

PROTECTING WILDLIFE FOR A HEALTHY PLANET

PROGRESS REPORT



As you will read in this report, with your help, WWF is making progress in restoring critically important species populations, fighting wildlife crime, and empowering communities to protect nature. In the last year, we celebrated numerous successes for some of Earth's most beloved species. We played an integral role in efforts to shut down ivory trade, including China's commitment to closing its legal ivory market. And we celebrated a promise by a critical tiger landscape country, Kazakhstan, to bring tigers back to their historical range.

This success is because of your enduring commitment to conserving wildlife and wild places around the world. Together, we are tackling the most urgent threats to endangered and threatened species, ensuring their survival for future generations and beyond.



ENDING WILDLIFE CRIME

Often controlled by dangerous crime syndicates, wildlife is trafficked much like drugs or weapons. Wildlife criminals can operate with impunity in areas suffering from a lack of adequate resources, making the trade a low-risk, high-profit business. With you, alongside a groundswell of support from people around the world, WWF is leading the global campaign to stop this vicious crime. Thank you for making the following remarkable achievements possible.

China begins to close domestic ivory markets and Hong Kong bans ivory trade beginning in 2021.

The Chinese government began shutting down its legal ivory market and committed to closing all shops and manufacturers by the end of 2017. This ban has enormous potential to impact ivory trade dynamics globally, and WWF is working together with TRAFFIC to support the Chinese government in ensuring the ban is effectively enforced. We are scaling up a global initiative to use the Chinese ban as a catalyst to secure more ivory market closures in Asia, including Hong Kong, which announced a complete ban on its domestic ivory trade by 2021, and Thailand.

Working with companies to stop illegal wildlife

trafficking online. WWF and TRAFFIC are coordinating with major e-commerce and social media companies to address the online trade of illegal wildlife products. At eBay, Etsy, and Google, 22 people were trained this spring to spot elephant, marine turtle, and pangolin products across the platforms. These flaggers sent in a total of 776 advertisements, with an average flag accuracy of 96 percent. The companies are now looking at rolling this program out with their own teams. Also this year, the predominant e-commerce companies Alibaba, Tencent, and Baidu announced a Chinese coalition in partnership with WWF and TRAFFIC to remove illegal wildlife products from their websites.

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RESTORING CRITICAL WILDLIFE POPULATIONS

WWF fights to restore critical wildlife populations and protect the life that inspires us with its beauty, power, and resilience. We use the best science available to rebuild struggling populations and ensure others are strong and thriving. With your support, we are seeing tremendous success.

ELEPHANTS

While some elephant populations are currently stable and growing, poaching, human-elephant conflict, and habitat destruction are contributing to overall declines of both African and Asian elephants. With your help, WWF works to conserve elephants on both continents. WWF took immediate action to stem an uptick of elephant poaching in Myanmar, fueling a burgeoning market for elephant skin. With support from more than 1,200 individuals, WWF organized antipoaching units in cooperation with our partners and Myanmar's government. The trainees for the units, called mahouts, are now armed with the skills needed to patrol Myanmar's forests for both human-elephant conflict and poaching.

TIGERS

Six years ago, WWF and our partners joined forces in a promise to double the number of wild tigers—from a low of 3,200 animals—by 2022. We are now halfway through the Tx2 timeline—and tiger populations are increasing, for the first time in a century. Over the past year, we celebrated numerous successes. In September, the Republic of Kazakhstan announced plans to bring tigers back to their historical range in the Ili-Balkhash region and signed a memorandum with WWF to implement a joint tiger reintroduction plan. And tiger population surveys are revealing progress in key tiger regions. Notably, camera traps supported by WWF captured the first high-resolution images of wild tigers in Bhutan above 11,000 feet in elevation.



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RHINOS

As few as 29,000 rhinos live in the wild, drastically down from the 500,000 that once roamed Africa and Asia in the beginning of the 20th century. With your support, we are achieving tangible success in rhino conservation and populations are on the rebound. WWF supports the recovery of rhinos by securing and protecting priority populations, and establishing new populations through translocations where secure habitat is available. In India's Manas National Park, WWF is working with the government to create breeding populations of greater one-horned rhinos. And in September, we celebrated the birth of a baby rhino in the park.

POLAR BEARS

Due to climate warming and the resulting decline in Arctic sea ice, polar bears now must swim farther and walk along coastal lands in search of food, away from their prey and closer to people. To protect both humans and bears, WWF is working with local communities to arm people with knowledge and basic deterrence equipment—and we have launched self-governed polar bear safety patrols with local villages. The Kingikmiut Nannuq Patrol began operating regular patrols in 2017 and responding to emergency polar bear situations between December and May. They now boast a trained staff of five active members who are able to respond to polar bear approaches within village limits and can “haze” bears away from the area using non-lethal methods.

VAQUITA

The smallest of the world's porpoises is the world's rarest marine mammal. Scientists estimate fewer than 30 vaquitas are left, placing this elegant creature among our planet's most critically endangered species. Following an urgent request by WWF and 200,000 of our supporters, the Mexican government fulfilled a commitment to permanently ban gillnets in the Upper Gulf of California that threaten the existence of the vaquita. Its drastic population loss—there are half as many vaquita today as there were just last year—is due to human activity, specifically the use of fishing nets that catch and accidentally drown the porpoise.

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WITH THANKS

Thanks to your commitment, we are gaining ground for our world's most threatened species. Together, we are protecting flagship species like elephants, tigers, rhinos, polar bears, and the vaquita. And, we're conserving critical landscapes for the species and communities that depend on them, shutting down illegal wildlife trade markets, and advancing climate change resilience. These achievements send a message to the world that conservation not only works, but has the power to change the course of history for wildlife and the extraordinary places they inhabit.

**Thank you for making
this work possible.**



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