



The Elephant Conservation Network

Kanchanaburi, Thailand



The ECN Newsletter

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ECN Mission

To understand the causes and effects of human-elephant conflict and establish an inclusive and collaborative approach to seeking solutions and planning interventions



ECN is a small non-profit organisation which relies on grants and private donations to do its work. Any financial support you give will be gratefully received

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1. ECN co-hosts first national HEC workshop in Thailand

In March, ECN organized the first national human-elephant conflict (HEC) workshop in Thailand entitled 'Human Elephant Conflict: The Way Forward'. It was co-hosted by Salakpra Wildlife Sanctuary. Held at the Pavilion Hotel near sanctuary headquarters and supported by [ZSL](#) and the [Darwin Initiative](#), it brought together 109 people (not including the ECN and Salakpra teams) from local communities, government agencies, NGOs, universities and the private sector. The aim of this two-day workshop was to share lessons learned from HEC research and mitigation projects around Thailand and to suggest practical solutions.



Local leaders at the workshop

There were 19 presentations in all, five given by government officials, two by university researchers, three by local community members, and nine by NGO representatives including ECN, [WCS Thailand](#), and [WWF-Thailand](#) with whom ECN enjoys good collaborative relations. On the second day, participants were divided into working groups to consider what should be done to help conserve Salakpra, how and by whom. Using these deliberations, ECN is currently working with Salakpra officials to draft an integrated conservation development plan which will be circulated for comment to other stakeholders in due course. Many people at the workshop commended ECN for facilitating such a useful gathering, giving those involved with HEC in Thailand the opportunity to meet each other in this way. Every working group also noted that active and sincere collaboration between stakeholders in the HEC equation is absolutely essential for the success of any long-term solution.

2. Crop-raiding field trials completed

In early 2007, ECN initiated crop-

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protection trials with farmers whose fields are raided by elephants. The aim was to find out which protection methods work, and which are cost-effective. Some of the methods tested were local schemes which villagers believed in but had not proven, e.g. plastic bags tied along string to mimic a simple electric fence, and CDs dangling in front of torches (right) which flash when they twirl. Other methods used effectively elsewhere e.g. chilli and tobacco oil fences, and well designed electric ones, were also tested. Farmers were keen to try these other methods when they heard about them at the feedback meeting after ECN's study trip to Kenya in 2006. Results from these trials are now being analysed.



An ingenious use for old CD's -- if it works

3. Srisawat corridor plan approved by Cabinet

As the south-eastern arm of the Western Forest Conservation Complex (WEFCOM), Salakpra supports at least 150 elephants, almost 20% of Thailand's largest surviving wild population. But their future is at risk unless the Srisawat forest reserve, a crucial conservation corridor connecting northern Salakpra to the rest of WEFCOM, is properly protected. With support from Japan's [Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund](#) and [US Fish and Wildlife Service](#), ECN surveyed the corridor in 2007 to map elephant distribution and human impacts. In December, Jittin reported our findings to the Kasetsart University's annual wildlife conference as a result of which, we were invited to man a booth at the Department of Nature Conservation's annual wildlife fair. At the fair, our four posters caught the attention of the Minister of Environment and his team who were developing a national conservation corridor plan. That plan, which incorporated maps and data from our corridor report, was approved by Cabinet on 22 January 2008.



Srisawat forest reserve corridor area

4. Study trip to other HEC wildlife sanctuaries

From 3-6 February, a team from Salakpra visited the Phu Luang and Phu Khieo wildlife sanctuaries in north-east Thailand to learn about the effective HEC mitigation methods of these royally-sponsored conservation areas. The study trip was partially supported by ECN but was

organised by Salakpra. Mem and Joy went to learn on ECN's behalf along with four Salakpra staff, two members of Kanchanaburi's Livestock Department, ten local community leaders and a protected area volunteer. At Phu Luang the team learned about the electric fence that stops around 100 elephants from raiding nearby fields. At Phu Khieo, they met local villagers and sanctuary staff to learn about the EU-funded participatory management project.



Learning that regular maintenance is what makes an electric fence effective

5. River Kwae Yai crossing routes surveyed

As part of mapping land-use around Salakpra and identifying corridors, ECN also investigated past and present routes used by elephants to leave the sanctuary and cross the River Kwae Yai (aka River Kwai). Field surveys were done by Mon and Gip, first by interviewing twenty-two of the most knowledgeable local residents e.g. hunters, village chiefs, farmers, cattle herders, and fishermen. Accompanied by their informants, they then surveyed the land routes on foot and the river banks by boat. A report, with maps, is in the pipeline. The team was told of eight routes used by elephants in the past, all following streams or valleys to reach the main river (right). Five are still used, though only one crosses the river, and three are blocked by the Srinakarin hydro-electric reservoir or villages. Six of the original elephant routes are associated with persistent crop-raiding. The other two have no crops nearby. We hope to identify another potential corridor to link the southern side of Salakpra to the Erawan National Park on the opposite side of the River Kwae Yai, thereby linking those two elephant populations.



Crop-raiding by elephants started soon after the Kwae Yai river was blocked by the Srinakarin Dam

6. Volunteer web designer

In January, Erik Rogers joined the ECN team as a volunteer to help increase our visibility beyond Salakpra by telling the world about our grassroots work with local associates and by sharing what we have learned. Our moniker ECN is an aim as well as a name, so building a collaborative network of people seeking sustainable solutions to HEC is a key objective. After spending several years developing commercial



Erik Rogers, ECN's web designer, a

websites, including one for Green Tortoise Adventure Travel, Erik volunteered to build one for Thailand's [North Andaman Tsunami Relief](#) (NATR) where he also taught English as part of an innovative vocational training programme. With its tsunami relief work done, NATR became [Andaman Discoveries](#), a community-based ecotourism initiative with mutually supportive links to ECN.

diligent, multi-skilled night-owl

The Elephant Conservation Network

ECN is a small non-government organisation (NGO), based in Kanchanaburi, west Thailand, that is seeking sustainable solutions to human-elephant conflict. Its current aim is to secure the future of the Salakpra Wildlife Sanctuary's elephants and their forest ecosystem for the benefit of local people and wildlife. It is supported by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and works with local communities, government agencies and other NGOs. We are extremely grateful to our [donors and supporters](#):

