

31 May, 2017

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

Dear Hon Tanya Chan,

**Public Hearing on June 6th 2017: Supporting the Hong Kong Government's Ivory Trade Ban**

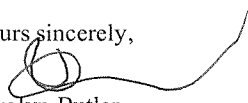
In regard to the above hearing, I write to express my support for the Hong Kong Government's upcoming legislative proposal concerning the ivory trade. I fully support the government's plan to ban the Hong Kong ivory trade; as well as its proposals to increase the maximum penalties under the Protection of Endangered Species Ordinance Cap 586. Frankly I am appalled that this has not happened sooner.

However, I do not support any proposition to compensate traders or buy out their stocks. The ivory traders have been forewarned for many years to prepare and sell their ivory and they have an additional 5-year grace period once the legislation comes into force. 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 and increasing poaching. Finally as a permanent Hong Kong resident and tax payer I object to my taxes being used to compensate the ivory trade participants, particularly when they have been repeatedly forewarned over decades.

I support the Ivory Trade Ban in Hong Kong and the Raising Penalties for the following reasons:

- 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.
- Traders have been found to replenish old ivory stocks with newly poached ivory. Without expensive scientific analysis it is impossible to distinguish 'legal' Pre-Convention ivory from 'illegal' ivory from poaching.
- The majority of stock registered with the government in the 1990s (85%) was from illegal sources.
- Today, 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 impacts wildlife tourism economically, not to mention 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.
- There is no deterrent sentencing in Hong Kong with respect to wildlife crime and penalties are minimal.
- Hong Kong considers itself a world city, yet it continues to permit such practises as ivory trade - this is not the stance of a first world city.

Yours sincerely,



Carolyn Butler