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ANNUAL REPORT



Indochinese tiger, Thailand. ©Freeland

WildCats Conservation Alliance is a wild tiger and Amur leopard conservation initiative between Dreamworld Wildlife Foundation (charity ABN#61150274463) and Zoological Society of London (UK charity # 208728).

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ABOUT US

WildCats Conservation Alliance is a joint initiative of the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and Dreamworld Wildlife Foundation (DWF), bringing together public and zoo support for the protection of wild tigers and Amur leopards. We currently support conservation projects across China, Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand and Russia.

To date, WildCats has channelled over **£4.8 million into 104 projects** tackling key threats through habitat restoration, population monitoring, human–wildlife conflict mitigation, anti-poaching efforts and disease management.

All funding proposals are rigorously assessed by independent, internationally recognised conservation experts, ensuring that only projects with strong scientific foundations and practical conservation value are supported, delivering real impact for tigers and Amur leopards.

Operating from ZSL's headquarters at London Zoo in Regent's Park, London, our core costs are covered by an annual grant from DWF, with additional infrastructure and management support provided by ZSL. This means **100% of every donation goes directly to conservation** work in the field.

Our aims

Reducing key threats

To reduce the key threats to tigers and Amur leopards by addressing illegal wildlife trade, increasing the area that is protected by antipoaching activities, enabling community coexistence and mitigating conflict helping to create safe and secure habitats.

Informing conservation actions

To deepen the understanding of the population ecology of wild tigers and Amur leopards through population monitoring, wildlife health monitoring and other relevant research to inform conservation actions.

Building capacity

To create and sustain a cadre of experienced and knowledgeable in country tiger and leopard conservationists through a variety of capacity development approaches.

Inspiring key stakeholders

To Inspire key stakeholders to act for wild tiger and Amur leopard conservation through education and outreach efforts to encourage collaboration and participation in conservation.

Our vision

Tigers and Amur leopards are safe and thriving in the wild.

Thong Pha Phum National Park in Western Forest Complex (WEFCOM), Thailand. ©Freeland

Our mission

To save wild tigers and Amur leopards for future generations by raising awareness of their status and funding carefully chosen conservation projects.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, WildCats Conservation Alliance continued its mission to safeguard wild tigers and Amur leopards, supporting six projects across China, Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand and Russia with a total investment of £201,965. These projects targeted the most pressing threats facing these big cats, from poaching and human-wildlife conflict to habitat degradation and loss of prey.

Conservation in Action

- **China:** Expanded community patrols to six villages, destroying 142 snares and delivering education campaigns that improved attitudes towards coexistence.
- **Indonesia:** Increased tiger encounter rates in Kerinci Seblat National Park, maintained historically low snaring levels, and secured arrests of poachers. In Bengkulu, community engagement, SMART patrols and religious leadership helped reduce poaching and promote coexistence.
- **Thailand:** Recorded a new male tiger, expanded anti-poaching patrols, and strengthened ranger capacity in Khao Laem National Park while engaging 1,200 students through outreach.
- **Nepal:** Restored and managed 22 hectares of tiger habitat, constructed new waterholes to reduce seasonal water scarcity, and ran coexistence workshops reaching more than 600 students.

Engagement and Fundraising

Support for wild cats grew stronger than ever in 2024:

- Digital outreach reached **80,000 website visitors (+30%)** and achieved strong growth across Instagram **(+205%)** and Facebook **(+174%)**.
- A Global Tiger Day campaign included a free Early Years Foundation Stage Tiger Activity Pack, accessible digitally, to inspire young families to engage with conservation.
- Zoos continued to play a crucial role, providing **84% of donor support**, with contributions from more than **50 zoos worldwide**.
- Corporate and trust partners provided vital funding, including Selatan Giftware, Bennetts Coffee, Wild Sumatra, Emma Abel Mosaics, the James Gibson Charitable Trust, and the Big Give.





PROJECTS FUNDED

Between January and December, WildCats supported six projects across five countries, providing a total of £201,965 in funding (see pages 4-8).

These projects address key themes including threat reduction, human-wildlife coexistence, population monitoring, and education and outreach in China, Indonesia, Nepal, Thailand, and Russia. Projects were selected through a single-stage application process and underwent independent peer review.



China



Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) China are working closely with the Hunchun Nature Reserve (HNR), part of the Northeast China Tiger and Leopard National Park (NCTLNP). They are reducing threats to Amur leopards and tigers and improving coexistence between wildlife and people by encouraging community participation in conservation actions.

Key activities and outcomes for this project are:

- In 2024, Hongqihe village was selected as the next site for a new community patrol team, bringing the total to six village teams.

- After an evaluation, a final team of six people were selected consisting of 5 men, and one woman.
- Villagers recruited from Hongqihe were trained in:
 - GPS field practice
 - Filling out patrol record forms
 - Identifying wildlife footprints
- The six community teams destroyed 142 snares during the year.
 - The majority were old snares, suggesting patrols are discouraging new snare placements
- Education campaigns reached 300 community members, covered:

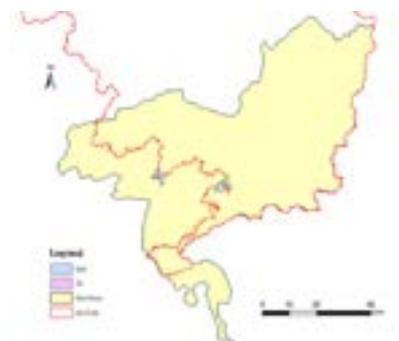
- The importance of coexistence with tigers and leopards
- How to reduce and respond to human-tiger conflicts
- Pre-and post-surveys showed increased positive attitudes toward conservation
- More than 4,000 people were reached during Global Tiger Day activities



Uniforms, supplies and equipment delivered to the community rangers ©WCS



Patrol inspection in Hongqihe village ©WCS



Location of the villages of Lihua (purple) and Hongqihe (blue) within Hunchun Administrative Region. The border of Northeast China Tiger and Leopard National Park is in red. ©WCS

Indonesia



TPCU PERSONNEL ON THE WAY TO SMART FOREST PATROL

Fauna & Flora (F&F, formally Fauna & Flora International) work in collaboration with the Kerinci Seblat National Park (KSNP) authority to support a sustained, natural increase in Sumatran tiger populations.

Key activities and outcomes for this project are:

- The Tiger Protection & Conservation Unit (TPCU) conducted 70 patrols.
- Patrol teams recorded an increased frequency of tiger encounters from one tiger per 21.7km walked in 2023, compared to one tiger per 18.5 km in 2024.
- TPCU rangers received camera trap training, and five camera traps were placed in the national park.
- The direct threat to Sumatran tigers from snaring was historically low with no active snares found.

- Seven formal written cautions were issued to 13 men for clearing national park and park-edge forests.
- Despite no active snares detected one tiger poacher and his broker were arrested in Jambi by officers from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry’s law enforcement division after they poached a tiger in a forest on the outskirts of the national park. One of the arrested men was already known to the TPCU investigators.
- Six human-tiger conflict incidents were managed and mitigated by local human-wildlife conflict mitigation task force teams through:
 - Village counselling and training
 - Setting traps in two cases to capture and relocate the tigers involved



Map showing the core area of Kerinci Seblat National Park ©F&F



Chainsaws confiscated from those illegally clearing national park land. ©F&F/KSNP



Trap being set to capture and relocate a tiger. ©F&F/KSNP



Male tiger recorded by camera trap placed by the forest patrol team. ©F&F/KSNP

Indonesia cont'd

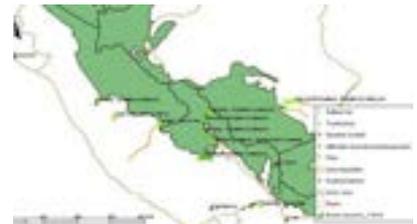


Lingkar Inisiatif Indonesia is working to secure a conservation area in Bengkulu, south of Kerinci Seblat National Park.

Key activities and outcomes for this project are:

- Lingkar and the Indonesian Ulema Council of North Bengkulu conducted seven socialisation sessions on MUI FATWA No. 04/104:
 - They reached 345 community members across seven additional villages
 - Surveys showed an increased knowledge about wildlife protection
- SMART patrols were conducted over 69 days:
 - 392 km patrol coverage across North Bengkulu, Lebong, and North Musi Rawas
 - Evidence found 28 poaching activities
 - Deer snares dismantled
 - A poachers camp destroyed
 - 32 cases of illegal forest area use reported
 - Two cases of illegal logging reported

- Mentoring of hunters was conducted in North Bengkulu and Lebong regencies:
 - Four senior hunters were identified
 - Two hunters pledged to stop illegal hunting activities
- In July, Lingkar collaborated with stakeholders to commemorate World Tiger Day through various activities:
 - School of Conservation
 - Conservation Camp
 - Talk show on the theme 'Living Harmony'
 - Public Speaking Competition for elementary school children
 - Film screening of 'The Last Snare'
- The rapid response team responded to two human-tiger conflict situations:
 - One tiger was successfully chased away
 - In the second incident, a tiger killed a villager resulting in three traps being set to capture and the authorities to relocate the animal.



Patrol Route Map ©Lingkar Inisiatif



Socialisation event to village leaders ©Lingkar Inisiatif



Patrol member discovers a snare in a poachers camp ©Lingkar Inisiatif

Thailand



In the heart of Thailand's Khao Laem National Park (KLNP), Freeland is conducting an ambitious project to secure Thailand's Indochinese tiger population.

Key activities and outcomes for this project are:

- Four systematic long-term monitoring (LTM) surveys were conducted:
 - Covering 24 grids (216 km²)
 - In the east, a new male tiger was recorded and catalogued as M7
 - Tigers were recorded on three routes across five grids
 - A total of 63 tiger images were captured of three individuals

- 30 mammal species were documented, including six tiger prey species
- Detection of sambar deer and gaur was below predicted targets; something to watch
- 355 anti-poaching patrols were conducted by nine patrol teams:
 - Spanning 1,927 patrol days
 - Covering 22,368 km
 - Significant threats from poachers and dogs were still recorded despite increased patrol effort
- Three training initiatives were delivered to 57 rangers covering:

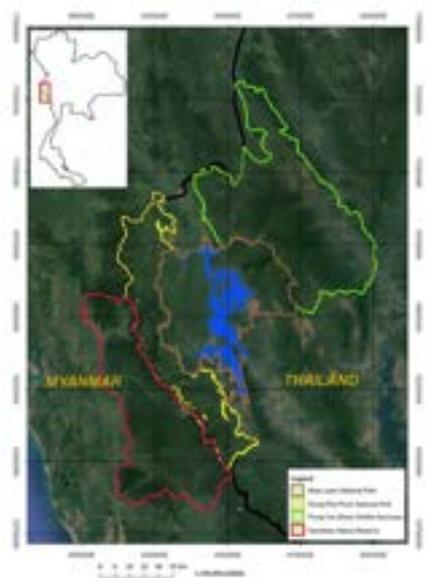
- Use of survey equipment, and SMART* data collection
- GSM** camera refresher
- Rapid response anti-poaching operations
- Outreach activities were conducted in 11 schools around Khao Laem reaching 1,226 students

**SMART Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool*

*** Global System Mobile Communications*



Outreach in Khao Laem in 2024 ©Freeland/DNP



Western WEFCOM four protected areas ©Freeland/DNP

Nepal



CAMERA TRAP OF BENGAL TIGER IN ENHANCED GRASSLAND

This project in Parsa National Park (PNP) is improving tiger habitat and collaboration among stakeholders.

Key activities and outcomes for this project are:

- An additional 12.5 hectares of grassland were managed to enhance ecological health.
- A total of 9.5 hectares of grassland were managed at Rambhori.
- To assess the impact of the interventions, 10 camera traps were set up.
- Four camera traps were installed covering three hectares in Sahajnath.
- Additional camera traps were installed in adjacent unmanaged locations to compare wildlife abundance and behaviour.
 - These provided insights into species distribution and activity patterns, strengthening park authorities' capacity for conservation planning
- Seasonal water scarcity was addressed by constructing a new waterhole, capturing underground water flowing through Kalidaha.
- To sustain this site there will be:
 - Regular site inspections
 - Seasonal maintenance
 - Longer term stakeholder engagement
- A tiger conservation awareness program was conducted in six government schools located in high-conflict areas. It reached 430 participants to discuss biodiversity, human-tiger coexistence, and safety.
- 218 university students participated in workshops on:
 - Waterhole strategies
 - Tiger conservation
 - Habitat management
 - Conflict mitigation



Staff conducting grassland surveys, the results of which are published in a paper: 'Assessment of habitat management intervention in PNP' ©ZSL/DNPWC



School awareness activity ©ZSL/DNPWC

Professional Development Award

Anna Klevtcova

In 2023, to commemorate the 2022 Year of the Tiger, WildCats Conservation Alliance launched its Professional Development Award. The first awardee Anna Klevtcova was studying for a PhD in Interdisciplinary Ecology at the University of Florida. Over the following two years with support from WildCats, Anna developed an approach to tiger conservation in Russia from the 'social side' of the issues and is applying this awareness and knowledge towards building more comprehensive conservation research. Anna has provided blogs and regular updates throughout her term, which can be seen on the WildCats website.

- With support from WildCats, Anna has made substantial progress in both her Ph.D. coursework and the development of her research project on Amur tiger-human coexistence in the Russian Far East (RFE).
- She completed two field seasons in the RFE (2023 and 2024), where she explored the study area, conducted a comprehensive literature review, held informal interviews, and refined her research approach. This work led to a robust and well-structured research framework.
- Anna has co-authored several drafts of scientific papers with her Ph.D. advisor, which are being prepared for submission to peer-reviewed journals.
- Since 2023, Anna has also developed an extensive database of tiger-related news from local media sources. This includes:
 - Tiger sightings and their locations
 - Reports of poaching
 - Livestock compensation data
 - Public concerns and fears
 - Government responses



Tiger day activities ©AnnaK



Tiger paw prints on the beach ©AnnaK

IMPACT

2024

£201,965 was granted to **6 projects** in **5 countries** protecting over **22,595km²** of vital wild tiger and Amur leopard habitats.

The combined projects, supported by Wildcats Conservation Alliance protect:

5%

of the global **wild tiger** population.

64%

of the **Amur leopard** population.

OBJECTIVES

INFORMING CONSERVATION

Only with long-term monitoring can we determine whether conservation actions are having a positive impact. Monitoring methods include setting camera traps and tracking secondary indicators such as pugmarks, territorial scratches and faeces.

REDUCING THREATS

Reducing the key threats to tigers and Amur leopards by addressing illegal wildlife trade, increasing the area that is protected by antipoaching activities, enabling community coexistence and mitigating conflict helping to create safe and secure habitats.

BUILDING CAPACITY

Creating and sustaining a cadre of experienced and knowledgeable in-country tiger and leopard conservationists through a variety of capacity development approaches.

INSPIRING

Inspiring key stakeholders to act for wild tiger and Amur leopard conservation through education and outreach efforts to encourage collaboration and participation in conservation.



391 camera traps were deployed, collecting data over a combined total of **27,516** days, capturing images of **64 tigers** and **30 Amur leopards**.

179–223 wild tigers are now estimated in Thailand, a 21% increase since 2022, making it the first Southeast Asian country to report a rise in tiger numbers.



355 tigers were recorded in Nepal in 2022 – nearly triple the number in 2009. WildCats has helped support this recovery by funding ZSL's work in Nepal since 2015.



130 wild Amur leopards are now estimated to exist in Russia alone. In Land of the Leopard National Park, where WildCats supports conservation, the highest Amur leopard densities ever seen in the country were recorded in 2024.



320 national park rangers received training supported by WildCats in 2024, enhancing their skills and preparedness to meet the challenges they face in the field.



>15,000 km² of habitat was patrolled by WildCats-funded rangers in 2024 who spent an impressive **85,030 hours** in the field.



346 occurrences of illegal activities were recorded within the protected areas supported by WildCats in 2024. A small decrease on 2023.



90 local community members took part in wildlife conflict mitigation activities in areas where potential or actual human-tiger conflict occurred.



4,440 students were reached in 2024 through direct and indirect communication.



74,575 instances of engagement with adults and children living alongside big cats have been delivered by project teams since 2018.



IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS



WildCats Conservation Alliance is a funding initiative of Dreamworld Wildlife Foundation (Charity ABN #61150274463) and the Zoological Society of London (charity #208728)



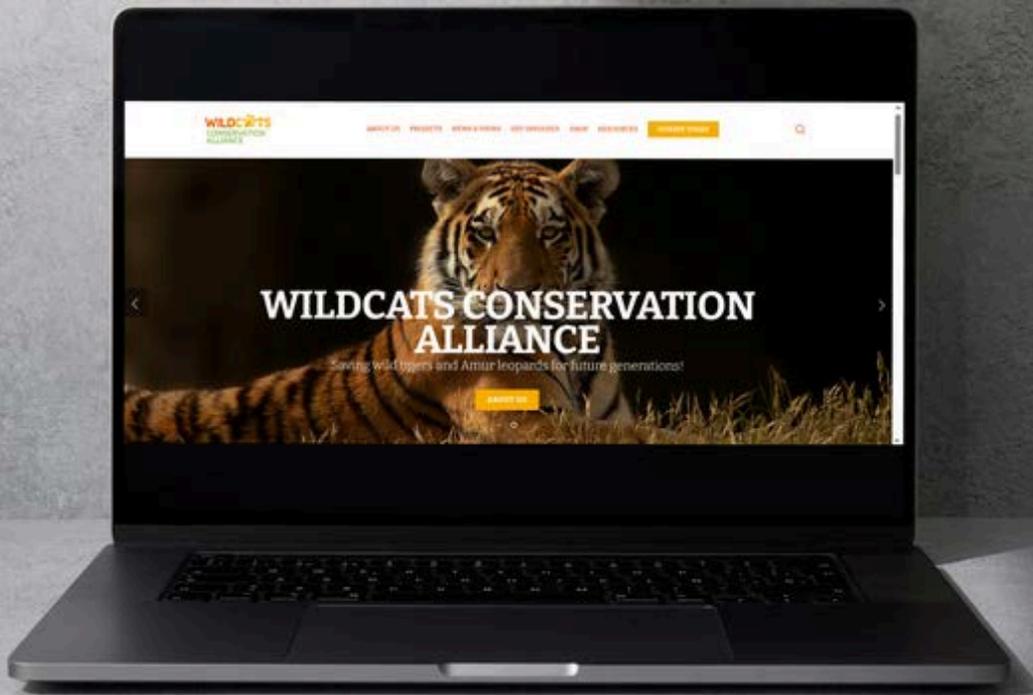
PROJECT VISITS

While the WildCats team maintains regular online contact with all project partners, visiting field sites is essential. Seeing conservation in action not only strengthens relationships with local teams but also allows us to gather powerful stories, images, and film that bring our supporters closer to the work their donations make possible. These visits also provide valuable opportunities to witness progress first-hand and ensure that the projects we fund are delivering meaningful conservation outcomes.

In 2024, we visited the Freeland project in Thailand's Khao Laem National Park (KLNP), a vital tiger stronghold within the Western Forest Complex. Working alongside colleagues from Freeland, ZSL, and Thailand's Department of National Parks, we joined patrols, school sessions, and community meetings, and visited ranger stations, camera trap sites, and remote forest areas.

The content gathered shines a light on conservation supported by WildCats since 2016. From anti-poaching patrols and tiger monitoring to education in high-risk poaching areas and work with communities facing human-wildlife conflict.





COMMS & FUNDRAISING

Digital and face-to-face engagement are central to WildCats' mission, working hand in hand to raise awareness, inspire action, and build support. Our digital channels connect us with global audiences in real time, driving education, advocacy, and fundraising. At the same time, in-person engagement through events, conferences, and partnerships helps to strengthen relationships, build trust, and secure lasting commitment. Together, these approaches are vital for achieving meaningful conservation impact.

Events

Staying connected with peers across the industry keeps WildCats informed on emerging issues and best practices. Over the year, the team engaged in monthly wildlife trade meetings, participated in the Conservation Optimism Summit hosted by the University of Oxford, and attended science-based conferences at ZSL.

WildCats Conservation Alliance were invited to attend the launch of the film *'The Poacher'* in London's West End. An Indian Malayalam-language crime drama mini-series created by Richie Mehta. The team had the opportunity to talk to guests about the illegal wildlife trade in tigers and Amur leopards.

WildCats was invited to attend a charity golf event by CBRE alongside ZSL's Counter Trafficking Specialist. Together, we showcased the vital work of rangers and their role in tackling the illegal wildlife trade. As a result of the event, WildCats received £2,000 to support ranger enforcement training in Thailand.



WildCats engagement at events



WildCats table at the CBRE charity fundraising event

Digital outreach

WildCats has a combined digital following of roughly **24,000** people. Through digital channels, WildCats continues to share conservation impact, build awareness, and connect with supporters worldwide.

In 2024:

- Email newsletter - We welcomed **165** new subscribers through our website, maintaining strong open rates of **40%**. Videos proved especially effective in boosting engagement.
- Website - Our site attracted **80,000** users, a **30%** increase from 2023. The Amur Leopard Facts page remained our most visited content, helping establish WildCats as a knowledge leader.
- YouTube - With **7,400** views (up **15%**) and nearly **100** hours of watch time, our growing video library continues to raise awareness.
- Social media - Reach grew significantly on both Instagram (**+205%**) and Facebook (**+174%**), supported by zoo partnerships, Global Tiger Day campaigns, and paid promotion during the Big Give on Meta.
- Podcast - Two new episodes were released, adding to our evergreen library that continues to attract listeners long after its launch in 2023.



Website users

80K



Combined digital following

24K



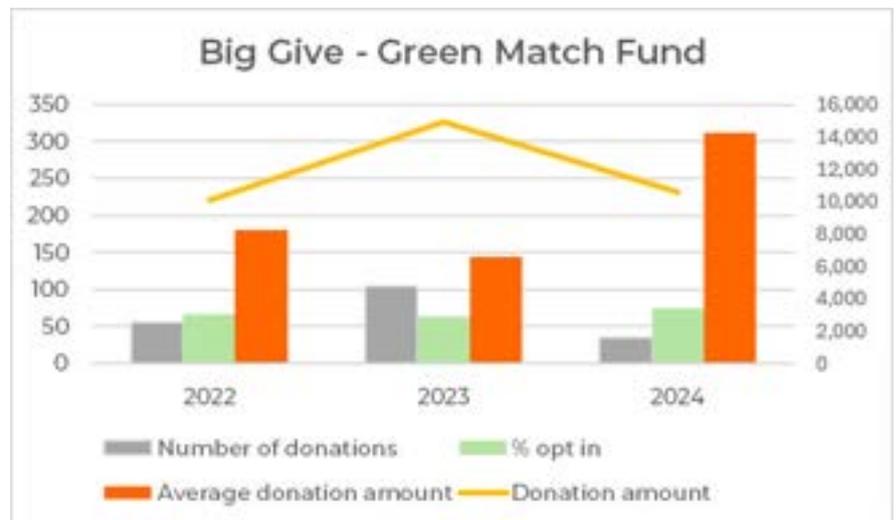
video views

7.5K



Fundraising campaign - The Big Give

Date: 18th-25th April 2024
Total online donations: £10,583
Total amount raised: £20,583
Gift aid: £130
Grand total: £20,713
Net total: £20,422.08
Number of donations: 34



In 2023, we were given the opportunity by The Big Give to increase the match amount from £10,000 to £15,000. In 2024, the amount was reduced back down to £10,000. Despite this, we saw an increase in the average donation amount and the percentage of donors who opted to hear more from us.

Of those who donated, 74% opted into our marketing preferences so we were able to send them a personalised thank you and add them to our email audience via a welcome journey.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income

Wildcats received £267,245 in 2024 which is 6.8% above the annual target £250,000.

Targets were set conservatively due to the ongoing global cost-of-living crisis, so we are pleased to remain on stable footing.

Zoo contributions

Zoos donated £220,945 in 2024, 10.4% above target.

The income from zoos is the lifeblood of WildCats Conservation Alliance. This is made possible by the generosity of the visitors, guests and the staff who inspire them. 50 zoos from across three continents contributed £220,945 to our funds during 2024, making up 84% of WildCats income.

Income	Total
Zoos	£220,945
Corporate	£9,181
Other	£37,119
Total	£267,245

Top ten zoos
Walter Zoo
Wilhelma Zoo and Botanical Garden
Odense Zoo
West Midlands Safari Park
Auckland Zoo
Dreamworld Wildlife Foundation
Emerald Park
Wroclaw Zoo
Greenville Zoo
Blackpool Zoo
Hertfordshire Zoo & Big Cat Sanctuary
Joint 10th



©Amur leopard © WCS / ANO

Expenditure

Grant funding

Between January and December, WildCats funded six projects in five countries to the value of £201,965.

Organisation	Project	Location	Grant
Freeland	Khao Laem Tiger Conservation Project	Thailand	£21,000
Fauna & Flora	Kerinci Seblat Tiger Protection Project	Indonesia	£34,000
Lingkar Inisiatif Indonesia	Tiger Protection in Bengkulu*	Indonesia	£31,560
Wildlife Conservation Society	Community based conservation	China	£31,500
Wildlife Conservation Society	Protecting Amur leopards & tigers	Russia	£63,000
Zoological Society of London	Promoting human tiger coexistence	Nepal	£20,905
Total			£201,965

*Also funded directly through Auckland Zoo

DWF operational grant expenditure

The Dreamworld Wildlife Foundation Grant for Operational Costs has been instrumental in enabling the WildCats Conservation Alliance to make significant contributions to wildlife conservation efforts.

The grant represents outstanding value and yields a substantial return on investment.

January - December 2024	Expenditure
Grant Management	
2 part-time salaries plus on-costs	£78,911
Equipment, Merchandise and Supplies	
Marketing & merchandise	£1,268
Travel	
BIAZA Annual Conference - fee travel, accom. x2	£1,145
EAZA Conservation Conference - as above x1	£1,072
AZA Felid TAG meeting (Grand Rapids) x1	£2,150
Field visit x1	£2,469
Administration	
Minor expenses, bank charges, webhosting	£1,169
Administration cost to ZSL	£3,000
Subtotal GBP	£91,184

Grant leverage for field programmes in 2024



THE TEAM



Monica Wrobel

Lead for Strategic Programming in Conservation & Policy at ZSL and line manager for WildCats. She has over 25 years' experience in endangered species recovery projects and natural resource management projects, working with innovative project leaders and empowering local communities in land-use decisions and mitigating human-wildlife conflict.



Esther Conway

An effective manager, efficient administrator and trusted, external-facing networker, Esther builds on her global relationships with donors and field teams alike to shape responsive support strategies with expert practitioners. She is responsible for donor outreach, day-to-day running, including staff management and finance, and liaising with technical experts. Esther works 30 hours a week.



Amy van Gelder

Communications Specialist for WildCats Conservation Alliance. Amy is responsible for communicating field-work in a relatable way to WildCats stakeholders. Amy manages video content creation, social media channels, email communications, podcast creation, digital fundraising campaigns, blog writing, reporting and upkeep of the WildCats website. In 2024 Amy worked 30 hours a week.

SPECIAL THANKS

- Dreamworld Wildlife Foundation and its team for funding the WildCats operations, allowing it to continue to spend 100% of the contributions received on wild tiger and Amur leopard projects.
- Monique Counihan, owner of Seletan, for being a true tiger champion
- Tim Butler for running for tigers
- Tal Chohan for his amazing big cat photos
- Monica Wrobel for her guidance and support

The following individual donors over £100

Paula Addicott, Ludwik Allerhand, Francesca Balboni, J Blunden, Rosemary Blunden, Otto Brunner, Dr Carol Burgess, Tim Butler, Dr Paolo Cav, Ms Mary Clements, L J De Zilva, Danielle Faucett, Robert Fish, Darren Hambacker, Steven Kandrac, Linn Largerstram, Bruno Muller, Tyler Obrien, David Prynne, C E Robinson, Ms Janie Runkle, Leila Salimi, Michael Vickers, Hannah Webb, Mick Wood.

Pro-bono support

Chris Budden for the continued maintenance of the bespoke online database built for 21st Century Tiger record keeping in 2007, which is still used on a daily basis.

Scientific advisors

Dr M Firoz Ahmed, Jo Cook, Dr Anthony Dancer, Yoan Dinata, Dr Alex Godfrey, Dr Thomas Gray, Doug Hendrie, Dr Dan Horton, Dr Lena Jeha, Dr Dale Miquelle, Dr Prakash Paudel, Dr Nathan Roberts, Dr Tiana Strike, Dr Nasir Uddin, Dr Divya Vasudev, Dr Gao Yufang, Dr Hariyo T. Wibisono, Dr Peter Zahler.

Zoo Associations

AZA (Association of Zoos and Aquariums), BIAZA (British and Irish Zoo Association), EAZA (European Association of Zoos and Aquaria), ZAA (Zoo and Aquarium Association Australasia) and WAZA (World Association of Zoos and Aquariums).



Clearing areas for vital grasslands in Parsa National Park, Nepal ©ZSL



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