

More endangered species to go on protection list (with photos)

More endangered species will be put on the control list under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance (Cap 586) when the amendments to schedule 1 come into force tomorrow (November 1), a spokesman for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) said today (October 31).

Newly listed species include pygmy chameleons, silky shark, thresher sharks, clarion angelfish and Dalbergia species. Some of the currently regulated species will be transferred from Appendix II to Appendix I. The details are in the Annex.

"The amendments will bring Hong Kong in line with the revisions to the list of controlled species in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora," the spokesman said.

Under the Protection of Endangered Species of Animals and Plants Ordinance, except with exemptions or otherwise specified, the import, export, re-export, introduction from the sea and possession of the controlled species, including their parts and derivatives, are subject to licensing controls. Relevant import and export controls will be implemented on the species concerned when the new control list comes into force.

The AFCD has notified the traders concerned about the legislative amendments through circular letters, and briefed the relevant stakeholders about the new controls through seminars.

Under the new controls, a Licence to Possess must be obtained within the three-month grace period for the possession for commercial purposes of Appendix I specimens or Appendix II live specimens of wild origin. The grace period will end on January 31, 2019.

The spokesman also reminded the public that the penalties for violating the Ordinance have been increased since May 1 this year. Any person found guilty of importing, exporting, re-exporting or possessing any endangered species without a licence is liable to a maximum penalty of a fine of \$10 million and imprisonment for 10 years. The specimens will also be forfeited upon conviction.

For the licensing requirements for the species listed on different appendices, please visit the website www.cites.hk. For enquiries, please call 1823.

