



LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

PEACE INDEPENDENCE DEMOCRACY UNITY PROSPERITY

Ministry of Agriculture and Environment

Department of Forestry

No: /DOF

Vientiane Capital, Dated: 11 SEP 2025

17406----

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Technical Standards for the Management of Captive Tiger (*Panthera tigris*) Breeding Facilities in Lao PDR

Pursuant to:

- The Decision of the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry on the Organization and Activities of the Forestry Department No. 3202/MAF, dated 7 July 2023;
- Law on Wildlife and Aquatic Resources No. 07/NA, dated 24 December 2015;
- Lao PDR's obligations under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);

The Department of Forestry, in its capacity as the CITES Management Authority of Lao PDR, hereby issues the following Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to regulate and standardize the management, housing, breeding, and welfare of captive tigers.

Article 1: Purpose and Scope

Purpose: This SOP provides step-by-step technical requirements to:

- Ensure genetic conservation and integrity of captive tigers;
- Prevent illegal trade and trafficking of tigers and their derivatives;
- Guarantee animal welfare and appropriate husbandry;
- Facilitate research, education, and potential reintroduction;
- Ensure compliance with Lao law and CITES provisions.

Scope: Applies to all state, private, or joint facilities housing, breeding, rescuing, transferring, or exhibiting tigers in Lao PDR.

Article 2: Licensing, Registration, and Reporting

Step 1. Licensing: Any facility holding tigers must first obtain a valid *Tiger Breeding and Management License* from the Department of Forestry (DOF). Licenses are non-transferable and subject to annual renewal, contingent upon satisfactory inspection by the competent authority.

Note: In line with the recommendations of the CITES Standing Committee at its 78th meeting (SC78, para. 33.8(k)(iii)), this licensing system does not permit the establishment of new tiger facilities. Existing facilities may only continue under strict compliance with licensing conditions and ongoing oversight by the DOF.

Step 2. Registration: Register all facilities and each tiger in the National Tiger Registry (TigerBase) managed by DOF.

Step 3. Reporting: Maintain daily facility logs (births, deaths, medical treatment, diet, transfers). Submit standardized electronic quarterly reports to DOF (Annex E).

Step 4. Breeding Authorization: Secure prior DOF approval via license for any breeding activity under a conservation-oriented plan.

Step 5. Prohibition of Commercial Trade: Keeping and breeding for commercial trade in live or dead whole tigers and their parts/derivatives is prohibited.

Article 3: Identification and Traceability

Step 1. Microchipping: Implant ISO 11784/11785-compliant microchip before 90 days of age.

Step 2. Biometric and Genetic Records: Record stripe photographs (both flanks + facial), collect DNA samples, and upload to TigerBase. All records must be linked to the individual tiger's microchip.

Step 3. Life History Tracking: Document cradle-to-grave records including date of birth, original source, transfers, reproduction, death and disposal (as per CITES Big Cat Task Force outcome document 2.1 a) i)). Dispose of carcasses following the SOP for disposal of deceased captive tigers (approved April 2025) by incineration or state-approved method under official supervision; issue disposal certificate.

Article 4: Facility Design, Biosecurity, and Housing

Step 1. Enclosure Recommended Standards:

- A outdoor enclosure: 1,000 m² per pair + 200 m² per extra adult.
- Fences: 5 m height with overhangs/moats; double perimeter fencing mandatory.
- Dens: 30 m²/tiger with climate control + platforms.
- Water feature: 20 m² pool per enclosure.

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Step 2. Functional Zoning: Establish distinct areas for breeding, quarantine, veterinary care, food preparation, and visitor safety.

Step 3. Biosecurity: Quarantine new arrivals for ≥ 30 days. Implement documented veterinary prevention program.

Article 5: Animal Welfare and Management

- Feed balanced carnivore diet (whole prey or equivalent + vet-recommended supplements).
- Implement weekly enrichment plan (sensory, cognitive, structural, social, food-based).
- House in compatible groups or pairs; solitary housing requires justification.
- Ban on public contact and performances.
- Maintain designated veterinarian and emergency health protocols.


Article 6: Breeding and Population Management

- Breeding requires DOF prior approval via license and adherence to conservation-based plans.
- Tigers that are not part of a conservation-based plan must be separated by gender before being sterilized (in accordance with CITES SC78 para 33.8, k i)).
- Participate in national/international studbooks to prevent inbreeding and maintain genetic diversity.

Article 7: Staff Competence and Training

- Facility manager: University degree (biology, veterinary, animal husbandry) + 5 years' large carnivore experience.
- Animal care staff: Mandatory DOF-certified training in handling, welfare, safety, emergency response.

Article 8: Inspections and Compliance

- DOF/DOFI conduct ≥ 1 unannounced inspection per year following the inspection guidance approved by the Lao government in November 2024.
- Compliance ratings:
 - Grade A: Fully compliant;
 - Grade B: Minor non-compliance (fix in 30 days);
 - Grade C: Major non-compliance (operations suspended);
 - Non-compliant: License revoked, criminal liability possible
- Transition: Existing facilities must comply within 12 months. Breeding moratorium applies until verified. 

Article 9: Sanctions

Non-compliance subject to fines, suspension, confiscation, or criminal prosecution under national law.

Article 10: Implementation

This SOP shall take effect from the date of its issuance.

Note: Implementation is conditional upon the **National Tiger Registry (TigerBase)** being fully operational. All facilities and relevant authorities must ensure that TigerBase is in place and functioning prior to the enforcement of this SOP.

ANNEXES:

- Annex A: Enclosure and Design Standards
- Annex B: Daily/Weekly Health Checklists
- Annex C: Veterinary and Necropsy Forms
- Annex D: Escape and Incident Protocols
- Annex E: Reporting Templates *See*

Issued by:

Director General, Department of Forestry
CITES Management Authority of Lao PDR



Assoc.Prof.Dr. Somvang PHIMMAVONG

Date: 11. 09. 2025

Annex A: Enclosure Recommended Standards

Component	Minimum Standard Requirement	Verification Method	Compliant (Y/N)	Notes / Corrective Action
Outdoor Enclosure Size	1,000 m ² for one pair + 200 m ² per additional adult tiger.	Review of facility blueprints; on-site measurement.		
Fence Height	5 meters minimum.	On-site measurement.		
Anti-Climb/Escape	Overhangs (min. 1m inward angle) or moats (min. 5m wide, 3m deep).	Visual inspection.		
Perimeter Fencing	Double fencing system with a minimum 3m gap between fences.	Visual inspection.		
Den Size per Tiger	30 m ² minimum.	Review of blueprints; on-site measurement.		
Den Amenities	Climate control (heating/cooling), raised resting platforms.	Visual inspection; check HVAC system logs.		
Water Feature	Pool/min. 20 m ² per enclosure, clean, accessible.	On-site measurement; visual inspection of water quality.		
Functional Zoning	Clearly separated areas for: Quarantine, Breeding, Veterinary, Food Prep, Public (if applicable).	Review of facility layout map; on-site walkthrough.		
Quarantine Unit	Fully isolated unit with separate equipment, ≥30-day capacity.	Visual inspection of isolation and access controls.		
Visitor Safety	Secure viewing areas (e.g., hardened glass, sufficient distance).	Inspection of barriers and public access protocols.		

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Annex B: Daily/Weekly Health Checklists

B1: Daily Health and Welfare Checklist

Facility: _____

Date: _____

Staff: _____

Animal ID/ Microchip #	Appetite (Full, Partial, None)	Behavior (Normal, Lethargic, Aggressive)	Stool (Normal, Diarrhea, None)	Visible Injuries/ Abnormalities	Enrichment Provided (Type)	Initials
General Enclosure Check: Cleanliness (Y/N), Water Available/Clean (Y/N), Fence Integrity (Y/N)						

B2: Weekly Detailed Inspection Checklist

Facility: _____ **Week** _____

Ending: _____ **Supervisor:** _____

Check Item	Status (OK / Needs Action)	Action Taken / Comments
Review of all Daily Health Logs for the week		
Integrity of all fences, gates, and locks		
Functionality of water features/pools (filtration, cleanliness)		
Inventory of food stocks and storage conditions		
Inventory of medical supplies and drugs		
Function check of emergency equipment (tranq. guns, etc.)		
Review of enrichment schedule and rotation		
Overall facility security assessment		

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Annex C: Veterinary and Necropsy Forms

C1: Veterinary Treatment Record

Animal ID: _____ **Species:** *Panthera tigris* **Sex:** M / F **Age:** _____

Date	Clinical Signs / Reason for Treatment	Diagnosis	Treatment Given (Drug, Dose, Route, Frequency)	Veterinarian (Name & Signature)	Next Review Date

C2: Tiger Necropsy (Post-Mortem) Report

Date of Death: _____ **Time of Death (approx.):** _____ **Date of Necropsy:** _____

Animal ID: _____ **Sex:** M / F **Age:** _____ **Presumed Cause of Death:** _____

Microchip Number (scanned): _____

Section	Findings
External Examination	Body condition (Good, Fair, Poor), Visible wounds, trauma, signs of illness, etc.
Internal Examination	Observations on all major organs (heart, liver, lungs, kidneys, digestive tract). Note any abnormalities.
Samples Collected	(e.g., Tissue (liver, lung), Blood, Hair, DNA) List samples and their storage location (e.g., Freezer ID).
Final Diagnosis	Pathologist's conclusion on the cause of death.
Disposal Method	<input type="checkbox"/> Incineration <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify): _____ Disposal Certificate Issued: Yes / No Certificate No.: _____
Report Completed by:	_____ (Name & Signature of Veterinarian/Pathologist)

Annex D: Escape and Incident Protocols

D1: Tiger Escape / Security Breach Immediate Action Protocol

Step 1: Secure and Alert

- Ensure safety of all staff. Account for all personnel.
- IMMEDIATELY alert Facility Manager and Head of Security.
- Activate on-site alarm system to alert all staff to the emergency.

Step 2: Confirm and Contain

- Confirm the animal's ID and last known location.
- If safe to do so, secure all internal gates to contain the animal within a section of the facility.
- Move all other animals to secure holding dens.

Step 3: Notify Authorities

- The Facility Manager MUST immediately notify:
 - Local Police: [Insert Local Police Phone Number]

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- Department of Forestry (DOF): [Insert DOF Emergency Contact Number]
- Local Authorities: [Insert Village Chief/District Office Number]
- Provide details: Time of escape, animal description (ID, size, sex), last known direction of travel.

Step 4: Public Safety & Recovery

- DOF and Police will lead the external response and public notification.
- Facility staff will assist with recovery efforts (e.g., guiding animal into a trap, using tranquilization equipment) ONLY under the direction of authorities and if it is safe to do so.

Step 5: Documentation

- Once the situation is resolved, complete an Incident Report (Annex E).
- Preserve any evidence related to the cause of the breach (e.g., broken fence, faulty lock).

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Annex E: Reporting Templates

E1: Quarterly Facility Report Template

(To be submitted electronically to DOF)

Reporting Period: Q1 / Q2 / Q3 / Q4 | Year: 20__

Facility Name: _____

License Number: _____

Facility Manager: _____

Section 1: Tiger Inventory (Summary)

	Start of Quarter	Born	Died	Transferred In	Transferred Out	End of Quarter
Total Tigers						
Adult Males						
Adult Females						
Sub-adults						
Cubs (<1 yr)						

Section 2: Significant Events (Detail each in separate table)

- **Births:** Date, Mother ID, Father ID, Number of Cubs, Microchip Numbers assigned.
- **Deaths:** Date, Animal ID, Microchip Number, Presumed Cause of Death, Necropsy Report Y/N, Disposal Certificate Number.
- **Transfers:** Date, Animal ID, Microchip Number, Transferred To/From (Facility Name & License #), Purpose, DOF Authorization Reference.

Section 3: Compliance Statement

I hereby declare that the information provided in this report is true and correct, and that the facility has operated in compliance with the SOP for Tiger Facility Management during this reporting period.

Signature of Facility Manager: _____

Date: _____

E2: Incident Report Form

Facility: _____ Date of

Incident: _____ Time: _____

Type of Incident: Animal Escape Animal Injury (to human) Animal-on-Animal Aggression Equipment Failure Other: _____

Item	Details
Animals Involved	List Animal IDs and Microchip Numbers.
People Involved	List staff or visitors involved (names, injuries if applicable).
Description of Incident	Provide a detailed, step-by-step account of what happened.
Immediate Actions Taken	What was done to secure the situation?
Root Cause Analysis	What was the direct and underlying cause of the incident?
Corrective Actions	What actions will be taken to prevent a recurrence?
Reported To Authorities	<input type="checkbox"/> DOF <input type="checkbox"/> Police <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ Date Reported: _____ Contact Name: _____
Reported by:	_____ (Name & Signature)

