# Declaration on rising international concern over the farming of bear bile in China

2006/2016(DCE) - 17/01/2006 - Written declaration

The European Parliament adopted a Declaration on rising international concern over the farming of bear bile in China.

The Parliament recalls that 7 002 Asiatic Black Bears (Moon Bears) are currently 'milked' for their bile in China and notes that these bears are endangered, featuring in the list in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES). Moreover, it stresses that new 'humane' bile extraction methods continue to cause agonising suffering and the death of bears on Chinese farms, with at least one new method directly contravening new regulations.

The Parliament welcomes the acknowledgement by eminent practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine of the existence of at least 54 herbal alternatives to bear bile, together with a synthetic version, as well as the action taken by the Chinese Government since 2000 in closing over 40 bear farms and confiscating 188 bears into the care of the Animals Asia Foundation (AAF). However, it notes the serious concern, internationally and within the Chinese media, public and Government, at the fact that such a cruel and uncivilised practice exists.

In this context, the Parliament calls on the Chinese Government to take account of this grave worldwide concern as the 2008 Beijing Olympics approach, by taking a clear stance on bear farming, initiating a countrywide ban forthwith on the breeding of bears on farms and setting a time-limit for the ending of bear farming. Moreover, it requests that the Chinese Government liaise with the AAF in accelerating the closure of all bear farms through programmes benefiting bears currently held captive and farmers reliant on the industry and calls for cooperation with the AAF in developing far-reaching education programmes to deter consumers of bear bile.