



Asian Turtle Program Indo - Myanmar Conservation



Indo-Myanmar
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The turtles in temporary containers after being removed from the luggage bags. Photo: Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore

Two men jailed for 15 months each for trying to smuggle 206 endangered turtles through Singapore

On the 9th of July 2015, two Russian nationals were detained after their exotic stash was detected by a Certis CISCO aviation security officer at Singapore's Changi Airport. The men were trying to smuggling 206 live turtles from Bangladesh to Surabaya, Indonesia by placing and hiding these turtles in four luggage bags lined with diapers and cloth to absorb their excreted waste. The turtles were found dehydrated and in poor condition. They have been identified as Black Pond Turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*), which is endangered and protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), estimated to be worth S\$90,000, equivalent to US\$65,000. Twenty-seven of them have since died or had to be put down for welfare reasons. The remaining turtles are under the care of Wildlife Reserves Singapore. On the 14th of October 2015, the men were each sentenced to 15 months' jail for the attempted smuggling.

In Singapore, penalties for infringing the Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act of CITES include fines of up to S\$50,000 (\$36,000) per scheduled species (not exceeding a maximum aggregate of S\$500,000 (\$361,000)) and/or up to two years' jail.

Moreover, 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 S\$10,000 (\$7,200) and/or jail of up to 12 months.

[SOURCE: todayonline.com](http://todayonline.com)