

Bid to save tiger threatened by poor data, says WWF

29 July 2014



A nine-month old yet-to-be-named tiger cub is pictured with its mother Aparna (right) in their enclosure at the Nehru Zoological Park in Hyderabad on February 15, 2014

Efforts to save the tiger are being undermined by a lack of information about how many of the endangered cats live in the wild, the conservation group WWF said on Tuesday.

In 2010, a "tiger summit" in St. Petersburg, Russia, set the goal of doubling the number of wild [tigers](#) by 2022, against a baseline population believed at the time to be as few as 3,200.

"This figure was just an estimate," Michael Baltzer, head of WWF's "Tigers Alive Initiative" said in a press release coinciding with Global Tiger Day.

"In 2010 many countries had not undertaken systematic national tiger surveys. Now many have or are doing so, but not all, leaving major, worrying gaps in our knowledge.

"Until we know how many tigers we have and where they are, we can't know how best to protect them."

WWF praised India, Nepal and Russia for carrying out regular national surveys that gave a reliable indicator of their tiger populations.

Bhutan, Bangladesh and China will shortly release the results from their own surveys, it said.

On the other hand, "wild [tiger populations](#) for Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam are unknown," it said.

WWF called on the holdout countries to carry out their surveys urgently.

"Systematic national surveys take six-12 months to plan and a minimum of a year to complete, so these surveys must start now if an updated global tiger figure is to be released" in 2016, the halfway point to 2022, it said.

Tiger populations have been decimated over the last century by trophy hunting, poaching and habitat loss.

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