

April 27, 2017

Life Sentence Behind Bars at a Bear Bile Farm

Ha Noi (April 27, 2017) - Education for Nature Vietnam (ENV) has just released its 31st [Public Service Announcement \(PSA\)](#), aimed at urging consumers not to use bear bile and help bring an end to bear farming.

In this latest PSA, life is envisioned from the perspective of a captive bear that has spent her entire life on a bear farm in Vietnam. She remembers being sold to the farm as a cub and enduring years of exploitation for her bile, wishing only to experience life beyond the walls of her imprisonment at the farm before she dies.

Filmed at an actual bear farm, the story is a reflection of the truth for nearly all of Vietnam's captive bears on farms, taken from the wild as cubs, subjected to frequent extraction of their bile, and living the remainder of their lives in a prison, never again to experience life in nature.



Bear bile farming in Vietnam reached its peak in 2005, when more than 4,300 bears were documented at hundreds of farms throughout the country. Over the last 10 years, the battle against the bear farming industry in Vietnam has achieved significant milestones, thanks to the collective efforts of authorities, NGOs and members of the public. According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, numbers of captive bears have decreased dramatically to a little over 1,200 today, while ENV research has shown that bear bile consumption has slumped 61% since 2009.

However, the battle is not yet won until all of Vietnam's bear bile farms are closed for good, and wild bears are given a chance to recover and live in nature without risk of killing or capture to support consumer demand for bear bile in Vietnam.

"In today's Vietnam, most of us recognize that exploiting endangered wildlife, like bears for their bile, is not only cruel and illegal, but also in conflict with living a clean and healthy life and reducing our impact on nature and the environment around us," says Mrs. Nguyen Phuong Dung, Vice Director of ENV. "Use of bear bile represents our past, and not our future."

Ms. Dung went on to say, "More effective modern medicines and herbal alternatives to bear bile exist. It is time to close down Vietnam's bear bile farms and give wild bears a chance to live their lives in nature, not living out a life sentence behind bars as depicted by this bear in the PSA."

Mrs. Dung listed three practical ways that the public can help protect bears:

- Do not consume bear bile or bear products.
- Report crimes involving the selling or trade of bear bile and bear products to local authorities or ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline, 1800-1522.
- Help educate others not to consume bear bile and bear products.

This PSA is part of a broader campaign by ENV, aimed at promoting the public's awareness and influencing behavior, to stop consuming bear bile and bear products with the end goal being to bring an end to bear farming and protecting the regions remaining wild bears.

The PSA will be broadcasted on both national and provincial TV channels throughout Vietnam in the coming months, and can be watched online at [ENV's YouTube channel](#).

ENV wishes to thank Four Paws International for supporting ENV's efforts to produce this PSA. ENV would also like to thank national and provincial TV channels, MobiTV, VTC Digital, and Sen Communications for airing the PSA and enabling this important message to reach millions of people across Vietnam.

More details about ENV's campaign to bring an end to bear farming and trade can be found at: <http://envietnam.org/index.php/what-we-do/env-species-focused-1/campaigns/end-bear-farming-and-trade>

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About ENV

Education for Nature – Vietnam (ENV) was established in 2000 as Vietnam's first non-governmental organization focused on the conservation of nature and the protection of the environment. ENV combats the illegal wildlife trade and aims to foster greater understanding amongst the Vietnamese public about the need to protect nature and wildlife.

ENV employs creative and innovative strategies to influence public attitudes and reduce demand for wildlife trade products. ENV works closely with government partners to strengthen policy and legislation, and directly supports enforcement efforts in the protection of endangered species of regional, national, and global significance.

Since 2007, ENV has focused its activities on three major program areas that comprise ENV's integrated strategic approach for addressing illegal wildlife trade in Vietnam. 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.