

PM: Adopt KL Joint Statement to save tigers

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia has proposed adopting the Kuala Lumpur Joint Statement on Tiger Conservation to recover and boost the tiger population in potential tiger habitats in South-East Asia.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said the 13-point joint statement would support the implementation of actions within the South-East Asia Tiger Recovery Action Plan (Strap) based on agreed priorities.

“The adoption of the Kuala Lumpur Joint Statement, Strap and Resource Mobilisation Strategy will provide Tiger Range Countries with a means to set realistic actionable targets in their bid to achieve tiger recovery goals,” he said when officiating the Fourth Asia Ministerial Conference (AMC4) on Tiger Conservation held virtually yesterday.

Ismail Sabri also called on the Tiger Range Countries and partners to work together in the spirit of a “world family” to save the animal as the loss of tigers knew no geographical, cultural and political boundaries.

Meanwhile, the Financial Resource Mobilisation Assessment was to be further deliberated on by member countries as it would include financing plans for tiger



Species in peril: Ismail Sabri said the 13-point joint statement would help efforts to recover and boost the tiger population in South-East Asia.
- LOW LAY PHON/The Star

conservation which South-East Asian countries may use when implementing tiger conservation efforts, he said.

Ismail Sabri said as tiger conservation was costly to execute, it was crucial for resource mobilisation and sustainable financial mechanisms to be put in place to ensure effective implementation.

He added that the Federal government had introduced the Ecological Fiscal Transfer for Biodiversity Conservation (EFT) to incentivise state governments to protect and expand tiger habitats, with a total of RM130mil having been disbursed to state govern-

ments through the EFT since 2019.

“On the international front, Malaysia takes its commitment to tiger conservation and biodiversity conservation seriously.

“We are proud to be a party to an extensive list of biodiversity-related multi-lateral conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity and Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (Cites),” Bernama quoted Ismail Sabri as saying.

Malaysia is also collaborating with various international agencies, including the Asean Working Group on Cites and Wildlife Enforcement

and Interpol, to combat illegal wildlife trade.

Ismail Sabri noted that the population of tigers had plunged to fewer than 4,000 worldwide and that the figure included the critically endangered Malayan tiger, a symbol of Malaysia’s strength and resilience which adorns its national coat of arms.

Based on the First National Tiger Survey conducted from 2016 to 2020, he added, fewer than 150 Malayan tigers were left in the wild, while experts had predicted that the species would vanish within five to 10 years if strategic actions were not put in place immediately.

“Therefore, the Malayan tiger has been afforded the highest level of protection in our legislation: Totally Protected Species under the Wildlife Conservation Act 2010 and Appendix 1 under the International Trade in Endangered Species Act 2008,” Ismail Sabri said.

Other successful tiger conservation initiatives include the award-winning Operasi Bersepadu Khazanah as well as the Biodiversity Protection and Patrolling Programme, under which 167 wildlife criminals were arrested for smuggling goods worth RM36mil.