

New Law Reform Initiatives to Improve the Protection of Endangered Species in Hong Kong

Date 07th May (Fri.)

Time 16:00 (UTC+8)

Venue Zoom



You can also email us to require the Zoom link
(check SBS website → NEWS & EVENTS)

In the past two years, record-breaking seizures of pangolin scales, rhino horn and shark fin have been made in Hong Kong but few cases prosecuted. Those that are brought to justice are inevitably the mules in the supply chain who receive minimal sentences for their nominal part in a crime that is increasingly transnational and highly organised. Criminal syndicates' use of Hong Kong as a wildlife smuggling hub could be curbed if the Hong Kong government passes a new Bill which would include wildlife crimes in the Organised and Serious Crimes Ordinance. In this seminar, drafter of the Bill, Amanda Whitfort, will (1) explore how the proposed legal changes to OSCO would affect the prosecution of wildlife crime and (2) introduce a new initiative by HKU Law and the School of Biological Sciences (<https://www.svis.law.hku.hk/>) which seeks to ensure that wildlife cases are prosecuted and sentenced with the seriousness they deserve through the use of species victim impact statements (SVIS) for endangered animals and plants.

All are welcome!



Amanda Whitfort is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law, HKU and a Barrister of the High Court of Hong Kong. Her research and practice focus on criminal law, environmental law and animal law. Whitfort's work has led to significant changes to Hong Kong's animal protection legislation and policy. Her current research focuses on demonstrating the seriousness of wildlife offending to Hong Kong's judiciary and government and ensuring that wildlife crime is investigated and punished with the effectiveness it deserves. Since 2015, Whitfort has been working towards the inclusion of wildlife crime in the Organised and Serious Crime Ordinance (OSCO) of Hong Kong.