

Endangered Species Advisory Committee

Education and Publicity

Purpose

This paper reports for members' information on our education and publicity plan for 2019.

Planned Education and Publicity in 2019

2. Over 35,000 threatened species are currently listed in the three Appendices to CITES. The lists of species are reviewed and updated every two to three years. Some of the listed species are commonly traded in Hong Kong. Yet, many people are unaware of CITES and its controls on the listed species. Thus, education and publicity represent an indispensable tool to promote the protection of endangered species and compliance with the relevant law. Continuous efforts are placed to:

- ◆ raise public awareness of endangered species protection and promote sustainable use of natural resources;
- ◆ publicise the measures that govern the import, export and possession of endangered species and the rationale behind;
- ◆ keep traders and the general public informed about the current scope of legislative control to remind them to comply with the law; and
- ◆ collect direct feedbacks and views from traders and the public which enable timely response to their needs.

3. In view of the above considerations, a series of education and publicity activities aiming at different target groups have been planned for 2019, some of which are already underway:

(a) Publicity to Cross-boundary Travellers

- ◆ Control Points are potential points of entry / exit of listed species in / out of Hong Kong. Every year, many tourists are intercepted for importing / exporting endangered animals and plants without licence or permit. In view of this, the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has commissioned a series of advertisements to be broadcast at six Shenzhen immigration control points from Jan to May 2019 to remind members of the public the control regime of importing and exporting specimens of endangered species and the penalty for breaching the law. The advertisement series consists of three themes which correspond to some the most commonly intercepted items (i.e. live orchids and traditional Chinese medicine and ivory).

- ◆ As the import of live orchids from the Mainland China without relevant CITES permit remains one of the major causes of non-compliance by Hong Kong residents, especially during the Chinese New Year, additional efforts were put into place from late January to early February to publicise the licensing requirements on the import of live orchids, as well as other endangered species at the control points. New control points established in 2018, i.e. Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Hong Kong Port and Express Rail Link West Kowloon were included in this publicity exercise. Roll-up panels were displayed at the control points and AFCD officers were stationed at the control points to distribute advisory leaflets to the public.

- ◆ Meanwhile, a new channel of publicity is also being tested. Two cross-boundary coach operators agreed to broadcast our TV announcements of public interest in their coaches. The trial run started late December 2018 and will last for three months, covering the peak period of Chinese New Year.

(b) Training Talk for Tourism Industry

- ◆ Furthering our work targeted at cross-boundary travellers, five training talks have been scheduled for Hong Kong Professional

Tourist Guides General Union (香港專業導遊總工會) in 2019 to educate their members on CITES implementation and legislative control of endangered species in Hong Kong. These training talks aim at equipping frontline tourist guides with adequate knowledge to keep their clients, be they incoming or outgoing tourists, informed about Hong Kong's control on endangered species to avoid unintentional import / export of illegal specimens.

(c) Consultations in Relation to CITES CoP18

- ◆ The 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP18) will be held in Sri Lanka in late May to early June 2019. Amongst other things, the meeting will consider proposals to amend the Appendices to CITES. To assess the implications of the proposals to Hong Kong, especially for trades likely to be affected by the proposals, AFCD will conduct consultations with relevant trades and stakeholders before the CoP18.

- ◆ Circular letters will be issued after CoP18 to inform traders of the results of the meeting and subsequent legislative amendments to the Ordinance, which correspond to the changes to the CITES Appendices adopted at the meeting. The Department will keep in close contact with the trades and further briefings / consultation meetings will be arranged for affected traders, where necessary.

(d) Education Programmes for Schools and Universities

- ◆ Holding 600 exhibits from 200 endangered species, the Endangered Species Resource Centre (ESRC) at the AFCD Headquarter is a unique venue serving various purposes related to education and publicity of endangered species protection. Students at different levels of study are one of our main target groups. In the past four years, we delivered more than 300 guided visits at ESRC to over 12,000 students from schools and universities each year. In addition, we also offer talks and exhibitions at schools and universities upon request.

- ◆ In 2019, we will continue to make good use of ESRC and our

expertise to educate students. As of mid-January 2019, we have already received over 160 bookings from schools to visit ESRC and 23 requests for school talks for the first half of 2019. A guest lecture will also be delivered at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2019.

(e) Publicity at Other Relevant Occasions

- ◆ A lot of shows and exhibitions are organised every year in Hong Kong, some of which present good opportunities for public education and publicity. We have identified several relevant occasions, e.g. HK SciFest, Hong Kong Flower Show and Food Expo Hong Kong, on which we will organise publicity work. Depending on the nature of the occasion, we will promote ESRC or introduce the import and export control on endangered species to the public.

(f) On-going Education and Publicity Activities

- ◆ To maximise the usage of ESRC and our education output, guided visits are offered to other groups and organisations on top of schools and universities. The centre is also open to the general public every Friday afternoon for individuals to visit. In addition, talks, posters and exhibition panels will be provided / lent to groups and organisations upon request. Promotional materials on our public education programme will be sent to community centres and distributed in District Offices.

Advice Sought

4. Members are invited to comment and give advice on the education and publicity plan mentioned above.

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
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