

CALL FOR EU ACTION TO END TIGER FARMING AND TRADE



Key facts and figures:

- The global wild tiger population is likely a little higher than 3,200, although scientific population surveys across all tiger range countries are yet to be completed.
- Trade in tiger parts and products for end uses such as tiger skins for luxury home décor or tiger parts for Oriental medicine, is the primary threat to the survival of tigers in the wild.
- Data gathered by WPSI indicates that more tigers have been poached in India over five months (January - May) in 2016 alone than in the whole of 2015. Thirty tigers have been poached already during this period in 2016 as compared to 25 in 2015.
- The trans-Himalayan trade in the parts and products of tigers, leopards and other Asian big cats is serious transnational crime often involving organised criminal networks.
- There are over 7,000 captive tigers in large tiger farms and smaller facilities that keep or breed tigers in China, Thailand, Vietnam and Laos, with the majority of captive tigers in China.
- These facilities are threatening the world's remaining wild tiger populations by stimulating demand for tiger parts and undermining enforcement efforts to end tiger trade.
- In China, EIA investigations have found that skins from captive tigers are being lawfully sold with Government permits and that such trade could provide an avenue for laundering wild specimens.
- In Vietnam, ENV's research has shown that the number of tigers in captivity in private farms has seen a significant increase from 81 captive tigers in 2010 to 180 to date.
- In 2007, in recognition of the risk posed by tiger farming to wild tiger populations, the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) adopted a seminal decision to end tiger farming and trade in captive specimens.
- Countries with tiger farms such as China, Thailand, Vietnam and Laos have failed to implement this decision. Even South Africa has engaged in this lucrative trade and is exporting captive tiger body parts to Asian markets.

What can the EU do?

- URGE countries with tiger farms to shut down such facilities and ensure that captive tigers from the EU (live or parts and products) are not exported to these countries.
- ENSURE the EU biodiversity strategy for Asia will lead to resources for local and national NGOs as well as international NGOs, and that it will take into consideration the fact that in many Asian countries implicated in wildlife trade there are serious concerns about transparency and freedom of speech of civil society.
- SUPPORT the closure of tiger farms and ending trade in captive tiger parts and products at the forthcoming CITES COP17 (Sept - Oct, 2016) and also support the proposal submitted by India on sharing images of seized tiger specimens.
- LAUNCH a co-ordinated well-publicised campaign to raise awareness amongst EU citizens about the concerns related to tiger farming especially when visiting countries implicated in trade in captive parts and products.
- ENSURE that the tiger trade issue is raised during bilateral engagements with key strategic partner countries and regional blocks such as China, Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, India, ASEAN, SAARC and G20.

For more information please contact:

Environmental Investigation Agency, UK (EIA), <https://eia-international.org/>

Education for Nature - Vietnam (ENV), <http://envietnam.org/>

Wildlife Protection Society of India (WPSI), www.wpsi-india.org