Endangered animals.

# Bengal tiger

The **Bengal** tiger is a feline, and the most well-known subspecies of tiger. Also called the Royal Bengal Tiger, it is lighter and less imposing than the Siberian tiger. Its population, thanks in particular to the protection actions of the Indian government, has been increasing for several years, in 2019, it probably exceeds 3000 individuals in India.

## Protection

In 1900, the Indian tiger population was estimated at between 40,000 and 50,000 individuals. By 1972, that figure had dropped to 1,850 and the Indian government established national parks to safeguard its tiger population. A protection program has put it back to about 4,000 in 1984.

The latest census of 2013 released by the Nepalese Minister of Forests and Soil Conservation, puts their population at 198 in Nepal and Bhutan, 150 in Bangladesh, 200 in western Burma. The 2007 census gives 1,411 tigers in India. This figure is lower than that of the 1973 census when Project **Tiger** was launched. In contrast, in the 2014 census, there were 2226 tigers across India, which predicted that the tiger population in India would continue to skyrocket.

# The giant panda

The giant panda is probably one of the most powerful symbols when it comes to species conservation. A national treasure in China, the panda has a special meaning for WWF, since it has been its symbol since its foundation in 1961. This peaceful member of the bear family, which feeds on bamboo, faces several threats. Its forest habitat is fragmented, and populations are small and isolated from each other. Not to mention poaching, which is a permanent threat to the panda.

In the 1980s, there were only 1,114 pandas in China. But the most recent censuses from 2014 reveal that there are 1,864 pandas living in the wild. Their population has increased by 17% in just one decade.

## Where can it be found?

The giant panda could once be frequently seen in southern and eastern China, as well as Myanmar and northern Vietnam. Due to population growth and extensive development activities, its range is now reduced to some 20 patches of isolated forest in the mountains in Sichuan, Shaanxi, and Gansu provinces.

## Avoiding the worst for the panda

After 30 years of slow but steady progress, the giant panda's status has now changed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species from endangered to vulnerable. The decision is a recognition of the work done over several years by the Chinese government, local communities, nature reserve employees and WWF.