



WWF for a living planet®

WWF Nepal

PO Box 7660
Baluwatar, Kathmandu
Nepal

Tel: +977 1 443 4820

Fax: +977 1 443 8458

www.wwfnepal.org

PRESS RELEASE

Nepal launches 3rd tiger survey in the transboundary Terai Arc Landscape

Kathmandu, Nepal – Nepal kickstarted the ambitious process of counting tigers in its 24,710km² Terai Arc Landscape covering protected areas, critical forest corridors, community forests, reserve forests and buffer zones.

Government-led teams will work with partners, including WWF, National Trust for Nature Conservation and ZSL from November 2017 to March 2018. Camera trap methodology, line transect and occupancy surveys will be used to estimate tiger populations, and prey abundance and density, deploying about 1,600 cameras and 400 field personnel.

Tigers are also being counted simultaneously in India in this transboundary landscape using the same methodology. This is the second time that India and Nepal are conducting a joint tiger survey since the first in 2013, that had estimated 198 tigers in Nepal. A joint status report on the results of the survey is expected in the latter half of 2018.

“Saving tigers requires conservation to work beyond borders and this shared landscape between India and Nepal is indeed an opportunity to work together for tigers,” said Man Bahadur Khadka, Director General of Nepal’s Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation. “Given Nepal’s commitment to the global TX2 goal of doubling wild tiger numbers by 2022, we are hopeful that the results of this survey will be a reflection of our efforts to protect this species.”

In Nepal, the survey will cover five protected areas together with corridors and adjoining forests connectivity in the whole of the TAL in Nepal. The survey area is divided into three blocks – Chitwan-Parsa Complex in the east, Bardia-Banke Complex in the west and Shukla-Laljhadi-Jogbuda Complex in the far west. Chitwan National Park and Parsa National Park are adjacent to India’s Valmiki Tiger Reserve, while Bardia National Park and the Shuklaphanta National Park share boundaries with India’s Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary and Dudhwa Tiger Reserve respectively. The survey is funded by WWF, ZSL Nepal, National Trust for Nature Conservation, Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, KfW/IUCN and the USAID-funded Hariyo Ban Program II.

“The transboundary landscape shared between India and Nepal houses one of the highest densities of tigers in the world, and has become a global priority for tiger conservation since its inception in 2001,” stated Dr. Ghana S. Gurung, Senior Conservation Program Director of WWF Nepal. “We are proud to be a partner to the government in protecting wild tigers and their forest homes, which are shared by many other threatened species, and which provide critical goods and services to people.”

Only an estimated 3900 tigers are left in the wild globally. After a century of decline, global tiger numbers increased for the first time in 2016, thanks to new areas being included in the national surveys, improved survey techniques as well as population recovery from conservation efforts. It



WWF *for a living planet*

WWF Nepal

PO Box 7660
Baluwatar, Kathmandu
Nepal

Tel: +977 1 443 4820
Fax: +977 1 443 8458
www.wwfnepal.org

is therefore important for governments to carry out regular tiger surveys such as this, to ensure an accurate global estimate of tiger population as techniques become more robust.

Despite the hopeful trends for tigers, much more work is needed to protect this species and their habitats, which remain vulnerable given unrelenting pressures from poaching, retaliatory killings and habitat loss. Saving wild tigers will also help safeguard critical benefits for other species and millions of people; a new WWF report reveals that securing tiger landscapes would help to protect the last remaining forests critical for carbon sequestration and hence climate mitigation, as well as at least nine major watersheds, which regulate and provide freshwater for up to 830 million people in Asia.

###

For more information, contact:

Kanchan Thapa
Conservation Biologist, WWF Nepal
Email: kanchan.thapa@wwfnepal.org; Mobile: +977 9801187370

About WWF

WWF is the world's leading conservation organization, working in 100 countries for nearly half a century. With the support of almost 5 million members worldwide, WWF is dedicated to delivering science-based solutions to preserve the diversity and abundance of life on Earth, halt the degradation of the environment and combat climate change. WWF has been active in Nepal since the 1960s. It works through a landscape level approach in conservation by engaging the government, conservation agencies and local communities to save the country's unique and irreplaceable biodiversity.

Learn more at www.wwfnepal.org