

Media Release

Global wild tiger population increases, but still a long way to go

NEW DELHI, India -- The number of wild tigers has been revised to 3,890, based on the best available data, said WWF and the Global Tiger Forum (GTF) ahead of a major tiger conservation meeting tomorrow in New Delhi to be opened by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

This updated minimum figure, compiled from IUCN data and the latest national tiger surveys, indicates an increase on the 2010 estimate of 'as few as 3,200', and can be attributed to multiple factors including increases in tiger populations in India, Russia, Nepal and Bhutan, improved surveys and enhanced protection.

"For the first time after decades of constant decline, tiger numbers are on the rise. This offers us great hope and shows that we can save species and their habitats when governments, local communities and conservationists work together," said Marco Lambertini, Director General of WWF International.

The meeting of tiger range governments at the 3rd Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation this week is the latest step in the Global Tiger Initiative process that began with the 2010 Tiger Summit in Russia. Governments at that meeting agreed to the Tx2 goal to double wild tiger numbers by 2022.

"This is a critical meeting taking place at the halfway point in the Tx2 goal," said Dr Rajesh Gopal, Secretary General, Global Tiger Forum. "Tiger governments will decide the next steps towards achieving this goal and ensuring wild tigers have a place in Asia's future."

Over the three day meeting, countries will report on their progress toward the Tx2 goal and commit to next steps. Prime Minister Modi will address the conference on the essential role tigers play as a symbol of a country's ecological well-being.

"A strong action plan for the next six years is vital," said Michael Baltzer, Leader of WWF Tx2 Tiger Initiative. "The global decline has been halted but there is still no safe place for tigers. Southeast Asia, in particular, is at imminent risk of losing its tigers if these governments do not take action immediately."

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Tigers are classified as endangered by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, threatened by poaching and habitat loss. Statistics from TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, show that a minimum of 1,590 tigers were seized by law enforcement officials between January 2000 and April 2014, feeding a multi-billion dollar illegal wildlife trade.

In order for countries to protect their tigers, it is essential that they know their tiger populations and the threats they face.

In 2014, tiger range governments agreed to announce a new global tiger estimate by 2016, based on full, systematic national surveys. However, not all countries have completed or published these surveys. The new minimum estimate of close to 3,900 tigers is based on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species account for tigers, updated for countries where national tiger surveys have taken place since the IUCN assessment.

WWF and the GTF commend the tiger range countries that have updated their population figures since 2010 and encourage the remaining countries to complete and publish their population surveys as soon as possible.

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Notes to editors:

For full details please refer to the accompanying background document *Global Wild Tiger Status April 2016*

Tx2: 100 years ago there were 100,000 wild tigers. By 2010, there were as few as 3,200. In 2010, tiger range governments agreed to act to double wild tigers by the next Chinese Year of the Tiger in 2022. This goal is known as Tx2.

Country	Total April 2016	Source
Bangladesh	106	National Survey 2015
Bhutan	103	National Survey 2015
Cambodia	0	IUCN 2015
China	>7	IUCN 2015
India	2226	National survey 2014
Indonesia	371	IUCN 2015 (lower range)
Lao PDR	2	IUCN 2015
Malaysia	250	IUCN 2015 (lower range)
Myanmar	No current data available*	IUCN 2015
Nepal	198	National Survey 2013
Russia	433	National survey 2015
Thailand	189	IUCN 2015 (lower range)
Vietnam	<5	IUCN 2015
Global Total	3890	

*The Myanmar Government figure is 85 tigers from a 2010 estimate. However as there is no recent survey data available, this figure has not been included.



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Country survey status:

- Malaysia: The first nationwide tiger survey is underway. WWF and the GTF commend the government for taking this step and urge the authorities to expedite the survey.
- Myanmar: There are ongoing talks with the government about development of a new tiger action plan which will include recommendations for surveys and protection measures in selected priority sites.
- Thailand: Site specific data of tiger populations is available. Discussions are ongoing with the Thailand government about using this data to provide a current population estimate.
- China: Evidence of tigers is only found in Northeast China in Jilin and Heilongjiang provinces. A field survey of Heilongjaing Province is underway with results expected later in 2016. Preliminary results indicate a promising increase in numbers.
- Indonesia: An island-wide occupancy survey was published in 2011. Extensive survey work across Sumatra is ongoing. Discussions are underway to evaluate how best to estimate the present population. This may comprise compilation of ongoing research as well as new survey work.

For more information, please contact:

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Photos and videos for media use only can be found [here](#).

About WWF

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