



The Australian – Letter to the Editor

09 August 2011

Dear Editor,

In response to Sian Powell's article '*From jungle to suitcase, Southeast Asia's wildlife faces a bleak future*' (6 August 2011), the Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association Ltd (AACMA) would like the opportunity to comment.

Under international and Australian wildlife law, it is illegal to import, export or trade in items that are on the CITES list of endangered species unless the appropriate permits have been issued. CITES refers to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. The relevant Australian law is the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

AACMA strongly opposes the use of endangered species in Traditional Chinese Medicine. In April 2007, AACMA entered into a funding agreement with the Department of the Environment and Water, Heritage and the Arts (now the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities) to establish and administer a collaborative certification scheme for professionals and traders involved in the research, recommendation, prescription, supply, export or import of traditional Chinese medicines.

This scheme is called the Traditional Chinese Medicine Endangered Species Certification Scheme (ESCS). Under the scheme, certified individuals publicly declare to trade only in legally acquired wildlife parts and products and that medicines and other products derived from the legal trade in endangered species cannot be obtained from the business.

This joint government-industry approach is aimed at raising awareness about and reducing the illegal international trade in endangered species.

A full list of CITES species can be found at
<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/trade-use/lists/cites/index.html>

Regards,
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AACMA CEO

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