

PRESS RELEASE

Cambodian youth pledged their support for Tiger conservation

July 29, 2022 — Two Cambodian Youth joined the International Tiger Youth Summit, organized by WWF-India & WWF-Tigers on July 28, 2022, and pledged their participation in tiger and wildlife conservation in Cambodia's natural forest habitats.

Ms Sapor Long, 19-year-old, a Cambodian youth delegate who attended the Summit, expressed that it is truly important for youth in Cambodia and the world to join hands in raising their voices for tigers and pledge their support for conserving the species for the benefit of nature and human wellbeing. "Without waiting any longer, we need to mobilize more participation from young people in Cambodia to support the tiger conservation efforts by the Royal Government, WWF and other partners," she said.

The Summit, conducted virtually this time, is organized every 12 years during the Lunar Year of the Tiger and brought together young people from 13 tiger range countries, Cambodia included, and beyond, to highlight the importance of securing forest habitats and prey for tiger conservation.

Another Cambodian Youth Delegate from the International Summit, **Mr. Fayanin Man** said that tigers may have been gone from Cambodia's natural forests, but the species still holds great significance to him spiritually and ecologically. "I have heard stories that tigers were once roaming the natural forests around us, and I have faith that with the right actions, Cambodia can see tigers in the wild once again in the future. My generation hopes to facilitate this effort," he said.

The role of youth in wildlife conservation is increasingly important in Cambodia and globally, particularly with the environmental challenges the world is facing today.

"I congratulate the participation of the Cambodian youth in the International Tiger Youth Summit where they send their message together with other young people from the tiger range countries, calling on governments and relevant stakeholders to recommit to the big cat conservation," said **Mr. Seng Teak**, WWF-Cambodia Country Director. "Engaging youth in environmental education and help them build relationships with nature are important to ensure a more sustainable future," he added.

The voices of the youth delegates need to be heard by decision makers in tiger range countries to ensure we create a future with wild tigers as part of a conservation legacy for future generations," said Mr. **Stuart Chapman**, Leader of WWF Tigers Alive Initiative.

In Cambodia, the last Tiger was photographed by camera trap in 2007 in Srepok Wildlife Sanctuary of Mondulkiri province. In 2016, wildlife scientists declared the big cat is functionally extinct in the Kingdom.

Tiger reintroduction in Cambodia remains a long-term conservation goal for the Government, WWF and partners. The effort will involve recovering tiger's prey base and creating favorable conditions for a reintroduction of the 'big cat' in the future. The forests in the Eastern Plains remain a globally irreplaceable conservation landscape for realizing the reintroduction ambition.

"Wildlife deserves to be protected just like humans. We, young people, have to join hands to protect them, be their voice before they go globally extinct. I wish to see tiger come back to Cambodia, thus I would be proud to tell my kids, I am taking a small part in this great effort," said **Ms Sapor**.

This year's Youth Summit declaration saw young leaders call on governments and businesses in tiger range countries to finally put words into action, in a bid to secure a future for the iconic big cat. The summit culminated in the presentation of the "2022 Youth Declaration for Tiger Conservation" to the Global Tiger Forum - the inter-governmental body for tiger conservation coordinating the Global Tiger Recovery Program planning for 2023-2034.

— ENDS —

For more information please contact

Sophearith Ravy | WWF-Cambodia | Sophearith.ravy@wwf.org.kh | Tel: 85570409276

Jenny Roberts | WWF | jroberts@wwf-tigers.org

Link to register for the virtual event [here](#).

Photos available for third party use [here](#).

Spokespeople available upon request.

About WWF

WWF is an independent conservation organisation, with over 30 million supporters and a global network active in over 100 countries. WWF's 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 world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption. Visit www.panda.org/news for the latest news and media resources and follow us on Twitter [@WWF_media](https://twitter.com/WWF_media).

About the Global Tiger Recovery Initiative

The Global Tiger Initiative (GTI) was launched in 2008 as a global alliance of governments, international organisations, civil society, the conservation and scientific communities and the private sector, with the aim of working together to save wild tigers from extinction. It seeks to empower tiger range countries to address the entire spectrum of threats, domestic as well as those that are transboundary in nature, and work toward increased financial sustainability through the integration of conservation objectives into development.

Why tigers matter

As the world's largest cat and an apex predator, tigers play a significant role in the structure and function of the ecosystem on which both humans and wildlife rely. They are a "landscape" species, needing large areas with diverse habitats, free from human disturbance and rich in prey. Success or failure means more than securing the future of a single iconic species – it sets a precedent for how we will consider and prioritise the health of nature in global development and in a changing climate going forward. For more information see: tigers.panda.org