From 31st of January to the 09th of February 2017, the Asian Turtle Program (ATP) of Indo-Myanmar Conservation (IMC) in collaboration with Kim Son Commune Youth Union organised the fifth football event to promote conservation of the world’s rarest turtle, the Hoan Kiem turtle (**Rafetus swinhoei**). Only three individuals of the species are known in existence in the world; of those, two individuals are living in Suzhou zoo, China. Only one living animal has been confirmed living in Vietnam in Dong Mo lake, Son Tay district, on the outskirts Hanoi.

After 11 intense matches, two outstanding teams made it to the final, the Nha Tho - “The Church” Team and Nghia Son Hamlet Team. After 90-minute of heated play, the teams drew 0-0 and the game went to a sudden death 11 meter shoot-out. “The Church” team were victorious, winning the turtle championship 2017.

After the match, the Chairman of Kim Son commune, Mr. Nguyen Van Mong, delivered a speech to express his gratitude towards the sponsors and to highlight the importance of the Hoan Kiem turtle in Dong Mo Lake. At the same time, through this event, he also wanted to remind the need for local collaboration in support of protection of this rare species.

“We would like to thank The Asian Turtle Program (ATP) for holding such a meaningful activity. Luckily, with the organization’s advocacy, we now recognize that we live next to a very rare turtle. Together with the organization, our people will conserve this species in Dong Mo lake.” Mr. Nguyen Van Thuc – a local fisherman who has been fishing in the lake for 30 years said. Press released by: Nguyen Tai Thang - ATP/IMC
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Above: Over the course of the tournament between 500 - 600 spectators came to support their teams.
Photo by: Nguyen Tai Thang - ATP/IMC

Picture (right): skilful technique of Nghia Son team. Photo by: Nguyen Tai Thang - ATP/IMC

Above: The victors take photo with Rafetus swinhoei picture.
Photo by: Nguyen Van Trong - ATP/IMC