



**Two Russian nationals sentenced to 15 months in jail  
for smuggling 206 endangered turtles**

Issued on 14 October 2015

Two Russian nationals were each sentenced to 15 months in jail today for smuggling 206 endangered turtles through Singapore on 9 July 2015, with their jail sentences backdated to the same day.

2 On 9 July 2015, a Certis CISCO aviation security officer detected four luggage bags stuffed with live turtles at the Singapore Changi Airport. The bags had arrived on a flight from Dhaka International Airport Bangladesh in transit to Surabaya Indonesia via Singapore. Upon further investigation, the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) found a total of 206 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*), a critically endangered species protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), for which international trade is prohibited. The turtles, estimated to be worth SGD 90,000, are believed to be in high demand in the exotic pet trade.

3 The owners of the bags, two Russian men - Pavlychev Maksim, 38; and Radkov Aleksei, 34, were immediately detained. Investigations revealed that they were approached by a friend to deliver the turtles to Indonesia. The luggage bags were lined with diapers and cloth to absorb the waste excreted by the turtles. Unfortunately, the turtles arrived dehydrated and were in poor condition. To date, 27 have since died or had to be put down for welfare reasons. The remaining turtles are being taken care of by Wildlife Reserves Singapore.

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4 Under the Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act (ESA), CITES permits are required for any import, export and re-export of CITES species, including their parts and products. It is also an offence under the ESA if the CITES species or their parts and products are not accompanied by proper CITES permits when they are in transit or being transhipped through Singapore. Penalties for infringing the Act include fines of up to SGD 50,000 per scheduled species (not exceeding a maximum aggregate of SGD 500,000) and/or up to 2 years imprisonment.

5 Under the Animals and Birds Act, any person who neglects to supply the animals with food and/or water or subject them to unnecessary suffering and distress, shall be guilty of animal cruelty and shall be liable, on conviction, to a maximum fine of SGD 10,000 and/or imprisonment for a term of up to 12 months.

6 “The Singapore Government has zero tolerance on the use of Singapore as a conduit to smuggle endangered species and their parts and products. We will not hesitate to take harsh enforcement actions against any person or company that smuggles wildlife through Singapore. AVA will continue to cooperate and collaborate with partner enforcement agencies nationally and internationally to curb wildlife trafficking,” said Ms Lye Fong Keng, Deputy Director, Quarantine & Inspection Group (Wildlife Section), AVA.

7 Anyone with information on illegal wildlife trade may contact AVA at 6805-2992 or via AVA’s [online feedback form](#). All information shared with AVA would be kept strictly confidential.

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ANNEX

S/N	Image	Caption
1	 A photograph showing four black, soft-shell luggage bags with wheels lined up on a light-colored tiled floor. The bags are of various sizes and are positioned against a plain wall.	The luggage bags that were used to transport the turtles.
2	 A photograph showing a person wearing a plaid shirt and white gloves kneeling on a tiled floor. They are sorting numerous turtles into several blue plastic trays. The turtles are of various sizes and are being organized into the trays. A black suitcase and a water bottle are also visible on the floor.	The turtles in temporary containers after being removed from the luggage bags

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Diapers and towels were used as lining in the luggage bags to absorb turtle excrement.

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