

[AFCD seized large batch of endangered red-headed Amazon river turtles \(with photo\)](#)

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) seized a total of 492 endangered red-headed Amazon river turtles (*Podocnemis erythrocephala*) with an estimated market value of about \$3 million at Hong Kong International Airport on December 11.

"The AFCD inspected a consignment of live turtles from Peru at the airport, and found 492 endangered red-headed Amazon river turtles among the consignment of over 14 000 live turtles. An attempt to illegally import endangered turtles of unknown source by concealing them in the consignment of a large number of live turtles of other species is suspected," an AFCD spokesman said.

Red-headed Amazon river turtle is a species listed under the Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). According to the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap. 586), import of Appendix II species requires the production of valid CITES documents. As the batch of red-headed Amazon river turtles was not covered by any valid CITES document, the AFCD therefore seized the turtles for further investigation.

According to the Ordinance, any person illegally import scheduled species is liable to a maximum fine of \$10 million and imprisonment for 10 years upon conviction. The seized specimens will also be forfeited.

The spokesman noted that the Government is committed to protecting endangered species. The AFCD will remain vigilant and continue to monitor and combat illegal activities involving endangered species.

The AFCD appeals to members of the public to call 2150 6978 or email espint@afcd.gov.hk to report any suspected irregularities.

