From the 13th - 21st July 2015 the Asian Turtle Program (ATP) of Indo-Myanmar Conservation (IMC) supported the kids football event in Yen Bai commune, Ba Vi district, Hanoi. In all eight teams from eight villages in the commune participated. The players aged from 11-14 years old, most of them were from the Muong ethnic group, a group that makes up 1.5% of the population of Vietnam where 54 ethnic groups are found. During the matches around 600-700 spectators watched the games. During the opening celebration, Nguyen Tai Thang from the ATP gave a special presentation highlighting the importance of the Hoan Kiem turtle (*Rafetus swinhoei*) that inhabits Dong Mo Lake in the commune and its legal protection under national law National Law (Penal code No.37/2009/QH12). Yen Bai commune was chosen as a focus for the activity following an illegal hunting attempt in March 2015 when a *Rafetus swinhoei* from the lake was almost caught by a group of men from the commune.

Press release by: ATP

We would like to send our profound gratitude to Cleveland Metroparks Zoo (CMZ) and Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) for supporting the *Rafetus swinhoei* project in general and this activity in particular. We would like to thank our local partners and agencies, and the Youth Union of Yen Bai commune who contributed greatly to the organisation of this successful event.

For further information, please contact:
Asian Turtle Program - Indo-Myanmar Conservation
Room 1806, C14 Bac Ha Building, To Huu street, Nam Tu Liem district, Hanoi, Vietnam
Tel: +84 (0) 4 7302 8389
Email: info@asianturtleprogram.org
Website: www.asianturtleprogram.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/AsianTurtleProgram
Over the course of the games between 600-700 spectators came to support their teams, including a lot of proud parents.

Photo by: Nguyen Tai Thang - ATP

In the pre game ceremony an awareness presentation was given for turtle conservation.

Photo by: Nguyen Tai Thang - ATP

The kids football match has been one of the first community activities to raise awareness to Swinhoe’s Softshell Turtle (Rafetus swinhoei) in the commune.

Photo by: Nguyen Tai Thang - ATP

Prizes included framed pictures of the famous turtle from Dong Mo Lake.

Photo by: Nguyen Tai Thang - ATP

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Photo by: Nguyen Tai Thang - ATP