

# »» Project Information



## Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation – Myanmar

### Conserving the tiger and alleviating poverty

Tigers are considered a highly endangered species and an estimated number of only around 3,800 animals still exist in the wild. They widely share their habitats with rural populations, who depend on the availability of natural resources from these areas. The vast destruction of tiger habitats and natural resources thus also threatens the livelihoods of these local communities.

Therefore, the Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme Asia is designed to fulfill two goals: conserving the tiger and alleviating poverty, combining the conservation of forests and biodiversity with promoting the socio-economic development of the poor local population in Tiger Conservation Landscapes and adjacent areas.

### Context

A hundred years ago the tiger was found across Asia. Its habitat ranged from eastern Turkey to the Russian Far East and as far south as the Indonesian archipelago. Myanmar is one of the 13 so called Tiger Range Countries in Mainland Asia where the tigers persist today. The continuous and rapid decrease of the global tiger population is not only alarming with regard to the survival of the tiger, but also represents the severe deterioration of ecosystems as the tiger functions as a flagship species and indicator for the intactness of significant natural habitats in Asia.

Myanmar is a high priority country for biodiversity conservation in Asia with extensive forested landscapes and high species diversity. In the past, tiger populations could persist over wide areas partly due to the existence of large expanses of intact habitat where human population density was low and disturbance to the tigers

and their prey was minimal.

Nowadays, however, there is a widespread loss of habitat due to changing land use patterns and various forms of uncontrolled hunting of the tiger or its prey. In Myanmar, especially hunting is spurred by a high demand for traditional medicines in Asia, which has led to the demise of tigers.

On the occasion of the First World Tiger Summit, held in 2010 in St. Petersburg, the Tiger Range Countries jointly agreed on doubling the number of existing tigers in the wild by 2022.

<b>Project name</b>	Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme Asia
<b>Commissioned by</b>	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
<b>Country/Region</b>	Currently projects in: Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, and Nepal, further eligible: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam.
<b>Lead executing agency</b>	International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)





Tiger caught on camera trap in Southern Tanintharyi 2016.  
Source: IUCN photo archive, Credit FFI

### Project approach

To support the goal of the Tiger Range Countries, the German government made a commitment of EUR 20 million. With these funds KfW, the German Development Bank, has launched the Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme Asia - together with IUCN – the International Union for the Conservation of Nature in January 2014.

Operating under the assumption that tigers can only be protected by actively involving local communities, the programme follows a dual, yet interlinked focus: Conservation of selected tiger populations and their habitats, and creating incentives for local communities through tangible livelihood benefits to support and participate in conservation efforts. The programme is thus situated in the interface between tiger conservation and the livelihood of the local rural population living in tiger habitats.

It is an open programme which provides grants to governmental and non-governmental organizations, managed by IUCN. Based on this open approach, eligible implementation partners, such as international or national NGOs, local authorities, administrations of protected areas (PA) and other stakeholders are invited to submit proposals for eligible measures or subprojects. Projects range from EUR 700,000 to EUR 2 million. Multi-disciplinary and collaborative projects are encouraged and the normal project duration is 3-4 years.

The programme is designed to improve the management of tiger habitats by tackling tiger-human conflicts, increasing anti-poaching efforts and law enforcement and involving local communities in conservation work.

### Impact

“The tiger is the face of Asia’s biodiversity and an emblem of the world’s natural heritage,” says Julia Marton-Lefèvre, IUCN Director General. “This generous support from Germany provides great hope for this iconic species, which is currently on the brink of extinction. Saving the tiger depends on restoring its rapidly shrinking forest habitat. This will regenerate valuable ecosystem services and improve the lives of some of the most marginalized people on our planet.”

Currently, there are two subprojects being implemented in Myanmar. The Wildlife Conservation Society (India & Myanmar) aims at the recovery of tiger populations in Northern Myanmar by increasing effective law enforcement, securing land tenure of communities and improving local ethnic livelihoods in both Myanmar and India. Thus key habitat connectivity across the transboundary Tiger Conservation Landscapes is maintained and reliance on key resources such as tiger prey reduced.

Fauna & Flora International (Myanmar) is dedicated to secure the Tanintharyi-Lenya Forest Corridor for tiger numbers to recover and grow. This includes community-based buffer zone management by which protected area borders and tiger populations are secured, while alternative local livelihoods can be provided.

The Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme in Myanmar will result in the following outputs: Firstly, management of tiger habitats is improved, secondly human-tiger conflicts (HTC) are mitigated, and thirdly, local communities proactively support tiger conservation measures.



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