

## Auctioning Endangered Wildlife Encourages Demand and Compromises Enforcement

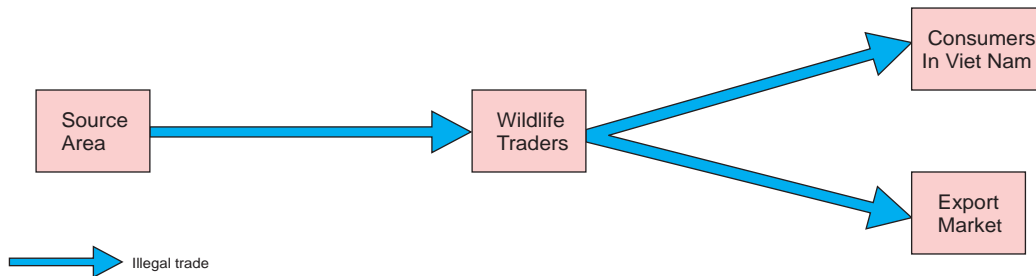
Auctioning off endangered wildlife that has been confiscated by the authorities contributes to the ongoing illegal trade and species extinction. This practice, which has been going on for years, reduces provincial authorities to the middlemen in the wildlife trade, taxing but not stopping smugglers, and stimulating consumer demand. Those tasked with wildlife protection should be actively working to protect wildlife in nature, to take down smugglers and illegal traders, and to gain control over this illegal business that is pushing the region's most endangered wildlife to the very edge of extinction.

This brief discussion examines the implications of the current practice of auctioning wildlife, including following the "money trail" that links consumers to hunters.



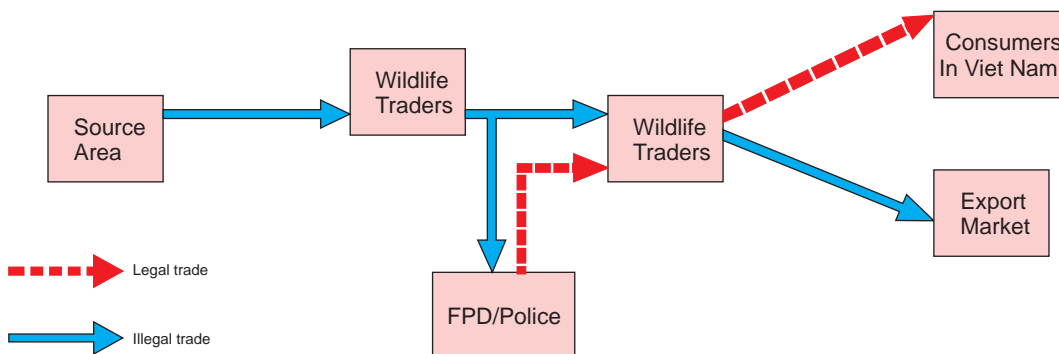
### Example 1: Normal trade flow

This diagram illustrates the flow of illegal trade when traders successfully evade authorities.



### Example 2: Trade flow with confiscation followed by auction of animals

In this second diagram, the smugglers are caught and the wildlife is confiscated, only to be auctioned off back into the trade.



Examine closely the flow the illegal wildlife. As you can see, confiscation by local authorities does not break the trade chain. In effect, the auctioned wildlife becomes "legal" and continues onward to consumers.

Does this practice help reduce the illegal trade of wildlife? In fact, some people, including many forest rangers and law enforcement officers, argue that the role of local authorities in auctioning off confiscated wildlife actually contributes to the ongoing illegal trade by providing a means by which wildlife that was hunted illegally can then be legally traded.

The role of the authorities in the trade flow is much like the role of a middleman in the illegal trade, except that the wildlife becomes “legal” as it passes through the authorities. The trade chain is interrupted, but not severed.

If the confiscated contraband were heroin, auctioning off the illegal drugs would not be an option. In the case of wildlife, confiscations and auctions amount to little more than a “tax” on the illegal trade, but do little to stop it.

If the Forest Protection Department is merely a means to collect revenue for the government coffers, this practice makes sense. However, if the responsibility of the agency is to protect wildlife and combat the illegal trade, serving as a middleman in the trade has little impact in stopping trade. Rather, this practice is contributing to the loss of our endangered wildlife by stimulating demand in illegal products, and is inherently in conflict with the Forest Protection Department's responsibility to protect Vietnam's forest and wildlife.

### International implications: Protected wildlife exported in violation of the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

Auctioned wildlife may be purchased by traders who then smuggle it across the border into China in violation of our CITES treaty obligations requiring permits from the central government to export listed species.

Do authorities have any responsibility to prevent wildlife that is auctioned off from then being illegally smuggled out of Vietnam in violation of our international treaty commitments?

In the past two years, more than 33 tons of pangolins have been seized and sold by authorities in Vietnam. Where are these pangolins now? There are no farms with legal holdings of pangolins.

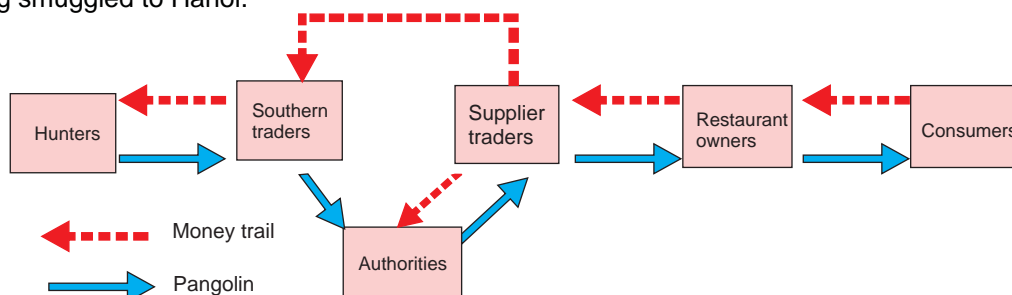
Other trade species that are commonly auctioned off but require export permits under CITES include monitor lizards, cobras, pythons, and 19 species of native tortoises and freshwater turtles.

### The money trail: Does auctioning off wildlife really directly contribute to the illegal wildlife trade?

Imagine that a pangolin is hunted from the forest in U Minh Thuong National Park in Kien Giang province in southern Vietnam. This pangolin is transported all the way to a Hanoi restaurant where a patron orders and eats it. The pangolin costs the restaurant patron about 2.2 to 2.5 million VND per kilogram. The restaurant owner is paid and in turn, orders more pangolins from his supplier, who then contacts his sources in the south, and orders another shipment to be delivered to Hanoi. The southern trader contacts hunters in Kien Giang and offers between 1.4 to 1.6 million VND per kilogram for any pangolins they can supply.

### Example 3 : The money trail interrupted by confiscation and auctioning

If we take the same pangolin scenario but this time the authorities in one province confiscate the shipment of pangolins being smuggled to Hanoi.



Pangolins are commonly found on the menu at restaurants that cater to wildlife consumers. Restaurant patrons support hunting and trade by buying illegal products such as pangolins and other wildlife.



Photo by Leanne Clark

Thanks to effective enforcement the pangolins are confiscated and diverted into the hands of the local authorities. However, when the pangolins are auctioned off, who buys them? Another supplier. The supplier pays the local authorities and the Pangolins re-enter the trade.

The pangolins will then evidently end up on the table of a restaurant (maybe the same restaurant), where they are eaten and the restaurant owner is paid. When his supply is exhausted, he places another order and the cycle continues. The consumer's money still reaches the hunter. Demand still finances continued hunting of a threatened species.

By selling pangolins and other wildlife through legal auction channels, we must accept that we are stimulating demand by creating opportunities for people to consume products that we wish to protect in nature.

We strongly encourage authorities to consider the legal status AND conservation importance of species that are confiscated in trade. If a species is rare or endangered or identified as being of conservation importance, this should be factored into the decision-making process.

Endangered species and other priority species should never be sold back into the trade. To do so, as the above illustrates, clearly just serves to continue the wildlife trade by adding another step in the trade chain and stimulating further demand. Moreover, if we are to preserve endangered wildlife in nature, it is essential for the public to see the authorities as protectors of rare and precious wildlife not middlemen in the trade.

Our collective objective should not be to prevent people from eating wildlife, but to ensure that any trade is legal AND sustainable.

There are excellent Forest Protection Departments, Environmental Police, and other government agencies working hard to protect wildlife in different parts of the country. ENV commends the positive contributions and sense of duty displayed by these agencies, and encourages others to take more responsibility and pursue an active role to protect wildlife. Let those of us that do care, work hard to protect endangered wildlife in the spirit of the law.

## Best Practices

1. Never auction off critical endangered species and globally threatened species such as pangolins.
2. Look for appropriate placement of endangered wildlife as the first option in settling cases. Endangered and globally threatened species should first be considered for placement in rescue centers, zoos and other legal non-commercial establishments before other options are considered.
3. Consider the conservation importance of wildlife before making a decision. Many species that are not specifically protected by law here in Vietnam are considered globally threatened and critically endangered.
4. Ask experts for assistance. Get help in dealing with confiscated wildlife! Our tendency is to avoid asking for help from others. Help makes our decisions stronger and our results better. Get help!
5. Wildlife parts and products should be donated to science, museums, or education programs, or destroyed. They should NEVER be sold.
6. Only release animals that are healthy. Ensure that animals are released only within their NATIVE range in habitat that is appropriate for the species. Generally, releases are not a good idea unless careful planning is involved. Very few released animals survive.

**Contact National FPD with your questions regarding confiscation settlement (telephone number 04.37346408) or contact ENV's Wildlife Crime Unit for help on toll-free 1800 1522. We will do our best to help you find solutions in every case.**

## Case Study: Twenty-five tons of Pangolins in Hai Phong

In late February and early March, the Hai Phong customs seized two shipments involving 24,035kg of frozen pangolins and 920kg of pangolin scales at Hai Phong port that were being smuggled into Vietnam by ship from Indonesia.

Conservation organizations, and indeed many law enforcement and wildlife protection authorities, had urged for the shipment of frozen pangolins and scales to be destroyed, rather than sold back into the trade. However on August 29, 2008, after months of deliberation, the decision was made to auction off all of the pangolins and scales, reportedly, to a businessman in Ho Chi Minh city.

The sale was made possible by Article 44 of Decree 159/2004/ND-CP which permits functional authorities to sell precious and rare wildlife that is determined to be weak or unable to survive.

Unfortunately this law puts functional agencies in the position of traders. When confiscated animals are auctioned off by the authorities, who do you think buys the wildlife? Wildlife traders! As a result, efforts to stop the trade actually support continued trade, and those tasked with wildlife protection end up serving in the conflicting role of both wildlife protector and trader.

In this particular case, the sale has not yet been concluded reportedly because police are concerned that the buyer in Ho Chi Minh city will re-export the shipment in violation of CITES regulations.

It is interesting to contrast this case with a related case in Indonesia that followed shortly after the Hai Phong seizure. In Sumatra, Indonesian authorities raided a warehouse and confiscated 14 tons of pangolins that were frozen, packed, and ready for export. In this case, Indonesian authorities succeeded in arresting 14 suspects in the city of Palembang, and subsequently destroyed all 14 tons of confiscated pangolins, as they routinely do with other confiscated wildlife that cannot be placed in zoos or rescue centers.

The example set in Indonesia demonstrates that authorities in other Asian countries are prepared to sacrifice the potential resale value of confiscated wildlife in order to enforce the law and bring an end to illegal smuggling and trade of wildlife.

## Turning Around A Bad Year for Bears and Other Protected Wildlife

This year has not been a good year for Vietnam's endangered wildlife. Laws aimed at protecting the most endangered species have been undermined by conflicting regulations issued by the authorities, which have resulted in numerous illegally held endangered species being registered as "legal" and left in the hands of private owners. The recent wave of cases range from tigers and bears to primates and pythons. In fact, ENV records show that 151 illegal bears have been discovered since 2007, many of which are pending registration. This is more than two years after a government ban was put in place prohibiting people from acquiring new bears.

The fact is that following the discovery of these animals, authorities have often found it easier to register illegal animals rather than face the difficult task of confiscating the bears and punishing the owners. The trend toward registering new bears found in the hands of farmers undermines the spirit and the letter of wildlife protection laws intended to protect endangered species. It also sends a dangerous message to people who illegally keep wildlife: "If you want to keep a tiger, bear, or other fully protected species, all you need to do is register the animal and pay a fine." Rather than confiscate the animals and issue stiff penalties that would deter others from keeping protected species, these recent registrations have opened the way for more protected animals to be hunted and sold in the future.

However, the last few months have delivered some good news in efforts to protect endangered bears.



A Malayan sun bear that was illegally being kept by a Dien Bien man was confiscated by the Dien Bien Forest Protection Department.

*Photo by Tuan Bendixen, Animals Asia Foundation*

In Dien Bien, the Forest Protection Department received information from a member of the public about a bear being illegally kept at a private home. In contrast with FPDs in some other provinces, Dien Bien rangers promptly confiscated the bear and issued a fine to the owner. The bear was later transferred to the bear rescue center at Tam Dao National Park.

A case in Hanoi is also encouraging. Back in July Environmental Police, acting on a tip from an informant, confiscated a bear and two macaques being kept illegally by a private company. However, the issue was not settled until recently when the Hanoi People's Committee ruled that the bear would not be returned to the owner and that the owner would face fines for illegally keeping a protected species.

These two cases, amongst tens of other cases where illegal bears remain in the hands of owners, mark a positive turn in events for bears, tigers, and other legally protected species. ENV applauds these decisions as positive examples. These cases demonstrate what can be done when the responsible authorities understand the nature of wildlife crime, and that confiscation and penalties, while not always easy to administer, are the only way to deter people from keeping protected species.

"We encourage other authorities throughout Vietnam to similarly demonstrate that they are tough on wildlife crime," says Van Anh, ENV's Wildlife Crime Program manager. "Once it becomes clear that crime will not go unpunished, people will begin to follow the law and bears, tigers, and other protected species will at last have a chance to survive in the wild."

ENV encourages government leaders and decision-makers to fully back efforts to protect our most endangered wildlife by getting tough on criminals, and using the law and punishment to deter future crimes against wildlife.

### **Bear tourism in Ha Long encourages international visitors to commit crimes**

Staff of several bear farms in Quang Ninh confirmed to ENV investigators that Korean and other tourists routinely visited bear farms as part of organized tours to Ha Long Bay. During some of these visits, tourists witnessed bile being extracted from a bear, tasted bear bile wine, and purchased bear bile products. Staff at one farm stated to ENV investigators that tourists typically purchased up to 10cc of bear bile.

In August, ENV carried out surveillance at the entrance to three major bear farms in Quang Ninh Province and recorded 40 buses and approximately 700 tourists entering bear farms over a four day period. Most visitors to these farms are Korean tourists, and these farms employ Korean staff to host the tour groups.

ENV urges the Quang Ninh People's Committee to

shut down illegal bear farms that are catering to foreign tourists and exploiting bears in violation of the law just kilometers from Vietnam's globally important

World Heritage site at Ha Long Bay. ENV believes it is only a matter of time before illegal tourism activities at bear farms in Quang Ninh casts a dark shadow over the legitimate tourism industry at Ha Long Bay, and negatively influences international perception of our most important national tourist site.

### **Bears and the Law**

Decree 32 of March 2006 divides protected species into two groups. Group 1B includes animals that are fully protected under the law and cannot be commercially traded under any circumstances.

Buying, selling, possession, and advertising of bear bile is prohibited under the law. According to the law, commercial trade in products made from species listed in Decree 32 Group 1B is illegal. Bear bile is considered a product made from bears.



A bear bile sign outside a house in Da Nang city. Advertising bear bile is illegal and efforts have been successful to have signs removed in most cases.

The ENV Wildlife Crime Unit has documented 52 cases in 2008 alone involving bears being kept in captivity. Most of these cases were reported by members of the public, and seven cases involved illegal transport and smuggling of bears. There have been 27 cases involving illegal bear bile advertising, and 61 cases involving bear paw or bile wine observed in restaurants or advertised in menus.

On September 29, 2008, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development released Decision No. 95 on the captive management of bears. The new decision reinforces regulations prohibiting hunting, buying, selling and trade of bears or parts and products made from bears. The decision also bans keeping of bears that are not registered, and specifies requirements for housing and keeping of registered bears in accordance with the law.

[Link to VN document:](#)

[http://envietnam.org/ENV\\_Resource\\_Library/ENV\\_Educational\\_Resources\\_and\\_Publication/Law\\_library/Law\\_article\\_2008/Decision%20No.%2095%20of%20September%2029%202008%20on%20captive%20bear%20management%20Oct.%207%202008%20EN\\_.pdf](http://envietnam.org/ENV_Resource_Library/ENV_Educational_Resources_and_Publication/Law_library/Law_article_2008/Decision%20No.%2095%20of%20September%2029%202008%20on%20captive%20bear%20management%20Oct.%207%202008%20EN_.pdf)

## Project Think

The following are responses to questions and comments received over the past year from forest rangers and other government employees involved in wildlife protection.

### Does releasing traded wildlife back into nature increase or strengthen biodiversity?

Releasing animals that have been held in the trade may have negative impacts on biodiversity by increasing the risk of spreading disease and introducing predators to previously balanced ecosystems. Animals that have been in the trade have undergone tremendous stress and are often in very poor condition when confiscated. Once released, these animals have little opportunity to adapt to their new environment. They must find food, avoid predators, find a secure place to rest or sleep. Most animals probably die or are killed soon after release. When humans interfere with natural processes, unless carefully planned and executed, the results are almost always negative.

In one Asian country, thousands of rat snakes were released into a forest following a seizure. It seemed like a good thing to do, but rat snakes prey on small birds and other animals. Releasing thousands of hungry predators into a forest almost certainly did more harm than good.



A common palm civet stares out beyond the bars of a cage shortly after confiscation in Hai Phong.

### Isn't farming of wildlife a good idea because it contributes to biodiversity conservation?

Preserving genetic breeding stock of endangered species is a good idea when the species can no longer survive in nature, and people are concerned that captive-bred animals may be the only hope for the species' survival. However, there is a substantial difference between breeding for conservation purposes (genetic preservation) and commercial farming. Here

in Vietnam, we mix the two ideas as if they were the same. In fact, commercial breeding is geared toward production (quantity of offspring produced), not gene preservation and reintroduction. In commercial operations, animals interbreed, and preserving genetic traits is not the objective of farmers. Animals that are captive raised are also poorly prepared to adapt and survive following release back into the wild. Moreover, producing and selling endangered species stimulates demand for the species from consumers, which results in increased hunting pressure on the species in the wild.

### What about crocodiles? Farming of crocodiles has permitted us to re-introduce the species into the wild?

True. Crocodiles were essentially extinct in the wild here in Vietnam. Very careful planning, genetic testing, and a costly monitoring and release program has permitted the Siamese crocodile to be re-introduced into Cat Tien National Park. However, most Siamese crocodiles in Vietnamese farms originate from animals illegally captured from the wild here or in Cambodia. As noted, trade in endangered species stimulates further demand, depleting wild populations. This has clearly been the case for crocodiles. The rush toward farming of crocodiles has nearly wiped out wild populations across the species' range.

Allowing farmers to illegally acquire and breed wild animals in order to preserve them is not an appropriate approach to conserving wildlife. It would be far less costly and more effective to protect animals in their habitat, and the best form of conservation breeding is the type that happens on its own in nature.

### I work very hard at my job as a ranger but it seems that I am held back by my boss who does not support me strongly. How do we improve wildlife protection if I am held back?

Progress also requires us to overhaul how we manage performance within functional agencies. We must move faster toward performance-based systems that reward good performance with promotions, more responsibility, and opportunity, and sideline people that fail to perform. When functional agencies are managed by performers, almost always, the overall performance of the agency improves. Managers must recognize that they need to do things differently or assume responsibility for falling behind as our nation develops and modernizes. Send us your thoughts and ideas about wildlife protection to [hotline@fpt.vn](mailto:hotline@fpt.vn) Your voice counts!

#### **Consult your National Forest Protection Department**

*If you are having difficulties dealing with a case involving Group 1B protected species because the subject of the case seems to be protected in some way, or if you wish to report corruption relating to forest crimes, please contact the new National FPD Forest Crime Task Force for assistance. Contact in Ha Noi: 04-3734-6408*

## Cooperation across borders on wildlife crime

The ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN WEN) was established in 2005 in order to facilitate cooperation amongst law enforcement agencies in ASEAN member countries in efforts to combat wildlife crime.

The illegal wildlife trade is a multibillion dollar industry spanning the entire globe. Efforts to address the illegal wildlife trade on a domestic front are essential to tackling the problem, but alone, cannot succeed. Crime syndicates and traders operate across national borders, and any determined effort to stem the flow of illegal wildlife requires governments to cooperate to address the problem.

In Vietnam, externally sourced wildlife routinely flows across the borders from Cambodia and Laos into Vietnam, smuggled up our highways, or arriving by port. Some of the wildlife is destined for Vietnamese consumers, but Vietnam is also what wildlife experts refer to as the backdoor for smuggling into China. A pangolin shipment, originating in Sumatra, may travel through six countries before reaching consumers in China. Macaques that are smuggled into farms in Vietnam from Laos are laundered before being exported to Hong Kong or China, then re-exported again to the United States and Europe. Tigers from Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand end up in farms or in tiger bone processing operations here in Vietnam. Crime syndicates from Vietnam are suspected of running a network smuggling rhino horn out of South Africa. Monitor lizards, snakes, freshwater turtles, and other wildlife from Laos and Cambodia are shipped to and through Vietnam on a daily basis. It is truly a global problem that respects no borders. Combating wildlife crime requires effective enforcement on a national scale to catch traders, interdict smuggling operations, and reduce consumer crimes. However, efforts are also required on an international scale, and measures must be taken to facilitate and ease the ability of law enforcement agencies to work across borders with counterpart agencies in other countries. We must recognize the need to share information and intelligence on investigations that transcend our borders, and cooperate fully on investigations that will collectively enable ASEAN member states to bring down major criminal networks responsible for illegal trade.

Below are some recent cases highlighting effective cooperation across national borders:

### **Pangolin seizure in Hai Phong leads to warehouse bust in Indonesia**

In late February 2008, Hai Phong Customs agents confiscated a shipment of approximately 24 tons of frozen pangolins and scales. Shipping documents provided to Indonesian authorities by Customs in Hai Phong, via ENV and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in Indonesia, reportedly led the authorities to a warehouse where another 14 tons of pangolins

similarly packed in frozen fish were discovered. Police arrested 14 people in connection with the case. The warehouse bust led Indonesian police to yet another location where more pangolin scales were recovered. Under current Indonesian laws, the suspects face potential imprisonment of up to five years and a 170 million VND fine for smuggling pangolins.

This is a positive example in which a little cooperation between authorities in Vietnam and Indonesia resulted in the uncovering of a major network and the arrest of suspects (*WCU Ref. Case 1090, 1100*).

### **US tiger gift results in punishment and investigation**

In December 2007, a stuffed tiger was confiscated from the cargo of a flight arriving in San Francisco International Airport (USA). The tiger was shipped from Ho Chi Minh city to the US and was intended as a gift for a Vietnamese American. The recipient pleaded guilty in the U.S. District Court and was ordered to pay a fine of US\$5,000 (86 million VND) to a tiger conservation charity. With assistance from ENV, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agents were put in touch with Vietnamese Customs authorities and National Environmental Police to relay details of the case. In this instance, cooperation between U.S. and Vietnamese authorities may help determine the origin of the tiger and the person(s) responsible for sending the stuffed tiger to the U.S. The investigation could also unearth additional crimes involving tigers or trade of endangered wildlife in Vietnam and neighboring countries (*WCU Ref. Case 1207*).



One of two tigers confiscated in January 2008 in Hanoi. The subject in this case was sentenced to probation and a small fine. This case highlights the weaknesses in the criminal justice system whereby penalties are too lenient to deter crimes.

### **Hawksbill turtles seized by Philippine navy**

In August, a Philippine naval patrol stopped a Vietnamese-registered fishing vessel off the Island of Palawan and discovered more than 100 dead marine turtles in the hold. Philippine authorities arrested the captain and 12 other Vietnamese fishermen. All 13



A Philippine navy gunboat stopped and inspected a Quang Ngai-registered fishing vessel with 101 dead hawksbill marine turtles in the hold.

Photo by WWF, Philippines

suspects face prosecution and remain in a Philippine jail. With assistance from WWF Philippines and ENV, Philippine authorities transferred relevant information about the case to the National Fisheries, Environmental Police, and Customs authorities in Vietnam, as well as to government officers in Quang Ngai where the fishing boat was registered. ENV urged Quang Ngai authorities to make it clear to fishermen that if they illegally hunt and kill marine turtles in violation of Philippine laws, they will be prosecuted and serve a sentence in Philippine prison. The case remains open at the time of this brief (WCU Ref. Case 1372).

## Regional Crime News

### India: Tip leads authorities to seizure of three illegal bears

In late September, Indian wildlife protection authorities confiscated three illegal bears in Tamil Nadu after concerned citizens responded to a newspaper advertisement asking the public to report illegal bears. Three suspects were also arrested and face prosecution in the case. Bears are fully protected under India's Wildlife Protection Act of 1972. It is illegal in India to possess or trade bears or bear parts.

This case is an important reminder of how valuable the public can be in assisting authorities to combat wildlife crime. It is also refreshing to see that Indian authorities take bear crimes seriously, arresting and prosecuting persons possessing protected species rather than negotiating enforcement of the law.

Source: *Indian Express*, September 30, 2008

### China: Man sentenced for faking tiger photo

In late September, Chinese authorities in Xinhua sentenced a resident to two and a half years in prison for faking a photograph of a critically endangered South China tiger and collecting a reward for his photo. In October 2007, the man had taken photos of a poster of a tiger in the forest in response to a reward offered by local officials. However, the faked photos were quickly discovered once they reached the internet and someone recognized the poster.

The South China tiger (*Panthera tigris amoyensis*) is considered one of the world's 10 most critically endangered species. Scientists believe as few as 20 South China tigers remain in the wild.

Another subspecies of tiger, the Indochinese tiger (*Panthera tigris corbetti*), is native to Vietnam. Some

scientists estimate there are fewer than 100 tigers in the wild in Vietnam.

Tigers throughout their native range are threatened by hunting and trade to meet the demand for tiger parts used in traditional medicine. Tiger pelts, teeth, claws, and busts are also valued for cosmetic and ornamental uses.

Source: *China View.cn*, September 27, 2008

### International: Cyber trade of wildlife, a growing problem

The trend toward cyber wildlife crime is growing throughout the region as more and more people gain access to the internet. Functional authorities in Vietnam would benefit by getting ahead of this growing marketplace. In past few years, ENV has logged about 15 cases in Vietnam involving advertising of bear bile, tiger products, and other protected species on forums, blogs, and web sites. While efforts to encourage website hosts to remove the illegal advertisements have been nearly 100% successful, the cases handled thus far represent only a tiny fraction of the amount of wildlife crime actually occurring via the web. Moreover, tracking of these crimes should not be limited to addressing the hosting of illegal advertisements. More importantly, efforts need to focus on the criminals that offer the protected species for sale on the internet.

Elsewhere in the region, authorities are beginning to address cyber wildlife markets. For example, Malaysian authorities arrested a man selling pythons in the middle of November after posing as buyers and setting up a meeting. When the man showed up, Wildlife and National Park officers seized the illegal snakes from his car.





A tiger claw and jaw sticks out of a boiling pot in Quang Ninh province where police confiscated bones and meat in September.

*Photo by Vu Trung, Quang Ninh Environmental Police*

A 2008 independent study of internet wildlife crime undertaken by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) found, over a six-week period, more than 7,000 CITES-listed animals and products being offered for sale on 183 web sites hosted in 11 countries.

*Source: The Star, November 21, 2008 and PR Newswire, November 20, 2008*

### Malaysia: War on Snares

The Malaysian Wildlife and National Park Department has declared zero tolerance on snares, according to an article published in The New Straits Times (NST) Online. More than 500 snares were collected by enforcement officers at Malaysia's famous Taman Negara National Park in November. Thousands of other snares were cleared from forests throughout peninsular Malaysia in similar operations earlier in the year. In Terengganu, one poacher who was caught with snares in his possession was fined 4.2 million VND, while another received a six-month jail sentence. A hunter caught in Perak with snares was fined 5.1 million VND.

The Malaysian authorities appear determined to send a clear message to hunters that even possession of snares with the intent to hunt is a crime that will result in punishment.

Snare hunting is a common method of capturing wildlife in Vietnam too. Many live animals observed in the trade suffer from snare wounds. In the words of one field biologist who has spent countless days in the forest: "some protected areas in Vietnam are so filled with snares that it is a miracle that anything could survive."

Protected area managers need to ensure their ranger

forces remain vigilant and active in efforts to destroy and remove snares found in the forest, and more importantly, arrest persons observed carrying "instruments of hunting" including snares during their patrols.

*Source: NST Online, November 13, 2008*

### Malaysia: Animals Seized from Private Zoo

In early December, Malaysian Wildlife and National Park authorities confiscated three dead tiger cubs, two pythons, and a crocodile from a private zoo in Johor. The animals were confiscated because the zoo's owners could not produce permits showing that they were of legal origin and registered. The zoo had not reported the birth of any tiger cubs as required under the law and the two pythons were seized because the zoo had permits for only 10, but possessed 12 at the time of the inspection.

In Vietnam, we have witnessed the growth of private zoos throughout the country. While there are means within the law to allow for development of private zoos for tourism and education purposes, most private zoos continue to collect animals of questionable origin, and few undergo the kind of inspections and enforcement necessary to ensure protected species are not illegally obtained.

*Source: The Star, December 5, 2008*

### India: Leopard Skins Seized

During August and early September, Indian authorities seized a total of 27 leopard skins bringing the total to 120 skins seized in India thus far in 2008. The skins have been confiscated from poachers and smugglers, which Indian law enforcement agencies believe are involved with an organized smuggling network that includes criminals in India, Nepal, and China.

*Source: Times of India, September 13, 2008*



A leopard cat confiscated by Environmental Police in Hanoi after the cat was spotted by foreigner in a restaurant.

*Photo by Rik Thornecliff*

**Note: Protected Area Managers.** If your teams are carrying out anti-hunting campaigns, please send ENV some facts and figures about your efforts. These can be used as examples for other protected areas to learn from and to demonstrate the good working you are doing to protect Vietnam's wildlife.

# The Crime Log

The Crime Log is an account of many of the cases for which the ENV Wildlife Crime Unit has received information during a given period of time. The Wildlife Crime Bulletin is distributed to People's Committee in all 63 provinces, as well as frontline functional agencies, and key members of the National Assembly and central government agencies with interests or responsibilities in relation to protection of wildlife.

## Top Performers 2008

ENV would like to recognize the efforts of this Wildlife Crime Bulletin's top performing enforcement agencies in their handling of specific cases. In the following cases, the response was timely, effective enforcement measures were executed, the outcome had sufficient deterrence value, the case involved critically endangered wildlife, and there was an appropriate solution for the animal(s) or wildlife products.

ENV salutes your fine work in the battle to protect Vietnam's wildlife!

### No. 1: Dien Bien FPD for their confiscation of an illegal bear

In September, Dien Bien FPD discovered an unregistered Malayan sun bear that was being illegally kept by a resident in Dien Bien District. FPD promptly confiscated the illegal bear and issued the owner a fine of eight million VND. The bear was later transferred to the bear rescue facility at Tam Dao National Park (WCU Ref. Case 1397).

In this case, the response and subsequent confiscation was handled efficiently and in a timely manner. The deterrence value was reinforced by both the eight million VND fine and the loss of the owner's original investment in the bear. The case's value was further reinforced by national television coverage of the successful operation. The bear was transferred to a legitimate government-sanctioned rescue center specializing in bears.

### No. 2: Son Tay FPD and police for decisive action in rescuing a Giant Soft-shell Turtle from Fishermen

The second recognition goes to forest rangers of the

Son Tay district (Hanoi) Forest Protection Department and district police for their immediate action in response to news that a local fisherman had caught the world's last known remaining giant soft-shell turtle (*Rafetus swinhoei*) in the wild, in a local stream. Rangers and police responded in force and after some initial obstacles, enforced the law and required the fisherman to turn the turtle over to FPD, after which, it was released back into its habitat where it had survived for many years.

In this case, the fisherman failed in his efforts to extract millions of VND from the authorities in order to release the turtle, and after a day-long debate, the police required the fisherman to comply with the law or face enforcement action (WCU Ref. case 1470).



The world's last known living Swinhoe's soft shell turtle (*Rafetus swinhoei*) shortly after it was captured by local fishermen near a lake west of Hanoi. The turtle was eventually released back in to the lake where it had lived for many years.

## Trade Seizures June – December 2008

### An Giang province

In August, rangers from An Phu District confiscated 1,018kg of wildlife including cobras, soft-shell turtles, and monitor lizards from several motorbikes. The animals were reportedly being transferred from a local resident's house in An Phu Town to buyers in a neighboring province. The animals were subsequently released back into the wild (WCU Ref. Case 1380).

### Da Nang province

Da Nang FPD, in cooperation with Environmental Police, confiscated two macaques, nine live Indochinese water dragons, 25 frozen Indochinese water dragons, a bear paw in wine, two jars of Sika deer wine, a wine jar containing a leopard cat, and jar of monitor lizard wine from three restaurants. The live animals were released and the wildlife products were incinerated. The restaurants were given fines totaling 2.9 million VND (WCU Ref. Case 1088, 1161, 1196).

**"Every animal counts! Your decision may save a species from extinction."**



Da Nang Environmental Police seized civet meat and wild pig meat from a local restaurant in July.

*Photo By Ba Cong - Da Nang Environment Police*

### Dak Lak province

In October, Krong Bong district FPD, working in cooperation with district police and the Commune People's Committee, searched a private house and found 33kg of frozen meat including 26kg of civet meat and 7kg of brush-tailed porcupine meat, along with 50 more live brushed-tailed porcupines, three live civets, a Malayan porcupine, and a wild pig. All of the frozen meat was incinerated, and the live animals were transferred to Chu Yang Sin National Park.

Punishment of the subjects is pending (WCU Ref. case 1424).

In November, Dak Lak Environmental Police confiscated 20.9kg of wildlife from Song Ma restaurant in Buon Ma Thuot City. The wildlife included one pangolin, two small Indian civets, four common palm civets, two soft-shell turtles and one red jungle fowl. The wildlife was released into the forest of Yok Don National Park and the subjects received a total fine of 15 million VND. (WCU Ref. case 1462)

### Hai Duong province

In October, Hai Duong authorities discovered 85 pangolins hidden in a vehicle that was transporting the pangolins north, possibly to China. The driver received a 60 million VND fine and the vehicle used to smuggle the pangolins was confiscated.

Later in December, the Hai Duong FPD stopped a bus on Highway 18 and confiscated 65 king cobras weighing a total of 194.8 kg. At the time of this report, the police are detaining the two subjects involved and have impounded the bus (WCU Ref. Case 1426, 1478).

### Hanoi

In August, Hanoi Environmental Police working in cooperation with Hanoi FPD confiscated 86 kg of cobras being transported on two motorbikes heading for Vinh Phuc Province. The two subjects involved in the case were issued fines of VND 30.6 million. (WCU Ref. Case 1366).

In August, mobile police team from Trung Hoa Ward found and confiscated 44 bear paws being transported by two subjects on motorbikes. On the way to the police station, one of subjects reportedly attempted to bribe the police with 9.3 million VND to release him. The bear paws were later transferred to the FPD and the subjects were detained pending criminal prosecution (WCU Ref. Case 1373).

Also in August, Hanoi Environmental Police, in cooperation with Hanoi FPD, investigated a restaurant in Hanoi, where they confiscated three brush-tailed porcupines. The owner of the restaurant received a fine of 2.25 million VND (WCU Ref. Case 1359).

In October, the Environmental Police in Hanoi confiscated a tiger skeleton from a private vehicle that reportedly originated in Nghe An Province. Meanwhile, the police from Dong Da District arrested a man transporting another 19kg tiger skeleton that was purchased from an unidentified person in Vinh Phuc Province. Both subjects face criminal prosecution (WCU Ref. Case 1390, 1429).

### Ha Tinh province

In August, PC15 special investigation police in Ha Tinh police, in cooperation with the Ha Tinh mobile ranger force, confiscated 65 pangolins weighing 318kg hidden in a private car with fake registration plates. The driver reportedly escaped during the incident, which occurred on the HCM Highway (WCU Ref. Case 1360).

In December, the Economic Police in Ha Tinh confiscated 63 pangolins from a car heading for the north. The occupants of the vehicle reportedly escaped. In a separate case in December, Duc Tho District FPD working with police confiscated five pangolins from a public bus. Three live pangolins (two were dead at the time of the seizure) were transferred to the Carnivore and Pangolin Conservation Program at Cuc Phuong National Park (WCU Ref. case 1479, 1480).

### Hau Giang province

In July, Hau Giang FPD, in cooperation with functional agencies, inspected a resident's house in Nga Bay town, discovering and confiscating 11kg of turtles and six kg of snakes. The animals had been reportedly bought from a local market and were to be transported to Ho Chi Minh city and neighboring provinces. All the confiscated animals were released at Lung Ngoc Hoang

**“The trade of wildlife will end when the public realizes that the trade benefits only a few, in profits earned today. But we all will all share the cost of losing a precious and irreplaceable part of our natural heritage when a species becomes extinct.”**

Nature Reserve and the subject was fined 1.5 million VND (*WCU Ref. Case 1351*).

In August, mobile FPD rangers confiscated two shipments of wildlife on the road, confiscating a total of 68kg of birds, snakes and turtles. In both cases, the wildlife reportedly originated from neighboring provinces and was destined for Ho Chi Minh city. All of the animals were released and the subjects were fined a total of 20 million VND (*WCU Ref. Case 1367, 1388*).

### Kon Tum province

In July, traffic police discovered a truck transporting 60 porcupines, two masked palm civets and one large Indian civet. All the animals were released at a forest in Dak Uy district and the driver was fined 60 million VND (*WCU Ref. Case 1331*).

### Lam Dong province

In October, rangers from Bidoup Nui Ba National Park FPD arrested four people carrying an 18kg gaur head. The men admitted to shooting the gaur while hunting inside the national park, and subsequently face criminal prosecution (*WCU Ref. case 1411*).

### Lang Son province

In August, border guards in Na Hinh District discovered a group of eight local women smuggling 50 live macaques over the border from Vietnam into China. The women were apparently hired by a man to transport the macaques over the border. The man was not caught and the women were issued warnings (*WCU Ref. Case 1375*).



A stump-tailed macaque confiscated from a business in Hai Phong earlier in the year at Soc Son Rescue Center.



Critically endangered Vietnamese pond turtles (*Mauremys annamensis*) at a local trader's house in Quang Ngai. The Vietnamese pond turtle is endemic to Vietnam.

### Phu Tho province

In July, the Phu Tho Environmental Police, in cooperation with the FPD, inspected a restaurant in Thanh Thuy district and confiscated two turtles, one civet, and two brush-tailed porcupines. The animals were later released and the subject received a fine of five million VND (*WCU Ref. Case 1346*).

In December, Phu Tho Environmental Police confiscated a civet, a monitor lizard, an unidentified wild cat, and a bamboo rat from a restaurant in Cam Khe District. The animals were subsequently released and the subject is currently awaiting administrative punishment at the time of this report (*WCU Ref. case 1487*).

### Phu Yen province

In July, Song Hinh district police, working in cooperation with the Traffic Police and the Economic Police, confiscated 202kg of wildlife including snakes, turtles, monitor lizards, soft-shell turtles and pangolins. These animals, which had been transported by car from Dak Lak to Phu Yen, were later released at Ea So Nature Reserve. The driver was fined 88 million VND and his driving license was suspended for six months (*WCU Ref. Case 1327*).

### Quang Binh province

In October, a mobile team of rangers confiscated 557kg of wildlife included 240kg of turtles, 20kg of Chinese soft-shell turtles, 231kg of common rat snakes, 56kg of monitor lizards and 10 porcupines. The driver of the truck was issued a fine of 170 million VND (*WCU Ref. case 1425*).

In December, Bo Trach district FPD, working in cooperation with Quang Binh provincial traffic police, stopped a public bus transporting 2,300 kg of snakes.

**“Make a difference everyday in what you do.”**

However, 2,000kg of the snakes reportedly originated from a legal farm in Bac Lieu province, and the remaining 300kg of Bocourt's water snakes had no papers showing legal origin. Consequently, the FPD confiscated 300kg of snakes and fined the subject 69 million VND (*WCU Ref. case 1475*).

### Quang Ninh province

At the end of June, Environmental police stopped a truck that had originated in Bac Lieu Province and was headed for the Chinese border at Mong Cai. In the truck, the police discovered 544kg of wildlife, including monitor lizards, civets and turtles (*WCU Ref. Case 1318*).



A crested serpent eagle discovered at a restaurant in Quang Ninh province by monitoring officers.

In August, National Environmental police, working in cooperation with customs, the National Department of Anti-trafficking and the National FPD's Forest Crime Task Forces, confiscated 2,024kg of snakes and 524 turtles weighing 775.5kg in Quang Ninh province. The shipment, headed for the Chinese border, reportedly originated in Laos and was smuggled into Vietnam through the Cau Treo Border Gate in Ha Tinh Province. According to the authorities, the bust was made thanks to a tip-off from the public. Police and customs spent more than a week conducting surveillance and following the shipment. Amongst the animals confiscated were rat snakes and six species of freshwater turtles. All of the confiscated animals were transferred to Soc Son Rescue Center (*WCU Ref. Case 1342*).

In August, Quang Ninh FPD confiscated an unregistered bear from one of six bear farms in Ha Long for not executing the People's Committee decision requiring the owner to pay an administrative fine for illegally keeping bears. The bear was transferred to Animals Asia Foundation's Bear Rescue Center at Tam Dao (*WCU Ref. Case 1120*).

In September, Environmental Police raided a

resident's house in Ha Long City and arrested three people involved in the production of tiger bone glue. The police confiscated 46kg of tiger bone and 55kg of tiger meat. All of the suspects were placed in temporary detention, and are facing criminal prosecution (*WCU Ref. Case 1386*).

In two separate cases in December, traffic police stopped buses and confiscated protected wildlife. One case involved an Asian golden cat and the second case involved a man carrying 28 elephant tusks. In both cases, the protected species/products were being smuggled to China via the Mong Cai border crossing. Prosecution in both cases is pending (*WCU Ref. Case 1491, 1493*).

### Quang Tri province

In December, a patrol team at the La Lay border gate confiscated 39 brush-tailed porcupines from two Thua Thien Hue residents that were reportedly smuggling the porcupines from La Lay Border Gate to A Luoi District. The smugglers were fined a total of 17.85 million VND (*WCU Ref. case 1466*).

### Tay Ninh province

In July, local police in Tan Binh District confiscated a reticulated python from a resident. The 11-kilo python was later released at Lo Go-Xa Mat National Park (*WCU Ref. Case 1335*).

In August, 2008, a traffic police patrol in Tay Ninh confiscated 30kg of monitor lizards being transported by motorbike on route 785 in Tan Chau district. According to Tay Ninh FPD, the animals possibly originated from Laos and were destined for Ho Chi Minh City. The motorbike driver subsequently escaped and all confiscated animals were released in a forest in Chau Thanh (*WCU Ref. Case 1357*).



A reticulated python confiscated by police in Tay Ninh province was later released at Lo Go Xa Mat National Park.

*Photo by Nguyen Dinh Xuan*

**“Make an example of criminals today to prevent crime tomorrow.”**

## Sentencing Updates (from earlier cases):

### Hanoi

Two subjects arrested in January of 2008 in a case involving the confiscation of two live tigers, two tiger skins and a number of other wildlife products including gaur horns, bear paws, and banteng heads were sentenced to 30 months and 24 months probation. Each of two subjects was required to pay a fine of five million VND (*WCU Ref. Case 735B*).

A Ninh Binh resident who transported, from Ninh Binh to Hanoi, a tiger that was cut into five pieces to make tiger bone glue was sentenced to 36 months probation (*WCU Ref. Case 1281B*).

### Nghe An province

Two smugglers involved in attempting to bring two bear cubs into Vietnam from Laos in March were sentenced to 30 months and 21 months probation respectively. The bear cubs were transferred to the rescue center at Pu Mat National Park (*WCU Ref. Case 1398*).

### Quang Binh province

The driver of a vehicle who was caught smuggling 453kg of monitor lizards, 170kg of turtles and 110kg of cobras in April was fined 60 million VND (*WCU Ref. Case 1253*).

### Bac Giang province

The subjects in a case relating to the confiscation in December, 2007 of 28kg of Indochinese rat snake, 15 brush-tailed porcupines, three turtles, one monitor lizard and 29kg of macaque and python bones were issued administrative fines. The driver was fined 12.5 million VND while the owner of the shipment was issued a fine of 38.3 million VND (*WCU Ref. Case 954*).

### Dong Thap province

The driver of a truck transporting 73kg of king cobra, 568kg of common rat snakes and 198kg of Bocourt's water snakes that were confiscated by Dong Thap Provincial Police in August 2007 was sentenced to nine months imprisonment (*WCU Ref. Case 716B*).

## Public participation in stopping wildlife crime

The public plays a crucial role in efforts to combat wildlife crime. Once the public is committed to change, it will become increasingly difficult for criminals to openly engage in criminal activities such as selling or trading protected wildlife.

ENV would like to thank all of the people who have reported crime through the wildlife crime hotline or directly reported crimes to the authorities, as well as the hundreds of volunteers and monitors throughout the country that help ensure businesses that were previously cited for violations remain in compliance with wildlife protection laws.

Here are just some of the cases that resulted from direct public action:

### July 2008

In Hanoi, one Asiatic black bear and two pig-tailed macaques were confiscated from a private company and transferred to Soc Son rescue center by Hanoi Environmental and local police. These animals were rescued thanks to the timely report from a concerned resident in June 2008. The company owner was fined 30 million VND (*WCU Ref. Case 1316*).

In July, a Hanoi resident voluntarily turn over to the Endangered Primate Rescue Center in Cuc Phuong National Park, a red-shanked douc langur that he had bought in Quang Binh province.

Note: ENV discourages the practice of purchasing wildlife to "rescue" it. Such a purchase stimulates demand, financially benefits hunters and traders of



A clouded leopard confiscated in Quang Ninh province several years ago remains healthy at Soc Son Rescue Center.

wildlife, and contributes to additional animals being hunted and sold in markets (*WCU Ref. Case 1334*).

Thanks to efforts by Hai Phong FPD to raise awareness among local people about the need to protect wildlife, a local resident in Thuy Nguyen District voluntarily turned over a bear that he was keeping. The bear was then transferred to the bear rescue center in Tam Dao National Park (*WCU Ref. Case 1341*).

A website administrator removed an online wildlife products advertisement following a discussion with ENV's Wildlife Crime Unit staff. Similarly, a volunteer from ENV's National Wildlife Protection Network discovered a restaurant in Ha Nam advertising bear bile. After subsequent monitoring and discussions with the

**“The best way to protect wildlife is in its habitat where it belongs, before it falls into the hands of hunters and traders”.**

owner, they agreed to voluntarily remove the sign. Another restaurant's owner in Lam Dong Province also voluntarily removed bear bile from the restaurant's menu following a discussion with the Wildlife Crime Unit's staff. These cases were first reported to ENV by members of the public through the National Hotline (WCU Ref. Case 1193, 1322, 1344).

### August 2008

Quang Xuong district FPD in Thanh Hoa Province issued an administrative fine of 150,000 VND to a resident who was illegally keeping a python. The incident was reported by a local resident to the National Hotline (WCU Ref. Case 1363).

A long-tailed macaque was rescued from the Coi Nguon Guest House in Thua Thien Hue province and released at Bach Ma National Park by the A Luoi district FPD. The information on the case was reported to the National Wildlife Crime Hotline by a foreign visitor (WCU Ref. Case 1355).

Cat Hai District FPD of Hai Phong Province inspected a restaurant and confiscated nine jars of wildlife wine that included king cobra, tiger penis, pangolins, monitor lizards, boucals, rat snakes and krates. Rangers subsequently incinerated the contents of the confiscated wine. The case was initially reported to ENV by national park staff member on holiday at Cat Ba (WCU Ref. Case 1291).

Following information reported to the hotline from an international tourist, An Giang FPD confiscated and released seven macaques back into the wild. The macaques were being kept at the top of Sam Mountain in Chau Doc district for several months prior to the release (WCU Ref. Case 1368).

### September 2008

Thai Binh Environmental Police inspected the homes of two residents who were reportedly keeping bears and advertising bear bile. The bears were determined to be legally registered, however the police required both owners to remove bear bile advertising sign boards from in front of their homes and sign commitments to stop advertising and selling bear bile. Further monitoring by volunteers indicated that the signs were removed (WCU Ref. Case 1376 & 1377).

Rangers from District FPD No. 2 of Hanoi inspected and confiscated a squirrel from a café shop on Tran Hung Dao Street thanks to a timely tip-off to the ENV Wildlife Crime Hotline by a local resident. The squirrel was then transferred to Soc Son Rescue Center (WCU Ref. Case 1385).

### October 2008

In October, a stump-tailed macaque was confiscated from a guesthouse in Khanh Hoa province and a second stump-tailed macaque from an apartment



A leopard cat at the Small Carnivore and Pangolin Conservation Center at Cuc Phuong National Park. Leopard cats are fully protected and listed under Group 1B of Decree 32.

building in Ho Chi Minh City thanks to the timely reports of local residents. One of the two macaques has been released and the second macaque is awaiting release at a rescue center (WCU Ref. Case 1399, 1412).

In Binh Thuan, another concerned resident reported to ENV's hotline a restaurant offering wildlife on their menu. Following the report, Phan Thiet City FPD inspected and confiscated 15 bamboo rats and two kg of snakes. The wildlife was later released and the restaurant owner received a fine of VND nearly two million VND (WCU Ref. Case 1404).

A live loris that was observed at a shop in Hanoi by several FPD staff from other provinces attending a training course in Hanoi was confiscated by Environmental Police and Hanoi FPD rangers. The loris was later transferred to Soc Son Rescue Center (WCU Ref. Case 1406).

In Ha Tinh, a local resident voluntarily turned over to the FPD a Ha Tinh langur which he had bought in Quang Binh province. The langur was transferred to the Endangered Primate Rescue Center in Cuc Phuong National Park (WCU Ref. Case 1407).

A gibbon was confiscated from a local resident in Dong Nai province by Thong Nhat District FPD and transferred to the Primate Rescue Center at Cat Tien National Park after FPD received a tip from local residents (WCU Ref. Case 1410).

A local resident in Thai Binh contacted ENV's Wildlife Crime Hotline to report four bears being kept at

**“Buying and selling wild animals and their parts is a CRIME.”**

resident's house. Thai Binh Environmental Police immediately inspected the site and discovered that two of the bears were unregistered. The Environmental Police are now working in cooperation with the provincial People's Committee and Thai Binh Department of Agricultural and Rural Development to have the illegal bears confiscated (WCU Ref. case 1421).

Thanks to a tip-off from a local resident, Ha Tay (Hanoi) FPD investigated and confiscated five live monitor lizards, which were being kept illegally at a resident's home in Ha Dong City. The subject was issued a fine of 900,000 VND (WCU Ref. case 1423). Another hotline call reported a website that was advertising bear bile. After subsequent discussions with the website host and the subject responsible for the advertisement, the advertisement was removed (WCU Ref. case 1394).

### November 2008

A owner of a shop in Can Tho City voluntarily removed a signboard advertising bear bile after ENV's Wildlife

Crime Hotline received a report from a local resident and subsequent discussions with the shop owner (WCU Ref. case 1416).

A local resident in Ho Chi Minh city contacted the hotline to report bear bile being advertised on a signboard at a real estate agency. Following discussions and monitoring by volunteers, the owner agreed to remove the signboard and promised to cease any further illegal activity (WCU Ref. case 1417).

Gia Lai provincial FPD confiscated eight live common palm civets from Thien Thanh 1 in Pleiku City following monitoring by volunteers. The civets were later released at Kon Ka Kinh National Park. The restaurant owner received a fined of 1,375,000 VND (WCU Ref. case 1450).

### December 2008

In Ninh Binh Province, a local resident was issued a fine of 500,000 VND for illegally keeping and selling snakes from his home, following a report to the hotline by another local resident (WCU Ref. Case 1382).

## Crime Statistics

The ENV Wildlife Crimes Unit has logged a total of 1539 cases between January 1<sup>st</sup> 2005 to December 31, 2008.

Period	Trade Seizures	Selling	Advertising	Possession display	Other	Total *
January 2008	20	46	2	18	0	86
February 2008	6	9	1	6	4	26
March 2008	10	62	2	15	0	89
April 2008	13	13	3	6	0	35
May 2008	8	21	1	17	0	47
June 2008	14	25	2	15	0	56
July 2008	8	10	5	4	1	28
August 2008	5	4	1	14	0	24
September 2008	13	0	3	12	0	28
October 2008	8	26	1	15	1	51
November 2008	12	10	0	12	2	36
December 2008	12	29	2	9	1	53
<b>Total 2008</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>559</b>
<b>Total 2005-2008</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>1539</b>

\* These statistics represent only a small fraction of the active trade in wildlife in Vietnam, and only account for those cases that are reported to ENV



## About the ENV Wildlife Crime Unit

Established in January of 2005, the ENV Wildlife Crime Unit runs the national Wildlife Crime Hotline, a toll-free number that was established to provide a mechanism for the public to report wildlife crimes. Reports are quickly passed on to the appropriate functional agency by ENV, after which case officers track each case through to its conclusion with special attention focused on the disposal of the animals or animal parts, and the punishment administered to the perpetrator in each case. Sources are contacted and advised in detail as to the outcome of the case that he/she reported. Cases are then documented and filed, and recorded on ENV's Wildlife Crimes Database.

The main aims of the program are to:

- \* Encourage public participation and support in efforts to combat the illegal trade of wildlife
- \* Support enforcement efforts by government agencies
- \* Document crimes and identify factors that contribute to the wildlife trade

The ENV Wildlife Crime Unit is jointly funded by the Humane Society International, Conservation International, and The Whitley Fund for Nature, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) and The Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.

ENV wishes to thank the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) for supporting the production of ENV Wildlife Crime Bulletin.

Wildlife Crime - Vietnam is produced quarterly by Education for Nature-Vietnam in Vietnamese language and is distributed to senior members in government and the National Assembly, Provincial People's Committees, functional agencies tasked with wildlife protection, protected area managers and rangers in all 64 provinces.

An English language version of the bulletin is also produced and distributed within the conservation community.

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### Your Voice and Ideas or Questions Are Welcome!

If you have a question about some aspect of the wildlife trade, email us and we will do our best to find you an answer. Your question might also be selected for the community voice section of our monthly wildlife crimes radio show on the Voice of Vietnam. Email: [Hotline@fpt.vn](mailto:Hotline@fpt.vn)



### Stop Wildlife Crime

If you see wildlife in restaurants or other business establishments, contact your local authorities or the ENV Wildlife Crime Hotline

Hotline: **1800-1522** Email: **Hotline@fpt.vn**

**You** can make a difference!