Developers, contractors face stiffer fines for chopping down protected trees
By Wong Siew Ying, Channel NewsAsia

SINGAPORE: Anyone who damages the greenery in parks can now be slapped with a $10,000 fine, up from $5,000 previously.

This, after an amended Parks and Trees Act was passed in Parliament on Tuesday, which called for an enhanced protection for nature.

The changes to the Parks and Trees Act also protect green buffers along what's known as Heritage Roads, while developers and contractors will face stiffer fines if they cut down protected trees.

A 150-year-old Hopea Sangal Tree was chopped down by a property management firm more than three years ago.

The firm was fined $8,000 for chopping down the tree and an additional $76,000 in compensation.

Now, a similar offence could result in a $50,000 fine for chopping down the tree and even more in compensation.

And its not just contractors or developers who have to be mindful.

Anyone who damages protected property in parks can be slapped with a $10,000 fine, up from the $5,000 previously.

The government is also moving to protect not just trees but green buffers along public roads.

Layered greenery along selected roads will now be protected under law.

One example of such a road - known as Heritage road - have tall green walls and green buffers of up to ten metres along both sides.

There is even a 'watch list' of other 'green roads' which the authorities are paying special attention to.

But tough legislation is not the only route to ensure Singapore's green.
"We hope that Singapore will not only be green on the outside but Singaporeans will be green in the inside as well. Over the years, we have transformed Singapore into a garden city. The next step is to transform Singapore into a green community. Green community - we want to inculcate this appreciation for nature, this love for planting trees and so on in the community," said 2nd National Development Minister Lim Swee Say.

So there are plans to work with grassroots organisations to inculcate a love for nature.

MPs feel that more needs to be done.

Dr Amy Khor, MP for Hong Kah GRC said: "We must step up efforts to educate Singaporeans to treat the natural environment - a scarce asset in Singapore - with respect. In this regard, I think one of the most fundamental problem that ought to be tackled at the community level is littering of our beaches and parks."

"A larger vision of ourselves must encompass not only our economy and our people, but our bio-diversity and eco-systems. I have last week mentioned the triple bottom line; and if we are to be sustainable in the long term as a nation, we must guard our natural resources as carefully as our fiscal reserves," nominated MP Dr Geh Min said.

While every effort will be made to conserve natural reserves, Mr Lim said this must be balanced with land use needs.

"If we continue saying that we have to conserve the nature at the expense of meeting our land use requirement, then I would think that by instituting public consultation, by formalising EIA will only lead to more dialogue and more disagreements. It will not lead to more harmonisation of this goal," Mr Lee said. - CNA
Affiliate Sites: CNA.tv | Teletext | TODAY | NewsRadio 93.8 | Radio Singapore International

Finance: Market Analysis, Market Insights, Currency Outlook, Unit Trusts
Forum: Market Talk, Currency Talk, Futures Talk
Information: Lifestyle, Newsbox, Events, Job Links, Travel, Mobile Mall, TV Guide
City Guide: Singapore, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand
Weather: Singapore, Asia Pacific, World
Services: Teletext, Chinese site, SMS News Alert, Video, CNA on WAP, Singapore Stock Monitor, MMS Services, E-mail News Alerts, News on PDA, Office Tools, Techstore, Bookstore

Singapore: 4D, TOTO, Singapore Sweep

About Us: Contact Us, Terms & Conditions, Site Map

Copyright © 105 MCN International Pte Ltd. All Rights Reserved.
Use of this Site is subject to our terms and conditions of use.
Your continued use of this Site shall be construed as your agreement to abide by our terms and conditions of use.