

SUMMARY OUTCOME FOR THE US CORAL REEF TASK FORCE 2nd MEETING:

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U.S. CORAL REEF TASK FORCE ANNOUNCES NEW ACTIONS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CORAL REEFS

The Task Force also passed four resolutions today on critical issues facing coral reefs. The Force voted to:

1. Support evaluating options to address imports of coral and coral reef species and promote sustainable harvesting of traded coral reef resources (the U.S. is the world's largest importer of corals, currently importing 80 percent of all coral and 50 percent of aquarium fish traded worldwide);
2. Support the existing U.S. Islands Coral Reef strategy as a priority for new funds proposed in President Clinton's FY2000 Lands Legacy Initiative;
3. Support the Department of State's statement on coral bleaching and climate change. The statement acknowledged that in 1998 coral reefs around the world suffered the most extensive bleaching and subsequent mortality in modern record. It is likely that anthropogenic global warming has contributed to increasing sea surface temperatures, the extensive coral bleaching, and the coral mortality that occurred simultaneously; and
4. Support the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperative's resolution against destructive fishing practices, including dynamite fishing and cyanide fishing.