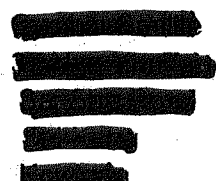


Legislative Council of the HKSAR
1 Legislative Council Road
Central
Hong Kong



31st May, 2017

Dear Sir,

RE: Legislative proposal to phase out the local trade in ivory

I am writing to support the Government's Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants (Amendment) Bill 2017 to effect the banning of the trade in ivory in Hong Kong.

1. The trade in ivory, including the ivory legally imported under "post-Convention" and "pre-Convention" ivory even though strictly controlled, contributes significantly to the continued problem of elephant poaching. This trade is not only decimating wild elephant populations but the illegal trade in one endangered species encourages the illegal trade of other at-risk animal species. The trade encourages criminal activity in areas with impoverished economies and has a huge impact on local communities where conservation officers such as anti-poaching rangers are killed or injured on a regular basis.

Unfortunately a market still exists in many part of the world for ivory, including Hong Kong and China and it is a matter of urgency that the Government implements legislative measures to impose a total ban on the import and export of all forms of ivory, including raw and worked ivory, as well as taking steps to ensure that the local ivory trade is completely phased out.

2. Penalties for smuggling and trading in ivory as well as other endangered species must also be increased and be punitive enough to deter the practice.

3. The question of whether traders should be compensated for a ban in ivory has been debated extensively. However I am of the firm opinion that the Government should not consider any type of compensation.

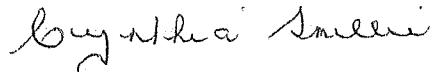
Traders were alerted in March 2016 to the proposed changes to the legislation and given that it will take some time to implement any ban, traders will have sufficient time to restructure their business and prepare for the new measures without having any significant impact. It appears too from a survey carried out by AFCD that many traders have already changed their business model and are trading in other commodities not

under CITES control. Measures have also been taken to retrain those skilled craftsmen who will be affected by the ban.

Paying compensation should not be considered because this tends to encourage the trade and people engaged in this should not be incentivised.

There is a huge amount of international and local concern over the plight of wild elephants and whether they will ultimately succumb to environmental pressures, including poaching and eventually become extinct. The Hong Kong Government can and should respond to this by taking all necessary steps to protect this vulnerable species and thereby enhancing its reputation for its support of nature conservation efforts worldwide.

Yours faithfully,



Cynthia Smillie BVM&S PG Dip CABP MRCVS

Veterinary Surgeon