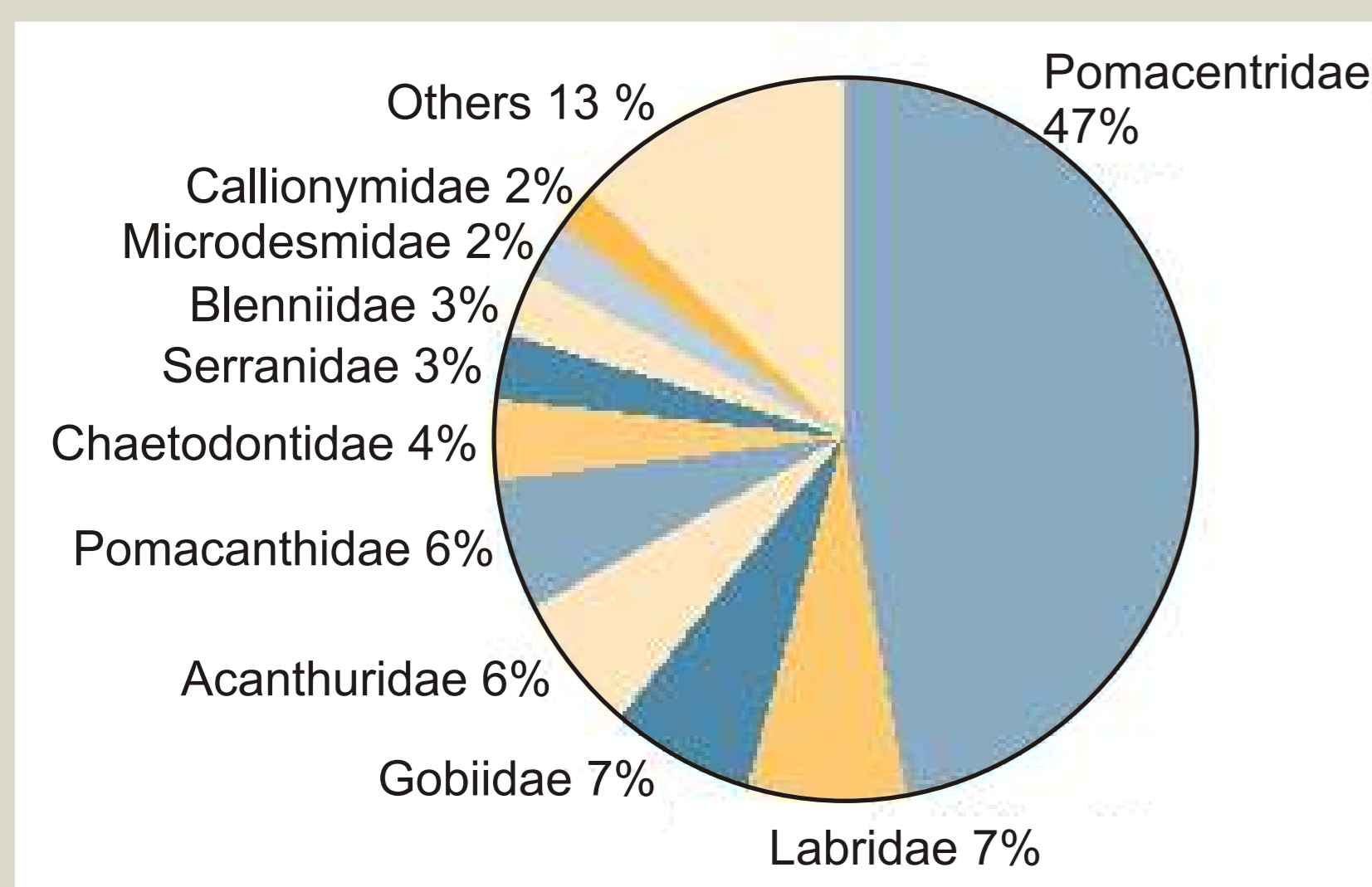


## From Ocean to Aquarium The global trade in marine ornamental species

Colette Wabnitz, Michelle Taylor, Edmund Green and Tries Razak

About 1.5 - 2 million people keep marine aquaria supplied by a trade worth US\$200-330 million annually. Each year between 20 and 24 million individual fish from 1471 species are transported from countries in Southeast Asia, but also increasingly from several island nations in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, to consumers in the main destination markets: the United States, the European Union (EU) and, to a lesser extent, Japan. Trade data, correlated with aquarium suitability information, indicate that two species (*Labroides dimidiatus* and *Synchiropus splendidus*) known not to acclimatize well to aquarium conditions are nonetheless very commonly traded.



### The Global Trade in Fish (broken down by family)

According to exporters' data in GMAD



The trade also includes 140 species of stony coral (11-12 million pieces p.a.), 61 species of soft coral and more than 500 species of invertebrates 9-10 million individuals p.a.), mainly molluscs, shrimps and anemones.



Button/meat coral, *Cynarina* spp. Concern over the scientific basis for Indonesian quotas of *Cynarina lacrymalis* lead to a temporary suspension of imports to the EU in 1999.

Philippine fisherman places Copperhead butterflyfish, *Chelmon rostratus* in a jar for storage after collection.

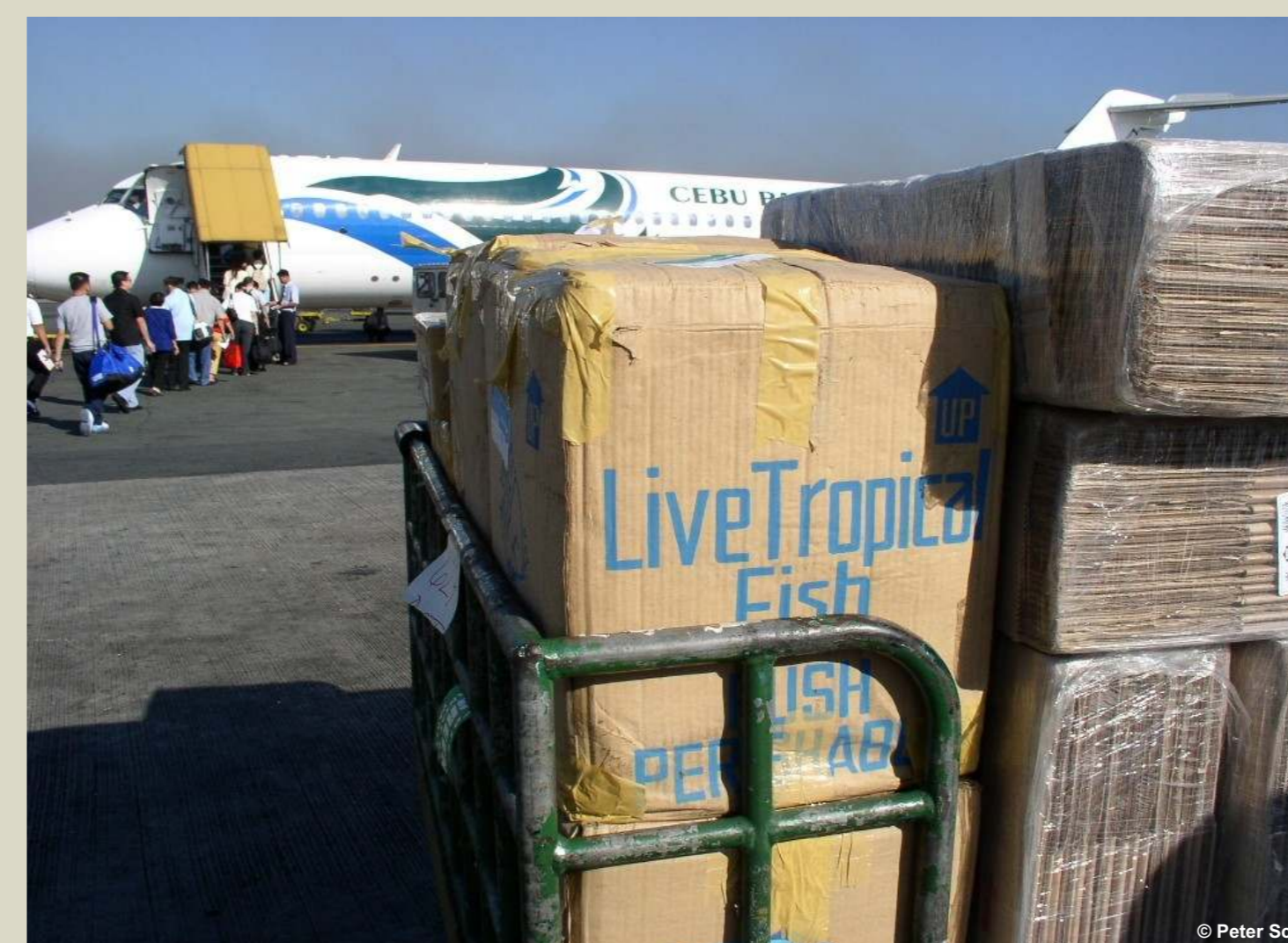


### Objective Data

Overall, there is a pressing need for basic information on the population dynamics and life history characteristics of organisms targeted by the ornamental trade. Combined with accurate trade data, such information is essential for making more informed decisions regarding the sustainable collection of marine ornamentals.



Harlequin tuskfish, *Choerodon fasciatus*. Typical retail value can be as much as US\$115 for an Australian specimen.



Boxes of live fish await transportation by air.