

Proposed Critical Habitat in American Samoa, Guam, CNMI*, & PRIA+ For 7 Reef Corals Listed Under the Endangered Species Act

*Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands +Pacific Remote Island Area



Acropora globiceps

Am Samoa, Guam,
CNMI, PRIA

Acropora retusa

Am Samoa, Guam,
CNMI, PRIA

Acropora speciosa

Am Samoa, PRIA

Acropora jacquelineae

Am Samoa

Euphyllia paradivisa

Am Samoa

Isopora crateriformis

Am Samoa

Seriatopora aculeata

Guam, CNMI

Why is coral critical habitat being proposed?

A total of 18 Indo-Pacific reef coral species have been listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), including these 7 species in U.S. waters. The ESA requires the designation of critical habitat for listed species that occur within the U.S., if “reasonable and prudent”.

Distribution of listed corals by jurisdiction:

- 6 of the 7 listed corals occur in American Samoa.
- 3 of the 7 listed corals occur in Guam and CNMI.
- 3 of the 7 listed corals occur in PRIA.

Proposed Critical Habitat in American Samoa, Guam, CNMI, & PRIA For 7 Reef Corals Listed Under the Endangered Species Act



Acropora globiceps

Acropora retusa

Acropora speciosa

Acropora jacquelineae

Euphyllia paradivisa

Isopora crateriformis

Seriatopora aculeata

What is critical habitat for?

Critical habitat establishes a requirement for federal agencies to consider the effects of any action they permit, fund, or carry out, and to ensure those actions are not likely to destroy or adversely modify the value of the critical habitat for the conservation of the listed corals.

Critical habitat does NOT:

- Create a refuge, sanctuary, or restrict access in areas designated as critical habitat.
- Restrict access to areas within critical habitat.
- Affect non-federal activities in critical habitat.

Proposed Critical Habitat in American Samoa, Guam, CNMI, & PRIA For 7 Reef Corals Listed Under the Endangered Species Act



Acropora globiceps



Acropora retusa



Acropora speciosa



Acropora jacquelineae



Euphyllia paradivisa



Isopora crateriformis



Seriatopora aculeata

Proposed critical habitat includes attributes that are essential for the conservation of the 7 listed corals:

- Consolidated, hard substrate free of sediment or algae.
- Good water quality, including suitable seawater temperatures, aragonite saturation, nutrient levels, and water clarity, as well as low levels of contaminants.

Proposed Critical Habitat in American Samoa, Guam, CNMI, & PRIA For 7 Reef Corals Listed Under the Endangered Species Act



Acropora globiceps

Acropora retusa

Acropora speciosa

Acropora jacquelineae

Euphyllia paradivisa

Isopora crateriformis

Seriatopora aculeata

How could final critical habitat help listed corals?

- Federal agencies should reduce the effects of actions they permit, fund, or carry out on coral critical habitat.
- Reducing the effects of federal actions helps protect the habitat of listed corals, whether listed corals are present or not within the action areas.

Proposed Critical Habitat in American Samoa, Guam, CNMI, & PRIA For 7 Reef Corals Listed Under the Endangered Species Act



Acropora globiceps



Acropora retusa



Acropora speciosa



Acropora jacquelineae



Euphyllia paradivisa



Isopora crateriformis



Seriatopora aculeata

Who could be impacted by final coral critical habitat?

- Federal agencies whose actions may affect coral critical habitat. Such federal actions include projects permitted, funded, or carried out by a federal agency.
- Non-federal entities with federal permits or funding whose actions may affect coral critical habitat.

Proposed Critical Habitat in American Samoa, Guam, CNMI, & PRIA For 7 Reef Corals Listed Under the Endangered Species Act



Acropora globiceps

Acropora retusa

Acropora speciosa

Acropora jacquelineae

Euphyllia paradivisa

Isopora crateriformis

Seriatopora aculeata

How to comment on proposed coral critical habitat (public comment period ends **February 25, 2021**):

- Submit comments online: Go to www.regulations.gov, search for “NOAA-NMFS-2016-0131”, click on “Comment Now!”.
- Submit comments at the public hearings: For details, please go to <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/proposed-rule-designate-critical-habitat-threatened-indo-pacific-corals>
- If you have questions, please contact Lance Smith at lance.smith@noaa.gov or (808) 725-5131.