

Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance, Cap. 586 Guidelines on Possession of Endangered Species

The import, export, re-export or possession of endangered species of animals and plants in Hong Kong, whether alive, dead, parts or derivatives, is subject to licensing control under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (the Ordinance), Cap. 586. The Ordinance is the local legislation that gives effect to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The Convention aims to protect endangered species from over exploitation through international trade. They are scheduled in the Appendices to Schedule 1 to the Ordinance.

Licensing Requirement for Possession of Scheduled Species

To possess an Appendix I species#, or a live animal or plant of Appendix II species of wild origin for commercial purposes in Hong Kong, a Licence to Possess issued by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) is required. Each licence could cover one or more species but is valid for one keeping premises only. No licence is required for possession of a live animal or plant of Appendix II species of non-wild origin if it can be proved by documentary evidence of its non-wild origin.

Application for Licence to Possess

To apply for a Licence to Possess, the following documents must be submitted to AFCD, by fax, mail, email or in person:

- completed application form (AF246), which is available from AFCD website and headquarters
- for possession of imported specimens: photocopy of the relevant CITES export permit issued by the Management Authority of the place of previous export and completed application for a Licence to Import (AF243)
- for possession of specimens transferred from a local supplier: photocopy of the Licence to Possess regarding the specimens issued by AFCD to the supplier and invoice showing the transaction

Normally 2 working days are required for processing an application for a Licence to Possess, but the issue of a licence is by no means automatic and inspection of the scheduled species by an authorized officer in advance may be required. The prescribed fee for a Licence to Possess is \$160.

For Licence Application and Enquiries

Fax: 2376 3749

Hotline: 2150 6973

Website: www.cites.hk

Licence Application Email: applycites@afcd.gov.hk

Enquiry Email: hk_cites@afcd.gov.hk

Address: 5/F., Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices, 303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

WARNING

- Possession of any specimen of scheduled species not in accordance with the requirement of the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance is an offence. The maximum penalty is a fine of HK\$10 million and imprisonment for 10 years upon conviction.
- Any breach of a licence condition is an offence. The licensee is liable on conviction to a fine of HK\$50,000 and the licence may be cancelled.
- The issue of a Licence to Possess under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance does not in any way exempt the licensee from the provisions of other legislations.

#Appendix I animals bred in captivity for commercial purposes from CITES registered farms and Appendix I plants artificially propagated for commercial purposes are treated as Appendix II specimens and therefore subject to the same control as Appendix II specimens of wild origin.