

Minimized human-wildlife conflict

Communities living adjacent to the Sundarbans still have unhealed wounds resulting from tiger-human conflict. Bagh is strengthening the Village Tiger Response Teams who manage stray tigers, provides veterinary training for conflict tiger handling, establishes a system for conflict prediction and monitoring, and promotes safety skills inside the forest to minimize injury and fatalities to tigers and humans.

Enhanced communication, outreach and gender engagement

Bagh is building on and expanding the 'Mother-like Sundarbans' campaign across the Sundarbans periphery inspiring people to participate in activities that protect the ecosystem. National and global awareness raising campaigns are aimed at engaging audiences and building social and political will. To promote long-term support, Bagh is creating a Wild Learning Center to serve as a platform to engage women, young people, and future conservation leaders.

Improved livelihoods for conservation

Promoting environmentally sustainable livelihood ideas in the Sundarbans region is imperative for conserving the forest. Bagh has been working with partners and stakeholders to reduce dependency on natural resources and encourage positive conservation actions in SRF through alternative and supplementary incomes with eco-friendly livelihoods initiatives. 'Bagh' is also supporting the growth of eco-tourism in Bangladesh.

Bagh and beyond

Tigers have survived on earth for almost 2 million years and we hope they will keep on roaming in the wild with all their majesty. The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) and Forest Department is the lead custodian of Bangladesh's natural assets. USAID's Bagh Activity and the Government of Bangladesh will build on the achievements and lessons learned to ensure that the roar of the Bengal tiger continues to resonate vibrantly throughout the Sundarbans.

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USAID's Bagh Activity



USAID's Bengal Tiger Conservation Activity (Bagh)

The Sundarbans, which means beautiful forest, is the beating green heart of Bangladesh. As wilderness areas and biodiversity keeps shrinking worldwide, the Sundarbans still stands strong as the world's largest mangrove forest, a world heritage site, and most significantly as the home to the majestic Bengal tigers- a symbol of pride for Bangladesh.



বাঘ আমাদের গর্ব
বাঘ সুরক্ষা করবো

The wild tigers in Bangladesh Sundarbans are facing tremendous challenges for their existence. Though tigers inhabited in almost all the greater districts of Bangladesh in the past, the wonderful creature is now critically endangered; and in a sharply declining trail, just around a hundred tigers have hardly survived only in the Sundarbans. If we cannot still conserve the last population of tigers, the Sundarbans and its biodiversity will be at risk of extinction and one sixty million people of Bangladesh will have nothing left to feel proud of being a 'nation of the tiger'. To be optimistic- the last chance is not yet over. Conserving the Sundarbans and its biodiversity by protecting the tigers with the united efforts of the government, business sector, other stakeholders and the general mass; has now become the demand of the time.

Bagh

The image of a tiger, the national animal of Bangladesh, is embedded in the country's culture as a symbolic celebration of the beauty and bravery of the nation. Yet, in the Sundarbans, 'Bagh'--the Bangla word for tiger--is a sound that is both feared and, at the same time, respected as a safeguard - a natural protector of the beloved forest that provides life and livelihoods to the people living next to the protected area.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has joined hands with the Government of Bangladesh to protect wild tigers in Bangladesh through the Bengal Tiger Conservation Activity (Bagh). Through 2018, the Bagh Activity will work on making the relationship between the Sundarbans and the adjacent people stronger and safer by empowering communities and institutions in taking ownership of protecting the majestic Bengal tiger and its magnificent forest home.

As USAID's Bagh Activity moves forward, Bagh will ensure more than the survival of Sundarbans tigers. Saving tigers will save the Sundarbans from all threats towards animals, vegetation, and people - this is the focal approach of the Bagh Activity. When tigers thrive in the wild, it will also ensure the survival of thousands of wild flora and fauna of the Sundarbans and protect the green mangrove wall that shields millions of people from natural disasters and supports their livelihoods.

Taking Bagh forward

A hundred years ago, Bengal tigers roamed in many parts of Bangladesh. Although the numbers have reduced significantly, the Sundarbans is still home to the largest single population of tigers in the world and is a global stronghold for biodiversity. In undertaking the Bagh Activity, USAID and the Government of Bangladesh have recognized the important role that a charismatic species like the tiger can play in conservation and socio-economic empowerment. empowerment.climate change mitigation and adaptation.



Tigers today

- Just within a century, global tiger numbers have reduced from 100,000 to only 3,200.
- In the 1930s, there were Bengal tigers in 17 districts across Bangladesh. Now, they only remain within the 6,017 square kilometers of the Sundarbans.
- According to the latest survey conducted by Forest Department, there were only 106 wild tigers left in Bangladesh.

Under the leadership of the Bangladesh Forest Department, USAID's Bagh Activity is implemented by WildTeam, an organization working for biodiversity conservation in Bangladesh since 2003. The Bagh Activity also receives technical support from the Smithsonian Institution and the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies.

From spreading conservation awareness in the communities living adjacent to the Sundarbans to increasing vigilance against wildlife crime, Bagh has been engaging people, institutions, and policymakers together with the opportunity to contribute to tiger conservation in five components:

Expanded knowledge base

Bagh supports priority research to inform management interventions for the targeted landscapes. The activity also develops tools and platforms for knowledge sharing, collaborative research, and learning.

Reduced illegal wildlife trafficking

Bagh provides support to the development of the national Wildlife Crime Control Unit, facilitates engagement with regional and international enforcement bodies, strengthens patrol efforts on the ground, and pilots models for community-based anti-poaching action.

