Wild Animal Protection Law of the PRC

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Unofficial English translation prepared for reference only. The official Chinese text prevails.

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Chapter I — General Provisions

Article 1 — This Law is enacted for the purposes of protecting wild animals, saving rare and endangered wild animals, maintaining biodiversity and ecological balance, promoting the construction of ecological civilization, and promoting the harmonious coexistence of humans and nature.

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Article 2 — This Law shall apply to the protection, hunting, artificial breeding, utilization and other activities related to wild animals and their habitats within the territory of the People's Republic of China.

The protection of wild animals in the sea areas under the jurisdiction of the People's Republic of China shall be governed by this Law.

Article 3 — Wild animal resources shall be owned by the state. The state shall guarantee the lawful rights and interests of entities and individuals engaged in scientific research and artificial breeding of wild animals in accordance with the law.

Article 4 — The state shall implement the principles of giving priority to protection, regulating utilization and strict supervision in respect of wild animals.

Article 5 — The administrative departments in charge of forestry and grassland and fishery under the State Council shall be respectively responsible for the protection and administration of terrestrial wild animals and aquatic wild animals nationwide.

Chapter II — Protection of Wild Animals and Their Habitats

Article 6 — The state shall implement classified and graded protection of wild animals. Wild animals shall be classified into wild animals under key state protection, wild animals under key local protection and wild animals with important ecological, scientific and social value.

Article 7 — The state shall compile and publish the list of wild animals under key state protection. The list of wild animals under key state protection shall be adjusted every five years based on the assessment.

Article 8 — The people's governments at or above the county level shall delimit nature reserves and other protected areas for the habitats of wild animals under key state protection, and take measures to protect and restore the ecological environment of the habitats of wild animals and improve the living conditions of wild animals.

Article 9 — Construction projects that may affect the habitats of wild animals shall avoid nature reserves and other protected areas for wild animals. Where avoidance is truly impossible, measures shall be taken to build wildlife corridors, fish passages and other measures to eliminate or reduce the adverse impacts on wild animals.

Article 10 — The state shall strengthen the rescue and protection of rare and endangered wild animals. Artificial breeding of rare and endangered wild animals shall be conducted for the purpose of species protection, scientific research, public education, artificial breeding for population restoration and other non-commercial purposes.

Chapter III — Administration of Wild Animals

Article 11 — Hunting of wild animals under key state protection is prohibited. Where it is necessary to hunt wild animals under Class I key state protection due to scientific research, population regulation, epidemic disease monitoring or other special circumstances, approval from the wildlife protection department under the State Council shall be obtained.

Article 12 — The hunting of wild animals shall be conducted in accordance with the law and the relevant provisions. Hunting tools and methods that are prohibited by the state from being used, such as poisonous drugs, explosives and electric shocks, shall not be used for hunting.

Article 13 — The artificial breeding of wild animals under key state protection shall be subject to the licensing system. Entities engaged in the artificial breeding of wild animals under key state protection shall apply for and obtain an artificial breeding license.

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Article 14 — The sale, purchase and utilization of wild animals under key state protection and their products is prohibited. Where it is necessary to sell, purchase or utilize wild animals under key state protection and their products for scientific research, artificial breeding, public display and performances, cultural relic appraisal and other special circumstances, approval shall be obtained from the relevant administrative departments.

Article 15 — The eating of wild animals under key state protection and terrestrial wild animals with important ecological, scientific and social value, as well as other terrestrial wild animals, is prohibited. The eating of terrestrial wild animals that are artificially bred and raised shall also be prohibited, except for those included in the livestock and poultry genetic resources catalogue.

Article 16 — The transportation, carrying, posting or delivery of wild animals under key state protection and their products out of the county border shall require a transportation certificate issued by the relevant administrative department.

Article 17 — The state shall establish a monitoring system for epidemic sources and diseases of wild animals, formulate emergency response plans, and organize relevant departments to carry out monitoring and early warning of epidemic sources and diseases of wild animals.

Chapter IV — Legal Liability

Article 18 — Where wild animals under key state protection are hunted without obtaining a special hunting permit, the illegally hunted animals and illegal gains shall be confiscated, and a fine of not less than two times but not more than 20 times the value of the hunted animals shall be imposed; where there are no hunted animals, a fine of not less than 10,000 yuan but not more than 100,000 yuan shall be imposed.

Article 19 — Where wild animals under key state protection are artificially bred without obtaining an artificial breeding license, the wild animals and illegal gains shall be confiscated, and a fine of not less than one time but not more than ten times the value of the wild animals shall be imposed.

Article 20 — Where wild animals under key state protection are illegally purchased, transported, carried, posted or delivered, the wild animals in question shall be confiscated, and a fine of not less than two times but not more than ten times the value shall be imposed.

Article 21 — Where wild animals are illegally eaten or used, the wild animals and their products shall be confiscated, and a fine of not less than two times but not more than 20 times the value of the wild animals and products eaten shall be imposed; where the eating of wild animals is conducted at the level of a food service business operator, the relevant license shall be revoked in accordance with the law.

Article 22 — Where a violation of the provisions of this Law constitutes a crime, criminal liability shall be pursued in accordance with the law.

Chapter V — Supplementary Provisions

Article 23 — For the purposes of this Law, the terms "wild animals" and "their products" mean the whole bodies (including eggs and spawn), parts and derivatives of wild animals.

Article 24 — This Law shall come into effect on May 1, 2023.

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