

New Concessions for Tigers



The challenge so far

For WVI to assist in radio collaring and gather veterinary data from tigers living in a landscape of national parks, villages, and concessions for oil, gas, forestry and oil palm as part of a wider partnership project. Data will assist the Dangku Tiger Conservation Partnership (of which the Zoological Society of London is a partner) to manage the mixed use landscape to ensure that economic activities can continue - but not at the expense of the Sumatran tiger.

The objective today

To conduct safe immobilisation, collaring and release of tigers in the field site in Sumatra, and in the process provide hands-on training to field staff including provincial vets. In addition, field staff will be trained to collect biometric and health data, and collect & store samples suitable for disease investigations and genetic analysis.

The solution we found

WVI big cat expert John Lewis has been invited by Zoological Society of London to join the field staff on their first tiger trapping season. John Lewis has had experience of working in Sumatra trapping conflict tigers before and in 2012 taught on the Tiger Conflict Veterinary Workshop organised by ZSL and Taman Safari Indonesia

Project partners Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and Taman Safari Indonesia (TSI) have invited WVI big cat anaesthesia expert John Lewis to train project staff in using box traps – deployed by the appropriate wildlife authorities in the area to safely immobilise the tiger before correctly fitting a GPS collar and taking vital biometric and health data. This data includes sex, length, weight, size of paws, temperature, heart rate etc. Any ectoparasites (ticks etc) will be collected, a faecal sample retained to identify intestinal parasites, and blood and hair samples taken.

Samples must be stored correctly so the maximum amount of information can be obtained, including which infectious agents (especially viruses) the tiger has been exposed to and which ones it may be carrying. This information will be compared to data collected from conflict tigers to identify if disease could be a cause of changes in the tigers' behaviour and if there are any threats to the tiger from disease. In the longer term, it will be possible to compare such information with data from tigers in different habitats to determine whether habitat type determines disease exposure patterns.

Study area is South Sumatra, a mixed landscape of a large National Park and several small protected areas. Forested areas in between are made up of concessions for palm oil, forestry, oil and gas. Through camera trapping it is known that tigers and other wildlife are using these areas.

WVI big cat specialist, John Lewis has worked with the Indonesian Department of Forestry (PHKA) and ZSL over the years to assist with training vets and field staff in safe immobilisation of conflict tigers, sample taking and storage protocols and disease management.

This new and exciting phase of tiger conservation in Sumatra is wholly inclusive of all stakeholders in the area and will add an important piece to the jigsaw of tiger ecology. To ensure our vet provide as much help as they can, please [DONATE NOW](#). WVI would like to thank the following funders for their generosity in supporting this projects:

- [Chessington World of Adventures](#)
- [Etihad Airways](#)
- [Friends of Paradise Wildlife Park](#)
- [Global Biofuels Trading Inc](#)
- [Virbac UK](#)
- [Wildlife Heritage Foundation](#)
- [Zoological Society of London](#)

For more information, visit the links
below.

[Dangku Tiger Conservation Partnership](#)

[Sitting in wait for a tiger...](#)

[Report on April 2013 trip](#)

[Summary of April 2013 trip](#)