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Hanoi, 30 May 2011

## **Press Release: New clubs in four provinces join ENV's National Wildlife Protection Network**

***Volunteers assembled in four cities across central and northern Vietnam during the last week of May to launch new member clubs of ENV's National Wildlife Protection Network. The new clubs established in Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Nghe An and Hai Phong provinces will significantly bolster efforts by ENV to monitor business establishments to ensure their compliance with wildlife protection laws.***

The National Wildlife Protection Network was developed in 2007 as part of ENV's strategy to stop the illegal trade of wildlife in Vietnam. The network currently hosts more than 2,800 volunteers in 32 provinces and includes eight member clubs operating in major urban areas and wildlife trade hotspots.

Volunteers and club members are responsible for carrying out compliance monitoring in their assignment areas as well as reporting wildlife crimes. Some network members also participate in wildlife trade surveys and assist with awareness activities organized by ENV. The expansion of member clubs follows the successful establishment of clubs in other major cities like Ho Chi Minh, Hanoi, Hue, and Da Nang during 2010.

"Volunteers play a critical role in combating the illegal wildlife trade in Vietnam," says Mr. Tran Viet Hung, Vice director of ENV. "They are our eyes and ears everywhere in the country."

"True volunteerism is still new to Vietnamese people, but there are an increasing number of members of the public who commit their energy and time to create a better society and protect wildlife."

As Vietnam's first local organization dedicated to protecting wildlife, ENV has developed an integrated strategy for addressing the illegal trade of endangered wildlife including strengthening law enforcement, increasing public awareness and participation, and improving wildlife protection laws and policies. ENV's Wildlife Crime Unit has documented nearly 3,500 cases since 2005, as well as worked with authorities to

rescue thousands of animals including many endangered species such as bears, gibbons and langurs. Many of ENV's successful cases over the past six years have resulted from the participation of volunteers and members of the public.

"Vietnam can't succeed in fighting the illegal wildlife trade without active participation from the public," says Hung. "The contribution of our volunteers is a reflection of a growing tide of public interest in putting an end to the illegal trade of wildlife."

ENV wishes to thank the **Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)**, the **MacArthur Foundation**, and the **Cleveland Metroparks Zoo** for their support in developing the National Wildlife Protection Network.

## **ABOUT ENV**

Education for Nature-Vietnam (ENV) was established in 2000 as Vietnam's first non-governmental organization focused on the conservation of nature and the environment. Our mission is to foster greater understanding amongst the Vietnamese public about environmental issues of local, national and global significance, ranging from the protection of wildlife and natural ecosystems to climate change. We employ creative and innovative strategies to influence attitudes and mobilize Vietnamese citizens to live in balance with the natural world and to take action to protect Vietnam's precious environment.

## **ENV Programs**

ENV specializes in four major program areas that collectively form ENV's integrated and strategic approach toward achievement of our mission. These include:

- Combating wildlife crime
- Raising public awareness
- Working with key decision-makers to strengthen policy and legislation
- Strengthening protected area management through education and training

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