



# **‘India can’t handle more big cats’**

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## **As habitats shrink, the country is nearing its capacity to manage its tigers: experts**

- While conservation efforts are aimed at increasing the tiger count in India, global experts and officials in the government suggest that India must also prepare for a new challenge — of reaching the limits of its management capacity.
- Officially, India had 2,226 tigers as of 2014.
- An ongoing census is expected to reveal an update to these numbers. Moreover 25-35% of India’s tigers now lived outside protected reserves.
- With dwindling core forests as well as the shrinking of tiger corridors (strips of land that allow tigers to move unfettered across diverse habitat), officials said there were several challenges — alongside the traditional challenges of poaching and man-animal conflict — to India’s success at tiger conservation.
- Barring China, all other tiger-range countries — Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Russia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, India and Nepal — were part of the conference in New Delhi, organised by the National Tiger Conservation Authority.
- Since 2006, the World Life Institute of India(WII) has been tasked with coordinating the tiger estimation exercise. The once-in-four-years exercise calculated, in 2006, that India had only 1,411 tigers. This rose to 1,706 in 2010 and 2,226 in 2014 on the back of improved conservation measures and new estimation methods.

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