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ནགས་ཚལ་དང་གླིང་ཀ་ཞབས་ཏྲོག་ལས་ཁུངས།

Royal Government of Bhutan
Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources
Department of Forests and Park Services



PRESS RELEASE

Bhutan has reached a new milestone with a 27% increase in the tiger population since 2016.

Thimphu, 29th July 2023: Coinciding with International Tiger Day, His Excellency the Minister for Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Dasho Dr. Tandi Dorji launched the 4th National Tiger Survey Report of Bhutan today. The event was attended by several dignitaries from the government, conservation partners, and embassies in Bhutan.

The findings from the nationwide survey confirmed that Bhutan now has 131 tigers in the wild, with an overall density of 0.23 tigers per 100 km sq. This is an increase of over 27% from its baseline population of 103 individuals in 2015. The increase in the tiger population indicates the success of Bhutan's conservation efforts – its commitment to the Global Tiger Recovery Program to maintain a viable tiger population. Further, the target of a 20% increase in tigers under the 12th Five Year Plan of the erstwhile Ministry of Agriculture and Forests and Bhutan for Life's conservation milestones has also been achieved.

His Excellency, in his keynote address at the event, paid tribute to Bhutan's extraordinary milestones in tiger conservation under the visionary leadership of our monarchs. His Excellency said, "It is of immense pride for our country to confirm an increase in the tiger population in our country."

The national tiger survey resulted from an extensive effort covering 26,075 km sq – 68% of the country, and a survey effort of almost a year. Three hundred foresters from 10 protected areas and 14 territorial divisions were involved in undertaking the mammoth scientific expedition with financial support from Bhutan for Life (BFL), "Vanishing Treasure Project - United Nations Environment Programme, and the IKI project under WWF Bhutan. Tiger conservation initiatives are also supported by conservation partners such as Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation (BT FEC), Bhutan Foundation and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bhutan office.

The findings from the survey ascertain Bhutan as a source site for tigers in the eastern Himalayan Region. It has the potential to not only reinvigorate the Northern "Forest Complex-Namdhapha-Royal Manas" (NFC-N-RM) tiger conservation landscape but can provide critical linkages between the Terai-Arc landscape and Indo-Chinese tigers in Myanmar and further east. The report also highlights the importance of maintaining and rigorously protecting tiger habitats, building a people-centred tiger conservation approach that integrates conservation and development needs, and expanding conservation interventions to include corridors and habitats beyond protected areas.

The Global Tiger Recovery Program for 2023-2034 was also launched during the event. The GTRP is a composite portfolio of tiger actions – both national as well as transnational.

His Excellency also declared that the Royal Government of Bhutan, under the Royal Patronage of Her Majesty the Gyaltsuen, will host the International Conference, "Sustainable Finance for Tiger Landscapes," on April 22-23, 2024. The conference will be co-organized by the Tiger Conservation Coalition, which includes the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), Fauna & Flora, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), Panthera, TRAFFIC, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

The International Tiger Day 2023 is observed in Bhutan through the support of conservation partners such as WWF Bhutan, Bhutan for Life, Bhutan Foundation, Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation and United Nations Development Programme Bhutan office.

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