



Media Release

Revealed: New WWF report unveils the unseen benefits of saving wild tigers

27 November 2017 – Money invested by governments, aid agencies and funds raised by supporters across the globe to save wild tigers have unseen benefits for Asia’s wildlife and millions of people, according to a new WWF report - *Beyond the Stripes: Save tigers, save so much more*.

Tiger landscapes - which range from the world’s largest mangrove forests in the Sundarbans, to temperate forests in the snowy mountains of Bhutan - overlap with globally-important ecosystems, many of which are part of Asia’s last wilderness. These biodiversity-rich areas harbour a wealth of critically important goods and services that millions of people rely on, from mitigating climate change and safeguarding freshwater to reducing the impact of natural disasters and improving the health of local people.

The report highlights that securing tiger landscapes could help protect at least nine major watersheds, which regulate and provide freshwater for up to 830 million people in Asia, including in urban areas across India, Malaysia and Thailand. Similarly, safeguarding tiger landscapes could, in turn, protect the last remaining forests critical for carbon sequestration, helping to mitigate climate change.

“Every dollar invested in saving the wild tiger also helps save many threatened species, and ecosystem services that are critical to millions of people,” said Michael Baltzer, Leader of WWF Tigers Alive. “Protecting the vast landscapes where tigers thrive helps to regulate freshwater, reduce the impacts of climate change and provide a source of clean air, medicinal plants, jobs, and so much more.”

Yet, wild tigers are endangered, and their habitats are threatened; having lost 95 per cent of their global range, the cats are now confined to fragmented populations in Asia’s surviving forest habitats. Even in the remaining range where tigers roam, close to half (43 per cent) of the present suitable tiger habitat could soon be lost to unsustainable agriculture expansion and urbanization, the report warns.

Forest loss continues at an alarming rate in tiger range states. Malaysia and Indonesia are among the world’s leading producers of carbon emissions linked to forest degradation. If such trends persist, more key tiger landscapes could switch from absorbing carbon to becoming net carbon emitters. In Sumatra alone, the only place in the world where tigers, orangutans and rhinos are found in the same habitat, deforestation has reduced natural forest cover by more than 50 per cent in the past three decades.

“The success of protecting wild tigers is a perfect indicator for Asia’s sustainable development. With Asia’s rapid economic expansion, prioritizing tiger conservation will significantly aid in securing natural capital that is necessary to meet the region’s sustainable development goals,” said Baltzer. “Protecting tiger landscapes achieves a win-win for tigers, and for our future generations. But if we fail to save wild tigers, we may fail to save much more.”



As an apex predator, tigers need vast landscapes to thrive, sharing their home with many other endangered species, such as the Asian elephant, leopard, and orangutan. Protecting the tiger's habitat thus helps to protect other threatened wildlife, including endangered but lesser known species that would otherwise receive little support – such as the pignose frog that spends most of its life underground, and is found only in the mountainous Western Ghats of India, where tigers have helped to spearhead the protection of natural sites.

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Notes to Editor:

This report is launched on the seventh anniversary month of the St Petersburg Tiger Summit, where TX2 - the global goal to double the number of wild tigers by 2022 - was committed to by 13 tiger range governments in 2010.

Learn more about TX2 and how WWF is driving the global goal to double tigers at tigers.panda.org.

For photos, videos, and a full copy of the report, you may access them [here](#). Or visit panda.org/savetigers for more.

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About WWF

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