

WILDLIFE CRIME

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ACTION AGAINST EXTINCTION

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The World Is Watching: Prosecuting Vietnam's Infamous Marine Turtle Kingpin

Biggest marine turtle seizure on record

In late 2014, law enforcement authorities discovered nearly ten tons of dead marine turtles following raids at six warehouses in the city of Nha Trang. The bust was the largest seizure of marine turtles in the world to date. The sight of more than 7,000 dead marine turtles brought the province of Khanh Hoa and Vietnam's most notorious marine turtle traffickers, Hoang Manh Cuong and his brother, Hoang Tuan Hai to the world's attention. The brothers were already known to police as significant figures in the illegal marine turtle trade, but this time the police had caught them red-handed.

The raids followed nearly two years of work investigating a criminal network that hunts marine turtles and sells them through middlemen to Hoang Manh Cuong. The dead turtles are then processed and smuggled to China where they are purchased for their decorative shells. ENV estimates that tens of thousands of marine turtles have been slaughtered and trafficked

through Cuong's factory in the city of Nha Trang in Khanh Hoa province.

The successful raids were a huge step forward in efforts to take down one of Vietnam's biggest marine turtle traffickers. However, nearly a year has passed and neither Cuong nor his brother have seen the inside of a court room or a prison cell.

"What remains to be seen is whether Khanh Hoa authorities will make an example of Cuong and his brother," said Bui Thi Ha, ENV's Vice-Director and head of the policy and legislation team, which works with senior government bodies on wildlife law. "This case is an opportunity for Vietnam to demonstrate to the world that we are serious about tackling criminal networks that engage in the illegal trade of endangered species."

Ms. Ha expressed concern about delays in the prosecution of Cuong and Hai in Khanh Hoa. "This

delay calls into question the resolve of Khanh Hoa authorities to apply the law fairly when influential businessmen are involved,” stated Ha. “Had the subject been an ordinary citizen, and not a kingpin with rich and influential friends, he would have been in prison by now.”

Indifference of authorities: Marine turtles are not receiving the protection they need and deserve under the law

On May 14, 2015, the Minister of Public Security, Tran Dai Quang, sent official letters of praise to authorities in Nghe An for their discovery of 31 pieces of rhino horn that were being smuggled through the province. The discovery resulted in the arrest and prosecution of the subject. Subsequently, law enforcement officers in Nghe An were rewarded for their role in the investigation and prosecution processes.

Likewise, tiger traders and smugglers are routinely arrested and prosecuted when caught trading tigers, such as the case in Nghe An in December 2014, which involved the seizure of a 120 kg frozen tiger by police and resulted in the prosecution of the subject.

Marine turtles, rhinos, and tigers are classified as endangered species and afforded an equal level of protection under Vietnamese law. Therefore, Ms. Ha asks, “Why is a case involving 7,000 dead marine turtles being treated any differently than cases involving the seizure of 31 rhino horns or one tiger?”

Resistance at the provincial level?

Having followed the case from the very beginning, ENV appreciates the strong commitment shown by the Central Government in addressing the case. Over 10 correspondences including communications from the Communist Party Office, National Assembly Office and Delegates, President’s Office, Supreme Court, Government Office, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development were sent to the Khanh Hoa authorities. The Supreme Procuracy and Ministry of Public Security instructed authorities in Khanh Hoa to prosecute the case according to Article 190 of the Penal Code.

According to Lawyer Tran Thi Ngan, CEO of Legal Associates Hanoi Law Firm, “The marine turtle case in Khanh Hoa is not a complicated case since evidence along with Hai’s (Cuong’s brother) testimony show that he traded in marine turtles. Identification results show that the species confiscated are included in the list of endangered, precious, and rare species prioritized for protection issued with Decree 160”. She adds, “Mr. Hai should have been prosecuted immediately after authorities received the identification results.”

ENV’s position on dealing with major wildlife traffickers

Strict enforcement and punishment is the key to eradicating the criminal networks that trade marine turtles and other protected wildlife species. Arresting and prosecuting drivers and middlemen without tackling the heads of these networks is not good enough. Hoang Tuan Hai must be prosecuted, but so must Hoang Manh Cuong, who is believed to be the real kingpin of the marine turtle trade.

In the February 20th, 2014 Directive 03/CT-TTg, the Prime Minister clearly stated Vietnam’s intent to act against organized criminals trading in endangered wildlife. The question is whether Khanh Hoa authorities will set an example for all of us to be proud of, or let this opportunity slip through their fingers and send a clear message to Vietnam’s top wildlife traffickers and kingpins that they are beyond the reach of the law.

The crime that most damages endangered species isn’t hunting or consumption, but indifference on the part of authorities in applying laws that were passed to protect wildlife. ENV hopes that authorities will give marine turtles the protection that they need and deserve.



Hoang Tuan Hai – Cuong’s brother confessed to illegally trading marine turtles at the time of the raids



A Bad Idea: Opening The Door For Commercial Trade Of Rhino Horn

Over the past several years, a large group of businessmen in South Africa who benefit from the rhino sport hunting business have been aggressively lobbying for the legalization of the commercial trade of rhino horns. They claim that opening the door to the legal trade of rhino horns obtained from sport hunting will help meet market demand and reduce the pressure on wild rhino populations.

Part of their plan includes funding rhino conservation efforts with the profits made from the sale of legal rhino horn and confiscated rhino horn products, an idea that may sound quite attractive to some governments. A vote that will determine the fate of rhinos is expected to take place at the next CITES Conference of Parties scheduled for 2016 in South Africa.

accelerate the killing of rhinos around the world.

We hope that governments, organizations, and citizens around the globe have not forgotten a similar legal sale involving elephant ivory in 2008: four African countries were permitted to sell 108 tons of government-owned elephant ivory as a one-time exemption. Although it's difficult to measure exactly how much this one-time sale has impacted elephant conservation efforts worldwide, it is certain that more than 100 tons of elephant ivory was not enough to saturate the market and reduce the pressure of poaching on elephant populations. The ivory trade still continues at an alarming rate; ENV's records indicate that more than 24.5 tons of elephant ivory has been smuggled into Vietnam since 2012, much of it heading to China. This test clearly did not work for elephants. Likewise, opening the door to the legal trade of rhino horn in Vietnam would be disastrous for wild rhino populations.

Vietnam is considered a major consumer market for rhino horn, however, only a very small percentage of the public are rhino horn consumers. This is illustrated by the proportionately small ratio between the numbers of rhinos



killed versus the size of the potential market in Vietnam. The legalization of the rhino horn trade could drastically increase the size of the consumer market for rhino horn in Vietnam as the public would be exposed to rhino horn readily available and openly sold in consumer markets.

The co-existence of legal and illegal trade of rhino horn will also compromise enforcement efforts nationwide as frontline law enforcement officers are forced to distinguish between legal and illegal products, undermining efforts to eradicate illegal trade and increasing opportunities for criminal enterprises to trade and sell illegally-sourced rhino horn, therefore perpetuating further killing of wild rhinos.

At a time when Vietnam and the rest of the world are actively working to stop rhino poaching in Africa and reduce the consumer demand for rhino horn, Vietnam should not pause, fumble or sabotage its own efforts by permitting the legal trade of rhino horn. Our time is now to contribute to the survival of this amazing species, not further its demise.

What is CITES?

The Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international treaty, of which Vietnam became a signatory in 1994. CITES regulates the trade of endangered species across international borders. Species listed under the appendices of CITES require permits in order to be transported across borders.

ENV and likely the vast majority of international conservation organizations strongly oppose this plan. We urge the government of Vietnam and governments in other countries to vote "NO" to this proposal because legalization of the rhino horn trade is likely to

A Great Step Forward: **Ban On All Endangered Wildlife Ingredients In Health Products**

Since January 2015, ENV has received numerous reports about cosmetics that contain endangered species derivatives such as bear bile. This high abundance of reports is due to the fact that procedures for importing, introducing, and circulating cosmetics do not require certificates of legal origin for wildlife ingredients. A loophole has been created by an inconsistency between wildlife protection law and regulations pertaining to medicinal and cosmetic products.

Following efforts by ENV in cooperation with the Ministry of Health (MOH), on August 28th 2015, MOH issued a ban on the use of rare and endangered wildlife products in cosmetics. Correspondence detailing this ban was sent by the Drug Administration of Vietnam to all provincial health departments and all cosmetic retail and production companies in Vietnam. On August 28th 2015, cosmetics joined medicinal and supplemental food products on the list of health products in which endangered species products are banned from use as an ingredient.

However, the instruction from the Ministry of Health is just the first step. To completely eradicate the use of endangered wildlife products in medicines, supplemental foods, and cosmetics, enforcement agencies need to actively enforce the bans.

According to a survey in September 2014 by the Social Institute on Knowledge, Attitude, and Behavior regarding Wildlife Consumption, 67% of the respondents admitted to using health products

containing wildlife. The findings of the survey also suggest that the lower the education of the respondents, the higher chance that they will use health products containing wildlife. This study suggests that demand for health products containing wildlife will remain high even when supplies of commercially available products are reduced. In order to successfully reduce the market for such products, enforcement agencies must ensure that supplies are diminished and violations involving manufacturers, healthcare providers, traditional medicine doctors, and pharmacies are effectively addressed. Enforcement efforts must also coincide with continued emphasis on reducing consumer demand. Breaking the chain requires active involvement targeting both the supply and demand sides of the equation.



Korean cosmetics containing bear bile were being sold in Vietnamese markets

Case Study

In early 2015, ENV received reports about a massage cream that according to its label contained bear bile. The massage cream product was named Misa F and was manufactured by the Quang Minh Company. ENV immediately transferred the reported information to authorities in Ho Chi Minh City. On June 25, 2015, the Department of Health of Ho Chi Minh City inspected the Quang Minh Company and determined that Misa F bear cream didn't actually contain bear bile, despite labeling on the package.

The Quang Minh Company had reused packaging of a product registered two years earlier that contained bear bile. After the inspection, the Department of Health ordered the Quang Minh Company to recall all Misa F products from stores and destroy the packaging. The company was also fined 20 million VND (\$900 USD).

The excellent work of the Department of Health in Ho Chi Minh City in dealing with this case is an example that should be followed by authorities in other provinces whenever commercial health products containing endangered wildlife are discovered.



MISA bear bile cream was widely sold at pharmacies and in stores in Vietnam

ENFORCEMENT LAW UPDATE



Photo: Hue IPD

No form of commercial trade in endangered species originating from the wild is allowed

The revised Investment Law that went into effect on July 01, 2015 re-emphasizes the protection status of endangered species originating from the wild.

According to Article 6 of the Investment Law 2014, investing in or conducting business involving species originating from the wild that are listed in Appendix III of the Investment Law and Appendix I of CITES is prohibited. Examples of species listed under Appendix III of the Investment Law include bears, tigers, pangolins, marine turtles, as well as many other species prioritized for protection.

Therefore, exploiting protected endangered species from the wild for commercial purposes such as farming, trading, and importing/exporting is completely prohibited. Auctioning these species after confiscation is also prohibited as no business or commercial trade is permitted.

Ban on advertising or selling wildlife products on e-commerce websites

Under Article 4 of Decree 52/2013/ND-CP, individuals and organizations are banned from using the internet to introduce, advertise, and trade endangered wildlife on e-commerce websites and e-commerce trading floor. Prohibited species include those listed in Appendix I of CITES and Decree 160 that originate in the wild.

Violators shall be fined from 70 million to 100 million VND (\$3,100 to \$4,500 USD) according to Article 50 of Decree 158/2013/ND-CP on the penalties for administrative violations pertaining to culture, sports, tourism, and advertising.

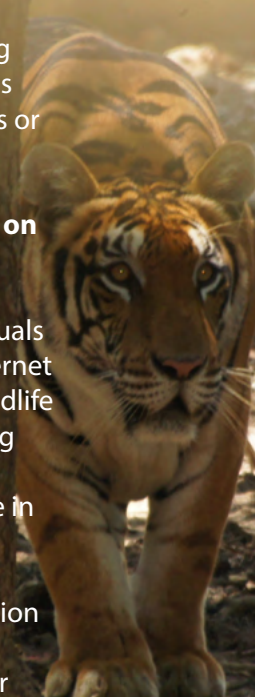
Case study

The Phi Long Traditional Medicine Company at 417 Phan Van Tri, Ward 1, Go Vap District, Ho Chi Minh City is reportedly openly advertising tiger bone wine and tiger bone traditional medicine on its website. Efforts to secure compliance from the company have failed. The company's advertisements on e-commerce websites are in direct violation of the law and subject to punishment under Decree 158/2013/ND-CP. Moreover, the sale of products containing tiger parts or derivatives is a criminal offense under the Penal Code.

Expectations of law enforcement:

- Check the content of the website and collect evidence of the e-commerce law violation;
- Conduct an inspection of the company to identify any illegal products containing tiger parts or derivatives, and prosecute the owner if criminal violations are discovered;
- Require the company to remove all illegal advertising from the internet;
- Apply a punishment accordingly, which will act as a warning for any other companies that engage in the trade and advertisement of species that are prohibited for commercial trade. This action will send the message that enforcement agencies will aggressively pursue and punish violators in accordance with the law.

Success in combatting wildlife trade starts with setting examples.



CRIME LOG

Ba Ria Vung Tau

On June 25, ENV received a report from a member of the public concerning a macaque being kept in a shop in the city of Vung Tau. ENV transferred the information to the Vung Tau Forest Protection Department (FPD), resulting in the confiscation and later release of the macaque into a local forest (Case ref. 8584/ENV).

Bac Lieu

The Bac Lieu Fisheries Department confiscated a green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) from a temple on April 20 following a report from a concerned member of the public to ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline. The turtle was later released (Case ref. 8330/ENV).

Binh Duong

Two macaques that were being kept in a private residence in Binh Duong were confiscated and released to the Vinh Cuu Culture and Nature Reserve after the violation was reported through ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline by a member of the public in early August (Case ref. 8742/ENV).

Binh Thuan

On April 8, a green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) that was being kept at a restaurant in Binh Thuan province was confiscated by Binh Thuan Environmental Police (EP) and released back into the ocean. The confiscation and

release was made possible by a member of the public who reported the crime to ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline (Case ref. 8158/ENV).

Binh Phuoc

On May 13, Bu Gia Map District Police confiscated a juvenile yellow-cheeked gibbon (*Nomascus gabriellae*) from a private residence following a report from a member of the public to ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline. After confiscation, the gibbon was transferred to the Bu Gia Map National Park's rescue center (Case ref. 8389/ENV).

Da Nang

On March 30, Son Tra District FPD arrested five hunters in the Son Tra Nature Reserve and confiscated three dead red-shanked douc langurs (*Pygathrix nemaeus*). The subjects will soon be prosecuted.

Thanks to a timely report to ENV from a member of the public, 20 Malayan snail-eating turtles (*Malayemys subtrijuga*) that were being sold at a market in the city of Da Nang were confiscated by Da Nang City FPD and transferred to the Turtle Conservation Center at Cuc Phuong National Park (Case ref. 8639/ENV).

In August 2015, the Anti-Smuggling Police of the Ministry of Public Security, in cooperation with Anti-Smuggling Bureau of General Customs officers,



Some of the ivory and rhino horns confiscated in Da Nang during several major seizures in August

confiscated nearly four tons of ivory, over four tons of pangolin scales, and 142 kg of rhino horn in three separate incidents involving sea containers that had arrived at a port in Da Nang.

Dien Bien

On February 16, following a report from the public, Nam Po District FPD and district police searched a private residence and confiscated one Malayan sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*) cub. The subject had purchased the bear from a hunter and was fined 40 million VND (\$1,810 USD). The bear was transferred to the Tam Dao Bear Sanctuary in April 2015 (Case ref. 8165).



Photo: Nam Po FPD

Dong Nai

On May 26, a hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*) was confiscated from a seafood shop by Dong Nai Environmental Police and transferred to Nui Chua National Park. The case was initially reported by a member of the public to ENV through the Wildlife Crime Hotline. (Case ref. 8423/ENV).

Following a report from a member of the public to ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline, Xuan Loc District FPD confiscated 15 squirrels from a shop and released them into a local forest (Case ref. 8783/ENV).

Thanks to reports from the public to ENV, a total of four macaques were confiscated in three separate incidents in Dong Nai province by FPDs in Dinh Quan, Thong Nhat, and Xuan Loc districts (Case ref. 8644, 8727, 8766, 8767/ENV).

"Buying and selling wild animals and their parts is a CRIME."

Dong Thap

On April 21, ENV received a report from a member of the public about a loris being advertised for sale on the internet by a subject in Dong Thap province. ENV worked with Dong Thap EP and FPD to execute a "sting" operation, which resulted in the confiscation of the loris and five raptors. All six animals were later released to the Tram Chim National Park and the subject was fined 15 million VND (\$750 USD) (Case ref. 8341/ENV).

Ha Noi

On April 10, Hanoi EP, Bac Tu Liem District Police, and Dong Ngac Ward Police stopped a motorbike and confiscated 13 frozen Sunda pangolins (*Manis javanica*). The subject had been arrested once in the past for trading wildlife. This time, the subject was prosecuted (Case ref. 8206/ENV).

On April 16, Noi Bai Customs inspected two packages that were sent via air from France to Vietnam and found 4.85 kg of rhino horn and 60.56 kg of elephant ivory (18 pieces). The owner of the goods has not been identified (Case ref. 8324/ENV).

After receiving a tip about pangolin trafficking from ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline, National Environmental Police Unit No. 3 organized surveillance and successfully caught the subject in his vehicle in Phu Xuyen District, Hanoi. Thirty-six live pangolins were confiscated and transferred to a rescue center in Hanoi. Two people have been arrested in this case and prosecution is currently pending (Case ref. 5410/ENV).

During a routine inspection of Bao Son Theme Park, ENV inspectors discovered a hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) in the park's aquarium. After transferring the information to the Hanoi Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), the marine turtle was confiscated by the Hanoi Fisheries Department on June 15 and released into the Hai Phong sea. The park was fined 40 million VND (\$1,810 USD) for this violation (Case ref. 3199/ENV).

Enforcement Note: Private zoos and other establishments keeping wildlife for educational purposes must have permits of legal origin for each individual and every species that they keep. Animals may only be obtained through legal sources. Animals being kept without clear records of legal origin will be confiscated in accordance with the law.

Thanks to a tip to ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline about a turtle advertisement on Facebook, ENV organized a "sting" operation with the Ha Dong EP in July, resulting in the successful seizure of 44 turtles at the residence of the trader. Among the 44 confiscated turtles were eight

critically endangered Indochinese box turtles (*Coura galbinifrons*). The turtles were transferred to the Soc Son Rescue Center and the subject is currently facing prosecution (Case ref. 7594/ENV).

On July 13, after receiving a report from an ENV volunteer about three lorises that were being advertised for sale on Facebook, ENV coordinated a “sting” operation with the Hanoi EP. Hours later, all three lorises were confiscated and transferred to the Soc Son Rescue Center (Case ref. 8638/ENV).

On July 30, thanks to information reported to ENV by a volunteer, Hanoi EP confiscated a whole Malayan sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*) that was being soaked in a vat of wine at a restaurant in Hanoi. The bear was subsequently destroyed by authorities (Case ref. 8648/ENV).



Photo: Soc Son Rescue Center

A bear confiscated from a restaurant in Hanoi where it was being kept in a vat of wine was destroyed by Environmental Police

Enforcement Note: It is a criminal violation to sell wine that contains bear parts. Restaurant and business owners selling bear paw (or whole bear) wine are subject to prosecution under the law. It is also a requirement that the bear products be immediately confiscated and disposed of in accordance with the law.

Hai Duong

On August 11, Hai Duong Provincial Police and FPD stopped a car in Tu Ky District and confiscated 85 live pangolins. During the stop, the police had to forcibly gain access to the vehicle because the owner refused to open the vehicle door. In addition to live pangolins, authorities discovered fake registration plates and fake government registration information. The pangolins were subsequently transferred to Soc Son Rescue Center in Hanoi. The driver faces prosecution (Case ref. 8867/ENV).

Hai Phong

On April 8, Hai Phong Economic Police confiscated 52 pangolins from a car that was travelling from Thai

Binh to Mong Cai City. The car was displaying false registration plates. Hai Phong economic police had been investigating this case for a long time. When police received information that the subject was travelling to Mong Cai, they organized a traffic stop and the two suspects were arrested following the discovery of the pangolins (Case ref. 8204/ENV).

Ha Tinh

Following the identification of a suspect who was advertising the sale of pangolin scales on his Facebook account, ENV worked with Huong Khe District Police and the FPD to address the case, resulting in the removal of the advertisements and the issuance of a 1.5 million VND (\$68 USD) fine (Case ref. 8494/ENV).

On May 14, authorities confiscated 36 Sunda pangolins (*Manis javanica*) and 70 clouded monitor lizards (*Varanus bengalensis*) from a vehicle in Ha Tinh province. The seizure was a result of cooperation between National Environmental Police Team 6 and local police. All 36 pangolins and a number of the lizards reportedly died. The deceased animals were incinerated (Case ref. 8399/ENV).

Hoa Binh

On May 8, Lac Thuy District Police confiscated 43 Sunda pangolins (*Manis javanica*) thanks to a tip from a member of the public. However, according to local authorities all subjects escaped. The live pangolins were transferred to the Small Carnivore and Pangolin Conservation Program at Cuc Phuong National Park. Thirty five of these pangolins were later released in June to Cat Tien National Park by Saving Vietnam's Wildlife (Case ref. 8393/ENV).

On June 4, Hoa Binh Traffic Police confiscated one impressed tortoise (*Manouria impressa*) and four four-eyed turtles (*Sacalia quadriocellata*), which were being transported by motorbike. The subject received an administrative punishment of 3 million VND (\$135 USD) (Case ref. 8476/ENV).

Ho Chi Minh City

On April 1, Ho Chi Minh City EP confiscated a loris from a coffee shop following a report by a member of the public to the ENV Wildlife Crime Hotline. The loris was later transferred to a rescue center (Case ref. 8142/ENV).

On June 29, Customs at Tan Son Nhat International Airport discovered two statues made of African elephant ivory (*Loxodonta africana*) in a suspicious package that arrived from France. Customs has thus far

“If you are not part of the solution, you may be part of the problem.”

been unable to identify the owner of the goods (Case ref. 8601).

On August 15, Customs at Tan Son Nhat International Airport searched a suspicious package arriving from Nigeria and found 42.2 kg of African pangolin (*Manis tricuspis*) scales (Case ref.8781/ENV).

In 2010, at a shop in Ho Chi Minh City, ENV discovered a number of wine jars that contained wildlife and wildlife products including fishing cats (*Prionailurus viverrinus*), leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*), king cobras (*Ophiophagus Hannah*), and bear paws. More than five years later, following countless efforts to get the illegal contraband confiscated, Ho Chi Minh EP confiscated the wine jars in June 2015. The owner of the shop claimed to have high-ranking friends in the government who were protecting him, which may help explain the five-year delay of a successful enforcement response to this criminal violation (Case ref. 2890/ENV).

Enforcement Note: *No one is above the law. ENV is particularly interested in pursuing cases where business owners incorrectly think that their friends in high places will exclude them from having to follow the same laws that apply to all other citizens. Give us your difficult cases and ENV will give our best effort to secure the compliance of these business establishments.*

On July 10, a member of the public contacted ENV and requested to voluntarily transfer an otter to a rescue center. Ho Chi Minh City FPD was notified, and they coordinated a successful transfer to the Cu Chi Rescue Center (Case ref.8645/ENV).

REPORT CORRUPTION

If you are aware of authorities accepting money or gifts from individuals involved in wildlife trade or wildlife farming, please report the incident to the National Anti-corruption Department at

080 48 228

On July 23, ENV received a tip about a wildlife trader operating from his home in Ho Chi Minh City. Following the transfer of the reported information to the HCMC FPD, forest rangers and local police raided the subject's home and confiscated 22 large yellow-headed temple turtles (*Hieremys annandalii*). The subject was fined 40 million VND (\$1,800 USD) (Case ref. 8687/ENV).

Ho Chi Minh City Environmental Police's outstanding success in a series of "sting" operations

ENV coordinated a number of "sting" operations with Ho Chi Minh EP following reports to the ENV Wildlife Crime Hotline about internet posts advertising the sale of protected wildlife. The details of some of these cases are below:

On April 8, two leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*) were confiscated and transferred to Cu Chi Rescue Center (Case ref. 7993/ENV).

On April 23, two pygmy lorises (*Nycticebus pygmaeus*), 11 Asian stripe-necked leaf turtles (*Cyclemys pulchristriata*), two elongated tortoises (*Indotestudo elongata*), one black marsh turtle (*Siebenrockiella crassicolis*), and one Burmese python (*Python molurus*) were confiscated from a subject who advertised many different wildlife species on his Facebook account (Case ref. 8354/ENV).

On May 19, an otter was confiscated from a man who advertised the sale of the animal on his Facebook account. The subject was later arrested (Case ref. 8384/ENV).

On June 24, a loris that was being advertised for sale on Facebook was confiscated (Case ref. 8499/ENV).



On July 7, a loris that was being advertised for sale on Facebook was confiscated and then transferred to the Dao Tien Rescue Center in Cat Tien National Park. (Case ref. 8606/ENV).

Photo: Dao Tien Rescue Center



On Aug 28, an otter that was being advertised for sale on Facebook was confiscated (Case ref. 8631/ENV).

Khanh Hoa

On April 14, ENV received information from a foreign tourist about wildlife being kept at a restaurant in Khanh Vinh district. The information was transferred to Khanh Vinh District FPD. Thanks to the quick response of forest rangers, an oriental pied hornbill (*Anthracoceros albirostris*) was confiscated from the restaurant. In 2014, ENV received a report about a hornbill at the same restaurant and the bird was subsequently confiscated (Case ref. 7257/ENV).

Enforcement Note: When authorities confiscate animals, they often do not impose any further punishment (as in the case above), which sets a bad precedent and does not help prevent future crimes. Authorities should take more aggressive measures and apply the law to its fullest extent (e.g. issuing administrative fines and revoking business licenses).

On July 2, ENV received a report about a hawksbill marine turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) being kept at a Russian restaurant in Nha Trang city. ENV immediately transferred the reported information to the Khanh Hoa Environmental Police, who confiscated and released the turtle (Case ref. 8602/ENV).

ENV received two separate reports on July 6 and July 15 about macaques being kept in a restaurant and a coffee shop respectively in Nha Trang city. Following the notification of the Nha Trang City FPD, both macaques were successfully confiscated and later released into a local forest (Case ref. 8615/8654 ENV).

Kien Giang

On June 30, during routine inspections at the Ha Tien border gate, the Ha Tien Border Police stopped and searched a car with a Cambodian registration and discovered a large quantity of ivory including 197 tusk pieces, two ivory necklaces, and five ivory bracelets, weighing a total of 398.9 kg. Authorities arrested a Vietnamese national in connection with the case (Case ref. 8605/ENV).

Lam Dong

On August 21, Provincial FPD together with local authorities confiscated meat, dried bone, and body parts belonging to five black-shanked douc langurs (*Pygathrix nigripes*) (Case ref. 8842/ENV).

Lao Cai

Thanks to tip from a member of the public, on August 13, Lao Cai City Police arrested a man carrying 106 kg of African elephant ivory (*Loxodonta africana*) on his motorbike. The smuggler faces prosecution and two other suspects connected to the case were also arrested (Case ref 8782/ENV).

Nghe An

On May 8, Nghe An Economic Police arrested a subject while he was transporting 31 rhino horns at a train station in Nghe An province. ENV linked the seizure to a major criminal network responsible for the movement of rhino horn, ivory, lion bone, and other wildlife products from Africa (Case ref. 8380/ENV).



Photo: Nghe An Economic Police

Thirty-one rhino horns seized by police in Nghe An, was one of the largest single confiscations of rhino horn to date in Vietnam

“Accept money from criminals, and you become one yourself.”

On June 12, the Con Cuong District FPD confiscated five impressed tortoises (*Manouria impressa*) from a restaurant. The tortoises were then transferred to the Wild Animal Rescue Centre at Pu Mat National Park and the subject was fined 3 million VND (\$135 USD). The case was first reported to ENV by a member of the public through the hotline (Case ref. 7972/ENV).

On August 6, ENV received a report from a member of public about a macaque being kept at a private residence. The information was transferred to the Anh Son District FPD resulting in the confiscation of a stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*). The macaque was later transferred to the Wild Animal Rescue Centre of Pu Mat National Park (Case ref. 8758/ENV).



Photo: Anh Son FPD

On August 9, Nghe An Environmental Police stopped a bus traveling from Vinh to Hanoi and confiscated 10 live pangolins. At the time of the confiscation, the owner of the wildlife was not identified. All 10 pangolins were transferred to the Cuc Phuong Small Carnivore and Pangolin Rescue Center (Case ref. 8763/ENV).

Ninh Binh

On August 22, Ninh Binh Economic Police together with the Market Management Department stopped a passenger bus on its way from Da Nang to Hanoi and confiscated seven Sunda pangolins (*Manis javanica*) weighing a combined total of 21.7 kg. Seven big-headed turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum*) belonging to the same passenger were also confiscated. Both species were placed in rescue centers in Cuc Phuong National Park. The subject is facing prosecution (Case ref. 8800/ENV).

Quang Nam

On April 17, ENV received information about a macaque being kept at a private residence. The information was immediately transferred to the Duy Xuyen District FPD, resulting in the confiscation of a stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*) that same day (Case ref. 8333/ENV).

Quang Ninh

On June 27, Uong Bi District Police and Quang Ninh Traffic Police searched a passenger bus and found 15 live Sunda pangolins (*Manis javanica*) and one frozen tiger cub. The owner of the goods is still wanted by police. The pangolins reportedly died following the seizure and all evidence was incinerated (Case ref. 8597/ENV).

Enforcement Note: Pangolins and other wildlife listed on Decree 160/2013/ND-CP cannot be auctioned off following confiscation. It is in violation of the law to do so. The best options for dealing with confiscated wildlife include transferring them to a rescue center (if alive), destroying the remains and parts or transferring to the Vietnam National Museum of Nature in Hanoi (if dead).

On August 12, Quang Ninh Customs confiscated 37 pieces of ivory weighing a total of 88 kg. The shipment was being transported on a passenger bus at the time of the seizure. The driver and his assistant were arrested for further investigation. The police are seeking the identity of the owner of the shipment (Case ref. 8778/ENV).

Quang Binh

On April 14, ENV received a report from a member of the public about an Asiatic black bear (*Selenarctos Ursus thibetanus*) in a tank of wine displayed at a restaurant in the district of Le Thuy. Following the transfer of information to Quang Binh authorities, Quang Binh EP and FPD initiated a timely response, resulting in the seizure of the bear wine. The bear was later destroyed by authorities (Case ref. 8277/ENV).

On June 1, ENV received tips about the placement of mist nets in rice fields aimed at catching birds, and a restaurant in Dong Hoi City advertising wild bird species. Dong Hoi City FPD was notified and worked quickly to ensure that the mist nets were removed from the rice fields surrounding the restaurant. FPD

“Tigers, gibbons, langurs, elephants, and many more species are following rhinos down the path of extinction. It’s up to you to stop this before it’s too late.”

also required the restaurant's owner to remove their signboard advertising wildlife (Case ref. 8458/ENV).

Enforcement Note: As of September 2015, it has been reported that the nets have been put back up in the fields, and the restaurant reportedly continues to sell wild birds to customers. If the restaurant owner continues to violate the law, local authorities should exercise aggressive measures to shut down the business, including withdrawal of the owner's business license and closure of the restaurant.

Quang Tri

On July 9, a member of the public called the ENV Wildlife Crime Hotline to report two impressed tortoises (*Manouria impressa*) that were for sale at a restaurant in Huong Hoa district. ENV immediately contacted Huong Hoa FPD, resulting in the confiscation of two turtles weighing a combined total of 3.5 kg. The tortoises were subsequently released into the forests of Vinh Linh district and the subject was fined 3 million VND (~\$150 USD) (Case ref. 8625/ENV).

Soc Trang

On May 22, ENV received information from a volunteer about a marine turtle that was being advertised for sale on the internet. Unfortunately, the subject sold the turtle for 3 million VND before ENV was able to coordinate an intervention by authorities. However, in June, after following the subject for a month, ENV received new information that the subject had another marine turtle for sale for 3.5 million VND. The information was immediately transferred to Soc Trang EP, resulting in the successful confiscation of the turtle from the subject, as well as a second marine turtle from an associate of the subject. Both turtles were released back into the ocean (Case ref. 8422/ENV).

On June 4, an ENV volunteer reported that a macaque was being advertised for sale on Facebook by a subject in Soc Trang province. The information and identity of the subject was transferred to Soc Trang FPD, resulting in the confiscation of a pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca leonina*) (Case ref. 8473/ENV).

"The best place to protect wildlife is in their habitat where they belong, before they fall into the hands of hunters and traders."



Photo: Soc Trang FPD

A pig-tailed macaque was confiscated by Soc Trang FPD and released

Son La

On April 15, a local in Son La province contacted ENV to report a pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca leonine*) being kept in captivity at a private residence. Mai Son District FPD was immediately notified and searched the site on two occasions but they were unable to find the animal. However, the authorities' persistence paid off when during their third search on July 7, the macaque was found and confiscated (Case ref. 8320/ENV).

On July 22, Sop Cop District FPD confiscated a Malayan sun bear cub (*Helarctos malayanus*) that was being transported on a motorbike. The motorbike driver initially escaped, but he later gave himself up to authorities and admitted to smuggling the bear. The case is pending prosecution. The sun bear cub was transferred to the AAF-operated Tam Dao Bear Sanctuary. (Case ref. 8684/ENV).

Tay Ninh

On May 27, four pieces of rhino horn weighing a total of 9.4 kg were seized at the Bau Da border gate while being transported by motorbike from Cambodia to Vietnam. Border authorities had received a tip from a member of the public, which led to the subsequent seizure and arrest (Case ref. 8455/ENV).



On July 9, ENV received a report about a macaque being kept at a private residence. The information was transferred to Tay Ninh Provincial FPD, resulting in the seizure of a juvenile long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*). The macaque was later released into the Nui Ba Mountain Forest in Tay Ninh (Case ref. 8629/ENV).



On August 4, ENV received a report about an otter being kept at a restaurant in Tay Ninh province. The information was transferred to the Tay Ninh FPD, resulting in the confiscation of an otter by forest rangers the following day. The otter was later released into Lo Go Xa Mat National Park in Tay Ninh (Case ref. 8745/ENV).

Thanh Hoa

On August 13, the National Environmental Police Team 5 together with the Nga Son district police stopped a vehicle on the highway and confiscated 56 live pangolins weighing a combined total of 232 kg. The driver's assistant was arrested but the driver managed to escape. The pangolins were transferred to the Small Carnivore and Pangolin Center at Cuc Phuong National Park (Case ref. 8784/ENV).

Thua Thien Hue

On April 17, a volunteer called the Wildlife Crime Hotline to report a restaurant in Hue that was keeping a live civet in their establishment. Following the transfer of information to the Hue FPD, the civet was confiscated. The restaurant in question has a long record of selling wildlife and breaking the law (Case ref. 2432/ENV).

On May 26, an ENV volunteer in Hue used the Wildlife Crime Hotline to report a macaque that was being kept at a local pagoda. The information was immediately transferred to the Hue FPD. Although the case was sensitive in nature, Hue FPD applied the law accordingly and confiscated the macaque. The macaque was later released into the Phong Dien Nature Reserve (Case ref. 8444/ENV).

Thai Binh

On April 3, Thai Binh Traffic Police stopped a passenger bus travelling from Quang Ninh to Vinh City in Nghe An province and discovered bags containing 84.5 kg of giant pangolin scales (*Manis gigantea*) in the luggage compartment. The bus driver was fined 450 million VND (~\$20,300 USD), but the owner of the scales has not yet been identified. After ENV informed the Thai Binh People Committee about the case and pertinent legal requirements, the evidence was transferred to the Vietnam Forestry Museum (Case ref. 8148/ENV).

Thai Nguyen

On April 26, ENV received information from a member of the public about several leopard cats being advertised for sale on Facebook by a subject in Thai Nguyen province. The subject was identified by ENV and the information was transferred to the Thai Nguyen EP, resulting in the confiscation of four leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*). The Facebook link was subsequently removed and the subject was fined 15 million VND (~USD \$680) (Case ref. 8363/ENV).



Photo: Vo Nhai District FPD

Tuyen Quang

On April 15, Na Hang District FPD confiscated a rhesus macaque (*Macaca mulatta*) from a private residence after being informed about the animal from ENV, who

“The illegal wildlife trade is mainly run by organized criminal networks, some of which are also involved in the drug trade and human trafficking.”

were in turn informed by a member of the public. The owner was reportedly fined for illegally keeping an animal without legal origin (*Case ref. 8308/ENV*).

On June 11, following information obtained from a report to the ENV Wildlife Crime Hotline, Yen Son District FPD confiscated two Chinese cobras (*Naja atra*) and one keeled box turtle (*Cuora mouhotii*) from a private residence. The animals were subsequently released and the subject was fined 3 million VND (\$135 USD) (*Case ref. 8490/ENV*).

Vinh Long

On July 7, Vinh Long EP, working in cooperation with the FPD, confiscated a leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*) that was being advertised for sale on Facebook. The confiscation followed a report to ENV by a member of the public and a “sting” operation that was set up to both identify the seller and give enforcement officers the opportunity to catch the seller in possession of the leopard cat (*Case ref. 8616/ENV*).

Crime Statistics

From January to August, ENV’s Wildlife Crime Unit documented a total of 988 new cases, averaging approximately four new cases per day.

Note: an individual case may involve multiple violations.

Table 1: Number of new cases from January to August 2015.

Month	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Total
Number of new cases	73	73	273	120	106	101	135	107	988

Table 2: Number of violations organized by type of violation from January to August 2015.

Type of Violation	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Total
Smuggling and trade	47	40	44	34	33	21	139	87	445
Selling or advertising	26	38	102	424	102	165	204	171	1232
Possession	67	40	62	53	44	42	38	37	383
Hunting	3	1	2	4	1	17	1	9	38
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total number of violations	143	119	210	515	180	245	382	304	2098



Photo: Son Tra Border Guard

A marine turtle released back into the sea in Da Nang after being confiscated by the Son Tra border patrol

REPORT WILDLIFE CRIME TO

1800 1522

hotline@fpt.vn

Android App: ENV - Report Wildlife Crime



THE ENV WILDLIFE CRIME UNIT

ENV's Wildlife Crime Unit (WCU) was established in 2005 to encourage greater public involvement in efforts to combat illegal wildlife trade, and to strengthen the effectiveness of front line law enforcement agencies through support and cooperation, and facilitating public reporting of crimes.

The WCU administers a national toll-free hotline for reporting wildlife crimes. Information reported through the hotline is passed on to the appropriate authorities. ENV then works closely with law enforcement agencies, tracking each case through to conclusion, and documenting the results on ENV's Wildlife Crime Incident Tracking System. Over 8,400 cases have been recorded since the WCU was established in 2005.

The main aims of ENV's Wildlife Crime Unit are to:

- Encourage public participation in efforts to stop the illegal trade of wildlife
- Provide support to law enforcement agencies tasked with combating wildlife crime
- Document crimes and work with authorities to identify and address factors that contribute to wildlife crime
- Provide law enforcement agents with timely alerts containing intelligence and analysis relating to criminal activities

ENV's efforts to combat illegal hunting and trade of wildlife are made possible thanks to the generous support of the following partners:

Amnéville Zoo

Awely, Wildlife and People

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

Columbus Zoo and Aquarium

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)

Four Paws

Freeland Foundation (ARREST Program)

Houston Zoo

Humane Society International (HSI) of Australia

International Rhino Foundation (IRF)

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

Save the Rhinos International (SRI)

The Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics

The Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

World Animal Protection

ENV would also like to thank our individual supporters from all over the world, who have contributed to our efforts by providing financial support, giving critical technical assistance, or volunteering their time helping protect endangered wildlife.

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