



Education for Nature - Vietnam

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November 12, 2009

Press Release

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GREEN GRANTS PROTECT NATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN VIETNAM

Hanoi, November 12, 2009 - Education for Nature - Vietnam (ENV), in co-ordination with Toyota Motor Vietnam (TMV), awarded 'Green Grants' to six protected areas in Vietnam. The grants aim to support staff in carrying out environmental education activities in the buffer zones of their national parks or nature reserves.

In May and August 2009, ENV held two training courses for representatives from eleven national parks and nature reserves. After the training course, participants submitted proposals to a joint ENV-TMV Green Grant review board for consideration. The proposals were judged based on specific criteria such as creativity and design, practicality, capacity to achieve the stated objectives, and conservation priorities.

Organizing the training courses at ENV's Environmental Education Training Center at Tam Dao National Park and supporting 'Green Grants' is one part of the long-term cooperation project - '*Go Green - The Preservation of Nature*' - between TMV and ENV. The project aims to increase environmental awareness in communities bordering national parks and nature reserves by supporting training and awareness activities. Thus far, ENV has organized four training courses for staff from 22 protected areas, with 13 parks and nature reserves receiving 'Green Grants'.

Mr Akito Tachibana - General Manager of TMV said: "Raising awareness amongst Vietnamese people about the relationship between human activity and the natural environment, and helping them to understand that every citizen is responsible for using natural resources effectively, is the main purpose of the program. We hope that the outcome is for more environmental protection activities to be carried out in national parks and nature reserves across the country".

In 2008, after two intensive training courses for 22 staff from 11 protected areas in the country, seven protected areas: Cat Ba; Ba Vi; Chu Yang Sin; Phong Nha - Ke Bang; Bidoup - Nui Ba; Bu Gia Map and Pu Huong, received a total grant sum of 156 million VND to support environmental education activities. To date, educators from seven protected areas have held 166 nature club meetings for as many as 5,000 students in secondary schools bordering their protected areas and 61 meetings in local villages for more than 3,200 local residents. Green Grants have also supported the airing of 264 radio shows on local public address systems from 2008 until now.

This year, a total of 160 million VND was awarded to educators from the Lo Go Xa Mat, Can Gio, Pu Mat, Chu Mom Ray and Ba Vi National Parks and the Muong Nhe Nature Reserve. Recipients plan to implement a range of environmental activities in local schools and villages, distribute awareness materials, and broadcast on local radio.

“Through our partnership with TMV, we have been able to make significant gains in reaching out to likeminded and motivated park staff and educators throughout the country,” said Dang Minh Ha, Director of Education and Training at ENV. “The Green Grant program goes beyond the utilization of our expertise in training environmental educators,” says Ha. “The grants provide direct support to the graduates that we feel can make the most difference, and we follow the grants with additional training and support in the field through our growing environmental education network.”

Since 2000, ENV has carried out nearly 60 environmental education training courses for community leaders, teachers, forest rangers, and protected area staff at 37 national parks and nature reserves and 16 universities. ENV coordinates a national network of environmental educators comprising former graduates of ENV training courses and other practitioners working to raise awareness about the need to protect nature and the environment in Vietnam. Through this network, ENV distributes news and resources and provides ongoing support, training, and technical assistance to network members.

ENV wishes to thank our ‘Go Green’ partner, TMV for supporting this important program to help increase environmental awareness across Vietnam.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. 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 environment. ENV’s 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 behavior, not only highlighting the need to protect Vietnam’s rich natural heritage and the living world around us, but also encouraging greater public participation in achieving this important and challenging task.

2. ‘Go Green – Hanh Trinh Xanh’ program

The ‘Go Green – Hanh Trinh Xanh’ Environmental Protection Program is a program that Toyota Motor Vietnam (TMV) in collaboration with the Vietnam Environment Protection Administration (VEPA) and Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) officially launched. It was born from an idea of creating a hub to promote closely and systematically, cooperation between the environmental protection activities of TMV with other organizations and dedicated environment volunteer groups in Vietnam. Budget for operation at the beginning stage is funded by TMV in order to achieve 3 objectives: Raising awareness of the community towards the protection of the environment and to ride on it to make people gradually change their behavior; directly implementing and supporting other environmental activities to minimize and stop damage to the environment in Vietnam; and supporting and helping individuals and organizations affected by environmental damage.

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