



Public Hearing on September 6th 2017: Cap 586 Amendment Bill

David Whyte to: bc_06_16@legco.gov.hk

30/08/2017 17:19

30th August 2017

Hon Kenneth Leung
Room 918, Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Hon Kenneth Leung,

Public Hearing on September 6th 2017: Cap 586 Amendment Bill

I am David Whyte, an Australian and British Citizen who has been living in Hong Kong for 9 years and gained permanent residency in Hong Kong 2 years ago.

I am writing to express my support for the Hong Kong Government's proposed Cap 586 Amendment Bill. After a recent trip to Kenya, I was able to see African Elephants in the wild where it really struck home as to what an incredible animal they are. Every child around the world has grown up learning about the elephant, the largest land based animal in the world and is therefore something that everyone holds true to their hearts. Too see these become extinct over Ivory trade, something which provides little benefit for the future of mankind would be one of our greatest mistakes.

For this reason, I fully support the government's three-step plan to ban the Hong Kong ivory trade; and its proposals to increase maximum penalties under the Protection of Endangered Species Ordinance (Cap 586).

That said, I do not support any proposition to compensate traders or buy out their stocks for the following reasons:

1. Providing any form of compensation will signal that Hong Kong is 'buying' ivory, likely triggering a surge of poaching in Africa.;
2. Compensation would establish a dangerous global precedent for other countries working to ban the trade;
3. The Hong Kong Government is not depriving ivory owners of all use of property;
4. Traders and others who have speculated on ivory have done so, knowing the risks of a shrinking legal market;
5. The heritage value and traditional skills of carvers are not a reason to continue the trade; &
6. Carvers and traders have had over two decades since the international ban, to diversify and/or switch trades and most have done so.

Please consider these points above as we take action to remedy our errors already made.

Sincerely Yours,

David Whyte

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