



The Conservancy Association

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Legislative Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Members of the Legislative Council,

24 May, 2018

Written submission on the protection of endangered species of animals and plants

The Conservancy Association (CA) would like to express our view on the protection of the endangered species, Incense tree (*Aquilaria sinensis*) and Green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*).

Incense tree (*Aquilaria sinensis*)

Conserve and sustain the local Incense tree population is important as illegal harvesting of Incense trees were serious in recent decade. It was appreciated that AFCD has established a Species Action Plan for Incense tree and cooperated closely with Police and The Police, the Customs and Excise Department to combat smuggling of endangered species including agarwood. However, for the number of convictions, it was quite low in recent years (3 out of 120 cases in 2015; 5 out of 54 cases in 2016 and 1 out of 53 cases in 2017). The government should put more efforts on the law enforcement.

Safeguard the existing Incense trees' populations becomes more and more important. CA had visited different greenbelts in recent years and discovered several Incense trees populations. One of the sites got more than 10 young Incense trees with DBH 10-40cm within an area of 100m², and many seedlings could be found in the site, too. For this kind of greenbelts, they are always threatened by future development in which the whole Incense tree population will be destroyed easily. AFCD should identify these sites and safeguard these vulnerable and valuable populations.

Regarding to law protection, Incense tree should be included in Forestry Regulations (Cap 96 sub. leg. A) to protect the species being cut and sell within local market.

Regarding to the installation of the tree guard, though it may be useful to deterring theft of the mature Incense tree, but it also exposes the locations of the trees. AFCD should consider this action carefully. It would be a good method to protect mature Incense trees near residential areas together with the installation of Infrared Sensor Camera Trap as well.

Regarding to the artificial propagation and replanting of Incense trees in Hong Kong, the conservation of the genetic variations of local Incense trees are also very important. Studies on local



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population genetic variation and mixed planting of different individuals collected in different locations were suggested. After planting of the Incense trees, planning on how to secure the survival of the seedlings is also necessary.

We would also like to ask for the actual timeline for each of the measures mentioned in the action plan so that we can follow and monitor the effectiveness of each of the actions.

Green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*)

Sham Wan in Lamma Island is the only one existing breeding site of Green turtles in Hong Kong. It is valuable to this endangered species and should be well prepared for the turtles during their breeding season (from June to October). The setup of the restricted area for Sham Wan beach is not enough as the female green turtles will be affected by the noise and light pollution made by the busy boat activities at and outside the bay. The expansion of the Sham Wan Restricted Area to the shallow water area should be considered in order to minimize the disturbance to the turtles.

We hope our recommendation will be considered and thank you for your kind attention.

Yours sincerely,

Kami Hui
Conservation Manager
The Conservancy Association