



MEDIA RELEASE

27 October 2011

AACMA REMINDS PUBLIC RHINO HORN IS ILLEGAL & NOT USED IN TCM IN AUSTRALIA

In response to recent media reports stating that rhinoceros horn is used in traditional Eastern medicine, the Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association Ltd reminds the public that rhino horn is not only illegal, it is not accepted practice in traditional Chinese medicine in Australia.

ABC News this week reported that "Vietnam's javan rhinos had been poached into oblivion". The report later states that "rhinoceros horns are a coveted ingredient in traditional Eastern medicine and rumoured to cure or fend off cancer...".

AACMA CEO Judy James said that 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.

"The rhinoceros, including the javan rhino, is listed under the CITES endangered species list," Ms James said.

"Rhino horn is not used by Chinese medicine professionals in Australia. Aside from being illegal, it's not accepted practice in Chinese medicine in this country," she said.

AACMA, the peak national body of Acupuncturists and Chinese medicine practitioners, strongly opposes the use of endangered species in Traditional Chinese Medicine and more than four years ago helped to develop the Traditional Chinese Medicine Endangered Species Certification Scheme (ESCS).

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.

Under ESCS, 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>

*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.

[end]

To read the ABC News report 'Vietnam's javan rhinos poached into oblivion' visit:
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-10-25/vietnam27s-javan-rhinos-27poached-into-oblivion27/3600028?WT.svl=news3>

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