President Enzo Liverino welcomed online members to its meeting.

He then asked Coral Commission Vice President Ken Scarratt to present a report on a study made by the ICA Gem Lab on describing the colour of the Mediterranean coral *Corallium rubrum* and the five designated comparison samples it had created.

“We were trying to provide a color communication system that can be easily replicated by people around the world in the coral trade,” Mr Scarratt explained.

“We looked at hundreds of different samples. We tried to keep it as simple as possible. The *Corallium rubrum* design color terminology goes from deep red to red, deep pink, pink and then light pink. Each of the color samples shall be considered as the center point for each of the color descriptive terms. We believe that this provides a good starting point.”

The Commission then heard an update on the work on coral research by the Monte Carlo Scientific Centre from Dr. Sylvie Tambutté, who provided a comprehensive outline of the center’s work on marine, medical and polar biology. She explained that the marine department looked at the functioning of coral systems. The center has coral culture rooms and 60 species in its tanks.

There are also experimental rooms where the temperature and light can be altered, as well as coral laboratories. “We can inspect very small pieces of live coral. We also look at tropical corals, and the effect of environmental parameters and bleaching. We look at all the organisms that live within coral, and at paleoclimatology and its effect on coral.”

Dr. Sylvie Tambutté said that the Monte Carlo Scientific Centre is a member of the secretariat of ICRI – the International Coral Reef Initiative which has carried out 40 years of research and found that 14% of coral disappeared in the nine years up to 2018.

Mr Hideki Kawamura then gave a review of the work of the Precious Coral Protection and Development Association of Japan (NPO). He spoke about the transplant project of the Kuroshio Biological Research Foundation which recorded a very successful survival rate of 99.1%. This was phase two of a wider project that began in 2016 aiming the reforestation of the sea bed with the local deep red “oxblood” *Corallium japonicum* and the pure white *Pleurocorallium konojoi*.

He also spoke on the issue of much older “fossilized” precious coral that comprises much of the current and historical catches in the Japanese waters. Radiocarbon dating of coral samples indicated ages as old as 5500 BCE. It was found that dead corals accounted for 86% of precious corals in Japan over the last 30 years.

Among the other issues he informed the Commission about were voluntary transparency initiatives and the CITES coral research report meeting held in Japan this year which was, he said, mostly attended by industry stakeholders.

Rui Galopim de Carvalho, Vice President of the Coral Commission alerted that CIBJO defines precious coral in a much more restrictive way than the wider scientific community. The jewellery industry restricts precious corals to those few species in the Corallidae family and the scientific community accepts in that definition all corals that may be used in adornments. This clarification is very important when interpreting the published literature on the subject.

Following his presentation, Moya McKeown, of Carbon-Expert Ltd, gave an update on the work of the Jewellery Industry Greenhouse Gas Measurement Initiative. She explained to members the importance of reducing carbon footprints how it can be relatively easily and inexpensively achieved.

Mr Liverino urged members to take part in the carbon free initiative. “In addition to saving money, you can also communicate to the industry and consumers that you are working in the right direction,” he said.

Adjournment