

Bengal tiger resting, Bandhavgarh National Park, India © Staffan Widstrand / WWF

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WHY AUSTRALIANS SHOULD CARE ABOUT SAVING THE TIGER FROM EXTINCTION



With your support, we can give tigers a fighting chance and protect global biodiversity.

If you open up a child's picture book on animals, there's a good chance you'll see a tiger looking back at you. Without a doubt, our majestic tigers have captured our imaginations and hearts. We are deeply fascinated with the big cats of the world.

But outside the storybooks, our tiger populations face an entirely different story. With more than 95% of wild tigers lost in the last century, tigers are in a real-life fight for survival. There are less than 5,600 tigers left in the wild and without urgent action, we could lose them forever.

From the Sumatran tiger, to the Bengal tiger and Amur tiger, we need a global effort to protect tigers and critical tiger habitats. This will also be a win for forests and ecosystems around the world, which are vital to the health of people and our planet. That's why WWF-Australia is working with its international networks and partners to save the homes of tigers.

With your support, we can make an even greater difference.

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A global symbol of wildlife conservation

With threatened wildlife at risk in our own Australian backyard, you might wonder why WWF-Australia is involved in tiger conservation.

Patrick Giumelli, WWF-Australia's Threatened Species Manager, explains that tigers are one of the most important symbols of conservation on the planet – and that it's about much more than just saving tigers.

"Tigers are one of the most iconic species in the world and one of the first animals that children learn to recognise," says Patrick.

"They are not only important culturally to the people who live in tiger range countries, but they are also interlaced within Western cultures through football teams, music, TV and even fashion. Given their iconic status, they are an important touchstone for many people when it comes to conservation."

These magnificent animals also hold immense cultural value for many [Indigenous cultures](#).

Tigers are an iconic animal and a source of inspiration for so many people around the world. Think about how many sports clubs, brands, beverages and even iconic songs like 'Eye of the Tiger' put tigers on a pedestal. And because of this, they can inspire wide scale support for conservation.

Tackling threats to tigers and tiger habitat

But despite their iconic status, tigers are at risk of extinction from tiger habitat loss, human-tiger conflict and poaching. It's estimated that 95% of tiger habitat has been destroyed in the last century. Sadly, big cat body parts are still prized possessions.

In 2010, tiger numbers had plummeted to just 3,200 in the wild. But since WWF joined forces with tiger country governments and organisations to take urgent action as part of a Global Tiger Initiative, the global tiger population has started to rise. While they're still at risk of extinction, there are now almost 5,600 tigers in the wild. This is a promising sign.

"Many of the threats that tigers face are not restricted to tiger range countries but have a global influence, whether it's poaching, habitat destruction or climate change," says Patrick.

Even though wild tigers might only be currently found in 10 countries, we need global cooperation. This scale of conservation action is an example of what's needed to protect our planet and precious biodiversity in the future.



Protecting critical habitats and forests

Tigers are an ‘umbrella species’, which means that when we protect tiger habitats, we also protect the homes of thousands of other wildlife species, including much of Asia’s amazing wildlife like elephants, orangutans and rhinoceros.

According to WWF’s [Beyond the Stripes: Save Tigers, Save So Much More report](#), tiger habitats overlap with four global biodiversity hot spots, 332 key biodiversity areas and 10 natural World Heritage sites. So, if we can protect and restore tiger habitat, we’re also protecting essential ecosystems, forests and water sources.

As humans, we rely on forests and water sources for a healthy planet and healthy people. This is vital for mitigating climate change and reducing the risk of natural disasters.

“Tiger range covers numerous key biodiversity areas and nine watersheds which protect critical water supplies for more than 800 million people,” says Patrick.

“In the face of climate change and the uncertainty around food and water security, protecting tigers and their habitat is vital to securing crucial resources in some of the most densely populated regions of our planet, which will benefit us all.”

International tiger conservation campaign

As part of our ambitious international conservation work to save tigers (known as TX2), WWF is helping to connect parcels of fragmented tiger habitats by replanting trees, protecting remaining habitats and supporting local landholders and Indigenous Peoples to stop deforestation.

WWF is also working with Indigenous Peoples and local communities to promote coexistence between humans and tigers, and to protect livestock. This includes funding simple but effective projects like installing predator-proof enclosures and lighting to discourage tigers.

And, when it comes to poaching, WWF is supporting and funding Indigenous anti-poaching patrol teams to remove snares and traps and report poaching activities to local authorities.

The gradual rise in the global tiger population is living proof that global wildlife conservation campaigns can turn things around.

But we still have a long way to go. And we need your support.

Will you help save our tigers and safeguard their homes forever?

Be a champion for conservation.

Take action today. Help us protect tigers and save them from extinction.

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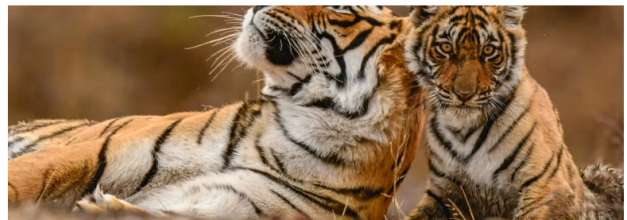
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