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Securing a **Future**
for **TIGERS**
in the **WILD**

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Securing a **Future**
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a Flagship of the **Wilderness**

Less than a century ago, tigers prowled the forests of eastern Turkey and the Caspian region of western Asia. They lived in the Indian sub-continent, and across to Indochina through China, Myanmar and Thailand. Branching out south, tigers inhabited the lowland rainforests and montane forests of Malaysia and the Indonesian islands of Bali, Java and Sumatra. They were also found in the Koreas, extending up to the Russian Far East.



The Hindu goddess Durga is traditionally shown astride a tiger

But by the 1980s, tigers on Bali and Java, and those in the Caspian region, were extinct. Of the remaining five sub-species¹, three (the Amur, South China and Sumatran) are critically endangered. The other two (the Royal Bengal and Indochinese) are under serious threat due to poaching and habitat loss.

Today, tigers are found in 14 countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia (Sumatra), Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, North Korea, Russia (Far East), Thailand and Vietnam. But these charismatic mammals, their prey and their habitat are under increasing threat in most of these countries.

The tiger is a revered and powerful symbol among the variety of cultures that live across its range. Even in places where it has become extinct or never existed in the wild, the tiger is present in myth and legend.

Tigers are at the top of the food chain. Hunting primarily by sight and sound, they have been known to eat crocodiles, fish, birds, reptiles, and even other predators such as leopards and bears.

Their preferred and essential food, however, is ungulates – hooved animals such as deer and wild pigs. As top predators, they keep populations of wild ungulates in check, thereby maintaining the balance between herbivores and the vegetation upon which they feed.

¹ A recent study of DNA has led researchers to propose the erstwhile Indochinese tiger found in peninsular Malaysia to be distinguished as the Malayan tiger (*P.t. jacksoni*), a separate sub-species.



An 1861 Oban triptych by Ichikawa Yoshikazu shows Masakiyo hunting tigers in Korea in the 1590s



Species *on the Edge*

All tigers are classified as endangered. Throughout their range in Asia (including the Russian Far East) tiger populations are threatened, either directly from poaching, or from habitat destruction and loss of prey. In many places, they struggle for survival against the needs of burgeoning human populations who compete for similar resources of food and shelter.

© WWF-Canon / Edward PARKER



Tiger bones are still used in Traditional Chinese Medicine

For more than 1,000 years, tiger parts have been in demand as an ingredient for traditional Asian medicines, for magic purposes, for souvenirs and curios, as status symbols and as decorative items such as wall and floor coverings. Although trade in tiger parts and derivatives is illegal, poaching persistently feeds continuing consumer demand and is a major worldwide threat to the species. Now, the threat is expanding: as tiger populations decline, demand increases for parts and derivatives of other big cat species such as the endangered snow leopard and leopard.

© WWF-Canon / Gerald S. CUBITT



Skins and ivory for sale at a market in Myanmar

Large-scale habitat destruction and devastation of prey populations are also contributing to the tiger's decline. When the habitat is rapidly turned into farmland and settlements, and when natural prey is hunted by humans and stocks fall, tigers attack domestic animals – and sometimes humans. This often leads to these 'problem animals' being killed by the authorities or angry villagers in retaliation.

Although there are no accurate recent estimates of the world tiger population, numbers are thought to have fallen by about 95 per cent since the turn of the last century – down from around 100,000 to the present estimate of between 5,000 and 7,000.

© WWF-Canon / Alain COMPOST



Large-scale conversion of tiger habitat remains a threat

Many range countries lack the capacity and resources to assess tiger and prey populations and monitor their distribution over time and space; neither are they able effectively to enforce laws prohibiting poaching and trade. Policies to ensure the long-term survival of the tiger are often lacking – and where they do exist, implementation is often weak.

Amur tiger

A typical male Amur tiger, the largest of the tiger subspecies, may weigh more than 250 kg and measure nearly three metres from nose to tip of tail. Once found in the taiga and boreal forests of the Russian Far East, China and the Koreas, it is now restricted to the Sikhote-Alin range in Russia's Primorski and Khabarovski provinces, and possibly to small pockets in the border areas of China and North Korea. Amur tiger populations have been severely reduced by poaching, poaching of prey and habitat destruction. The 2005 Amur tiger survey revealed less than 420 of this sub-species remain in the wild.



© WWF / KLEIN & HUBERT



© WWF India / Neel GOGATE

Bengal tiger

The Bengal tiger is the most numerous of tigers in the wild today. It lives in Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar (Burma) and Nepal, with India home to the biggest population. It mostly inhabits the deciduous forests of central and south India, the Terai-Duar grassland and sal forests of the Himalayan foothills, and the temperate forests of Bhutan. The Sunderban, which straddles Bangladesh and India, hosts the only mangrove forests where tigers are found.

A burgeoning human population is reducing the space available to the tiger, resulting in increasing conflicts with humans that often lead to retributive killings. The tiger also faces a serious threat from poachers. Although precise figures are not available throughout its range, current estimates show there are about 4,000 Bengal tigers surviving in the wild.



Indochinese tiger

Dispersed widely throughout seven countries (Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam), the Indochinese tiger probably numbers fewer than 1,500. The key menace is poaching of both tiger and prey. In some landscapes, good habitat is extensive, although fragmentation driven by rapid development, especially of road networks, is forcing tigers into small and scattered refuges that isolate the populations. Unfortunately, this provides better access for poachers.



© WWF-Canon / Elizabeth KEMF



© WWF / Frédy MERCAY

Sumatran tiger

The smallest of the tigers, the Sumatran, is critically endangered. Found only on the Indonesian island of Sumatra, it is fighting for survival against poaching and large-scale habitat conversion. A TRAFFIC^{*1} report on Sumatran tigers revealed that at least 50 were poached every year between 1998 and 2002. Now, the last 400 or so are confined mostly to protected areas in montane forests, peat swamps and remaining blocks of lowland rainforests, which are threatened by conversion to agriculture and commercial plantations, as well as encroachment by logging and road construction.

South China tiger

Thought to be the ancestor of all tigers, the South China sub-species has not been sighted in the wild for more than 25 years. If a wild population does remain, it may not be viable. Its survival would depend on adequate habitat and prey species, both of which are scarce or heavily fragmented.



© WWF-Canon / John MacKINNON

¹ TRAFFIC – the joint wildlife trade programme of WWF and IUCN, the World Conservation Union

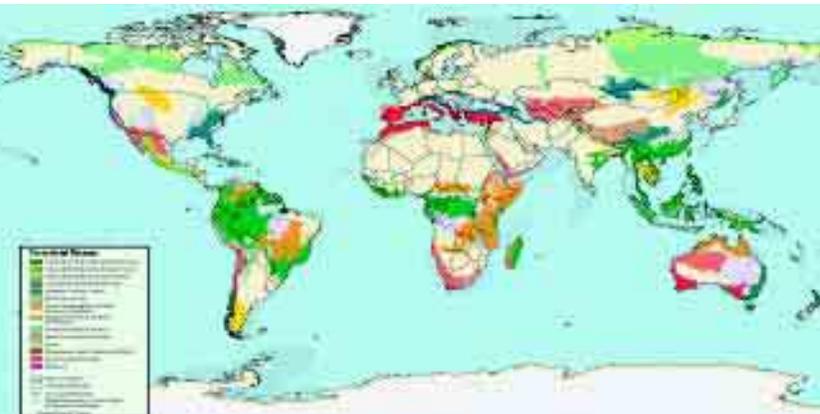
a Strategy for the **21st Century**

Drawing upon four decades of tiger conservation work with partners across Asia, and working with some of the world's most eminent experts, WWF has developed a new and far-reaching strategy. Its cornerstone is a landscape-based approach to tiger conservation supported by a strong programme to address illegal trade wherever it occurs.

Today, wild tigers occur mostly in small 'island' populations, which are predisposed to inbreeding and increasing vulnerability to the pressures of encroachment and poaching. Keeping these 'islands' intact amid some of the most densely human-populated countries is possible – but it offers little hope for the species' genetic vigour and long-term viability.

WWF recognises the need to take tiger conservation beyond the borders of national parks and nature reserves into entire landscapes by integrating the protection, restoration and sustainable use of the ecosystems in which the tigers live. The essence is to conserve their broad ecology and behaviour in their natural habitat, not just discrete populations. This is not to imply that conservation work in isolated reserves is unimportant; rather, it underlines the unique role that these core areas have in establishing vibrant and viable tiger conservation landscapes.

WWF's landscape conservation goal aims at connecting protected areas through natural corridors and protecting them. To do this, field managers and policy-makers must employ 'people-friendly' conservation approaches that will allow humans to coexist harmoniously with tigers in these landscapes. This ambitious venture must involve local communities, local authorities and other stakeholders at different levels of planning, policy-making and implementation.



WWF's GLOBAL 200: A NEW AGENDA FOR THE 21st CENTURY

To help make strategic conservation decisions, WWF developed the Global 200. These are areas where the Earth's biological wealth is most distinctive or the richest, where its loss will be more severely felt, and where we must fight hardest for conservation. Developed by WWF scientists in collaboration with regional experts around the world, the Global 200 is the first comparative analysis of biodiversity to cover every major habitat type. Spanning six continents and all the world's oceans, the ranking provides a critical blueprint for biodiversity conservation on a global scale. By saving the Global 200, we can conserve the broadest variety of the world's habitats and species as well as the ecological and evolutionary processes that maintain life on Earth.



WWF's Strategy for Conserving Tigers in the Wild

In 2002, WWF developed its Tiger Conservation Programme in partnership with other conservationists and authorities. It identified seven priority areas where conservation would most benefit the long-term survival of tigers in the wild. Four additional areas were then identified as 'tier-two' landscapes where more information to assess the status of tigers was required. Within these key landscapes, WWF and its partners work to reduce or remove threats to tigers in the wild by:

- restoring habitat, maintaining connectivity and securing a wilderness landscape;
- strengthening anti-poaching efforts to reduce losses in species numbers;
- mitigating conflicts over resources to benefit both humans and tigers;
- facilitating creative land-use planning to solve problems facing wildlife and people;
- monitoring populations to improve management strategies for tigers, including increasing prey populations;
- building capacity of local conservationists;
- focusing on cross-cutting issues such as policies, sustainable forestry and human-wildlife conflict; and
- stopping the illegal trade in tiger parts.

By conserving the tiger, we can secure a sound future for many other species that thrive in its habitat. WWF's Tiger Programme is complementary to its Asian Rhino and Elephant Action Strategy (AREAS) in several key landscapes because tigers, rhinos and elephants sometimes share the same spaces. These landscapes lie in areas of distinctive biological richness, identified by WWF as Global 200 Ecoregions, a science-based global ranking of the Earth's most biologically outstanding terrestrial, freshwater and marine habitats.



A Forest Guard in Sunderban Tiger Reserve stands next to a Bengali poem glorifying the tiger

© WWF / Tshewang WANGCHUK

WWF's new strategy for tiger conservation is aligned with, and based upon, the following vision and goals:

Vision: A world in which tigers thrive in natural habitats across their range and benefit humanity as a result.

Long-term goal: To conserve viable populations of tigers and their prey, across their entire range, in large well-managed networks of protected areas, buffer zones and connecting tiger-friendly landscapes.

WWF's programme goal (to the year 2010): To improve the protection and management of key tiger populations and their habitats in top priority conservation landscapes, through measures that can be sustained and supported over the long term by governments, local communities and other stakeholders.



Mapping the Tiger World

WWF, in collaboration with Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and with support from Save the Tiger Fund, originally developed the concept of Tiger Conservation Units (TCU) to define areas in Asia important for tiger conservation. A TCU is defined as “a block or cluster of blocks of existing habitats that contains, or has the potential to contain, interacting populations of tigers”. The entire landscape of natural habitats over which tigers may disperse and become established is included in a TCU. It is not limited to, or contained within, protected areas alone. TCUs are based and scored on the integrity of the habitat, pressure of poaching and the status of the population. These three variables were identified by scientists and conservationists as the main reasons behind the decline of tigers in the wild. The sum was used to rank and prioritise TCUs in the following four categories:

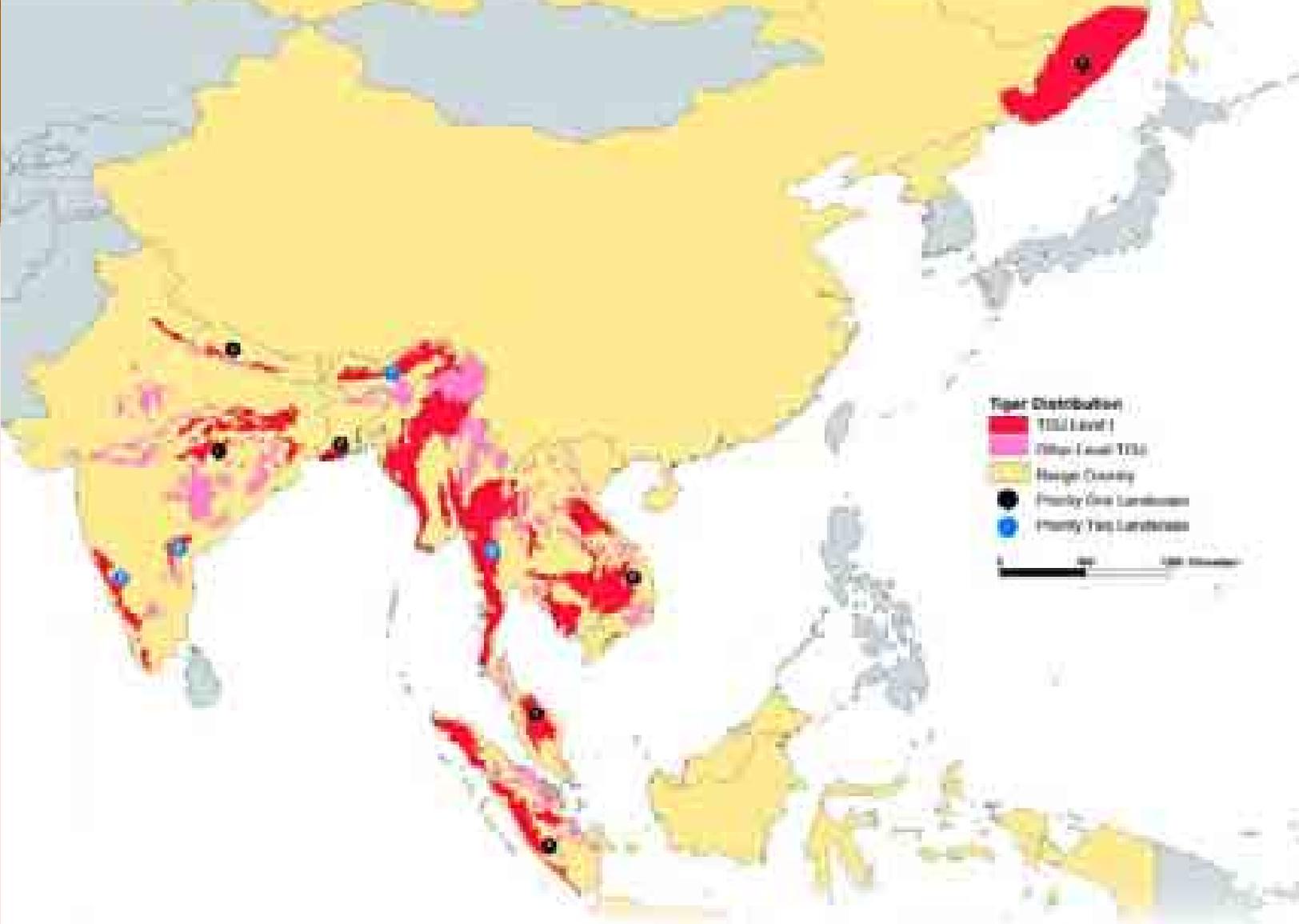
Level I TCU: A TCU offering the highest probability of persistence of tiger populations over the long term. They are essential for a global tiger conservation strategy. Level I TCUs share the following attributes: large blocks of habitats suitable for tigers and prey with adequate core areas: low to moderate poaching pressure on tigers and prey species either as a result of remoteness or vigilant protection.

Level II TCU: A TCU offering medium probability of persistence of tiger populations over the long term. They contribute to a bioregional tiger conservation strategy. These TCUs share the following attributes: moderate to large-sized blocks of habitat suitable for tigers with adequate core areas: moderate to high poaching pressure on tigers and prey species but with potential for implementing effective anti-poaching measures in the near future.

Level III TCUs: A TCU offering low probability of persistence of tiger populations over the long term due to its small size, isolation from other habitat blocks containing tigers, and fragmentation within its respective major habitat type. With intensive management and protection, Level III TCUs can harbour small populations of tigers. They are most important to national tiger conservation strategies. Level III TCUs share the following attributes: small blocks of habitat suitable for tigers with small or no core area: high poaching pressure on tiger and prey species that endangers conservation efforts.

TCUs requiring immediate surveys: Any TCU that potentially contains extensive blocks of appropriate tiger habitat with or without protected core areas, but data on habitat quality, poaching pressure or population status for the most important habitats within the TCU are lacking. (Wikramanayake, E.D. et al. 'Where can tigers live in the future?'. In *Riding the Tiger* (1999) ed. J. Seidensticker, S. Christie, & P. Jackson, pp 256-259. Cambridge)

WWF and its partners use such data to make informed decisions about where to effectively intervene with conservation action. This database has already proved to be an important tool in prioritising areas for conservation. Such important information and expert advice has already been used in selecting WWF's priority landscapes. Like any other information system, this has to be maintained as a dynamic database – it needs to be updated with the most current information regularly in response to events over time. WWF, WCS, and its partners in range states are now in the process of revising and updating the information on TCUs all across the present tiger range. This will be an invaluable tool for evaluating effectiveness of conservation work over the last decades, and also provide better directions for future work in tiger conservation.



PRIORITY LANDSCAPES FOR WWF'S TIGER CONSERVATION STRATEGY

South Asia	Satpuda-Maikal Landscape (India) ❶ Sunderban Landscape (Bangladesh, India) ❷ Terai Arc Landscape (India, Nepal) ❸ Manas-Namdhapa (India, Bhutan) ❹ Eastern Indian Highlands (India) ❺ Western Ghats (India) ❻
Southeast Asia	Taman Negara-Belum-Hala-Bala Landscape (Malaysia, Thailand) ❶ Tesso Nilo-Bukit Barisan (Indonesia) ❷ Western Forest Complex-Tannantharyi (Thailand, Myanmar) ❸
Indochina	Lower Mekong Forests Landscape (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam) ❶
Russia	Russian Far East Landscape (Russia) ❷

The Last Stronghold **Priority Tiger Landscapes**

WWF believes that the tiger's global survival will be ensured by protecting its key habitats. Our work concentrates on enlarging the geographic scale of tiger conservation from a site-specific intervention to the protection, restoration and sustainable use of the larger habitat in which the species lives, breeds and disperses.

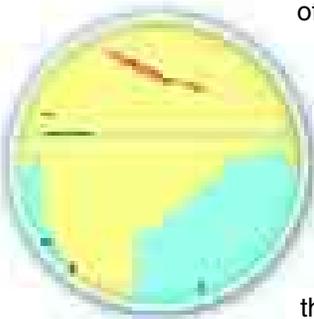
Priority Landscapes in South Asia



Terai Arc Landscape – India, Nepal

Three endangered large mammals coexist at the base of the Himalayas, making this one of the few places in the world where tigers, elephants and rhinos still roam. A diverse array of hoofed mammals supports the tiger populations in this area shared by India and Nepal – a landscape where elephant grass reaches seven metres by the end of the monsoons. This overlaps the Terai-Duar savannas and grasslands Global 200 Ecoregion. Here, authorities in both countries claim a combined total estimate of more than 600 tigers.

MAPS: © WWF Nepal Program / Gokarna THAPA



WWF has been working with local partners to strengthen anti-poaching efforts, and to reduce threats to the natural habitat, in India and Nepal. Work is now under way to decrease pressure on natural forests in order to reduce conflict. On the Indian side, efforts have been started to secure two corridors – Lagga Bagga and Rajaji-Corbett – which will allow tigers to live, breed and disperse in a larger area. Already some of the restored habitats are showing signs of use by tigers for breeding. The long-term aim is to secure a well-connected habitat for the whole landscape.

Recently, this landscape has been affected by insurgency and political unrest in Nepal. Many years of hard work are at risk, and there is a grave threat to the survival of tigers and other wildlife. The Terai Arc Landscape is also a WWF AREAS priority landscape.

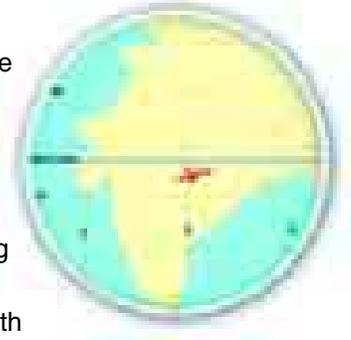




Satpuda Maikal Landscape (Kipling Country) – India

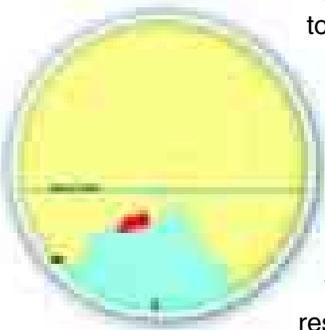
The deciduous forests of central India harbour the highest number of tigers in the sub-continent – but increasing pressure from humans and cattle threaten their survival. Even though the Satpuda Maikal Landscape overlaps the Eastern Deccan Plateau Moist Forests Global 200 Ecoregion, some parts are very dry prior to the monsoons: reduced water availability is an issue here for wildlife as well as for humans. Some 500 or more tigers roam this landscape, which is also known as Kipling Country, after Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book* stories.

WWF has been reinforcing the anti-poaching capacity of the government authorities in the Achanakmar Wildlife Sanctuary which, thanks to our unstinting support, has been declared a new Tiger Reserve. Work is also under way in the corridor between this and the Kanha Tiger Reserve: here, we are cooperating with local people (mostly Baiga and Gond tribal people) in order to improve their livelihood opportunities and thus reduce pressure and dependence on forests. Not least among our successes has been increasing water availability during the dry season.



Sunderban Landscape – Bangladesh, India

The only mangrove forest in the world inhabited by the tiger lies at the delta of the Ganga and Brahmaputra rivers. Most waterways originating in the Himalayas flow into these two rivers, depositing silt and forming the alluvial Sunderban delta where they meet the Bay of Bengal. Sunderban (Sanskrit for 'beautiful forest' or 'forest of the Sundari trees') is a UNESCO World Heritage Site on both the Bangladeshi and Indian sides. There are three protected areas on the Bangladeshi side, and with the Sunderban Tiger Reserve on the Indian side, together total around 4,000 sq km. An estimated 250 tigers exist in the Indian Sunderban, and about 350 tigers on the Bangladeshi side.



People living in and around this landscape depend on the mangroves for a variety of resources – honey, firewood, deer meat, thatch, fish and shrimp. Inevitable conflicts arise when they encroach upon the tiger's habitat. WWF is working on one island to introduce alternatives for income generation so that local people would not have to depend heavily on mangrove forest resources. The communities of Chota Molla Khali are now engaged in batik painting, poultry and improved agriculture that bring them better income. They depend less on resources from prime tiger habitat.

Priority Landscapes in South-east Asia



Taman Negara-Belum-Hala-Bala – Malaysia, Thailand

This transboundary landscape straddles much of northern Peninsular Malaysia and a small area of southern Thailand. It overlaps the Peninsular Malaysian Lowland and Montane Forests Global 200 Ecoregion. Also a WWF AREAS priority landscape, much of it is an important TCU. Taman Negara National Park alone harbours around 90 breeding tigers and more are found in adjoining areas.

A complete survey is yet to be undertaken in other parts of Peninsular Malaysia.

Logging operations and road development pose a big threat to tiger habitat, and conversion of forests to agriculture or commercial plantations has resulted in more frequent encounters between tigers and livestock. Human-tiger conflict has resulted in very strong negative sentiments towards tigers.

WWF has been leading an initiative to reduce human-wildlife conflict through better livestock management. By helping farmers build more secure cattle sheds, WWF has managed to reverse a decision by the State government to eliminate all tigers. Now WWF is working with local communities and state governments to

replicate its conflict mitigation activities in other areas. In addition, WWF is also working on management of High Conservation Value Forests.



Tesso Nilo and Bukit Barisan – Indonesia

Representing the Sumatran Island Lowland and Montane Forests Global 200 Ecoregion, this landscape covers the last blocks of lowland tropical rain forest in Sumatra and Bukit Barisan Selatan, important TCUs for the Sumatran tiger. The revised landscape stretches from Tesso Nilo in Riau to Bukit Tigapuluh, and then on to Bukit Barisan Selatan, all on the island of Sumatra. The tigers in this landscape comprise a significant proportion of this population.

There are an estimated 400 Sumatran tigers in the wild and the biggest threat to their survival is probably poaching: indeed, research by TRAFFIC in 2003 revealed that at least 50 Sumatran tigers were poached each year between 1998 and 2002. In addition, large-scale habitat conversion to commercial plantation is rapidly eating away natural forests. Illegal logging is also prevalent in much of Sumatra, with local pulp and paper mills relying heavily upon fibre collected from tropical rainforests. Unless an end is brought to rampant habitat loss and the illegal trade in tiger parts, Indonesia may lose its last remaining tiger species.

WWF has successfully lobbied corporate partners and the State government to declare Tesso Nilo a protected area. This is probably the last remaining block of lowland tropical rainforest for tigers in Sumatra.



MAPS: © WWF Nepal Program / Gokarna THAPA

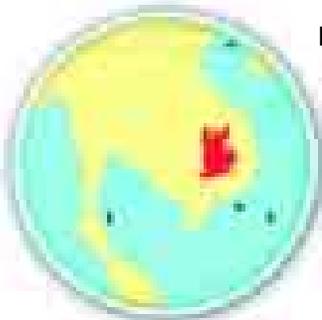


Priority Landscapes in Indochina



Lower Mekong Forests – Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam

The Indochinese tiger has all but disappeared in many parts of Vietnam and Cambodia, and in some areas of Lao PDR. Incorporating important parts of two Global 200 Ecoregions, the Central Indochina Dry Forests and the Greater Annamites, and overlapping with the AREAS Tri-Border Landscape, the Lower Mekong forests are a mix of lowland and highland tropical deciduous, semi-evergreen and evergreen formations. Both tiger and prey densities are generally low due to intensive hunting and weak law enforcement in the region over past decades. Habitat fragmentation is a serious problem, especially in Vietnam.

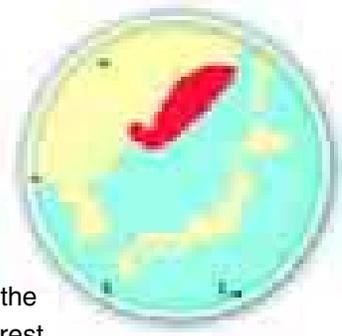


Recognising these constraints, WWF has identified core areas and corridors for protecting and monitoring tiger and other key species; however, there is also an urgent need for evaluation and mapping work in Lao PDR, where tiger presence is confirmed throughout the country. Tiger-oriented projects are working with the Ecoregional programme and government partners to strengthen management of key protected areas in the landscape, especially improving law enforcement to reduce poaching and trade, and sustainable forest resource management. However, there remains a need for awareness-raising and training among local communities.



Priority Landscape in the Russian Far East

Vast tracts of forest in Primorski and Khabarovski provinces represent the Russian Far East Broadleaf and Conifer Forests G200 Ecoregion, and are a Level I TCU. In the 1940s the Amur tiger was on the brink of extinction, with no more than 40 specimens in the wild. Thanks to vigorous anti-poaching and other conservation efforts by the Russians with support from WWF and many other partners, the tiger population recovered and has remained stable throughout the last decade or so. About 334-417 adult Amur tigers remain in the wild. Poaching of tigers and prey, increased logging and road construction, forest fires and inadequate law enforcement are key threats that affect the survival of Amur tigers in this landscape.



WWF, in partnership with the Russian authorities and other NGOs, is helping establish Econet, an ecological network of protected areas that will become a well-connected habitat for the tiger. This involves setting up new protected areas and improving management of the whole protected area system. Emphasis is on recovery of prey species, regulated hunting management, anti-poaching, and integration with forest and freshwater initiatives in the Russian Far East.



Other Landscapes

WWF's first round of priorities picked seven landscapes. This does not imply that other areas are of lesser importance, but rather that the prioritisation process reflected knowledge at that time. Even so, the following were also selected as important areas needing further scrutiny:

Manas-Namdhapa – Bhutan, India

Stretching from the Himalayan foothills north of the Brahmaputra river and continuing to the timberline above 4,000 m, tigers are found in this landscape in some of the most natural states. Manas Tiger Reserve in India, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, adjoins the Royal Manas National Park in Bhutan to form part of an important TCU. On the Indian side, this landscape merges with the AREAS North Bank Landscape. The natural state of Bhutan's tiger habitat will allow an insight into tiger and prey behaviour in steep, moist temperate forests.

Western Forest Complex, Tannantharyi – Myanmar, Thailand

This landscape straddles the Tannantharyi (Tennasserim) range on the Thailand-Myanmar border. On the Thai side are two large protected area complexes: the Western Forest Complex (WEFCOM) in the north, comprising 17 protected areas, and the Khaeng Krachan Complex in the south, which includes Khaeng Krachan National Park and Mae Nam Pachee Wildlife Sanctuary. Much of the habitat in the centre of this landscape lies in Myanmar and little is known about its biodiversity and forest conditions. Protected areas can be made more secure by maintaining linkage to other nearby habitat. The WEFCOM-Tannantharyi Landscape is important because it supports a broad range of biodiversity and a high density of tigers.

Eastern Indian Highlands

This region comprises discontinuous hill ranges, plateaus and escarpments running along the east coast of India. They spread over 75,000 sq km and cover parts of Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka States. The Western Ghats are joined to the Eastern Ghats by the Shevaroy hills, an important link for genetic continuity of the region's biodiversity, and an important corridor for large mammals such as tigers and elephants. The four major rivers of southern India – the Kaveri, Krishna, Godavari and Mahanadi – pass through the region.

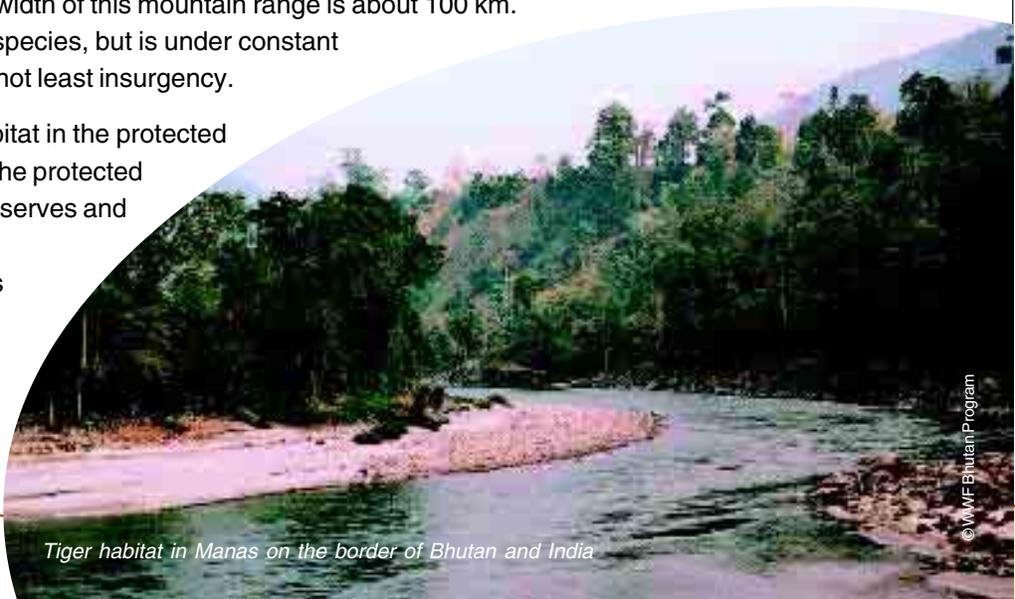
Tadoba Andhari and Indravati Tiger Reserves contain tigers and prey. The area is also one of the last domains of the wild water buffalo. Encroachment of forests, illicit felling of trees, poaching and habitat fragmentation are among major threats in this landscape.

Western Ghats

The hill chain of the Western Ghats reaches 2,800 m before merging with the Deccan plateau at an altitude of 500-600 m. The average width of this mountain range is about 100 km.

This bioregion contains a wealth of species, but is under constant threat from human encroachment – not least insurgency.

The condition of the tiger and its habitat in the protected areas is good, although connecting the protected areas needs to happen. Four tiger reserves and several national parks and wildlife sanctuaries make up the core of this landscape.



Tiger habitat in Manas on the border of Bhutan and India



Meeting the Major Challenges

Solid partnership and cooperation between all stakeholders is essential if the tiger is to survive in its natural setting. No one organisation, agency, community or individual has the resources, knowledge or capacity to succeed alone. Tiger conservation on the scale envisaged in this strategy will call as never before upon the ability of people and organisations to work together. The approach will require long-term commitments, and sharing of knowledge, skills and resources, to implement diverse but complementary activities such as community-based natural resource management, law enforcement, conservation education, research and surveys, and cross-border cooperation that will ultimately lead to a future shared harmoniously by tigers and humans.

Poaching and illegal wildlife trade

Poaching is a serious threat in all tiger range countries, which is why WWF works with local partners to strengthen anti-poaching efforts and intelligence networks. Together with TRAFFIC, we address the threat of the illegal trade in tiger products. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) prohibits international trade in the tiger and its parts and products. Even so, trade continues relentlessly in range, transit and consumer states.

In order to enhance tiger conservation efforts, WWF and TRAFFIC employ several strategies to reduce and ultimately eliminate this trade. These include:

- anti-poaching efforts in and around protected areas;
- improving the understanding of tiger trade issues and dynamics (as well as the related trade in similar species such as the snow leopard) in range and consumer countries through research and trade monitoring, so that effective ways to address this trade and reduce demand can be developed;
- working nationally, regionally and internationally to improve law enforcement capacity, intelligence gathering, information-sharing and awareness of the trade's impact, as well as strengthening international cooperation between range and consumer countries, in order to detect and halt the trade;
- exploring the potential to replace the use of tiger parts and derivatives in traditional Asian medicines with alternatives;
- researching the impact of trade in tiger prey species in order to improve protected area management;
- researching social and cultural aspects of the use of tiger and leopard skins in traditional Himalayan clothing; and
- developing educational materials for use among people who treasure the skins of big cats, and those who practise traditional medicine.



Forest Guard with a confiscated tiger skin in Chitwan, Nepal

Political unrest

Political instability poses serious threats in several key tiger areas – sometimes making it impossible to discover population, prey and habitat viability status. Although hailed as a conservation model, the Terai Arc Landscape programme in Nepal is under threat from insurgents. Many years of commendable conservation efforts are at risk of being undone due to clashes between rebels and security forces, and the general lawlessness that prevails in some key tiger habitats.

Human-wildlife conflict

As humans relentlessly encroach into the Earth's last remaining wild places, people and wildlife are increasingly competing for living space and food. As discussed earlier, tigers are suffering not only from significant loss of habitat but also from a decline in their prey species. As a result, more and more tigers are forced to search for food among the domestic livestock upon which many communities depend heavily for their livelihood. However, when livestock predation occurs, tigers are persecuted, captured or killed in retaliation. Sometimes livestock carcasses are baited in order to poison the tiger when it returns to its kill. Tiger prey species are also killed by villagers, which further exacerbates the problem.

These conflicts are not only one of the biggest threats to the world's remaining tigers, but also a major problem for communities living in or near tiger habitat: tiger attacks on humans are on the increase. WWF is committed to working with these communities to find solutions which will allow man and beast to live in harmony.

Many projects to mitigate human-tiger conflicts have been established by WWF and other conservation organisations in partnership with governments throughout Asia. To increase the conservation impact, programmes are normally developed in critical tiger habitats such as around a protected area or in a corridor. The simplest mitigation measures involve setting up compensation schemes to reimburse villagers who have lost livestock to tigers – but of course it is also important to address the root cause of conflicts.

For example, WWF is currently working to change livestock management to prevent tiger kills, and to provide alternative livelihoods to local communities. This will reduce their dependence on forest resources, which in turn will decrease the likelihood of tiger attacks on them. Several crop protection initiatives are also in place.

A common theme running through most of these programmes is the necessity for all stakeholders – most essentially the affected communities – to participate fully. Ideally, over the long term, they will take on increasing levels of control over the programme, so that it becomes as internally regulated and self-sustaining as possible.



Agriculture fields often sit next to tiger and prey habitat

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Villagers are consulted on ways to resolve human-wildlife conflict

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Illegal loggers are open to tiger attacks

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Unsustainable land-use practices

While large tracts of forest are often being cleared to make way for human settlement and agriculture, tiger habitats outside the protected areas are being heavily used for grazing and collecting forest products. That is why securing corridors and keeping land intact to link the protected areas needs major attention. WWF's Tiger Programme aims to strike a balance between the conservation needs of tigers and the survival needs of humans, but in so doing, ecological and social challenges must be overcome. To fight the pressures of logging and land conversion, WWF is endeavouring to modify land-use policies and ensure sustainable resource management practices. We are also focusing on government and corporate responsibility to prevent encroachment into prime forest habitats.



Towards a **Brighter Tomorrow**

The WWF Tiger Programme strives to provide a brighter future for tigers in the wild, in their natural elements. By securing adequate habitat, prey and suitable conditions for tigers to thrive, breed and disperse, we are also contributing towards conserving a myriad of other species.

WWF has more than four decades of experience working on the ground as well as with policy issues in order to address problems and constraints facing important species such as the tiger. We have used biological and social science, policy and economics, and the wisdom of our conservation experience to develop strategic solutions.

We place great importance on conservation intervention – a culmination of field data integrated with management decisions. While monitoring populations and habitat is a crucial part of our programmes, an even more critical component is the action to remove immediate threats to the survival of priority species. The global nature and outreach of the WWF network, together with the local knowledge of its field programmes and staff, enables us to work at local, regional, national and global levels effectively. We have the capacity to influence international campaigns and the negotiating skills to alter policies and practices detrimental to biodiversity.

WWF encourages governments, NGOs, other organisations and anyone interested in learning more about tigers in the wild to help create a secure and permanent future for them. There is no time to be complacent – the tiger is in crisis. We need partners like *you* to garner political, financial and material support to ensure that the tiger, lord of the jungle, still prowls the forests of Asia.

Get involved. Make a difference.

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WWF is the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organization in the world. With almost five million supporters worldwide and a global network active in more than 90 countries.

WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature by:

- conserving the world's biological diversity
- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable
- promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption

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