

numbered c. 60, now only numbers seven individuals. Another group has not been seen since the fire and we presume all group members perished in the blaze, which burned very fast and hot and left the macaques no time to escape.

Twelve groups close to our project base were badly affected by the fire, suffering fatalities. Their food sources disappeared as the oak trees burned and all the acorns, invertebrates and fungi that the macaques find in the leaf litter and that sustain them through the winter were destroyed.

An overwhelming and prompt response to our emergency funding campaign, particularly from the European zoo community, meant we were able to supply five villages destroyed by the fire with basic provisions and medical supplies and assist villagers in repairing their houses. After reports of macaques foraging in village fields, we began to provide food to the macaque groups we judged at risk of starvation. In autumn, the macaques feed mainly on acorns but many of the oak trees were damaged by the fire. Acorns provide oil and protein, enabling the macaques to gain weight in preparation for winter. We have now constructed multiple feeders to place in trees, to provide the macaques with acorns we are purchasing from elsewhere in Morocco.

We are mindful of the risks of habituating the macaques to the presence of people and sensitive to the perceptions of villagers, who may resent our support of macaque groups. To mitigate against both issues, we are employing local villagers directly affected by the fire to transport the acorns to forest areas known to be used by the macaque groups, away from the paved road.

The forest is already beginning to regenerate but we need to ascertain how soon the oak trees will mast post-fire, as that will influence how macaques survive future winters and whether they will reproduce and the infants survive in 2023.

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## Behaviour change conservation campaign for improved human–tiger coexistence in Nepal

In 2010, with a total of 121 tigers *Panthera tigris tigris*, Nepal committed to double its tiger population by 2022 as part of the TX2 St. Petersburg declaration, along with the other 12 tiger range countries. According to the Nepal National Tiger Survey 2022, the tiger population is now 355. Negative human–tiger interactions have, however, also increased. Tigers are occupying greater areas, and territorial fights

amongst them are increasing. Dispersing tigers are using marginal areas, increasing the likelihood of encounters with local people collecting forest resources.

The Bardia and Banke National Parks, in the western Terai, hold c. 150 tigers. According to the National Trust for Nature Conservation, there were 34 human casualties from tiger attacks in these two National Parks during 2019–2022. Problematic tigers are monitored by camera traps to identify individuals and monitor their health. Twelve tigers that were identified as having killed people, or that were weak or injured, were captured and released in the core of Bardia National Park, transferred to a zoo, or kept in a holding centre. In the case of a healthy tiger identified by the camera traps, local communities are advised to refrain from entering the forest until the tiger has left the area. Most attacks occur when people are collecting forest resources during the daytime. Local people enter the forest for the collection of grasses, fodder, timber and wild vegetables, and for livestock grazing and fishing.

To reduce human–tiger conflict and forest dependency, and to improve co-existence with the tiger, the National Trust for Nature Conservation and Bardia National Park have initiated a behaviour change campaign. In November 2021, 19 members of Community Based Anti-Poaching Units, representing every region of the National Park, were trained to carry out a behaviour change campaign for forest-dependent communities. The change agents discussed tiger behaviour and how to avoid encounters with tigers, and outlined safety measures. During January–June 2022, the change agents organized awareness sessions near the Park border for a total of 8,042 people (3,788 men, 4,254 women). These people do not have access to social media or FM radio and had not participated in previous conservation awareness sessions. As a result of these sessions, 317 farmers constructed predator-proof corrals to protect their goats and pigs from carnivores; 12,867 fodder seedlings were planted on private land, to minimize forest dependency for fodder collection; 559 farmers were involved in the cultivation of wildlife-friendly cash crops such as ginger, turmeric and lemon; and 19 farmers living adjacent to the Park began running homestays for tourists. Behavior change campaigns are considered effective for the reduction of human casualties from tigers, leopards and elephants, and for improving human–wildlife co-existence.

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