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30 January 2015

Dear Sir/ Madam,

**The Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586)**  
**Regulations on Ivory Trade**

This circular aims to remind traders about the regulations on ivory trade.

African elephant and Asian elephant are listed in the Appendix I to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Their import, possession or re-export is strictly regulated under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586).

The international trade in ivory has been banned by CITES since 1990. But for the ivory which had been legally imported before the ban and registered with this department, they can be traded locally in Hong Kong if they are kept under a valid Licence to Possess issued by this department. However, such ivory cannot be re-exported out of Hong Kong for commercial purposes<sup>1</sup>.

We would like to remind you on the following points:

- Each Licence to Possess is valid for one keeping premises only. The licence shall be kept and displayed in a conspicuous position in the keeping premises specified in the licence or a place specified by an authorized officer. The original licence should be displayed without redacting any information appears therein.

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<sup>1</sup> Trade in ivory acquired before the CITES provisions apply to them (called pre-Convention specimens) in mid-1970s is permitted. If accompanied with a valid pre-Convention Certificate issued by the CITES Management Authority of the exporting place, pre-Convention specimens can be legally imported into Hong Kong and be used for commercial trade. Re-export of pre-Convention specimens would require a Licence to Re-export from this department.

- The licensee must record every transaction in a specified form, such as acquiring, using and sale, and attach to the form relevant documents in connection with such transaction.
- **Any ivory bought by a tourist in Hong Kong could not be re-exported out of Hong Kong to other places (including the Mainland of China).**

Any person import, possess or re-export ivory not in accordance with the Ordinance is an offence. The maximum penalty is a fine of HK\$5 million, imprisonment for 2 years and forfeiture of the specimens upon conviction. In addition, breach of any condition of the licence is an offence. The licence may be cancelled and the licensee is liable on conviction to a fine of \$50,000.

Should you have any question about this circular, please contact Mr. IU Ka-po at telephone number 2150 6969.

Yours faithfully,



(Azaria K. Y. WONG)  
for Director of Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation