

## **Wildlife Crime: Don't be part of it!**

*UNODC launches new public service announcement to raise awareness of criminal trade in wildlife products*

**Bangkok, 19 November 2013** – The illicit trade of wildlife and its derivatives to, from, and within Asia is worth billions of dollars annually. It fuels organized crime, corruption, and violence. This transnational crime has rarely been a priority for law enforcement and the criminal justice system, allowing traffickers to enjoy a high level of impunity so far.

As a rich bio-diversity hot-spot, the Southeast Asia and Pacific region is both a point of origin and destination for a significant trade in wildlife that threatens many vital and endangered species with extinction. Rare wildlife is consumed throughout Asia – but particularly in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Viet Nam and Thailand – for luxury meals, and used for status symbol ornaments and in traditional medicine. Asia is now a significant consumer market for smuggled wildlife, driving the massive scale of poaching in Africa.

To highlight the urgency of this issue, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Regional Office for Southeast Asia and the Pacific is launching a wildlife crime public service announcement (PSA) to raise awareness among young Asians that the buying, selling, and consuming of protected species is illegal and finances organized crime.

Featuring internationally renowned Chinese actress Li Bing Bing, who is also a Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Environment Programme, the PSA vividly illustrates how wildlife crime inflicts a tragic toll of destruction and asks viewers to make a difference by changing their consumption habits today. Delivered by Ms. Li, the PSA's message is simple: ***Buying protected wildlife is a crime. Don't be part of it!***

“In today's globalized society, young people are better informed and can drive change. They can make informed choices and decide not to be part of this trade which lines the pockets of criminals,” said Yury Fedotov, UNODC Executive Director. “By showing the consequences of the illegal wildlife trade – corruption, organized crime, and the extinction of endangered species – this PSA asks young people in Asia to make a radical change,” he added.

The PSA is available in English and Mandarin, and in subtitled Thai and Vietnamese versions:

- English: <http://youtu.be/l3jlt16LhPs>
- Mandarin: <http://youtu.be/v7tOGidCbb0>
- Thai: <http://youtu.be/MeBSwzzaEMs>
- Vietnamese: <http://youtu.be/Y7VNOgUG3C8>

A social media is available for download from: <http://j.mp/WildlifeCrimePSA-SM-Pack>.

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