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## **Take action to stop illegal wildlife trade and consumption before it is too late**

Hanoi - Education for Nature-Vietnam (ENV) released their latest public service announcement (PSA) today, drawing attention to the consumption of endangered species and their products in Vietnam. The PSA calls upon Vietnamese citizens to take action and lend their support to efforts to protect endangered wildlife.

In ENV's most dramatic PSA yet, a young girl stumbles into a restaurant where wildlife is being served to customers. As she looks around in horror and takes in the scene of endangered species being consumed by patrons of the restaurant, she screams "Stop!" By presenting the views of Vietnamese youth about wildlife consumption, the PSA illustrates how this illegal trade threatens the country's future and urges the audience to take action by choosing not to consume wildlife and reporting wildlife crime to the authorities or ENV's wildlife crime hotline on 1-800-1522.



*"While Vietnam is one of the most biologically diverse countries on earth, it is also a major hub for illegal wildlife trade and consumption," said Nguyen Thi Phuong Dung, Vice-Director of ENV. "Winning the battle to stop the illegal wildlife trade is not just the job of government; it is also the responsibility of the people."*

In a recent consumer wildlife crime survey conducted by ENV in six major cities across Vietnam, 651 of the 3,743 restaurants inspected were operating in violation of wildlife protection laws (17%). According to the National Forest Protection Department's records, 598 endangered animals were the subject of violations of wildlife protection regulations in 2014. However, experts believe that these figures represent only a small fraction of the true number of endangered species illegally trafficked each year. As Vietnam's economy has boomed over the past decade, demand for wildlife products has increased dramatically, leading to a spike in illegal wildlife trade.

*"It is time for every citizen to join the battle against illegal wildlife trade and consumption," continued Dung. "The struggle cannot be won without the active support and participation of the Vietnamese public. We must ensure that other species do not follow our rhinos down the path of extinction."*

The new PSA will be aired on 60 national and provincial TV channels across Vietnam in the coming months.

ENV gratefully acknowledges Busch Gardens and the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium for their valuable support in producing this PSA, in addition to national and provincial TV channels, VTV Cab, An Vien TV (AVG), VTC Digital and RailTV for airing the PSA, enabling this important message to reach millions of people across Vietnam.

The PSA can be watched online at: <https://youtu.be/8hpamEmUixM>

For more information, please contact:

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**About Education for Nature – Vietnam (ENV)**

Education for Nature - Vietnam (ENV) was established in 2000 as Vietnam's first non-governmental organization focused on the conservation of nature and protection of the environment. Our mission is to foster greater understanding amongst the Vietnamese public about the need to protect nature and wildlife. We employ creative and innovative strategies to influence public attitudes and mobilize Vietnamese citizens to live in balance with the natural world. We work closely with government partners to strengthen policy and legislation and directly support enforcement efforts in the protection of endangered species of national, regional and global significance.

**ENV's strategic approach to tackling the illegal wildlife trade**

ENV focuses its activities on three major program areas that comprise ENV's integrated strategic approach for addressing illegal wildlife trade. These include:

- Reducing consumer demand for wildlife products through investment in a long-term and sustained effort to influence public attitudes and behavior
- Strengthening enforcement through direct support and assistance to law enforcement agencies, and mobilizing active public participation in helping combat wildlife crime
- Working with policy-makers to strengthen legislation, close loopholes in the law, and promote sound policy and decision-making relevant to wildlife protection.