Hanoi, January 18, 2011
Press release:

New PSA: Bear bile is not a magic medicine

Education for Nature-Vietnam (ENV) has launched a new public service announcement (PSA) urging the public not to use bear bile.

The 36-second PSA which will air on national and provincial television in early 2011 features a young boy scraping his knee while playing with his little sister. The boy's grandmother immediately suggests that bear bile be used to treat the injury and prevent bruising. However, the boy's mother intervenes, discarding the idea and telling her elder and the public that bear bile is not a "magic medicine". She goes on to suggest that people should seek professional medical care when treating sickness or injury, not use bear bile.

The PSA is the 6th produced by ENV in recent years as part of efforts to reduce consumption of bear bile.

Link to PSA:

The findings of ENV's recent study show that 22% of Vietnamese people have used bear bile in the past, and 72.5% of bear bile consumers use bear bile with the intention of treating a specific health problem such as bruising, muscle complaints, digestive problems and arthritis.

According to the ENV study, more than half of the users who quit using bear bile did so because they felt that it was ineffective. Some doctors have also recently suggested that there may be serious potential health risks linked to using bear bile.

"Use of bear bile threatens the future of our bears," says Mr. Tran Viet Hung, ENV's Communication and Public Awareness manager, "ENV seeks to dispel traditional beliefs that bear bile is some form of miracle drug."

Hung goes on to say, “Seeing a doctor is the best solution whenever a person is faced with a health concern, not only for the sake of human health, but also for the sake of protecting Vietnam's bears."

Bears are listed under Group IB of Decree 32/ND-CP/2006 prohibiting commercial exploitation of live animals or their parts and derivatives. Vietnam is home to two species of bears, the Asiatic
black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*) and the Malayan sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*). Both species are being pushed to the edge of extinction, mainly due to the illegal hunting and trade to support the demand for bear gall bladders and bile used as a traditional form of medicine. Asiatic black bears are usually captured as cubs in the wild and sold to bear farms where they are raised and used to extract bile from the gall bladder. Currently, there are about 3,500 bears in farms in Vietnam, most of which originated from the wild.

ENV wishes to thank the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) for their generous support in efforts to bring an end to the exploitation and trade of bears.

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*Additional reference:*


Bear campaign TV Public Service Announcements
TCM alternatives PSA:
Bear extinction guaranteed PSA:
Say NO to bear bile PSA:
Pop star My Linh PSA:
Younger generation Say “No” PSA: