



Legislative proposal to ban the local trade in Ivory - 2 June 2017

Gary Ades to: panel_ea

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Dear Panel on Environmental Affairs and Chairperson Hon. Tanya Chan

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

The proposal to ban the import, re-export and possession of pre-Convention ivory for commercial purposes and increase penalties for wildlife crime has been long awaited by many in the community and globally that have concern for the future of the African Elephant which is presently heading for extinction and concern regarding the illegal trade in endangered species.

The ivory trade encourages criminal activities which are presently difficult to completely control without an outright ban. The traders have also been provided ample time to sell their stocks and have been treated fairly by the Hong Kong Government, I do not agree on any form of compensation in this respect. Public funds, should not be made available to any industries or trades which are adversely affected by changes in economic or commercial circumstances when they have been repeatedly forewarned over decades.

China has already made serious commitments to end the trade by the end of this year and the eyes of the world will be on Hong Kong to show similar conviction in finally ending a business that has been fueling the slaughter of these magnificent animals and allowing ongoing illegal activities to stain the reputation of this city.

Ivory poaching has reached unprecedented levels driven by demand in Asia. If nothing is done, the African elephant populations in the wild will become extinct in our lifetime. The illegal ivory trade also impacts wildlife tourism economically, and contributes to the tragic deaths of park rangers annually.

The global support for closing ivory markets is clear, 183 countries/territories of CITES are unified in closing domestic markets that contribute to poaching or illegal trade in ivory. Penalties for smuggling and trading ivory and other endangered species must also be increased in order to have a serious deterrent effect on the criminal elements.

The Hong Kong SAR Government should follow the lead of other nations and take all necessary actions to ensure that these endangered species are around for future generations to see and in turn demonstrate a clear stance regarding the protection of global Biodiversity.

Yours sincerely,

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