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Coral Guide for Customs

Classification & Identification of Coral Materials

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Introduction

It is of great importance to properly classify and identify corals in order to restrict illegal trade, mitigate harm to marine life and maintain accepted trade practices.

This coral guide is designed to clarify and assist in customs endeavours, particularly relating to exports and imports of such coral products.

Section 1 “Washington Convention CITES” (The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species), covers the convention that puts forward which coral species that are faced with strict regulation, those that requires country cooperation and those who do have no restrictions for trade.

Section 2 “International Regulations”, outlines global trade regulations for precious coral and which refers to what, if any, appendix they are referred to in CITES.

Section 3 “Precious Corals”, thouroughly describes precious corals, described with CITES classification, the new genus name, commercial name, colour attributes, fishing area and depth as well as the corals features (shape, size and weight).

Section 4 “Description and Photos of Precious Corals” aims to further illuminate on precious coral by giving them a detailed description, accompanied with photos, to aid in identification and classification processes and procedures.

Section 5 “Geographic Locations of Coral Harvesting”, illustrates where most coral harvesting is taking place around the world and what kind of species that are fished in various areas.

1. Washington Convention CITES

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species

The Washington Convention — CITES, entered into force in 1975, in response to concerns that many species were becoming endangered because of international trade. Because this trade crosses national borders, international collaboration and cooperation is crucial to ensure this trade is sustainable and controlled and does not threaten or endanger wildlife.
CITES regulates international trade in species by including species on one of three Appendices.

Appendix I — species that cannot be traded internationally for primarily commercial purposes, unless permitted in exceptional circumstances.

Appendix II — species that can be traded internationally for commercial purposes, but within strict regulations, requiring determinations of sustainability and legality.

Appendix III — a species included at the request of a country which then needs the cooperation of other countries to help prevent illegal exploitation.

Coral groups included in the CITES Appendices II

- Black coral (Antipatharia spp.), Appendix II
- Blue coral (*Heliopora coerulea*), Appendix II
- Stony corals (Scleractinia spp.), Appendix II
- Organ-pipe corals (Tubiporidae spp.), Appendix II
- Fire corals (Milleporidae spp.), Appendix II
- Lace corals (Stylasteridae spp.), Appendix II

Coral groups included in the CITES Appendix III

- Red and pink coral (*Corallium elatius, C. japonicum, C. konojoi, C.secundum*),

  Appendix III, China)

Coral groups which are not included in the CITES Appendices

- Red corals — Sardinian (*Corallium rubrum*)
- Bamboo coral (Isididae)
- New coral (Not classified)

2. International regulations

Information for traders, customs and shipping agencies

Commercial name and species	CITES Appendix	Note
Mediterranean Sardinian Sciacca (*C. rubrum*)	Not included in any CITES Appendix	Can be exported and imported in every country
Aka Moro Oxblood (*C. japonicum*)	CITES Appendix III	* See note below
Cerasuolo Momo Satsuma (*C. elatius*)	CITES Appendix III	* See note below
White Bianco (*C. konojoi*)	CITES Appendix III	* See note below
Angel skin Boké Magai (*C. elatius*)	CITES Appendix III	* See note below
Midway (*C. secundum*)	CITES Appendix III	* See note below
Missu / Misu *(Hemicorallium sulcatum*) Deep sea *(Hemicorallium laauense*) Garnet *(Hemicorallium regale)*	Not included in any CITES Appendix.	It is suggested to classify as Corallium secundum

Coral included in Appendix III:

- Enacted in 2008,(asked from China) expired in 2013 and extended until 2016, when CITES must pronounce definitively to include Appendix II or exclude it from the Washington Convention.
- **CITES Appendix III means MONITORING the trade, without any restrictions.**

Fish and wildlife

Any importer in Switzerland and the United States requires a Fish and Wildlife licence to import coral.

3. Precious Coral Species

Precious coral description and definition

CITES Classification	New Genus Name	Commercial Name	Colour	Fishing Area and Depth	Corm Feature (Morph. Size & Weight)
Corallium rubrum	*Corallium rubrum*	Mediterranean Sardinian Sardegna	Uniform red.	Mediterranean and west African Atlantic areas. 50–800 m	Bush-shape Avg. height: 15 cm Avg. diam.of trunk: 8 mm Avg. weight: 100 g
Corallium rubrum	*Corallium rubrum*	Sciacca	Orange, pink and darked “smoked” orange colour.	Mediterranean, south part of Sicily. 30–60 m	Small branches Avg. height: 7–10 cm Avg. diam.of trunk: 5 mm
Corallium japonicum	*Corallium japonicum*	Aka Moro Oxblood Moro	Dark red and very dark red with lengthwise white "soul".	Japan 80–300 m	Fan-shape Avg. height: 20 cm Avg. diam.of trunk: 12 mm Avg. weight: 200 g
Corallium elatius	*Pleurocorallium elatius*	Cerasuolo Momo Satsuma	Bright red, salmon, orange and flesh colour with lengthwise white "soul".	Taiwan and Sea of Japan 150–350 m	Fan-shape Avg. height: 35 cm Avg. diam.of trunk: 25 mm Avg. weight: 500 g
Corallium elatius	*Pleurocorallium elatius*	Angel skin Boké Magai Pelle d’Angelo	Flesh pink with different colour intensity.	Japan, Taiwan, Hainan and Hong Kong 150–300 m	Fan-shape Avg. height: 35 cm Avg. diam.of trunk: 25 mm Avg. weight: 500 g
Corallium konjoi	*Pleurocorallium konojoi*	Pure White Shiro Bianco	Milky white and red or pink speckled white.	South China Sea and Hainan 80–300 m	Fan-shape Avg. height: 35 cm Avg. diam.of trunk: 25 mm Avg. weight: 500 g
Corallium secundum	*Pleurocorallium secundum*	Midway Rosato White/Pink	Red speckled or veined white or pink; uniform clear pink.	Hawaii and Midway Island (1965) 400–600 m	Fan-shape Avg. height: 25 cm Avg. diam.of trunk: 15 mm Avg. weight: 200 g
	Hemicorallium regale	Garnet	Pomegranate-colour with different intensity shades of uniform pink.	Hawaii (1979) 350–600 m	Parallel shape Avg. height: 15 cm Avg. diam.of trunk: 8 mm Avg. weight: 100 g
	Hemicorallium laauense	Deep Sea Deep	Bright white, clear pink, white pomegranate. red veined or spotted.	Midway (1981) N/W around Emperor Seamount 1,000–2,000 m	Fan-shape and parallel trunks lacking of primary and secondary branches. Avg. height: 30 cm Avg. diam.of trunk: 10 mm Avg. weight: 150 g
	Hemicorallium sulcatum	Misu Missu Miss	Pink to violet uniform colour	North Philippines, Taiwan and Japan (Boso Peninsula) 100–300 m	Fan long shape Avg. height: 25 cm Avg. diam.of trunk: 15 mm Avg. weight: 200 g

For commercial use (e.g., import and export) it is suggested to use CITES Classification.

4. Descriptions and Photos of Precious Corals

In the following section all major precious corals used in the jewellery industry, is being given a detailed description and illustration to assist and ease the process of identification.

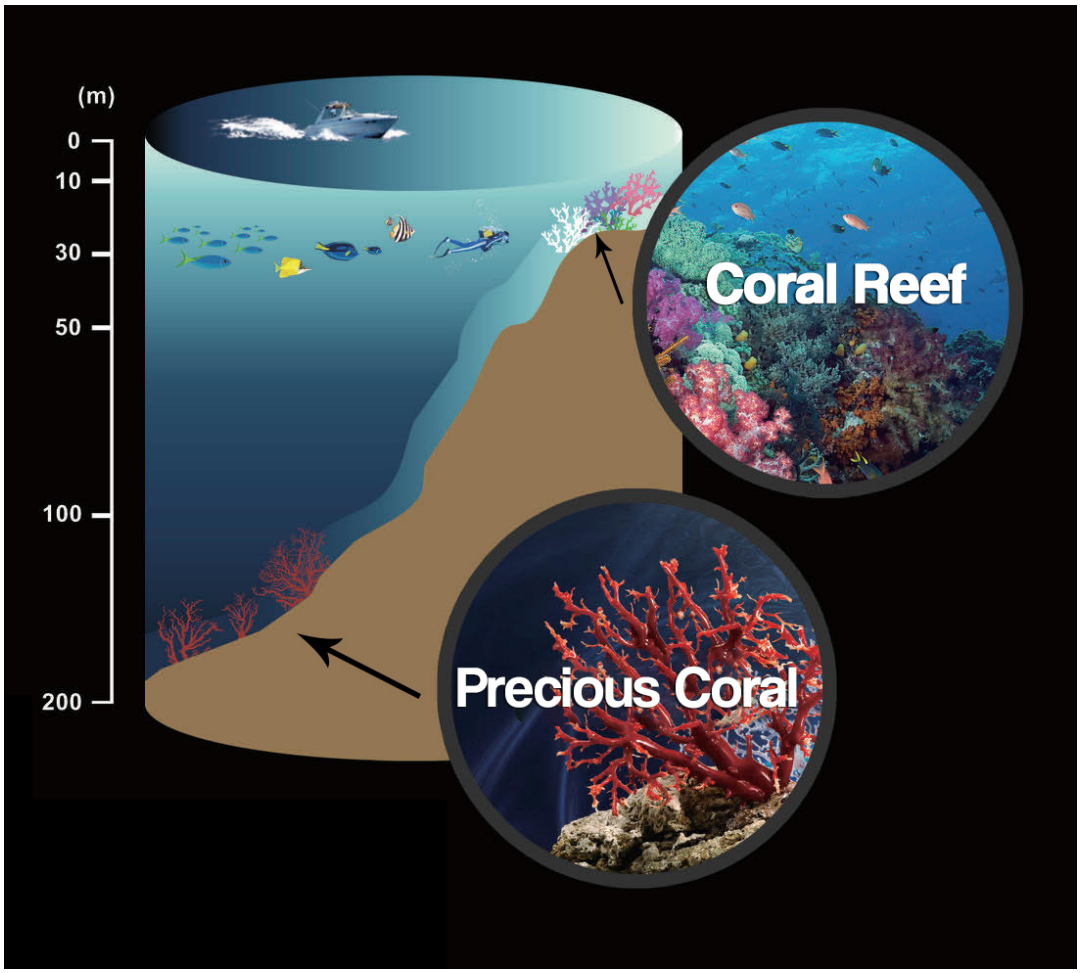
Coral is typically divided into two distinct categories:

1. Sea reef coral and other common coral
2. Deep sea precious coral.

These two types of coral are different.

I.e. when we are snorkelling or scuba diving, we can see the reef coral. These corals are not used in jewellery, and ought to be protected to avoid harm to marine life

Whereas, the precious coral to make jewellery, is often located over 100 m or more below the surface, and fishing precious coral legally would not destroy the environment.



Reef coral is located at approximate 8–20 m below sea level, whereas precious coral, such as "Aka" used in this example, is at depths of around 80–300 m and more.

4.1. Aka (Corallium japonicum)

CITES Classification	*Corallium japonicum*
New genus name	*Corallium japonicum*
Commercial names	Aka, Moro and Oxblood
Colour	Dark red and very dark red with lengthwise white "soul".
Fishing area	Japan
Depth	80–300 m
Shape	Fan-shape
Avg. height	20 cm
Avg. diameter of trunk	12 mm
Avg. weight	200 g

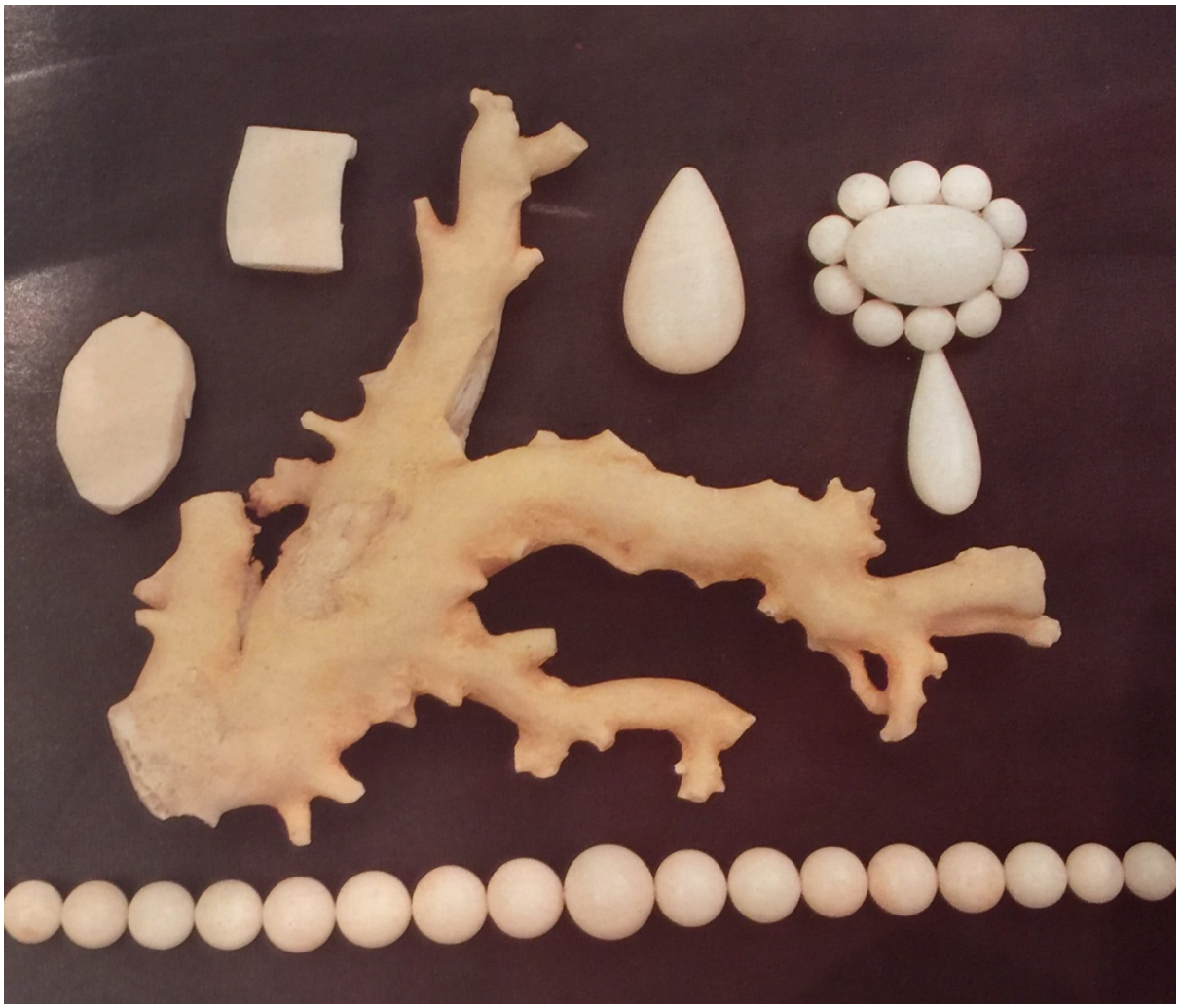
1.1. Momo (Pleurocorallium elatius)

CITES Classification	*Corallium elatius*
New genus name	*Pleurcorallium elatius*
Commercial name	Momo, Cerasuolo and Satsuma
Colour	Bright red, salmon, orange and flesh colour with lengthwise white "soul".
Fishing area	Taiwan and Sea of Japan
Depth	150–350 m
Shape	Fan-shape
Average height	35 cm
Average diameter of trunk	25 mm
Avg. weight	500 g

1.2. Angel skin (Pleurocorallium elatius)

CITES Classification	*Corallium elatius*
New genus name	*Pleurocorallium elatius*
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	500 g

1.1. Pure White (Pleurocorallium konojoi)

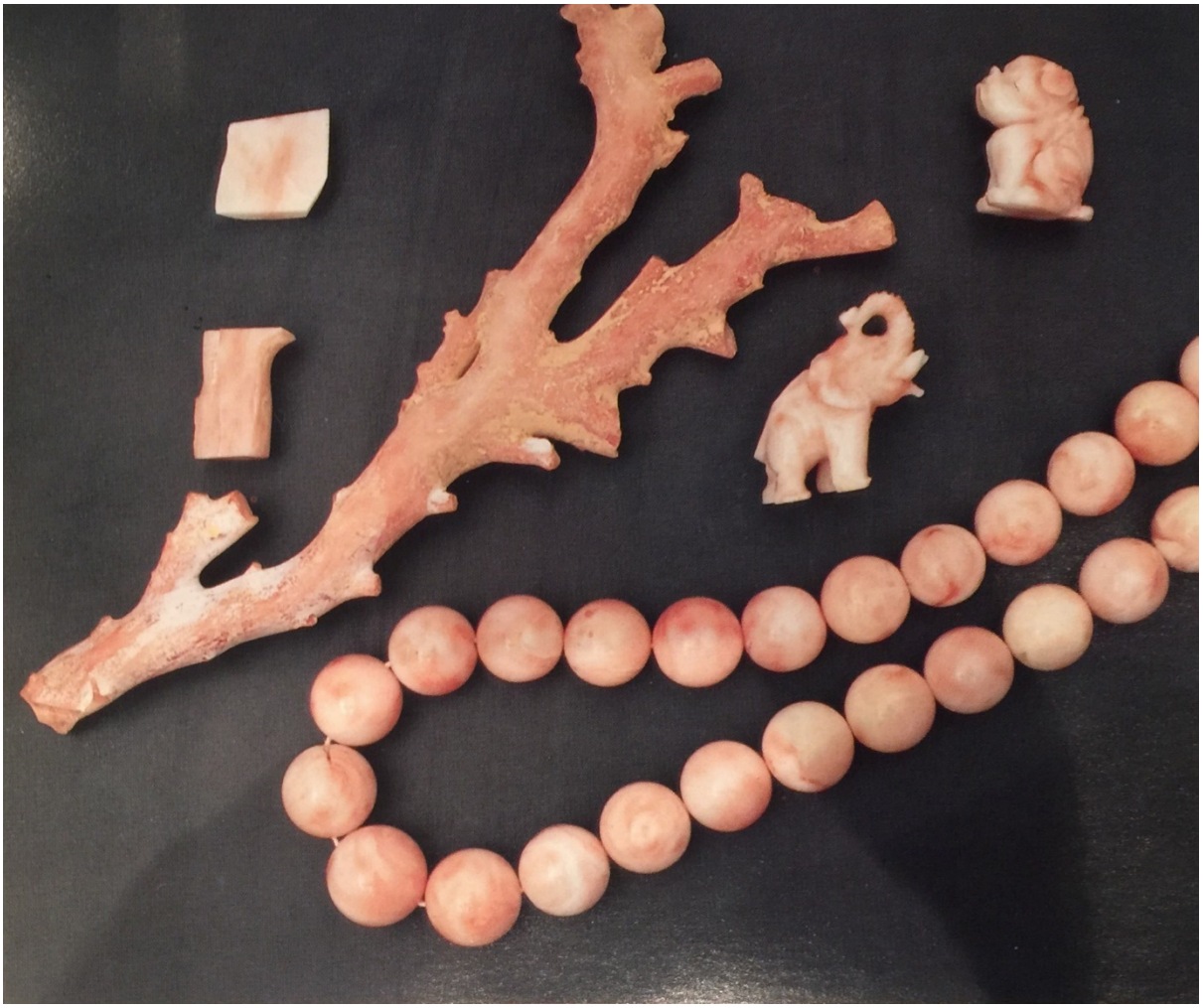


CITES Classification	*Corallium konjoi*
New genus name	*Pleurocorallium konojoi*
Commercial name	Pure White and Shiro
Colour	Milky white and red or pink speckled white.
Fishing area	South China Sea and Hainan
Depth	80–300 m
Shape	Fan-shape
Average height	35 cm
Average diameter of trunk	25 mm
Avg. weight	500 g

1.1. Midway (Pleurocorallium secundum)

CITES Classification	*Corallium secundum*
New genus name	*Pleurocorallium secundum*
Commercial name	Rosato, Midway and White/Pink
Colour	Red speckled or veined white or pink; uniform clear pink.
Fishing area	Hawaii and Midway Island (1965)
Depth	400–600 m
Shape	Fan-shape
Average height	25 cm
Average diameter of trunk	15 mm
Avg. weight	200 g

1.2. Deep Sea (Hemicorallium laauense)



CITES Classification	*Not Classified but Suggested from Cibjo as Corallium secundum*
New genus name	*Hemicorallium laauense*
Commercial name	Deep Sea
Colour	Bright white, clear pink, white pomegranate. red veined or spotted.
Fishing area	Midway (1981). N/W around Emperor Seamount
Depth	1,000–2,000 m
Shape	Fan-shape and parallel trunks lacking of primary and secondary branches.
Average height	30 cm
Average diameter of trunk	10 mm
Avg. weight	150 g

Garnet (Hemicorallium regale)

CITES Classification	*Not Classified but Suggested from Cibjo as Corallium secundum*
New genus name	*Hemicorallium regale*
Commercial name	Garnet
Colour	Pomegranate-colour with different intensity shades of uniform pink.
Fishing area	Hawaii (1979)
Depth	350–600 m
Shape	Parallel shape
Average height	15 cm
Average diameter of trunk	8 mm
Avg. weight	100 g

1.3. Missu (Hemicorallium sulcatum)

CITES Classification	*Not Classified but Suggested from Cibjo as Corallium secundum*
New genus name	*Hemicorallium sulcatum*
Commercial name	Misu, Missu and Miss
Colour	Pink to violet uniform colour
Fishing area	North Philippines
Depth	100–300 m
Shape	Fan long shape
Average height	25 cm
Average diameter of trunk	15 mm
Avg. weight	200 g

1.4. Sardinian (Corallium rubrum)

CITES Classification	*Corallium rubrum*
New genus name	*Corallium rubrum*
Commercial name	Sardinian and Mediterranean
Colour	Uniform red.
Fishing area	Mediterranean and west African Atlantic areas
Depth	50–800 m
Shape	Bush-shape
Average height	15 cm
Average diameter of trunk	8 mm
Avg. weight	100 g

1.5. Sciacca (Corallium rubrum)

CITES Classification	*Corallium rubrum*
New genus name	*Corallium rubrum*
Commercial name	Sciacca
Colour	Orange, pink and darked “smoked” orange colour.
Fishing area	Mediterranean, south part of Sicily.
Depth	30–60 m
Shape	Small branches
Average height	7-10 cm
Average diameter of trunk	5 mm

1.6. Common Coral Species

1.6.1. Bamboo coral

a common coral (also known as mountain coral. It belongs to the family Isididae (subclass Octocorallia). Bamboo coral has a white calcareous axis with dark keratinous gorgonian nodes; the white axis is commonly died red.

1.6.2. Black coral

a common coral belonging to the order Antipatharia (subclass Hexacorallia). Black corals are colonial corals that form non-calcareous skeletons composed of protein and chitin that are quite flexible, spiny, tree like, unbranched or branched.

1.6.3. Blue coral (*Heliopora coerulea*)

a common coral belonging to the family Helioporidae (subclass Octocorallia). It is a reef-building coral, of blue colour, with a rough and porous calcareous skeleton that is difficult to be used for ornaments and which requires to be filled with resin. This species is listed in a CITES Appendix II.

1.6.4. Sponge coral

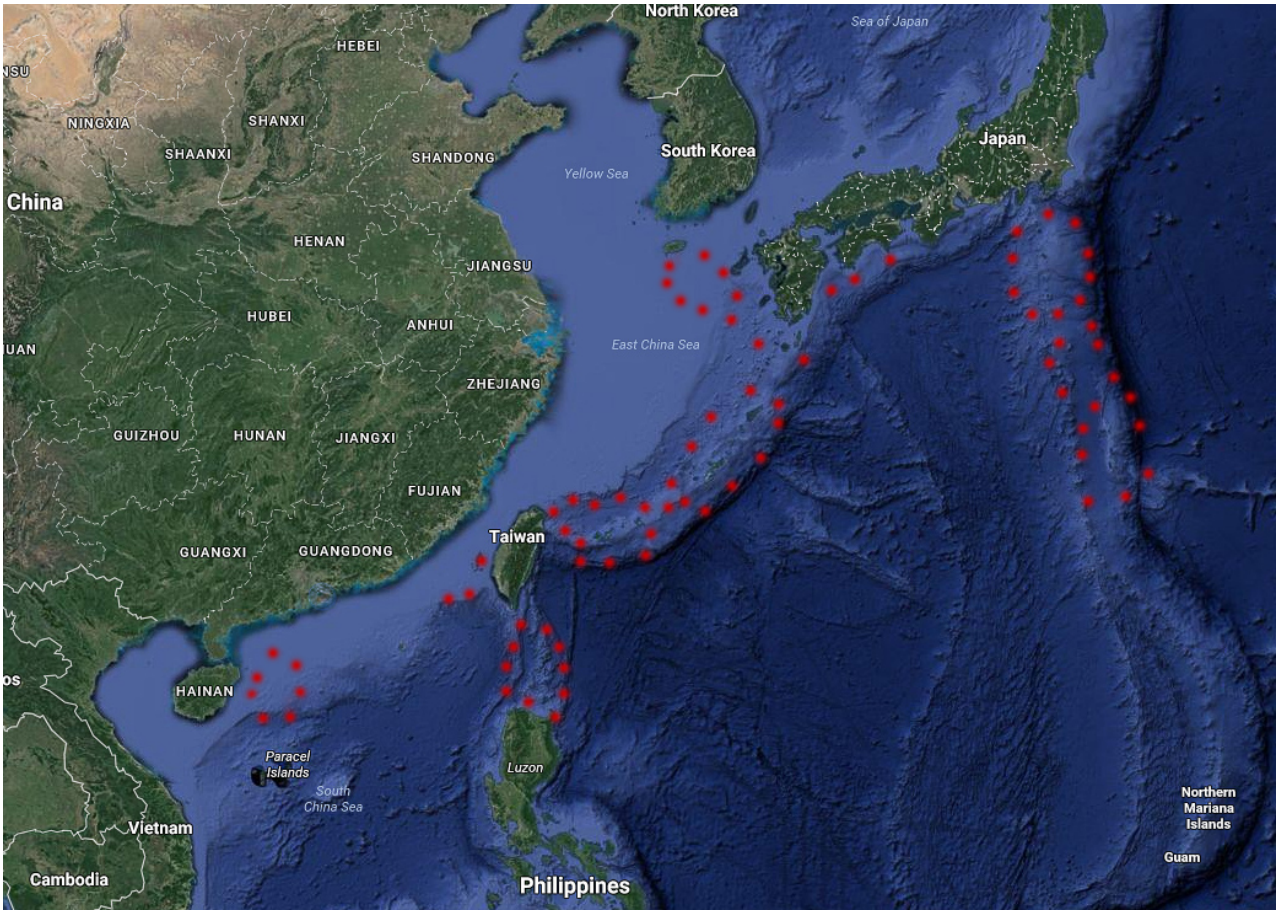
a common coral belonging to the family Melithaeidae of the order Alcyonnacea. Its name is derived from its similar appearance to sponges. Until recently sponge coral was not used for jewellery because it has too many holes. As such, to be used in jewellery today, it heavily relies on stabilisation by being filled with resin or polymer and being polished. In addition to being filled, some material is also dyed, and a small amount of sponge coral has reportedly been “pressed” (crushed up), and mixed with epoxy to be formed into desired shapes. Sponge coral is often sold as natural Congi or “red spongy coral”.

5.Geographic Locations of Precious Coral Harvesting

NOTE — These maps are based on recent data. However, they may or may not correspond to exact locations of specific coral.

South China Sea and Japan Sea

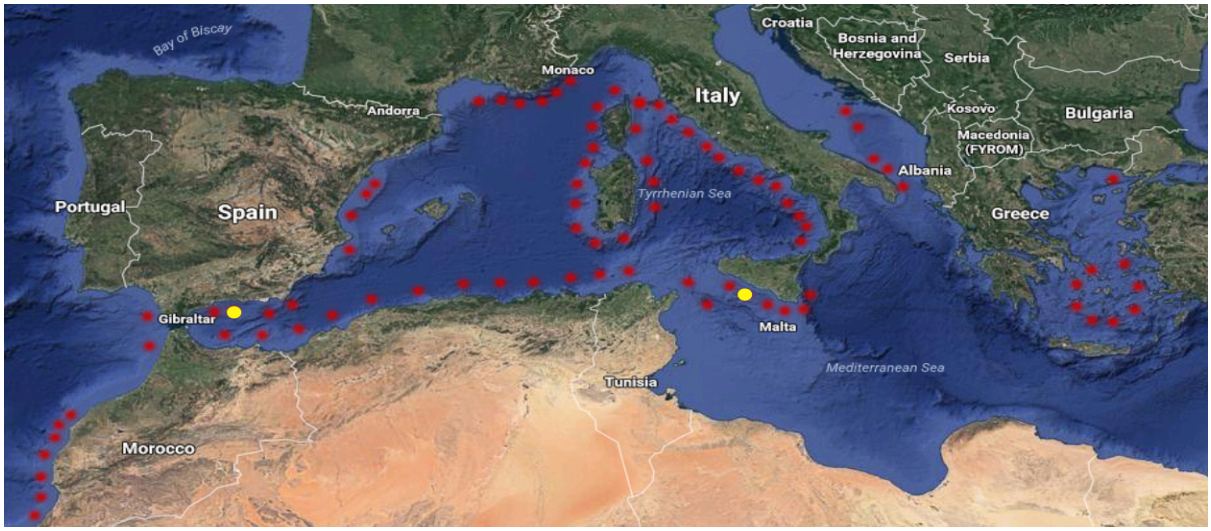
Corallium japonicum	Aka, Moro, Oxblood
Pleurocorallium elatius	Momo, Satsuma, Boké, Magai
Pleurocorallium konojoi	Pure White, Bianco
Hemicorallium sulcatum	Misu

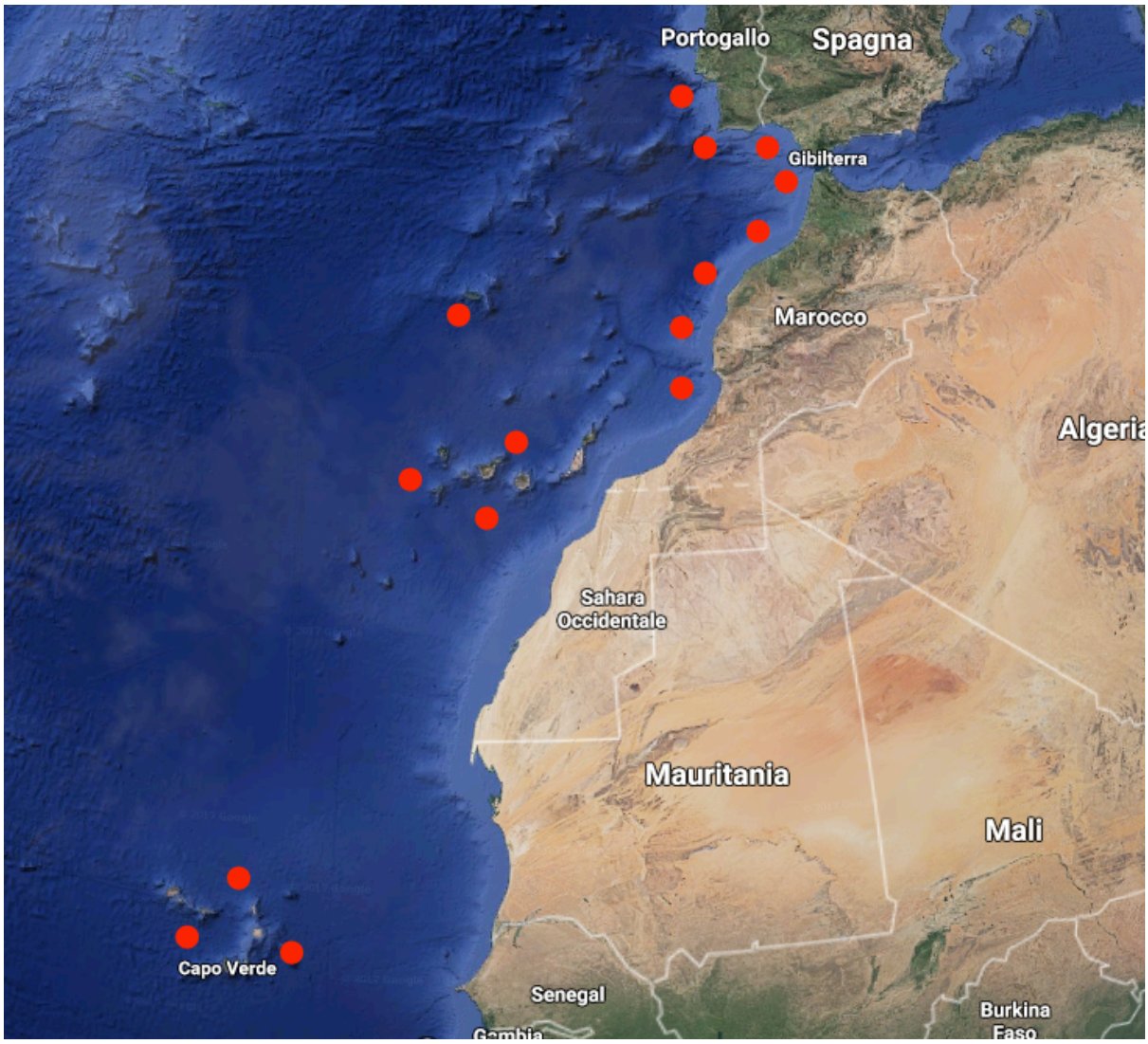


Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean

Corallium rubrum Sardinia, Sciacca

● - Coral Banks ● - Dead Coral Deposit (Sciacca and Alboran





Pacific Ocean

Pleurocorallium secundum	Rosato, Midway & White/Pink	Hawaii waters
Hemicoralium regale	Garnet	Hawaii and Midway waters
Hemicorallium laauense	Deep Sea	Midway waters