

Global wild tiger population to be counted by 2016

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The world's wild tiger population fell to just over 3,200 in 2010

Thirteen countries with wild tiger populations agreed Tuesday to take part in a global count to establish how many of the critically endangered animals are left and improve policies to protect them.

Experts say that although the [tiger](#) population has remained stable over the last four years, a lack of accurate data is hindering effective policies.

The pledge came at a global conference in the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka where over 140 people have converged for three days to discuss actions to save the tiger.

"We really need science-based data on the number of tigers," said John Seidensticker of the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute in Washington.

Current data on numbers in the wild was mostly "guesstimates", he said.

The count is due to be completed within two years.

The world's wild tiger population fell to little over 3,200 in 2010 from 100,000 only a century ago and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature has listed the animal as critically endangered.

Poaching, encroachment on its habitat and the illegal wildlife trade are blamed for the declining number.

In 2010 the 13 countries with [tiger populations](#)—Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand and Vietnam—launched a plan to double their numbers by 2022.



The 13 countries with wild tiger populations have agreed to double their numbers by 2022

Officials at Tuesday's conference said that populations had risen in major "tiger range" nations such as India, Nepal and Russia.

But poaching continues to be a major problem. Statistics from TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, show that at least 1,590 tigers—an average of two a week—were seized between January 2000 and April 2014.

"We recognise that poaching is still the number one threat to tigers. It's

happening all over the tiger ranges. But we are still not really seeing strong commitment by the governments put in place against poaching," said Mike Baltzer of World Wildlife Fund.

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