



# SE Asian tigers 'extinct within 15 years'

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Posted 7 hours 17 minutes ago

Updated 6 hours 51 minutes ago

**A top level conference on tiger conservation has begun in Thailand with a warning that the animals could be locally extinct within 15 years.**

Government ministers from 13 countries with native tiger populations are meeting for the first time and say tiger numbers are in crisis.

Earlier this week the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) released a report warning that tigers could be locally extinct in the Greater Mekong region within 12 years.

The report blamed habitat loss and poaching for tiger body parts, which are used in traditional Chinese medicine.

The WWF estimates that combined numbers in Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam have fallen to just 350.

Thailand's environment minister says countries in the region need to move urgently to protect species.

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