

## **Proposal for subgenus *Holothuria* (*Microthele*) in CITES Appendix II**

France has prepared a listing proposal of the subgenus *Holothuria* (*Microthele*), included 4 species, in CITES Appendix II.

**About the species :** Sea cucumbers are marine animals belonging to the echinoderm phylum. The subgenus *Holothuria* (*Microthele*), commonly named teatfish, includes 4 species: *Holothuria fuscogilva*, *H. fuscopunctata*, *H. nobilis*, *H. whitmaei*. These species have been chosen because they are easily recognizable, both alive and treated, due to the presence of spike-like protrusions on the dorsal body (teat-like shape).

**Distribution:** These species live in between tropics, both in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, from the eastern African coast to Polynesia.

**Why should we include them in Appendix II?** They are overexploited due to the growing demand for these species as food in many tropical countries. The species are also exported to South-East Asia (mainly China). For this reason, 3 of the 5 species proposed are assessed as « threatened by extinction » by the IUCN.

**Proposal's challenge:** The inclusion of these species in the CITES represents important socioeconomic implications for consumer countries.