

March 8, 2017

LC Paper No. CB(1)680/16-17(03)

Ms Tanya Chan
Chairperson of the Panel on Environmental Affairs

Re: Pledge for support and appeal to expedite the closure of Hong Kong's Ivory market

Dear Ms Tanya Chan,

On behalf of our organization, the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, and our members and supporters worldwide, we are writing to pledge our support and commend actions taken by the government of Hong Kong towards a closure of their domestic ivory market.

A domestic ban on all trade in ivory, as called for in a resolution of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) at its 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties in South Africa in October of last year, is a vital and necessary step to help protect Africa's vanishing elephant populations from being driven to extinction.

Whilst we applaud and support the actions taken by the Government of Hong Kong to announce the implementation and enforcement of an ivory ban, the current poaching levels are at unsustainably high levels with over 30,000 African elephants being slaughtered every year. If this rate continues, in five years' time, the length of time of the proposed 'phase out' period suggested by the Government of Hong Kong, an additional 150,000 elephants will have been killed for their ivory. We therefore wish to raise serious concerns regarding this timeline which does not go far enough to ensure the end of this slaughter before it is too late. Hong Kong's commitment is in stark contrast to China who are leading the way by confirming that a full phase out of all ivory processing and sales will be implemented by the end of 2017.

2017 is a critical year for elephants since the passing of the CITES resolution on closure of domestic ivory markets and we therefore welcome and encourage you to take a strong and vocal lead at the upcoming debate at the Hong Kong Legislative Council (LegCo) in support of expedited measure to ensure a full ivory ban in Hong Kong.

Best wishes,



Oliver Smith
Chief Executive Officer, David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation

Saving endangered wildlife

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