

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



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REPORT ON ACTIONS TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT CITES DECISION 15.86

The attached document has been submitted by China in relation to agenda item 49 on *Humphead wrasse*.*

* *The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CITES Secretariat or the United Nations Environment Programme concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author.*

Report on actions taken to implement CITES Decision 15.86

This report provides information on actions taken by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of China to implement Decision 15.86 in response to CITES Notification No. 2011/015.

Domestic legislation and control

Under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance, the domestic legislation which implements CITES in the HKSAR, an import permit issued by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD), the CITES Management Authority of the HKSAR, is required for any import of live specimens of Appendix II species of wild origin. In the HKSAR, the major commodity of *Cheilinus undulatus* in trade is live fish. Accordingly, the import of live *Cheilinus undulatus* requires an import permit issued by the AFCD.

Application for the import permit should be supported with a copy of a CITES export permit and made in advance. In case of suspected fraud, the AFCD would contact the exporting countries direct to verify the authenticity and validity of the export permit in question before an import permit is granted. When deemed necessary and practicable, AFCD may take into account restrictions adopted by exporting countries through appropriate permit conditions and administrative measures. For example, following the banning of sea export of *Cheilinus undulatus* by Indonesia, AFCD immediately stopped the issuance of import permit for shipments which were declared to be exported from Indonesia by sea.

Enforcement and monitoring

The enforcement momentum is maintained in the HKSAR to combat illegal trade in CITES species, including *Cheilinus undulatus*. The AFCD and other enforcement agencies in the HKSAR have formed a liaison group to provide a platform for information exchange and joint operations. Through regular meetings and communication among members of the liaison group, intelligence on illegal shipments was provided to enforcement agencies for appropriate enforcement actions. Information about potential illegal shipments was also provided to the Customs for profiling of high-risk shipments.

Capacity building

The AFCD provided training to enforcement agencies on the CITES related

legislation. Enforcement agencies are therefore well aware of the control of CITES species as required under the domestic legislation. With necessary training provided and dissemination of identification materials, the identification of *Cheilinus undulatus* by frontline enforcement officers is not a problem in the HKSAR.

Information exchange

Major enforcement cases involving *Cheilinus undulatus*, as well as other CITES listed species, were communicated as soon as possible to the exporting countries for follow up action and copied to the CITES Secretariat for information. This practice of information exchange will continue.

Problem encountered

The placement and disposal of seized *Cheilinus undulatus* had been discussed at a previous regional workshop. Unfortunately, participants from the major exporting countries indicated that they did not intend to receive the seized fish for various reasons. Seized live fish is kept at government facilities and aquarium as far as keeping space is allowed. Yet, the keeping and placement of the fish in both the long and short term are still a concern of the HKSAR.

Conclusion

We are satisfied that the requirement for an import permit, as stricter domestic measures in the HKSAR, served as a useful tool to strengthen the control of the trade in *Cheilinus undulatus* and detect possible illegal shipments. The AFCD will maintain its enforcement momentum to combat illegal trade in CITES species and continue the existing practice of information exchanges with Parties and the CITES Secretariat.

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), China
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