

TIGER



FACTS

There are two recognized subspecies of tiger*: the continental (*Panthera tigris tigris*) and the Sunda (*Panthera tigris sondaica*). The largest of all the Asian big cats, tigers rely primarily on sight and sound rather than smell for hunting. They typically hunt alone and stalk prey. A tiger can consume more than 80 pounds of meat at one time. On average, tigers give birth to two to four cubs every two years. If all the cubs in one litter die, a second litter may be produced within five months.

WHY THEY MATTER

This big cat is a critical part of ecosystems and cultures. If forests are emptied of every last tiger, all that will remain are distant legends and zoo sightings.

As a large predator, the tiger plays a key role in maintaining healthy ecosystems. These ecosystems supply both nature and people with fresh water, food, and health.

THREATS

Poaching is the most immediate threat to wild tigers. Every part of the tiger—from whisker to tail—has been found in illegal wildlife markets. A result of persistent demand, their bones, and other body parts are used for modern health tonics and folk remedies, and their skins are sought after as status symbols among some Asian cultures.

Tigers have lost an estimated 95% of their historical range. Their habitat has been destroyed, degraded, and fragmented by human activities. The clearing of forests for agriculture and timber, as well as the building of road networks and other development activities, pose serious threats to tiger habitats. There are often limited resources for guarding protected areas in the countries where tigers live.

PROTECTION

WWF works to enforce zero tolerance for tiger poaching across Asia. We help build the capacity of government enforcement units in each landscape and install the best new technologies to assist local agencies by achieving conservation results. We help improve the effectiveness of wildlife rangers by training personnel from enforcement agencies on tools such as SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool). We also work to ensure that communities have a stake in conservation, as they are typically the best stewards and managers of their natural resources.