

# TIGER CONSERVATION

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I choose the tiger conservation because I think they are one of the most beautiful animals in the whole world. Sadly the tiger, and the other big-cat species is highly endangered, and I think it is important to work hard so they won't be exterminated.

The humans is a big threat to the tigers. Since the tiger is a predator the human-tiger-overlap leads to serious problems. Humans grow in number, and this result in less area for the tiger to live. Chief scientist for the World Wildlife Found, Eric Dinerstein announced disturbing news about tiger's shrinking habitat. The tigers only now survive in 7 percent of their historic range, and use 40 percent less area than was estimated in 1997 (<http://www.worldwildlife.org/news/displayPR.cfm?prID=299>)



The first picture shows the tiger habitat according to the first tiger habitat assessment in 1995. The second picture shows that the tigers use 40 percent less area than in the 1995-study.

Only 4 strongholds is found that can support more than 500 tigers:

- Russian Far East-Northeast China
- Terai Arc Landscape of India and Nepal
- Northern Forest Complex-Namdapha-Royal Manas (Bhutan/Myanmar/India) and

- Tenasserims of Thailand and Myanmar

And only 23 percent of tiger conservation landscapes are protected!

Most likely there is only 7000 wild tigers in the world living today.

Of the originally 24 countries the tigers lived in, there is now only 14 countries that have wild tigers. Without the population of Bengal-tigers, we can almost not talk about populations, rather isolated individuals. ([www.wikipedia.org/](http://www.wikipedia.org/))

I will focus on the tiger in Sumatra, Indonesia:

Sumatran-tigers is the smallest of the tigers that are alive today.

([www.tigertrust.info/thesumatrantiger.htm](http://www.tigertrust.info/thesumatrantiger.htm)) There are probably less than 400 Sumatran tigers left in the wild today. ([www.tigertrust.info](http://www.tigertrust.info)). But there is a large conservation programme to save the Sumatran tigers.

The conservation of large mammals is theoretically best where large protected areas are surrounded by buffer zones. Multi-use buffer zones is often used as a strategy to provide both economic benefits to people, and conservation benefits for the wildlife. Agriforestry systems will most likely play an important role in the conservation of large mammals. Agroforestry systems are characterized by generally higher biological diversity compared to surrounding agricultural landscapes, but generally they have lower biological diversity compared to primary forests.

The biggest threat to tigers today is man. Rapid human population growth have forced the tigers to live in small areas. Buffer-zones extend the habitat for plants and animals, but also increases the risk of conflict with people using the same areas. It is therefore important to identify land use systems that can fulfil both the animals, and the peoples interest, so that there will be no conflict. In Sumatra the smallholders is encouraged to plant trees on production forest land to create buffer zones around the protection forests. These trees are mainly timber and the remainder are fruit-trees.



The protected areas in Sumatra is close to one fifth of its land area, but it is characterised by many small, and few large reserves. Protection forests account for over half of this total area. Harvesting of natural resources by local villagers is common here. The conservation of tigers and large mammals is also important for

protection of many other species that share their habitat, and they play important ecological roles. The tiger is for instance thought to regulate the pig and large ungulates populations. Where the tiger is missing, these species often become a pest for the agriculture.

Observations from literature and global analysis of existing data on population extinction of 10 species of large carnivores, shows that the major cause of mortality is the conflict with people on reserve borders. A lot of collected reports, documents, and other information about human-tiger conflicts shows that tiger conflicts was lower in undisturbed forests and protected areas or highly disturbed areas. It also showed that the conflict was higher in moderately disturbed areas, where there is a high probability of overlap between people and tigers. These reports suggest that the probability of human-tiger conflicts is largest in multiple use areas on the edges of protected areas, where humans and tigers share resources. In contrast, there is few reported conflicts between humans and tigers in parks that are bordered by seas and rivers, and have no buffer zone or significant forest patches suitable for for wildlife.

The human-tiger conflict can sometimes end tragically. When a tiger cross the border of a protected park and either kill livestock, or kill or injure local people, the farmers often take matters into their own hands and kill the animal. Therefore, when conflict occurs, the authorities have to be ready to respond to move the animal, transfeer it to captive facilities , or by lethal means in extreme circumstances. (reviewed article)

Another big threat to the Sumatran tiger is the illegal traiding of tiger parts and products. Chinese medicine has spread through Asia, and almost every part of the tiger is thought to have healing properties. Although trade of tiger parts is illegal, it is widespread that you can get up to \$20 000 for an adult tiger on the black market. ([www.tigertrust.info/thesumatrantiger.htm](http://www.tigertrust.info/thesumatrantiger.htm))

A lot of founds have been made to help the tiger-species. These founds does, among other things, scientific research of tiger ecology and monitoring of tiger numbers to improve their understanding of their needs. (<http://www.savethetigerfund.org/Content/NavigationMenu2/Initiatives/Evaluation/default.htm>). So hopefully, with hard work, and the right knowledge, the tiger will still survive for many years.



## **Sources:**

- <http://www.worldwildlife.org/news/displayPR.cfm?prID=299>)
- [www.wikipedia.org/](http://www.wikipedia.org/)
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- Philip Nyhus and Ronald Tilson (2004) Agroforestry, elephants, and tigers: balancing conservation theory and practice in human-dominated landscapes of Southeast Asia. *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment* 104: 87–97
- [www.tigertrust.info/thesumatrantiger.htm](http://www.tigertrust.info/thesumatrantiger.htm)
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