

MYCAT TRACKS

The Malayan Tiger's Struggle for Existence



Malaysian Conservation Alliance for Tigers

MYCAT TRACKS 10TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

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*Opinions expressed in *MYCAT Tracks* are those of the author and not necessarily of MYCAT or the organisation the author represents.



FOREWORD

by Kae Kawanishi
General Manager, MYCAT

I don't know a life without purpose. Isn't purpose what makes us human?

The world is full of things to fight for and Malaysia's wildlife is the pick of our lives. By the time I was 10 years old, I knew my contribution to the world would be to study and protect wildlife. It was no coincidence that I came to Malaysia to study tigers in 1997 and met a group of people who shared the same purpose. The spirit of working together to save the tiger brought us together; consequently the Malaysian

Conservation Alliance for Tigers (MYCAT) was born in 2003.

For those with big dreams, the gap between goal and reality can be a torment. When I feel that I can't go on, I think about the solidarity of my colleagues and friends, fighting alongside. They are the stars that have guided MYCAT. Without these lights, the challenges would have been too daunting and bleak to face.

After one million years of reigning over Asia's forests, tigers everywhere are in trouble. The unimaginable – a world without wild tigers – is quickly becoming reality. Forest by forest, country by country, tigers are killed and sold to satiate greed, ignorance and the traditional belief that consuming tigers will make people as strong as the animals. By the turn of this century, the world had lost 97% of its wild tigers. As Malaysia's tiger population too had declined from 3,000 to 500 individuals, the nation needed a strategy to save it from imminent extinction.

During the past decade, this tiger conservation strategy was conceived, endorsed and implemented, albeit unsatisfactorily. Over the same decade, most countries in Indochina lost their tigers to poachers despite all efforts. In Malaysia, though diminished, the currently estimated 300 wild tigers survived one of the toughest times in modern human history for all wildlife. Their continued existence was a





result of a series of conscious conservation efforts by many quarters. I declare a small win.

Fieldwork I conducted between 2009 and 2011 to monitor a tiger population in central Malaysia broke my spirit – the tigers were gone. Visions of dead wildlife and carved-up forests deepened my sense of helplessness and have kept me awake many nights. A massacre of forests and wildlife was wrought in a place I had always considered home. I was smothered with anguish at the countless moments of their deaths. It is a grief that I wish I could forget. A few years later, becoming aware of the reason why I had to experience the painful reality of what was happening to wildlife and forests everywhere helped me out of my depression. With the privilege of knowledge, I had inherited a duty to act.

Dr. George Schaller, whose seminal research on tigers in the 1960s inspired me to become a carnivore ecologist during my undergraduate years, says that conservation has no victories and is a never-ending process. In the face of such odds, I could not have picked better teammates to fight this battle. The fight for the Malayan tiger isn't over yet. Like peace, conservation successes can be achieved at specific points in space and time and so we must soldier on. And we will do better with more funds and people on our side.

This special issue of *MYCAT TRACKS*

commemorates the 10-year journey that MYCAT members have jointly taken towards saving the Malayan tiger. I have asked my colleagues to each write an opinion piece on their respective areas of expertise: looking back – what happened in the recent past; looking forward – what is likely to happen in the next decade; and finally, what needs to happen so that the Malayan tiger will recover and survive into the future. Controversial, disturbing, impolite it may be – I have asked the writers to be honest.

One day, hopefully in the distant future, the tiger will go extinct, most likely before the human will. The day could be sooner if the current trajectory continues without major changes. Their fate is in the hands of mankind. When the Malayan tiger goes extinct and MYCAT's fellowship becomes a footnote of history, these are the tracks that I want to leave behind for future generations. When someone asks what people did when wild Malayan tigers were eliminated, this publication will provide some answers.

Yet, some of the hardest battles are fought by people not featured in this publication.

I wish to acknowledge the work done by wildlife rangers. I had the privilege of spending some years in Taman Negara alongside some of the best rangers from the now defunct Tiger Unit in Pahang. Among other great things they taught me about Malaysia, they taught me the way of tigers and the jungle. They worked to save not only wildlife but also my life without expecting appreciation. Subsequently during my tenure in the Wildlife Department, I came to know members of Tiger Units from other states.

Without these tiger rangers, I would not have become the tiger expert that I am today. Without them, Malaysia would have already lost its tigers. Though little recognition, resources and reward were given to these heroes, their purpose remained pure and their ways humble. Across gender, racial, religious, cultural and national differences, the tiger brought us together. We shared a common value. More than being great wildlife rangers, they are great human beings. That is what tigers need. Their spirit lives in me. So the fight must go on.



Contributors



ASHLEIGH SEOW is interested in indigenous peoples, their customs, and cosmology. As a Malaysian Nature Society nature guide, he volunteered for Citizen Action for Tigers (CAT) Walk in 2010, and joined MYCAT in 2012 as a Citizen Conservation Specialist to include the indigenous Batek in tiger conservation and to help them preserve their traditional skills and knowledge at Sungai Yu Tiger Corridor. He also conducts the Forest Safety and Confidence course for CAT Walk leaders. Prior to joining MYCAT, Ashleigh delivered organisational development workshops for the banking and energy sectors and negotiation skills training for companies afflicted by poor communication and troubled working relationships with their stakeholders. He also taught political economy at Murdoch University.



With support from the Malaysian government, **KAE KAWANISHI** conducted the first scientific research on tiger ecology in Malaysia between 1998 and 2001 in Taman Negara. After receiving her PhD from University of Florida, she worked for the Malaysian Department of Wildlife for three years as a Technical Advisor in research and conservation. During that time, the government founded MYCAT and developed the *National Tiger Conservation Action Plan*. During her second field research, she initiated a citizen conservation programme to protect wildlife at Sungai Yu Tiger Corridor in 2010. Mentored by world-renowned tiger conservation biologists throughout her career, she believes that partnership and inclusion are the key to successful wildlife conservation.



Former award-winning environmental journalist, **ELIZABETH JOHN** directs all media and communication work for TRAFFIC in Southeast Asia, reaching out to the region's millions about wildlife trade and the crises caused by poaching and trafficking. She shapes the messaging on the organisation's work and efforts to change attitudes towards wildlife use, and designs outreach projects from awareness raising in schools to wildlife crime reporting for journalists. Elizabeth has long been a noisy and persistent advocate for better policy and protection for tigers, and kick-ass prosecution of poachers, and believes lasting solutions to the problems facing the Malayan tiger can be found.



Armed with her determination to make the world a better place for wildlife and with over a decade of experience working on forest and conservation issues, **KANITHA KRISHNASAMY** believes that Malaysia's natural resource mismanagement stems from short-sightedness and apathy by the country's decision-makers. She manages TRAFFIC Southeast Asia's programme on species critically threatened by trade, including TRAFFIC's initiative in the Belum-Temengor Forest Complex – a premier tiger site that is facing tremendous pressure from poaching and trade, unsustainable timber extraction and forest conversion. She is a member of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Board member for FSC in Malaysia.



GOPALASAMY REUBEN CLEMENTS' career in tiger conservation began in 2007 when he was appointed Species Conservation Manager of WWF-Malaysia's Malayan tiger conservation project. In 2010, he co-founded the research group Rimba and became the Principal Investigator of the Kenyir Wildlife Corridor Project, which aimed to develop measures to mitigate the impacts of roads on tigers and other mammals in Kenyir, Terengganu. After receiving his PhD from James Cook University in 2014, he became the Principal Investigator of Project Harimau Selamanya, a 10-year project that focuses on the protection and monitoring of tigers in a core area in Kenyir Wildlife Corridor and Taman Negara.



LAVANIADEVI GOPALAKRISHNAN joined MYCAT as a volunteer for Citizen Action for Tigers (CAT) Walk in 2012, interned with the Secretariat's Office in 2013 and is now a Programme Officer. She coordinates MYCAT's citizen conservation programmes, including CAT Walk and outreach. She is now undergoing training to become a CAT Walk leader herself. She loves coordinating CAT Walks and empowering members of the public who are willing to help save wildlife. She is inspired daily by the folks she works with and by their infectious passion for saving wildlife.



MARK RAYAN DARMARAJ has been working for WWF-Malaysia for the past ten years and is currently the Lead Research Scientist for WWF-Malaysia's Species Conservation Programme. He completed his PhD in 2012 at University of Kent, United Kingdom on tiger ecology in the Belum-Temengor Forest Complex. He then became the first Malaysian PhD holder on tiger ecology. He was awarded the *Zoological Society of London Thomas Henry Huxley Award* for the best PhD thesis of the year in the UK and the *Fiona Alexander Prize*, another award for the best thesis within the department he studied.



MELVIN GUMAL has a PhD on bat ecology from University of Cambridge and has been involved in conservation in Malaysia since 1988. His initial engagement included working with indigenous communities to create protected areas for orang-utans, for which he recently won the *Whitley Award*, a prestigious international nature conservation prize. After 15 years working in the civil service with Sarawak Forestry Department, he became the Director of Wildlife Conservation Society-Malaysia Programme (WCS) in 2003. Together with government agencies, WCS' work in the Endau-Rompin landscape includes heavy on-the-ground enforcement. The multi-agency enforcement effort has been ongoing since 2009 to protect tigers and other wildlife.



Like a cat, **MUNA NOOR** has had many lives, including as Editorial Director for one of Malaysia's largest English language publishers and Director of Corporate Communications for an investment firm. She's a lover of animals but in particular cats big and small. She recently left her job to devote more time to personal pursuits including spreading the message of tiger conservation. She is a certified Citizen Action for Tigers (CAT) Walk leader and was awarded *MYCAT Volunteer of the Year* in 2012. She is currently helping MYCAT as a Communication Strategy Specialist to improve its communications with donors and the public.



NAGULENDRAN KANGAYATKARASU joined the Government of Malaysia as a Diplomatic and Administrative officer in 1995. He has been involved in policy formulation, governance and stakeholder engagement on issues related to the environment, especially focusing on biodiversity. On these issues, he has represented the Government of Malaysia in numerous international conventions. He assisted with getting the *National Tiger Conservation Action Plan* adopted by the National Biodiversity and Biotechnology Council in 2009, as well as with the passing of the Wildlife Conservation Act 2010. He is currently pursuing a PhD at University of Nottingham in the area of Biodiversity Governance, and is a recipient of the *Special Excellence Award 2014* from the University.



As a Programme Officer with TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, **OR OI CHING** coordinates all programmes in the Belum-Temengor Forest Complex. She engages with the local communities through education and awareness outreach programmes, as well as reaches out to enforcement agencies through training workshops. After five years of work in wildlife conservation, she has come to understand the sentiments of the general public towards wildlife, especially those of the local communities in Belum-Temengor.



SIVANANTHAN ELAGUPILLAY has been working with the Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia for more than 30 years. His PhD was on protected area policy from University of Idaho in 2005. During his lengthy professional life, Siva has held a number of posts, ranging from Head of Wildlife Management to Head of Law Enforcement, but for the most part, has stayed on top of conservation issues related to the tiger and protected areas. Nationally and internationally, he is known as Malaysia's tiger expert and has inspired many tiger conservationists across various institutions. For his unmatched contribution to tiger conservation, he was presented with Malaysia's first-ever *Tiger Wallah Award* by MYCAT in 2014.



SUZALINUR MANJA BIDIN has been with MYCAT since 2007. Tapping into his experience working as a Zoo Educator prior to joining MYCAT, he has co-developed, coordinated and executed MYCAT's outreach and education programmes at poaching and trading hotspots targeting both urban and rural communities. As Senior Programme Officer, he had previously coordinated a joint capacity-building programme for Taman Negara enforcement staff and currently manages MYCAT's Wildlife Crime Hotline and Citizen Action for Tigers (CAT) programme. His talents include graphic design and he is the in-house designer for many MYCAT posters and newsletters.



WONG PUI MAY joined MYCAT as a Programme Officer in 2010, and is now the Coordinator. She communicates with the public, facilitates communication among MYCAT partner NGOs, and coordinates MYCAT joint initiatives, such as a memorandum to the government, press statements and events like the *Wild Tiger Run*. She also bridges the communication gap between the government and NGOs. She has attended many meetings among both government and non-government stakeholders where tiger conservation challenges were discussed, and finds that similar solutions have been proposed repeatedly. She hopes that Malaysia's leaders will start listening to our tiger experts before it's really too late.



LIVELIHOOD

Voices from the forest

By Arop, Bao, and Cicak *interviewed by Ashleigh Seow

LOOKING BACK

In the past, things were very good: the forest was big, there were many animals and much *ubi* (tubules, indigenous people's staple diet) to gather. In 2000 the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) came. The forest was cut and ruined by logging, and oil palm, which was planted in 2004. More people started mining. Things got worse. During this time, they did not log near our settlement. We need the forest to be close to collect fruit and blowpipe game. We like it here because the forest is still nearby. Next time the logging will be closer to us. We don't know if they will continue logging and then plant oil palm in place of the forest. We hope not.

After the oil palm and loggers, wildlife became less. Before that there were tigers. After the rains, we could see their tracks close to the village and in the forest. Once we saw signs of three tigers on a path. Then we started to see many snares in the forest and signs of animals being trapped. The tigers became less common and we saw fewer signs of them. Now we see hardly any tiger sign in the forest and are not disturbed by

the thought of tigers because there are very few, if any. Before, when hunting or foraging, three or more people went together, now one person can walk alone. In one way, we are free of fear and do not need to defend ourselves, but we also miss them and the elephants and gaur too for they have almost gone as well. The monkeys and pigs are many and these now come near to villages for food.

LOOKING AHEAD

In the past, the government did not sell the forest around our settlement, now there is only a small amount of big forest around the *Batu* (limestone outcrop), the rest is like *belukar* (disturbed secondary brush vegetation). We hope the government will stop this logging because it is not good for the forest. We weep for the forest, for the Forest Reserves and Taman Negara, all the way to Kelantan. And for the animals. If there is not enough food, they will come to the villages to raid orchards or, in the case of tigers, to look for dogs or people, which will be bad for all. They do not want to disturb us and are not to be blamed, for it is poachers and our own government who have damaged the forest

and ruined the livelihood of the Orang Asli and the animals.

What is important also is our *adat* (tradition). If we lose our forest, we lose our culture, customs and medicinal plants. Before the logging and mining and town people came, there were many sorts of medicines and *ubi*; now many are lost or rare. If oil palm grows where the forest was, our youths will not know the trees and plants, their leaves, branches and fruits.

Our parents' graves will be destroyed. A Batek is buried close to where he last lived; our grandparents and ancestors are everywhere in the forest and we know where they lie. But if the forest is logged, we will lose them and we will not be able to remember their graves.

If the logging, oil palm and mining continue, this village will have to move elsewhere, maybe back to the forest in Taman Negara. This is the *tempat asal Batek* (the place where the Batek people emerged into this world). No other people can make this claim and we will return even if we are later removed. They can block us a thousand times but we will return twice

fold. Many of us were born there. Our *adat* comes from there. *Batek berasal sana (we come from there)*.

WHAT IS NEEDED

The government doesn't look after the place well. We used to see many intruders in the forest but never saw the authorities patrolling. From Sungai Relau to Kuala Yu [western border of Taman Negara], a year could go by and we would never see patrol units or their tracks in the forest or their boats on the river. We are happy to see visitors coming into the forest and our settlement and want MYCAT to do more. In many places the local villagers do not lay snares anymore because they will be disturbed by MYCAT and also when MYCAT finds snares, the authorities will come into the forest later to collect them. We think more patrolling is needed in Ulu Sungai Yu where the poachers have moved to. But the best thing for Batek and all the animals would be if other people stop trying to improve or take things from this place and leave it alone.



“What is important also is our adat (tradition). If we lose our forest we lose our culture, customs and medicinal plants.”



Ten and still fighting



MYCAT marks a decade of tiger conservation partnership in Malaysia. What better time to celebrate the triumphs, contemplate the failures and steel ourselves for the incredible challenges that will lie ahead in the effort to save the Malayan tiger.

By Muna Noor

"But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger;
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect;
Now set the teeth and stretch the nostril wide,
Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit
To his full height!"

William Shakespeare

Tiger Chronology Top 50

2003

MYCAT established

Research finds
Malaysia has
enough habitat to
support 1,500 tigers

2004

Project
addressing
human-tiger
conflict begins
in Jeli, Kelantan

RELA (People's
Volunteer Corp)
member charged
for killing tiger in
Negeri Sembilan

2005

Wildlife
Crime Unit
set up to
intensify anti-
wildlife crime
efforts

Rubber
tapper killed
by tiger in
Kelantan

2006

80,000 postcards
handed to Perak
Chief Minister to
protect Belum-
Temengor

Workshop
conducted to
develop strategy
to save Malayan
tigers



The *Panthera tigris*, or tiger, is the world's largest cat. It is the object of fear and awe, revered and reviled in one breath and yet for all the tales of its strength and ferocity, there are fewer than 3,200 left in the wild, all of them in Asia.

The Malayan tiger or *Panthera tigris jacksoni*, named after renowned tiger conservationist Peter Jackson, is *our* tiger. The last of nine sub-species to be recognised after it was officially identified in 2004, it is found only in the Malay Peninsula, not even in Sabah and Sarawak or in neighbouring Sumatra despite our geographical proximity. This is what makes this beast truly special to Malaysians.

Like many of the world's tigers, the Malayan tiger once claimed its rightful place as king of the jungle. In the 1950s, there were an estimated 3,000 roaming the dense steamy forests of pre-independence Malaya. Today, only about 300 remain. That's probably fewer than the children enrolled in your neighbourhood primary school. The odds

are unsettling. Human population growth, development and poaching have pushed Malayan tigers and other wildlife that share its forests to the brink of survival.

Enter MYCAT

If this sounds like an unfair fight then MYCAT was created to even up the odds.

"During my PhD research in Taman Negara, I was supported by many people from the Wildlife Department and NGOs who all shared the same goal of saving wildlife in Malaysia, and experienced the same challenges such as lack of resources, and capacity for effective protection and scientific research. It made sense to put them all together for a greater outcome. Being young and naïve, I did the most logical thing, which was to enter the Malaysian civil service and persuade the government to set up MYCAT," says Dr. Kae Kawanishi, now the General Manager of MYCAT Secretariat's Office.

Formed in 2003, MYCAT was created as a platform to bring the government and NGOs

closer together for information exchange and collaboration for tiger conservation. As an alliance, MYCAT was a first, not just here in Malaysia, but in tiger conservation globally. It includes leading nature and wildlife conservation organisations: Malaysian Nature Society (MNS), TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)-Malaysia Programme, and WWF-Malaysia. MYCAT is supported by the Wildlife Department, and has become a symbol of what can be achieved when you put the right people in a room.



From left, Dino, Chris and Melvin

2007

1,175 km² Royal Belum State Park gazetted

Wildlife Crime Hotline 019.356.4194 launched

Race Against Time campaign launched to rally support for tigers and better wildlife law

2008

Terengganu State Executive Council agrees to gazette the 150 km² Sungai Deka corridor as a wildlife reserve

Hunting moratorium on all wildlife passed in Johor

International Trade in Endangered Species Act 2008 passed

Tiger Action Plan published

Malaysia's blueprint for saving the tiger

By Kae Kawanishi

The nature of a country's development is demonstrated by the policies it implements. Securing continued existence of the tiger and its habitats, while managing the forests in a sustainable manner, is an indication of Malaysia's ongoing effort to achieve a sustainable society. We believe that the presence of healthy tiger populations in large contiguous forests will signify the balanced progression of the country's ecology, society, culture and economy and, ultimately, an enhancement of the quality of life of Malaysians, which is the essence of Malaysia's *Vision 2020*.

At the beginning of the millennium, there were only about 500 wild tigers left in Malaysia. Over three days in 2006, experts from relevant fields, including policy, land-use planning, law enforcement, INTERPOL, customs, forestry, timber certification, park management, tiger biology, wildlife trade, wildlife conservation, Chinese medicine, road building, and environmental education gathered and discussed a national strategy for recovering the Malayan tiger population. We had the best people in the room, filled with great energy and hope for the future of the tiger in Malaysia. Based on the discussions, I led and coordinated the drafting of the plan in the subsequent nine months. The draft plan underwent 17 additional meetings and 11 revisions among the MYCAT partners before submission to the Wildlife Department's Tiger Action Plan Advisory Board. It took an additional 18 months for our common vision to become a national policy document at the end of 2008.

Towards the goal of doubling the country's tiger population from 500 to 1,000 by the year 2020, the *National Tiger Conservation Action Plan* lays out 80 detailed actions to be implemented by over 40 stakeholders, ranging from a researcher to the Economic Planning Unit in the Prime Minister's Department. Strong leadership, coordination, communication and monitoring are keys to the success of the plan.

These 1,000 tigers were to be conserved in what's called Central Forest Spine, a network of forest complexes connected by green linkages. Together, they would form 51,000 km² of contiguous forest along the length of Peninsular Malaysia, much like a long green spine.

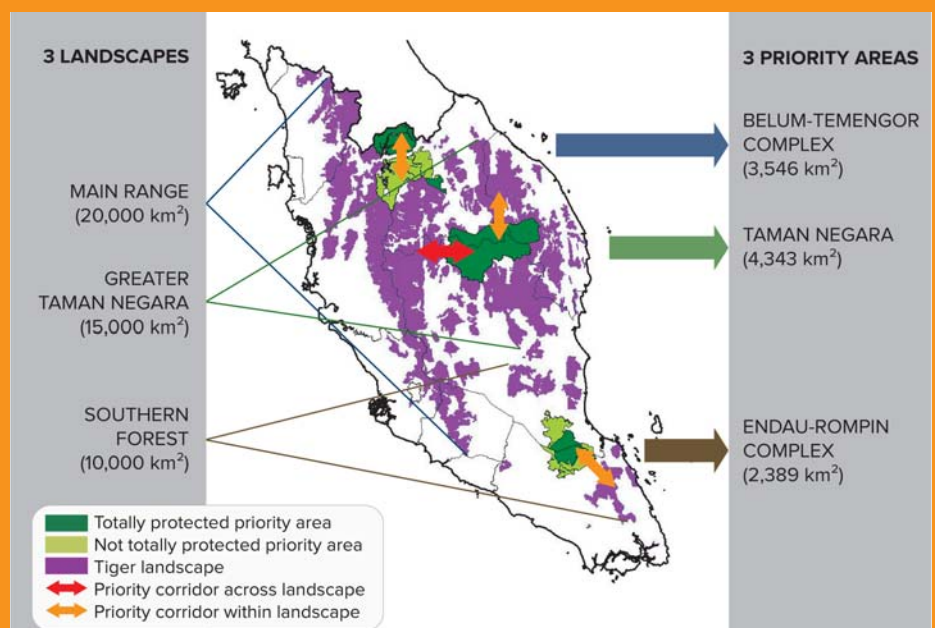
In the Central Forest Spine, the *National Tiger Conservation Action Plan* identifies three priority areas and four priority corridors. The priority areas are Belum-Temengor Complex in the north, Taman Negara National Park in the centre and Endau-Rompin Complex in the south.

While the northernmost corridor along the Gerik-Jeli highway is meant to ensure the contiguity of Belum-Temengor, the southernmost corridor is for Endau-Rompin. Two corridors connect Taman Negara to its adjacent forests – along *Sungai Yu* (Yu River) to the west of the park and along Kenyir Lake to the north.

MYCAT Secretariat's Office assists the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment in monitoring the progress of the implementation annually. Although gradual improvements are made in the number of actions completed, especially in 2013, the overall level of implementation has been unsatisfactory. This culminated in the continued loss of tigers and natural forests. The loss of biodiversity and natural forests serves as an alarming proof of Malaysia's unsustainable economic development. Some Malaysians became richer but the nation became poorer in her natural capital, at the expense of future generations.

Our visionary plan did not fail. It is still the best one for the Malayan tiger. However, despite a number of milestones, overall we failed to make the plan a reality. It is time to evaluate where we are and re-strategise the priority actions for the next decade, towards our common vision for the tiger and Malaysia.

"Our visionary plan did not fail. It is still the best one for the Malayan tiger. Despite a number of milestones, however, overall we failed to make the plan a reality."



Landscapes and priority areas laid out in the *Tiger Action Plan* (Source: DWNP 2008).



Butchered tiger found in a man's refrigerator in Kelantan © DWNP

Marking milestones: looking back on 10 years

With MYCAT facilitating in 2006, the Wildlife Department organised and hosted the Malayan Tiger Conservation Workshop with the aim of developing a *National Tiger Conservation Action Plan* for Malaysia. The plan became the nation's roadmap, detailing the direction and specific actions required for its target of doubling the estimated population of Malaysia's wild tigers to 1,000 by the year 2020. The work formed the basis for a triumphant appearance at the 2010 Tiger Summit in St. Petersburg, Russia.

Dato' Dr. Dionysius Sharma (aka Dino), CEO and Executive Director of WWF-Malaysia and fellow founding MYCAT member recalls: "While other tiger range countries were talking about doubling the tiger numbers at the Tiger Summit, Malaysia could say that it believed in doubling tiger numbers and it had already published that as a national strategy." In effect, Malaysia was ahead of the game and the world knew it.

In addition, MYCAT played a huge part in the successful lobby for the development of Malaysia's new Wildlife Conservation Act and the International Trade in Endangered Species Act. Some 56,000 people worldwide signed the petition for a better wildlife law. Successfully passed in 2010, the protection status of wildlife under the new law was given proper accord and stiffer penalties were imposed. "It sent a strong message about how wildlife crime was going to be viewed by the Malaysian Government. So when the law was passed, it was a very proud moment for many Malaysians, including us – the MYCAT partners who had been pushing for it for a long time," says Dino.

Dr. Melvin Gumal, WCS-Malaysia

"A quick survey of literature related to tiger conservation reveals a startling reality: Malaysia and the Malayan tiger barely get a look in. We need to make more noise for the Malayan tiger, we need for its roar to be heard."

Programme Director affirms: "MYCAT has allowed for more openness among the NGOs; it has allowed for much more engagement with the public on tigers and their habitats, and it has pushed the Government to be more responsive to queries from NGOs and the public." Such advances have been critical to the continued existence of the Malayan tiger.

Challenges ahead

In the battle for survival, the Malayan tiger is being attacked on multiple fronts. Initial decline has primarily been attributed to large-scale loss and fragmentation of the tiger's historical habitat as lowland forests were converted into human settlements and agricultural land. In more recent times, the tiger's most relentless of enemies has come from the threat of poaching. No one knows this better than Regional Director of TRAFFIC Southeast Asia and a founding member of MYCAT, Dr. Chris R. Shepherd. "Southeast Asia is a hotspot for illegal wildlife trade in the world. High levels of biodiversity are just getting vacuumed up", he says with great alarm.

Illegally hunted for their skins, bones, blood and even sexual organs for use in medicine, trophies and talismans and sold at exotic meat restaurants, rapid economic growth in Asia and increasing wealth of its citizens has not only spurred demand for tiger parts, but converted it from one for purported health to the obscene display of wealth. Tigers are being killed to show off and their cubs smuggled out alive as pets for the rich.

Nor is the poaching restricted to just tigers. In a clear demonstration of how the food chain works, the poaching of tiger prey such as sambar, Asia's largest deer species, and gaur (forest buffalo) is also contributing to the tiger's decline. An assessment of

2009

Multi-agency enforcement activities, using a new, transparent and efficient system, starts in Endau-Rompin, Johor

Tiger parts seized in Thailand found to be from five Malayan tigers

1st Bilateral Meeting between Malaysia and Thailand on Cooperation in Wildlife Law Enforcement held

Tiger caught in a snare near the Gerik-Jeli highway rescued, but later dies

6-year moratorium on hunting sambar and barking deer passed





tiger prey showed the critical status of the sambar, and prompted MYCAT to lobby for an immediate change of the sambar's legal status, from hunted species to totally protected species. In response, the Malaysian government instituted a six-year hunting moratorium in 2009 as a stop-gap measure.

And yet not many Malaysians would be aware of the struggle for survival that is going on just hours from where they live and work, if it were not for MYCAT's efforts. Development and urbanisation have distanced city dwellers from nature. In losing sight of the fundamental role nature plays in our lives, we run the risk of forgetting just how much we depend on it for crucial ecosystem services. If there is flooding, erosion, landslides, drought, and heat waves, the answer is to look to the forests. As the famous Malay saying goes, *tak kenal maka tak cinta* (if you don't know it, how are you to come to love it).

To that end, MYCAT, in tandem with its partners, has organised countless activities to spread the love for our Malayan tiger

and other wildlife, from holding outreach programmes in schools and night markets next to tiger habitats to organising the *Wild Tiger Run*, a 10km fun run in the city in support of the Malayan tiger. Face to face, shop to shop, and house to house, MYCAT and its 1,082 volunteers have reached out to 40,645 Malaysians over the years. Yet of all these activities, none has captured the imagination more than the MYCAT CAT Walk. Conducted in the Sungai Yu Tiger Corridor, a critical area connecting the tiger ranges of Taman Negara and the Main Range, volunteers hike through tiger habitats, putting them directly on the ground where illegal trapping, logging and encroachment into the park may be happening. CAT Walk has brought in 550 'voluntourists' from 24 countries to Sungai Yu.

"Looking back, what has changed is the fact that people came together wanting to save tigers," says Dino. "What we have done through recent activities is to allow people to participate in tiger conservation voluntary programmes. Overall we have done really well in raising the profile of what is happening to our tigers."

While MYCAT engages with members of the public, corporations and local communities in tiger conservation, partner NGOs have worked with the authorities to strengthen the protection of tigers in the forests.

And yet any celebration is tempered by the sense that in the ten years of MYCAT's existence, so much more could have been done. If the International Tiger Summit provided Malaysia the opportunity to demonstrate that it had a head start on tiger conservation, that first mover advantage was lost in subsequent years. On Malaysia Day 2014, the Wildlife Department and MYCAT jointly announced that wild tiger numbers in Malaysia have fallen to as few as 250, effectively rendering the species critically endangered in the country.

The global shift

At an international level, there is no greater time than now for the conservation community. Illegal wildlife trade is recognised today as a threat to global security,

2010

National Biodiversity Council adopts the *Tiger Action Plan*

Research in Sungai Yu corridor, Pahang finds no tigers or sambar deer

Governments of all tiger range nations unanimously agree to double global tiger numbers by 2022

Nine Orang Asli detained for snaring, torturing and killing tiger in Perak, but later acquitted

Tiger shot dead by RELA member in Perak; government called to review RELA firearm possession and use

Citizen Action for Tigers (CAT) programme begins in Sungai Yu, Pahang



“At the end of the day we’re still losing and it’s no fault of any of the people who are trying, it’s completely the fault of the people who aren’t.”

© Jake Leong/MYCAT

with support being thrown behind its halt by the Obama Administration, British Prime Minister David Cameron and the British royal family.

It is worth at least US\$19 billion a year, making it the fourth largest illegal global trade after narcotics, counterfeiting, and human trafficking. “Globally this is recognised as being a serious problem and governments are putting large amounts of money towards this. But there’s very little money being put into protecting Malaysia’s tigers,” Chris laments.

Earlier this year, Germany announced €20 million support to tiger conservation, which was followed by a British government announcement of £4 million to tackle illegal wildlife trade worldwide. Conservation programmes for Malayan tigers are, however, not eligible for either grant because Malaysia is an upper middle income country perceived as being able to fund its own programmes. Notwithstanding, financial support of MYCAT from the Malaysian government has been scant.

According to Dino, naiveté and false

optimism are to blame for MYCAT’s failure to deliver on some of the more fundamental requirements of the [Tiger Action] Plan. “A lot of what I see today in terms of the lack of delivery is very closely linked to the lack of resources. There was the assumption that these resources would come from the government.”

For Chris, shortcomings are happening in spite of the efforts being made. “At the end of the day, we’re still losing and it’s no fault of any of the people who are trying; it’s completely the fault of the people who aren’t.”

“We have signed on to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), we’ve signed on to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Malaysian delegation was at the London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade. We’re party to all of these things,” emphasises Kanitha Krishnasamy, Senior Programme Officer at TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, “Malaysia needs to realise that this is not just a box ticking exercise.”

Meanwhile at the public level, part of the

inertia to act in favour of tigers is down to the lack of perceived financial incentives and economics. “People aren’t making enough money out of having wild tigers in Malaysia,” says Chris. “Eco-tourism for tigers here isn’t the same as India. You go to a tiger reserve in India, you have a good chance of seeing a tiger. The terrain typical of tropical rainforests does not allow this. Kae herself has never seen a tiger in Malaysia, but one of the things I have always admired about Kae, is that even though she has never seen a tiger, she recognises the importance of it. It really doesn’t matter to her whether she’s seen one or not. She’s happy just knowing they are there. Not enough people have that attitude.”

It’s a surprising turn of events given the Malaysian propensity for entrepreneurship. Globally there are many examples of tourism and its related business activities that bank on the power of imagination and open minds. Kae explains, “It is our ignorance to believe only what we can see and our arrogance to call it ‘primitive’ when other creatures

Reduced to Skin and Bones reports 55-63 dead tigers were seized in Malaysia between 2000 and 2010

Presidential Tiger Summit in St. Petersburg Russia, addressing global concerns on wild tigers, see donors pledging US\$300 million

Wildlife Conservation Act 2010 passed

Construction of RM30 million wildlife viaducts along highway near Sungai Deka, Terengganu completed

Construction of RM80 million wildlife viaducts along highway near Sungai Yu, Pahang begins

“It would be absolutely ideal if the Prime Minister picked this up and ran with it as something that he wanted to be remembered for, that he’s the one that turned the tide.”

perceive much wider environmental cues; I think it’s rather primitive to appreciate only things you can hold and possess.”

As members of the Malaysian public, we are just as complicit in the country’s lack of progress in trying to recover tiger populations. WCS-Malaysia’s Melvin expresses frustration at our collective lack of initiative and calls it “a denial of responsibility”. Chris chimes in: “Awareness levels here in Malaysia need to translate into action. If you know there is a problem, you should do something. You really can’t say it’s terrible the tigers are disappearing but you can’t do anything – because you can.”

Kae is convinced that the Malayan tiger’s survival hinges on the support of a greater mass of Malaysian public. “Malaysia is losing this battle because it’s been fought by a handful of conservation NGOs and government enforcement personnel. Saving tigers means saving Malaysia’s healthy forests. It means sustainable development and a balanced society. Not enough people care,” she says.

To wit, the public’s lack of visibility is matched only by that of the tiger’s. A quick survey of literature related to tiger conservation reveals a startling reality: Malaysia and the Malayan tiger barely get a look in. “We need to be better in terms of placing ourselves out there at a global level,” urges Kanitha. We need to make more noise for the Malayan tiger; we need for its roar to be heard. For all these reasons, there is a very real chance that the Malayan tiger could become extinct in our lifetime.



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Tiger, tiger burning bright....

Yet in spite of all of it, hope is not yet lost. “The next ten years will be the deciding decade, for the tiger and for Malaysia. It will have to be the turning point towards a Malaysian society that embraces the diversity of lives in the truest sense”, says Kae.

The good news is that when there is sufficient prey, tigers are incredibly prodigious and mating occurs throughout the year. Peninsular Malaysia also still retains 38 per cent of the land area as forest

cover and unlike Sumatra, our forests are largely linked. “We still have the habitat for 1,000 tigers,” Chris shares optimistically.

In the Southern Forest Landscape of Endau-Rompin, where WCS-Malaysia has been working hand-in-hand with the authorities, with the support of the royal family and local government for on the ground protection, tigers are making a comeback. “It’s impossible to deny that recovery is happening,” Melvin says. It is welcome news for his MYCAT partners and provides an excellent case study for a nationwide tiger turnaround.

2011

Islam, Wildlife Conservation & You, a reference book on Islam and conservation released

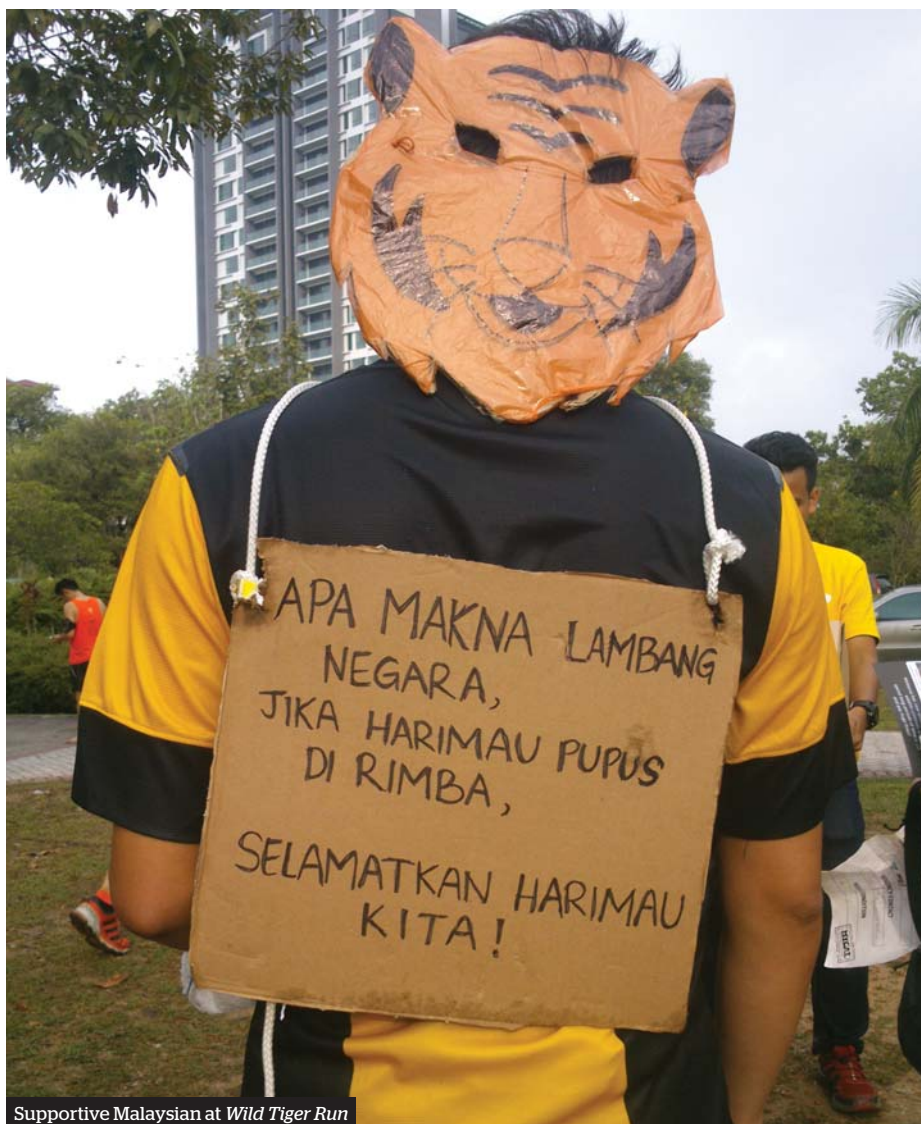
On Borrowed Time, a 10-minute documentary highlighting poaching and illegal trade in Belum-Temengor debuts

Research in western Taman Negara Pahang finds tiger numbers have plummeted since 1999

2012

Government announces RM60 million allocation for wildlife viaducts along the Gerik-Jeli highway in Perak

Country’s biggest tiger seizure (22 skulls and 8 skins) made in Kedah. Culprit sentenced to 24 months jail and RM200,000 fine



Supportive Malaysian at Wild Tiger Run

Moving forward: The next 10 years

In studying MYCAT's annual report card and assessing the wins and failures with honesty and pragmatism, for members of the MYCAT coalition, the next ten years have already been mapped out. There are two key areas of focus: funding and the Tiger Task Force.

Malaysia is not a poor nation. India and Nepal through a concerted effort have made real strides in saving their tigers and rebuilding tiger populations there. You could argue that Malaysia is in a much better economic place than any of those countries. "There's incredible

wealth in Malaysia and there are a lot of very influential people that could get on board and champion the same cause that MYCAT is fighting for," exhorts Chris. "Whether they are individuals or corporates, they really should see the value in MYCAT and step up and put some serious money behind it."

According to Kanitha, the key to this is the perception of MYCAT as being synonymous with Malayan tigers. "MYCAT needs to be more prolific, as an alliance it has to be seen as the authority for tigers in Malaysia and ensure it is in a much better

position to negotiate with decision makers. Globally, WWF can walk into a room with President Obama or the UK Prime Minister and make such negotiations. We need to be at a level where we can do the same with Malaysia's Prime Minister."

Which brings us to the Tiger Task Force. Kanitha likens the Tiger Task Force to Malaysia's National Water Services Commission for water or the Transport Commission for transport – "specific bodies that are meant to look at specific issues". For the Tiger Task Force it will be securing the future of Malaysia's tigers.

"We could have been more effective if the government institution was in the coalition as an equal partner," says Dino. Chris too makes no bones about it: "We really need the government to set up a Tiger Task Force that's going to lead and coordinate the next leg of the race." Such a mandate would ensure that things get done and like any other government department, the Tiger Task Force would be audited and made accountable for its results. Issues of jurisdiction would have to fall away and collaboration would have to be fostered to meet goals.

Chris singles out the Prime Minister for the role of Chairperson for the Tiger Task Force. As the leader of a country with the world's last remaining tigers, its own tiger sub-species, a country in which the tiger appears in our national emblem, nothing could be more meaningful. "It would be absolutely ideal if the Prime Minister picked this up and ran with it as something that he wanted to be remembered for, that he's the one that turned the tide," he says hopefully. "[Ten years from now] it would be nice to be able to use the Malaysian government as an example of a government that decided to do something to save the tiger and successfully did it."

Changing our stripes

Ultimately the success or failure of our nation to save its own tigers will depend on all of us. Losing the Malayan tiger would symbolise the greatest failure in conservation, not to mention in achieving sustainable development. If we cannot save the most iconic species in the

Chief Minister announces commitment to revitalise Joint Enforcement Taskforce in Belum-Temengor, Perak

After 9 years in operation, MYCAT receives financial support from the Malaysian Government (Selangor State Govt.)

While similar studies in other suspected tiger crossing areas revealed nothing, research finds tigers crossing in Sungai Deku corridor Terengganu



Open letter on monoculture plantations threatening tiger habitat sent to Malaysian Prime Minister

Tiger Task Force: Stop me if you've heard this one before....

By Wong Pui May

After four years of the unsatisfactory implementation of the *National Tiger Conservation Action Plan*, which resulted in further loss of our natural forests and tigers, the need for a game-changing initiative was repeatedly discussed formally and informally among the main stakeholders, including the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE), Wildlife Department, the Forestry Department and MYCAT, throughout 2012.

The lack of MNRE personnel dedicated to coordinating or monitoring the *Tiger Action Plan* implementation was identified as the greatest challenge to overcome. MYCAT for example, has trained or worked with at least ten different MNRE officials over the years in monitoring the plan's implementation. A dedicated team of

professionals is required to integrate the planning and implementation of activities according to various policies at the federal and state levels.

The Wildlife Department had suggested from the outset that Malaysia should emulate the world leader in tiger conservation, India, who has a National Tiger Conservation Authority that is legally mandated to distribute funds to tiger reserves and monitor the management of such reserves.

In 2013, the top recommendation that emerged from the *Mainstreaming Tiger Conservation in Malaysia* workshop, organised by the Wildlife Department in collaboration with the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute USA and WWF-Malaysia, was to institutionalise the

plan's implementation by setting up a central coordinating structure. Senior officials from MNRE and the Wildlife Department echoed this recommendation in a subsequent meeting with the top management of the Ministry. Taking it a step further, TRAFFIC Southeast Asia and WWF-Malaysia called for our Prime Minister to set up and chair a Tiger Task Force at the end of 2013. To date, these repeated calls by Malaysia's conservation experts have not been heeded.

Apart from the chronic problem of the lack of resources and commitment, the *Tiger Action Plan* also suffers from a lack of leadership. In tiger range countries where the top leader is involved in saving their tigers, populations are recovering.

MYCAT urges the Prime Minister to create and chair a National Tiger Task Force, with adequate representation from State and Federal Government agencies and professional tiger conservationists, in order to monitor the implementation of the plan. This task force would also be able to make executive decisions on policy, allocation of resources, enforcement and land management favourable for tiger conservation.

As tigers are an umbrella species, such a task force will represent so much more, and will benefit forest and wildlife across the Peninsular. And just maybe, there will also be a benefit to those who rely directly on the forest for their livelihood – the Orang Asli.

If you are sick, you would see a doctor. If your car is giving you problems, you would go to the mechanic. The state of our environment and wildlife is in crisis, but why won't anyone listen to the experts?

The times when tiger, forestry and environment experts keep repeating themselves like broken records need to end. Perhaps it is time for Malaysian citizens to get informed and stand up for what we love, to demand that our natural heritage is protected, and ironically, to live out the essence of our government's slogan – "Biodiversity. Our Life, Our Heritage, Our Future".

"Apart from the chronic problem of the lack of resources and commitment, the Tiger Action Plan also suffers from a lack of leadership."



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2013

Green Court formed to handle environment-related cases

Development halted in the sensitive Sungai Dekka corridor, Terengganu

Research finds tigers crossing in Belum-Temengor corridor in Perak

A 50% decline in tiger numbers since 2004 recorded in Gunung Basor Forest Reserve, Kelantan

Global tiger report *Reduced to Skin and Bones: Revisited* reveals tiger parts equivalent to 36 tigers seized in Malaysia between 2010-2012

189 km² of forest flanking the Gerik-Jeli highway that separates Belum and Temengor gazetted as Amanjaya Forest Reserve



Wild Tiger Run © Timothy Teoh/MYCAT

world, what hope do we have for saving less charismatic wild animals, or plants, or indeed ourselves?

“When the video of A’Famosa’s mistreatment of its captive tiger surfaced three years ago, people rallied round within a day. Some would say it’s a welfare issue, but still it was a tiger and people were willing to act immediately,” Kanitha reminds us, proving that we can mobilise, we just need to do so more often.

So do we care enough to ensure our tigers don’t die out? Poaching has already driven the wild banteng and Javan rhino to extinction in Peninsular Malaysia. We cannot allow our tigers to follow the same tragic fate.

Kae’s dream is for Malaysians to take

ownership of the struggle to conserve the natural wonders in our backyard. “A wild place reminds us of our humble existence on this planet. It has to be protected as a window to experience the great something out there, the love and unity with the universe,” she says wistfully. For Malayan tigers, this dream needs to find its reality and be scaled up fast. “People need to recognise that this is urgent,” says Chris.

If we are fortunate, we may be standing at a crossroads. We are the generation that decides. And we have more power than we can imagine. “Malaysians underestimate the power of each individual,” Kanitha asserts. We have the power to speak up over forest losses in the blind pursuit of development,

over low sentences for tiger poachers and traders. We have the power to hold our governmental agencies accountable for their actions and inertia. We have the power within our own social circle to share and inform, inspire and move people to action, to use our influence to raise national concern for tigers and motivation for tiger conservation.

When asked what the Malayan tiger symbolises, the answers from the founding members of the coalition were myriad – national icon, umbrella species, symbol of strength and spirituality. Perhaps Chris sums it up most accurately. “The Malayan tiger symbolises success or failure,” he says. It is profound and causes pause for reflection. So what will it be, Malaysia?

Call made for sambar deer to be totally protected under Wildlife Conservation Act 2010

Memorandum to set up Tiger Task Force sent to Malaysian Prime Minister

2,500 people participate in MYCAT’s *Wild Tiger Run* in Kuala Lumpur

Public Service Department approves 66 posts for law enforcement, including creation of the first legal positions in Malaysia’s Wildlife Department

Research in Endau-Rompin, Johor finds increasing tiger population



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KNOWLEDGE

What we know and don't know about the Malayan tiger

By D. Mark Rayan and G. Reuben Clements

Like many other countries, Malaysia's earliest knowledge documentation on tigers was by ex-hunters such as Arthur Locke who wrote the book *Tigers of Terengganu*. Interestingly enough, it was based on this piece of literature that we thought Malaysia had as many as 3,000 tigers in the late 1950s. In the 1970s, research on tigers was focused mainly on livestock depredation and it was not until the late 1990s that several studies attempting to assess the status of tigers with the use of camera traps began to emerge and produced the first science-based estimates for tigers – this technology radically changed our understanding of just how many tigers there are in Malaysia.

We now know roughly how many tigers there are in three priority tiger sites within the country based on camera trap data from government and NGO researchers. Unfortunately, we still have no proper understanding of how tigers are faring outside these priority sites. We do know

“It seems that a paradigm shift of valuing and viewing biodiversity as natural capital is required, if the conservation status of tigers is to be placed high up on the national agenda.”

that habitat loss and poaching are the main threats to tigers. However, we are still trying to better understand how tigers respond to habitat alteration and other anthropogenic impacts. As we progress to be a developed nation by 2020, it is apparent that our development is proceeding at the expense of biodiversity conservation, as shown by the ever increasing threats of poaching, degradation and loss of natural forest. It seems that a paradigm shift of valuing and viewing biodiversity as natural capital is required if the conservation status of tigers is to be placed high up on the national agenda. Therein lies the challenge in translating biodiversity values and ecosystem services into measurable economic properties, so that the long-term gains of preserving tigers and their habitat can be clearly shown. On reflection, perhaps the question we need to ask ourselves is this: how can we use scientific evidence to compel decision makers to bring about changes needed for the recovery of the Malayan tiger?

In the past decade, we have seen research findings guiding strategic anti-poaching efforts, the establishment of wildlife corridors and a forest reserve, halting development in important tiger habitats as well as the establishment of a hunting moratorium on the sambar deer. Evidence-based decision making is happening. However, if the complacency of the nation in reducing loss of natural forest and poaching continues, wild Malayan tigers will no longer persist over the next few decades.

Amidst this bleak scenario is the hopeful promise that if focused interventions were applied over the next decade, there will be a real chance to reverse the decline of wild Malayan tigers. The *National Tiger Conservation Action Plan*, which was developed in 2008, aims to double Malaysia's wild tiger population to 1,000 adult individuals by the year 2020. Best evidence now suggests that we may be down to 250-340 tigers in the country and so we are probably not going to achieve this target.



© WWF-Malaysia/Christopher Wong

The recent announcement of declining tiger numbers illustrates the need for a robust nationwide tiger survey to be carried out by the government and NGOs, hand in hand. But do we have sufficient manpower to do this?

At the moment, the sad answer is no. The Wildlife Department, due to lack of manpower and funds, is unable to regularly monitor tiger populations outside Malaysia's largest protected area, Taman Negara. In fact, researchers from NGOs have for some time been helping to monitor tigers in other regions such as Belum-Temengor, Kenyir, Sungai Yu and Endau-Rompin. However, the main problem restricting NGOs from recruiting vast teams of tiger researchers to cover more ground is lack of sustainable funding. Indeed, local private companies can do more to support local tiger conservation efforts. Another reason for the difficulty in recruiting is the shrinking pool of local graduates who want to pursue a career as a conservation biologist, which can be a demanding job often with little monetary

benefits and plenty of time away from family and friends. One way to breed a larger pool of local conservation biologists is for academics to infuse more conservation biology topics into their undergraduate curriculum and initiate mammal ecology projects into their graduate research programmes. At the same time, NGO researchers should develop closer ties with academics, who can not only arrange biodiversity conservation talks to inspire and expose undergraduates, but also link up promising biologists with NGOs.

Ultimately, knowledge is power. We need to urgently know how many tigers are left, where they are and how they are doing. Without this knowledge, it would be difficult to continue convincing our political leaders to commit resources to save the Malayan tiger. But alas, we cannot just depend on researchers to save this species. The evidence on show overwhelmingly suggests that we need a concomitant increase in resources for enforcement if we want to prevent our national icon from going extinct.

Fighting the real beast: illegal trade

By Kanitha Krishnasamy and Elizabeth John



© Akira Leyow/TRAFFIC

This year, illegal wildlife trade dominated the global conservation agenda. Big names in the political, sporting and entertainment scene – plus a prince or two – were moved to action, making influential decisions, elevating the platform for discussion and shaping growing commitment towards ending wildlife trafficking.

As heads of nations from the Presidents of the United States, China, Gabon, South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania and Russia to the Prime Ministers of the UK, Thailand and Viet Nam threw their weight behind

this battle, a cloud of silence prevailed in Malaysia. Conservation policies and laws are in place, but the public commitment to fight this crime appears lacking at the highest levels of decision-making in Malaysia. This seeming nonchalance and the systematic removal of tigers from the wild will be the animal's ultimate ruin.

Tigers are hunted and traded for their skins, bones, blood and even sexual organs for use as medicine, trophies, talismans and exotic meat. In Malaysia, parts of at least 92 tigers have been seized from 2003 to 2013.

To a large extent, the discussions have been about whether or not these were Malayan tigers, tigers from outside the country or those from captive-bred populations. When a video released in the UK showing five Malaysian men involved in killing a tiger went viral in 2009, the preoccupation was with finding out who had leaked the video to the British.

Considering that the wild tiger population is at crisis levels here and elsewhere around the world, the concern shouldn't be about what species of tigers these are or who released the information



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“Malaysia is very likely to continue losing a significant part of its tiger population to hunting and trade unless kingpins are caught and convicted.”

on illegal hunting and trade. As important as the answers to these questions may be, the more crucial fact should be that tigers are being hunted and traded illegally in Malaysia, by Malaysians who supply the animal and its parts to the black market.

In February 2012, the Wildlife Department arrested a man in possession of bones, skulls and skins amounting to 22 tigers, nine elephant tusks and deer antlers. He was subsequently jailed 24 months and fined RM 200,000 (USD 67,000). For this crime, he could have been looking at up to 13 years in jail or fines exceeding a million ringgit (USD 300,000).

The trial revealed several interesting finds: he was an odd-job worker and welder in a village who paid RM 70,000 (USD 23,000) in bail on the spot. He maintained that he was not the owner of the wildlife parts, rather that he was keeping it for a Thai national from whom he went to great lengths to pick the items up. However, he failed to provide any further details.

While this man was punished, the masterminds behind this operation escaped. Who are they? How long have they been in operation? What other criminal activities are they involved in? How are these criminal networks linked? How do they operate and how have they done so without being caught? Can information on their finances and travels held by Bank Negara or the Customs and Immigration Department shed some light on their operations? These questions must be answered if Malaysia intends to end tiger trade.

Scrutiny of seizure data shows that those

involved in this illegal trade include armed robbers (who also happen to smuggle tigers and other wildlife), zoo operators, restaurant owners, security personnel and villagers. Tigers have been found chopped into pieces or tied at the limbs, shot, speared and snared and subsequently hidden in homes, vehicles or restaurants until a prospective buyer is found.

The information shows those involved in this crime aren't just going after tigers – they are also vacuuming tiger prey such as deer and wild pigs out of forests. This spurred the government to ban the hunting of the sambar and barking deer, but only until 2015. Removing the tiger's main food source brings serious repercussions, including human-wildlife conflict.

Johor, Kedah, Pahang, Perak and Kelantan have seen the highest number of tiger part seizures. This highlights two major points: the states are either home to Malaysia's tiger priority sites or notorious gateways for the smuggling of tigers and other wildlife out of the country, or both.

Malaysia has already lost the Javan rhino, the green peafowl and a number of other plants and animals. The banteng is gone from Peninsular Malaysia. A handful of Sumatran rhinos are hanging by a thread in Sabah, with the species likely extinct in Peninsular Malaysia. And in the worst case scenario – if all of the seizures in the past decade are indeed parts of wild Malaysian tigers – we have lost about 20% of the estimated tiger population to trade.

Are we in real danger of losing them all? Yes.

Based on the path trodden by other keystone wildlife such as rhinos and elephants, the dedication with which smugglers are getting better organised, and the improvement of infrastructure and transportation systems, Malaysia is very likely to continue losing a significant part of its tiger population to hunting and trade.

Unless kingpins are caught and convicted.

Law enforcement efforts have yielded some great seizures and convictions. But to truly beat the odds and keep the species alive in Malaysia, two things must change. The first is to take wildlife crime seriously and pursue the criminals and syndicates behind it with the determination of a man preparing for battle. The second is to establish a National Tiger Task Force, a body with the clout and the currency to tackle poaching, protect habitats and safeguard prey – a body that won't get mired in quibbles over jurisdiction, funding or policy direction.

If used well, Malaysia's strong *National Tiger Conservation Action Plan* and tough laws, with its hefty penalties, can create a forbidding environment for wildlife criminals. Like Thailand, couple these efforts with the use of money laundering laws to uncover and shut down the vast tentacles of criminal syndicates. Weed out corruption. Make intelligence-led investigations a focus. Equip, train and professionalise ranger and enforcement services.

If Malaysia can do this with vigour, resources and full government support, it may just take back the upper hand from poachers and keep its unique tigers.



PROTECTION

Needing a perfect “10”: impressions from the last 10

By Melvin Gumal

When I first started out as head of Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in Malaysia back in 2003, tiger conservation was one of the key issues that I knew I would have to deal with. This majestic beast has always captured everyone’s imagination, from children to adults, and with numbers fast dwindling in other parts of the world, it is a species that cannot be ignored. I had heard of MYCAT, the coalition. I had even read about it in the papers, nine months after I had become head of WCS in Malaysia. Finally in my 11th month in office in 2003, I met the woman who was a key figure in tiger conservation in Malaysia, Dr. Kae Kawanishi of MYCAT. Prior to this, I had asked my other colleagues, “What do you call this woman?” Their responses were, “Dr. Kay to some, and Dr. Kai to others”.

In this cold office in a government compound, where the air-conditioner was blasting, she gave me a firm handshake. Strong hand. Harder stare. Better not get on the wrong side of this woman. Small and very spirited. Single-minded and watching my every move. And during the course of our first conversation, when I indicated that we

need to be aware of poachers and be really careful, her immediate reply was, “Based on my research, poaching is not an issue in Taman Negara at the moment.” At that time, this was true. But fast forward to 2014, and MYCAT’s repeated comments are now “We need to ramp up anti-poaching patrols in Taman Negara and Belum-Temenggor to the levels of those in Endau-Rompin Johor and Pahang.”

In my ideal world, large wild cats like tigers and leopards should be at the densities seen during our early years of independence. It was a time where animals roamed free in our forests, and wildlife came close to our villagers’ door-steps. At that time (through my rose-tinted glasses), our people had much more respect for the laws, for our civil service and politicians. In turn, both the politicians governed and the civil service administered with fairness and justice. Perhaps indeed, this was a time when Malaysians were less ruthless, more patient with each other and more benign to our natural resources. In fact, our natural resources were also shared by a smaller population. Perhaps also, it was a time when globalisation and complete unabated movement of poachers was non-existent. Perhaps, perhaps perhaps....



But, our reality and the one that I am living in, is NOW. In 2014, I am seeing hoards of poachers roaming our landscapes, land conversions, not for the NEED for development, but for the WANT of its riches. It is also a time when Malaysian NGOs tend to be less confrontational and instead, opt for ‘cooperation’, even when we know that we will lose, and our hypothetical lines in the sand will be crossed repeatedly. It is almost like Malaysian NGOs are living in a ‘Stockholm Syndrome’ and are partial to repeatedly want to absolve certain sins. Unfortunately,

it is a time when enforcement agencies are inadequate in their efforts, and

their understanding of the threats. It is also a time when they have an inability to strategise and focus correctly across all fields. Instead, they perpetuate a false calmness when indeed there is a storm and it is not in ‘a tea cup’. In a moment of clarity, a minister even indicated that Malaysia practices ‘political patronage’ – and most things are done, if there is a reward for their actions and not for the pure altruism that he had witnessed in his earlier political life. He further commented that this ‘norm’ now transcends much of the administration.

“In my ideal world, large wild cats like tigers and leopards should be at the densities seen during our early years of independence.”

In view of all these realities, it is therefore inevitable that tools such as enforcement partnerships, transparency, accountability, a much more focused strategy, better trained enforcement staff, greater patrolling efforts and patrolling coverage and use of ‘better’ technology are being constantly called for, and are seen as a panacea to solve all ills pertaining to poaching and loss of wildlife and to bring wildlife back to its glory (again in my rose-tinted glasses). And these tools are increasingly being used in most of our landscapes and are being pushed not just by the NGOs, but also by some altruistic and moralistic members of the civil service.

And as the poachers increase in numbers, spread their efforts, become cleverer at avoiding the authorities and have a better network of anti-surveillance, our enforcement efforts, therefore, inevitably must increase. For if not, we are not just fighting a losing battle; we are witnessing a losing battle at close quarters and this is very demoralising. Having worked with some of our altruistic anti-poaching teams for several years, I fear for their morale and pray that they have the energy to keep going.

I end with an encounter with another strong woman, Dr. Vidya Athreya, a leopard biologist working in the urban landscape in Mumbai. Her words of wisdom – ‘big cats can exist with humans even

in our urban landscapes for as long as we have greater empathy for these animals, protect them, understand their requirements and accept that we do have to live with some form of conflict. The Indian population, be it

in towns and villages, tend to have greater acceptance and sympathy for wildlife’. In my future, I hope for the same – a Malaysian populace with greater sympathy for wildlife. The sympathy must also be coupled with a passion for greater commitment and enforcement so that our large cats are not lost in our lifetime and our children’s. We are already responsible for losses of other species and indeed some have become extinct during our watch. We would not want the tiger to be another species lost to human greed, while we bleated like sheep instead of being the shepherds protecting and leading the species to safety.

¹ In this context, Stockholm Syndrome would mean NGOs (captive in this declining environmental loss) expressing empathy, sympathy and have positive feelings, sometimes to the point of defending the wrongs that are perpetrated by the poachers, land degradation authorities and the inadequacies of the enforcement agencies

PROTECTION



Trend of poaching and patrol

RETROSPECT:

- a. Prior to the 1990s, wild animals were killed mostly by Malaysian poachers. This changed by the early 1990s when a surge of Thai nationals started the illegal extraction of agarwood (*gaharu*). Some of those whom were arrested by the Wildlife Department carried snares and firearms for poaching wildlife. To combat these commercial poachers targeting high-end wildlife such as the rhinoceros, the Wildlife Department's Rhino Protection Units regularly patrol rhino habitats, coinciding with those of tigers, in the late 1990s. The patrols were partially funded by international donors.
- b. When rhinoceros numbers plummeted and approached extinction, i.e. at the beginning of the millennium, the price of other commercially valuable wildlife such as pangolins and tigers soared. Reported figures for tigers went from about RM 2,000 per animal in 2003 to over RM 100,000 by 2013.
- c. The poaching incidents continued over the first decade in the new millennia. This was recorded not just by NGOs, but also by government statistics. To combat the increase, anti-poaching efforts also increased, albeit and admittedly not enough to cope with the illegal incursions.
- d. Thus, by 2001 the military had to be called in to patrol protected areas as the poachers were carrying arms and were much more militant in nature. The military continues to be part of the enforcement effort to date in Taman Negara and in Endau-Rompin.

PREDICTION:

- a. If the anti-poaching efforts are inadequate, tigers could disappear in large parts of Malaysia in the next decade, as witnessed in Cambodia by the mid 2000s. Laos and Myanmar are in critical

condition as tigers were also surgically removed by poachers in the past decade. If there is no major enforcement effort done to combat the losses, these two countries could lose all their wild tigers before 2020.

- b. In the next decade, if the anti-poaching efforts continue to be inadequate, tigers could disappear from most parts of Malaysia except possibly in locations where they have been protected by on-going intensive patrols.

NEEDS:

- a. Tigers can make a comeback. If the anti-poaching effort includes a better informant network, field patrols that are incisive and carried out with greater frequency, and the effort is spread over the tiger landscape, it gives tigers a chance to rebuild their population.
- b. To adequately protect Taman Negara, for example, the Wildlife Department needs to increase their patrol efforts, be much more focused at their patrols, and engage with like-minded organisations to jointly deter poaching. Just how much effort is needed? Huai Kha Kheng, a well-protected wildlife reserve in Thailand where tigers and other wildlife are safe despite its proximity to the Myanmar border, has on average, 9.2 full-time enforcement/patrol staff in every 100 km² of the land. To achieve the same intensity of foot-patrols in Taman Negara, the Wildlife Department would need at least 400 personnel patrolling the park FULL TIME. The current manpower is only a fraction of what's needed even when military personnel and the Wildlife Department staff from outside Taman Negara are brought in part-time to boost the ground coverage. Protecting wildlife in Taman Negara needs to be a full-time job and the Public Service Department needs to recognise this and open vacancies for such positions.

A walk on wild's side

By Lavaniadevi Gopalakrishnan



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Footsteps echo in the forest. A group of people hike in a single line along a logging road, their eyes scrutinising the trail for something. They are seen almost every weekend here, in a relatively unknown part of the Malaysian forest, occasionally even spending the night in the forest. Who are these people, and what are they looking for?

They are members of the general public, MYCAT volunteers participating in its flagship programme, Citizen Action for Tigers (CAT). CAT involves citizen conservationists in the protection of an important wildlife corridor along Sungai Yu in Pahang. This stretch of forest is divided by a highway that provides ease of access for poachers into the adjacent Taman Negara.

The premise behind the CAT programme is simple. Wrongdoers are unlikely to carry out their activities in a place frequented by people, especially those who are alert to the possibility of crimes in progress.

Similar to a neighbourhood watch (or *Rukun Tetangga* for Malaysians), MYCAT has brought this idea one step further – into our forests to jointly safeguard our wildlife and heritage, complementing the patrol efforts by Taman Negara rangers inside the park.

With the ultimate goal of protecting and recovering the tiger population in the corridor

“Wrongdoers are unlikely to carry out their activities in a place frequented by people, especially those who are alert to the possibility of crimes in progress.”

and Taman Negara, CAT enables volunteer conservationists not only to deter poaching and encroachment by their mere presence, but also to save wildlife by deactivating snares or traps found during a guided recreational walk. Some tricky walks are guided by local Orang Asli. If volunteers encounter any suspicious activities, they call the 24-7 Wildlife Crime

Hotline. MYCAT then relays the information to the authorities for action. In effect, CAT Walk provides much needed “boots on the ground” and “eyes and ears” in the forest. And most importantly, CAT Walk slowly but surely nurtures a sense of ownership and stewardship over nature amongst the volunteers, moulding them into future conservation champions.

Since the programme’s inception in 2010, 550 volunteers of 24 nationalities have detected and deactivated 83 snares, while walking 584 km in the corridor! Presently, MYCAT is seeing a declining trend of threats to

wildlife, suggesting poachers are slowly being rooted out from the area. Occasionally, tiger pugmarks or images of sambar on camera traps are starting to welcome volunteers.

Today, CAT Walk is very popular, showing that the public is willing to take up the reins to help protect endangered wildlife. The mantle of responsibility is not only taken up by individual members of the public, but also shared by some corporations willing to “donate” their staff time to walk the corridor as “green” CSR.

Strong support from the public fuels MYCAT’s hope of expanding the CAT programme to other important tiger habitats. Is this possible? Can an individual really make a difference in saving a species nearing extinction? The indisputable answer is yes!

Visit www.citizenactionfortigers.my for more information to join CAT Walk or support the programme.

“This trend of habitat loss is increasing and expected to continue. If this is not halted or reversed, Malaysia will fail not just in its global promise to save tigers or avoid deforestation, but much more.”



FORESTRY

When the going gets rough

By Kanitha Krishnasamy

Last year, when I first shared news with friends and family that Malaysia recorded the world's highest deforestation rate over a 12 year period, the first and almost unanimous response was “Isn't that old news?”.

The fact that Malaysia lost some 4.7 million hectares of forest from 2000-2012, an area almost six times the size of Selangor, didn't seem to faze Malaysians as much, as many were under the impression that this was normal.

This year, this record has been overtaken by Indonesia. When the news hit global headlines, one could almost hear the inaudible sigh of relief; that we were no longer the world's worst perpetrator. Whether we are on the number one or number five spot is not as significant as Malaysia continuously being on this undesirable list for many years.

Only about 15% of key tiger habitats are totally protected, while a vast majority

of these areas are forest reserves; the very areas being converted for plantations and industrialisation purposes. To put this into perspective, in the 12 years that we lost all that forest cover, oil palm plantations grew by about 50%.

Anyone working in conservation has heard the “forest is a state matter” line from just about everyone in government. True as that is, through the years, this has become a mantra used almost as an excuse for inaction and a lack of accountability.

The loss of Malaysia's forest is a culmination of decades of poor decision making and government back-paddling, some of which nullify government planning processes. One arm of the government comes up with a conflicting policy and stated intention from the other arm of the government. An example plaguing Malaysia's biodiversity conservation efforts is the battle (or lack of) between the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

(MNRE) and the Ministry of Plantations and Commodities (MPIC) for forest conservation versus forest conversion.

In 2005, the Malaysian Cabinet endorsed Peninsular Malaysia's National Physical Plan (NPP) – a spatial planning policy with a primary objective of urbanisation through sustainable development, keeping in mind the country's various sectoral policies. The result was the identification of areas and priorities for infrastructure development, agriculture, environmental protection and many others.

Also in 2005, the Malaysian Cabinet authorised the MPIC to initiate an aggressive programme to develop forest plantations throughout the country, with rubber making a monumental comeback. The MPIC's National Timber Industry Policy aims to create 3,750 km² of plantations from 2006-2020. More alarming is that State Governments have identified more than this amount of areas for plantation expansion,



which begs the question, “Which native forests are we going to lose next?”

The two Ministries aside, it is the State Governments that ultimately pulls the strings, shaping Malaysia’s forest landscapes, or the lack of it. No forest is excised, no plantations are created without the endorsement of the state Executive Council.

These issues are not as easily dealt with in the current governance system – deals have been made, money has exchanged hands. Multibillion dollar investors with the most powerful voice, and those profiting from these deals – both governments and individuals – are at an advantage to steer the decisions that result in where land is parcelled out for various purposes; thus disregarding conservation policies.

The nett result of this disconnect and vested interests between State and Federal Governments is clear: more tiger habitats cleared to make way for plantations, particularly oil palm and rubber. Tigers and other wildlife are losing their homes completely while others are left in isolated, fragmented pockets. Tigers cannot survive in plantations.

Forest certification tools such as those being administered by the Malaysian Timber Certification Council and the MPIC are meant to improve forest governance, protect people

and biodiversity. But they are not achieving what these were intended to achieve, and sometimes serve as a smokescreen for indiscriminate forest conversion and logging, encroachment, illegal wildlife hunting and trade, all of which violate the fundamental existence of the MNRE. Areas subjected to certification audits are a mere fraction of a particular state’s forests which, nonetheless, result in an entire state being certified as sustainably managed. This has serious implications for large states with huge expanse of forests, such as Pahang, Kelantan, Terengganu and Perak: the very states where plantation expansion is targeted and where tigers have a fighting chance.

This trend of habitat loss is increasing and expected to continue. If this is not halted or reversed, Malaysia will fail not just in its global promise to save tigers or avoid deforestation, but much more. The impact will be more personal with Malaysians losing the right to clean air and water, healthy forests that sequester carbon, forest-dwelling communities losing their livelihoods and much more.

That said, all is not lost. Today, we still have sufficient forest cover to keep our Malaysian tigers for generations to come and the hope among conservationists shines somewhat brightly.

But the simple fact of the matter is that economic gains are overriding sound conservation policies and decision-makers are not seeing the forest for the trees. This situation must be reversed: the Federal Government must re-examine forest and plantation management policies currently in place, including the financial subsidies and mechanisms that serve as perverse incentives for deforestation. Halt inappropriate and indiscriminate conversion of natural forests to monoculture plantations. Strictly prohibit any logging or conversion in tiger priority forests and corridors. Reclassify forest management units, that are subjected to forest certification audits, from the current state to district level, at the minimum, and give a state-wide certification only when all the units are certified. State Governments must also be compelled to make transparent the notification of degazetting forests prior to decision to excise, and the involvement of the public as a whistle-blower is critical.

So, this is not a question of completely ending plantation expansion or logging operations to save tigers. This is a question of penny, pride and prioritisation – where to log sustainably, where to create plantations, where to prohibit conversion and where to save tigers.



POLICY

Harmonising the management of protected areas by Federal and State Governments

By Sivananthan Elagupillay

The designation of Protected Areas (PAs) in Malaysia, in particular Peninsular Malaysia, has been a protracted issue especially after the country achieved independence in 1957. Under the Malaysian Constitution, Wildlife and National Parks (which we can refer to as Protected Areas) are Concurrent Issues. This means both the Federal Government and the respective State Governments can pass federal or state legislation and create agencies to administer these matters.

Prior to independence, wildlife and PA matters were handled by the respective State Governments. The exception to this was the management of Taman Negara National Park. Since 1939, Taman Negara has been managed by the Federal Government through the Director General (then Chief Game Warden) of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) Peninsular Malaysia. However, the gazetting of Taman Negara was achieved through three separate but similar state legislations passed by the State Governments of Kelantan, Pahang and Terengganu. One

could interpret this as a precedent, set since 1939, enabling the Federal Government together with the State Governments to be involved directly in the management of wildlife and PAs.

Following independence, one of the initiatives undertaken by the Federal Government was to strengthen wildlife management. It started off with the passing of a federal legislation, the Protection of Wildlife Act in 1972 in Parliament. This was followed by the federalisation of State DWNPs from the respective State Governments and bringing them directly under the Federal DWNP, a process that was only completed in the late 1970s. At the same time the Federal Government, through the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MOSTE), embarked on enlarging the PA network in Malaysia with a long list of potential PAs identified for designation in the Third Malaysia Plan (1976-1980).

To undertake this mammoth task, MOSTE, through Parliament, passed the National Parks Act in 1980. The purpose of this law was

to gazette new national parks in Peninsular Malaysia as identified in the Third Malaysia Plan. Among them included the Endau-Rompin area at the Johor and Pahang borders. However, to designate new PAs, the consent of the State Government is needed. It was at this juncture that the State Governments began to give serious attention to the designation of new PAs on their own initiatives. The State Governments viewed PAs as land and forestry issues that are state matters under the Constitution. Secondly, states considered that there was an opportunity cost which could be lost forever and, therefore, the State Governments should be compensated for the designation of new PAs.

To address the State Governments' concerns, in the 1990s the Federal Government through the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism, added economic incentives through the implementation of the National Ecotourism Plan with specific budget allocations to develop ecotourism sites. To take advantage of such incentives, several State Governments created new PAs, including



© Abraham Mathew/MYCAT

Johor and Perak, which designated Endau-Rompin National Park and Royal Belum State Park, respectively. These State Government-managed PAs, which were also in the Third Malaysia Plan list, are important sites for tiger conservation and ecotourism.

Malaysia has been successful in the creation of many PAs to conserve the diverse biodiversity resources of the country and to promote ecotourism.

However, the designation mechanism used is also diverse, leading to a long list of legislation and agencies associated with PA management in Peninsular Malaysia, Sarawak and Sabah. In addition, there are many wildlife-rich habitats outside the present PAs that need to be upgraded to PAs. As a result, the fates of habitats for wildlife such as tigers are in the hands of many management agencies that all need assistance to manage these habitats to an acceptable standard.

Acknowledging that the State

Governments are keen on managing their own PAs and that this has resulted in the development of several PA systems within the country, the Federal Government through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has now initiated an incentive-based mechanism to streamline and harmonise the management of PAs for conservation-based objectives. This is being

“The fates of habitats for wildlife such as tigers are in the hands of many management agencies that all need assistance to manage these habitats to an acceptable standard.”

implemented under DWNP through the Global Environment Facility-funded and United Nations Development Programme-supported Protected Areas Financing Project. At the national level, the project will support the establishment of a national conservation trust fund managed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, as well as develop national standards for PA governance

and criteria to receive additional funds.

At the state and agency levels, this project will strengthen the capacity to manage the state/agency PA systems. At the ground level, the management and business plans of Taman Negara National Park, Endau Rompin National Park and Royal Belum State Park will be developed so that wildlife management, law enforcement and

community and stakeholders’ involvement will be strengthened. Since all three PAs are important Malayan tiger conservation sites, these initiatives will enhance the protection of the source tiger populations that will eventually spread out to surrounding tiger landscapes.

The Federal Government hopes to replicate this policy initiative in other states, and in the long run ensure Malaysia’s PAs are well managed with a sustainable financing mechanism in place that will ultimately benefit the conservation of wildlife, including the Malayan tiger.

Wild tigers and the tiger economy: an intimate tango for life

By Nagulendran Kangayathkarasu

The term tiger economy has been coined by economists to represent the rapid economic growth some Asian countries, including Malaysia, have and continue to experience. As for Malaysia, the prefix tiger has a direct correlation to the growth that we want to achieve as per the nation's Vision 2020. This growth is not just economic growth, but also a growth that embraces sustainability and well-being: where biodiversity is not compromised in the name of growth.

Malaysia is one of the 12 richest countries in terms of biodiversity. Our biodiversity is crucial, not only in providing us with food, medicine, fibre and other products, but also in performing the vital services to sustain life on earth by providing fresh water and air, regulating weather, pollination, soil formation

and other important ecosystem services.

In fact, for us in Malaysia, our culture and lifestyle have been woven by our rich biodiversity. Just look at the cultural expressions found in our communities. Dance, art forms as well as traditional games and music have derived inspiration from our rich biodiversity.

This biodiversity we inherited has to be protected, but unfortunately it's often taken for granted. The recent report of the dwindling wild tiger numbers did not get the same level of attention or reaction compared to when a pair of giant pandas came to town.

The loss of the charismatic Malayan tigers will presumably have no impact on us, as we can't "see" them. The water crisis in early 2014 is a clear example of how we react only if issues affect us directly. Now we hear people

grumbling in *kopitiams*¹ about how we should better manage our water catchment areas and forest. The loss of the Malayan tiger on the contrary will have the effect of the proverbial frog in the boiling water!

Biodiversity becomes even more important, as the nation has embarked on the Bio-economy Transformation Programme to leverage on the country's rich biodiversity for generating wealth to furnace socioeconomic development as envisioned through the New Economic Model. While this programme seems to be a promising tool, we must always remember that for Malaysia "bio-economy" in its most basic definition is not new. Malaysia has always been a country that has benefited from our rich biodiversity base.

From the time of early Hindu civilisation



© Eric Vts

and the great Malacca Empire, through the colonial years and right up to present times, our biodiversity and natural resources have been a major contributing factor to our success in terms of economic growth.

Hence, it is time we look at new models 'Beyond GDP' for measuring our development. It is about time we look at the social and environmental parameters alongside the dominant economic indicators to measure development and progress. The Science Advisor to our Rt. Hon. Prime Minister advocates that conservation and sustainable use of resources is not a hindrance to development, but it is fundamental to development and promotes wellbeing and sustainability.

A good approach for Malaysia to conserve her biodiversity is by preserving the Malayan tiger, which is an apex predator. Protecting an apex predator will also protect biodiversity. In 2009, Malaysia took a huge step in unveiling the *National Tiger Conservation Action Plan* to double the wild tiger numbers up to 1,000 by 2020. But a recent report by the Wildlife Department and MYCAT has shown a drastic drop to around 300 individuals. This is alarming as we are reaching tipping points in

saving this majestic and national icon.

This crash in tiger numbers is a reflection of what is happening to biodiversity. If this trend continues, the supporting services that biodiversity provides will decline. This collapse in ecosystem services will eventually grab the 'tiger' away from our tiger economy. It will make us limp like a wounded tiger. If we do not act now with a bold game change, we will not only lose our tigers, but also see an eventual collapse of our economy, growth and well-being. We, as a nation, would have lost our soul. We can't afford a Malaysia with a landscape without wild tigers.

The game change should include the following:

- a) A high level committee chaired by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister to address the rapid decline of the Malayan tigers. This committee has to be geared to implement swift actions with adequate resources mobilised to meet the aspirations of the *National Tiger Conservation Action Plan*. This committee has to put the plan back on track, not just for the tigers but for our own survival;
- b) Set up a dedicated National Malaysia Tiger Conservation Authority, which is well

manned (both in numbers and expertise) and funded to implement and take concrete actions. This Authority will be the focal agency for the *National Tiger Conservation Action Plan*, as well as the secretariat for the high level committee above;

- c) Tiger conservation is also fundamental to national security as many poachers are foreigners. The recently launched 1Malaysia Biodiversity Enforcement Network (1MBEON) should step up its enforcement by mobilising other relevant agencies such as the General Operation Force of the Royal Malaysian Police; and
- d) The National Natural Resources Conservation Trust Fund² should have a dedicated window to fund tiger conservation and related activities adequately on a sustained manner with funds from the government, the private sector and other sources including alternative financing schemes.

We need to act now, if not we may lose our tigers, our tiger economy and much much more. This symbiotic relationship of wild tigers and tiger economy is a tango for life itself!

¹ *Kopitiams* are traditional coffee shops

² The establishment of the National Natural Resources Conservation Trust Fund was adopted by the Malaysian Parliament on 27 November 2014

MYCAT & YOU

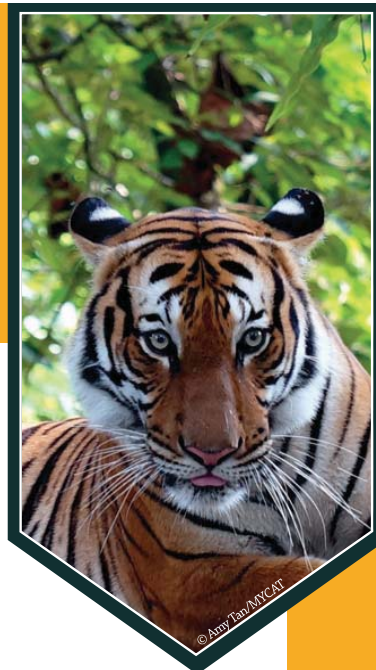
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Malayan tigers are found ONLY in Malaysia and there now ONLY about 300 wild tigers left! We have to act NOW to save them from extinction in our lifetime.

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Your contribution will help us to increase advocacy work, community outreach and school education programmes for those living near tiger habitats, and opportunities for the public to help save tigers.



The business of conservation: **good deeds with dirty hands?**

By Ashleigh Seow

In the past decade the corporate sector has been partly responsible for the decline in tiger and other wildlife numbers through converting wildlife habitats to oil palm monoculture, resource mining and Latex Timber Clones. Other activities such as highway construction, timber extraction and poorly managed agriculture have further degraded tiger habitats.

MYCAT's creation in 2003 coincided with a time of rising global social and environmental consciousness. Consumers began demanding higher standards of corporate accountability for the increasingly obvious detrimental social and environmental consequences of business activity.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was a logical development in the debate about the regulation of business activities, which started soon after the creation of limited liability joint stock (private) companies in 1856. Over the past 150 years, state and society have increasingly realised that profit-driven organisations must be governed by legal, financial, social and environmental norms since they have been, in the main, demonstrably incapable of sustained long term ethical self-governance. The dismal track record of the armaments, resource extraction industries and financial sector, to name a few, have demonstrated this shortcoming.

First governments, then the financial markets and now society have sought greater scrutiny, higher accountability and responsibility standards from business.

Environmentalists joined other civil society organisations as watch dogs of corporate behaviour.

Business saw the writing on the wall and sought to associate themselves with environmental and social causes. Sustainability became a buzz word covering an umbrella of activities from recycling of office paper to emission reductions from factories. Firms engaged with NGOs and local communities and sought to gain "good corporate citizen" credentials in a wide variety of CSR work such as tree planting on deforested land.

Prior to this, much business involvement in social and environmental issues had been driven by philanthropy; a word of ancient origin meaning deeds done for the benefit of others with no thought of gain or publicity.

Now sponsorship out of reputational necessity is branded as virtue and commodified, an example being carbon credits. Business seeks a "green" image. Many international NGOs themselves use branding and reputation enhancing language to "encourage firms to leverage their corporate philanthropic and marketing efforts to increase their exposure in front of environmentally-minded consumers".

In Malaysia, the oil palm sector attracted attention both for its profitability and its destructiveness in its threat to forests and wildlife, including tigers. Sustainable standards were developed to mediate between the two outcomes, but were slow in implementation.

A new, and often difficult,

dialogue between business and NGOs was born. This process is still evolving as NGOs evaluate the trade-off between the attractions of funding and partnership against the risks of being tainted by unscrupulous "green washing". The problem for NGOs is, "what if your partner acts in an unethical manner?" And unethical behaviour can happen away from the home country. Accordingly, NGOs must not only scrutinise a prospective sponsor's track record in Malaysia, but also elsewhere, which makes due diligence a costly exercise.

This is all the more necessary now that some firms have gone beyond partnerships with NGOs into ownership of conservation projects, setting goals, funding, staffing and managing projects, such as Nestlé's RiLeaf reforestation of the Kinabatangan riparian corridor. Originally a WWF project, Nestlé now owns it. The obvious question is, "if they own the project who keeps them honest?" What if another less scrupulous company "buys" the project for the valuable environmental "goodwill" as accountants term it?

This trend is likely to continue into the next decade, as more firms feel the pressure to improve their branding. In principle, the association of business with environmental values should be a good thing when business takes heed of environmental scorecards as well as balance sheets. Nevertheless, the NGO-firm relationship will continue to require careful management bearing in mind that the ultimate business goals will seldom be the same as those of



Royal Selangor has been regularly sending staff for CAT Walks since 2012 © Royal Selangor/MYCAT

conservationists.

There have to be limits and understanding of what conservation priorities are, according to Dr. Melvin Gumal of the Wildlife Conservation Society. Greening and planting trees may be seen as the easiest, most cost effective way of generating good PR. It solves one problem, but is probably not a conservation priority for some NGOs. Similarly, conservation education and training of corporate staff as part of their HR training is good, but in terms of the effort needed for relationship management versus hand-holding and the urgency of protecting tigers in the field – it may not be a priority, unless it is like MYCAT's Citizen Action for Tigers programme.

Thus, for corporate engagement, there is a need to make sure that these corporates meet conservation goals and not the reverse, i.e. conservation organisations meeting the budgetary, PR and CSR goals of business. And while they do meet in common forums, some corporates have their own pre-determined and defined goals.

Where does this leave tiger conservation? Dato' Dr. Dionysius Sharma, CEO of WWF-Malaysia, believes corporate management of wildlife is more problematic than other

forms of environmental conservation.

While there are cases elsewhere of wildlife parks being managed by the private sector for limited periods, it would be very unwise if management of an endangered species like a tiger was ever outsourced to a profit-driven organisation with short term or even medium term goals. Wildlife projects need clear parameters, defined outcomes and objectives, and must be time bound. The challenge for conservationists is to craft shared value initiatives or strategies that address the needs of business without compromising ultimate goals such as conserving viable wild populations.

Another important challenge is the need for continuing public oversight and clear accountability. So-called "sanctuaries" (another ancient and abused word) driven by commercial gain are little more than theme parks and do not assist the wild animals and often are fronts for "wildlife laundering".

"The challenge for conservationists is to craft shared value initiatives or strategies that address the needs of business without compromising ultimate goals such as conserving viable wild populations."

Yet conservation needs business involvement as well as public and government support. Why shouldn't firms invest in tiger conservation in their pursuit of social capital? Ultimately firms are just a group of people, be they shareholders or staff. Effective conservation, one of the most important global challenges today, requires that people need to be aware and participation is the only way to imbue an organisation with genuine conservation values.

MYCAT believes in this approach and in bringing business into tiger conservation by partnering to stop the illegal wildlife trade at source. Some companies have already joined in protecting the tiger and its habitat by deterring poaching of wildlife in the Sungai Yu Tiger Corridor. And most encouragingly, some, such as Malaysian-listed company Royal Selangor, have not sought any publicity whatsoever, which means that altruistic philanthropy, like the tiger, is not yet extinct.

Extinction of the majestic stripes

By Kae Kawanishi



Conservation biologists study the human impact on the extinction process of biological diversity. Extinction is an evolutionary process that happens to all species and over 99.9% of all species that ever lived on Earth had gone extinct, mostly prior to the appearance of *Homo sapiens*. Extinction of a species usually involves a series of events starting from net loss of individuals in a given population, net loss of distinctive sub-populations and subspecies, and finally loss of all individuals in the entire range of the species. The extinction rate of biodiversity world-wide is faster in our lifetime than at any other time in the

short history of modern man (300,000 years), and than average extinction rates in the evolutionary history of the life on Earth (3.5 billion years). For example, the tiger is only about 1 million years old while the average lifespan of all species is 10 million years. In other words, humans are currently causing mass extinction of life on Earth.

Malaysia's biodiversity is especially at risk of rapid decline due to its initial richness inherent to tropical rainforests, many endemic taxa, geographical insularity, high deforestation rate, unsustainable development and lack of conservation

resources, which includes conservation biologists to study the extinction process and make scientifically sound management recommendations. While the world has lost some 97% of the original tiger population in the past century, Malaysia, since its independence in 1957, has lost 90%. The rate of loss is un-proportionate to the official forest coverage – 38% of Peninsular Malaysia – because many forests are becoming empty of commercially valuable animals such as tigers.

Like house cats, tigers are prolific animals that can breed and reproduce easily. Biologically, it is possible for

the population of 300 Malayan tigers to bounce back to 500 and eventually to 1,000. Malaysia has enough forests to support up to 1,500 tigers. Socially, however, it will take miracles to recover the 90% loss. One such miracle would be the integration of biodiversity conservation into the State Governments' decision-making processes regarding resource extraction, especially forestry.

PREDICTION

I predict that in the next decade, extinction rates will accelerate world-wide and the health of Earth will further deteriorate. In Malaysia, this process will not be documented scientifically except for a very few high profile species, but the effects of degradation, destruction and fragmentation of the forests will be visible and felt in the lives of Malaysians. The tiger worldwide will not be extinct yet. Population recovery will continue to occur in some pockets of forest that receive long-term commitment and adequate resources like those in India, Nepal, Russia, Thailand and Endau-Rompin in Malaysia.

While biodiversity in general will decline due to the loss of natural forests in Malaysia, commercially valuable species like the tiger will be specifically targeted. More poachers from Indochina will flood Malaysia's fragmented forests, free for all, and compete with local poachers. Only 15% of the tiger habitats are in protected areas, which means most tigers in the rest of the forests will be gone. It will become too costly to monitor and protect the few that remain, even if someone would want to do so. In essence, tigers will survive only in the three isolated priority areas (Belum-Temengor, Taman Negara and Endau-Rompin).

“Among the tiger range countries, Malaysia is a rich country, but its high GDP growth is irrelevant to human capital and resources for biodiversity protection. Although Malaysia has relatively good conservation policies and laws, the enabling conditions for effective implementation are lagging behind.”

While political commitment to nature conservation will remain weak and the state Forestry Departments will not protect biodiversity beyond the monetary value of timber, I predict that MYCAT and the Wildlife Department will be galvanising more resources to protect and monitor tigers in these three areas. If we fail to do this in the next decade, then the loss of the Malayan tiger will be irreversible in the foreseeable future.

A landscape approach to biodiversity conservation is a popular concept and is viable in some wealthy countries. This was what local conservationists envisioned in 2006 when we met to develop a national strategy to double the tiger numbers in Malaysia by 2020. Among the tiger range countries, Malaysia is a rich country, but its high GDP growth is irrelevant to human capital and resources for biodiversity protection. Although Malaysia has relatively good conservation policies and laws, the enabling conditions for effective implementation are lagging behind.

In the next decade, the Malaysian public and the government will not be ready for the radical changes required for effective biodiversity conservation. I cannot even objectively foresee these changes coming in my lifetime. The progress will be gradual, yet extinction will come much more rapidly.

NEEDS

We have learned that conservation resources are pitifully small, and time is running out for the tiger. The full-time manpower to adequately protect Taman Negara, for example, is currently less than 10% of what is needed. We should not spread the resources so thinly over the vast

“Biodiversity is essential for human survival. Saving tigers from imminent extinction requires healthy forests, sustainable development, strong governance, and educated and caring people who are ready to take action. Losing tigers signifies the lack of these conditions.”

forested landscape at the risk of losing everything. We need to focus on the priority areas. We need to have armed enforcement and military personnel protecting the forest interiors, and flood the edges and easily accessible areas with citizen conservationists and tourists.

Wildlife can live with tourists, but not with poachers. We should know about every individual tiger that lives in these priority areas, and protect and monitor them diligently.

Tiger conservation needs to be adequately financed so that conservation professionals can do conservation instead of raising funds full-time.

If we can protect these three source populations in the next decade, I will consider our effort a success. When the enabling conditions for effective biodiversity conservation using a landscape approach are prevalent in the distant future, tigers can re-colonise the rest of the forested landscape.

Biodiversity is essential for human survival. Saving tigers from imminent extinction requires healthy forests, sustainable development, strong governance, and educated and caring people who are ready to take action. Losing tigers signifies the lack of these conditions. If Malaysia fails to safeguard the future of its tigers by failing to preserve them in the protected areas over the next decade, life in this country will not be safe for me and for my child. Every tiger deserved to be saved, but Malaysians will not have deserved my dedication.



MENTALITY

Roaring for tigers, but is anyone listening?

Changing and enduring attitudes towards tigers and tiger conservation.

By Elizabeth John, Suzalinur Manja Bidin and Or Oi Ching

In August 2002, the then Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat ordered a large-scale, army-led operation to wipe out all tigers in the state.

“Malaysia already has far too many tigers...they are better off dead,” he told the press following several fatal tiger attacks on rubber tappers in the Jeli district.

Dangerous, unnecessary or just plain irrelevant, seemed to be a common view of

tigers at the time.

Of course, there were always people to whom tigers mattered. They were the ones whose voices of reason – *don’t kill every single tiger, just because one killed* – won the day and put paid to the mass extermination plan.

And over the years this group has grown, and is largely aware that Malaysia has its very own tiger which is threatened and in need of protection. The increased level of awareness is

apparent in the total absence of this question nowadays: “*Eh, Malaysia got tigers ah?!?*”

It was there in the outcry that followed a measly fine imposed on a trader in Tumpat, Kelantan, caught with a quartered tiger in his freezer in 2005, and in the public and media calls for tougher enforcement after the tiger cub Nicky was rescued from a Pahang restaurant the same year.

The public uproar against the Penang



Chief Minister's plan for a tiger park in 2009 even before conservation groups raised a stink; the angry picket against the abuse of tigers for photography at a zoo in Melaka in 2010; some 56,000 public signatures that provided the push for a critical overhaul of Malaysia's wildlife laws; the public rant against government inaction in the wake of UK Channel 4's video of brazen Malaysian poachers posing with a dead tiger somewhere in northern Peninsular Malaysia – all these say that people care and do make their voices heard for tigers.

So, we're all good then?

No, not so fast.

Malaysia's biggest seizure of tiger parts on record took place in Kedah just two years ago. A mind-blowing 22 bags of skeletal remains of tigers and eight whole skins found in the possession of a single trader.

People may be increasingly aware today, but more than a few still want tiger parts.

Researchers and rangers on patrol still have no trouble finding snares in protected areas. Poaching has devastated the population of tiger prey, especially the sambar deer. A latticework of highways and other development across protected areas brings poachers closer to tigers, and tigers into greater conflict with people.

Still dangerous, necessary only to those who

profit from them and just as irrelevant to the political czars as they were back in August 2002.

And in classrooms of forest-fringe communities, the disregard is painfully clear. During our outreach programmes at schools, volunteers casually asked ten to twelve-year-olds if they had ever seen a snare. The vast majority raised their hands to show they had without any hesitation.

They could tell volunteers how traps were

“People may be increasingly aware today, but more than a few still want tiger parts.”

made, what animals were caught and even the culinary delights created out of some of Malaysia's most protected species.

Tigers and everything else in the wild world are still thought of very much as a commodity – food, medicine, a product to trade. These children live so close to the majestic beast yet do not relate to it in any conservation terms.

When our exhibition booths in some of these communities showcase wildlife parts and products confiscated by authorities, people often ask if the exhibits are for sale! And just as you start thinking that we're sunk,

it gets worse.

Hunting is just a part of daily life, say many within communities crucial to our efforts to save tigers. Wildlife is a bounty to be enjoyed. Cultural belief in the efficacy of tiger parts in healing and boosting performance in the bedroom still holds sway in this day and age.

Politely accepting the brochures that list hefty fines for poaching, the locals show little emotion when the conversation turns to falling tiger numbers. A tiger has little meaning in their lives; a dead tiger even less. The loss of tigers simply does not possess the immediacy of a water cut or a choking haze.

On occasion, residents show disdain towards the visiting conservationists who have the temerity to tell the host how to behave in his own house.

Even among the rural and urban folk who understand the tigers' plight, the mentality is often one of resignation or skepticism. At workshops to promote the use of the Wildlife Crime Hotline, participants often question if it's really their place or within their power to propel change.

Catching poachers and smugglers, protecting the tiger...isn't that the government's job? What are they doing?

Of those who do save the hotline number for later use, some can be heard remarking

MENTALITY



Orang Asli children and adults listening to a talk on tigers © Hamsiah Abu Bakar/MYCAT

that they don't really believe their reports will result in action. Not a surprise considering few tiger poachers and smugglers actually get caught and slapped with a penalty of any worth; and the miserable publicity there is on the few occasions they are.

Last year, some 1,000 people signed up as volunteers for MYCAT after the group's run to raise awareness on the tiger's dire situation.

These new volunteers and the thousand more who've helped over the years are testament to changing minds, or to the fact that those who believe in saving tigers are willing to put a little sweat into making that happen.

But there is little hope for a future with wild tigers if we fail to overcome the current poaching pressure and habitat loss. And as tigers become a rare sight in the forest, it will be even harder for people to feel connected to them and maintain interest in conserving wild tigers.

The responsibility of saving wild tigers has always been shouldered by a very few in society who truly care for wildlife. For the longest time, this has largely been considered the duty of green NGOs and this state of affairs is likely to remain unchanged in the foreseeable future.

So after years of exhibitions, talks, walks, interviews, petitions and riding the social media bandwagon for tigers, the time has come to try something new and to make the messages much more relevant to the public –

moving them to care, and then to act.

Ideally this should begin with a clearer understanding of what goes through the mind of the average Malaysian when the talk turns to tigers. Right now, it's a jumble of assumptions, intuition and limited insight that is sometimes a hit, but more often a miss.

Organisations attempting to reduce demand for threatened wildlife, try and avoid this pitfall by carrying out detailed studies on why society consumes illegal wildlife goods like tiger parts, rhino horn or ivory. The knowledge gives communicators and campaigners a much better chance of getting to the heart of the problem.

Such work in China has identified corporate gift-giving, health and investment as key reasons for this behaviour. While in Vietnam, it has shown that buyers and users of rhino horn form a powerful social network consisting of important individuals with whom it is crucial to maintain good relationships.

Studies on demand for other wildlife have also shown how income, culture, beliefs, misinformation, the need for prestige or luxury, in combination or separately, drive illegal trade and consumption of wildlife.

Figuring out why Malaysians, who are now better informed about the tiger problem, don't often act on that knowledge will be fundamental to saving the country's tigers.

Equally critical will be conservationists'

willingness to seek solutions beyond their area of expertise or when conservation tactics alone are not enough.

If it is apparent that public attitude towards the poaching and trafficking of tigers is informed by economics, religion, land ownership or corruption and disregard for the law, then new measures, new collaborations and a completely different set of skills may be called for.

Really talking to communities and working with them, providing leadership where there is none and stepping aside where there are local champions, demonstrating the value to humans of protecting a space and a species – all these will help change public perception that the conservationist is all about the green agenda, while people are secondary to wildlife.

For people to see, understand and believe that saving tigers is urgent and necessary, conservation NGOs must convince opinion leaders and decision makers who have a say in policy, legislation, and financing.

For them, we must shape and sustain a political case for strong conservation protection. It will take courage and persistence, but success would be invaluable – it would mean tigers have a place on the national agenda.

Conservation, let alone saving tigers, rarely features in national debate and discussion on how the country's wealth should be spent, its resources managed or the future planned. It has to be visible, alongside such issues as health, education, security and livelihoods before anyone will give two-hoots about tigers.

Moving forward, we cannot afford to forget the many who view tigers and tiger conservation positively. Neither can we ignore the people for whom tigers are little more than animals in a zoo or symbols on official crests.

Those who care need to know exactly what they can do to help. The dire situation the Malayan tiger faces can often leave the public feeling helpless and apathetic. They need a list of concrete actions and must be able to see those actions bear results.

For the rest, and the future generations that have yet to hear about the vanishing Malayan tiger, thoughtful and targeted engagement must continue.

There are but 250-340 wild tigers left. Reach out, ask, cajole, listen, speak up, demand, persuade, study, prove, win-over. There's precious little time.

“Those who care need to know exactly what they can do to help. The dire situation the Malayan tiger faces can often leave the public feeling helpless and apathetic. They need a list of concrete actions and must be able to see those actions bear results.”

Take Action!

The future will depend on our choices and deliberate actions. Will you be a member of the species that dominates Earth and destroys its natural systems and the web of life? Or, will you follow your conscience and act with compassion?

- Report suspected poaching or trading activities involving tigers, tiger prey and other endangered animals to the MYCAT Wildlife Crime Hotline at 019.356.4194, report@malayantiger.net or www.facebook.com/wildlifecrimehotline
- Save tigers from poachers' snares by volunteering for Citizen Action for Tigers (CAT). Sign up at www.citizenactionfortigers.my
- Sign up as a MYCAT volunteer at www.malayantiger.net
- Secure forests for tigers and our own future by finding out more about the *Central Forest Spine Master Plan* and calling upon your elected state representative to uphold the plan in your state
- Voice your opinion to the press and national leaders on indiscriminate development, deforestation and poaching
- Support conservation campaigns initiated by MYCAT and partner NGOs
- Raise awareness and funds for tiger conservation at your school or company, and donate to conservation organisations
- Learn about tigers and tiger prey from reliable sources like the MYCAT website (www.malayantiger.net) and share with your friends and family
- Do not use traditional medicines which contain parts of tigers and other endangered species
- Do not eat the meat of endangered species, particularly tigers and tiger prey (wild deer and wild boar)
- Do not purchase decorative items or fashion made from parts of endangered species
- Do your research before visiting zoos or theme parks with wildlife. Stay away from those involved in illegal acquisition or use of wildlife



Citizen Action for Tigers

Now anyone can help save wildlife!

Poaching is the main threat to the survival of wild tigers in Malaysia. Always wanted to help but don't know how?

Join Citizen Action for Tigers (CAT) to deter poaching and keep an eye out for illegal activities while having fun in the great outdoors! If you see anything suspicious in the forest, report it to the Wildlife Crime Hotline (019-356 4194).



CAT Walk

Keep the Sungai Yu Tiger Corridor safe while enjoying nature in Sungai Yu, near Merapoh, Pahang, over the weekend. Take moderate walks of varying lengths and enjoy leisure activities such as bird watching, picnicking and swimming. Fitness level normal.

Easy to moderate

Themed Walk

Join a Border Walk to keep watch along the Taman Negara border, a Moon Walk to camp in the forest, River Walk for some wet and wild fun, and more. Fitness level normal to high.

Moderate to challenging

Volunteers must be above 18 years old and in good physical condition.
Look out for trip dates and sign up to volunteer at www.citizenactionfortigers.my

A programme by:



Financially supported by:



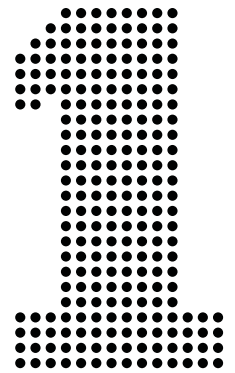
MYCAT in Numbers (2003-2013)

3000

wild tigers remain in Malaysia

1,500

tigers can be supported
in Malaysia's forests



national
strategy on
saving tigers

1,082

volunteers empowered
to spread messages
and tools to save tigers

405
reports
received
by Wildlife
Crime
Hotline;

253
actions
taken
by the
authorities

6-year
moratorium
on sambar
and barking
deer hunting
instituted

459

CAT Walkers
protected Sungai
Yu Tiger Corridor

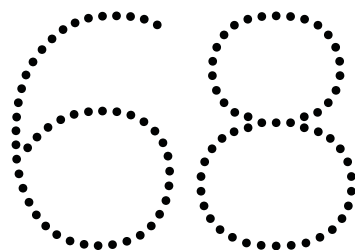
665 km covered by
CAT Walkers

40,645

Malaysians reached, face-to-face,
in 134 roadshows and school
outreach programmes

56,062

supporters worldwide
called for a better wildlife
law in Malaysia



enforcement staff
trained to better
patrol Taman Negara

2,500

runners signed up for
the Wild Tiger Run

108

poachers' traps
deactivated by
CAT Walkers

Thank You!

Many thanks to MYCAT volunteers who contribute time and energy, as well as specific expertise, to make our programmes a success. MYCAT volunteers between 2003 and 2013* are:

Abbey Thangiah Davadason Peter
Abd Munir Mohamad Abd Khalil
Abdul Halim Ahmad Mazlan
Abdul Rahman Aziz
Abdul Rahman Mustapa
Abdul Razak Sanusi
Abdussalaam Kamaluddin
Adam Stone
Adibah Munirah Mazlan
Adisti Zolkopli
Adli Hadi Sabaruddin
Affah Zainal Abidin
Afqah Khalid
Ahmad Arif Farid Ibrahim
Ahmad Azharuddin Osman
Ahmad Azri Zulkifli
Ahmad Deedat Abdul Hamid
Ahmad Faizal Rahim
Ahmad Nazrul Hisham Mohamad Nasir
Ahmad Safuan Md Yusoff
Ahmad Siddiq Mohd Adnan
Aiidir Putera Ab Raman
Aiman Safwan Ahmad Suffian
Aimi Amalina Abdullah
Aimy Rashidah Zakaria
Aisath Shamrath Waheed
Alan Yu
Aleka Erica Elizabeth Fernandez
Alexander M Jack
Alice Gemma Monk
Alice Wong Sow Moy
Amanda Lam Su Lin
Amanda Sonia Nathan
Aminath Afri Mukhtar
Anara Akhmetzhanova
Ang Ah Leck
Angelica Anthony Thane
Anisrah Abdul Sabhee
Ann Marie Sidhu
Anna Ransch
Apau Mudzaffar Harun
Arhrwin Kalai Chelvan
Arina Mahdi Abdul Manaf
Asha Kaur
Ashleigh Kivilaakso Seow
Ashwin Singh Pentlia
Asiyah Wahidah Razali
Aysha Clare Whittaker
Azari Kamal
Azariah Ariffin
Azeela Mohd Ali
Azfar Mahdi Abdul Manaf
Aziezan Jaafar
Azira Azreen Abdul Aziz
Azisha Aziz Abdul Ahmad
Azlan Mohamed
Azwan Roslan
Azwari Zainal
Baduriah Mohd Ariffin
Barry-Dean Dawson
Bashtiah Nahrul Khair
Beatrice Sim Wuan Hung
Belinda James Xavier
Ben Stone
Benjamin Derek James
Benjamin Tan Wei Liang
Bernadette Chin
Biman Bardhan Amal Bardhan
Bobby Soon
Booi Carlyn
Brian Koh Weng Chuan
Cahaya Amalina Zaini
Calvin Lai Kin Hon
Camellia Chim Yee Peng
Cameron Kennedy
Carol Ho
Caroline Yap
Carolyn Marsh
Chan Beng Beng
Chan Chin Wei

Chan Sheow Chen
Chan Shuk Yee
Chan Wai Kin
Chanelle Tan Wan Sin
Chang Hon Kit
Chang Yen Lynn
Charlie Frew
Cheong Peg Ling
Cheong Shu-Mei
Chew Fui San
Chew Lee Yui
Chia Wai Meng
Chiew Lin May
Chin Joon Ming
Chin Pik Wun
Chin Yen Wah
Chong Ai Lyn
Chong Ban Lee
Chong Pooi Yee
Chong Shu-Yi
Chong Yuan Yoon
Choo Shuet Yee
Choong Wai Sum
Chow Kar Shin
Chris Ong Jenn Yi
Christophe Chevrier
Chu Mei Yi
Chua Vi Vian
Chua Wan Chyng
Chua Wei Jie
Claire Beasat
Clarence Anslam
Clarence Chua
Cunayah Carwinah
Daniel Quilter
Darrin Wu Wen Long
David Chin Hoong Weng
David Lim Chan Foo
David Trees
Dean Bangs
Denise Cheah Su Lin
Dewi Juita
Dewi Mulyani Mohd Ilham
Dilina Kamaruddin
Dinaesh Kumar Sivananthan
Donovan Louis
Dylan Jeffri Ong
Eileen Chiang Ai Lin
Elena Wong Wei Wen
Elizabeth Lisa John
Elli Noor Syafikah Azmi
Ema Dayana Safian
Eng Chee Jiang
Eng Mei Ngoh
Eng Sin Yin
Eric Chan
Eugene Lee Thean
Eunice Lum Sow Chan
Eunice Wong Zi Yi
Evelyn Hii Shin Yee
Fahrol Liza Jaafar
Fara Atika Mat Isa
Farah Ahmad Damanhuri
Farah Hanis Juhari
Farahen Abd Hadi
Farahida Mazlan
Farid Ibrahim
Faridah Mat Ali
Fariz Abdul Aziz
Farida Syafinaz Mohamad
Fazely Jaafar
Felicia Tan Cui Xian
Firdaus Mohd Raf
Firdausia Hj Omar
Fred Koontz
Freda Koh Jia Ti
Gabriela Riskova
Gan Yuh-Lin
Gerald Koh Jia Haur
Gerard Christopher Noel

Gerd Neumann
Gilles Faussat
Goh Chiew Yee
Goh Wai Kuan
Gopalasamy Reuben Clements
Gurnam Singh Dhaliwal
Ha Siaw Harn
Habib Fadli Lutas Asril
Habibah Yusof
Hafeeza Harun
Hafiza Razali
Hafizah Hanif
Hairunnisa Zaharah Abdul Raqib Lim
Hajarnotul Atiqah Nurain Mohd Nor
Hamdan Alias
Hamed Nasrollahi
Hamidah Yusoff
Hamsiah Abu Bakar
Hamzah Mohd Ali
Han Shuet Ling
Haniza Jais
Hanni Hazirah Binti Hisham
Hanusha Nair
Harkeerat Sandhu
Haroman Musa
Harriet Florence Webb
Harrison Ooi Zhi Jun
Harvinpreet Kaur
Hasmaniah Saidina Abas
Helen Alexandra Forsyth
Helen Johnny
Henry Chan
Heon Sui Peng
Hezry Haizad
Hia Pei Gyn
Hilda Norsyikin Razali
Ho Sook Mun
Ho Yoke Wan
Hoh Choong Weng
Huzaifah Mohd Zainudin
Hwang Shiang Lin
Ian Chew Seng Yian
Ibtisam Sarhanaa Shamsudin
Ida Anura Elias
Ilyas Sapian
Intan Farhana Mat Saad
Ira Imriyati Zainol Alam
Irene Zambon
Irwan Buana Ismail
Ishammudin Murni
Iskandar Fadzillah
Ivan Tacey
Izzasyahira Hazwani Awang Yassin
Jake Leong Chee Onn
Jamaluddin Othman
Jan H Stuienberg
Jane Phang Jo Ee
Jas Khairulshazwan Jas Saripudeen
Jasmine Steed
Jason Boehle
Jason Wee Chee Siang
Jason Yong Jun Keat
Jeanne Lim Chee Jing
Jeannie Chan
Jennifer Cantlay
Jennifer Neoh Tan Su Heng
Jennifer Ubung Nawan
Jenny Tanedo
Jeremy Phang Pok Shan
Jeremy Theng Zhen Wei
Jerome Tan
Jesmail Kaur
Jess Chey Poh Wah
Jesse Lee Yin Lay
Jessica Liew Sue Ann
Jeyamani Kuppusamy
Jill Khoo Siao Hooi
Jim Stone
Joanna Melissa Moss
Joanne Tong

Joel Chua
Johanan Micaiah Supramaniam
Johannes Eich
John Chan
John Graham Robertson
John Steed
Jonathan Goh Teik Ean
Jordyn Lee Chian Hoey
Joyce Lim Shiu Hui
Juanita Johari
Julia Jaafar
Julia Lo Fui San
Junaiddi Omar
Kaamini Planisamy
Kaartigaian Gunasegran
Kamilla Adam Cheah
Kanagalingam K. Kulasingam
Kavitha Jayaseelan
Kazel Teoh Kuan Min
Kee Wei Ken
Keisha Sheeena Ravichandran
Kennedy Voon Zhen Yi
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Kerry Stansfield
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Khairany Mohamed Khalid
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Khok Li Jun
Kieya Arshia
Ko Wern Yen
Koh Hock Guan
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Koo Pei Yee
Krissie Bea Sta Maria
Kshitij Suhag
Kuo Zi Chong
Kwan Poh Peng
Lai Tatt Sheng
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Laleindra Kumaran
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Lau Chak Onn
Lau Ching Fong
Lau Kai Pin
Laura Benedict
Laura Ribero
Lavaniadevi Gopalakrishnan
Laviniya Naidu
Law Lee Huie
Layne Winnings
Lee Bee Kin
Lee Caulfield-Marsh
Lee Ching Nee
Lee Ching Yew
Lee Jia Chern
Lee Mei Foong
Lee Miao Lu
Lee Oon Teik
Lee Shin Hui
Lee Shing Peng
Lee Siew Mei
Lee Wei Nie
Lee Zhiang Ho
Leona Liman
Leong Shen-Li
Leong Suet Yin
Leroy Yeow
Leslie Fernandez
Liaw Wei Ling
Liew Ching Miao
Liew En Ji
Liew Mai Fung
Lim Aun Tiah
Lim Chee Chung
Lim Chia Ann
Lim Eitwyn
Lim Kae Sen
Lim Kaiyang
Lim Li Shan
Lim Loong Shueng
Lim Mei Yi
Lim Puay Aun
Lim Seik Ni
Lim Shin Yee

Lim Shu Ting
Lim Sing Hua
Lim Teck Wyn
Lim Tze Tshen
Lim Wee Siong
Lim Wei Jin
Lim Zh Biao
Linda Khoo
Lindy Siu Wei Lin
Ling Toh Hao
Lisana Saleem
Liwina Thamby Pillai
Loh Chan Wai
Loh Pei Vent
Loh Pui Yen
Loh Yook Fun
Lok Jing Tian
Long Seh Ling
Loo Sheng Nee
Loretta Ann Shepherd
Lorraine Lim Caishan
Low Carmen
Low Kok Chang
Low Yan Ling
Lucas Lim Yoon Fatt
Lucie Nicole Baker
Luqman Nulhakim Rusli
Mabel Loo Lih Chyun
Mafuyu Negishi
Mah Wai Loon
Maimunah Mohd Noor
Maisara Aina Mohamed Asri
Maisarah Izzah Tajaruddin
Maizatun Arrazi
Mak Jun Kiat
Mak See Mun
Malcolm Leon D'Silva
Marcus Tan Yong Aun
Maria Che Makhter
Mariani Ismail
Mark Ng
Marlina Yusoff
Mary Liew Cheng Huan
Mary Soh Chooi Bing
Mazrul Mahadzir
Md Shahri Md Alwi
Megan Lim
Mellissa Robat
Melville Chin Nieh Jia Jeong
Mengran Li
Mervyn Guan Yin Hui
Michael John Hill
Michael Khor Lean Hong
Michelle Chua Khit Yeng
Michelle Fong Wai Cheng
Michelle Yee
Mikkel Bering
Mimi Aminah Azizan
Mohamad Afif Mohd Shahar
Mohamad Farhan Mohamad Sobri
Mohamad Nazrin Ameer Ali
Mohamad Nizam
Mohamed Adam Mohamed Azlan
Mohamed Yusof Mohd Hussain
Mohammad Aslam Che Mat
Mohammad Noor Hakimi Hatimurruddi
Mohammad Ridhwan Md Zan
Mohd Aiman Zulkifly
Mohd Akmal Abd Rahim
Mohd Alif Adenan
Mohd Aminulrashid Ahmad
Mohd Arif Zaini
Mohd Asri Ibrahim
Mohd Dhirar Azwar Mohd Nadzir
Mohd Fairuz Abd Rahman
Mohd Fairul Ilham Che Amran
Mohd Faizal Bakar Ali
Mohd Faizul Ali
Mohd Faizul Azhar Mohd Ariffin
Mohd Farhan Hanif Reduan
Mohd Fauzi Ahmad
Mohd Hafiz Abdul Ghani
Mohd Hairul Nizam Termuger
Mohd Hosni Shamsir Md Nasir
Mohd Huzaai Abd Rahman
Mohd Iskandar Shah Amran
Mohd Izwan Mat Ismail
Mohd Khairul Afq Zulkefli
Mohd Khairul Fizreey
Mohd Khairul Zakirin Mahadi
Mohd Latiff Mohd Yusoff
Mohd Najmi Imran Razak
Mohd Nizam Mohd Sani

Mohd Nordin Abdul Rahim
 Mohd Razali Mohd Isa
 Mohd Razif Shahredza Aspawi
 Mohd Riduwan Mohd Zanin
 Mohd Rizal Umar
 Mohd Rosalin Awang
 Mohd Shah Rizuan Kamaruddin
 Mohd Sharullizam Ramli
 Mohd Sofian Hamid
 Mohd Syafie Effendi
 Mohd Syamim Yusof
 Mohd Zarith Zainal
 Monika Benova
 Muhaiddatul Ismah Ismail
 Muhammad Akmal Noor Ezat
 Muhammad Faiz Ishak
 Muhammad Farhan Abdul Rahman
 Muhammad Hafizuddin
 Muhammad Zulfauli Zulkifli
 Muhammad Adib Bahari
 Muhammad Akmal Mohd Jais
 Muhammad Ali Mustarfa
 Muhammad Arafat Zainudin
 Muhammad Asri Isah
 Muhammad Faris Md Sukri
 Muhammad Fawwaz Haikal Fauzi
 Muhammad Hafiz Wahid
 Muhammad Hairul Hidayat Hamdan
 Muhammad Iqbal Ishak
 Muhammad Jeffry Mat Juri
 Muhammad Najia Jamaludin
 Muhammad Nazreen Chahril
 Muhammad Nazri Mohd Nasir
 Muhammad Saiful Zulkifli
 Muhammad Shahmi Mohamad Nasir
 Muhammad Shazmir Roslan
 Muhammad Syafiq Roslan
 Muhammad TaAyun Amin Manjaya
 Muhammad Ukasyah Mohd Azizan
 Muhammad Yusuf Izzudin
 Muhammad Yusuf Mohd Noordin
 Muhammad Zhafr Johari
 Muhd Nagiuddin Azmi
 Muhd Shanzan Sha Abdullah
 Muhd Zahiddin Ahmad
 Muhd Zharrieg Haizad Zainol
 Munirah Zaini
 Musfirah Mohd Asri
 Nabila Azhar
 Nadia Aulia Arifin
 Nadia Natasha
 Nadiyah Rosli
 Nadzirah Abdul Ghani
 Nai Sheue Fen
 Najat Nasuha Hairul Anuar
 Najmi Naim Zaki
 Najwa Ismail
 Nasir Ahmed
 Natalie Key
 Natasha Ann Culus
 Natasya Ali
 Navinah Ravindaran
 Nazarull Ariffin Mohamad
 Nazri Ahmad
 Neel Chakravarty
 Neoh Beng Hsuen
 Ng Char Ree
 Ng Chun Kit
 Ng Eng Hooi
 Ng Kim Chu
 Ng Kok Meng
 Ng Liang Hao
 Ng Nicole
 Ng Shwu Huey
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 Ng Yi Qin
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 Wah Jo Vie
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 Wan Kamarul Ariffin Wan Ibrahim
 Wan Marzuri Wan Abdullah
 Wan Nor Azlina Wan Muhamad Rashad
 Wan Norwisi Wan Shamsudin
 Wan Nurizan Wan Salleh
 Wan The Noor
 Wanshahdhan Wan Mohd Khirudin
 We Wei Shin
 Wennie Seumin
 Wong Ee Lynn
 Wong Hor Wai
 Wong Kel Yinn
 Wong Kok Nai
 Wong Kok Seng
 Wong Li Teng
 Wong Meng Li
 Wong Pooi San
 Wong Pui May
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 Woon Ning Xian
 Wu Wen Long
 Wuwei Neng
 Xavier Yeoh Ping Chien
 Yang Chien Yu
 Yang Sok Theng
 Yap Han Yang
 Yasmin Suraiya Mohd Yusri
 Yee Jia Yin
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 Yee Woon Sim
 Yen Khang Ling
 Yeo Keat Eu
 Yeo Shu Yuen
 Yeoh Boon Nie
 Yeoh Chooi Keen
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 Yeong Chen Shin
 Yeow Shiau Ling
 Yom Nurul Akma
 Yong Hua Ming
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 Yu Cai Hong
 Yusnita Binti Yusof
 Yusuf Abdali Ebrahim Saleh Aheed
 Zailifah Idris
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Any omissions or errors are completely unintentional.



MYCAT's work would not have been possible without both in-kind and financial support from various individuals, agencies and donors.

We acknowledge the continued support from, and cooperation with, the Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia, as well as the financial support from the following donors between 2003 and 2013:

Grants > RM100,000

Maybank Foundation
Save Our Species
Save the Tiger Fund, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Rhino and Tiger Conservation Fund, US Fish and Wildlife Service

Grants/donations < RM100,000

Alice Smith International School
Association of British Women in Malaysia
Barbara de Waard
21st Century Tiger
Darryl MacKenzie
David Trees and Firdausia Hj. Omar
Dickerson Park Zoo
elc International School
ExxonMobil Malaysia
Garden International School
GEF Small Grants Programme
International School of Kuala Lumpur and

Benchmark
Irene Zambon
James Nichols
Japan Tiger and Elephant Fund
Lejadi Foundation
Lexi Knowles
Loong Kok Foong
Malaysian Government (National Sports Council, Selangor State Government)
Malaysian Nature Society
Muna Noor
Malaysia Building Society Berhad
Malaysian Embassy in Berlin, Germany
Margaret Eileen Hall
Matthew Linkie
Mont' Kiara International School
Michael John Hill
Murayama
Panthera
Panthera and Woodland Park Zoo
Pan Technika

Patricia Zahara Ariffin
Permanis Sandilands Sdn. Bhd. and Hitz.fm
SK Bukit Damansara
SK RKT Bersia
SMK La Salle, Petaling Jaya
St. Patrick's Society of Selangor
TRAFFIC Southeast Asia
Tyra Filiz Couture
Wildlife Conservation Society-Malaysia Programme
Wong Horr Wai
Wong Young Soon
WWF-International Tiger Programme
WWF-Malaysia
Members of the public

The main communication between MYCAT partners takes place in the MYCAT Working Group, which comprises representatives from partner organisations and the MYCAT Secretariat's Office. Acknowledgement is due to Heads of MYCAT partner organisations and Working Group members from 2003 to 2013:

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TRAFFIC Southeast Asia

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The Malaysian Conservation Alliance for Tigers (MYCAT) is an alliance of the Malaysian Nature Society (MNS), TRAFFIC Southeast Asia, Wildlife Conservation Society-Malaysia Programme and WWF-Malaysia, supported by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia, for joint implementation of the National Tiger Conservation Action Plan for Malaysia. MYCAT's goal and objectives focus on saving the Malayan tiger in the wild, ensuring that it will survive into the next century.