



A letter of support for the complete banning of the trade and sale of ivory in Hong Kong

Dewi Rowlands (ANH)

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Dear Chairperson and Members of the Legislative Council Panel on Environmental Affairs

I write to you in support of the legislative changes for the banning of the sale and trade of ivory in Hong Kong.

It is imperative for the survival of elephant species worldwide that a ban on the sale and trade of ivory is implemented immediately.

As a signatory to CITES, the Hong Kong SAR Government has the legal, ethical and moral obligation to implement this ban as soon as possible, and to close all existing loopholes that still exist for this trade to continue legally or otherwise. China and the majority of other jurisdictions have already banned this trade, so leaving such loopholes open will only serve to increase the illicit trade of ivory in Hong Kong.

There has been ample time already for the trade to dispose of stocks, so any grace period or any compensation offered for existing stocks, risks increasing the illicit trade in ivory in Hong Kong, and thus further endangers the protection of the species during this time. CITES banned the international trade in ivory in 1989, and ivory has been CITES controlled since 1975/6, yet ivory stock levels have not dwindled, but elephant numbers continue to be at risk. The ban on the sale and trade of ivory in Hong Kong needs to be stopped immediately with no further incentive in the form of compensation of tax payers money offered by the government.

It is also vital that the legislative penalties for illicit trade in ivory and other CITES protected wildlife be strengthened and that the fine and custodial sentence be sufficient deterrent in a trade that is valued in tens of billions of US dollars worldwide annually.

I would appreciate the committees consideration for my personal views with regards to this issue.

Sincerely

Dr. Dewi Rowlands

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Member- HK SAR Government AFCD - Animal Welfare Advisory Group

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