



March 22nd, 2017

Hon. Tanya Chan
Room 814, Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong

Dear Hon. Tanya Chan,

ADM Capital Foundation would like to express its strong support for the HKSAR government's proposed ban on the domestic ivory trade in Hong Kong and increased penalties for wildlife crime.

We applaud the proposed action to stem the flow of illegal wildlife products through Hong Kong. The illegal trade in fauna and flora is valued at USD7-23 billion annually, and Hong Kong, as a global trade hub, can play a vital role in stopping this destructive trade. In 2016, the Great Elephant Census showed a 30% decline in savannah elephants in Africa, a loss of around 144,000 elephants, largely to supply demand in China. This level of poaching is unsustainable and could cause the extinction of elephants within our lifetime.

We also welcome the upcoming debate in the Hong Kong Legislative Council Environmental Affairs panel and urge legislators to support the proposed bill. Adopting the proposals will also support Action 5 in the Environment Bureau's Biodiversity and Strategy Action Plan (BSAP), "Step up enforcement against wildlife crime" and particularly 5c to "Strengthen enforcement and legislative measures to combat illegal trade in ivory."

The urgency and Hong Kong's role are clear. Although the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) banned international trade in ivory in 1989, Hong Kong's domestic trade in pre-Convention ivory has continued. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has enabled this 'legal' trade through a licensing system but it is impossible, without scientific analysis, to distinguish pre-Convention ivory from freshly poached, illegal ivory. This has allowed some local traders to launder illegal ivory into the market as legally-licensed product. This unconscionable trade must cease immediately.

There is a global recognition that elephants need to be protected by closing domestic ivory markets. In October 2016, the Conference of the Parties of CITES adopted a recommendation calling for the closure of domestic ivory markets where they have been linked to poaching and illegal ivory trade. We encourage the HKSAR Government to follow other CITES signatories such as the United States by banning its domestic ivory trade. China has also pledged to phase out its own ivory trade by the end of 2017. By delaying action, Hong Kong risks undermining the message to Chinese consumers that ivory is no longer an acceptable product.

We respectfully urge you to support the legislative proposals outlined above that will help combat the illegal trade in ivory and prevent the extinction of this and other endangered species.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Genasci", written in a cursive style.

Lisa Genasci, CEO

March 22nd, 2017

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