



MEDIA RELEASE

29 July 2016

WWF-Malaysia and Maybank Join Hands to Give the Thumbs Up for Malayan Tigers on Global Tiger Day

29 July 2016, Kuala Lumpur: In conjunction with the Global Tiger Day, Maybank Foundation collaborated with World Wide Fund for Nature Malaysia (WWF-Malaysia) to increase awareness for tiger' protection globally through the #ThumbsUpForTigers digital campaign. This was part of an effort to develop a long-term program in the area of tiger conservation. Early this year, the Foundation committed funding of RM1.2 million to support WWF-Malaysia's ongoing tiger conservation efforts in the Belum-Temengor Forest Complex.

"WWF-Malaysia is pleased that a corporation like Maybank is playing an active part in the global movement to save tigers. Malayan tigers have been pushed to the brink of extinction by poaching, habitat loss, forest degradation and fragmentation. They are now classified as a 'Critically Endangered' species under the IUCN Red List. The latest population estimates indicate that there could be as few as 250-340 Malayan tigers remaining. We need to combine our efforts at full force to double the number of tigers in the wild," said Dato' Dr Dionysius S.K. Sharma, Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer.

"Maybank's participation has certainly set an exemplary effort for other organisations to integrate environmental conservation and sustainability into their everyday operations," he added. "A major challenge that we face in saving the Malayan tiger is the lack of funds. Many don't realise that conservation is a costly endeavour, and to be effective it needs to be continuous."

"Maybank's humanising financial services mission means that efforts to address the business and social agendas alone are not adequate and attention must be paid to maintain a well-preserved ecosystem for us to be sustainable. For us, the only way to act is without delay, and we have made protecting the environment, one of the key focus in our corporate responsibility initiatives", said Tan Sri Dato' Megat Zaharuddin Megat Mohd Nor, Chairman Maybank & Maybank Foundation. He further added "Our strong brand association with tiger, have inspired us to champion the tiger conservation efforts in Malaysia."

Approximately 20 countries worldwide participated in the #ThumbsUpForTigers campaign to raise awareness about Tx2 - the global goal to double wild tiger numbers by the year 2022. This Global Tiger Day is particularly important as 2016 marks the half way point of the Tx2 goal.

On the local front, WWF-Malaysia's tiger conservation programme aims that by 2020, Belum-Temengor will harbour 46 adult tigers contributing to an overall viable population of at least 80 tigers within the larger Northern Banjaran Titiwangsa Landscape, the second largest contiguous forest complex in Peninsular Malaysia that encompasses 8,500 km² of contiguous forest (inclusive of Royal Belum State Park, Temengor Forest reserve, Perias, Korbu and Basor forest reserves).

During the event at Menara Maybank, thousands of thumb prints were unveiled by Tan Sri Dato' Megat Zaharuddin Megat Mohd Nor. Spurred on by the overwhelming support shown by Maybank staff and members of the public, he also called on policy-makers, government authorities, and other conservation bodies to work hand-in-hand in shaping our environment for the sake of future generations.

“The loss of several Malayan tigers early this year has sparked a growing awareness amongst Malaysians on the importance of our tigers and their vulnerability in the wild. WWF-Malaysia reiterates the urgency for on-the-ground protection against poachers and wildlife traders/traffickers, particularly within the three priority sites for tigers (Belum-Temengor, Taman Negara and Endau-Rompin Forest Complexes),” Dato' Dr Dionysius further explained.

He added, “A thorough review of the National Tiger Conservation Action Plan and the fast-tracking of the implementation of the Central Forest Spine Master Plan must also be top priorities. In relation to these, we stress the need for an evaluation of current approaches and projects to identify gaps and lessons learnt, in an effort to streamline efforts towards the recovery of tigers.”

WWF-Malaysia's exhibition on tigers at Menara Maybank Kuala Lumpur is opened for the public to visit until 12 August 2016. WWF-Malaysia and Maybank Foundation would like to invite the public to come and learn more about how individuals can support tiger conservation.

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About WWF-Malaysia

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 is the Corporate Responsibility arm of the Maybank Group. It exists to positively impact communities in the markets that Maybank operates. Its mandate is to identify programs that will have the most tangible and sustainable results - efforts that will bring measurable change over the long term. Maybank Foundation invests for impact in six focus areas: Education, Community Empowerment, Healthy Living, Environmental Diversity, Arts & Culture, and Disaster Relief.

Note to the media:

1) All quotes are to be attributed to the designated persons quoted in this media release.