



Dr. G. Wayne Clough
Secretary, Smithsonian Institution

Global Tiger Initiative
World Bank—Smithsonian Institution Partnership Launch
Smithsonian Castle, National Mall
Friday, June 19, 2009

Dr. Clough's Remarks

Thank you very much. Thank you and welcome. Thank you, Steve, for that introduction and particularly for your leadership as the Acting Director of our National Zoo and Conservation Center in Front Royal.

We welcome all our special guests today from this city as well as around the world. And thank you for coming to witness what we believe is an important step, the creation of a global effort between the Smithsonian Institution and the World Bank to ensure that wild tigers can survive for generations to come.

It builds on a previous partnership which was launched, the Global Tiger Initiative, last year. And I'm confident that the skills, expertise, and experience that these two great institutions have will make a major difference in the 13 tiger-range countries.

As the distinguished Harvard biologist E.O. Wilson recently said, "If you save the living environment, the biodiversity that we have left and the biodiversity you have left, you will also automatically save the physical environment [too]. If you only save the physical environment, you will ultimately lose both."

Our two great institutions, we believe, have the responsibility to prepare future conservation leaders to recognize and adapt to the global challenges that we and the wildlife that we admire so much faces. The support of the World Wildlife Fund and Deutsche Bank will greatly contribute to this success. And much of the training will take place at the Zoo's Conservation Research Center in Front Royal, Virginia.

I'm especially pleased to welcome the President of the World Bank, Mr. Robert Zoellick, and I'll introduce him shortly. I want to thank Congress, of course,

for their long-standing support for the Smithsonian and the National Zoo, and particular thanks to Congressman Madeleine Bordallo of Guam. She's been very active and involved in environmental issues throughout her 40 years of public service.

In the last Congress, the Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans, and Wildlife held hearings on tiger conservation and created legislation that became the Multinational Species Conservation Funds Reauthorization Act.

Our former Zoo Director, John Berry, testified at that hearing. The legislation supports field conservation projects, scientific research, habitat enhancements, law enforcement, and local community outreach and education. And I should add that this subcommittee, along with the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands, will be at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Edgewater, Maryland, next week for a joint field hearing on the impacts of climate change on the Chesapeake Bay, which are incidentally very large—its effects.

We look forward to continued cooperation with Congress on these and other important issues. Since its founding, the Smithsonian has always been an international institution, and today it has activities in 88 countries. A few months ago, I was at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama, which is a world leader in the field of the behavior and the responses of tropical forests.

This month, I've been in Chile to see our Magellan--the Magellan Telescopes and the potential for the giant Magellan Telescopes that allow us to explore the origins of the universe, and just yesterday, I returned from a visit to Kenya to see the Impala Research Center.

The Impala Research Center offers the opportunity to see the magnificent wildlife of Africa firsthand, and I can tell you it is a remarkable experience; but particularly, to try to understand how the pressing needs of the people who live in these countries can work together with those needs that we have for the wonderful [ph.] animals--how both can succeed and how we can develop a sustainable approach for both humans and animals.

And that's what we hope to do with this new partnership—help countries who are involved to learn how to coexist with wildlife, particularly the grand and magnificent tiger.

The Smithsonian has had a long concern for wild tigers. In 1969, then Secretary S. Dillon Ripley pledged the Smithsonian to support wild tigers, save all tigers at the New Delhi meeting of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

As we conduct research around the world, we also recognize our responsibility of providing resources and sharing our knowledge with international colleagues. With programs like this, the World Bank Conservation and Development Network Partnerships that work together, we have the opportunity to train hundreds of decision-makers, professionals, and practitioners who are on the ground engaged in stabilizing and eventually restoring the wild tiger populations.

We're optimistic, and we're ready to make a difference. So, let me extend my thanks to all those across the Smithsonian and the World Bank who made this day possible—a very exciting day, and especially to Bob Zoellick. He is the 11th president of the World Bank.

Mr. Zoellick served in President Bush's Cabinet as U.S. Trade Representative and Deputy Secretary of State, and he's held many other government positions as well as leadership roles in the private sector. And he is a dedicated and remarkable public servant, and we look forward to working with him in this great effort.