



## Press Release

### Young people encouraged to sing, dance and act for wildlife protection!

**Hanoi, 10 April 2014** – A new performing arts competition was launched today to encourage young people across Vietnam to use their creativity to support wildlife protection efforts, as part of a series of activities to celebrate the International Day of Biological Diversity in Vietnam (May 22).

The “Youth for Wildlife Protection” competition is a joint initiative of the Vietnam Environment Administration (VEA) and the Central Youth Union, and is open to all Vietnamese students and young people to create and record an original song, play, or dance, fitting within one of the four designated themes of wildlife protection. It aims to inspire young people to learn more and get involved in biodiversity conservation activities, by using an entertaining and creative approach to raising public awareness and spreading conservation messages.



“Young people are our future, and it’s very important that they understand the environmental issues we are facing, and get involved with protection efforts,” said Nguyen Phi Long, Member of the Standing Committee, Head of Youth Solidarity Committee, and Standing Vice Chairman of Youth Union of Vietnam. “This competition is an exciting opportunity for young people to help create and spread meaningful wildlife protection messages while having fun with their friends, and we hope to receive thousands of entries from all over the country.”

Performances can be solo or as a group, must be recorded by video or audio recording, and submitted to the Central Youth Union and Biodiversity Conservation Agency between April 10 and May 10, 2014. All entries will be uploaded to the Youth Union website, and members of the public will have the opportunity to vote for their favourite performance between May 10 and 17, 2014.

The competition will culminate on May 22, when the best 20 entries will be screened at a special event and awarded prizes, including 10 million VND cash for the Most Outstanding performance. A judging panel including the well-known actor and comedian, will select the most imaginative

performances with the best messages to receive the top ten prizes, and a further ten encouragement awards will be presented to the most popular performances as voted by the public.



“Vietnam is recognized globally for its unique biodiversity, but unfortunately more than 800 species of rare plants and animals now face very serious threats to their survival,” said Dr. Nguyen The Dong, Deputy Director General of VEA. “Raising awareness of this situation is critical to change peoples’ behavior and encourage a greater appreciation for the value biodiversity brings to all our lives. We are very happy to work with young people on this issue, and look forward to seeing their creations.”

The competition is organized as part of the project “Wildlife Consumption in Vietnam: Reforming Policies and Practices to Strengthen Biodiversity Conservation” (WLC Project), funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) via the World Bank (WB).

*For full details on competition guidelines, and how to enter, please visit the Youth Union website: <http://baoton.vvc.vn>*

*For more information, please contact:*

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**About International Day for Biological Diversity**

Since 2000, the UN General Assembly has adopted 22 May as the International Day for Biological Diversity to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues around the world. In 2014, the theme of the day will be island biodiversity and National theme of the day in Vietnam will be reducing illegal consumption of endangered wildlife to protect biodiversity.