

Media Release

Tiger numbers in Russian Far East province bounce back from zero to estimated 20 individuals

VLADIVOSTOK, 26 February 2020 - In a remarkable turnaround for Amur tiger numbers in the Russian Far East province of Evreiskaya, numbers have gone from zero, since they were reintroduced in the area in 2013, to an estimated 20 individuals. Included in this number are five cubs found within three litters, proving the success of the translocation of tigers to the area.

“This is the first time such extensive research has been conducted in Evreiskaya Province. Preliminary data shows that the tiger population there is growing and can be estimated at 20 individuals, including cubs,” said Aleksei Kostyrya, Rare Species Projects Coordinator at WWF Russia’s Amur branch.

“This is a remarkable turnaround. Even 10 to 12 years ago, encountering tiger paw prints here was a once-off experience, but now we can confidently say that the tiger group in this Province is stable, and with the potential to grow and expand both into Russia and China.”

WWF Russia specialists, other NGOs as well as officials from the provincial Directorate on Fauna and Protected Areas conducted the expedition from 19 January to 4 February 2020.

The focus of the research was on Dichun and Zhuravliny Wildlife Refuges, where rehabilitated tigers have been released, as well as the Pompeevka River basin where the Pompeevsky National Park is planned to be declared. Experts counted the local tigers, evaluated their distribution, age and sex structure, and the quality of habitat.

“The group of Amur tigers has been created from scratch in Evreiskaya Province thanks to the joint efforts of the government and environmental organisations. The recent data proves that in Dichun, Zhuravliny and the neighboring hunting leases there are three tiger litters: one female has one cub, the other one has two cubs, while the third tigress has three cubs. We have been monitoring tigers here since 2014 using a network of camera traps with funds from the Amur Tiger Centre and WWF,” said Viktor Kuzmenko, head of the Center TIGR.

The survey covered 60% of an area that WWF has been aiming to establish a transboundary protected area in, across the Maly Khingan Mountain Ridge near the border with China [1]. Finding these numbers of tigers in this region confirms the need to declare the area protected.

“The future of tigers in this area will be at risk from extractive industries, such as forestry and mining, which is why it’s urgent we declare this a protected area,” said Aleksei Kostyrya.

Similar research expeditions will be conducted this year in Taipinggou Reserve in China and adjacent to the Russian border areas.



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More information about WWF's work protecting tigers in Russia can be found [here](#).

Notes:

[1] The transboundary initiative announced at [NEASPEC meeting in Harbin](#) last summer.

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