



Hon. Tanya Chan LegCo Environmental Affairs Panel HK Elephants

Rupert Pitt to: panel\_ea

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Hon. Tanya Chan

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Affairs Panel

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Dear Tanya Chan

I support the Hong Kong Government's proposal to ban the export, and possession of pre-Convention Ivory for commercial purposes, and to increase penalties for wildlife crime.

Hong Kong's 'legal' trade in pre-Convention ivory has been administered through a licensing system that has provided a front for laundering illegal ivory. Ivory traders have been found to replenish old ivory stocks with newly poached ivory.

Today, ivory poaching has reached unprecedented levels driven by demand. An elephants is killed every 15 minutes in Africa. If this continues African elephant populations in the wild will become extinct in our lifetime.

I do not believe there should be compensation to ivory traders:

Ivory traders have been forewarned for 27 years to prepare and sell their ivory, and they have an additional 5 year grace period once the legislation comes into force. Most traders do not rely on just ivory for their income.

People who have speculated and stored ivory can sell this ivory now; they do not need to be compensated (the proposed ban was announced 15 months ago and is not envisaged to be fully in

place until December 2021).

No other country has provided compensation, and China will not do so when their ban comes into force at the end of this year.

Compensation can motivate dishonest traders in Hong Kong to increase their ivory stock in the short term from illegal sources before the ban becomes effective, thus increasing future compensation payments.

I thank you for the consideration you have given this letter.

Yours

Rupert Pitt