



WWF RESPONSE TO STATEMENT OF CONCERN BY TIGER BIOLOGISTS

The *Statement of Concern by Tiger Biologists* was authored by four tiger biologists and questions the source and credibility of the data used to compile the new global tiger population figure.

The statement is based on the premise that a 'report' was issued by WWF and the Global Tiger Forum (GTF) from which the new figure was derived. This is incorrect. No report was published.

WWF and the GTF compiled the updated tiger population figure from the IUCN Red Data listing completed in 2015 (Goodrich *et al*, 2015). The IUCN assessors (including three of the authors of the statement) totalled the global number at 3159. Since then, India, Russia, Bangladesh and Bhutan published the results of their national tiger surveys. WWF and GTF updated the IUCN 2015 data with data from these surveys. Where a range was stated by the IUCN assessment, the lower end of the range was used for the updated tiger population figure. This brought the total to 3890. No additional survey work or analysis was undertaken by WWF or the GTF.

The IUCN Red Data listing is compiled on behalf of IUCN members by the Cat Specialist Group of the IUCN Species Survival Commission. It is in the public domain and is seen as the current best available data. This information was clearly stated in the press release and all supporting documents.

The statement also claims that the 'report' stated wild tigers are "on track for a doubling in a decade." This is not stated in the press release or supporting documents. The press release stated "*Global wild tiger population increases, but still a long way to go.*"

WWF shares the concerns of authors of the statement that tiger population data should be based on the best scientific data available and that the increase in tiger numbers should be balanced with recognition of the severe threats that tigers continue to face, that some populations have been decimated in the last five years and that serious rates of habitat loss still threaten tigers and tiger population recovery.

Full action, investment and collaboration from all tiger range countries is needed to achieve Tx2; the global goal to double wild tiger numbers by the year 2022. At the 3rd Asia Ministerial Conference on Tiger Conservation, governments restated their commitment to the Tx2 goal. This needs to be translated immediately into action on the ground or the window of opportunity will be missed. The new global tiger number is not a trigger for complacency but for action.

Country	IUCN estimate based on field data (within the past five years, 2009-2014)	WWF & GTF total April 2016	Source
Bangladesh	Not available	106	National Survey 2015 ²
Bhutan	50 (43-61)	103	National Survey 2015 ³
Cambodia	0 ^{12, 13}	0	IUCN 2015 ^{1, 12, 13}
China	>7	>7	IUCN 2015 ¹
India	1,706 (1,520 to 1,909)	2226	National survey 2014 ⁴

Indonesia	670 (371 -1,273)	371	IUCN 2015 ¹ (lower range)
Lao PDR	2 ⁹	2	IUCN 2015 ^{1,9}
Malaysia	300 (250-340)	250	IUCN 2015 ^{1,10,11} (lower range)
Myanmar	Not available	No current data available*	IUCN 2015 ¹
Nepal	198 (163-235)	198	National Survey 2013 ⁵
Russia	Not available	433	National survey 2015 ⁶
Thailand	221 (189-252)	189	IUCN 2015 ¹ (lower range)
Vietnam	<5	<5	IUCN 2015 ¹
Global Total	3159	3890	

KEY
Data updated with national tiger surveys since IUCN estimate

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