



CRIME FIGHTERS

ENV's crime fighters had another amazing month on the front lines of national efforts to combat wildlife crime.

Some notable successes this month include the seizure of two Southern buff-cheeked gibbons (*Nomascus gabriellae*), seven pig-tailed macaques (*Macaca leonine*), and a long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*) from a well-known local eco-tourism area in Bac Lieu province. The case began in August 2017 with a public report to ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline. After four years of efforts to get the animals confiscated – all while the owner sought legal papers (for animals he purchased illegally) – the seizure finally occurred, and the macaques and gibbons were transferred to Cat Tien National Park Rescue Center.

In October, ENV facilitated the first seizure of a caracal (*Caracal caracal*) in Vietnam from a resident's home in Hanoi, where it was being kept as a pet. This wild cat species is endemic to Africa, the Middle East, and southwest Asia.

A number of successes in online cases were also achieved during the month of October.

In one case, ENV's crime fighters succeeded in confiscating a loris in a cooperative operation with police in Thai Nguyen province after the subject advertised the animal for sale on Facebook. Meanwhile, in another online advertising case in Gia Lai province, the subject advertised tiger cubs, rhino horn, live tortoises, pangolin scales, and other wildlife online. After the case was reported to ENV through the ENV Wildlife Crime Hotline, police raided the subject's home and confiscated suspected leopard claws, bear bile, and a range of other wildlife.

WILDLIFE CRIME at a glance

This month

259 Number of new cases this month, comprised of
660 individual violations

This year

1,892 Hotline cases reported so far in 2021

10.8 Average number of hotline cases daily

186 Internet crime cases reported this month, comprised of
551 individual violations

1,990 Internet crime cases reported so far this year, comprised of
6,689 individual violations

***95%** Current success rate on internet crime cases

***51.5%** Overall success rate on all cases in 2021 so far

538 Total number of live animals confiscated and transferred this year

*Success rates include some cases reported prior to the reporting period that resulted in successful outcomes during the present period.

Big picture

21,240 wildlife crime cases comprised of
57,413 violations have been logged by ENV

Online markets SHUT DOWN

Efforts to shut down online markets in October continued to yield results, with **34 wildlife selling groups** comprised of **121,751 members** shut down during the month. These groups ranged from bird trading groups with more than 10,000 members, to groups specializing in ivory products, reptiles, and small mammals. The largest groups to be shut down this month included a small carnivore selling group, which had **23,409 members**, and a francolin selling group, which totaled **17,111 members**.

ENV is especially grateful to our partners Facebook, Google, Zalo, TikTok, and other major online platforms for their support in combatting online wildlife crime in Vietnam.



ENGAGING THE PUBLIC



New recruitment film FOR VOLUNTEERS

ENV released a **new volunteer recruitment film** aimed at bolstering the ranks of ENV's 10,000 member-strong volunteer force, called the ENV Wildlife Protection Network. Covering 59 of 63 provinces, ENV volunteers are tasked with monitoring business establishments to ensure compliance with wildlife protection laws following an intervention by ENV or law enforcement. This means checking to see if violations that were previously reported to ENV still remain, and reporting the results of the monitoring back to ENV for action.

ENV volunteers also form part of groups known as "ENV outposts" in major cities to carry out organized monthly monitoring of businesses, host awareness events, and carry out other engagement activities.

ENV anxiously awaits an end to the Covid-19 pandemic so that the recruitment team can return to the provinces and actively enlist new members.

Note: Only a portion of the 10,000 volunteers in ENV's Wildlife Protection Network are active, and thus continued recruitment is necessary to maintain a strong core force of active volunteers in critical cities and regions of the country.

Never Again PSA re-released: Reminds public about links between WILDLIFE AND ZOO NOTIC DISEASES

In October, ENV re-released our "**Never Again**" PSA, which is ENV's second PSA addressing the connection between zoonotic diseases and wildlife. The film portrays life in Vietnam during the initial Covid-19 outbreak, and encourages the public to take action to ensure another pandemic is never again possible.

Since the PSA first aired in November 2020, it has been broadcast on 55 channels in provinces across Vietnam.

Pangolin deterrence

The latest deterrence film produced by ENV features major pangolin seizures and their resulting prosecutions, clearly demonstrating that the risks of arrest and imprisonment for pangolin traffickers are real.

The film was originally developed for airing on ENV's YouTube and other viral channels, although it will soon also be aired on selected popular TV channels and be reaching even larger audiences. See the English subtitled version here:

[Pangolin Deterrence Film](#)



NEW English website LAUNCHED

After more than a year in design, ENV finally launched its revised English website. The new site, found at <https://env4wildlife.org/>, highlights important events and the latest films and reports on its home page, while also including a library of all of ENV's films, reports, and other publications, and an English language wildlife protection law library.

The latest inclusion to the new site is [an online reporting mechanism](#) to report wildlife crimes in Vietnam. With this, users can complete a simple form and submit it for immediate (same day) review by ENV's Wildlife Crime Unit on Mondays to Fridays.

VIRAL ADVERTS this month

ENV's online campaign continues to urge the public not to consume wildlife and to avoid the risks of criminal prosecution

*Advert 1: Prohibited products!
Trading tiger and bear claws and teeth is against the law and can be punished by up to 5 years in prison!*

*Advert 2: Macaques are not pets!
Sad, haunting eyes longing for freedom...*





MEANINGFUL IMPACTS

Strengthening law and policy

ENV helps put more bad guys **IN JAIL**

On September 28, an online ivory and bear product trader in Dak Lak was sentenced to 18 months in prison, following the seizure of 2.56 kg of ivory and several bear gall bladders from his home in a police raid in August 2020. The case was initially reported to ENV by a member of the public, where it was determined that more than 2,500 ivory products were advertised on the subject's Facebook, in addition to a small quantity of rhino horn. ENV prepared an evidence package for Dak Lak authorities, profiling the subject and detailing evidence of his crimes, along with the applicable legal references to his violations.

ENV is pleased with the results in this case, as online traders are particularly difficult to pursue – thus news of a successful arrest followed by a successful prosecution is already being used to deter others from similar crimes.



Another important prosecution this month involved the conviction and sentencing of a tier-2 wildlife trafficker in Hanoi. In a collaborative operation with police that took more than three months to develop, the man and his accomplices were arrested in May 2021 with a live Asiatic black bear, six bear paws, a frozen tiger, and other wildlife.

On October 30, he was convicted by a Hanoi court and sentenced to 3.5 years in prison and fined VND 50,000,000. The two other men arrested were also convicted, but each received a suspended sentence.





TIGER FARMS in Vietnam

The breeding of tigers in captivity in Vietnam is commonly referred to as “tiger farming.” In reality, there are no commercial farms breeding tigers in Vietnam.

There are 18 privately-owned licensed tiger facilities in Vietnam. Of these 18, three are closed to the public and the remainder are zoos. ENV has been inspecting tiger facilities on an annual basis since 2009, including both joint inspections with local authorities and unannounced inspections, conducted covertly. Through 12 years of monitoring and inspections, ENV has thoroughly profiled each facility and investigated the possibility of tiger trade occurring at every one.

Of the 18 facilities keeping tigers, four facilities have been directly linked to tiger trafficking in the past, with one of these still actively laundering tigers. ENV is presently working to shut down this facility, while being actively engaged in shutting down two more privately-owned zoos with past history of criminal activity involving the sale of tiger cubs, though progress has been delayed due to Covid-19.

ENV was successful at putting a spotlight on the issue within the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in 2019, and ensuring that addressing the tiger breeding issue in Vietnam was also included in the Prime Minister’s 2020 decree on tackling wildlife trafficking in response to Covid-19. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has delayed the government effort aimed at evaluating the conservation value of a number of facilities keeping tigers – some of which have no conservation value at all.

While the known trade of tigers from one facility and a leakage of captive-born cubs from a few others remain points of concern, the trade of tigers sourced from Vietnam’s licensed facilities is negligible compared to the illegal trafficking of tigers sourced from Laos and beyond, as illustrated by this past summer’s seizure of 24 live tigers in Nghe An and Ha Tinh provinces.



However, the problem with legal facilities is not the leakage of tigers, but rather the potential for growth of captive tiger populations at licensed facilities where populations, unchecked, could expand rapidly and increase the likelihood that surplus tigers would end up in the trade. For this reason, ENV has proposed a new decree on the management of non-commercial facilities that will regulate the breeding of tigers and other endangered species, ensuring that such breeding is under tight regulatory control and will directly benefit conservation, including education, research, or conservation breeding objectives.

In October 2021, ENV's Director of Policy & Legislation took ENV's position on captive tiger management to the airwaves in an interview on the VTV1 evening news.



GROWING CONCERN over development of **exotic species pet trade** in Vietnam

Over the past few years, ENV's Wildlife Crime Unit has received a steady increase in online cases involving exotic species being advertised and possessed. A rapid **assessment of the trade in exotic species in Vietnam examined cases occurring in only the first half of 2021**. Over this period alone, a total of 573 animals in 75 cases were reported to ENV (excluding about 4,000 parakeets reported in a single case). Reptiles comprised 60% of the cases, while small mammals comprised 27%. Birds made up 12% of the cases.

Threats posed by exotic species trade

- Risk of zoonotic disease transmission
- Promotes demand and illegal trade of some endangered species
- Risks to native biodiversity and ecosystems associated with the release and introduction of non-native species in Vietnam

ENV has sounded the alarm with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), which is responsible for wildlife, including control over non-native species. At issue is the legality of the growing exotic pet trade, and in some cases, the smuggling of exotic species into Vietnam. New regulations are required to address issues such as the farming of non-native species, allowances for private pet breeders, and tighter controls over the legal versus illegal trade of exotics.

ENV's concern is that if left unchecked, the trade of exotic species will grow substantially, to the point where it is beyond the capacity of authorities to control.





BEAR COUNTDOWN

Bear numbers October 31, 2021

At the end of October, **324 bears** remained on **105 bile farms** in Vietnam – a **92% reduction** from the more than 4,300 bears in captivity in 2005 when the government initiated efforts to phase out bear farming.

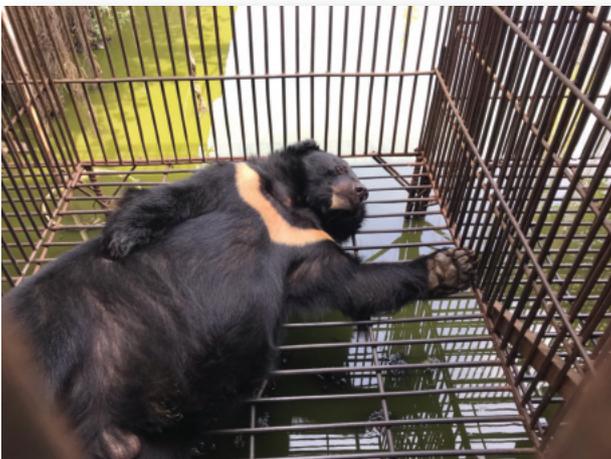
Since 2005, ENV has led a multifaceted campaign to bring an end to bear farming in Vietnam that has yielded substantial progress over time. Successes include strengthening laws to protect bears, actively working with police to address bear crime, engaging bear farmers to turn over captive bears, and partnering with celebrities and the public to reduce consumer demand and keep the issue a national priority.

Three more bile bears transferred

While Covid-19 has obstructed efforts to transfer bears from bile farms where owners have expressed interest in giving them up, in October, ENV was pleased to see three more bile bears transferred from Long An province to the Free the Bears sanctuary in Dong Nai.

The owner initially contacted ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline in September 2020 asking for help in transferring the remaining bears from his farm in Long An. ENV contacted Free the Bears, and after more than a year of delays resulting from Covid-19, all three bears finally left their bile cages to live out the remainder of their lives in a spacious sanctuary.

Psyops 2021



Bear farmers will be more likely to turn over their bears when faced with external pressure to give up bear bile farming from authorities, but also pressure from the public. Since 2011, ENV has been carrying out its “Psyops campaign” aimed at applying such pressure upon bear bile farmers to give up bile bears.

Under the campaign, each month ENV sends a postcard conveying a different message to every bear bile farmer in the country. More than 42,000 postcards have been mailed to farmers since the campaign began and hundreds of bear bile farmers have called it quits.

Examples of Psyops postcards sent to bile farmers:

Postcard 1 (above): *People are struggling with the effects of self-isolation and quarantine in Covid-19 times.*

Meanwhile, caged bears have been living in extreme isolation their whole lives.

Do the right thing!

Postcard 2 (right): *"I keep bears for conservation, not for selling!" (front text)*

Keeping bears in cages and selling bear products is illegal and cruel! Don't use "protecting and caring for bears" as an excuse for this horrendous practice! (back text)



Covid-19 delays: A building storm



While Vietnam prepares to lift restrictions on travel and make an effort to restore normalcy after almost two years of disruption caused by Covid-19, ENV is bracing for a mountain of work that has built up over this same period and been delayed by the Covid-19 outbreak. Crime reduction campaigns, prosecution training workshops, targeted law enforcement operations, recruitment of volunteers, and virtually dozens of other activities are pending ENV's ability to get back into the field.

Watch out – this newsletter might just turn into a full dissertation once the Covid-19 shackles are removed.

Throwback

Frozen tiger cubs Saturday Story – ENV's most successful Facebook

Posted in August 2019 following the seizure of frozen tiger cubs, this "Saturday Story" post – written by a member of ENV's Communications and Public Awareness Department – generated a reach of 1,065,574 Facebook users through its 5,318 shares and 37,261 likes and comments, setting an as-yet unbroken record for the most successful post to date. What's more, during that month alone, ENV's Facebook page gained more than 8,000 followers – another record for ENV's Vietnamese Facebook page. See the story below:



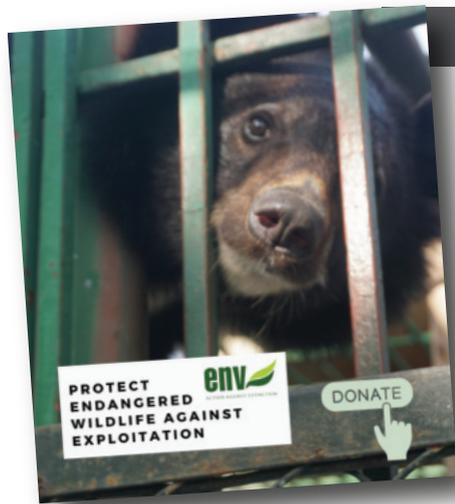
Frozen tiger cubs seized in one of many law enforcement actions targeting tiger traders

"Mommy, I was frozen today.

Having seen my friends killed, frozen, and purchased, finally, it was my turn. In that moment, I wished humans would stop using tiger bone and putting us in alcohol. If they did not have these ridiculous beliefs, I could feel proud to be a tiger. Instead, we are a commodity... how pitiful to be a tiger.

Killed, disemboweled, and frozen. I don't know what my 'price' is, but it's certainly high enough for humans to disregard our life. Ruthlessly, the knife goes in, a life is over, and a product is advertised online. When they killed us, we fought and screamed in pain, but they didn't care.

However, if I were to be born again, I'd still want to be a tiger to give humans one more chance to protect us."



We need your support

Help ENV protect endangered wildlife against exploitation

In preparation for 2022's being a better year for wildlife, we have launched our latest campaign on **GlobalGiving** with the goal of protecting endangered animals from exploitation by humans. Covid-19 has made this fight more challenging, but ENV is unwavering in its mission thanks to the continued generosity of our supporters.

Help ENV protect wildlife by supporting our efforts to combat wildlife crime, reduce consumer demand, and establish our vision for a Vietnam where wildlife is free of illegal exploitation and allowed to persevere and thrive in nature.

KEY links

-  **First Wildlife Crime Bulletin of 2021:** A thorough look at progress and challenges to end wildlife trafficking in Vietnam
-  **Wildlife Law Guidance 2021:** A comprehensive guide for law enforcement on the application of wildlife protection laws in Vietnam
-  **Prosecution Report 2020:** Vietnam is tough on wildlife criminals!
-  **Law Enforcement Responsiveness Report 2020:** A proactive attitude to publicly reported crimes
-  **Exotic Species Report:** Growing concern over development of exotic species pet trade in Vietnam
-  **Penal Code PSA:** Don't do it - wildlife crime is not worth the risk!
-  **Tiger King PSA:** Famous comedians in Vietnam urge the public to protect the world's remaining tigers by avoiding consumption and use of tiger products
-  **Rhino PSA:** Children know the score on rhino poaching

EDUCATION FOR NATURE – VIETNAM

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 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. ENV also employs creative and innovative strategies to influence public attitudes and reduce demand for wildlife trade products.

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