



MEDIA RELEASE

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Snares push Malayan tiger to the brink of extinction

Global Tiger Day 2020 aims to motivate community about tiger conservation over month-long virtual events

29 July 2020 - Rallying behind the urgency to save the critically endangered Malayan tiger, WWF-Malaysia, in partnership with Maybank, launched Global Tiger Day 2020 - a month-long Malayan tiger-themed campaign.

Global Tiger Day in Malaysia kicked off on 29 July 2020 with a 30-minute Facebook Live launch via the StreamYard live streaming platform, with a series of tiger-themed content planned throughout the month, culminating in a virtual concert which will be broadcast on 30 August 2020 in the run up to the Merdeka celebrations.

Malaysia is one of only ten tiger range countries in the world that is home to the tiger. In the 1950s, Malayan tigers numbered an estimated 3,000 but preliminary findings from Malaysia's first National Tiger Survey have found that the numbers have dropped to less than 200. This severe decline is thought to be largely a result of the snaring crisis across Southeast Asia that is decimating wildlife populations in the region.

According to a new WWF report, *Silence of the snares: Southeast Asia's Snaring Crisis*, an estimated 12 million snares are set every year throughout protected areas in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Vietnam, while an average of 53,000 snares were removed annually from 11 protected areas in five Southeast Asian countries, including Malaysia.

Within WWF-Malaysia's priority site of Belum-Temengor, the population of tigers has decreased by about fifty percent in just the past ten years. In mid-2018, with Maybank's partnership support, WWF-Malaysia launched an ambitious initiative called Project Stampede which drastically increased the number of patrol teams comprising people from the local indigenous communities, to carry out patrols, remove snares and collect data on poaching. These efforts have seen a 99% reduction in snares encountered, with 227 active snares deactivated over a total of 22,800 km patrolled on foot over the past four years. The fate of the Malayan tiger hangs in the balance



and it is only through concerted and collective efforts at all levels can the species survive.

“I applaud the collaboration between WWF-Malaysia and Maybank for these continued conservation efforts, which include the protection and monitoring of tigers as well as engagement with local indigenous communities in the Belum-Temengor Forest Complex. Conserving our natural heritage can only be possible if all parties continue to work together towards a common goal”, shared the Patron of WWF-Malaysia, Sultan of Perak, DYMM Paduka Seri Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah.

“This is a race that we should not drop out of even during unprecedented times such as the threat of the Covid-19 pandemic. We must continue the fight to save the Malayan tigers before it is too late,” said Shahril Azuar Jimin, CEO of Maybank Foundation.

“The cause of conserving the tigers cannot be seen as a short term initiative but in fact a meaningful journey of collaborative effort between various like-minded stakeholders. The work that we have done is far from over, we need to continuously place high-impact efforts in order to protect this majestic species and more importantly to ensure the greater ecosystem is not at risk,” he continued.

“The alarming decline of our national symbol is a clear indication that we need to step up where it matters. Global Tiger Day presents an opportunity not only to highlight our mission, but to translate awareness into action as a vehicle of change to raise the status and restore the majesty of our Malayan tiger,” said Ms. Sophia Lim, Executive Director / CEO of WWF-Malaysia.

Global Tiger Day, also known as International Tiger Day, was created in 2010 at the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit in Russia. It is held each year on 29 July, and is an annual celebration to raise awareness for 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 organisation 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/

Note to the media:

- 1) All quotes are to be attributed to the designated persons quoted in this media release.**
- 2) Should you need more information, please see the details below but please note that this person is for contact purposes only and is not the organisation's authorised spokesperson, so we would appreciate it if this name is not printed in the article.**

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