



# YEAR OF THE TIGER

2022 WWF Tigers Alive  
Annual Report





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# INTRODUCTION

The Tigers Alive Initiative is one of WWF's most ambitious and visionary conservation programs undertaken for a single species; since established in 2009 we have been working with partners to double wild tigers globally.

From a population of perhaps 100,000 at the beginning of the last century, tiger numbers hit an all-time low in 2010 with as few as 3,200 left in the wild. That same year, all 13 tiger range governments came together for the first time at the St. Petersburg Summit where they committed to double the number of wild tigers by 2022 - a goal known as Tx2.

In this critical year for tiger conservation, the 2022 Lunar Year of the Tiger, we have seen both cause for celebration and stark reminders of the need for further and urgent action on tiger recovery.

In July, a global assessment and update on wild tiger numbers by the IUCN Red List (in consultation with WWF) was released indicating global tiger numbers are around 4,500 (3,700-5,600) tigers. While uncertainties in baselines make it difficult to reliably assess trends in global tiger populations, there is growing evidence that global wild tiger decline has finally been reversed — a rare and hard-fought conservation success story, particularly in Bhutan, India and Nepal.



# FOREWORD



## Stuart Chapman, Lead WWF Tigers Alive Initiative

“Over the next 12 years we have the opportunity to use bold and ambitious conservation interventions to return tigers to their historic range. These projects will require significant investment but the resultant impacts for biodiversity, climate change prevention and mitigation, and sustainable economies for local communities will far outweigh the resources needed for this large-scale ecosystem restoration.”

## Dr. Sejal Worah, Chair WWF Tiger Steering Group & Programme Director, WWF India

“While we celebrate the increase in tiger numbers, it presents challenges for people living in proximity to wild tigers. But negative interactions can be managed if we partner with communities who navigate life in tiger landscapes — and give them the opportunity to directly contribute to the policies affecting them and to benefit from living with tigers. Over the next 12 years we will endeavour to better integrate the needs and contributions of local communities into future tiger conservation efforts.”



## Dr. Margaret Kinnaird, Lead Wildlife Practice, WWF International

“Conserving tigers has the potential to produce significant biodiversity gains and provide a wide array of ecosystem services and direct benefits to local communities. The fate of people and big cats are closely intertwined, and our approach to tiger conservation going forward will be demonstrative of our capacity to live in harmony with nature.”








THE PAST 12 YEARS OF TIGER  
CONSERVATION HAVE SHOWN THAT  
WHEN WE COME TOGETHER  
TO PROTECT NATURE,  
RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE  
IN SPITE OF THE ODDS.





# TIGER RANGE COUNTRIES

-  Trend increasing
-  Trend stable
-  Trend not determined
-  Trend decreasing
-  Historic Tiger Range

*Due to varied sampling coverage and monitoring techniques there could be some uncertainty in the depicted trends*



**Nepal** became the first country to release updated tiger numbers in 2022 when the Rt. Honorable PM, Mr Sher Bahadur Deuba announced the historic more than doubling of tiger numbers since 2009. Nepal's National Tiger and Prey Survey 2022 found there are now 355 wild tigers in the country, almost three times the population in 2009. The exhaustive survey covered 20,747 square kilometres, 14% of the country, and required 13,065 days of field staff time and was supported throughout by WWF-Nepal.

In **Malaysia** hope remains with the breeding population evidenced in Belum-

Temengor Forest Complex in January 2022 when WWF recorded a video of a mother and four cubs on camera trap.

Despite the increase in wild tiger numbers, a soon to be published analysis estimates that the species is **restricted to less than 3 per cent of its historic range** and this continues to decline. However, across vast tracts of this prior range habitat exists and there is an incredible opportunity for **full scale ecosystem restoration across 91 million ha** of their previous range through a focus on tiger conservation in targeted landscapes (Miquelle and Sanderson, 2022).



**“TIGERS ARE RESTRICTED TO LESS THAN 3% OF THEIR HISTORIC RANGE”**

# YEAR OF THE TIGER HIGHLIGHTS

JAN

Malaysian Tiger Task Force established

India's Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve and Nepal's Bardia National Park jointly receive the Tx2 Award. Khata Forest Conservation Area granted the Conservation Excellence Award.



FEB

Tiger NGO Coalition vision document *Securing a Viable Future for the Tiger* launched

Launch of the Lunar Year of the Tiger and the WWF Tx2 Impact report



APR

WWF Tiger Trail Auction held in Singapore



The *Living with Tigers* report released by WWF



JUL

Tigers remain 'Endangered' in IUCN Red List Update

International Tiger Youth Summit 2022 organized by WWF

On Global Tiger Day, Nepal announced tiger population estimate that shows close to tripling their wild tiger population



AUG

*Restoring Asia's Roar: Opportunities For Tiger Recovery Across Their Historic Range* report released by WWF

44 Sambar deer translocated into Mae Wong and Khlong Lan National Parks in Thailand

Tiger Range Countries met in India - way forward agreed for GTRP 2.0



SEP

Russia announced increase tiger population estimate of 750 wild tigers including cubs

Russia and Kazakhstan sign MoU on tiger reintroduction

*Snaring of Big Cats in Mainland Asia* briefing released by WWF and TRAFFIC



NOV

Cambodia and India sign MoU on tiger reintroduction

Tackling Tiger Trafficking Framework launched at CITES CoP19 side event by WWF and partners

Global Tiger Recovery Program 2022 - 2034 Planning Meeting, New Delhi



DEC

Side event at Convention on Biological Diversity COP-15: *Wild Cats: Iconic Indicators of Biodiversity*

US Big Cat Public Safety Act becomes law



*Skin and Bones: Tiger Trafficking Analysis* released by TRAFFIC



Ecosystem restoration at this scale is vital not only for the species itself which is revered across and beyond its range, but also for the diverse environments it impacts. Tiger landscapes contribute to human well-being, locally and globally, through the provision of many ecosystem goods and services such as sustainable water supplies, carbon sequestration, food security and medicinal plants, and economic opportunities. Such large, ecologically intact areas are critical in addressing the triple crises of biodiversity loss, climate change, and the emergence of zoonotic diseases, and providing the stable conditions essential for healthy, sustainable economies and security for human communities.

In aid of driving more effective and collaborative efforts for tiger recovery for this next 12 year phase WWF has been central in bringing together a coalition of the world's most prominent tiger NGOs and IGOs. Fauna and Flora International, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, Panthera, TRAFFIC, Wildlife Conservation Society and WWF launched a joint vision in

January 2022 for how the Tiger Range Countries can strengthen and improve the Global Tiger Initiative for the next 12-year period. The key points in the vision document, [Securing a Viable Future for the Tiger](#) suggests range-wide goals for the next 12-year commitment to not only include preventing decline and supporting increasing tiger numbers in existing sites, but also active restoration of tiger range both in current and historic tiger range countries.

As we close the Year of the Tiger, and enter the next 12 years of commitments of the Global Tiger Recovery Program there is a pressing need not only to continue the global tiger recovery efforts, but also to strengthen all necessary actions to achieve long-lasting tiger conservation.

This WWF Tigers Alive annual report highlights how WWF has worked with partners at all levels to seize the opportunity of the 2022 Year of the Tiger and established the foundation for increased and sustained tiger recovery efforts over the next 12 years and beyond.





# TOWARDS COEXISTENCE

**Tigers live in some of the most densely populated countries of the world and finding effective ways to partner with people living and sharing spaces with wildlife in these areas is vital for the long-term recovery of wild tigers.**

Human-tiger conflict is a serious threat to both communities and tigers, and governments and conservation organisations need to better engage communities that live in tiger landscapes to understand the challenges they face. There has been a lack of practical guidance on how to do this and in response, WWF developed a holistic approach known as [People Centred Tiger Conservation](#). The approach provides a framework to become trusted partners with communities by better understanding their priorities and values; maintaining dialogues and sustaining long-term engagement; and collaborating with communities and other stakeholders to develop innovative approaches to increase community stewardship for tiger conservation. By co-designing conservation strategies with communities this approach will ensure more informed decision making on planning and conservation to enable human tiger coexistence under changing conditions.

## LIVING WITH TIGERS REPORT

In June of the Year of the Tiger WWF launched the [Living with Tigers report](#). This piece of major research lays the groundwork for future WWF expansion of community led tiger conservation over the coming decade.

The current lack of community voices in tiger conservation policy-making and policy delivery is addressed in detail, and the report highlights the massive untapped potential for community involvement. This report reimagines tiger conservation in a considerable way – one that would provide tangible and scalable benefits to huge numbers of people that reside in tiger landscapes. The report recommendations urge tiger range country governments to put those living with tigers at the heart of human-tiger conservation strategies.

WWF will continue to encourage governments to adopt the report recommendations to ensure communities are partners in tiger conservation including:

**1:** Adopt well-defined and measurable goals on human-tiger coexistence in the next Global Tiger



Recovery Program (2023-2034), and directly link such strategies to the sustainable development agenda.

**2:** Rapidly expand direct community involvement in tiger conservation decision-making - and in doing so, create new forums for direct dialogue with 'tiger' communities at all governance levels.

**3:** Ensure community stewardship in conservation by seizing opportunities to formalise and expand existing community governance models in tiger landscapes

**4:** In consultation with local communities, design and implement new policies that reduce the costs and expand the benefits of living with tigers, both as a matter of fundamental fairness, and in recognizing the critical role Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities play in maintaining tiger populations.

**5:** Significantly increase investments for tiger conservation outside traditional protected areas systems. These investments should maximise the use of social science expertise and also facilitate the processes that can lead to the formation of new community conserved areas within tiger areas.

*The Sundarbans has one of the highest rates of human-tiger conflict in the world. For many, the mangrove forest is a crucial source of food and income. The traditional honey collectors of the Sundarbans are known as 'moulis'. The women tentatively remove slats from the hive to check the bees are healthy and productive, looking for any signs of disease.*

© Tanmoy Badhuri / WWF International



## A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO PROMOTE HUMAN TIGER COEXISTENCE

WWF-India is moving towards a holistic forward looking approach to address human-tiger conflict as well as working to change the narrative by promoting the concept of human-tiger conflict and coexistence.

The first part of this work is the creation of a *Human Wildlife Conflict Atlas* which is made up of multiple data sources to understand trends and intensity of human-tiger conflict. This will also incorporate coexistence cultures arising out of traditional beliefs. The atlas comprises an artificial intelligence data scraper that extracts information on incidents of human-tiger conflict published in English media sources.

The second part of this holistic forward-looking approach are plans to radio collar or conduct focused monitoring of dispersing tigers around the buffer zones of Protected Areas. This work will help WWF to better understand human-wildlife interface dynamics and tiger movement in human dominated landscapes.

Further conflict management efforts include establishing groups of local citizens to help with the management of human-tiger conflict. In the Terai Arc Landscape these groups are known as Bagh Mitras, which translates to 'tiger friends'. Bagh Mitras are trained to reduce risks of human wildlife interactions on local communities. A similar group of over 100 citizens from villages across the Indian Sundarbans are being trained and equipped as a voluntary group, named Prokriti Bandhu, to manage human-tiger conflict in the region.

The final part focuses on mitigating conflict by compensating economic losses arising from human-tiger conflict, such as livestock depredation, to prevent targeted killings. Tools such as the Livestock Insurance Scheme and Interim Relief Scheme continue to be supported by WWF-India.

## REVISION OF THE SAFE SYSTEMS APPROACH

The Safe System Approach, developed by Tigers Alive, is a holistic and integrated framework to



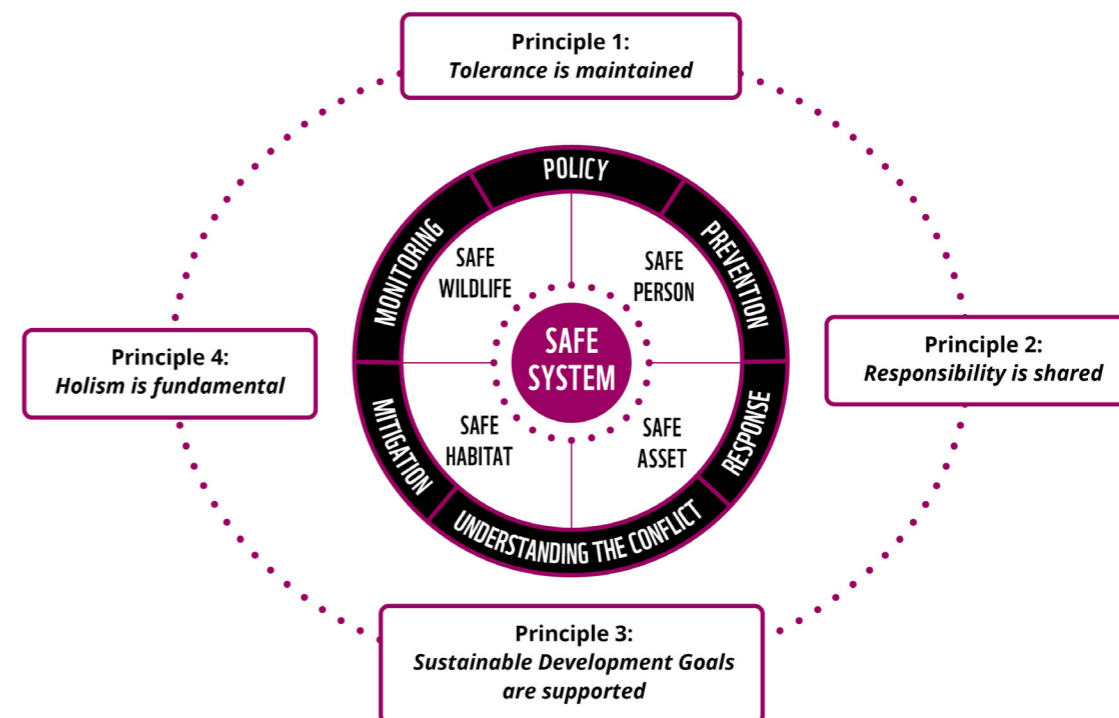
support the design and management of human-wildlife conflict to keep people, their assets, wildlife and habitat safe. This year WWF began an entire revision of the Safe Systems Approach to make it more impactful for users.

This process will include gathering thorough feedback from a range of partners and experts, particularly to ensure voices of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities are incorporated effectively in the roll out of this approach. Ultimately we want to help manage conflict through having an easy to use system with a step by step guide for users, and statistical validation of the assessment tool. The revised Approach will be piloted in six sites (including two in tiger range - Bhutan and Malaysia) in June 2023 to assess the impact of the new model before the approach is scaled up across other areas with human-wildlife conflict.



Atul Singh and some of his team of Bagh Mitra (tiger friends) on the edge of Pilibhit Tiger Reserve. This volunteer team of tiger trackers help mitigate human-tiger conflict in this landscape where humans and tigers live side by side.

© Jitender Gupta / WWF International



## PEOPLE AND TIGERS IN TRONGSA, BHUTAN

Trongsa, located in central Bhutan, is a mountainous area that's home to local resource dependent agrarian communities. It's also well connected to multiple protected areas which are home to tigers who regularly pass through Trongsa as they move in the search for food or a mate. The area is one of the poorest districts in Bhutan and communities there are heavily reliant on livestock and subsistence crop production.

The community has lost more than 2,700 livestock over five years (2016-2020) with the vast majority attributed to kills by tigers, yet the area has no targeted conservation interventions. In response, this year WWF met with four gewogs (groups of villages) in the district to develop a deeper understanding of the communities, their tolerance and impacts related to tiger conservation through a social survey 'Capturing Community Perceptions and Social Sentiments on Living with Tigers'.

The online survey measured tolerance levels of communities for tiger conservation. The results are now being used to inform a multi-year project proposal in Trongsa which will be rolled out in partnership with the local communities and Government of Bhutan to reduce human tiger conflict and its impacts on their livelihoods. Given the success of the survey in Trongsa WWF is looking to scale the use of this approach to further tiger conservation landscapes.



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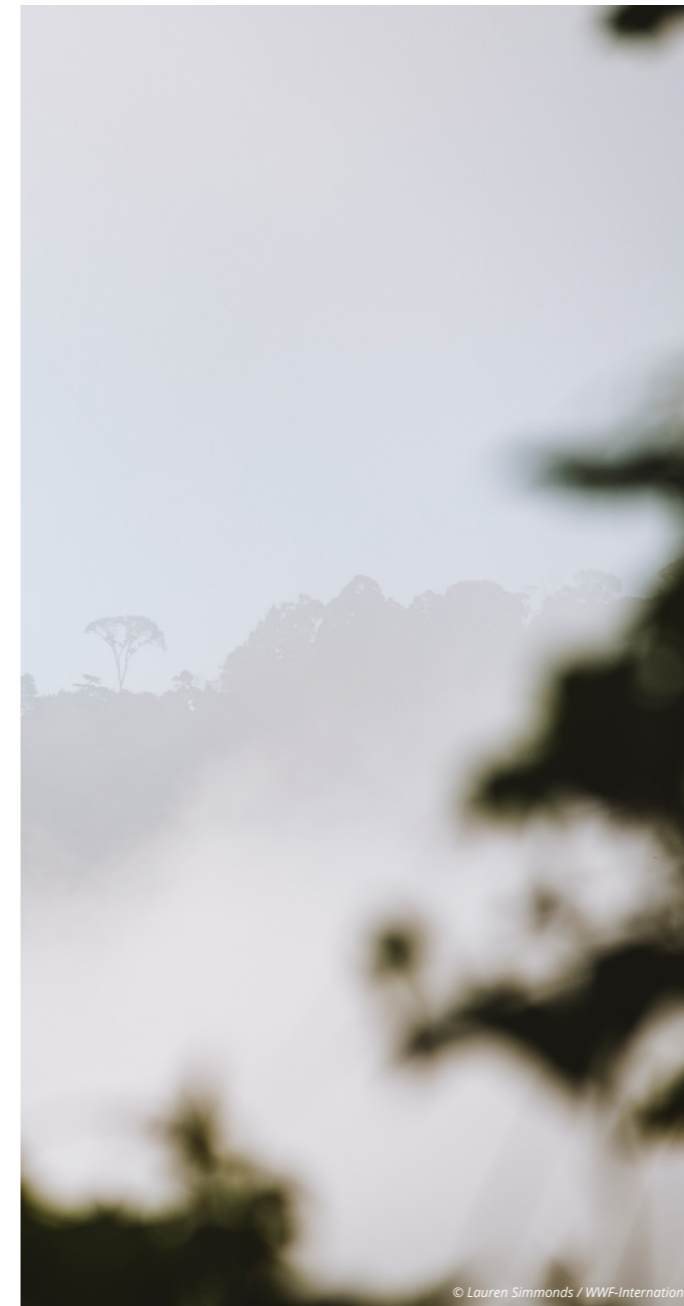
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## MAPPING SOCIAL LANDSCAPES IN MALAYSIA

Royal Belum State Park is one of the last strongholds for tigers in Malaysia with less than 150 left in the whole country. The Orang Asli, Peninsular Malaysia's Indigenous Peoples, live in the State Park and the surrounding areas and have shared their home with tigers for centuries. During September this year WWF piloted a participatory mapping exercise with two Orang Asli communities to strengthen community partnerships in tiger conservation there.

The aim of the exercise was for the communities to create physical maps that visualise their social landscape. A variety of information is used to create the maps such as the demographics that make up the community, how close the communities are to the forest, whether or not they depend on natural resources, if there are any marginalised groups, who the community influencers are, and who are the internal or external local leaders.

Understanding the social characteristics, perceptions and networks within the Orang Asli communities will help us identify key barriers and opportunities to strengthening community partnership. This will enable us to develop and implement tailored strategic interventions for community engagement to ensure long term sustainable tiger conservation in the landscape.



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## FEATURE STORY

# CONFLICT TO COEXISTENCE

**Smriti Dahal is WWF Tigers Alive Community Lead who grew up in Kathmandu, and would often go with her friends and family to the closest national parks to get away from the hustle and bustle of the city. These mountains, some of the highest in the world, and its lowland forests, were the places she spent time with her friends and family. And so naturally she wanted to protect it as best she could, here she goes into detail about her work with communities living in tiger landscapes in Nepal.**

When I began my career in environmental policy, I was expecting to be working with plants and animals. But instead what I've learned, time and time again, is that conservation isn't just about wildlife – it's about people.

Once remote villages now have access to mobile devices and social media. Younger generations are travelling abroad for education and work. And as societies, traditions and environmental conditions change, so must our ways of preserving both nature and culture.

These rapid social and environmental changes often came up in conversations I had recently under the canopies of Nepal's Banke National Park.

## ASKING QUESTIONS

Banke National Park was established 12 years ago, as part of [Nepal's commitment to doubling the population of tigers](#) in the wild by 2022. Spanning 550 km<sup>2</sup>, it sits within the [Terai Arc Landscape](#), a precious ecological treasure stretching over 700 kilometres across southern Nepal along its border with India.

The tiger population here increased from 4 in 2013 to 25 in 2022. This is an amazing conservation feat, an achievement only possible through the sustained collaboration and commitment of the various people and sectors involved. But with this progress in wildlife conservation, we also have to consider the kinds of impacts it has on people.

With tiger numbers on the rise, how have communities around the park been impacted?

How did the establishment of Banke National Park change their way of living? How do they feel about tiger conservation and what roles do they want to take in it, if any? This is what we at WWF needed to find out.

## ASSESSING REALITIES

From Kathmandu, we flew to Nepalgunj then drove to the nearest buffer zone – a transition space between protected areas and surrounding human settlements – to visit neighbourhoods nestled around Banke National Park.

With the support of WWF Nepal's field team, who are key to sustaining long term relationships with people around Banke, we were able to arrange meetings with several community members who we got to know better each day. We introduced ourselves and discussed the research that WWF was conducting and needed their help with. The study, "*Capture Community Perceptions on Living with Tigers*", aimed to determine the social carrying capacity of these communities living in the buffer zone of the National Park.

It was eye-opening during the research to see how social dynamics came into play, because rules don't affect everyone in the same way. Indigenous communities might depend more on natural resources in their daily lives, while newcomers to the area might not. Women might have more duties but less voice in community decisions than men. Some people might have more money and land to adapt to new restrictions, while others might have a better relationship with park authorities or a better understanding of new regulations in place.

This research takes time and resources but it's critical that WWF spends more time in communities to better understand community perspectives and how conservation measures impact different parts of a community. Without them WWF is unable to design specific interventions that benefit communities living with wildlife on their doorstep.

## LOOKING AHEAD

The analysis from our research shows that human-tiger interaction is increasing as a concern for all communities living around Banke National Park. During the research, residents, although positive about tiger recovery, expressed their fear and concerns of living with tigers. While communities had positive perceptions towards tigers and thought they had a right to live in the

forest, their tolerance towards tigers depended on the severity and impact of the human-tiger conflict. Recommendations from the study, will be used to inform WWF's tiger conservation work, lobby tiger range governments and mobilise resources to upscale this work across Nepal and other tiger range countries.

Successful tiger conservation will require understanding the diverse and complex interactions between the dynamic ecological and social elements of landscapes - and much more needs to be done to understand social dynamics.



Smriti Dahal with people from various communities in the buffer zone of Banke National Park, Nepal.

**END**

**EXPLOITATION**





The illegal trade of tigers, their parts and products remains a constant threat to wild tigers. Driven by a demand for uses such as traditional medicines, health tonics, ornamentation and increasingly as a status symbol, their skin, teeth, bones and other body parts are big business.

[Between January 2000 and June 2022 a total of 3,377 tigers](#) were seized from traffickers, close to matching the number of tigers left in the wild today, at 4,500. WWF and TRAFFIC, the global wildlife trade monitoring network, are working together with governments, enforcement agencies, the private sector and others to break persistent illegal trade routes, while reducing demand for tiger parts through behavioural change approaches in major Asian markets. We are also working towards commitment and implementation from the governments in China, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam to phase out tiger farms which, by feeding the trade from captive tigers, perpetuates and stimulates demand for tigers thereby threatening those in the wild.

## TRAFFIC'S SKIN & BONES REPORT

TRAFFIC's [Skin and Bones: Tiger Trafficking Analysis from January 2000–June 2022](#) reviewed new stark data showing an increasing trend in seizures, that evidences the illegal trade of tigers and their parts continues to threaten the future of wild tigers. Analysis of tiger seizure data between January 2000 and June 2022 across 50 countries and territories estimated a minimum of 3,377 tigers were confiscated by authorities as whole tigers, dead and alive, as well as a variety of tiger parts and products.

The release of the report before CITES CoP19 in November included a call for CITES Parties to fully implement the needed activities agreed through CITES, including stronger laws and enforcement on the illegal tiger trade, and actions to stop the involvement of tiger farms in trade.

This is seen as a flagship report on tiger trade trends, and is used by governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders to inform decision making. Whilst it's not possible to determine the exact impact of this particular report, we expect that it contributed to the sense of importance in tackling tiger trade during the CITES CoP this year.

# TACKLING TIGER TRAFFICKING FRAMEWORK

The [Tackling Tiger Trafficking Framework](#), which will help address the illegal trade in tigers and their parts and products, both from wild and captive sources, was launched in November 2022. The technical expertise of more than 12 partners were brought together to develop a key guidance document collating the best strategies, approaches, tools and resources available to break the tiger trade chains. The framework has already been referenced in the Global Tiger Recovery Program 2.0 briefing on combating trade and was launched at a side event at the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES CoP19) in November 2022 in Panama.

WWF and partners will advocate the framework

is used by governments and relevant law enforcement agencies in the development of their national tiger trade strategies. The framework should also be referenced and utilised within the Global Tiger Recovery Program 2.0, and in law enforcement meetings aimed at tackling organised wildlife crimes in Asia.

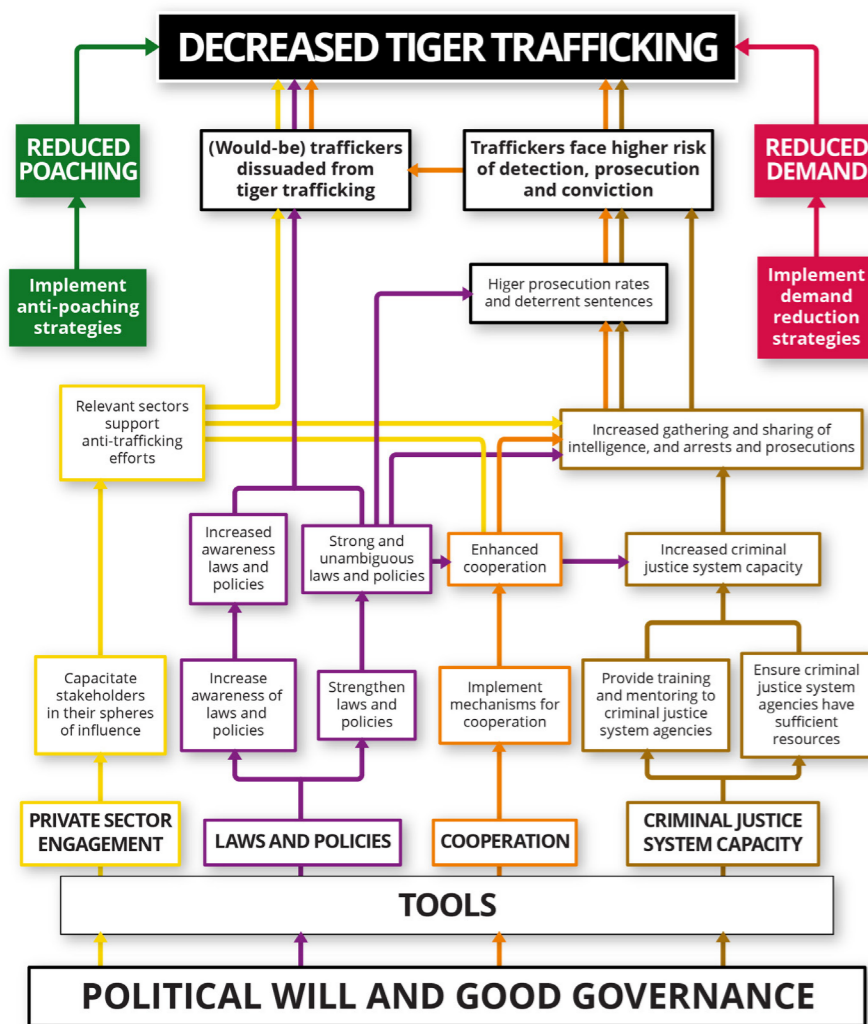
## ADDRESSING TIGER TRADE BEYOND THE TIGER RANGE

In the USA, on 29 July the House of Representatives passed H.R. 263, the [Big Cat Public Safety Act](#) and on 6 December it was passed unanimously by the Senate. This legislation will help prevent captive tigers from ending up in the illegal trade in tiger parts and products, which is a primary threat to the species in the wild. The new law will also help ensure the welfare of captive big cats, as well as public safety, by requiring facilities to obtain

a federal permit for big cat ownership. Through these actions, information will be provided on who owns them, when they're sold or traded and what happens to their parts when they die. The new law sends a message to the world, particularly to places in which tiger farms help fuel the illegal big cat trade - like China, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam - that the US stands strong against wildlife crime. In addition to WWF's direct lobbying efforts, nearly 690,000 WWF activists have sent messages to their Members of Congress to urge support for this critical piece of legislation. [WWF US's statement can be found here.](#)

Following the [WWF and TRAFFIC report released in 2020 on the EU's role in tiger trade](#), EU Member States have continued to work towards the development of EU Guidance on tiger trade. This year Slovakia and the Czech Republic have continued to lead on this with TRAFFIC support, with thanks to WWF Germany funding.

### TACKLING TIGER TRAFFICKING FRAMEWORK Theory of change



# CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

In March the 74<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee of CITES was held in Lyon, France. This was followed by the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of CITES (CoP19) in Panama City, Panama during November 2022.

It was confirmed that some of the proposed tiger farm missions (they were first agreed in 2016) have finally been scheduled to take place for Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam in January 2023. WWF continues to advocate to ensure these are conducted thoroughly including strong terms of references including relevant non-Secretariat expertise to join the missions.

The terms of reference and the modus operandi for the new CITES Big Cat Task Force were agreed with all of WWF's key comments to improve transparency and robustness included. In this, governmental and other experts will consider the enforcement actions needed to tackle illegal trade across all big cat species. TRAFFIC's report, commissioned by the CITES Secretariat, on legal and illegal trade in big cats, which will inform the work of the task force, has now been [published](#).

At CITES CoP19, WWF co-hosted two well-attended side events. At the first we moderated a discussion on the trade in Asian big cats,

and the desired outcomes from CITES at CoP19. Presentations from the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), TRAFFIC, and the Wildlife Justice Commission (WJC) highlighted the issues, including the findings and recommendations from the above mentioned Skin and Bones report and the WJC [To skin a cat: How organised crime capitalises and exploits cat tiger facilities report](#).

At the second event, the Tackling Tiger Trade Framework was launched by WWF on behalf of the 12 partners to governments, NGOs and other stakeholders. With the EIA, India's Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, TRACE Wildlife Forensic Network, and the WJC, the criminal justice system approaches to address tiger trade were discussed in detail.

In part from WWF's advocacy before and during the meeting, the CoP19 outcomes retained some Decisions which were proposed for deletion that addressed improved enforcement, tourist markets and the leopard trade, and strengthened language being added to the Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. Cop18) on the trade in Asian big cats.

Whilst we did not lose ground on the agreement of actions needed by Parties, it is disappointing that despite some mention from four tiger range countries, even stronger action was not agreed specifically targeting certain countries that are not implementing CITES effectively to reduce tiger trade. This was in part due to a reluctance of Parties to champion the calling out of certain governments.



© Paula Carrillo / WWF

## STOP THE SNARING CRISIS

Snaring remains a major issue in tiger range countries and is emptying forests within and beyond Asia. WWF estimates that there are over 12 million snares present in the protected areas of Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam. Driven by the growing illegal wildlife trade poachers are increasingly using snares to trap wild tigers, leopards and other animals that are in high demand in the black market.

WWF launched the [Snaring of Big Cats in Mainland Asia](#) briefing which found a minimum of 387 Asian big cats had been captured in snares between 2012-2022. Further data suggests that 50% of tiger snaring incidents were indeed targeting tigers. The briefing, authored in partnership with TRAFFIC and released in September 2022, addresses a serious lack of reliable and analytical data on the snaring crisis in South Asia.

WWF continues to advocate for the recommendations detailed in briefing and raise awareness, particularly amongst protected area

managers and governments in South Asia, of the threat which snaring has (particularly in buffer areas) on Big Cats. In Southeast Asia partners are increasingly recognizing the impact of snaring and it was for instance now included in the recent USAID call for proposals in Cambodia.

## CANINES FOR FELINES: WILDLIFE SNIFFER DOGS COUNTERING TIGER CRIME IN INDIA

TRAFFIC-India and WWF-India work together on a programme for sniffer dog training which provides expert training for wildlife sniffer dog squads to detect and deter wildlife crime. This year the sniffer dog programme inducted six more dogs, bringing the total number of dogs supported by this initiative to over 90. Puppies of about six to nine months are provided training along with two handlers nominated by the participating state forest departments. During 2022, the sniffer dogs have helped in making breakthroughs in a number of tiger poaching cases in the country.



## INSTITUTIONALISING RANGER TRAINING IN BHUTAN

WWF continues to support institutionalisation of ranger training with active projects in Bhutan and India. In Bhutan, WWF has helped the Ugyen Wangchuk Institute for Conservation and Environment to amend and strengthen the existing training curriculum for rangers. The new curriculum was developed in consultation with the Department of Forest and Park Services officials, Southern African Wildlife College and forest rangers and is now endorsed by the Government of Bhutan. This sets uniform and optimal standards for ranger training in Bhutan and ensures that rangers have the skills they need to deliver on their duties.

Rangers play an indispensable role in maintaining the integrity of the protected and conserved areas while supporting the diverse rights of those they interact with. At a global level this year eight Ranger Code of Conduct workshops were conducted with 667 rangers trained from 63 countries by WWF in partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and 316 of those rangers were from tiger range countries. These workshops create awareness on the value and benefits of a Code of Conduct for rangers and ranger employers. In April the Code of Conduct guidelines, along with a explainer video, were launched to help ranger employers adapt and implement the Code of Conduct.

## ROLL-OUT AND STRENGTHENING OF SMART

This year WWF has continued to connect technology and conservation through the implementation and scaling of the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool across tiger habitats. The release of SMART 7.0 in 2022 marks a significant step forward and through the SMART Mobile Data Collection field staff can now efficiently collect data while on the move, cutting down on time, energy and costs.

SMART Mobile Data Collection now allows communities to gather data and contribute to specific databases. This will have a significant impact on the ability of SMART to contribute to citizen science and community led data collection efforts. WWF-Myanmar are now using this system to ensure continuous monitoring of wildlife in the tiger landscape, as the political instability doesn't allow direct engagement with relevant government authorities. WWF aims to expand this further in tiger range countries, particularly in Southeast Asia where tiger numbers are declining and are at high risk of poaching.

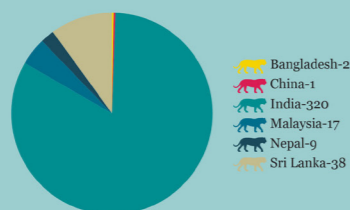


## SNARING OF BIG CATS IN MAINLAND ASIA : 2012-2021

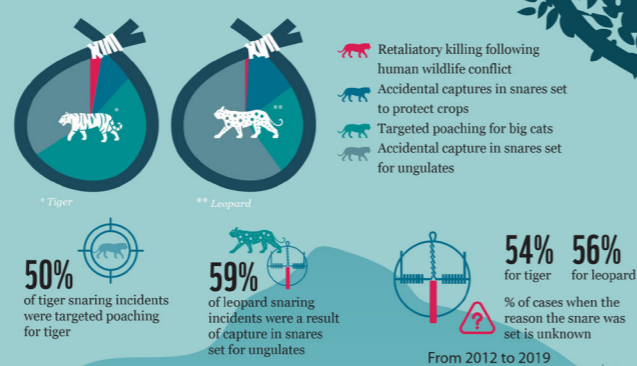
A MINIMUM OF 387 CAPTURED IN SNARES

- 130 TIGER
- 245 LEOPARD
- 1 SNOW LEOPARD
- 2 LION
- 9 ASIAN BIG CAT

BIG CAT MORTALITY FROM SNARES BY COUNTRY



MOTIVATION FOR BIG CAT SNARING INCIDENTS



Data on the capture of *Panthera* cats across all Asian countries between 2012 and 2021 was collated from open-source media reports and publications, the Wildlife Trade Information System of TRAFFIC and official databases of the Indian National Tiger Conservation Authority. Where stated we recorded the reason snares were set and the location of the snaring incident.

From 2012 and 2019 between 2 and 14 tigers were caught in snares annually in India

During the same period between 17 and 29 tigers were poached annually

Therefore snaring may be the cause of >40% of tiger poaching mortality in India



## ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES FACED BY RANGERS

On an average, two rangers per week lose their lives in the line of duty. This year WWF with partners released a paper, "*Conservation Casualties - An analysis of on duty ranger fatalities (2006-2021)*", that highlighted a total of 1,535 confirmed on-duty ranger fatalities recorded during a 16-year period (2006–2021) with 554 of these casualties happening within tiger range countries. The data shows that felonious deaths, such as homicide, accounted for over 42% with the others a result of accident, illness, wildlife attacks or other unintentional work-related casualties.

The paper highlights the need for better recognition of rangers as frontline workers as other frontline forces such as firefighters and police. WWF is using the findings to urge ranger employers and the conservation community to address the poor working conditions of rangers and provide adequate health and life insurance.

To further our advocacy efforts on ranger welfare, this year WWF also published '*Life on the Frontline of Tiger Protection*' in January 2022 which analysed the results from 1,599 surveys completed by public sector patrol rangers who work across all 10 countries that have wild tiger populations. The data puts in perspective the scale of challenges rangers face in tiger areas with about two-thirds saying they were not provided with insurance coverage for serious injury or on-the-job death. This, along with other evidence of poor working conditions for rangers, has resulted in further



work being undertaken to develop ranger welfare standards.

The report also released for the first time an assessment of ranger densities in all tiger countries. The findings show that most tiger countries do not currently have rangers at adequate densities in tiger landscapes - this is particularly the case in Southeast Asia where regionally tiger numbers continue to decline. The results were presented to government representatives at the 4th Asian Ministerial Conference in January, and were distributed further by the Global Tiger Forum. WWF's advocacy efforts for improved ranger welfare will impact beyond tigers given the employment welfare and safety implications for frontline staff is a global issue.

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## PREVENTING LOOPHOLES IN WILDLIFE SPECIAL LABELLING SYSTEM

WWF experts were consulted at the request of the National Forest and Grasslands Administration of China on wildlife special labelling systems.

After reviewing the entire policy regulation WWF China identified potential loopholes. The following recommendations were provided to the National Forest and Grasslands Administration of China:

The need to strengthen strict bans on tiger products and rhino horns by making statements precisely in text instead of missing some key words.

Disclosing all wildlife special labelling messages for public access and evaluation.

Remove any potential wildlife species that could be taken advantage of by breeding facilities, by having special labelling including all listed species in CITES Appendix I.



© WWF-US / Keith Arnold

## ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF TIGER FARMS ON WILD TIGERS

In 2022 WWF worked with North Carolina State University, US, to develop a system model looking at the impact of tiger farms on wild tigers, and the model has received positive feedback from a group of tiger trade, wildlife farming and economist experts. Our hope is that the model will be a valuable tool to inform the debate around the benefits versus risks of tiger farms to wild tigers. WWF views tiger farms as a threat to wild tiger conservation and are advocating for their phase out, but we look

forward to the final results of this process, which we hope will inform decision making around tiger farms.

## 6 MILLION PEOPLE ARE REACHED THROUGH SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN IN CHINA

WWF-China is leveraging the powerful social media presence of Weibo to raise awareness of the plight of wild tigers around the world. Through the integration of Weibo commercial

products and interactive content, WWF is urging users to protect endangered animals, join a boycott of tiger products and share messages with their networks. The campaign on Global Tiger Day 2021 and 2022 reached over 6 million people, with almost 1.77 million web users interacting with the campaign, joining the tiger protection group, and receiving commitment certificates stating they would not purchase illegal wildlife products.

In addition, the experience and capabilities in campaigning have enhanced the cooperation with the Chinese Customs, whom WWF is now jointly designing on initiatives to reduce trafficking of illegal wildlife products.





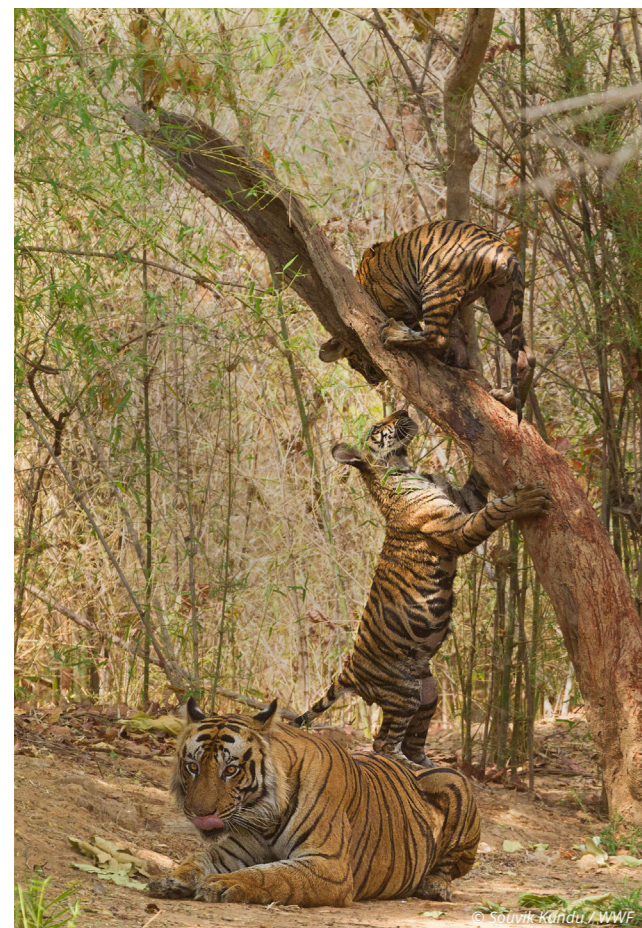
**SECURE  
CONNECTED  
HABITAT**

## ENSURING TIGER MOVEMENT AND DISPERSAL

Securing ecological connectivity and human wellbeing in the face of ever more crowded landscapes\* on Earth is the biggest conservation challenge for tigers in most parts of their range.

WWF's landscape approach builds effective management of an area through long-term, strategic collaboration among multiple stakeholders, with the purpose of ensuring living and thriving areas of habitat suitable for people and wildlife. This approach involves convening key stakeholders to build consensus about landscape management and decision making and is useful when there are diverse resource requirements, interactions and interdependencies in resource management.

Connectivity between protected areas is integral for easy dispersal of tiger populations, and other wildlife, in conservation landscapes. With wildlife populations declining globally, it is imperative to prioritise large natural areas and interconnected habitats for species to move, breed and thrive.

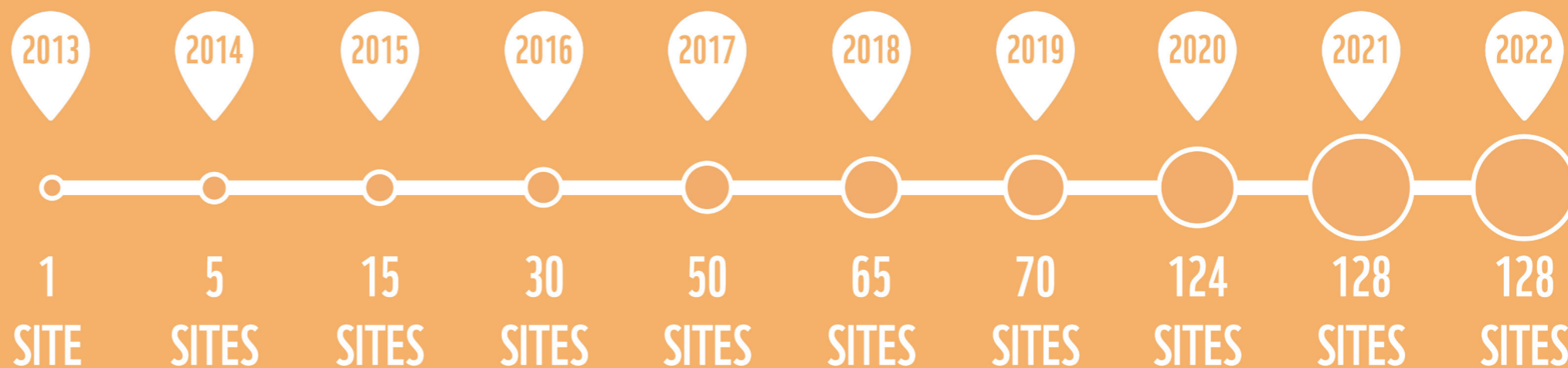


*\*WWF's definition of a landscape is a socio ecological system that consists of natural and/or human modified ecosystems, driven by distinct ecological and socio cultural influences.*

# EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT THROUGH CAJTS

(Conservation Assured Tiger Standards)

## NUMBER OF REGISTERED CAJTS SITES



## CAJTS

Protected areas are home to a majority of wildlife throughout the globe and are attributed as the main reason behind the safeguarding of current wildlife populations. However, protected area management can be a complex system with a multitude of challenges, issues and needs. CAJTS was developed as a tool to provide incentive for improving the effectiveness of protected and conserved areas and key sites.

Developing CAJTS over the last ten years has involved a huge collaborative effort in standard setting, advocacy, software development, training, and much more including a 10 year CAJTS report which was published this year. For the sites and people involved it has represented

a major commitment in supporting national systems to implement CAJTS. Over the last decade, 128 tiger conservation sites from seven countries have been CAJTS registered.

In 2022, four sites (three in India and one in Russia) increased the total number of CAJTS accredited sites to 25. This includes 17 tiger reserves and three forest divisions in India, two sites in Russia, two in Bhutan and one in Nepal. These sites have shown that they meet the standard expected for tiger conservation. Some connecting tiger sites are now CAJTS accredited, for example Royal Manas National Park in Bhutan and the adjoining Manas Tiger Reserve in India, and Chitwan National Park in Nepal and the adjoining Valmiki Tiger Reserve in India.

## ACCELERATING PROGRESS

Protecting the places where tigers live and breed is the backbone of the tiger recovery strategy. The most important sites to protect are those that are or have the potential to become breeding grounds, allowing tigers to disperse across larger landscapes. These sites are 'heartlands'. The second call this past year for the Heartlands Accelerator Fund, was disbursed to 10 projects in six countries (Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, and Thailand). The portfolio includes a diverse amount of activities such as human tiger coexistence, prey management, habitat management, protection, and stakeholder management - all CAJTS elements aimed towards increasing tiger populations and improving habitat in these heartlands.

# HONOURING EXCELLENCE FOR TIGERS

The TX2 awards are endorsed by a consortium of partnership organisations including CA|TS, Fauna and Flora International, Global Tiger Forum, IUCN's Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme, Panthera, UNDP, The Lion's Share, Wildlife Conservation Society and WWF.

## TX2 AWARD

In February 2022, Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve and Nepal's Bardia National Park were awarded for doubling tiger populations within a protected area. The tiger population of award winner, Bardia National Park, witnessed an increase of almost five-fold from 18 tigers in 2009 to 87 in 2018 - an astounding achievement given it is situated in one of the most densely populated regions of the world, the Terai Arc Landscape in Nepal.

Sathyamangalam, designated a Tiger Reserve in 2013 in the Western Ghats of India, was home to only 25 tigers in 2011 but today there are an estimated 80 individuals in the area. With proper prey abundance, protection and connectivity, Sathyamangalam saw a close to four fold increase, an achievement that warrants celebration.

## CONSERVATION EXCELLENCE AWARD

The Conservation Excellence award was presented to the transboundary Khata Forest Conservation Area. The 15-mile pathway along the shared border of Nepal's Bardia National Park and India's Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary maintains connectivity for tiger populations between the two countries.

The corridor's incredible community based conservation efforts have been successful in securing safe passage for wildlife in the corridor. In turn, the increase in wildlife through the corridor has also helped local tourism in the area and provided opportunities for community members to engage first-hand in conservation.



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© DoFSC / WWF Nepal



© WWF-India



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# CONNECTIVITY ACROSS THE TIGER RANGE

## COLLABORATING ON CONNECTIVITY IN INDIA

Maintaining habitat connectivity is a key element in the conservation and management of endangered species, such as the tiger. Effective landscape-scale connectivity conservation requires looking beyond organisational boundaries and working collaboratively to achieve a shared conservation vision to sustain ecological processes in rapidly changing landscapes. Through this was born the [Coalition for Wildlife Corridors](#), a one of its kind initiative for connectivity conservation. WWF-India facilitated the formation of this informal network which currently has 12 NGOs.

The coalition aims to develop multi-organisation synergy to adopt a data driven approach for conservation planning in corridors, promote better human wildlife coexistence and influence economic development to minimise impacts on connectivity in major terrestrial and freshwater habitats. Its pillars are to generate actionable information to drive evidence-based decision making; enable local stewardship for corridors and identify opportunities to pragmatically reconcile conservation and economic development goals to promote land use planning that supports the future of people and wildlife.

Rajaji Tiger Reserve in the west of the Indian Terai Arc Landscape has seen the impact of infrastructure development more than most. A growing city, railway line, and highway have sliced through the centre of the reserve making it near impossible for tigers to move between the eastern and western regions.

In a significant discovery, toward the end of 2022, WWF documented tiger movement into western Rajaji from the Chilla-Motichur corridor for the first time in 20 years. WWF and partners have been instrumental in constructing an overpass for vehicles in this area to reduce the impact of infrastructure on connectivity and this tiger movement confirms these efforts are needed.

## TIGER HABITAT CONSERVATION IN NEPAL

Shuklaphanta National Park, a transboundary national park in the western forests of Nepal directly connected to Pilibhit Tiger Reserve in India through Lagga Bagga, is home to the largest herd of swamp deers in the world and has seen significant growth in tigers with numbers increasing from 8 in 2009 to 36 in 2022.

As a transboundary site, Shuklaphanta is imperative to tiger movement and dispersal between India and Nepal, and could serve as a source of tigers for other sites in the Terai Arc Landscape. Following patterns that lead to the success behind other protected areas in Nepal, WWF supported extensive habitat mapping this year to identify important grasslands and wetlands. This exercise was able to identify the most important and frequently visited wetlands, along with highlighting key issues in the habitat such as invasive species management and the need for more expansive grasslands. This data has now fed into the protected area management action plans, and will aid in conducting additional improvement of habitat to boost tiger and its prey recovery.

Today, the core area of Shuklaphanta alone, one of Nepal's youngest national parks, holds 11 tigers/100 sq.km and could be key to the dispersal of tigers in low land areas and high altitude in the years to come. Shuklaphanta National Park along with Pilibhit Tiger Reserve, Boom-Champawat, and Bramhadev-Dadeldhura forms the circle of life for survival of tigers along the complex.

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR CONNECTIVITY

Connectivity between habitats to allow movement and dispersal for tigers is one of the main components behind the increasing population of tigers in China. A report, *"Cross-Border Tiger Conservation Cooperation between China and Russia in the Past 30 Years"*, compiled by WWF, Northeast Forestry University, Nature and Ecology Research Institute of Heilongjiang province and Northeast China Tiger and Leopard National Park was approved by the experts of the review team led by the Forestry and Grassland Bureaus.

The board of experts agreed that the rapid recovery of the Amur tiger and leopard populations in the past 30 years was closely related to the transboundary efforts of China and Russia - decades worth of efforts in the making. Since the 1990s, China and Russia have signed the agreements on the conservation of biodiversity, Amur tigers and other endangered species in the Amur Heilong Eco-Regional Complex. As one would expect, this population is expected to increase further by constructing ecological corridors and restoration of tiger habitats.

Transboundary efforts have subsequently increased with wildlife authorities in China and Russia, together with scientific research institutions and NGOs, implementing multiple conservation projects. This has resulted in an increase in China's tiger numbers from 12-14 in 2000 to 50 today.



Corbett Tiger Reserve, India © Lauren Simmonds / WWF-International



Banke National Park, Nepal © Shikhar Bhattarai / Puz Factory Productions / WWF-International



China © Staffan Widstrand / Wild Wonders of China / WWF

# EXPAND TIGER RANGE



**Tigers, an apex predator, keep the balance between prey species and the surrounding vegetation, and play an important role in maintaining healthy ecosystems. With so few tiger populations remaining, protecting existing fragments of habitat will not be sufficient, successful population recovery also requires expanding their occupied range through ecosystem restoration and rewilding.**

For tigers, this could take place naturally, as individuals from existing populations disperse into new territories. Or it could be driven by planned translocations and reintroductions of tigers into areas of their range from which they have been lost.

Not only would restoring the tiger's historic range support new conservation goals WWF is lobbying for in the Global Tiger Recovery Program (2022-2034), but it would also generate significant benefits in terms of ecological functionality and ecosystem services, such as safeguarding watersheds, mitigating climate change, reducing disaster risk, and securing a range of human health benefits.

## RESTORING ASIA'S ROAR REPORT

Tigers once roamed across Asia from the Caspian Sea in the West to Korea in the east and southwards to the islands of Java and Bali in Indonesia. Today, tigers are restricted to less than 3 per cent of their historic range.

In August 2022, WWF identified tiger range recovery areas of 1.7 million km<sup>2</sup> across 15 countries where tigers could come back. WWF launched a report, *Restoring Asia's Roar*, that analysed the geographic opportunities for tiger range recovery across the species' historic range, based on the relationship between tiger presence and intensity of human activity. In 15 counties, expanses of currently unoccupied but potentially suitable tiger habitat remain.

WWF supports range recovery by helping build the enabling conditions for natural dispersal or supporting reintroduction efforts. Partnering with governments, civil societies, and local communities to secure and increase the protection of such areas will be essential to sustaining tiger recovery in the long-term.

## LANDSCAPES FOR TIGER RECOVERY

### ILE BALKHASH, KAZAKHSTAN

Tigers went extinct in Kazakhstan over 70 years ago, but a landmark effort is underway to return this iconic big cat to the country's Balkhash region by 2025. If successful, this will mark the first international tiger reintroductions in history.

A tiger reintroduction program, led by the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan with the support of WWF and UNDP, is restoring biodiversity of the Ile Balkhash Reserve and adjacent sanctuaries which span over 10,000 km<sup>2</sup> of ecologically significant reed thickets and riparian forest. The biodiversity of the nature reserve includes about 40 species of mammals, 284 bird species and more than 420 species of plants, many of them are listed in the Red Book of Kazakhstan.

The area has the capacity to support 120 tigers if there is enough prey (mainly wild boar and Bukhara deer) to sustain them.

We are now midway through the restoration stage and progress in 2022 has been focused on setting up the enabling conditions for tiger reintroduction across multiple sectors.

### PREY AND HABITAT RESTORATION

Following increasing efforts to bolster prey density - including reintroduction of endangered Bukhara deer and restoration of habitat - monitoring has recorded promising signs.

- The density of **wild boar** has more than tripled since 2018 to 15 boar per 1000 ha.

- There has been a significant increase in **goitered gazelles**.
- Since 2019, 150 Bukhara deer have been reintroduced.
- WWF is working with UNDP to reintroduce **kulans** in 2022.

To restore habitat this year WWF supported planting of more than 15,000 seedlings of oleaster (*Elaeagnus*), Asiatic poplar and willow and, in the northern part of the reserve, WWF supported the establishment and maintenance of watering holes which are vital for animals amid the long dry seasons.

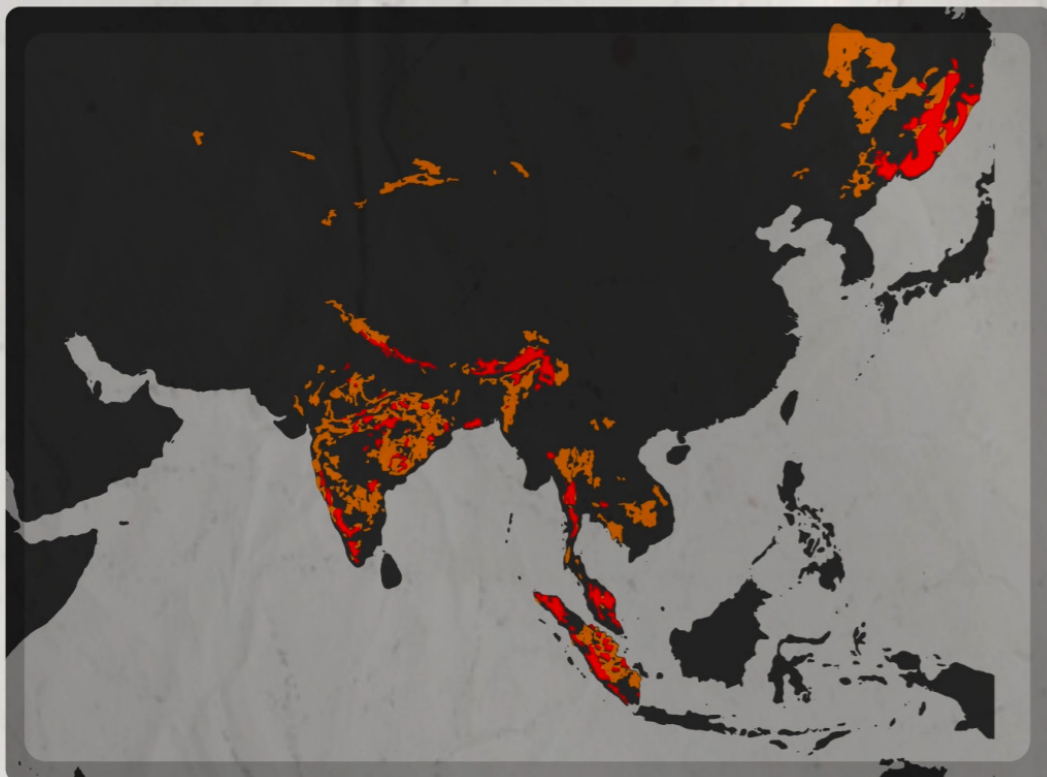
As a result of active reintroduction and habitat restoration populations of wild boars, roe deer, deer, gazelles and kulans should collectively reach over 25 ungulates per 1000 ha by 2025 i.e. more than 3,500 thousand animals.

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Critically, throughout the reintroduction process, WWF is partnering with local communities on a holistic conflict management system. Together we are developing prevention measures for human-wildlife conflict, preparing compensation schemes in the event of livestock loss or crop damage and improving local laws on enforcement and protection.

WWF is also supporting alternative income streams nominated by local communities. This year we partnered with 40 families hostels, and provided small grants for goose breeding farms, agriculture through drip irrigation, ethnic camps, national crafts and more. WWF is furthering these meaningful relationships through school engagement initiatives and community events.

## THE RANGE OF WILD TIGERS: FROM LOSS TO POTENTIAL RECOVERY



■ THE HISTORIC RANGE ■ THE CURRENT RANGE ■ THE POTENTIAL FUTURE RANGE

TIGERS ARE  
RESTRICTED TO  
LESS THAN  
**3%**  
OF THEIR  
HISTORIC RANGE



## MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

Following the designation of Ile Balkhash Nature Reserve (415,000 ha) in 2018 the adjoining Pribalkhashsky and Karoysky Sanctuaries, a total of 700,000 ha, were added to the management of the reserve this year increasing the scale of ecological restoration.

In 2022 WWF also supported the creation of a reintroduction centre, including the construction of enclosures for veterinary examinations. The centre will support monitoring of tiger behaviour and movements, and through this also help to ensure the safety of local communities.

**“The support of local people is one of the most important stages of the tiger reintroduction program. Without their assistance, the implementation of such an ambitious project is simply impossible.”**

**Grigory Mazmanyants**  
Head of the WWF Russia office in Kazakhstan

Protection is a critical element for successful tiger recovery and for boosting prey numbers. WWF is improving capacity, resources and the use of technologies - including the implementation of SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool), Unmanned Aerial Vehicles monitoring, and satellite fire control. The program has already established three ranger centres and secured vital equipment and support for protection staff including health insurance, training, field equipment, radio stations, radio towers and satellite communications.

## POLITICAL WILL

In September 2022 a Memorandum of

Understanding relating tiger reintroduction was signed between the Government of Russia and Kazakhstan. The Memorandum marks the start of joint productive work on the ambitious task of returning the iconic big cat to Kazakhstan, and includes the possible donation of wild tigers from the Russian far east, training of specialists and support by Russian experts.

## THAILAND PREY RECOVERY

### SAMBAR DEER

In 2022 WWF supported the Department of National Parks to release 44 sambar deer, a preferred tiger prey, into two locations in



Thailand:

- **Khlong Lan National Park - 20 Sambar** (new location for Sambar reintroductions)
- **Mae Wong National Park - 24 Sambar** (building on 32 Sambar released in 2021)

Preparation for the reintroduction of sambar includes creation of grasslands and salt licks as well as the active moving and monitoring of the deer. In addition to GPS collars, we set up camera traps to monitor the deer after they are released. All processes of sambar reintroduction were closely monitored by veterinarians and followed Thai Law and WWF Animal Handling and Translocation Standards.

Given the success of these efforts the Department of National Parks in collaboration with WWF are expanding the program and will release 500 sambar in the next five years.

## BANTENG

Fifty years ago, banteng, a globally endangered wild cattle, would have been found grazing throughout Thailand's Mae Wong National Park. However, by the 1970s logging and poachers arrived and banteng numbers here began decreasing, eventually disappearing from the protected area altogether within the decade.

For decades it was hoped that Huai Kha Khaeng

and Thailand remains one of the most important strongholds. WWF is motivated by this sign of hope and will work with the Government of Thailand to ensure the trend continues in a positive trajectory.

**“In the last year camera traps have also captured an incredible sighting of a tigress and two cubs in Mae Wong National Park. Encouraging signs show that prey populations are increasing and we could see a change in tiger numbers here in the coming years/decades.”**

**Dr. Rungnapa Phoonjampa**  
Senior Project Manager, WWF-Thailand

## TIGERS HEADING NORTH

Amur tiger pugmarks have been discovered in the Southeast Yakutiya - the most northerly range record of recent times - a signal that the endangered species' population is recovering. This is the first confirmed evidence of a tiger in Yakutia in half a century and it is over 1,000 km north of the known current range.

## EASTERN PLAINS, CAMBODIA

[WWF estimates](#) that there are over 12 million snares present in the protected areas of Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam. Snaring is a major driver of the loss of key wildlife, such as tigers, from these countries and has caused rapid declines of many species including leopards and ungulate species: banteng, gaur, eld's deer, muntjac, sambar and wild pig.

The last tiger photographed in Cambodia was in 2007 in the Eastern Plains of Cambodia. Their population was decimated over decades due to poaching and habitat loss. However, plans for reintroduction are now underway including building up law enforcement efforts to recover

Wildlife Sanctuary, which connects to the south and holds the largest remaining banteng population in Thailand, would one day begin to repopulate Mae Wong National Park.

After extensive protection, restoration and research in Mae Wong National Park in 2019 camera traps captured the first banteng there in over 40 years. In total the team of scientists discovered at least nine individuals with indications that they could be considered a resident population.

Globally, banteng populations have decreased by more than 50 per cent over the last 20 years

tiger prey.

Results from a WWF's decade-long (2010-2022) ungulate monitoring program in Cambodia's, in two wildlife sanctuaries in the Eastern Plains Landscape indicated that populations of Banteng, Muntjac, Wild Pig decreased by 89%, 65% and 15% respectively.

In March 2022, a multi-stakeholder advocacy effort kicked off to address the snaring crisis. The Zero-Snaring Campaign: Zero Wild Meat, led by the Ministry of Environment, is a joint commitment between the National and Provincial governments and NGO partners. It aims to eliminate the use of snares in Cambodia's protected areas, strengthen anti-snare law, prevent the sale and consumption of wildlife, raise awareness to stop the demand of wild meat and unlock more resources to support national protected areas.

As of December 2022:

- 32 restaurants in Monduliri have joined forces in committing to #ZeroWildMeat and continued to spread awareness about the pandemic risks of consuming wild meat among their clients by displaying educational posters and standees in their business outlets.
- Over 3,900 people had committed to #ZeroWildMeat through the Zero Wild Meat campaign website launched in late October.
- Over 2 million people reached via social media and over 125 media reports covered as part of the Zero Wild Meat campaign, a subsequent effort targeting demand consumption, under the umbrella campaign of the Zero-Snaring.
- More than 3 million people reached via social media and at least 610 media reports covered the kick-off in Phnom Penh and provincial rallies of the Zero-Snaring campaign.







# UNLOCK CAPITALS

**Tigers are far more than a single species. They are ecosystem engineers, revered across and beyond its range, spanning religious and spiritual systems.**

After decades of decline, the recovery of tigers in certain landscapes can be attributed to political will, long-term financing and meaningful partnership between governments, communities and civil society. For tigers to continue to survive and thrive, such momentum and investments need to be increased and sustained.

## **PARTNERSHIP TO SECURE A VIABLE FUTURE FOR THE TIGER**

The NGO coalition for tigers, which includes the world's most prominent tiger non-governmental and intergovernmental organisations (FFI, IUCN, Panthera, WCS and WWF) was recently established around an initial goal of releasing a joint vision for how the tiger range countries and partners can best secure this species in the coming years.

That collaborative effort produced the Securing a Viable Future for the Tiger vision, released in January 2022. This document suggested a number of range-wide goals and approaches which the tiger range countries negotiating the next 12-year commitment period might incorporate in order to strengthen that intergovernmental effort. In addition to outlining approaches that might reverse declines or threats where tigers exist, it also makes a strong case for prioritising and planning the expansion of tiger range over the coming decade. After releasing this vision, this partnership subsequently engaged with the Global Tiger Forum and other organisations to advocate for such improvements.

This coalition for tigers is growing its ambition and reach since the foundation of the vision. We have jointly hosted events, including one at Convention on Biological Diversity COP-15 (part-II) in Montreal, regarding the potential to use tigers and other Big Cats as indicators for tracking broader biodiversity progress. The partnership has also begun to outline joint efforts for 2023 including a series of national-level meetings with tiger range state governments to improve and maximise the conservation impact of the recently launched Tiger Conservation Landscape 3.0 Analytical Tool. Another important effort underway, involves the design of a major international event that would expand financing

for tiger conservation during the next 12-year recovery period.

## **GLOBAL TIGER RECOVERY PROGRAMME 2022-2034**

The first iteration of the Global Tiger Recovery Program from 2010 to 2022 sought to empower tiger range countries to address the entire spectrum of threats, both domestic and transboundary in nature, and work toward increased financial sustainability. The foundation of the program was 13 individual National Tiger Recovery Plans outlining urgent priority activities each tiger range country needed to fulfil to contribute to the global goal.

Throughout 2022, WWF worked with partners to strengthen commitment renewals for a Global Tiger Recovery Program (GTRP) 2.0, which will again centre around a 12-year cycle (2022-2034) linked to the Lunar Year of the Tiger. During 2022, WWF secured expert consultants to provide strategic inputs into the design of GTRP 2.0 which is led by the Global Tiger Forum. The approach has had a positive impact in some areas, such as the streamlining and simplification of GTRP key performance indicators that will inform progress against National Tiger Recovery Plans. The consultants also provided the push needed to get top-level goals discussed at an intergovernmental meeting in New Delhi, India at the end of November 2022. At the close of the meeting, four separate draft goals were being discussed, with some aligning closely with the priorities suggested by the NGO coalition and consultants. Further refinements will be needed however, with a final GTRP to be published and endorsed in 2023.

In January 2022 Malaysia held the 4th Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation which was the first time it was hosted by a Southeast Asian country since 2010. This was an important moment - and hopefully a turning point - for a region that has struggled to meet the ambitions of the GTRP (2010-2022). The event included an address by the Malaysian Prime Minister, and strong statements from the majority of tiger range country representatives. Ministers from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Malaysia, Nepal, Thailand, and Viet Nam were present, while deputy ministers or similar represented Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, and Russia. WWF also advocated to ensure that

Kazakhstan (tiger reintroduction site) was formally brought into inter-governmental meetings from this point forward. In this first formal appearance Kazakhstan was represented by their Deputy Chairman of the Committee of Forestry and Wildlife.



# SOUTHEAST ASIA TIGER RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

The severity of the collapse of tiger numbers has continued to be felt in Southeast Asia over the last 12 years. Most of these countries have experienced significant declines in tigers, with three (Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam) having completely lost their wild tigers in recent years. As such, tiger conservation leadership emanating from the region itself is critically needed. To do so, WWF supported and pushed for the development of a Southeast Asia Tiger Recovery Action Plan (STRAP) whereby countries would contribute defined measurable actions to be delivered in less than three years. Throughout 2022 there were some positive developments on this front, with six of seven countries engaged in shaping STRAP commitments. Malaysia increased their political ownership for finalising the STRAP in August, with a further commitment to explore the formation of a STRAP Secretariat with input from WWF. Such a body would add a much needed forum for Southeast Asian tiger range countries to address their unique challenges.

## A WAVE OF CHANGE IN MALAYSIA

Over the course of a year, there has been an immense political breakthrough in Malaysia for tiger conservation. Following years of advocacy efforts by WWF-Malaysia, the government made multiple strategic moves that enhanced tiger recovery efforts domestically and set a benchmark for other Southeast Asian countries to follow.

After years of steady decline in tiger numbers, with a record low of less than 150 tigers recorded in Malaysia in 2019, it was beginning to look like tigers were rapidly heading towards national extinction. However, the establishment of the Malaysian Tiger Task Force in January is likely the most substantial move made by the government in recent years to save their tigers. The Prime Minister of Malaysia is for the first time directly involved in the chairing of a major government-wide meeting on tiger recovery. The inaugural meeting, in January 2022, included other important political powers such as the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, representatives of various agencies, and numerous state executive councillors. The Prime Minister will chair one such meeting a year, with multiple



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additional meetings held at the ministerial, state, and technical levels.

Plans for a new Tiger Unit spread across eight states and the central government was also announced in 2022. If implemented, it would significantly expand the scientific-technical capacity dedicated to tigers within the country. This could bring about a wave of change throughout the country and by extension the region.

Further to this, the government has also advanced a commitment to establish a dedicated Wildlife Crime Bureau within the Royal Malaysia Police, which will include as many as 50 staff spread across both federal and state levels in the country. That move comes in addition to a considerable increase in the total number of rangers working in tiger landscapes, as part of an initiative that has seen hundreds of new rangers (including Orang Asli indigenous rangers) introduced across Malaysian protected areas during the calendar year.

## INTERNATIONAL TIGER YOUTH SUMMIT 2022

WWF hosted the second International Tiger Youth Summit on 28 July 2022. The Summit convened 26 youth delegates from 13 tiger range countries with tiger conservation experts and partners in order to:

- Build awareness and understanding among the youth regarding the importance of tigers for the future of our planet and people.
- Share the youth's recommendations on urgent steps toward tiger conservation to be taken by governments, civil society and citizens.



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The theme for the event, 'Roar for Tigers', was chosen to exhort and inspire youth to action to secure the tiger's future. The live event had over 2,700 people sign in from 42 countries and culminated in a Youth Declaration presented to the Global Tiger Forum. With a direct reach of 10,000 and an indirect reach of 99,000, the International Tiger Youth Summit performed well in all tiger range countries as well as internationally.

## WWF-SINGAPORE'S AR-MAZING TIGER TRAIL

This impressive island-wide trail exhibited 33 life-sized tiger sculptures were exhibited across Singapore to celebrate this magnificent animal and raise awareness for the challenges facing wild tigers today. The sculptures were designed by a collective of over 60 global and local artists from 14 countries each presenting a unique perspective on how climate change, poaching and

deforestation is affecting tigers in the wild.

The highly-visual, gamified trail encouraged visitors to further engage with the sculptures and deepen their understanding of the issues facing tiger conservation through a series of quizzes and Instagram AR filters, which could be unlocked at each sculpture on the trail.

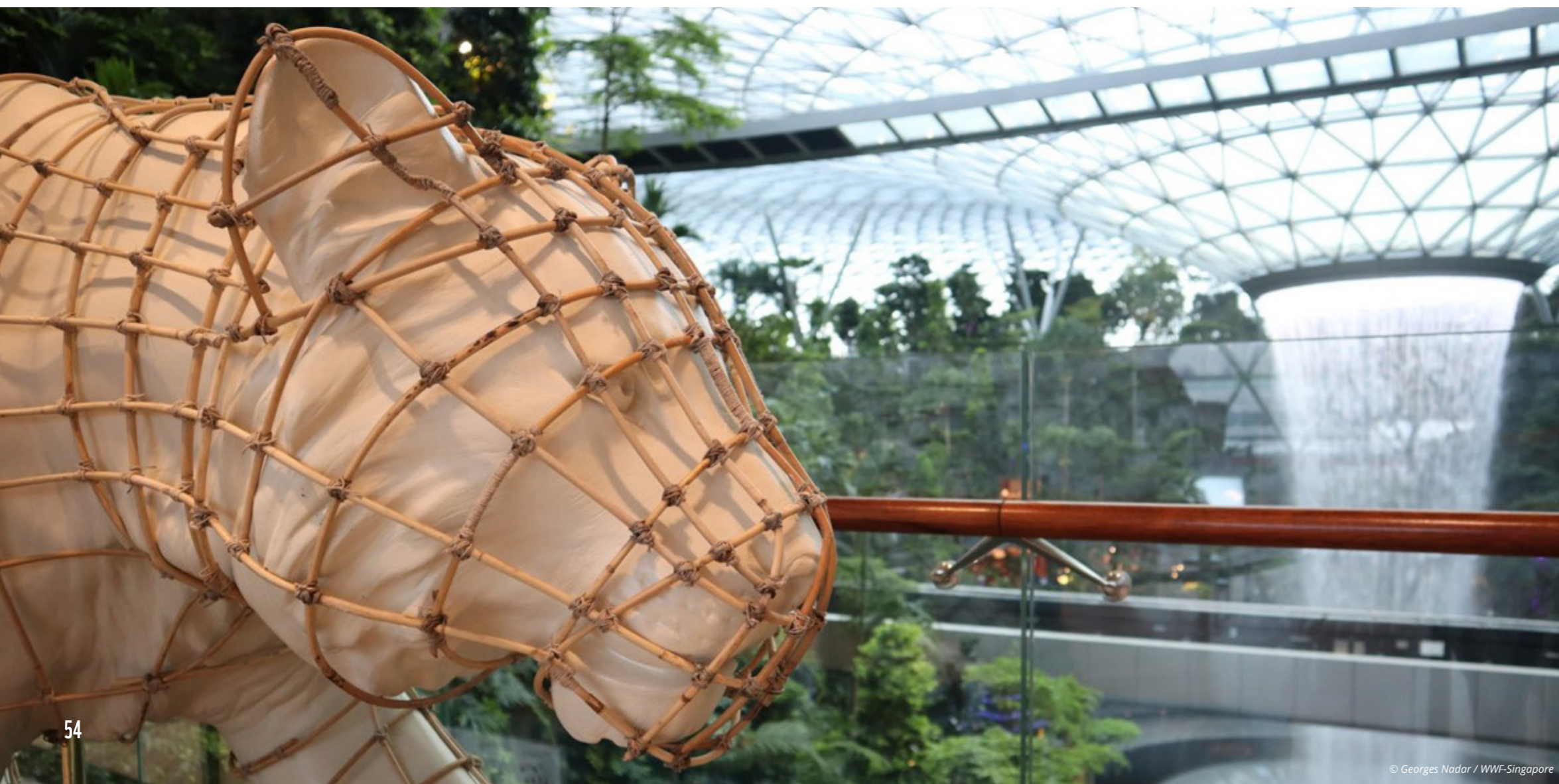
The key objectives of Tiger Trail were to raise awareness of biodiversity in Singapore and the region by using tigers as a key indicator, whilst simultaneously showcasing local and international artists, and profiling local iconic tourism hotspots and businesses, whilst raising vital funds for tiger conservation. Over 2,900 people participated in the Trail and the media reach was over 1 million. 55 sponsors and partners provided vital sponsorships and services to make Tiger Trail happen and marking the conclusion of the trail, WWF, together with Sotheby's, launched an online auction in April 2022 to mobilise resources for tiger recovery in Southeast Asia.



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## TIGER DIALOGUES IN INDIA

Tiger Dialogues was a first of its kind series of moderated panel discussions co-hosted by WWF-India, WCS-India, and Panthera. The discussions focused on tiger conservation in India in its historical context and brought current conversations into sharp focus, broadening opportunities and constituencies for tiger conservation.

The sessions were attended by a wide variety of stakeholders including conservationists, park managers, biologists, educationists, historians and researchers from across the world. The topics included the consequences of habitat fragmentation on tiger populations, exploring the tiger's life history to understand how they have adapted to ever-changing landscapes, and the limits of behavioural adaptation, beyond which the species' demography is likely to be adversely impacted. A session around lessons learnt from successfully conserving tigers particularly drew the audience to come up with interesting insights which can be taken forward.

# ONWARD TO THE NEXT YEAR OF THE TIGER



The 2022 Year of the Tiger has marked a pivotal moment in the ambition to restore wild tiger populations. As we begin the next 12 years of tiger conservation work to the 2034 Year of the Tiger, we are committed to drive forward a framework that is tiger friendly, people centred, and embedded within the global and national economic agenda.

WWF's forward-looking strategy will work in partnership with the rapidly changing communities living in tiger landscapes, build political will and landscape connectivity, change tiger consumer behaviour, reduce poaching and trafficking and ensure alignment with broader priorities of the environmental agenda, such as climate change adaptation and mitigation, land degradation and ecosystem restoration and rewilding.

Tigers are a conservation dependent species, so interventions will be continually needed to ensure their landscapes have the necessary components for them to thrive. We cannot lose the momentum we have spent decades building and we absolutely have to maintain long term investments. The effort it will take to secure a viable future for tigers is daunting, but the growing wild populations across much of their range and the opportunities to bring tigers back to their historic range is incredibly inspiring.

**We are on a mission to ensure these iconic animals thrive for generations to come - join us.**

## TOWARDS COEXISTENCE

WWF will be ensuring that tiger landscapes are major contributors to socio-economic development, community well being, and gender equity. Our People Centred Tiger Conservation approach recognises that communities must be partners in tiger conservation, rather than simply actors or beneficiaries. This means we will be spending more time and a diversity of skills to better understand the attitudes, perceptions, and aspirations of communities; to identify how power dynamics and external factors influence conservation; to be able to develop a shared vision and common ground; and, to identify and implement a range of conservation incentives that go beyond just economic benefits.



## END EXPLOITATION

To end tiger trade and poaching, WWF will be strengthening responses to tiger trafficking and employing strategic evidence based behaviour change campaigns to reduce demand from tiger consumers. On the other end of the tiger trade WWF will continue to support sustainable and institutionalised ranger training opportunities as well the use of innovative technologies in anti-poaching. To help secure prey populations, we will also target evidence-led behaviour change campaigns for tiger prey consumers.



## SECURE CONNECTED HABITATS

WWF will continue to adopt a landscape approach which recognises that social-ecological processes, tiger behaviour and the genetic interaction of multiple small tiger populations across an area are critical for sustainable and long-term tiger recovery. To maintain the health of tiger populations, we will help manage tiger habitat and areas of the surrounding matrix synergistically to mitigate threats, restore prey populations, reduce conflict risks for humans and tigers, and maintain connectivity.



## EXPAND TIGER RANGE

To expand wild tiger range we will be focused on and advocating for inspirational and ambitious rewilding projects in appropriate community supported sites across the tiger's historic range. We will support detailed site feasibility analyses to be conducted in full partnership with local communities, for identified sites for potential reintroduction. WWF will also work with partners to build up effective protected area management systems, community and political support, and sufficient prey all of which are essential to support natural range expansion and prior to any tiger reintroduction effort.



## UNLOCK CAPITALS

To unlock both political will and financial investments WWF will use the strength of the coalition of NGOs (Fauna and Flora International, IUCN, Panthera, TRAFFIC, and Wildlife Conservation Society) at a global level to develop major joint activities around mutual priorities - greatly increasing our potential to achieve conservation impact and policy outcomes in those areas. We will also work with our partners at all levels from local to international to advocate for increased investment and political support for the recovery of tigers over the next 12 years.



**THANK YOU**



# 2009

Working towards Tx2  
since 2009

## 14

Focusing on 14  
landscapes



## 1,500,000+

Over 1.5 million km<sup>2</sup> covered in  
WWF tiger landscapes

## 80%

Around 80% of the world  
remaining tigers live in  
WWF priority landscapes



Working to sustain the natural  
world for the benefit of people  
and wildlife.

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