

CAMPAIGNS

Still time to save the tiger

EAZA'S TIGER CAMPAIGN WAS ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL – CAMPAIGN PARTNER 21ST CENTURY TIGER CONTINUES THE URGENT WORK

Esther Conway, Manager, 21st Century Tiger

Although the focus is on the EAZA Ape Campaign this year, do keep in mind the ongoing campaign of 21st Century Tiger. After 14 years at the forefront of zoo conservation efforts, there are many more opportunities for involvement.

The Russian Far East is a case in point – a huge landscape with protected areas for wildlife, but with a lack of institutional resources available for use. This is why backing the work of the Phoenix Fund is a priority for 21st Century Tiger. Run by the charismatic Sergei Berezuk, Phoenix supports a two-pronged approach: demand reduction for tiger parts through education and awareness; and protection through anti-poaching and wildlife crime prevention.

The Russian Far East and adjoining Chinese border area contains the world's last wild Amur tigers, but an insatiable demand for tiger parts has seriously depleted numbers. About 500 remain in Russia and possibly fewer than 100 in northern China.

A major project run by the Phoenix Fund focuses on anti-poaching in Russia's Northern Primorye region. It operates across five districts and not only protects tigers but also preserves prey species and habitats from illegal activities. The Phoenix team works alongside the teams of the Hunting Management Department, public environmental investigators, forest managers and police officers to increase the protection capacity in the area.

According to Alexander Samoilenko, the Phoenix team leader: 'As a rule, poachers are nowadays equipped with all-terrain vehicles (4WD jeeps, snowmobiles, paragliders), firearms and communication devices much better than law enforcement officers are'.

This project achieved notable results in 2010, with nearly 100 patrols documenting more than 60 violations in hunting and logging, and seizing and handing over 15 illegal weapons to the police. They initiated criminal proceedings in five cases, but the team believes that the low fines currently set for wildlife crimes do not deter poachers and that more drastic measures



are needed. The good news is that the Russian Government appears to agree and is considering a bill for harsher punishments, including arrest and imprisonment.

Outside Russia, 21st Century Tiger backs projects in many countries such as China, India, Indonesia and Thailand. These programmes help combat poaching and other crime, conserve habitats, raise awareness and monitor populations, and are instrumental in supporting tigers' future survival.

21ST CENTURY TIGER AND YOU

In 2010, 21st Century Tiger raised more than €160,000 for tiger conservation, with zoos acting as major contributors. Any EAZA zoo can donate to 21st Century Tiger, whether or not they are part of the Tiger EEPs. Conservation support is a vital role for every zoo and 21st Century Tiger facilitates this. Tigers are charismatic, and can inspire your visitors to save not only the tiger but also their whole forest ecosystem.

More than 120 zoos have given over €1 million through 21st Century Tiger since 1997. Some, such as the Kolmarden Zoo Fundraising Foundation, contribute sufficiently to enable them to 'own' a project within the 21st Century Tiger portfolio (larger funders can take part in our Fully-Funded scheme, which has a lower limit of US\$15,000 a year). Other

zoos provide unrestricted funds for the general campaign.

In return, 21st Century Tiger provides an effective service for zoos wanting to support conservation projects. 100% of donations received go to carefully chosen projects that are thoroughly examined by a panel of international experts. Regular reports from all projects are available on the 21st Century Tiger website at www.21stcenturytiger.org, where hundreds of photographs are available for zoos to use in their education and interpretation material.

Each year 21st Century Tiger issues fundraising certificates for public display to all zoos that raise over £500, with platinum, gold, silver and bronze certificates depending on the amount. Apart from zoos and the corporate sector, 21st Century Tiger gratefully receives support from the public through direct donations and initiatives.

21st Century Tiger is a partnership between the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and Global Tiger Patrol, raising funds for wild tiger conservation projects in the field. Having contributed over €1.8 million to more than 50 projects in seven countries since its establishment in 1997, it is amongst the top seven tiger-funding agencies globally. To find out more and to join other zoos in supporting wild tiger conservation email 21stcenturytiger@zsl.org or visit www.21stcenturytiger.org.