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10 Critical Actions to Combat Vietnam's Illegal Wildlife Trade

Hanoi, September 9, 2020 - Education for Nature Vietnam (ENV) has published [10 Critical Actions for Combating Illegal Wildlife Trafficking 2020](#), an annual list of key interventions that ENV considers priorities in tackling the wildlife trade in Vietnam.

The release of the list coincides with the issuance of a new directive by the Prime Minister on July 23rd in response to the Covid-19 global pandemic. The PM directive is aimed at mobilizing government agencies to actively strengthen efforts to eliminate wildlife trade and reduce the threat to human health and safety associated with trade and consumption of wildlife.

10 CRITICAL ACTIONS

1. Take down leaders of wildlife criminal networks
2. Eradicate corruption
3. Establish effective deterrents
4. Reduce the risk of future pandemics associated with wildlife consumption and trade
5. Implement a clear ban on any form of commercial trade of endangered species
6. Strengthen management of conservation facilities and non-commercial facilities
7. Finish the job: End bear farming in Vietnam
8. Strictly regulate and manage commercial wildlife farms
9. Hold local authorities responsible for eradicating wildlife crime in their jurisdictions
10. Pull the plug wildlife crime on the internet

At the top of the list is the need to initiate aggressive police investigations that target the leadership of wildlife trafficking networks, with the aim of arresting and prosecuting the leaders of these criminal enterprises and dismantling their operations permanently.

In addition to taking down wildlife trafficking kingpins, other critical interventions include strengthening deterrence to reduce crime, addressing abuse within the commercial wildlife farming industry, eradicating corruption within the criminal justice system, and putting an end to bear farming.

“Vietnam has made substantial progress on all ten priorities in recent years,” says Vu Thi Quyen, ENV’s Founder and Executive Director. “There are positive developments on all fronts. Now, the task at hand is to maintain momentum and continue aggressively down this path, to the point where Vietnam is no longer a major consumer of wildlife, nor a trafficking hub for the region.”

Quyen believes this goal is not only realistic, but achievable. “Look at how the criminal justice system has applied the revised Penal Code,” says Quyen. “Criminals are going to prison for their crimes, and among them are the leaders of four major trafficking networks.”

“We have a lot to do ahead of us, and some major obstacles to overcome, but we have already accomplished a great deal of progress.”

Tackling corruption within the criminal justice system remains one of the most difficult obstacles to overcome in the battle to combat wildlife trafficking in Vietnam. Whether corruption involves passage of goods through ports or airports, issuance of permits to commercial farms, or allowing criminals to escape capture, prosecution, or imprisonment, corruption undermines the law, and in doing so, undermines the health of society and effectiveness of government.

In addition to eliminating corruption, one of the new critical actions in 2020 reflects the need to address the serious human health and safety risks posed by animal-borne viruses like Covid-19. While ENV strongly supports current efforts to eliminate wildlife trade and consumption as called for by the Prime Minister, ENV goes on to urge policy-makers, key ministries, provincial governments, and other government agencies to share the responsibility of increasing public awareness about the deadly effects of wildlife trade and consumption, reinforcing national efforts to curb consumer demand and reduce the risk of future outbreaks.

“We believe Vietnam is on many fronts a leader in Southeast Asia in efforts to tackle the illegal wildlife trade, and we’re proud of the progress that has been accomplished,” states Quyen. “Success is within our grasp if we can remain focused and committed to addressing these ten critical actions for Vietnam.”

Copies of [10 Critical Actions for Combating Illegal Wildlife Trafficking 2020](#) will be sent to People’s Courts, Procuracies and relevant law enforcement agencies in 63 provinces.

ENDS.

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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