

Tiger Watch

World's largest tiger study finds tigers in just 7% of their former range

Good news, bad news and surprising opportunities for emblematic big cats, study says

In July, a group of scientists released the results of the world's most study of current tiger distribution. They reported that tigers may have vanished in as much as 40 percent of their remaining habitat in the last 10 years, but some areas, including the Terai Arc Landscape and the Russian Far East, have received significant conservation investments and have stable or even increasing tiger numbers.

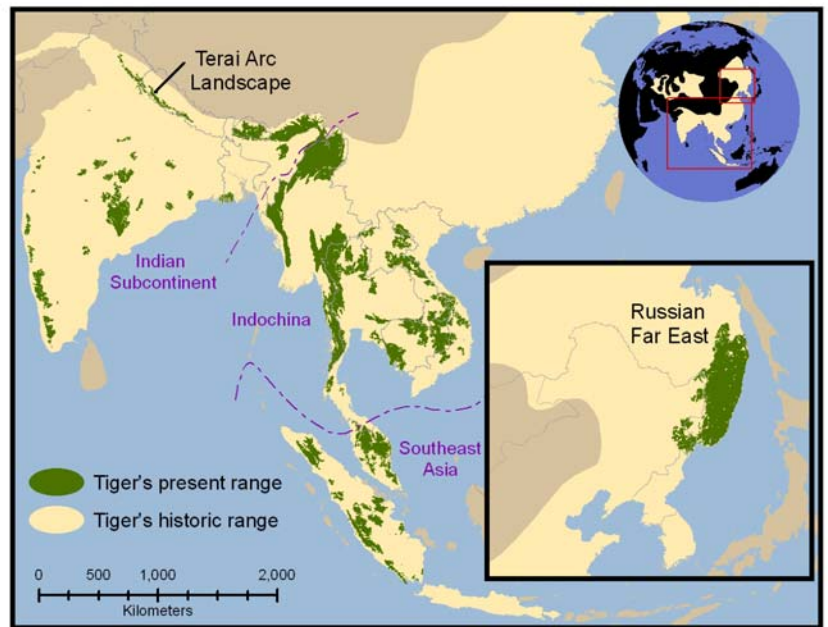
The study, produced by the Save The Tiger Fund, the World Wildlife Fund, the Wildlife Conservation Society, and the Smithsonian's National Zoological Park, calls for specific international actions to safeguard remaining populations from poaching and loss of habitat and prey species such as deer that tigers need to survive.

"Now more than ever, tigers need homeland security," said Dr. Joshua Ginsberg of the Wildlife Conservation Society. "Coordinated action is needed now in those countries where tigers still live in

order to preserve and even bolster populations for the future."

The report analyzes data from 180 of the world's leading tiger experts and more than 3,000 tiger locations to establish where these emblematic big cats still roam and to establish global tiger conservation priorities.

Using a combination of satellite technology, Geographic Information System (GIS), information on tiger distribution and human pressure, the study identifies "tiger conservation landscapes" – places and habitats that can support viable tiger populations in the future. Despite the alarming losses, there is some good news that is indicative of our efforts to save wild tigers: there are four strongholds for tiger conservation that have the potential to support 1,000 tigers or more, including the Russian Far East, the Terai Arc Landscape, the Northern forest complex of Myanmar, India and Bhutan and the Tenasserim range of Thailand and Myanmar. The new landscapes map identi-



fies over 1.1 million km² of remaining tiger habitats, 23 percent of which is legally protected, compared to a global average of just 13 percent.

The study was funded by the Save The Tiger Fund, a partnership between the ExxonMobil Foundation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the UN Foundation, the World Wildlife Fund and the Wildlife Conservation Society. Since 1995, STF has invested \$14.5 million in tiger conservation work, amounting to about one quarter of all the NGO money invested specifically in tiger conservation projects.

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STF grantees in Laos set a camera trap to locate tigers. Their records were submitted to this study (Photo: WCS, Laos).

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Read the full report and help us to save tigers today!

www.savethetigerfund.org

Summer brings hope for better anti-smuggling efforts

Efforts to stop tiger trafficking appear to have secured a place on the shared agenda of Asia's emerging giants, China and India.

This bilateral concern could bring good news for tigers. The lack of cooperative policing of tiger trade has allowed smugglers from India and other neighboring tiger-range countries virtually free passage across China's frontier to reach eager consumers of tiger skins and bones. Sustained joint international law enforcement operations and intelligence sharing are essential to severing the links between supply and demand.

Save The Tiger Fund's Campaign Against Tiger Trafficking (CATT) reports that a delegation from China's State Forestry Administration went to India in late May to discuss how China and India can put "teeth" into an existing 1995 Sino-Indian protocol on stopping illicit trans-boundary trade in tiger parts. Sources in India's Ministry of Environment and Forests said that it will reciprocate in July by sending a delegation to Beijing to continue discussions.

Around the same time, China's forestry ministry sent out a caravan of wildlife officials and conservationists to raise awareness among the people and government authorities in the pan-Tibetan region about laws prohibiting the buying and selling of parts from tigers and other

Asian big cats. They had hoped to address some of the misinformation that had some Tibetans believing that buying and selling tiger skin to adorn traditional robes was allowed under China's laws. In fact, buying and selling tiger parts for any reason is illegal in China and punishable by stiff jail time.

In June, delegates from China, India and Nepal met to discuss collaborative means of stopping trans-boundary wildlife trafficking, while a workshop was held in the Indian border town of Gangtok to sensitize law enforcement officials there about the wildlife smuggling that may result when the Nathula Pass, an important high-mountain route between India and China, is reopened in July after being closed for more than 40 years.

Also in June, India's National Wildlife Board gave final approval for establishing a Wildlife Crime Control Bureau made up of law enforcement specialists from police, customs and border security agencies, giving the bureau the bite necessary to catch, punish and deter tiger traders. India's prime minister also is exploring dividing the forest and environment ministry into two branches, one dealing with environmental issues and the other tackling forest and wildlife matters. Advocates of this division say it would give tiger poaching more of the



Arrest of a tiger trafficker in China (Photo: WCS, China)

attention and resources required to stop it.

CATT and its alliance of government and non-governmental partners have made it a priority to encourage China and India to take global leadership in stopping tiger trade. India already has joined the U.S. government-led Coalition Against Wildlife Trafficking (CAWT), which hopes to spur high-level government action to stop illicit wildlife trade. Given that CAWT's initial focus is on Asia and tiger trade, CATT and CAWT will encourage China to officially join India, the United Kingdom and the United States as the fourth state member of CAWT.

All in all, the summer brought new hope for the political will and law enforcement action that will be necessary to stop tiger trafficking.

World's largest tiger study [continued from page 1](#)

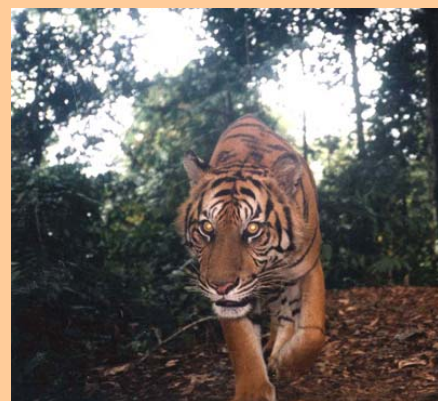
"ExxonMobil Foundation's effort to save this charismatic species demonstrates our continued support for biodiversity conservation in a complex and ever-changing world. We are grateful for the expertise and effort that has gone into this report which is an invaluable roadmap that will provide guidance to grant makers, conservationists businesses and policy makers to ensure that wild tigers survive for future generations" said Lorie Jackson of the ExxonMobil Foundation.

In order to safeguard the remaining tigers, the report's authors call for the following 10-year objectives for tiger conservation: 1) to secure tiger populations in all global-priority tiger landscapes; 2) to obtain reserve status for 10 places with unprotected breeding tiger populations; 3)

to establish at least five tiger habitat corridors between fragmented tiger conservation landscapes and 4) to take conservation actions that expand the range of breeding tigers in at least five priority tiger conservation landscapes.

"An evaluation of Save The Tiger Fund's investments over the last 10 years has clearly shown that we have made a big difference in the landscapes where we have focused our investments," said Brian Gratwicke of the Save The Tiger Fund. "However, these dramatic declines are an important reality check, showing that for every success story there are failures. We have learned how to succeed in tiger conservation, but tigers are a conservation-reliant species and we will need to work tirelessly to

find new and creative conservation financing mechanisms to increase our strategic investments in priority landscapes."



Tiger caught in camera trap in Sumatra (Photo: WCS, Indonesia)

Grantee Spotlight: The Phoenix Fund



Sergei Bereznuik receives the Whitley Award for Nature conservation from Princess Anne.

Save The Tiger Fund grantee scoops major conservation prize

Last May, amid much pomp and ceremony at London's Royal Geographical Society, the Princess Royal presented Sergei Bereznuik the coveted £30,000 (\$54,300) Whitley Award. The Whitley Award is in memory of Daniel Kelly and sponsored by The Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation.

Sergei was instrumental in efforts to avert the collapse of the Amur tiger population. While when working for the Russian government, he helped to form a special anti-poaching force called Inspection Tiger in 1994. Without it, the Amur tiger would have disappeared from Russia. The ever-changing legal system makes

environmental law enforcement an incredibly frustrating proposition, especially in a culture where poaching is illegal but widespread and acceptable, and the future of the species depends very much on the attitude of local people toward them.

Save The Tiger Fund (STF) has a special connection with Sergei's current organization,

the Phoenix Fund. STF gave the organization a start-up grant in 1999. Since then, STF has provided over \$650,000 in funding for 14 Phoenix Fund projects. These projects engaged anti-poaching teams through Inspection Tiger, built human-tiger conflict response teams and created vigorous education programs, including the first Tiger Day Festival in Vladivostok in 2000. Tiger Day is now an annual city holiday and draws more than 3,000 festival participants.

"It was a great honor and pleasure to be there and to meet people who have been carrying out outstanding conservation work around the world fighting to safeguard the planet's resources and wildlife," said Sergei. "I appreciate the

opportunity to tell people about our conservation efforts to save the Siberian [Amur] tigers and I hope that, together, our joint efforts will save this critically endangered species."

Sergei's efforts have helped to stabilize the Amur tiger population at about 450 individuals. "I am pleased to know that all our conservation work and dedication has been recognized. I hope that it will draw more attention to problems currently facing Siberian tigers. With this award, the Phoenix Fund will expand its tiger conservation projects, strengthen its anti-poaching and outreach activities in the Russian Far East, and engage younger generations to solve local ecological problems," he said.

Too often, tiger conservationists go without the recognition they deserve, but sometimes there are brief moments when the world's spotlight focuses on a lifetime of effort. We only hope the spotlight continues to shine on the Russian Far East, and not just on a stage at London's Royal Geographical Society. As Sergei noted, "Unfortunately, it is sometimes easier to get through to the British princess and to gain recognition abroad than to achieve understanding in our region."

Links: The Phoenix Fund:

<http://www.phoenix.vl.ru>

The Whitley Award:

<http://www.whitley-award.org>

Tiger Information Center gets new look



The new website will better serve a range of audiences including kids, teachers, scientists, donors and grantees alike (Photo: Phoenix Fund).

This July, Save The Tiger Fund (STF) launched its new website www.savethetigerfund.org. "This new conservation portal will serve multiple audiences," said Mahendra Shrestha, the Save The Tiger Fund Director. "Now grantees can search our grants library, donors can evaluate final grant reports, kids can play fun tiger games and passionate tiger advocates can sign up for news alerts and discuss their views with the world's leading tiger experts, all at the click of a button."

The STF website is the first part of a larger web-based initiative being

undertaken by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to provide unprecedented access to the information and conservation resources that have been generated since it was founded in 1984. The Foundation has awarded over 7,000 grants to more than 2,600 organizations in the United States and abroad and has leveraged - with its partners - more than \$300 million in federal funds since its establishment, for a total of more than \$1 billion in funding for conservation.

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Tiger Information Center continued from page 3



The new look for www.SaveTheTigerFund.org

The new tiger site has an interactive mapping feature that allows the user to virtually explore the world's tiger landscapes and submit wild tiger sightings online. "The tiger mapping tool is accompanied

and Tiger Watch articles, contribute online and share their views with others.

We have retained and updated a great deal of the excellent content that was created by the Minnesota Zoo Foundation on

by an online form where users can submit their observations and is the first of its kind for tigers" said Joe Salerno, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's internet services director. "This is truly using the power of the internet to harness cutting-edge scientific information." The site disseminates the latest news in tiger conservation and the findings of the world's most renowned tiger conservation experts so that we can improve tiger conservation practice globally. Users can also sign up to receive CATT alerts

our former site, and provided many interactive tools, content and videos to better serve the range of audiences that visit www.savethetigerfund.org. So whoever you are, happy surfing!

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Established in 1995, Save The Tiger Fund is a special initiative of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in partnership with ExxonMobil Foundation to support diverse tiger conservation projects. For more information about Save The Tiger Fund, please visit

www.savethetigerfund.org or write to us at:

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The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of natural resources and was created by Congress in 1984. For more information see www.nfwf.org