

Saving Vietnam's wildlife

Education for Nature-Vietnam (ENV) was established in 2000 as Vietnam's first non-governmental organisation focused on the conservation of nature and the environment.

Quyen Vu | Founder, Education for Nature Vietnam

It's 8:30am and the ENV office is already buzzing as staff file in, ready for another day's work. Ms Hang and Ms Huong from the Wildlife Trade team are busy loading the big green ENV van with materials for a university seminar. They're heading to Hanoi's University of Education to present a talk to 150 students on wildlife trade and consumption issues and what they can do to help protect wildlife.

Upstairs in the Wildlife Crime Unit (WCU), case officers are reviewing their cases and preparing for the day ahead. Each case officer may handle up to 200 cases ranging from restaurants offering wildlife on their menu, to live bears being kept in someone's backyard.

Phuong is excited: her months of negotiating have paid off and the tigers will be moved to the rescue centre tomorrow!

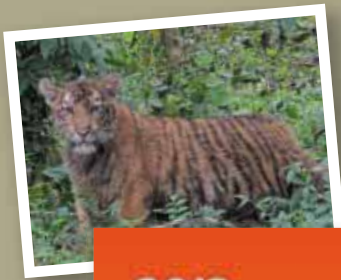
In the manager's office, ENV's Vice Director Mr Hung is working with Ms Dung, Operations Director, to finalise the rhino horn demand reduction campaign for 2013. The campaign includes a series of awareness activities aiming to encourage Vietnamese to stop using rhino horn as a social status symbol and a form of magical traditional Chinese medicine. Since rhino horn is consumed by only a small group of people in Vietnam, it is quite tricky to figure out an effective way to reach them. Hung is looking at a draft of a rhino public service announcement (PSA), which focuses on creating a negative social attitude towards rhino horn users. It will be the first of two rhino PSAs for the year and is planned to be aired nationally. As part of the campaign, ENV is also working closely with authorities to strengthen law enforcement and address the illegal trade of rhino horn around the country.

In the Communication department, the team is in full swing with the tiger transfer news and news just in from the crime unit: they have just secured the confiscation of a baby gibbon caught by a hunter who had killed its mother for meat. Ms Thuy is happy that the gibbon is heading for a rescue centre, however she knows that there will be more to follow, and that the real fight to save endangered wildlife rests with making sure the animals are never removed from nature in the first place.

As it approaches 6pm, staff begin to head home. It's the end of another busy day saving Vietnam's wildlife.

Grants

In 2012, Save the Rhino gave of £13,085 to support ENV's rhino campaign. The grant will support several aspects including a public awareness campaign through public service announcements, a viral internet campaign and strengthening ENV's Wildlife Crime Unit



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A phone call comes through the Wildlife Crime Hotline, and Ms Lan Anh takes the first crime report for the day. It's a tourist reporting seven macaques being kept in a cage at a restaurant on Phu Quoc Island, southern Vietnam. Lan Anh collects the details, and then begins by contacting the local Forest Protection Department office to report the case and get them to conduct an inspection.

Meanwhile, downstairs Ms Thao is on the phone to the leader of the volunteer club in Ho Chi Minh City. Thao is responsible for managing the 3,600 members of ENV's Wildlife Protection Volunteer Network. Today she has 30 cases that need to be checked; mostly business establishments that have been caught selling or advertising wildlife products in the past. They plan to divide the cases amongst 10 teams of two volunteers who will carry out the monitoring missions and report back within a week.

In the Policy and Legislation department, Ms Phuong takes a phone call from the Vice-Chairman of the Nghe An People's