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## **UN-led alliance commits to saving dwindling tiger population**



24 November 2010 – Discussions at an international forum in Russia on restoring the global tiger population from the brink of extinction have resulted in a United Nations-led alliance to fight wildlife crime and put an end to the key drivers threatening the wild cats around the world.

The meeting held this week in Saint Petersburg saw the governments of 13 Tiger Range Countries agree to double tiger numbers by 2022 and the heads of five major international agencies discuss collective actions aimed at stopping the poaching, smuggling and illegal trade of tigers.

“Ending wildlife crime against tigers and other endangered species, particularly transnational trafficking, requires a coordinated global response,” said the Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime ([UNODC](#)), Yury Fedotov, who underlined [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon’s “strong support” for the Tiger Forum.

“Thanks to our expertise based on UN standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice, combined with many years of experience helping States to fight crime, UNODC is well positioned to support the Tiger Range Countries,” he added.

In 2009, tiger skins sold for up to \$20,000 and bones retailed for up to \$1,200 per kilogramme with UNODC estimating the total market value at about \$5 million. Over the last century, tiger numbers have plummeted from about 100,000 to less than 3,500 in the wild today, with three sub-species disappearing altogether and the remaining six at risk.

In order to boost tiger conservation efforts, UNODC teamed up with the World Customs Organization (WCO), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), INTERPOL, and the World Bank to establish the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICCWC).

Bringing the expertise of the five international agencies together, the ICCWC will provide specialized services to Tiger Range Countries in a coordinated effort to tackle the increasingly organized and sophisticated nature of wildlife crime.

“We know what is causing the decline in numbers of wild tigers,” said World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick. “But the good news is that tiger populations can recover. We have to protect their habitats and ranges, target illegal trade, and find ways that people can benefit more from live tigers than dead ones.”

Aided by the ICCWC, the 13 Tiger Range Countries will implement the Global Tiger Recovery Programme which will target poaching, the illegal trade of tigers and habitat conservation, as well as create incentives for local people to protect the big cats.

“ICCWC sends a very clear message that a new era of wildlife law enforcement is upon us,” said CITES Secretary-General John Scanlon. “Poaching and illegal trade have brought tigers close to the point of no return. Only if we work together, can we ensure that tigers will survive.”

Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand and Viet Nam are the 13 Tiger Range Countries that have committed towards implementing the Global Tiger Recovery Programme.

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