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MEDIA RELEASE

21 March 2016

Maybank and WWF-Malaysia launch partnership to conserve tigers in Belum-Temengor

Pulau Banding, 21 March 2016 -The Maybank Foundation today launched a partnership with World Wide Fund for Nature Malaysia (WWF-Malaysia) to support the organisation's ongoing tiger conservation efforts in the Belum-Temengor Forest Complex which started in 2007. The Foundation's committed funding of RM1.2 million for the first year of the four-year project will enable WWF-Malaysia to continue its existing work in the landscape.

Maybank Foundation is the CSR vehicle of the Maybank Group, which seeks to **positively impact communities in markets that Maybank operates**. The Foundation's programs are focused on 6 key pillars which are:

- Education
- Community Empowerment
- Healthy Living
- Arts & Culture
- Environmental Diversity
- Disaster Relief

This collaboration, which is part of the Foundation's Environmental Diversity pillar, will involve a program called "Strengthening Tiger Conservation in the Belum-Temenggor Forest Complex". In this regard, Maybank Foundation, together with WWF-Malaysia, will be developing a long-term program in the area of tiger conservation.

The Belum-Temengor Forest Complex is located in northern Perak and spans about 3,000 km² - an area of about four times the size of Singapore. It has been identified as one of three priority sites for tigers in the country under the National Tiger Conservation Action Plan. Belum-Temengor represents a critical area for tigers as the breeding population of tigers found there is an important source population for the larger Northern Main Range landscape, which, at over 8,000 km², is one of the largest contiguous habitats for tigers in Peninsular Malaysia.

WWF-Malaysia's tiger conservation work on the ground, which includes research of tigers and their prey, engagement with local communities and supporting enforcement agencies such as the Department of Wildlife and National Parks, would not be where it is today without the full support of the Perak State Government and its agencies who are committed to saving the Malayan tiger.



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Chairman of Maybank and Maybank Foundation, Tan Sri Dato' Megat Zaharuddin Megat Mohd Nor said, "The tiger has given us inspiration, for its majesty, its strength and its agility. From these, our stakeholders see our brand attributes of being courageous, genuine, creative, empathetic, and collaborative, giving them confidence that we are there to create value whilst humanising financial services."

"WWF-Malaysia needs to join hands with various parties to conserve our natural heritage. In these challenging economic times, we are pleased that corporate entities like Maybank are playing a crucial role in conservation, together with the support and collaboration of government agencies and managing authorities. We commend the exemplary efforts and vision of the Perak State Government in establishing Royal Belum State Park in 2007 and gazetted a critical ecological corridor as Amanjaya Forest Reserve in 2013; as well as the recent completion of a viaduct for wildlife crossing along this corridor by the Federal Government last September" said WWF-Malaysia Executive Director/CEO Dato' Dr Dionysius Sharma.

"State agencies, such as the Perak State Parks Corporation, Department of Wildlife and National Parks, the Perak Forestry Department as well as the State Economic Planning Unit, are also key partners in this conservation journey" he added.

Tigers are an umbrella species and apex predators, therefore protecting tigers and their forested habitat will result in the protection of entire ecosystems whose services humans rely on. Back in the 1950s, Malaysia was thought to have as many as 3,000 tigers. In 2014, the number of Malayan tigers was estimated to have declined to an estimated 250-340, down from our previous best guess of 500 tigers back in 2003.

WWF-Malaysia has over the years received funding from various sources to support its tiger conservation work, most recently from a Panda Ball charity dinner. WWF-Malaysia's tiger conservation efforts in Belum-Temengor will require a minimum funding of RM7 million over the next 4 years. And so Maybank's initial funding for the first year through this partnership comes at a crucial time when efforts need to be stepped up to stem the decline of our tigers, which are now classified as 'Critically Endangered' under the IUCN Red List.

Several recent cases of tigers being killed have sparked a growing awareness amongst Malaysians on the importance of our tigers and their precariousness in the wild. More people are also becoming increasingly concerned about the sustainability of our natural environment. The public play a vital role in shaping our environmental future, but there is a need to work hand-in-hand with policy-makers, government authorities, and also environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for the sake of our future generations.

The launch ceremony was graced by DYMM Paduka Seri Sultan Perak Darul Ridzuan, Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah, who is also WWF-Malaysia's patron. Other VIPs in attendance included the Chief Minister of Perak Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir Perak, State Exco members, and Federal and State directors from various agencies.

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About WWF-Malaysia



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WWF-Malaysia (World Wide Fund for Nature-Malaysia) was established in Malaysia in 1972. It currently runs more than 90 projects covering a diverse range of environmental conservation and protection work, from saving endangered species such as tigers and turtles, to protecting our highland forests, rivers and seas. The national conservation organization also undertakes environmental education and advocacy work to achieve its conservation goals. Its mission is to stop the degradation of the earth's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the nation's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption. For latest news and media resources, visit http://www.wwf.org.my/media_and_information/media_centre/

About Maybank Foundation

Maybank Foundation exists to positively impact communities in markets that Maybank operates. We care about the communities that sustain our business and we are committed to giving back through long-term partnerships, volunteer efforts and targeted social investments. Our approach goes beyond charitable giving and we want to build sustainable programmes with long-lasting impact. Visit our Maybank Foundation website at: www.maybankfoundation.com

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