

June 1, 2016

## Famous comedians Quoc Khanh and Cong Ly urge the public to protect tigers

Hanoi, June 1, 2016, Education for Nature – Vietnam (ENV) has released its latest [public service announcement](#) (PSA) which features famous comedians Quoc Khanh and Cong Ly urging the public to protect the world's remaining tigers by avoiding consumption and use of tiger products.

The PSA is set back in Vietnam's imperial era, with the honorable king, starring Quoc Khanh, receiving guests during the Lunar New Year. Cong Ly, playing a flashy man in a polished suit and fancy car, shows up to offer the gift of a tiger to the king. To everyone's surprise, the king turns down the gift and delivers a wise message: "Tigers are not medicine. The tiger is the king of the forest and the majestic symbol of our nation." The king goes on to say, "It is the duty of each and every citizen to protect our tigers," ending with the king making a phone call to ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline 1800-1522 to report the violation.

In the last 30 years, wild tiger populations in Vietnam have been in steady decline. Experts believe that there are as few as five wild tigers remaining in the country.

The greatest threat to Vietnam's tigers is illegal hunting and trade. Tiger bones are used to make traditional medicine. Tigers are also consumed in wine or displayed as trophies. ENV's statistics alone have recorded 772 violations related to advertising, selling, possession, and smuggling of tigers since 2010.

*"Demand for tiger products in Vietnam has not just reduced our own tiger populations," says ENV Vice Director Nguyen Phuong Dung. "It has contributed to the decline of the world's tiger population too."*



Dung called upon ordinary people to get involved by avoiding use of tiger products, and more importantly, reporting to authorities when they observe violations involving advertising, selling, or trade of tigers.

Dung also emphasized the need for the government to take a stronger stance on tiger trade through a number of immediate and urgent measures including:

- Aggressively pursue criminal networks and their leaders that are engaged in the illegal smuggling and trade of tigers.
- Strengthen deterrence by addressing weaknesses in the application of the law that has thus far resulted in lax punishment for tiger traders and not a single criminal prosecution or imprisonment of a major tiger trader.
- Meet international obligations to prevent the growth of tiger farming in Vietnam, which are widely recognized and documented as cover for the laundering and illegal trade of tigers. Most tiger farms are neither for education nor conservation purposes but merely created to legitimize tiger trading activities.

*"The future of our tigers, and indeed the world's tigers, depends upon us and what we do now," says Dung. "Each and every one of us has an opportunity to make a difference, whether we are a farmer or a*

*judge, a student or government worker, a policeman or a soldier. We need to decide. Shall we sit and watch this majestic part of our heritage slip into extinction as we did the rhino? Or should we do our part now?"*

The PSA is part of ENV's long term campaign to reduce consumer demand for products made from tigers and address the illegal tiger trade. The new PSA will be aired on national and provincial television channels throughout Vietnam in coming months, and can be watched online at:

<https://youtu.be/GvpqPOvJjaU>

ENV gratefully acknowledges comedians Quoc Khanh and Cong Ly, Awely Wildlife and People, and the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service for their valuable support in producing this PSA. ENV would also like to thank national and provincial TV channels, VTV Cab, An Vien TV (AVG), VTC Digital, and Sen Communications for airing the film and enabling this important message to reach millions of people across Vietnam.

ENV's campaign to stop the illegal tiger trade:

<http://envietnam.org/index.php/what-we-do/env-species-focused-campaigns/stop-the-illegal-tiger-trade>

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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 tiger trade**

ENV is working with law enforcement, decision-makers, and the public to stop the illegal trade of tigers and prevent further development of commercial tiger farming in Vietnam. Our campaign activities include:

- Facilitating public reporting of tiger crimes through ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline and assisting law enforcement in addressing specific crimes reported to ENV
- Strengthening legislation and policy, and advocating stronger support from key decision-makers in government relevant to the protection of tigers
- Carrying out a wide range of public awareness campaigns through radio, television and national media to increase awareness and participation amongst the general public to protect Vietnam's tigers and reduce consumer demand
- Working with law enforcement agencies to gather intelligence on the key traders and the criminal networks they operate that are smuggling tigers into Vietnam
- Independent monitoring of all tiger farms and private zoos in Vietnam to suppress the growth of tiger farming activities and prevent leakage of captive born tigers into the trade
- Encouraging the public to report tiger crimes to authorities or ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline