



TRAFFIC

November 2025

BEYOND SKIN AND BONES:

*A 25-YEAR ANALYSIS OF TIGER
SEIZURES FROM 2000 TO JUNE 2025*

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TRAFFIC REPORT

ABOUT US

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TIGERS TRAFFICKED JANUARY 2000 — JUNE 2025

OVERVIEW OF 25 YEARS



3,808

tigers were confiscated in **2551 seizures** between Jan 2000 and June 2025



83%

of all **tigers seized** were in Tiger Range Countries (TRCs)



77%

of **seizure incidents** took place in TRCs and 23% in non-TRCs

THE PAST FIVE YEARS

573

tigers were confiscated in **765 seizures** between Jan 2020 and June 2025

68%

of tigers seized took place in TRCs, and **32% in non-TRCs**

2023

saw the **highest seizures** in the 2020-2025 period, and second highest over 25 years

COUNTRIES



IN



ID

were the top countries by **seizure incidents** over 25 years



CN



IN



TH

were the top countries by **tigers seized** over 25 years



ID



Viet Nam showed a sharp rise in trafficking incidents in the last five years, with **11% of seizures (55)** and **19% of confiscated tigers (102)**



India confiscated nearly as many tigers in the first half of 2025 (**23 tigers**) as it did during all of 2024 (**25 tigers**)

WHOLE ANIMALS SURGE



Globally, seizures involving whole tigers (dead/alive) rose from 10% of seizures in the 2000s to 40% from 2020 onwards



Among TRCs, Viet Nam, Russia, Thailand and Indonesia lead the trend in most whole tiger seizures in 2020-2025



More seizures have featured claws and teeth since 2020

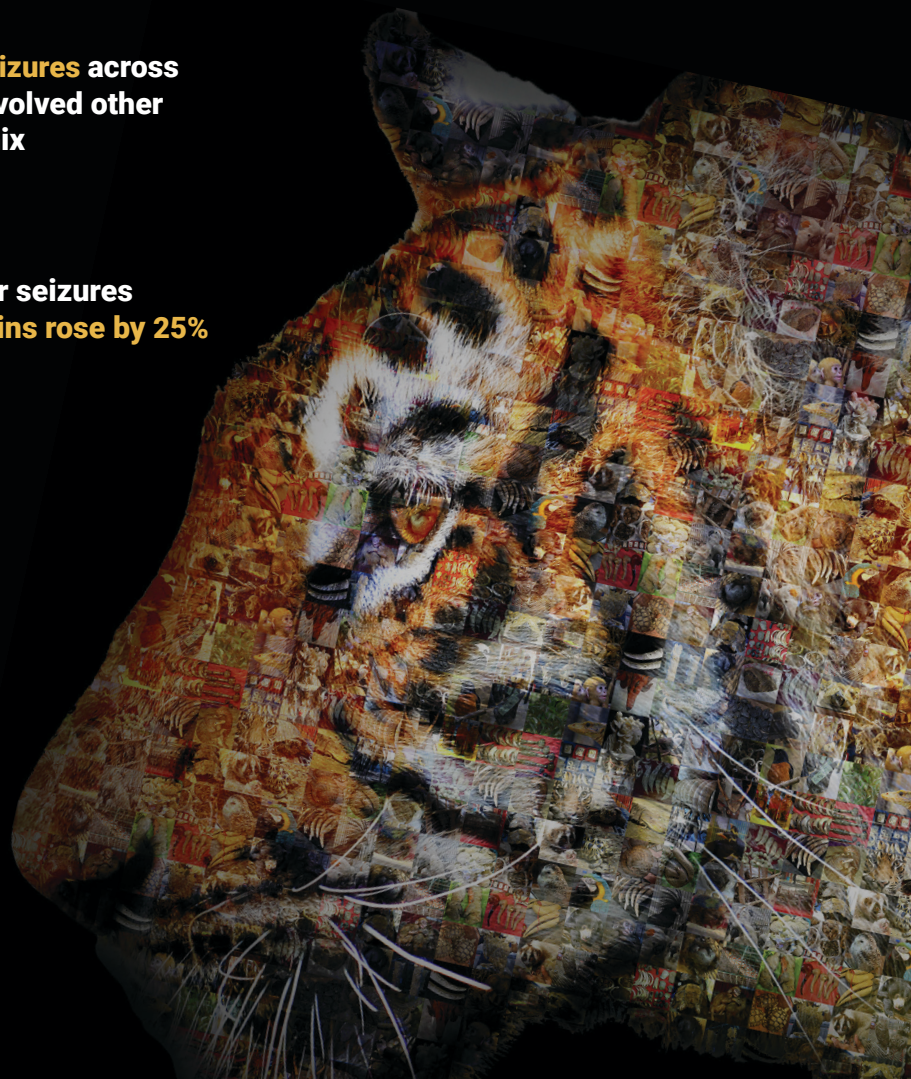
MULTI-SPECIES TRAFFICKING

20%

a fifth of tiger seizures across 25 years also involved other species in the mix



since 2020, tiger seizures linked to pangolins rose by 25%





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the sixth iteration of TRAFFIC's authoritative monitoring of the trafficking and illegal trade in tigers (*Panthera tigris*), featuring over a quarter of a century of seizure data from January 2000 to June 2025.

This analysis focuses primarily on the Asian region and particularly on the 13 recognised Tiger Range Countries (TRCs) where urgent and effective conservation action for tigers is needed. Data from other countries is also included opportunistically to provide context on the broader picture of the illegal trade of tigers. Throughout the report, we show long-term trends across the full 25.5-year dataset, with each section spotlighting post-2020 insights to capture contemporary trends for tiger trafficking that highlight current and pressing issues in the past 5.5 years ending June 2025. For simplicity, this may often be referred to 25 and 5 years, referring to the two time periods.

The statistics in this report are based on seizure information available to TRAFFIC from both open and confidential sources, and may therefore be incomplete or differ in the calculation scope and methodology from other analyses. Because tiger trafficking is covert, many incidents go undetected. Seizure data offers a useful – though imperfect – indicator of trafficking levels and law-enforcement response. Its interpretation is influenced by factors such as actual crime rates, reporting practices, agency coverage, and law-enforcement priorities and performance, all of which can introduce bias. A rise in seizures in one country does not necessarily signal increased trafficking or superior enforcement compared to others; rather, it reflects the volume of recorded illegality in that place at that moment in time. Throughout this report, when we say seizures, confiscations or cases, this refers to seizure incidents and not the number/volume of tigers seized/confiscated.



TIGER SEIZURES

2025 marks the 50th anniversary of tigers being listed under Appendix I of CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Wild Fauna and Flora) which forbids the international commercial trade in tigers, their parts and derivatives that are taken from the wild. Despite this being enshrined in most national legislations, tiger trafficking remains rampant today – across the 25-year assessment, 2023 recorded the second-highest number of seizures (139), of which a majority (105 incidents) occurred within Tiger Range Countries. Between January 2000 and June 2025, at least 2,551 seizure incidents were recorded globally, representing a minimum of 3,808 individual tigers. This is a conservative estimate based on the volume and variety of tiger parts confiscated, as detailed in the Methodology section.

Historically and in the current analysis India, China, Indonesia and Viet Nam have been the top countries by number of tiger seizures and – with the addition of Thailand – the highest number of tigers confiscated. Altogether, these four countries accounted for almost 77% of seizures and the number of tigers confiscated within TRCs since 2000.

In the most recent period between 2020 and June 2025, India – with the world's largest wild tiger population – remains at the forefront, reporting almost half of total seizures (230) and 37% (190) of tigers confiscated within TRCs. India has already confiscated nearly as many tigers in the first half of 2025 (23) as it did during all of 2024 (25), suggesting a significant increase by year's end. This is followed by Indonesia, recording 16% of both seizures (77) and tigers confiscated (90). Noteworthy was the surge in trafficking incidents in Viet Nam during the recent five years, accounting for 11% of seizures (55), and 19% of tigers confiscated across TRCs (102).

Although the surge in tiger seizures is a result of effective law enforcement action, a persistently high and increasing trend reinforces concerns about unabated trafficking taking place across the region. While tigers confiscated in Viet Nam are likely to be from captive sources, tigers confiscated in India and Indonesia are most likely poached from wild populations, further threatening survival in the wild of this already imperilled species. Whether tigers are illegally sourced from wild or captive sources, urgent and decisive action is needed across TRCs - to stop the poaching and trafficking from source sites and across the trafficking chain, alongside tackling the demand in consumer countries.

TIGER PARTS SEIZED

Globally, data show a marked increase in the confiscation of whole tigers. In the early 2000s, tiger parts accounted for over 90% of seizures, but by 2022 this share had fallen to around 60%, where the remaining 40% involved whole tigers, either dead or alive. For instance, in Viet Nam, more than 56% of tiger seizures over the 25.5 years involved whole animals.

Notably, in the most recent period between 2020-June 2025, four TRCs stood out with a high percentage of seizures involving whole animals: Viet Nam (57%), Russia (55%), Thailand (43%) and Indonesia (41%). Together, these countries alone accounted for 63% of seizures in TRCs in the last five years that involved whole tigers (dead and alive).

Although tiger skins and bones continue to be featured in seizures, from around 2020, tiger claws and teeth – used in fashion and as amulets – have particularly increased in frequency.

Different geographies exhibit differing patterns of consumption:

- Mexico and the USA show trends toward live tigers
- Europe trends towards parts for traditional medicines with tiger derivatives
- Asian countries report most seizures featuring tiger skins, bones, claws and whole dead animals not yet taken apart.

LOCATIONS

Tiger seizure incidents occurred in over 1,600 localities across the world, 77% of which were in TRCs. Despite these sizable numbers, the distribution of seizure incidents was more narrowed down to a limited set of recurring hotspots showcasing the highest density of reported trafficking incidents:

- Tiger Reserves in India and Bangladesh
- Forests of Gunung Leuser National Park in Aceh province of Indonesia
- The consumption markets of Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City, and Nghe An province of Viet Nam bordering with Bolikhamxay province of Lao PDR.

Analysis of trafficking routes reveals considerably shorter route points between 2020-June 2025, compared to 2000-2019. Whether this stems from shorter distances between supply and demand locations, better law enforcement closer to the source of supply, or a clearer and articulated transportation network between supply and demand centres is unknown. This requires further investigation.

TRAFFICKING PATTERNS WITH OTHER SPECIES

From a demand perspective, tiger products carry a specific symbolism that is also associated with other species. While most seizures involved only tigers, nearly 20% included other trafficked species as well. The species most commonly found alongside tigers were leopards, elephants (ivory), bears, ungulates, and pangolins (scales) between 16%–34% of incidents where multiple species were seized. From 2020 onwards, a noticeable increase has been observed in tigers being trafficked with parts of pangolins (+5 percentage points, a 25% increase) and ungulates (+7 percentage points, a 20% increase).



A cub rescued from illegal online trade in Nonthaburi Province, Thailand in April 2022 in an operation by Thai authorities and the Wildlife Justice Commission

RECOMMENDATIONS

This analysis shows the continued pressures on wild tigers for illegal trade. The fight against poaching and illegal tiger trade requires a multifaceted approach. Decades of recommendations, by governments, NGOs, conservation practitioners and other experts, including in TRAFFIC's previous Skin and Bones analyses, remain crucial and valid. We reiterate the following actions:

ELEVATE IMPACT-DRIVEN ENFORCEMENT AND PROSECUTION

Disrupting the operations of organised criminal networks across the illegal trade chain remains essential. This requires prioritised and well-resourced multi-agency efforts — including training and upskilling agencies — to conduct in-depth and sustained intelligence-led investigations, particularly at known hotspots. Crucially, investigations should not end at the point of seizure, as is often the case. The only way to dismantle criminal networks is to identify and investigate everyone involved along the trafficking chain. The frequency of cross-border trafficking underscores the need for strong international cooperation, which benefits all affected countries. Effective prosecution and consistent conviction outcomes — along with a strong and robust legislation — can significantly enhance deterrence, with robust financial and custodial penalties reducing the profitability and appeal of poaching and trafficking. This report does not assess legislation, but a separate [study](#) has been conducted for TRCs, which forms a crucial part of enforcement and prosecution responses and outcomes. Although this analysis does not include a market assessment, some seizures have involved market activity. Markets selling tiger parts and products have long been documented across all TRCs, both in physical locations and online, with some operating more openly than others. These markets must be shut down.

CONTROL FACILITIES HOLDING AND BREEDING CAPTIVE TIGERS

Data from the most recent period show an increase in trafficked whole tigers, many indicating captive origin from countries without a viable wild tiger population. This long-standing problem requires meaningful action. Facilities must be subject to robust laws, regulations, and enforcement aligned with CITES Resolution Conf. 12.5 (Rev. CoP19), associated Decisions, and recommendations from the 77th and 78th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee ([SC78 Doc.43.1](#) Illegal trade and enforcement on Asian big cats and [SC78 Doc 43.2](#) on Asian Big cats in Captivity) and the latest [CITES CoP 20 Doc 77.2](#). It is imperative that the CITES Secretariat and relevant governments establish and closely monitor control mechanisms of facilities keeping or breeding captive tigers to verify the legality of their operations. Among others, this includes: provisions to review management systems; registration, monitoring, audits and [inspection](#); limiting [breeding](#) within facilities only to a level supporting wild tiger conservation; and proper disposal protocols (see proposed [General Guidance for the Inspection of Captive Tiger Facilities](#)). Where violations have occurred, strong actions should be mandated on such facilities, including the closure of facilities found breeding for trade, as prohibited by [CITES Decision 14.69](#).

FORENSICS PROFILING AND DATA MANAGEMENT

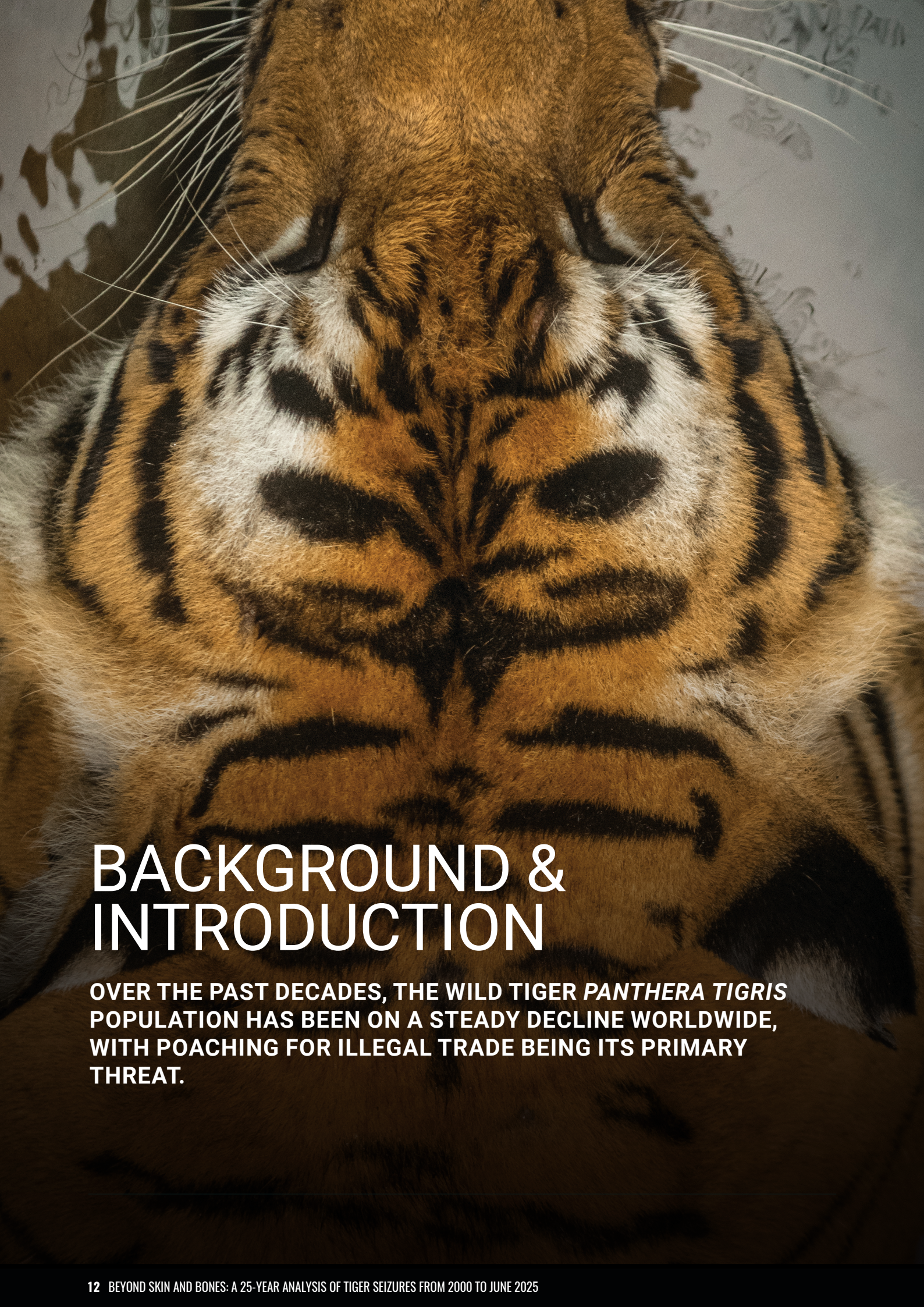
Forensics and data management are critical to enforcement, prosecution, and the regulation of captive facilities. DNA profiling of confiscated specimens should be routinely conducted, alongside other identification methods such as photographic documentation of stripe patterns and tiger parts. This approach must also apply to tigers in captive facilities. Cross-border information sharing is essential to disrupt international trafficking networks. Recent analysis shows a shift toward more frequent seizures of whole live or dead specimens. Sharing images of skins can help trace provenance via stripe patterns, improving understanding of trafficking routes and criminal networks and enabling governments to prioritise targeted enforcement actions.

REDUCE DEMAND

Targeted [actions](#) to reduce demand for illegal tiger parts and derivatives can have a lasting impact to address the tiger poaching and trafficking crisis. Efforts to deter consumers and traders from buying and selling illegal products must be carefully undertaken, including through targeted behaviour change interventions and campaigns that are evidence-driven and country-specific. It is critical to ensure, however, that exploitation is not simply redirected to other species.

DATA SHARING & COLLABORATION

Transparency of law-enforcement actions is crucial to allow the development of effective evidence and data-driven policy decisions concerning tiger conservation. Governments should leverage quantitative data disclosure to foster greater inter-governmental collaboration and civil society engagement. The international nature of this crime requires more effective information sharing between countries, for example, by replicating the regional [TWIX](#) (Trafficking in Wildlife Information Exchange) data management networks that exist in Europe and Africa. Such a system in Asia and particularly among range states, could transform enforcement action and impact.



BACKGROUND & INTRODUCTION

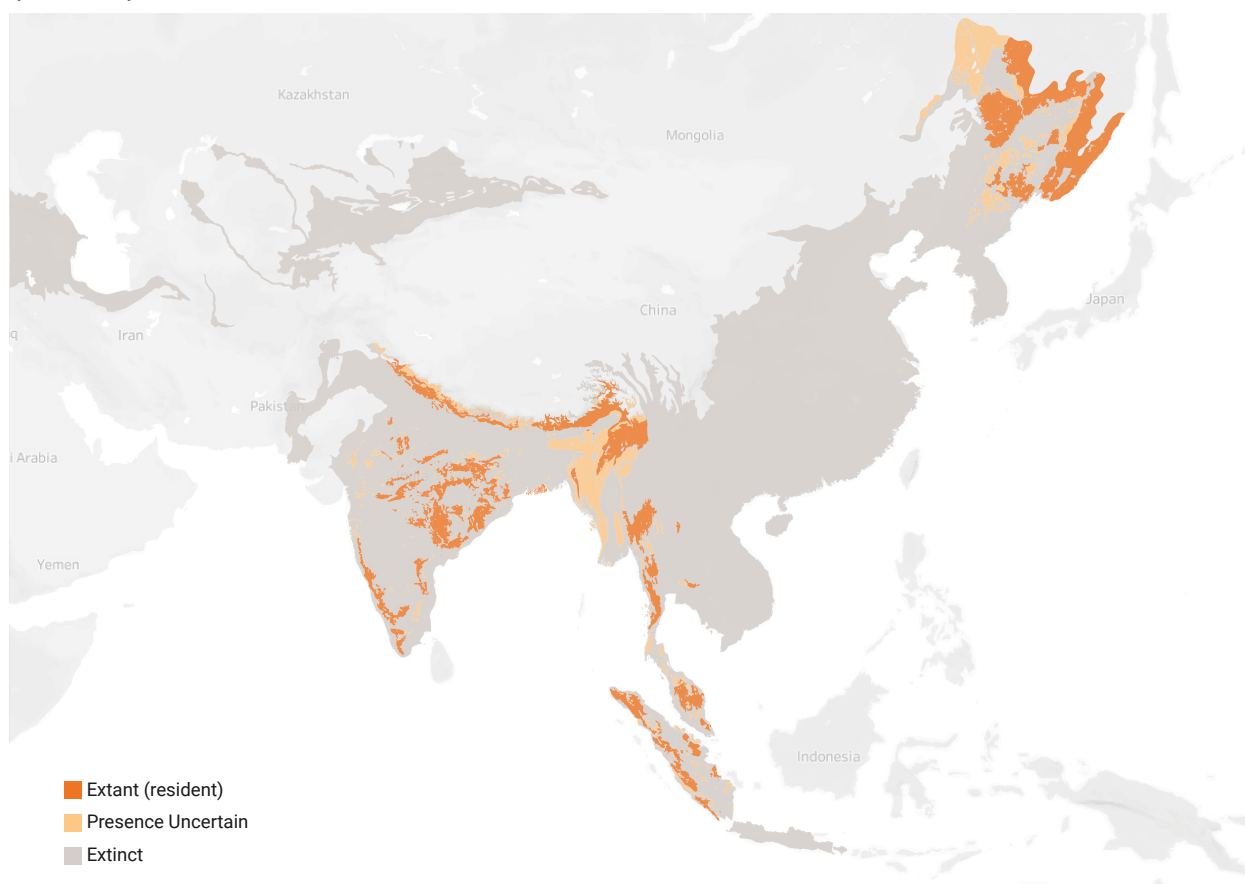
OVER THE PAST DECADES, THE WILD TIGER *PANTHERA TIGRIS* POPULATION HAS BEEN ON A STEADY DECLINE WORLDWIDE, WITH POACHING FOR ILLEGAL TRADE BEING ITS PRIMARY THREAT.

The global tiger population has fluctuated in the past decade, with current estimations putting it between 3,700 - 5,500 individuals. Globally, 13 countries are recognised as Tiger Range Countries (TRCs), though only 10 have breeding wild populations: Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, and Thailand. Wild tigers occurred in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam, but no known breeding populations currently exist¹. All 13 countries are considered TRCs in this analysis.

100,000
tigers once
lived in the wild
Now surviving in under
6% of their range

MAP 1

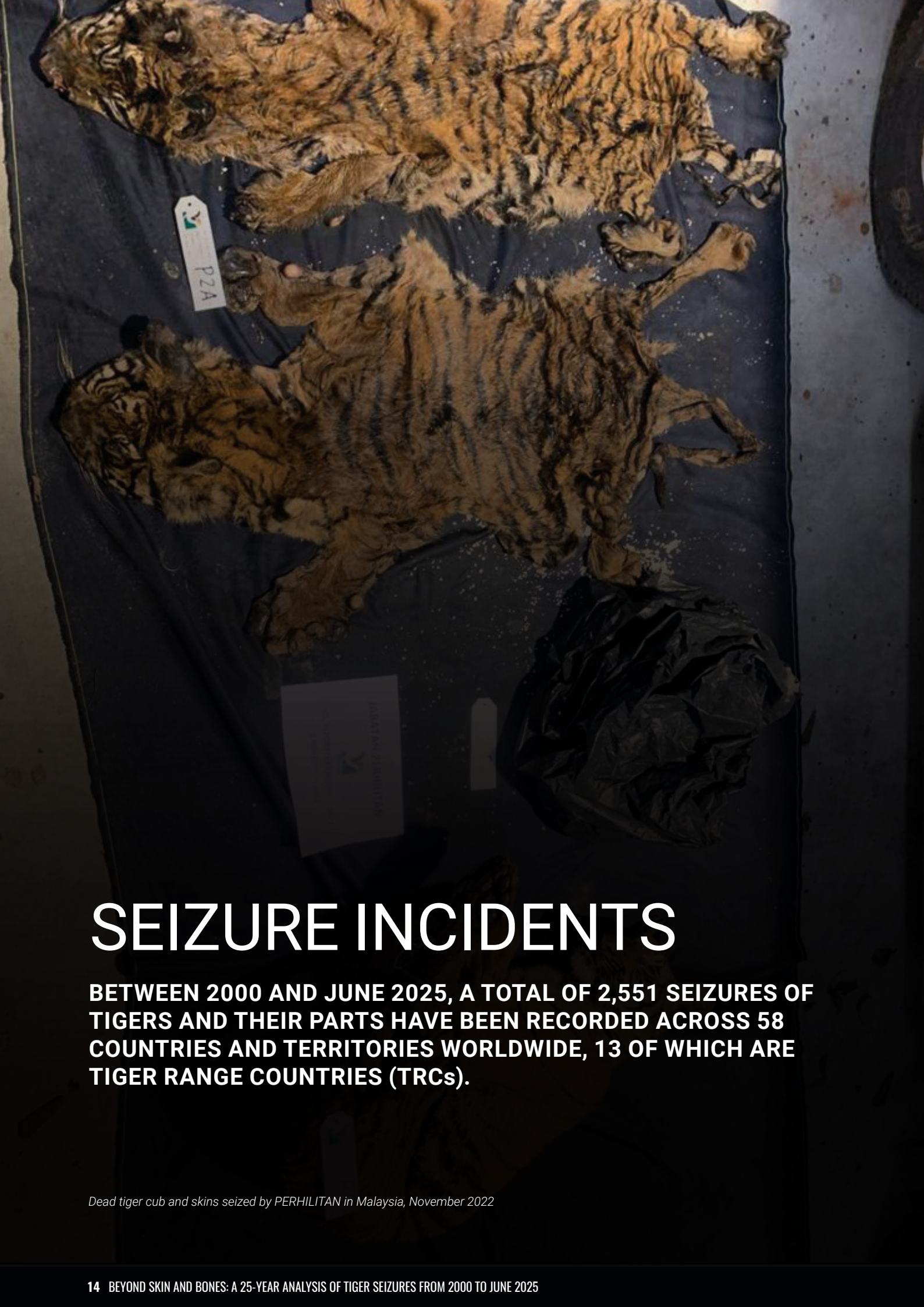
Tiger range current (dark orange), presence uncertain (light orange) and extinct (gray) locations across Asia. Source: IUCN Red List accessed July 1, 2025 July 1, 2025.



Since 1975, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) has listed all tiger subspecies in Appendix I (with the exception of *Panthera tigris altaica*, which was included later in 1978). This effectively means that all commercial international trade of tigers taken from the wild, their parts, and derivatives is prohibited. [CITES Resolution Conf 12.5 \(Rev CoP19\)](#) on the conservation and trade of all Asian big cats provides the framework for implementing CITES obligations. The effective implementation of CITES resolutions and decisions pertaining to tigers has been challenging and insufficient across countries, evidenced by continued high level of trafficking and its associated problems.

This report is the sixth TRAFFIC analysis of trafficking in tigers *Panthera tigris*, assessing seizure incidents of tigers and their parts from 2000. While it assesses data from a global perspective, it focuses on incidents within TRCs. The data presented in this report underscores the urgency of addressing the poaching and illegal trade of tigers within these TRCs. Findings from this report provide insights into the trends, patterns, and issues facing tigers, and the report are intended to guide and shape the necessary interventions, strategies and policies to safeguard tigers. The report covers long-term trends across the full 25.5-year dataset, with each section emphasising insights in the most recent period from 2020 – June 2025, to capture contemporary trends that highlight more current issues. The analytical methodology used in this analysis is detailed in the last chapter.

¹ https://globaltigerforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Press-release_Global-Tiger-Day2023_GTF.pdf



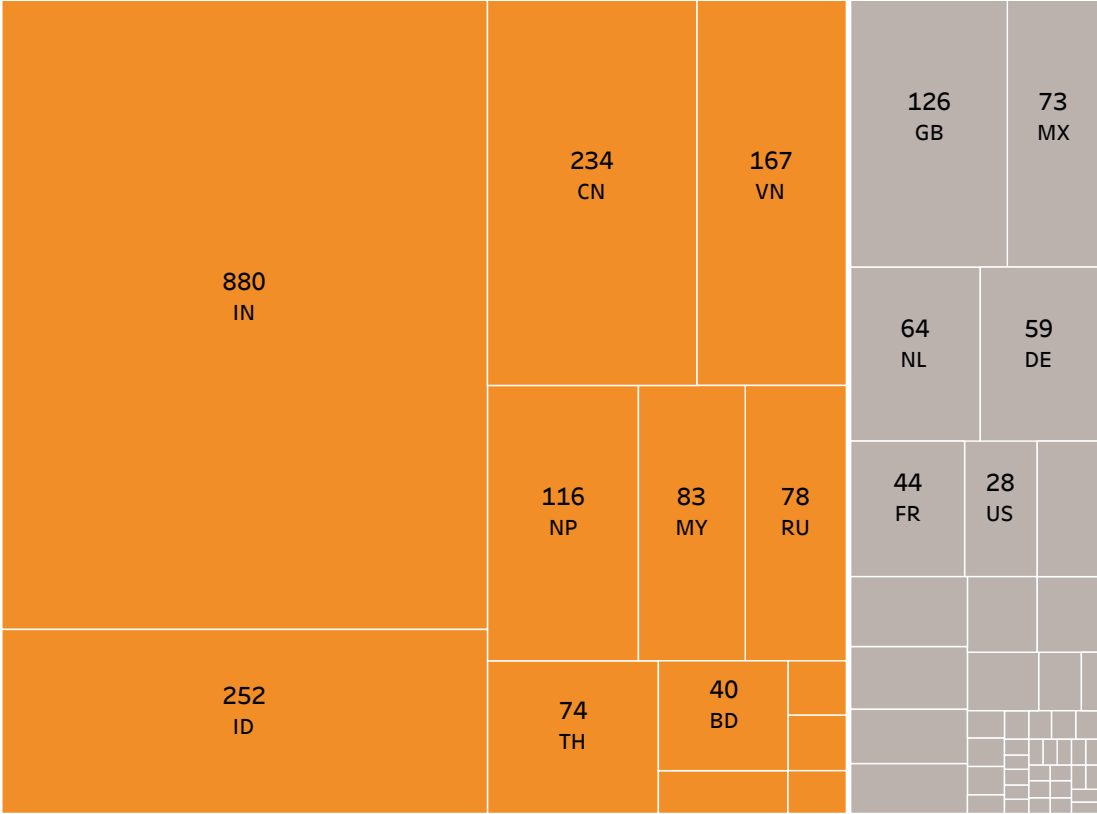
SEIZURE INCIDENTS

BETWEEN 2000 AND JUNE 2025, A TOTAL OF 2,551 SEIZURES OF TIGERS AND THEIR PARTS HAVE BEEN RECORDED ACROSS 58 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES WORLDWIDE, 13 OF WHICH ARE TIGER RANGE COUNTRIES (TRCs).

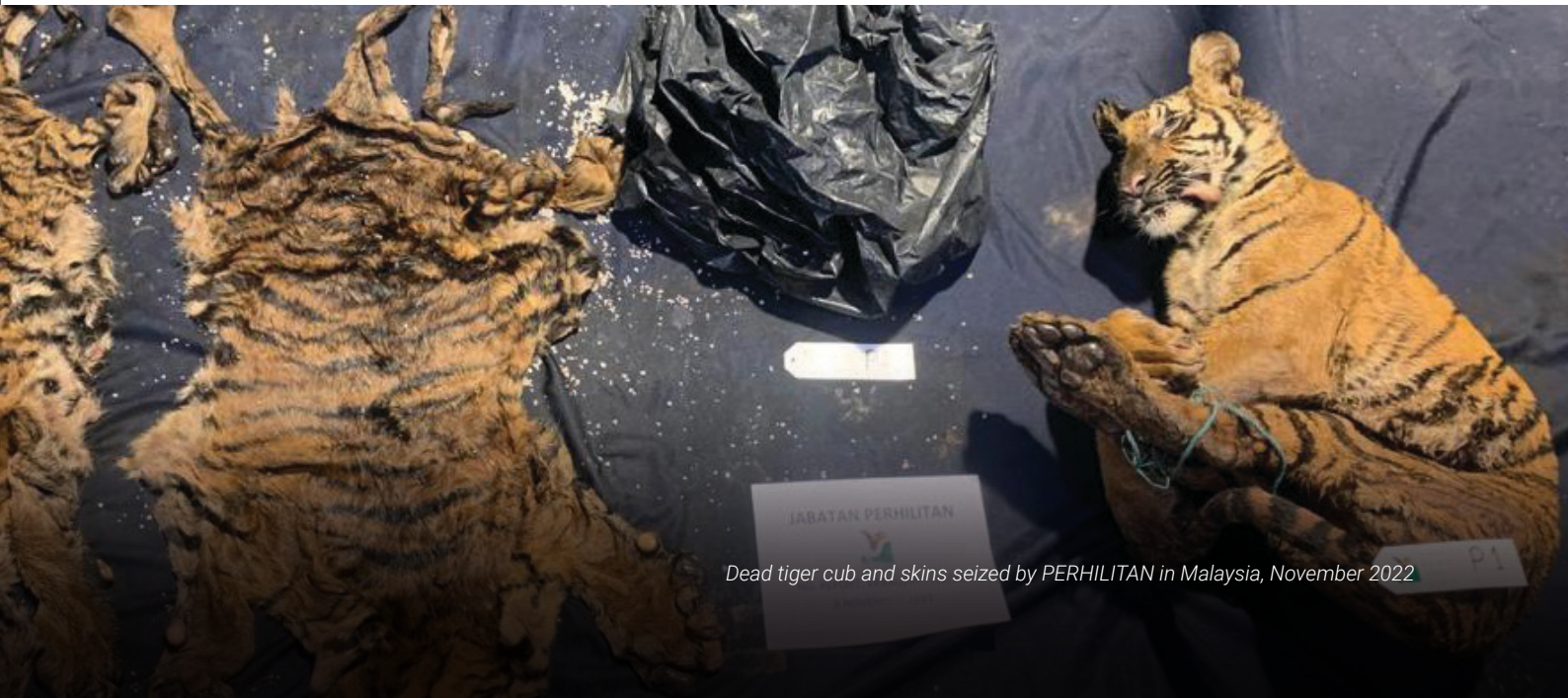
Dead tiger cub and skins seized by PERHILITAN in Malaysia, November 2022

Over 77% of all incidents occurred within TRCs (1,965), with India, China, Indonesia and Viet Nam at the forefront (Figure 1). Among non-range countries, a sizable number of seizure incidents were reported by the United Kingdom (GB), as well as Mexico (MX) and the Netherlands (NL).

FIGURE 1
Number of tiger seizure incidents by country in TRCs (orange) and other countries (grey) between 2000-June 2025.



Within the TRCs, the geographical distribution (by province/state) of seizures was uneven across the period assessed, with certain provinces reporting considerably more frequent incidents – this is not unusual given the long timeframe over the assessed period. Many seizures however occurred especially within and around tiger conservation and protected areas such as in Maharashtra (India - 142), Madhya Pradesh (India - 132), Karnataka (India - 88) and Uttar Pradesh (India - 80). Outside of India, the Bagmati province of Nepal recorded the second highest seizures (55) between 2000 and June 2025.

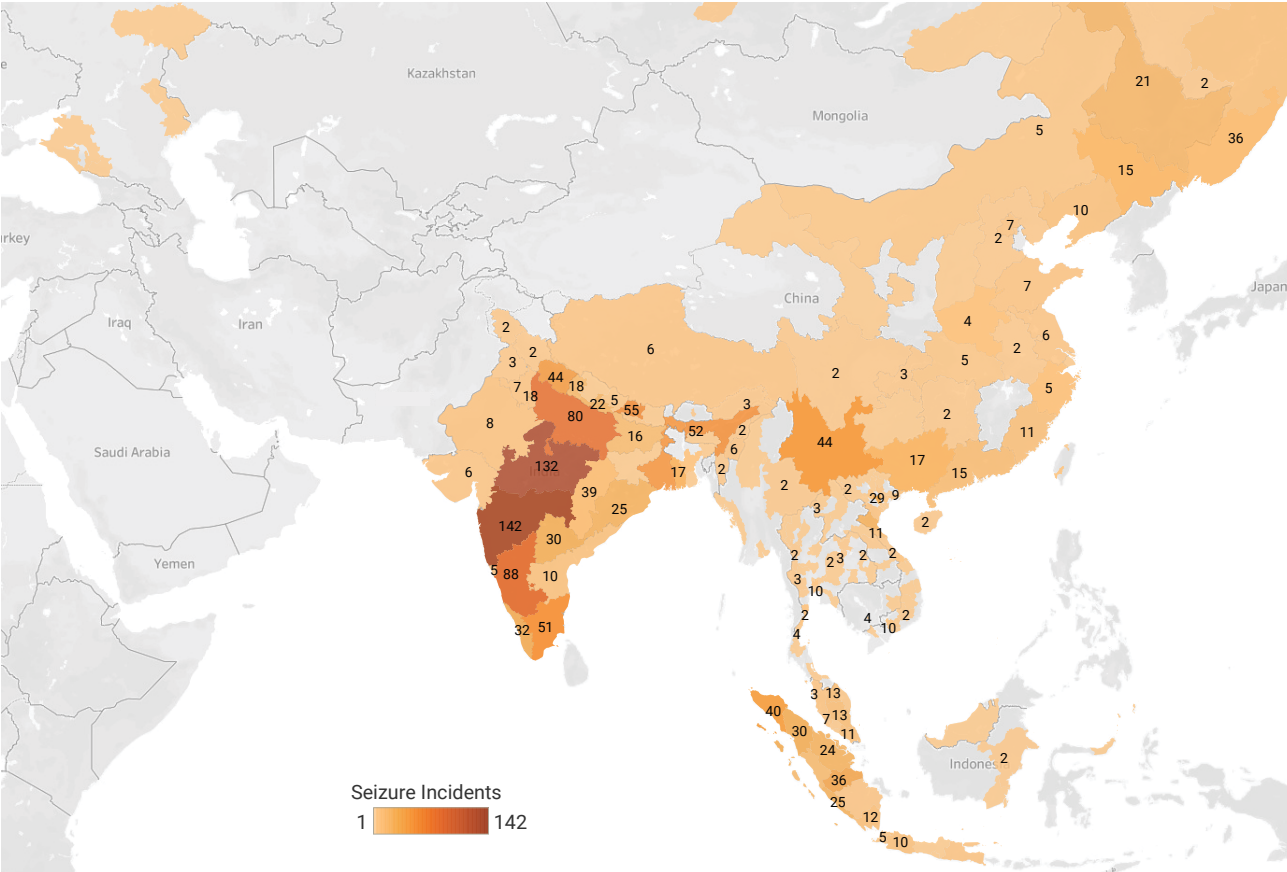


Dead tiger cub and skins seized by PERHILITAN in Malaysia, November 2022

Trends Since 2020

In the most recent period between 2020 and June 2025, 573 seizures were recorded, of which 481 took place within TRCs. Having the largest tiger population globally, India recorded the highest number of seizures since 2020 (230 seizures), almost half of the total within TRCs, followed by Indonesia (77 – 16%) and Viet Nam (55 – 11%).

MAP 2
Tiger seizure incidents in key states/provinces across Asia between 2000-June 2025. Where no number is specified, the state/province has recorded only one seizure.





Save Vietnam's Wildlife staff caring for seven tiger cubs seized from illegal trade in August 2021

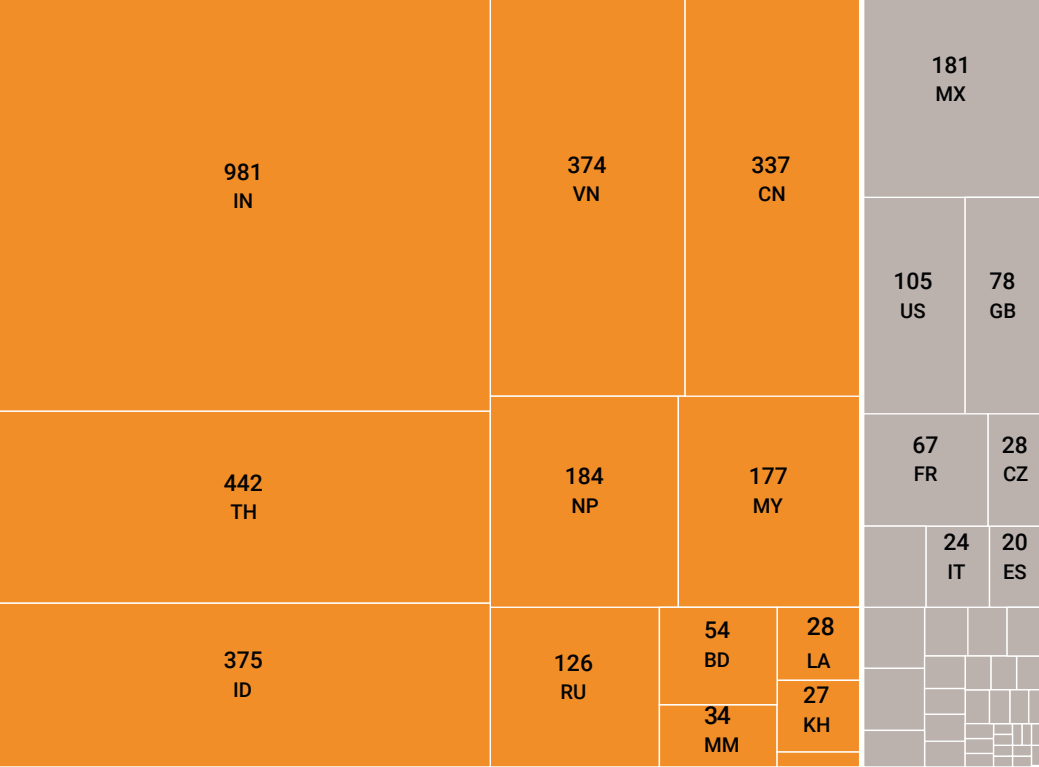
TRAFFICKED VOLUMES

THE 2,551 SEIZURE INCIDENTS REPORTED INVOLVED THE CONFISCATION OF WHOLE TIGERS AND TIGER PARTS ATTRIBUTABLE TO A MINIMUM ESTIMATED 3,808 TIGER INDIVIDUALS BETWEEN 2000 AND JUNE 2025.

IN: India, CN: China, ID: Indonesia, VN: Viet Nam, NP: Nepal, RU: Russia, MY: Malaysia, TH: Thailand, BD: Bangladesh, MM: Myanmar, GB: United Kingdom, MX: Mexico, FR: France

Tiger Range Countries accounted for 83% of the total tigers confiscated (3,145 tigers) over the assessed period, with India covering one fourth of the grand total followed by Thailand (12%) and Indonesia (10%). Compared to the previous Skin & Bones analysis published in 2022 (covering 2000-June 2022) TRAFFIC recorded an increase by 431 confiscated tigers globally, of which 262 tigers were confiscated within TRCs alone². Notably, Thailand 's prominence in the volume ranking stems from a few very large seizures, particularly those involving tigers/specimens from captive facilities, such as the single seizure in 2016 at the Wat Pha Luang Ta Bua tiger temple involving a staggering 187 tigers.

FIGURE 2
Number of tigers confiscated as whole individuals or estimated from the body parts seized across TRCs (orange) and other countries (grey) between 2000-June 2025.



Trends Since 2020

In the most recent period between 2020 and June 2025, 765 tiger individuals were confiscated, 68% of which were within TRCs. India accounted for the largest share with 190 individuals (37%), followed by Viet Nam with 102 (19%) and Indonesia with 90 (16%). For these top countries, element of poaching in priority range states and an illegal supply from captive sources is notable. India has consistently been subjected to poaching and trafficking given its global stronghold, making a target for criminals.

The high number of detection and interception by Indian authorities showcases effort taking into addressing the problem; indeed, the same can be said of all countries with high number of detection. Within Southeast Asia, Indonesia is among the most important stronghold with its island subspecies. Having already lost the Javan Tiger *Panthera tigris sondaica*, declared extinct as recent as 2008, all effort must be taken to ensure its last subspecies does not go the same way. With an estimated wild population of some 400 tigers, the seizure of an equivalent of 90 tigers in just the past five years underscores a need for urgent action particularly at key hotspots.

Beyond Tiger Range Countries

Additionally, since 2000, 586 seizure incidents involving an estimated 662 tigers were reported by countries outside of TRCs, mainly across Europe (430 incidents, topped by the UK with 126 incidents) and the Americas (106 incidents, almost entirely in North America). The largest volumes were reported by Mexico (181 tigers), the US (105) and the UK (78). These statistics are not considered exhaustive; they emerge from data sharing agreements and opportunistic data collection in these regions and are included here only to illustrate the occurrence of tiger confiscations outside their range, signalling the global nature of tiger crimes.

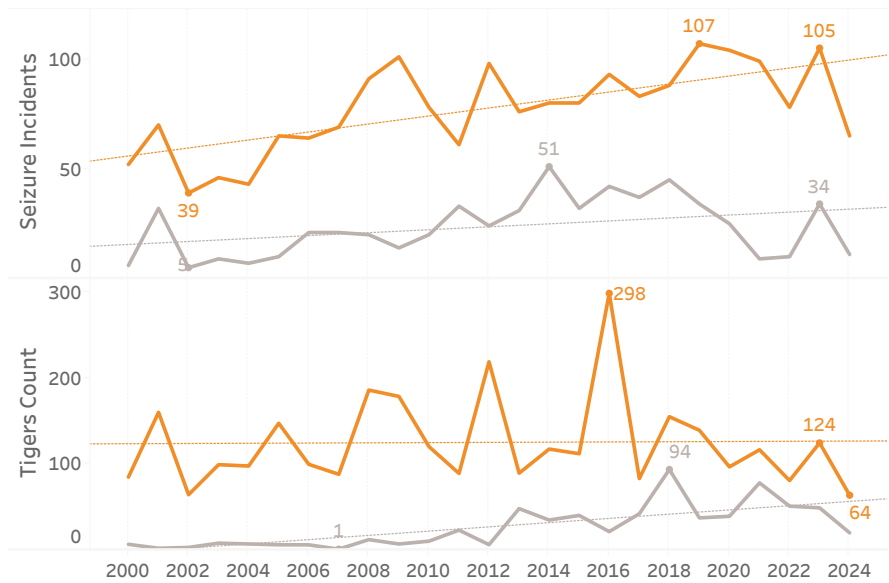
² This increase in figures in part is due to better data collection, including for cases prior to June 2022 which became known to TRAFFIC during this analysis in 2025. Historically, TRAFFIC's Skin and Bones analyses have shown that data from the most recent period continues to surface over time as cases are gathered, reported and verified.



TRAFFICKING TRENDS

Tiger seizures have increased over the years, particularly within TRCs. It reached an all-time high in 2019, with 107 seizures in TRCs, representing a whopping 76% of the total of 141 seizures across the 25.5 years assessed. Notably, 2023 recorded the second highest number of seizures: 139 with 105 within TRCs, pointing to the fact that the crisis remains active and ongoing. While the number of cases was high, the equivalent estimated tigers involved did not show a similar rise (Figure 3). Data shows that the number of tigers confiscated has been relatively stable on average over time, with a slight decrease in recent years. Regardless, the large and increasing number of seizures indicates a still widespread demand of tiger products.

FIGURE 3
Number of seizures and estimated tigers confiscated across TRCs (orange) and other countries (grey) between 2000-2024. The peak of 298 tigers confiscated in 2016 is an outlier stemming from a single seizure of 187 tigers from a single location in Thailand. Data for 2025 have not been included here as it does not depict the full year and may cause bias in the interpretation of year-on-year trend.



Trends Since 2020

The past five years since 2020 saw India, Indonesia and Viet Nam as countries with the highest number of seizures and equivalent tigers seized within TRCs. Almost half of the seizures (48% - 230) and the tigers confiscated (43% - 313) between 2020-June 2025 were reported by India alone. This is followed by Indonesia recording 16% in both seizures (77) and tigers confiscated (127). Viet Nam reported relatively fewer seizures (11% - 55) albeit of larger volumes totalling to 18% of the overall confiscated tigers (132). Together, these three countries accounted for 75% of seizure incidents and 77% of the total tigers confiscated in the past five and a half years. The recent period also saw the Russian Federation and Thailand recording an increasing number of cases. In the Russian Federation, this increase in cases coincided with the beginning of the military confrontation in Ukraine in 2022. During the first half of 2025, India already confiscated almost the same number of tigers as reported for 2024, projecting an increase by year end.

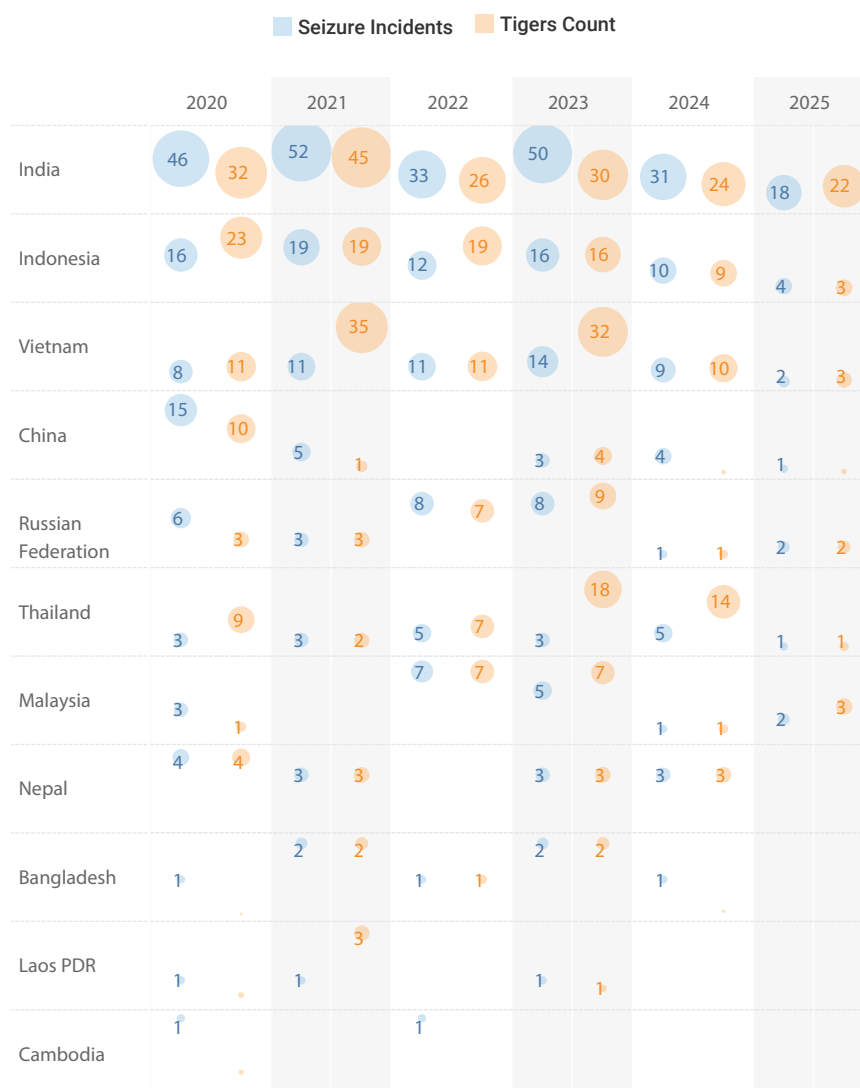
FIGURE 4

Figure 4: Number of seizures and number of estimated tigers confiscated across TRCs between 2000-June 2025 versus the most recent five years (2020-June 2025).

	Seizures (2000-Jun 25)	Tigers Count (2000-Jun 25)		Seizure Incidents (2020-Jun 25)	Tigers Count (2020-Jun 25)
Bangladesh	40	54		7	5
Bhutan	7	6		0	0
Cambodia	9	27		2	0
China	234	337		28	28
India	880	981		230	313
Indonesia	252	375		77	127
Laos	16	28		3	4
Malaysia	83	177		18	37
Myanmar	9	34		0	0
Nepal	116	184		13	14
Russian Federation	78	126		28	30
Thailand	74	442		20	60
Vietnam	167	374		55	132

FIGURE 5

Trends in seizures (blue) and estimated number of tigers (orange) confiscated across TRCs between 2020–June 2025.



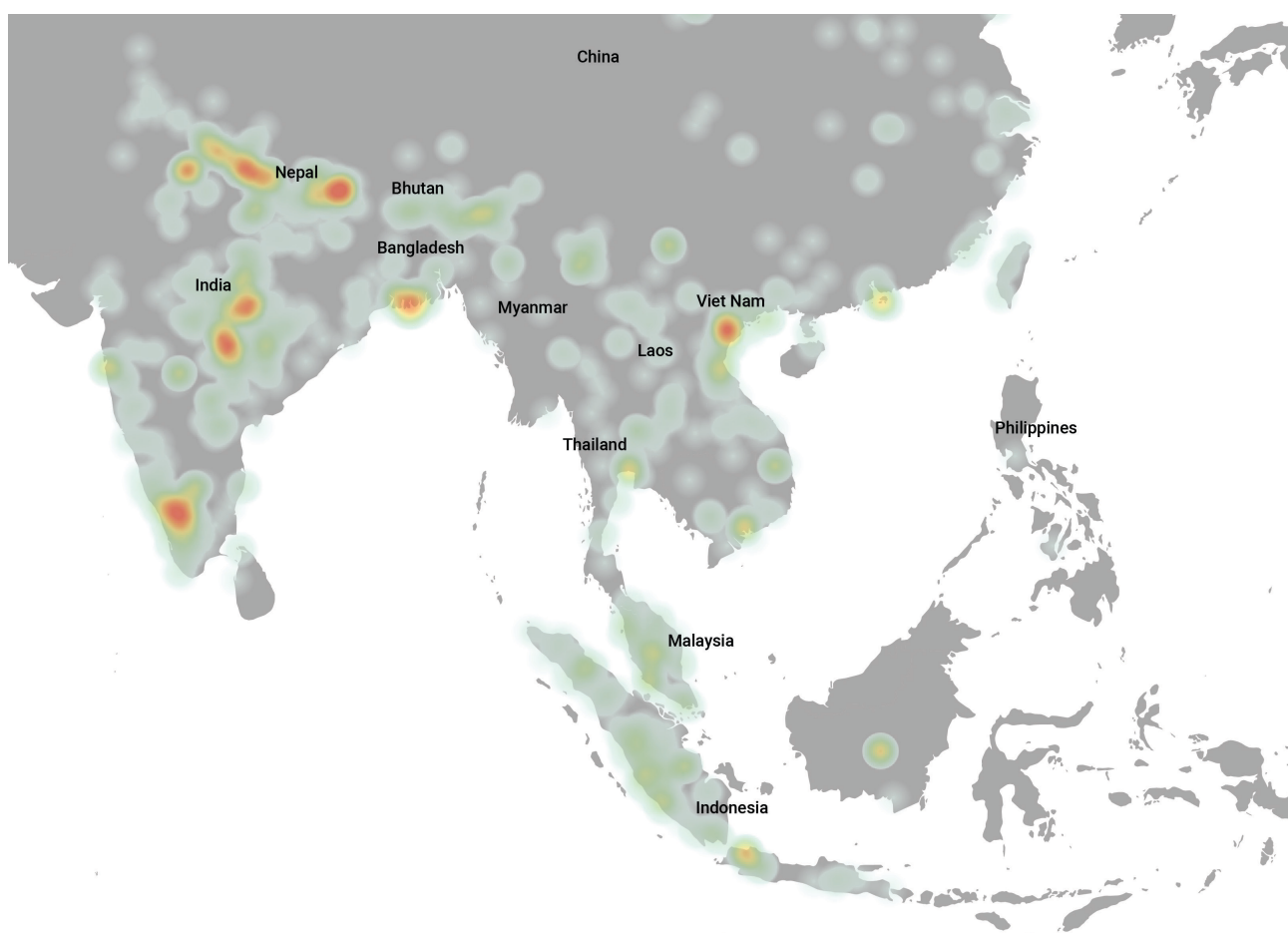
The illicit trade in tigers, being inherently covert, may not be fully captured by seizure data alone. While seizures signify the success of government actions and offer insight into the level of trafficking, they are not absolute and very likely represent only a fraction of the actual trafficking activities. Seizure records serve as an indirect measure of trafficking levels, but they are influenced by various biases, including: differences in law enforcement efforts, investment over time, enforcement effectiveness, wildlife crime rates per country, inconsistent reporting and recording practices among law enforcement and media, corruption levels, and confidentiality of seizure data or restricted access to seizure information. Consequently, an increase in seizures in one country may not necessarily indicate higher wildlife poaching or trafficking levels compared to other countries. However, it does reflect the scale of the captured underlying illegality occurring within that specific country at a particular point in time.

HOTSPOTS

Tiger seizure incidents occurred in over 1,600 localities across the world, 77% of which were in Tiger Range Countries. Despite this variety of locations, the distribution of seizure incidents was mostly within a limited set of hotspots, some of which have generally remained the same over the past several years and indicate where interventions should be prioritised.

FIGURE 6A

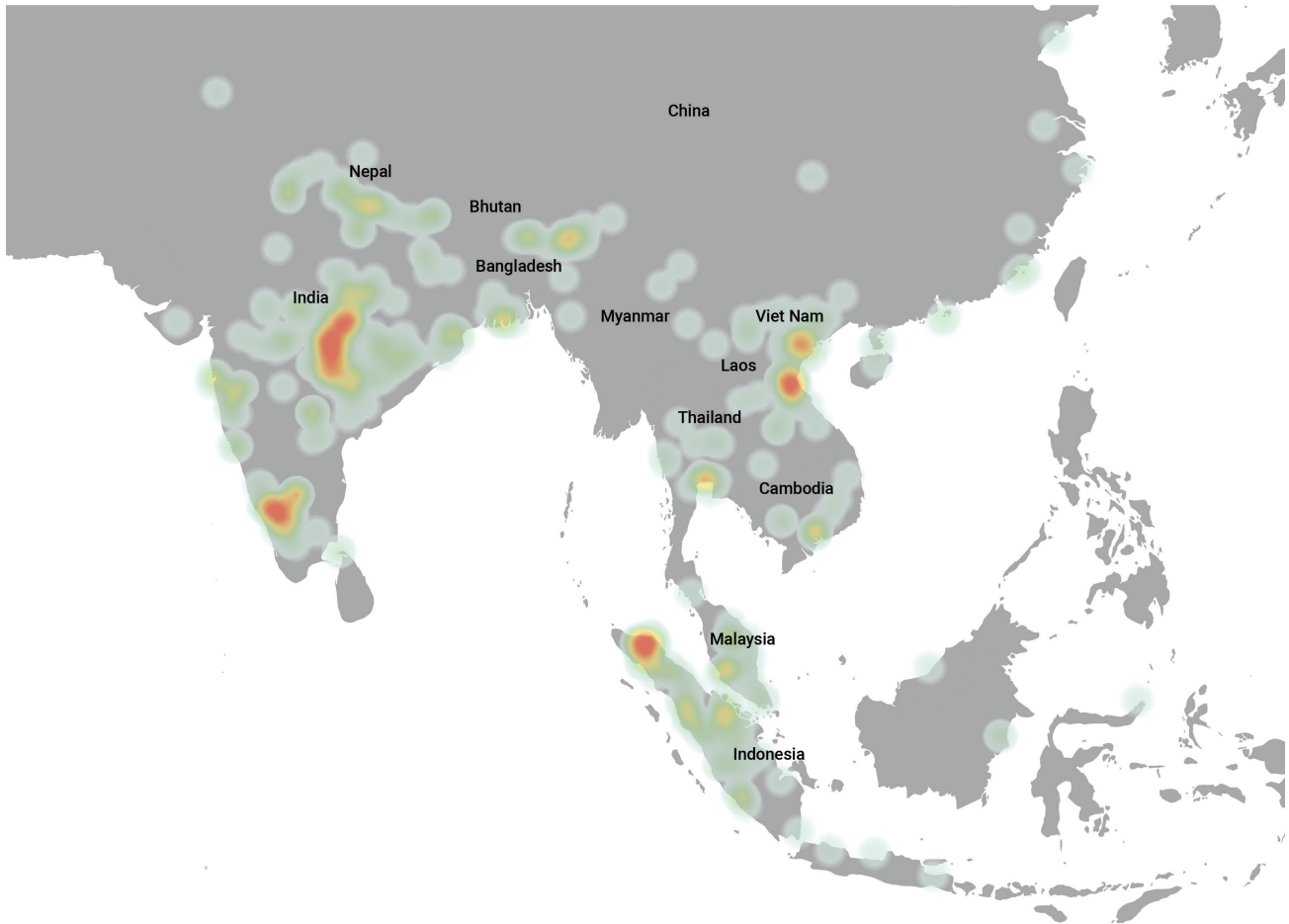
Close-up of trafficking hotspots in South and South-east Asia measured by number of seizure incidents recorded between 2000-2019.



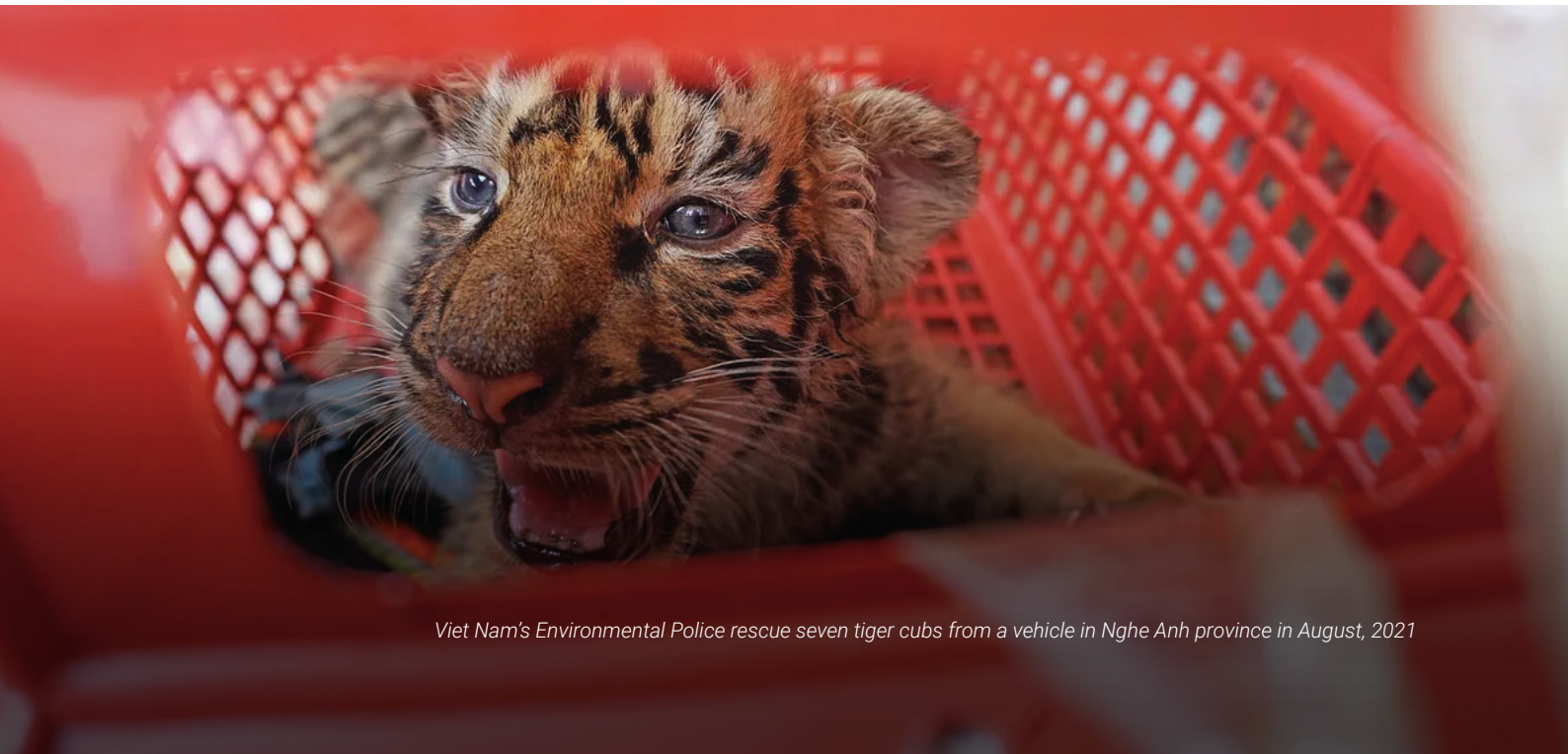
Most recent years have witnessed a decrease in seizures in several tiger range countries, with notable hotspots remaining in India (Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra, Kanha Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh, Nagarhole Tiger Reserve in Karnataka), Viet Nam (Hanoi and Nghe An province hosting the key Nam Phao border crossing with Bolikhamxay province of Lao PDR), and Indonesia (Aceh province).

FIGURE 6B

Close-up of trafficking hotspots in South and South-East Asia measured by number of incidents recorded between 2020-June 2025.



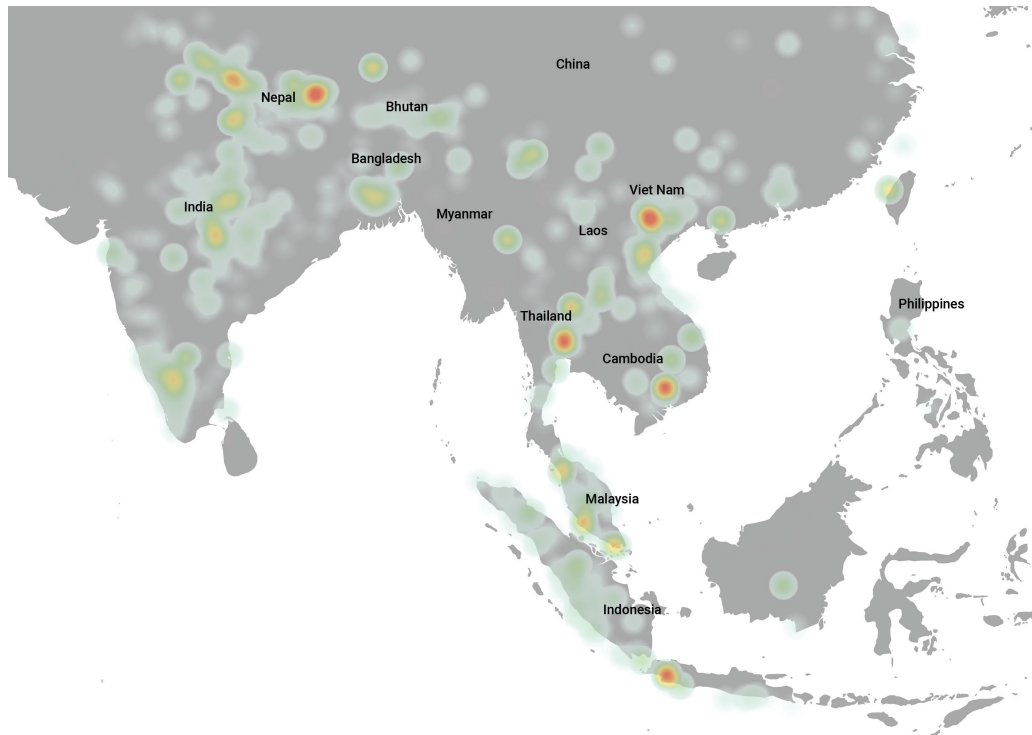
Measuring hotspot density from the perspective of the volume of tigers confiscated yields similar results during the most recent five years. The areas around the Nghe An province, at the Nam Phao border crossing with Bolikhamxay province of Lao PDR emerged as the most prominent hotspot with the highest concentration and the largest volume of tigers confiscated.



Viet Nam's Environmental Police rescue seven tiger cubs from a vehicle in Nghe Anh province in August, 2021

FIGURE 6C

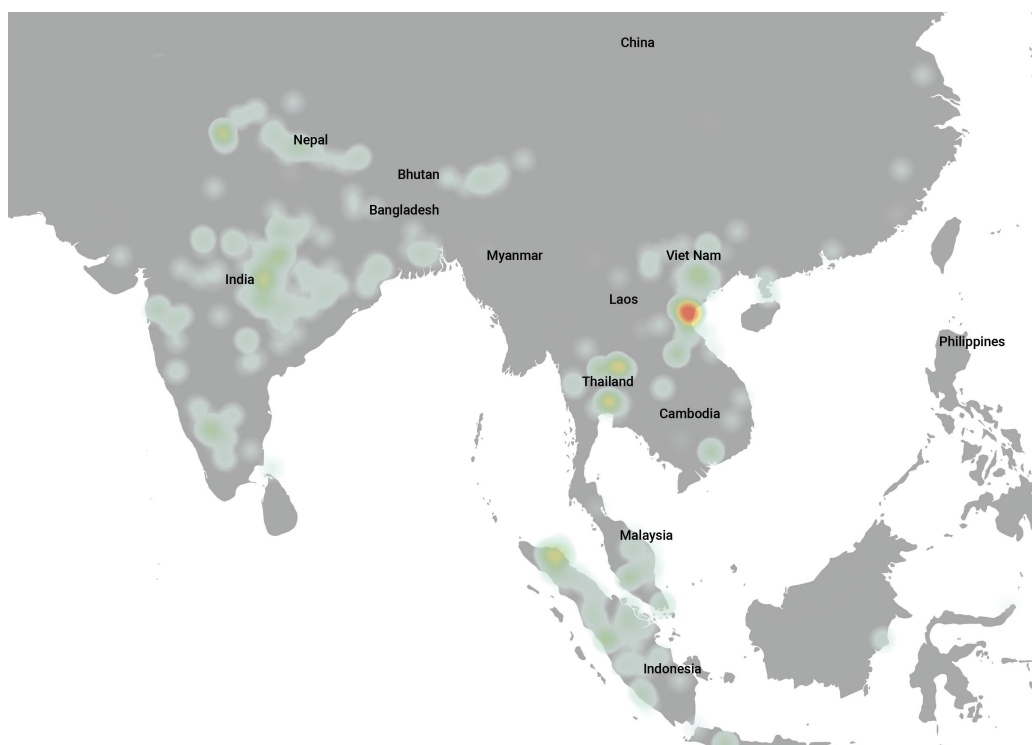
Close-up of trafficking hotspots in South and South-East Asia measured by number of tigers confiscated between 2000-2019. Excluded from this chart is the 2016 outlier seizure at the Wat Pha Luang Ta Bua tiger temple involving 187 tigers, which would have otherwise obscured other hotspots.



Close-up of trafficking hotspots in South and South-East Asia measured by number of tigers confiscated between 2000-2019. Excluded from this chart is the 2016 outlier seizure at the Wat Pha Luang Ta Bua tiger temple involving 187 tigers, which would have otherwise obscured other hotspots.

FIGURE 6D

Close-up of trafficking hotspots in South and South-East Asia measured by number of tigers confiscated between 2020-June 2025.



Country	Hotspots	Recent Trends since 2020
 China	At border gateways between Yunnan province and Myanmar, and the Hunchun national nature reserve in Jilin province neighbouring the Land of the Leopard National Park in Primorsky province of Russia.	Both hotspots report relatively limited frequency and volumes which sensibly decreased in recent years.
 India	Nagarhole Tiger Reserve (Karnataka), Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve (Maharashtra), Kanha Tiger Reserve (Madhya Pradesh), Dudhwa National Park (Uttar Pradesh), Sundarbans National Park (West Bengal) and neighbouring Khulna province of Bangladesh.	Frequency of occurrence across these hotspots increased in recent years.
 Indonesia	Spread across the island of Sumatra, with Gunung Leuser National Park in Aceh province particularly affected, and more concentrated around the capital of Jakarta on the island of Java.	Aceh province hotspot has become more prominent in recent years.
 Malaysia	In peninsular Malaysia, mostly in the central region of Pahang where the Taman Negara National Park is located, and around Kuala Lumpur.	Incidents have become more concentrated around these key hotspots in recent years, although in lower volumes.
 Nepal	Most seizures occurred in proximity to Kathmandu which is the primary transportation gateway and law enforcement choke point.	Significant reduction in recent years although border areas with India continue to report some tiger trafficking activity.
 Viet Nam	In proximity of Ha Noi, Ho Chi Minh city, and the Nghe An province bordering Lao PDR Bolikhamxay province.	Increased frequency and relative volume concentration.



Some of the 17 tigers seized from several illegal captive facilities in the Do Thanh Commune in Vietnam, by the Nghe Anh Police in August 2021



TRAFFICKING ROUTES

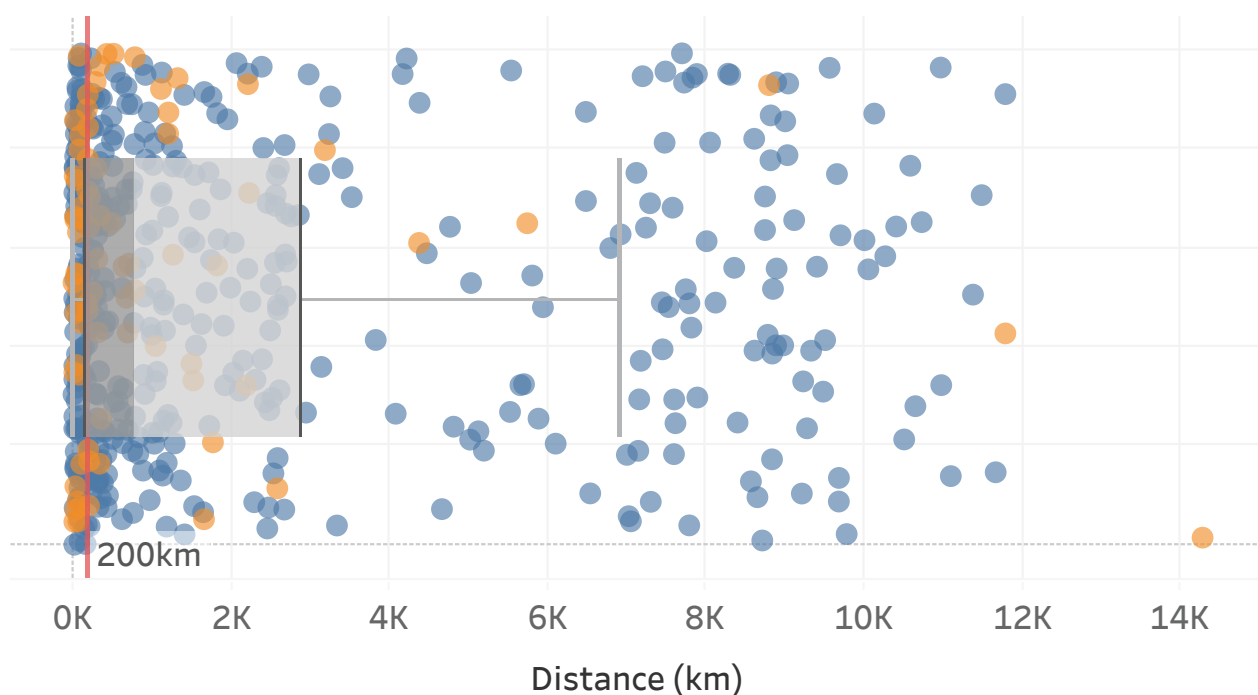
ANALYSIS OF TRAFFICKING ROUTES WAS CONDUCTED WITH THIS DATASET TO GAUGE POSSIBLE ROUTES ALONG A TRAFFICKING CHAIN.

However, this is prefaced with the caution that route information was largely incomplete and not often reported, with varying factors unknown from a seizure record alone. Trafficking route information was available for 571 seizure incidents (22% globally, 24% among TRCs), with variable degrees of accuracy and completeness. Within these caveats, analysis shows that the vast majority of trafficking instances occurred over a moderate route leg distance with a median of about 780 km, measured as the shortest path between the point of seizure and the closest known transit point or purported origin or destination. In more dated seizures, a sizable number of outliers exceeded 7,000 km of distance.

More recent seizures between 2020-June 2025, however, reported considerably shorter route legs with a median of about 200 km. The reasons for this could be varied and include several possibilities, such as: shrinking distance of the movement of tigers between source, middlemen and demand locations, or a more clear and articulated transportation network between supply and demand centres that is able to evade detection. A decrease in the total distance between the source and the consumer, however, does not necessarily imply a reduction in the overall trade distance, as it can be heavily influenced by the level of detail provided by the available seizure information. To gain a more comprehensive understanding of trafficking patterns and aid in targeting efforts, more thorough investigations and reporting on the transportation chain are necessary.

FIGURE 7

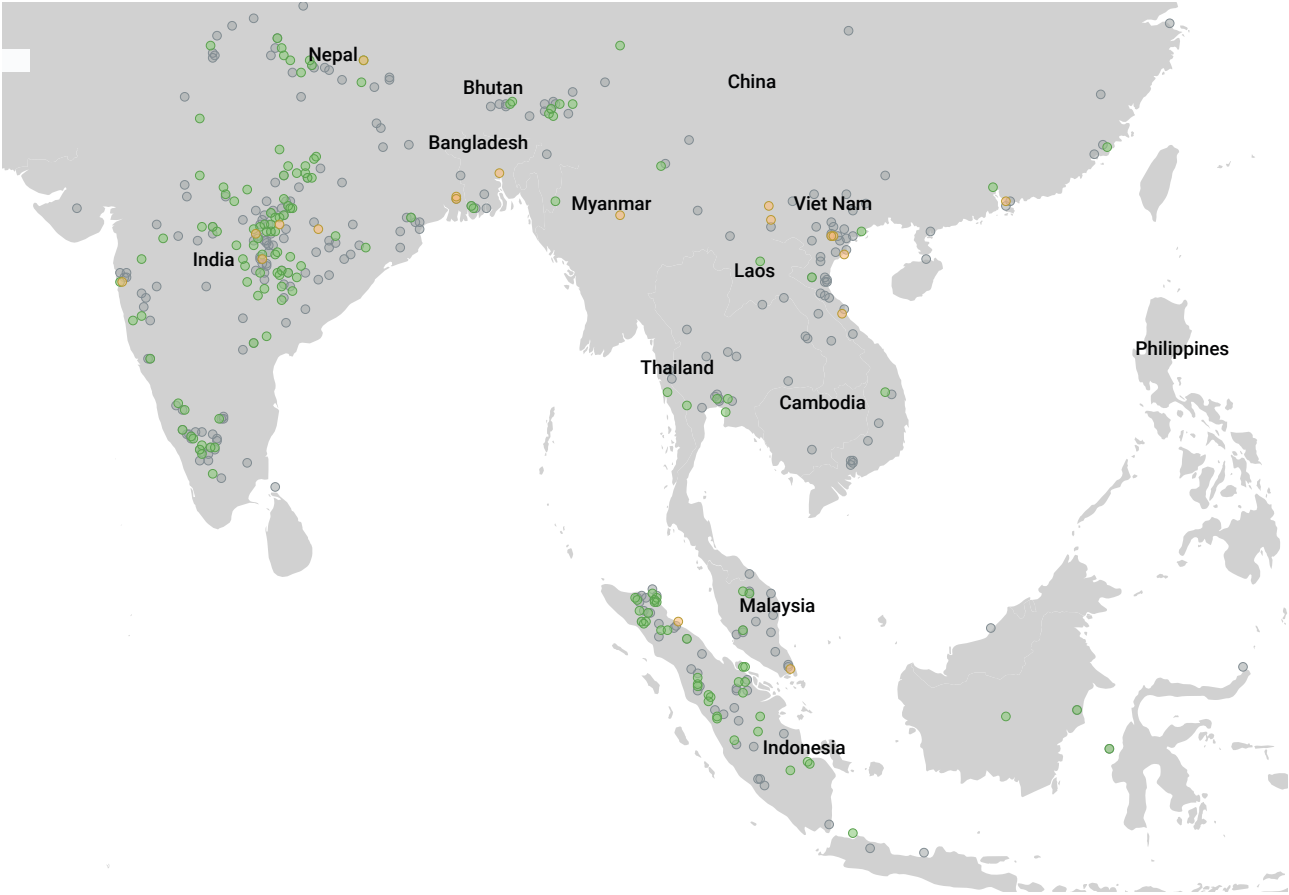
Distance distribution between reported tiger trafficking route legs between 2000-2019 (blue) and 2020-June 2025 (orange). Each point represents the distance in km covered by one reported trafficking route leg. The box represents the interquartile range (middle half of the route legs distances) ranging from 180 km to 2,900 km, with a median of 780 km. The red line marks the median for the 2020-June 2025 period which is considerably shorter at about 200 km. The box whisker represent 1.5 times the upper interquartile range (7,000 km) above which data is considered as outlier.



Trends Since 2020

In recent years, most declared origins of trafficked tigers were located in India (Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka provinces) and Indonesia (Aceh and West Sumatra provinces). Reported trafficking routes were predominantly domestic or occurring along cross-border locations heading towards international gateways and consumption centres. Destination data highlights once more the role of the northern part of Viet Nam and its border with Lao PDR. This analysis however is hampered by knowledge limitations of whether the route point classification of origin and destination are intermediate points or at the far ends of the route. When a tiger part is confiscated along the trade route, law enforcement does not always have evidence of who and where the ultimate consumer is.

FIGURE 8
Reported tiger trafficking route source (green), transit (gray), and destination (orange) locations within South and Southeastern Asia between January 2020 and June 2025.



A tiger skin confiscated by authorities in Bener Meriah Regency, Nangroe Aceh Darussalam, Indonesia in November 2020



WHOLE TIGERS

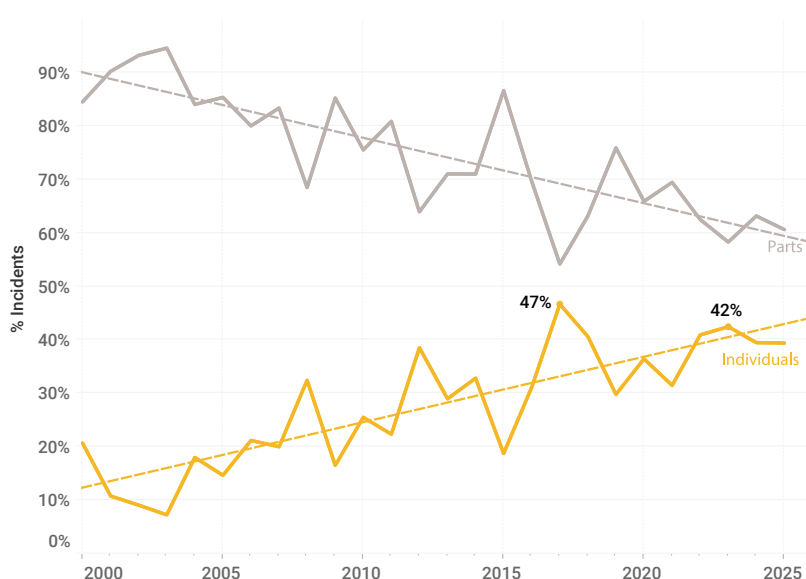
GLOBALLY, WHOLE TIGER INDIVIDUALS (EITHER LIVE OR DEAD, INCLUDING FETUSES) HAVE OCCURRED IN 29% OF THE TOTAL SEIZURE INCIDENTS BETWEEN 2000 AND JUNE 2025, WITH MOST OF THEM TAKING PLACE IN TIGER RANGE COUNTRIES.

This share however, decreased from 73% between 2000-2019 to 65% between 2020-June 2025, denoting a shift towards countries outside the tiger range.

Over time, the proportion of tiger seizures featuring whole individuals has been steadily increasing, reaching a peak of 47% in 2017. Despite a temporary dip during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic period of 2020-2021, the overall trend of increasing seizure incidents involving whole tiger individuals appears to continue, with the share settling to 39% in 2024 and the first half of 2025. The year 2023 recorded the all-time high number of seizures featuring whole tigers: 59 incidents, more than half of which occurred outside of TRCs.

FIGURE 9

Seizure incidents involving whole tigers (yellow) vs tiger parts (grey) reported globally between January 2000 and June 2025. The clearly growing trend of whole trafficked individuals peaked at 47% in 2017.

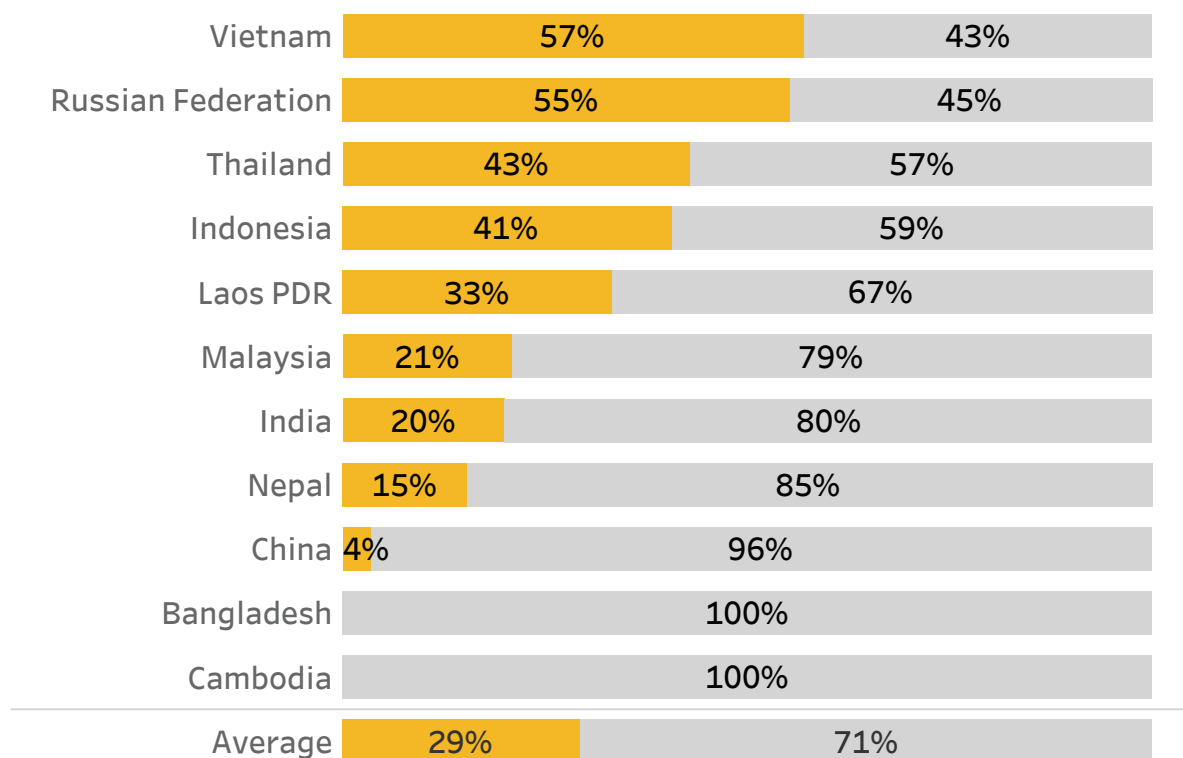


In the most recent period between 2020-June 2025, four TRCs stood out with a high percentage of their seizures involving whole animals: Viet Nam (57%), Russia (55%), Thailand (43%) and Indonesia (41%). Together, these countries alone accounted for 63% of seizures in TRCs in the last five years that involved whole tigers (dead or alive). A vast majority of these cases were linked to poaching.

When over two-thirds of whole tigers confiscated between 2020 and June 2025—an increase of 19 percentage points from the previous period—are found in countries without viable wild tiger populations, it suggests two possibilities: cross-border trafficking or the involvement of captive-bred tigers in the illegal trade. The latter has long been a persistent challenge in efforts to curb tiger trafficking.

FIGURE 10

Share of seizure incidents involving whole tigers (yellow) vs tiger parts (grey) within Tiger Range Countries between 2020 and June 2025.



Tiger bones seized by authorities in Uttar Pradesh, India in September 2023.

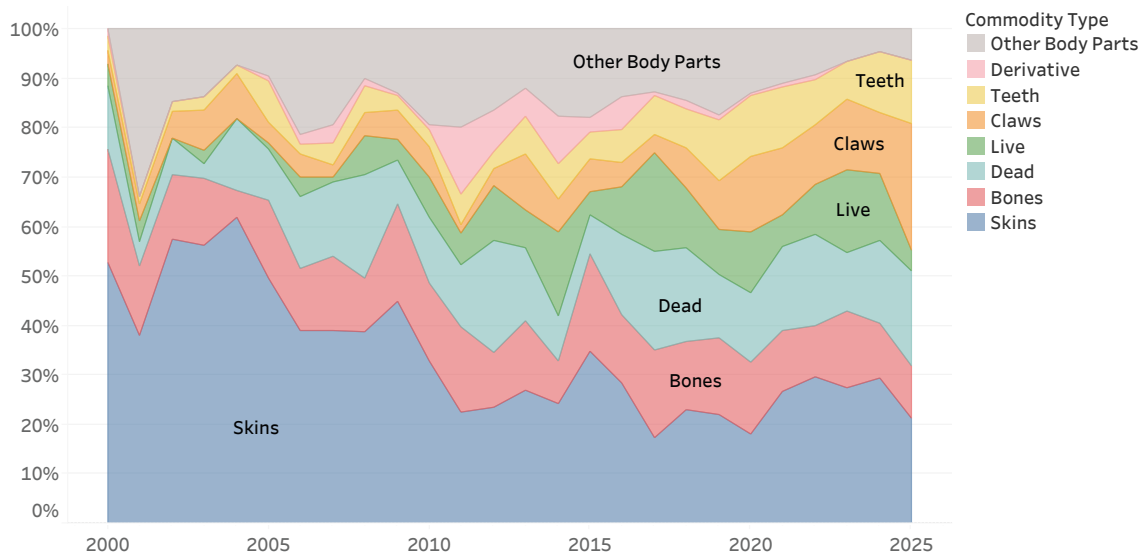


A large Tiger skin seized in a joint operation in Bihar, India in August 2023

TIGER PARTS

TIGER SKINS HAVE BEEN CONSISTENTLY THE MOST SOUGHT-AFTER BODY PART, FOLLOWED BY WHOLE INDIVIDUALS AND TIGER BONES, WHICH ARE USED TO PRODUCE TIGER INFUSED LIQUOR AND TIGER BONE GLUE.

FIGURE 11
Frequency share of different commodity types found in seizure incidents globally between 2000 and June 2025.



Beginning in 2011, seizures have increasingly involved other body parts, with claws and teeth dominating in recent years due to demand for amulets, jewellery and fashion accessories. The year 2023 has witnessed the second highest number of incidents of tiger claws (24 seizures of 94 items) and the third highest number of tiger skins (46 seizures of 62 items) denoting a rampant trade in these commodities.

FIGURE 12
Number of incidents globally resulting in the confiscation of each commodity type between 2000 (00) and June 2025 (25). Note: Values cannot be summed across different commodity parts, multiple commodity types may be found in the same seizure incident.

	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Skins	37	46	31	41	34	47	40	44	50	66	37	25	34	38	40	58	47	24	40	43	32	41	35	46	26	10
Bones	16	17	7	10	3	15	13	17	14	29	18	19	16	20	14	33	23	25	24	30	26	19	12	26	10	5
Dead (Individuals)	9	6	4	2	8	10	15	17	27	13	15	14	33	21	15	13	27	28	33	25	25	26	22	20	15	9
Live (Individuals)	3	5		2		1	4	1	10	6	9	7	16	11	28	8	16	28	21	18	22	10	12	28	12	2
Claws	2	4	3	6	5	4	5	3	6	8	7	2	5	16	10	11	8	4	14	19	27	21	14	24	11	12
Teeth	2	2	1	2	1	8	2	5	7	4	4	7	5	11	12	9	11	11	14	24	22	19	11	13	11	6
Other Body Parts	1	4	1	2		2	4	6	3	3	2	19	21	12	30	18	20	8	11	9	17	13	6	8	1	2
Derivatives		26	3	4	2	4	13	14	9	9	12	8	6	5	7	3	9	5	7	12	1					
Skulls		7	3	3	2	4	5	2		7	6	4	5	8	4	9	4	3	7	10	8	3	4	3	3	
Meat		4	1	1			1	1	1	1	1	3	3		1	9	4	2	4	3		1	2	1		
Paws		1		1				3	1	2	2	3	2		2	3	2	2	1	4	1	3	1	1		

COMMODITY TRENDS

Trafficking and by extension, the consumption pattern, vary across the globe: tiger skins are the most frequently confiscated commodity in Asia, and in particular in South Asia, followed by Southeast Asia and East Asia. Skins also rank at the top in Eastern Europe. Tiger bones are the second most frequently confiscated commodity in East and South Asia, ranking third in Southeast Asia. Whole tiger individuals (dead or alive) are the most confiscated in North and Central America. Derivatives and traditional medicine compound rank at the top in North and Western Europe.

Southern Europe VII



Western Europe VI

Consumption regions, feature several seizures of imported traditional medicine products claiming tiger parts as an ingredient.



Northern America VIII

All seizures occurred in the USA where live tigers are sought after as status symbol pets.



Latin America and the Caribbean IX

Almost all seizures occurred in Mexico where live tigers are sought after as status symbol pets.



Top Commodities



Live animals



Bones



Teeth

V Northern Europe

Consumption regions, feature several seizures of imported traditional medicine products claiming tiger parts as an ingredient.



IV Eastern Europe

Consumption region, features taxidermy dead animals for decoration.



III Eastern Asia

Consumption region where skins are used for trophies or fashion accessories, teeth for pendants and bones for preparing infused liquors.



II Southern Asia

Prominent tiger habitat region, features a large number of seizures of freshly poached tigers and tiger body parts mainly for export.



I Southeastern Asia

Both a prominent tiger habitat and consumption region, features several seizures of whole dead animals awaiting dismemberment.





TRAFFICKING PATTERNS WITH OTHER SPECIES

Tiger parts in multi-species seizure by Malaysian authorities in August 2016

While 79% of the tiger seizures on record did not report other commodities being confiscated, in one fifth of the cases other wild animals were seized along with tigers.

The demand for tigers in Asia is closely associated with illegally trafficked products of several other wildlife species. These include species whose parts and products provide popular and direct tiger substitutions or alternatives such as leopards (in 34% of the seizures featuring multiple species), bears (26%) and lions (7%). Substitution between tiger and leopard skins is known, as well as between the canine teeth and claws of all big cats and bears. An additional frequent association of this kind also occurs between tigers and ungulates (33%) such as deer, serows, gaur and muntjac traded for their horns and fangs.

Confiscations have also taken place with other high value species in trade: elephant ivory (29% of the incidents featuring multiple species), pangolin scales (16%), and rhino horn (11%), with the latter two used in alleged traditional medicine along with tiger infused liquors.

Although less frequent and more varied at the species level, 17% of the seizures of tiger products included reptiles such as crocodile and snake skins and turtle carapaces. Birds also featured sporadically in 11% of the multi-species seizures, with the notable mention of hornbills in 4% of the cases.

In the period between 2020-June 2025 compared to the previous period 2000-2019, there were less seizures featuring tigers together with other felids were less frequent (-14 percentage points), elephant ivory (-8pp) and rhino horn (-6pp). Instead, slight increase in frequency was registered for the occurrence of pangolin scales (+5pp) and ungulates (+7pp).

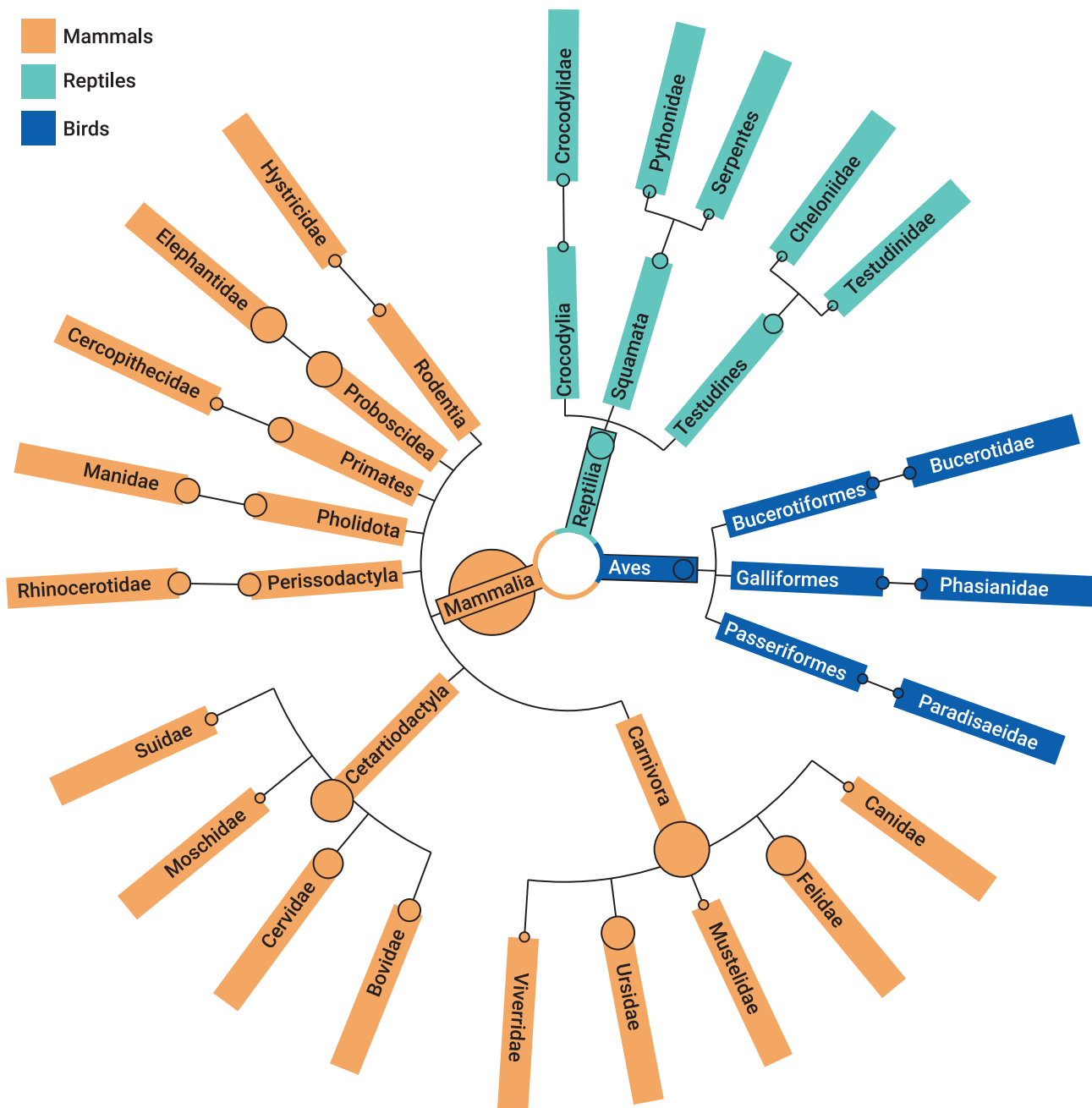
FIGURE 13

Top taxonomic classes, orders and families confiscated along with tigers 10 or more times between 2000 and June 2025. The percentage represents the frequency of occurrence out of all seizures where at least one other species has been confiscated along with tigers. Trends (expressed in number of percentage point (pp) difference) are computed comparing the overlap rate during the 2020-June 2025 period and during the previous 2000-2019 period. Note: Values shall not be summed up because multiple species may be confiscated in the same seizure incident.

Class	Overlap	Trend
 Mammalia	95%	= (-1pp)
 Reptilia	17%	-- (-3pp)
 Aves	11%	=

Order	Overlap	Trend
Carnivora	59%	-- (-11pp)
Cetartiodactyla	33%	+ (+7pp)
Proboscidea	29%	-- (-8pp)
Pholidota	16%	+ (+5pp)
Perissodactyla	13%	- (-8pp)
Testudines	9%	=
Squamata	8%	= (-2pp)
Primates	5%	-- (-3pp)
Bucerotiformes	4%	= (+1pp)

Family	Overlap	Trend
Felidae	41%	-- (-14pp)
Elephantidae	29%	-- (-8pp)
Ursidae	26%	= (-1pp)
Cervidae	23%	+ (+3pp)
Manidae	16%	+ (+5pp)
Bovidae	15%	+ (+3pp)
Rhinocerotidae	11%	-- (-6pp)
Bucerotidae	4%	= (+1pp)
Suidae	4%	= (-1pp)



METHODOLOGY

SOURCES AND ACQUISITION

The dataset collected worldwide for this analysis covers the period from 1 January 2000 to 30 June 2025 with the analysis focusing on Asia and the Tiger Range Countries (TRCs). Data was obtained primarily from open sources such as news media outlets, law enforcement press releases and verified social media accounts. Additional data was gathered from Government agencies and NGO partners. Where possible, data from open sources was confirmed with the relevant government regarding details of seizures. Information from non-TRCs was primarily sourced from transparency and data-sharing agreements with TRAFFIC.

The governments of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Thailand have provided relevant data based on formal requests between 2010 and 2016 (Verheij et al., 2010, Stoner and Pervushina, 2013; Stoner and Krishnasamy, 2016; Wong and Krishnasamy, 2019) with additional information gathered for the 2016 - 2025 period.

Data up to 2021 was also received following authorization from government agencies that submit their seizure data to the EU-TWIX database (Trade in Wildlife Information eXchange). Key components of the data considered for the analysis included the locations, quantities, sources of tigers seized (wild sources or captive-bred). Due to the varying reporting standards of media and government agencies, the data obtained often differed in terms of the level of detail provided. Data on law enforcement outside of the TRCs was also collected opportunistically to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the global tiger protection status.

PRE-PROCESSING

Prior to the analysis, all data obtained were subjected to a thorough verification process including verification with local partners and government agencies to ensure maximum accuracy, especially with regards to information related to the time, locations, quantity, and type of commodity as well as the type and penalty given for each incident.

Geographical information consisting of latitude and longitude points were averaged to the first decimal unit in this analysis. This approach was taken to manage variation of recorded GIS locations that are in close proximity with each other (e.g. districts or a city). Therefore, datapoints generated from the analysis are approximately within a 16 km radius from the original locations. When the location information available is limited to the provincial level, the data point is displayed at the geographical centre point of the province. Particular attention however has been taken to minimise the approximation of geographical locations to ensure maximum accuracy in the analysis.

Throughout this report, China is represented inclusive of all its territories.

TIGER COUNTS

Tiger commodities usually come in a variety of forms making it complex to estimate the number of individual tigers involved. A standardised calculation based on the different commodity types was applied for this analysis to overcome this variation and calculate the minimum number of tigers seized (n) as precisely as possible. This approach is consistent with the one used for the 2019 and 2022 iterations of Skin & Bones (Wong and Krishnasamy, 2019 and 2022).

TABLE 1

Standardised calculation method to estimate the number of individual tiger (n).

Commodity Type	Confidence	Calculation	Notes
Live, Carcass, Whole skin, Head, Skeleton, Skull, Tail, Genitalia, Gallbladder	High	$n = x$	Unique parts
Claw	High	$n = x/18$	One tiger has 18 claws
Tiger liquor (juvenile)	High	$n = x$	Whole cubs
Paw	High	$n = x/4$	One tiger has 4 paws
Teeth	Low	$n \text{ min} = x/4$ $n \text{ max} = x/30$	One tiger has 30 teeth and 4 canines. When traded alone, teeth are most likely canines.
Bone (items)	Low	$n = x/432$	One tiger has 432 bones
Bone (weight)	Low	$n = x/10 \mid n = x/15$	One adult tiger has 10-15 Kg of bones
Meat (weight)	Low	$= m \text{ (adult)}$ $n = m/2 \text{ (juvenile)}$ $m = x/200 \text{ (male)}$ $m = x/117.5 \text{ (female)}$ $m = x/159 \text{ (unknown)}$	The estimate is based on 45% meat yield on average body weight: Male 200 kg, Female 117.5 kg, Unknown 159 kg. Juveniles are estimated to weigh half of adults.
Tiger liquor (juvenile)	Low	$n = x/8$	Leg bones are usually used for spirits. One tiger has 8 leg bones.
Skin (pieces)	Low	$n = x/6 \text{ (adult)}$ $n = x/3 \text{ (juvenile)}$	Estimated value allowing enough surface to be worked into medium-sized products.
Whiskers, other derivatives and body part	Low	$n = 1$	
Unspecified	Low	$n = 1$	

CONFIDENCE LEVELS

To minimize the impact of overestimation errors caused by assumptions, we have categorized commodities into two groups: High and Low Confidence. For each seizure incident involving multiple commodities, only the estimate originating from High Confidence commodities was used, while the Low Confidence estimate was discarded when comparatively lower. High Confidence is attributed when the number of tigers involved is certain or reliably accurate, such as when a single skull is considered to represent one tiger. In this analysis, a seizure of 5 skulls and 10 bones would result in an exact estimate of 5 tigers, as the Low Confidence value (bones) is excluded from the calculation. While 10 bones represent an estimated 2.3% of one tiger, they do not add any significant detail and could introduce a significant error in an average estimate if taken into account. If Low Confidence items were always computed against the average, the resulting estimate would have lost accuracy and potentially resulted in either over or underestimates. For example, a seizure of 5 skulls and 10 bones would have resulted in an estimate of 2.5 tigers [$n = (5+0.023)/2$] using a computed average that considered both High and Low Confidence commodities.

By prioritizing reliable sources and excluding Low Confidence estimates, this approach has considerably reduced the error margin in this analysis, as the vast majority of seizure incidents involved at least one High Confidence commodity type.

Among Low Confidence commodities, a special mention is needed for teeth and meat, for which assumptions were made.

Teeth: Each Tiger has 30 teeth; however, canines (n=4) are typically the most sought- after commodity due to their use as pendants. For this analysis, we consider that teeth are canines when traded alone, mostly downstream in the trade chain. Seizures occurring near tiger habitats often feature complete body-sets, which would lead to an inaccurate teeth-based estimate ($30/4=7.5$ tigers). However, because teeth are considered a Low Confidence commodity, in the case of one complete body-set the misleading teeth estimate is discarded in favour of concurrent High Confidence commodity types (e.g. skull, tail, etc.). This approach ensures that one complete body-set is always counted as 1 Tiger, and at the same time enables a more accurate estimate when only Tiger teeth are seized.

Meat: The total weight of an adult tiger spans 90–310 kg (males), 65–170 kg (females). We assume a 45% edible meat yield from tigers [min (avg. female) 35 kg – max (avg. male) 71 kg], a bit higher than cows (ca. 40%) due to the relatively higher ratio of muscular tissue in wild tigers. This commodity type is considered Low Confidence due to the wide range coupled with the absence in most cases of cues on the sex and size of the animal and unreported variables such as the presence of bones or the hydration level of the meat.

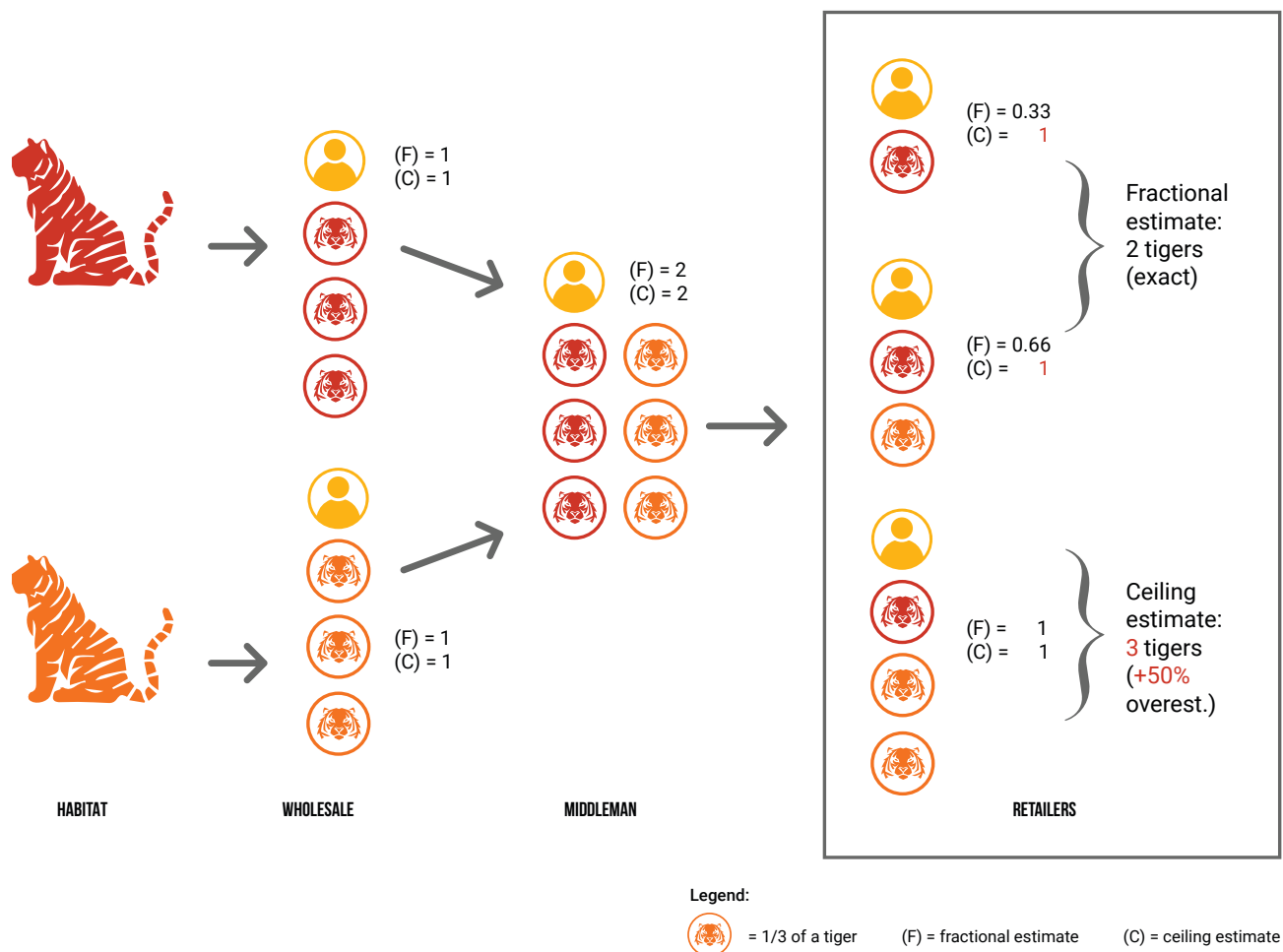
SINGLE-CASE MAXIMUM ESTIMATE

When multiple types of High Confidence commodities were collected at the same time, only the commodity yielding the largest number of tigers possibly involved is considered. Such a single case maximum estimate approach is effective in avoiding underestimates when a fraction of several parts of potentially multiple tiger individuals is captured in a single seizure incident.

Example	Items Seized	Fractional estimate of number of Tigers	Single Case Maximum Estimate	Rationale
Seizure 1	Skulls = 3 Claws = 74	from Skulls = 3 from Claws = 4.1	4.1 (5 tigers)	One tiger has only 1 Skull and 18 Claws, therefore 74 Claws must belong to five tigers ($74/18=4.1$), not three.
Seizure 2	Skulls = 2 Teeth = 13	from Skulls = 2 from Teeth = 3.2	3.2 (4 tigers)	One tiger has only 1 Skull and 4 canine Teeth (valued for trade), therefore 13 canine Teeth must come from four tigers ($13/4=3.2$), not two.
Seizure 3	Genitalia = 3 Bones = 38 Kg	from Genitalia = 3 from Bones = 3.8	3.8 (4 tigers)	One adult tiger has 1 Genitalia and an average of 10kg of Bones, therefore at least four tigers ($38/10=3.8$), were involved, not three.

TRADE CHAIN DISTRIBUTION

As the trade chain progresses from the poaching site to the end consumer, confidence in the number of tigers poached decreases. Seized tiger commodities close to the poaching site are more likely to feature full sets (whole body, teeth, claws, etc.), providing more reliable information on the number of tigers involved. However, as the commodities are mixed and distributed in fractions across middlemen and retailers, achieving a reliable estimate requires additional caution. The current analysis employs a fractional estimate approach, which takes into account fractions of one tiger in the computation and ensures that aggregate measures are truly conservative estimates. This approach differs from analyses that use a ceiling estimate approach, which rounds up the whole numbers to the higher unit, potentially leading to overestimates.



DATA QUALITY AND LIMITATIONS

Due to the limitations in data collection and reporting inconsistencies, the data available for this analysis may not represent the complete number of incidents that occurred. The illegal trade in tigers, being inherently covert, is unlikely to be fully captured by the reported seizure data alone.

Seizure records serve as an indirect measure of trafficking levels, but they are influenced by various biases, including differences in law enforcement efforts and effectiveness, wildlife crime rates per country, inconsistent reporting and recording practices among law enforcement and media, varying levels of corruption, and others. Consequently, an increase in seizures in one country may not necessarily indicate higher wildlife trafficking levels compared to other countries, although it does reflect the scale of the captured underlying illegality or law enforcement effort taking place within that specific country.

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WORKING TO ENSURE THE TRADE IN
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A THREAT TO THE CONSERVATION
OF NATURE

TRAFFIC

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