



Asian Turtle news

News from the Frontlines of Conservation

Số 2/C5, Tập thể Đại học Ngoại thương, Chùa Láng str, Hanoi, Tel: 84-4-7753935

Turtle training for Customs officers and Forest Protection Department rangers along the Cambodian border

(Hanoi) June 2, 2007 Turtle experts have joined forces with Education for Nature Vietnam (ENV) to hold a series of training workshops focused on turtles, for wildlife protection officers and customs agents in three southern provinces.

A total of 58 forest rangers and 33 customs officers participated in the workshops that were held in Dong Nai, Binh Phuoc, and Tay Ninh Provinces. Tay Ninh and Binh Phuoc Provinces are both major trade routes for wildlife smuggled from Cambodia into Vietnam.

The workshops focused on raising awareness about the crisis facing the region's turtles resulting from unsustainable trade, and providing frontline officers from enforcement agencies with basic skills to help them identify any turtles they encounter during the course of their work.



Participants were also provided with a basic introduction to the ecology of turtles, a review of the legal protection status of turtles in Vietnam, as well as a review of procedures and recommendations for dealing with turtles confiscated from the trade.

During the afternoon sessions of the day-long workshops, rangers and customs officers debated the role of enforcement agencies in wildlife protection, the sensitive question of how to deal with confiscated wildlife, and the impact of wildlife farming on wild populations of species. Extensive pre- and post-program testing allowed the instructors to evaluate the impact of the training, including the participants' ability to identify turtle species in trade.

Similar training workshops have been carried out for wildlife protection authorities in 30 provinces and eight national parks, as well as for officers from the Vietnam and China CITES management authority, and other functional agencies.

The training courses were instructed by Bui Dang Phong, manager of the Cuc Phuong Turtle Conservation Center (TCC), Tim McCormack, Field Project Coordinator for the Asian Turtle Program, and Douglas Hendrie, Asian Turtle Program Director. Special thanks go to Tran Thu Hang of ENV's Wildlife Crime Unit and Phan Thi Duyen for organizing and facilitating these efforts. The Asian Turtle Program's turtle identification and trade enforcement training program is possible thanks to generous support from the **Humane Society International (HSI)**

The Asian Turtle Program (ATP) is a consortium of people and institutions dedicated to the protection of Asian turtles in the wild. Support for the Asian Turtle Program is provided by the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, Conservation International, the Turtle Survival Alliance, and the Wildlife Conservation Society. Project activities carried out by the ATP are supported by a wide range of institutions and private sponsors from around the globe

Gallery



Forest Rangers in Dong Nai province are tested on their turtle identification skills. Many of these rangers are involved in major wildlife trade confiscations along Highway 1A



Most Customs officers had not had any prior training that would help them identify species that are observed at border checkpoints.



Phan Thi Duyen of ENV took an opportunity at one of the workshops to take the turtle ID test, demonstrating that she had *finally* learned to identify her native turtles.



Tay Ninh customs officers and rangers broke into working groups to discuss how to deal with confiscated wildlife.

For further information please contact:

Asian Turtle Program

Education for Nature - Vietnam
PO Box 222
Hanoi, Vietnam
Tele. 84 (0)4-775-3935
Email: ATCNnetwork@fpt.vn

Visit the Asian Turtle Conservation Network website:
www.asianturtlenetwork.org