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### **Pink dolphins were brought here legally**

SIX pink dolphins on the endangered species list were imported legally from Thailand by a Singapore marine park, contrary to claims by a conservation group.

Under the Convention On International Trade In Endangered Species Of Wild Flora And Fauna (Cites), Singapore was permitted to bring in the dolphins for captive breeding and educational purposes as it had sufficiently-equipped facilities to house and care for them.

The export of the mammals to Singapore's Underwater World in 1999 also had the agreement of Thailand which, like Singapore, is a signatory to Cites – an international convention protecting endangered species.

'The acquisition of the six Indo-Pacific humpback or pink dolphins from Thailand by Underwater World Singapore did not contravene Cites' requirements,' Minister of State (National Development) Vivian Balakrishnan said in response to a question.

In December last year, the Thai police raided Oasis Sea World in Laem Singh, Thailand, after Singapore conservation group Animal Concerns Research and Education Society claimed the marine park had exported the animals illegally.

The group also alleged that both marine parks had misrepresented the dolphins' origins and that they were captured in the wild and were not born in captivity as claimed.