

MALAYAN TIGER



BASIC FACTS

Tiger is the largest cat species in the world and only found in Asia. It belongs to the Family Felidae in Order Carnivore. Siberian tiger is the largest sub-species and can grow up to 3.3m long and weights up to 300kg. While the Malayan Tiger is the smallest subspecies with an average size of 2.4m long and weights 120kg. Tiger live in an area with thick vegetation, adequate water supplies and food resources. It can be found in a variety of habitats such as grassland, coniferous, deciduous, tropical, mangrove swamps and peat swamps.

Tiger population has declined during 20th century due to the loss of 95% of its habitat in Asia which made the status of tiger become critically endangered by the estimation population from 5000 to 7000 individuals in over 100 isolated. Until 1970s, tiger hunted for trophies or pests. Thus, killed as three sub-species of Tiger have become extinct namely Caspian Tiger from Central Asia, Java Tiger and Bali Tiger both from Indonesia. South China Tiger (China) is no longer visible during this few years and possibly become extinct.



As a top predator in ecosystem, the tiger able to catch mammals that are five times to its weight as prey. Unlike grasslands in India and Nepal, tropical forest could not support a high diversity and abundance of ungulate species. In Peninsular Malaysia, the main prey species are Wild Boar, Barking Deer, Sambar Deer, Greater Mouse Deer, Gaur and Lesser Mouse Deer. Livestock such as cattle and buffalo presence near tiger habitats also consider as its prey.

Tigers are solitary except for juvenile and during mating season. However, in some instances, small groups consisting of adult individuals also exist. Mating occurs at any time during the year and usually female produce two or three cubs. Tiger cub will live with his mother for two years, where they will be taught to hunt, identify hazards and adapt to the wild.



Malayan Tiger (*Panthera tigris*)



level, the tiger are listed in Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix 1 (all types of commercial trade is prohibited) and categorized as endangered in the IUCN Red List (2009).

Usage of snare is banned and offenders who have more than 25 wires will face mandatory jail sentence up to 10 years. For less than 25 wires, the offender faces up to maximum fine of RM5000.00 and / or imprisonment of up to five (5) years.

PROTECTION STATUS

Under the Wildlife Protection Act 1972 (Act 76), tiger was classified as a protected species. In 1976, the status changed to totally protected. Offences involving shooting, killing or taking (or any parts of the tiger), will carry a fine not exceeding RM15,000 and / or not more than five years jail sentence. However, through the enforcement of the new Wildlife Conservation Act 2010 (Act 716) for offenses related to the tiger, the minimum penalty is RM100,000 and / or a maximum sentence of up to RM500,000 and / or five (5) years imprisonment will imposed.

Primary prey species such as Wild Boar, Sambar Deer and Barking Deer are declared as protected species and hunting license must be obtained. At the international

TIGER PREYS



DISTRIBUTION AND POPULATION STATUS

Tigers are very difficult to be seen in the forest for the estimation of actual population of Peninsular Malaysia. Based on the average carrying capacity of tropical forests, tiger density estimates and the inhabited area of the tiger in the period of 1995-2008, Malaysia has at least 450-500 tigers. This shows that, at present, Malaysia has the largest population of tigers in Southeast Asia.

Tigers do not exist in Sabah and Sarawak and is widely distributed throughout Peninsular Malaysia except in the islands. The population in Perlis, Penang, Malacca, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya is extinct. Although the most appropriate habitat is lowland forest, tiger can live in a variety of habitats from peat swamp forest, small bush in forest plantations and mountains. Four states in Peninsular Malaysia which still have high population of tigers are Pahang, Perak, Kelantan and Terengganu.



MAIN TREATS

Loss of habitat and prey species, poaching, killing caused by a conflict with humans and the use of snares is the main threats to the tiger. Although the rate of habitat loss in Malaysia has stabilized, the effects of forest fragmentation caused by development projects has increased the possibility of extinction of small isolated tigers population and the chance encounters with humans and their livestock that raise human-tiger conflict.

Almost every parts of tiger is believed to have value in traditional medicine. Tiger meat is also served as delicacy in exotic restaurants. Other body parts such as teeth, claws and skin are taken as trophies, charms and as personal collectibles.

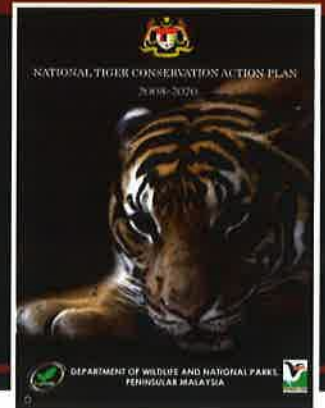


Tiger Habitat

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL TIGER CONVERSATION ACTION PLAN (NTCAP)

NTCAP adoption was decided by the Sixth Meeting of the National Biodiversity Council (MBN) in 2009 after MBN take note of the Malaysian tiger populations in Peninsular Malaysia are drastically threatened. Therefore, MBN agreed to adopt the NTCAP to ensure this species remain in their natural habitat and increase the population up to 1,000 Malaysian tigers by 2020.

This plan recommends 80 actions to be implemented to increase the population of the Malaysian Tiger. These actions will be implemented by various agencies and NGOs. However, DWNP should lead the implementation of most of the NTCAP.



TIGER CONSERVATION ISSUES

Deforestation rate today is not as fast as before and Peninsular Malaysia still retains its 45% of forest cover. Over 90% of the remaining forested land declared as permanent reserved forest under the supervision of the Forestry Department or under the supervision of Protected Areas of Wildlife Department. All protected areas covering 7,527km² in which the National Park is the largest with an area of 4,343km².



Tiger died from poachers snared



Effects of snare on tiger

The largest population of tigers can be found in the Greater National Park Landscape. This landscape extends from lowland to montane ericaceous forest in Malaysia's most extensive forest reserves covering area surrounding the National Park. Monitoring tigers and prey on the community as well as the ongoing patrols ensure the survival of this species.

Tiger-human conflict resolution is the main role of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP). Many conflicts occur where tiger habitat disturbed for agriculture or animal husbandry. Livestock predation translate into economic losses and farmers threat the tigers as pests. There are those who

take their own action to kill tigers that devour their livestock. If the tiger was shot and injured, it will result to a serious problems. Injuries will affect the tiger to hunt prey and ultimately may targeting a livestock or human as victims. DWNP role is important to avoid and solve this situation. Therefore, human-tiger conflict issues are included as part of the conservation education program in schools and institutions of higher learning.

Recognizing the level of cooperation and communication is effective to guarantee biodiversity conservation, DWNP has supported the establishment of the Malaysian Conservation Alliance for Tigers (MYCAT) to ensure the survival of the tigers continues to secure for the next century. The aim is to consolidate the establishment of MYCAT authorities in Malaysia and non-governmental organizations to get involve in tiger conservation in the country.



Wildlife ecological corridor



CONSERVATION EFFORTS

NTCAP identified about 49,000km² area in Peninsular Malaysia as tiger habitat. Currently, 6,200km² habitat areas were gazetted as protected areas i.e. National Parks, Belum State Parks and Endau-Rompin State Parks. Several other tiger habitats like Temenggor Forest Reseved need to be upgraded the protection status of Protected Area (PA).

The tiger habitats are fragmented by development, including road construction and agricultural development. To link the isolated forested area, a number of actions taken by the Ministry of *Natural Resources and Environment* (NRE) and DWNP to develop and gazette the Ecological Corridor areas as identified under the Master Plan of the *Central Forest Spine* (CFS). As the tiger habitats included in the CFS area, the CFS Master Plan will ensure the future of tiger habitat.

NRE through the DWNP and Forestry Department in collaboration with the State Governments and the *Economic Planning Unit* (EPU) with the cost of RM170 million is creating ecological corridors in three places namely Sungai Deka in Terengganu, Sungai Yu in Pahang and Gerik in Perak.