

# TIGERS ON THE REBOUND?



The world's tiger population has plunged in the last century. Today, fewer than 4,500 survive in the wild. But in India there are signs of a turnaround.

India is now home to 2,226 tigers in the wild. That's up from the 1,706 counted in the country's 2010 tiger census.

"While the tiger population is falling in the world, it is rising in India," says India's Minister for Environment and Forests, announcing the results of the 2014 tiger census. "We have increased by 30 percent from the last count. That is a huge success story."

India does a wild-tiger count every four years. The 2014 census was conducted using nearly 10,000 cameras placed throughout India's wildlife reserves and other tiger

habitats. Computer software sorted through the images to identify each tiger by its unique pattern of stripes. Nearly 80 percent of all the tigers counted were identified this way.

"The information is as accurate as you can get," says Belinda Wright of the Wildlife Protection Society of India. "So it's very good news for the tigers."

Even so, the tiger remains one of the world's most endangered animals. At the start of the 20th century, an estimated 100,000 tigers lived in the wild, and their natural habitat extended through much of Asia. About 93 percent of their habitat has been lost, mostly to human development.

Another major threat to the tiger's survival is poaching (illegal hunting). Tiger tails, bones, eyes,

and other body parts are still prized in China, where they are used in traditional medicines.

India is a leading participant in an international effort known as Tx2—a program that aims to double the worldwide number of tigers in the wild by the year 2022.

India takes that goal seriously. The government has set aside more than 40 tiger reserves—areas that are protected from poachers and development.

"It is heartening that India's tiger numbers are increasing," the environment minister says. "This was not the situation a decade ago, and I am proud that we have risen to the challenge and turned the situation around."

Now home to 70 percent of the world's wild tigers, India plans to share its wealth: It will donate tiger cubs to other countries to help them boost their wild-tiger populations.

**40,000**

The number of tigers in the wild in India in 1947

SOURCE: *The Telegraph*

## Tigers on the Rebound?

1. Which sentence from the text best summarizes the central idea of the text?

- a. "The world's tiger population has plunged in the last century."
- b. "While the tiger population is falling in the world, it is rising in India."
- c. "About 93 percent of their habitat has been lost, mostly to human development."
- d. "The government has set aside more than 40 tiger reserves..."

2. Which sentence from the text best supports the central idea of the text?

- a. "Another major threat to the tiger's survival is poaching (illegal hunting)."
- b. "India does a wild-tiger count every four years."
- c. "Even so, the tiger remains one of the world's most endangered animals."
- d. "India is a leading participant in an international effort known as Tx2—a program that aims to double the worldwide number of tigers in the wild by the year 2022."

3. First, read the dictionary definition. Then, complete the task.

(v.) 3. to descend or dip suddenly

**Underline the word that most closely matches the definition provided.**

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"While the tiger population is falling in the world, it is rising in India," says India's Minister for Environment and Forests..."

4. Read the sentence from the text.

"It is heartening that India's tiger numbers are increasing," the environment minister says.

**Which statement best describes what the phrase "It is heartening..." adds to the meaning of the text?**

- a. It explains that tigers have hearts.
- b. It suggests that the tiger reserves have improved the problem.
- c. It establishes that people are feeling encouraged.
- d. It reinforces the idea that this is a severe problem.