

Hong Kong Customs detects first case of smuggling suspected scheduled fresh totoaba fish maw this year (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (September 20) seized about 46 kilograms of suspected scheduled fresh totoaba fish maws, with an estimated market value of about \$7.4 million, at Hong Kong International Airport. This is the first smuggling case involving scheduled fresh totoaba fish maw detected by Customs this year.

Through risk assessment, Customs officers yesterday inspected an air consignment, declared to be carrying frozen fish fillets, arriving in Hong Kong from Mexico. Upon inspection, Customs officers found the batch of suspected scheduled fresh Totoaba macdonaldi fish maws mix-loaded with non-scheduled frozen fish fillets inside three cartons. A 58-year-old man suspected to be connected with the case was arrested.

Investigation is ongoing.

Under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance, any person found guilty of importing or exporting an endangered species without a licence is liable to a maximum fine of \$10 million and imprisonment for 10 years.

With the recent reduction in air passenger traffic, Customs will continue to step up enforcement against trafficking activities involving prohibited and controlled items through air cargo, postal parcel and express courier channels.

Members of the public may report any suspected smuggling activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

