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**FASHION AND DESIGN INDUSTRY LEADERS LAUNCH  
CORAL CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN**

*Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Lela Rose, Chantecaille Beauté, Vena Cava and Michael Aram  
join forces with SeaWeb and The Tiffany & Co. Foundation  
to raise awareness of threatened marine animals*

NEW YORK, NY (January 23, 2008) – Julia Louis-Dreyfus, The Tiffany & Co. Foundation and leading fashion and home designers unveiled their commitment to coral conservation today at the launch of *Too Precious to Wear*, a program of the ocean conservation organization SeaWeb. The fashion and design world have long looked to corals and the ocean as a source of inspiration and imagination, yet these beautiful animals and their habitat are increasingly in danger. *Too Precious to Wear* aims to raise awareness of corals and the threats to their survival, and show how the fashion and design industries, as well as consumers, can safeguard these imperiled marine species.

Despite their appearances, corals are neither rocks nor plants. Corals are living animals that provide marine species with food, fertile grounds for reproduction and a safe haven from predators. Unfortunately, corals are in serious trouble due to destructive fishing methods, climate change, pollution and removal from the sea for use in jewelry and decorative home objects.

*Too Precious to Wear* fashion leaders include Sylvie Chantecaille, owner and founder of Chantecaille Beauté; ready-to-wear and bridal designer Lela Rose, Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA)/Vogue Fashion Fund finalists Lisa Mayock and Sophie Buhai of Vena Cava and home and lifestyle designer Michael Aram.

“Corals inspire me and many others with their beauty, and coral reefs support the livelihoods of millions around the world,” said Julia Louis-Dreyfus, founding partner of *Too Precious to Wear*. “These animals are integral to the health of the ocean, and it is up to each of us to make sure corals are protected. If we take good care of the ocean, the ocean will take care of us.”

Dawn M. Martin, president of SeaWeb, said, “Corals simply are too precious to wear. They belong in the ocean, where they contribute to the survival of thousands of other marine species. Consumers and the fashion industry can play an important role in the ocean’s recovery by simply choosing products that do not harm the ocean. Conscientious jewelers like Tiffany & Co. have already removed precious corals from their product lines, and we urge others to take the same action.”

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Red and pink corals (commonly known as precious corals) are more often seen adorning the necks of beautiful women than in their natural ocean habitat. Red corals have been fished for more than 5,000 years in the Pacific and the Mediterranean, but in just the past two decades they have shown serious signs of decline. The United States, as the world's largest documented consumer, has placed significant pressure on these threatened animals, importing more than 26 million pieces from 2001 to 2006. The American market is also responsible for 80 percent of the live coral taken from reefs (more than 400,000 pieces a year). Entire coral populations have been wiped out by destructive fishing gear such as trawls, which can mow down everything in their path. Recovery is not guaranteed and takes decades if it is able to occur.

Michael J. Kowalski, Chairman and CEO of Tiffany & Co., said, "We are committed to obtaining precious materials in ways that are socially and environmentally responsible. We decided to stop using real coral in our jewelry over six years ago and feel that there are much better alternatives that celebrate the beauty of the ocean."

Sylvie Chantecaille of Chantecaille Beauté said, "As designers and innovators our customers look to us for ideas and information. When we are creating our products, we have an excellent opportunity to help preserve rather than harm our natural environment. If we are not careful, we may love precious corals to death. The impact would be much greater than losing an accessory or a design idea; we would lose a vital part of a healthy ocean. We urge others in the industry to help create a demand for coral conservation."

*Too Precious to Wear* launches at the beginning of the 2008 International Year of the Reef, marking the first time that marine scientists and fashion industry elite have joined to raise awareness of the threats facing corals and coral reefs. Scientists say that 20 percent of the world's coral reefs have already been destroyed, and that another 24 percent may be lost within our lifetimes if human impacts on corals are not reduced.

Dr. Andrew Baker, scientist and professor at the University of Miami said, "Corals around the world are in jeopardy, and urgent action is needed to stem their decline. With the fashion industry and scientist uniting, we have an opportunity to reduce consumer pressure on corals, and raise awareness of the global threats they face from climate change, overfishing, habitat destruction, pollution and disease."

In addition to raising consumer and industry awareness of the need to protect corals, SeaWeb and its *Too Precious to Wear* program will seek stronger conservation policy for corals in the United States and abroad, by calling for increased monitoring of the global coral trade.

Artist and home designer Michael Aram said, "My Coral Reef Collection celebrates the serene blue waters of the ocean and its aquatic creatures without causing them harm. With *Too Precious to Wear*, we can help ensure the survival of coral by highlighting the many coral-inspired and ocean-friendly products available."

Aram's Coral Reef Collection is just one example of coral alternatives available to consumers who love the ocean. Pottery Barn, the nation's leading home furnishings company, has a range of coral-inspired decorative objects for the home. A percentage of sales from Chantecaille's Coral Compact supports the Pew Institute for Ocean Science's Reefs of Hope project.

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For interviews with spokespeople, please contact Lauren Cuneo at 212.981.6788 or

lcuneo@kruppgroup.com. For further information, visit [www.tooprecioustowear.org](http://www.tooprecioustowear.org). SeaWeb ([www.seaweb.org](http://www.seaweb.org)) is a communications-based nonprofit organization that uses social marketing techniques to advance ocean conservation. By raising public awareness, advancing science-based solutions and mobilizing decision-makers around ocean conservation, SeaWeb is leading voices for a healthy ocean.