

Press release - ARC

BATH, June 26, 2013: This Friday the head of China's oldest religion will visit Bath for meetings with the Kelston Park-based Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC).

The China Daoist Association Secretary General and four other key members of the Association have come from Beijing to discuss a range of practical environmental projects with ARC ranging from tackling the illegal wildlife trade to making some of the great pilgrimage places of China more ecological.

ARC is a secular organization founded in 1995 by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh to work with faiths around the world to protect nature based on their own teachings.

Daoism has its roots in the ancient shamanic traditions of China and emerged as a distinct philosophy over 2,500 years ago in the famous book known as the Dao De Jing (Tao Te Ching)**. It has protected the sacred mountains of China for over two millennia and is now one of the major organizations helping to protect nature across China.

Earlier this year, in partnership with ARC the Daoists - who founded Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) more than 2,000 years ago - spoke out about the abuses of wildlife perpetrated in its name.

"One of Daoism's great gifts to the world is Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). TCM plays an important role in caring for our health but when it endangers the natural world it is no longer in alignment with Daoism's spiritual principles... We ask all suppliers, practitioners and consumers of traditional medicines to protect and care for plants, insects and other creatures, especially endangered animals, and to refrain using them in TCM."

- China Daoist Association

They pointed out that truly Traditional Chinese medicine never used animal parts and this message is now being broadcast around China to try and undercut the demand which is driving the illegal trade in rare and endangered animals.

The Daoists are also here to discuss an exhibition and traveling performance of Daoists music, ritual and marshal arts – the first such set of events every to take place in Britain. Over sixty Daoist nuns and monks will come to the UK in October for these events.

INTERVIEW/PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

The Daoists will be at Kelston Park, Bath, BA1 9AE on Friday June 28th 2013 between 4 and 5.30.

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** Note to editor – the old way of referring to Daoists is as “Taoists” with their ancient text the Tao Te Ching (now the Dao De Jing). It changed with pinyin, the way of phoneticising Chinese that has also led to Peking becoming Beijing etc.