

Dr. Vo Quy

Honorary President

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Dr. Quy, was born in a small village in Ha Tinh Province in central Vietnam. He developed a deep interest in birds from childhood and by age 12 could identify most of the species that lived near his village. During the war against French colonial rule, he walked to China and studied biology at the Vietnam teacher-training institute established by the government in China's Guangxi Province. In 1954, he returned to Vietnam and in 1956 helped found then the University of Hanoi (since 1993, Vietnam National University, Hanoi), and began teaching in its zoology department. In the early 1960s, he studied at Moscow University and obtained his Ph.D. in ornithology. He subsequently returned to then the University of Hanoi, as a lecturer and then zoology professor. He remains a professor at that university to this day.

As a zoologist and ornithologist, he has spent many years conducting inventories of the fauna of Vietnam, and established the first Zoological Museum at the University of Hanoi or elsewhere in Vietnam. His book « The Birds of Vietnam » in two volumes published in 1975 and 1981 is the first zoological book written by a Vietnamese scientist with the description of 774 species (and 1004 sub-species) of birds of Vietnam and their biological data, including the description of a new species of pheasant of the world, the Vietnamese Pheasant (*Lophura hatinhensis*).

He has initiated the research of the effect of war on environment. During the war (in 1971 and then in 1974) he led the first team of environmental scientists to go farther south of the 17th parallel to investigate the environmental damaged caused by US Army's bombs, herbicides (Agent Orange/Dioxin), bulldozers, and napalm, a substance used in bombs and flamethrowers that spreads fire. Through these risky travels, he came to realize effort that lay ahead to repair Vietnam's environment and to establish the first national research Program on 'Rational utilization of natural resources and Environmental Conservation'' in Vietnam (1981).

As a co-founder and leader of the State Program from 1981 to 1990, he played a key role in initiating the new environmental policies of sustainable development towards the economic growth of Vietnam. He was the editor and co-author of the first draft of the National Conservation Strategy for Vietnam (1985) and designing the first draft of the Environment Law for Vietnam (1989).

Other fields of his research are biodiversity and endangered species, establishment and management of protected areas, rural societies in relation to the use of biological resources and forests, and the natural resources needs of the poor people.

He was the founder and director of the Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies (CRES) at the Vietnam National University, Hanoi for 10 years (1985-1995). From 1996 he was selected as Chairman of the Scientific Committee and then Honorary President of this organization. He concentrates his work on training young scientists on environmental issues; assisting local

communities to sustainably use their natural resources, protect and restore their environments, and helping them to conserve biodiversity. He has initiated small projects that aid local people to use natural resources rationally, including land, forest, wetland, fauna, flora...on which their livelihoods and welfare depend. He is planning to take a two-sided approach to the conservation problem, "bottom-up" and "top-down". The bottom-up approach includes working closely with local people and local authorities to demonstrate how they can sustainably manage their natural resources in order to reduce the pressure on nature. He believes that quality of life increases when the land is restored, forests are well managed, and biodiversity is well conserved. The top-down approach is rooted in good relations with government officials, administrators and policy makers. Helping the authorities of national and provincial levels to implement the country's National Conservation Strategy and encouraging them to accede to and abide by international agreements, such as CITES, RAMSAR, the Biodiversity Convention is an important aim of his Center.

Since 1986, he has been the member of the Commission of National Park and Protected areas (CNPPA) / World Commission of Protected areas (WCPA) and member of Species Survival Commission (SSC) of The World Conservation Union (IUCN). He was member of Steering Committee of SSC and was selected as Chairman of Asian Wild Cattle Specialist Group from 1986 to 1994. He has been working closely with The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), UNEP and MAB/UNESCO for many years. He concentrates his work to protect the nature, the biodiversity, to save endangered species by encouraging the Government to establish protected areas and national parks and helping the people living in the buffer zones of protected areas, using rationally their natural resources, and in the same time conserving their nature and the biodiversity.

Vo Quy is leader and/or founder and active member of a number of NGO's related to the conservation of nature and conservation of environment in Vietnam, such as : Vietnam Association of Biologists; Vietnam Association of Protection of Natural resources and Environment; Vietnam Association of Ecologists; Ecology - Economy Institute; Education for Nature - Vietnam Center; Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin , Vietnam-U.S. Dialogue Group on Agent Orange/Dioxin ...

16 books (including 8 books co-author\editor) and more than 140 publications, papers and reports on ornithology, sustainable use of natural resources, conservation of nature and wild life, conservation of environment, biodiversity, sustainable development, socio-economy, long-term effect of herbicides on Environment and living resources.

In recognition of his contribution to the education and research works, Vietnamese Government/ authorities had awarded him 12 Medals and Orders.

He was also selected as recipient of a number of international honors, including the WWF Gold Medal (1988); the Global-500 Award from UNEP (1992); the highest Award of IUCN, The John Phillips Medal (1994); The Bruno-Shubert Award, I Category of Germany (1994); The PEW Scholars Award of University of Michigan,

USA (1995); the Golden Ark Order of the Netherlands (1997); the Blue Planet Prize of Japan (2003); and the Certification of Appreciation of the World Association of Representatives for Descendants WARD, Japan (2004) in recognition of his lifetime dedication to the conservation of nature and natural resources, his pioneering work on a National Conservation Strategy for Vietnam, his strong support for activities in the field of biodiversity, species survival and protected areas, his distinguished Service in International Conservation, and his education work for more than 50 years teaching experience. In 2008, he was selected as one of Heroes of Environment by Time Magazine, USA.

(Document from CRES)