



Peter Knights

Guardian Against the Illegal Wildlife Trade

Co-Founder of WildAid, one of the world's most successful organizations fighting the illegal wildlife trade, Peter Knights actually began his career as an ecological detective.

He was a program director and undercover investigator working on the illegal trade in endangered species for the Global Survival Network and a senior investigator for the Environmental Investigation Agency.

Knights specialized in conducting on-site investigations globally and campaigning against the wild bird trade for pets and consumption of endangered species in traditional Chinese medicine, such as bear gallbladder, rhino horn and tiger bone. In 1996, he created the Active Conservation Awareness program in Asia, the first international program aimed at reducing demand for endangered species products. The program used sophisticated advertising techniques, donated airtime and celebrity spokespeople with the message, "When the buying stops, the killing stops."

He received an Associate Laureate of the Rolex Award for Enterprise for this memorable work.

The program now reaches up to one billion people a week with over 80 celebrity ambassadors, like Jackie Chan, Yao Ming, Ralph Fiennes, and Harrison Ford. Surveys indicate the campaign has persuaded 8-30% of shark fin consumers to stop eating shark products with a further 40% saying they were eating less. The program is currently focused on the 2008 Beijing Olympics and features gold medal winners.

Knights also created the Shark Conservation and Galapagos Forever programs.

A graduate of the London School of Economics, Peter has also served as Executive Director of WildAid and Program Director to the Barbara Delano Foundation.