

NATURE

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**4K**

# THE HIDDEN TIGERS OF DIBANG

1 x 50 min.

Written and directed by Mike Birkhead and Beth Jones

4K, 5.1 and Stereo

Executive producers: Sabine Holzer, Walter Köhler



TERRA MATER  
Factual Studios

**This film tells the almost unbelievable story of an undiscovered population of 50 tigers. And how their discovery could lead to their death.**

In the remote Himalayan valley of Dibang in North East India, fifty wild tigers roam the slopes. For centuries, they've been kept safe from the world by the local Idu people whose entire ideology is centered around protecting the tiger.

But three years ago, a young Indian scientist called Sahil Nijhawan working in the area gained the trust of a local family and was told of their existence.

This programme follows Sahil for a year as he attempts to see one of these hidden tigers for himself. He's spent the last few years setting video camera traps. He can recognise at least 12 individuals, including what he thinks is the biggest male tiger ever. But now he's determined to know the tigers even better and film them using daylight cameras, night cameras and thermal cameras.

Sahil also learns more about the age-old harmony that exists between the Idu and the tiger: even if the big cats slaughter their highly valued ceremonial cattle, the

Idu won't retaliate. By meeting local shaman and taking part in their rituals, Sahil finds out why.

But he also learns of the dangers facing Dibang's tigers.

The valley is being infiltrated by foreign invaders, Solung people, drawn in search of a valuable medicinal plant. The Solung don't revere the tiger as the Idu do and there's no taboo to killing one.

And there is an even greater threat.

As the secret of Dibang's tigers spreads beyond the valley, Sahil discovers that Indian tigers are valuable political pawns. The government's National Tiger Conservation Authority want to claim these tigers as their own and declare the Idu land a tiger reserve under their protection. But their guns and guards have failed in so many Indian parks where many tiger populations have all but disappeared—slaughtered by poachers.

Is this the fate of the Dibang tigers? Or can Sahil convince the authorities to leave them alone, under the protection of the Idu, something that has worked so well for years for the hidden tigers of Dibang?



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