



FACTSHEET

2010



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Forest-Species

WWF'S WORK ON SUMATRAN TIGER CONSERVATION

The Sumatran tiger numbers fewer than 400 individuals in the wild, and is found exclusively on the Indonesian island of Sumatra

Indonesia: A Key Country to Tiger's Survival

Indonesia hosts approximately 12 percent of the global wild tiger population and thus is a key country among the 13 tiger range nations. Yet the wild population of the Sumatran tiger (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*) is only about 400 individuals and limited to the island of Sumatra. This means the protection of every single individual and its habitat, and the restoration of that habitat, is of great urgency.

Classified as critically endangered, the Sumatran tiger is one of six tiger subspecies that survive today. As top predators, tigers keep populations of wild prey in check, thereby maintaining balance in the ecosystem between prey and the vegetation which the prey depends on for food.

As with wild tigers everywhere, the Sumatran tiger is threatened by habitat loss, poaching, illegal trade, and human-tiger conflict.

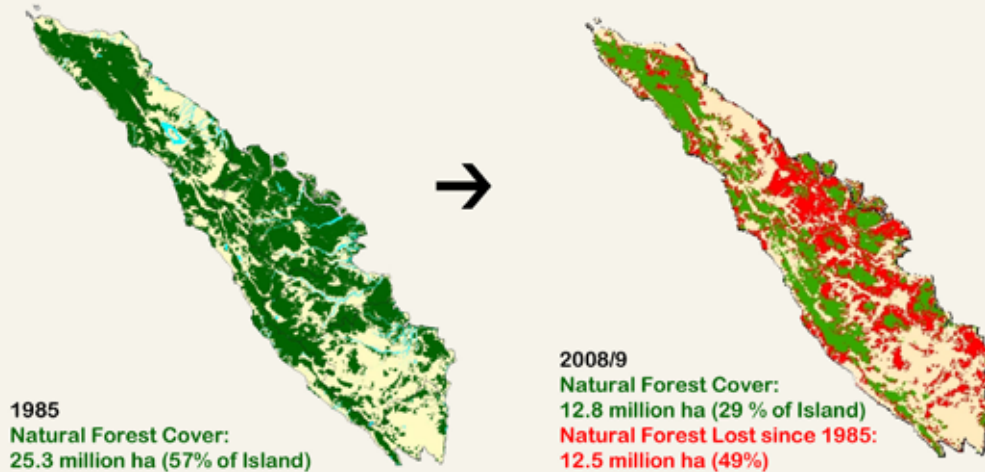


Sub species: Sumatran Tiger
Latin name: *Panthera tigris sumatrae*
Status: Critically Endangered (IUCN)
CITES: Appendix I (international commercial trading is prohibited)
Population: Approx. 400 tigers in the wild
Length: up to 1.4 m
Weight: 250 kg
Protection: Protected by Indonesian Law Act No. 5 of 1990 on Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystems

WWF-INDONESIA WORKS IN SUMATRA

Sumatra lost nearly 13 million hectares of forest between 1985 and 2009, mainly due to conversion to agriculture and commercial plantations, as well as encroachment facilitated by unsustainable logging operations and road construction.

In 2008, the island had 12.8 million hectares of natural forest remaining, covering only 29 percent of its land area; of the remaining forest, 87 percent (11.1 million hectares) is known to be the population range for Sumatran tigers. As their forests disappear, tigers are forced into closer contact with people, and are frequently killed or forced into captivity after straying into communities.



WWF in Sumatran Tiger Priority Landscapes



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WWF-Indonesia's tiger conservation efforts cover the priority areas in Central Sumatra of Rimbang Baling, Bukit Tigapuluh, Tesso Nilo, and Kampar-Kerumutan. These priority areas are also home to a range of other endangered species such as elephants and the Sumatran orangutan.

Since 2004, WWF-Indonesia and its local partners have conducted research to further our biological understanding of the area, in addition to tackling poaching in the two core areas of Tesso Nilo and Rimbang Baling and illegal wildlife trading throughout Riau and Sumatra. WWF also works closely with local communities to reduce human-tiger conflict. Other relevant activities include reducing pressure from illegal timber harvesting through community programs, monitoring forest crime, working with forest and plantation companies on more forest-friendly behavior, outreach and awareness campaigns for local communities, and engaging government partners on sustainable land-use planning and implementation.

WWF-INDONESIA'S TIGER PROGRAM

Since 2004, WWF has made significant progress in its efforts to conserve Sumatran tiger



Reliable research methods and strong baseline data

WWF-Indonesia has built up a strong set of baseline data on tiger ecology, prey status and habitat conditions that give us new scientific knowledge about the species across their habitat range in the landscape: peat swamp forest in Kuala Kampar-Kerumutan, lowland forest in Tesso Nilo, and hilly forest in Rimbang Baling and Bukit Tigapuluh. By using two main methods of research -- camera trapping and patch occupancy -- results of WWF surveys have been used to improve knowledge of the Sumatran tiger, identify wildlife corridors that require protection, contribute to island-wide data, and support outreach and education activities.

Strong relations and close collaboration with key partners

WWF-Indonesia has been instrumental in the establishment of the National Action Plan on the Sumatran Tiger 2007–2017 and the draft of the National Tiger Recovery Plan to be finalized at the end of 2010. Both plans contain comprehensive and progressive strategies and guidelines to protect Sumatran tigers, as well as links to global tiger recovery programs. Strong relationships with key partners also allowed WWF to facilitate a pledge at the 2008 IUCN World Conservation Congress by four Sumatran ministers and ten provincial governors to save Sumatra's remaining natural ecosystem through spatial planning. As a result of the pledge, a sustainable development vision for Sumatra 2020 has been produced by the governments. RIMBA integrated ecosystem – an area in central Sumatra which contains three out of the six priority Tiger Conservation Landscapes on the Island—has been designated as a demonstration project for spatial planning and development with low-carbon emissions.



Skilled and Dedicated Team

The WWF Sumatran tiger research program consists of a dedicated team with local knowledge and expertise and led by a national researcher. The field team that forms the backbone of the programme conducts surveys and monitoring activities. The team members are well equipped and well trained on wildlife survey techniques, field navigation, first aid response, database management, GIS and photography. Technical support is readily available from a network of experts to ensure that surveys and research are always rigorously conducted and evaluated. WWF also fields an anti-poaching patrol team and a unit that works to reduce human-tiger conflict in local communities.

Strong Campaign Team

At the national level, the Sumatran tiger team is supported by a campaign team that reaches out to national and international media, policymakers and the wider public. Besides liaising with other WWF offices and NGO networks focusing on tigers, the WWF-Indonesia campaign team is also supported by public figures or celebrities that help to raise public awareness on tiger issues. In mid-2010, WWF facilitated an online tree-planting campaign that obtained almost 65,000 trees to cover almost 100 hectares for Sumatran tiger habitat rehabilitation in Sumatra. Through their media campaign, the team also helps raise awareness among the private sector on best management practices and sustainable use of natural resources, as well as highlighting law enforcement in wildlife crime court cases.



CHALLENGES

WWF faces several challenges in our work in the landscape. The key ones are:



(C) WWF-Indonesia / Tiger Patrol Unit

Human-tiger conflict

Human-tiger conflict has long been a serious problem in the landscape. From 1997 to 2007, 235 cases of human-tiger conflict were documented throughout the landscape, with at least 36 tigers killed or injured. Many people have been killed or wounded by tigers. Tigers frequently prey on livestock. As a result, villagers often seek to have problem tigers killed, even though they are encouraged to contact the forestry department to try to have the tiger live-trapped and removed from the area.

Lack of sufficiently trained rangers

To cover such an extensive landscape, a larger team of trained rangers is urgently needed. For example, at present, a single government ranger is assigned to cover an area of 90,000 hectares in the Rimbang Baling Forest. Fieldstaff are also not equipped with the proper skills to carry out wildlife surveys and criminal investigations.

Funding Commitment

WWF is committed to providing technical support to the Government of Indonesia to ensure all key tiger habitats are zoned for protection in the ongoing spatial planning process, which requires a long-term funding commitment. Funding, however, has remained a constant challenge, as most funding commitments are short-term.

Poaching and illegal trade of tigers and tiger parts

From June 2008 to December 2009, 277 snares set for Tigers and their prey were discovered and confiscated by WWF's Tiger Patrol Unit -- a clear demonstration that poaching and illegal trade in tiger parts pose a serious threat to the Sumatran tiger's survival. A report in 2008 by TRAFFIC, the wildlife monitoring network, revealed that Indonesia (specifically Sumatra) was one of the tiger range states where illegal trade in tiger parts continued in a fairly open manner.

Lack of maximum sentence for wildlife crime

Law enforcement is still lacking, especially in the case of enforcing maximum sentences for tiger poachers or other wildlife crime. In 2009, judges in a court case in Sumatra's Riau Province sentenced two poachers for only one year's imprisonment and a minimal fine for the killing of three Sumatran tigers. To address this issue, WWF is currently working on capacity building for law enforcement agencies in Riau Province.



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

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