

Russia Mulls Neurosurgery for Paralyzed Tiger

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russian authorities said Tuesday they would rather perform neurosurgery on a crippled Amur tiger with paralyzed hind legs and tail than put the animal to sleep.

The big cat was found crawling across the taiga in the far eastern Amur region in late January.

Despite being malnourished, the feline tried to resist capture, though it had no defense against a tranquilizer dart.

The tiger was then sent for a medical examination, though experts struggled to find a CAT scanner big enough to support his weight.

Eight foreign veterinarians and several Russian specialists said the tiger cannot be healed and should be put to sleep to put it out of its suffering, as it is likely in considerable pain, Amurpravda.ru news website said.

But every possible measure will be taken to save the tiger and allow him to return to the wild, or at least live out his days in a safari park, the Amur Region administration said in a statement.

The administration named neurosurgery as a possible treatment for the tiger, which is believed to have sustained a spinal cord injury when hunting a boar.

The decision on the surgery is expected Wednesday, when the results of the CAT scan will be available.

The Amur tiger is an endangered species, with only some 450 living in the wild, according to the World Wide Fund for Nature. The animal is the focus of an intense conservation effort spearheaded by President Vladimir Putin.

Not all humans are willing to put in as much effort to spare animals from being put to sleep: On Sunday, a healthy young giraffe in a Copenhagen zoo was killed, autopsied and fed to the lions — all in public view — as a genetic undesirable whose existence could lead to inbreeding.

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