

Thailand Report to CSG Steering Committee
25th CSG Working Meeting 7 – 10 May 2018

By
Parntep Ratanakorn
Yosapong Temsiripong
Nareerat Sangkachai

Siamese Crocodile Task Force
Crocodile Cooperative of Thailand
Mahidol University

The Siamese Crocodile Task Force is a network of researchers, conservationists, and all stake holders in both public and private in southeast Asia including Indonesia, Cambodia, Lao, Vietnam, and Thailand. The main objective of SCTF is to encourage all range states to closely communicate on conservation status of the Siamese crocodiles. The 2nd meeting was held on 1-2 June 2017 at Mahidol University, Thailand. See meeting report in CSG Newsletter Vol.36 No.2 April – June 2017.

Here we summarize Thailand conservation activities within a year. In September 2017, we published a significant literature in PLOS ONE entitled genetic diversity and demographic history of captive Siamese and Saltwater crocodiles in Thailand (Lapbenjakul et.al., 2017). We collected DNA samples from the majority of captive breeding facilities in Thailand and tested them. The outcomes from various techniques show a small percentage of hybridization occurs within captive breeding program in Thailand. We concluded that we have a number of purebred Siamese and Saltwater crocodiles to support reintroduction program. We strongly encourage all crocodile farms to continue keeping both species separate to avoid hybridization since we must genetically select them for reintroduction.

We have done a number of systematic surveys in Bueng Boraphet Wildlife Reserve during Oct-Dec 2017. The survey route consists of transect line 1 and 2, total 34.38 km. Day-time surveys for signs of tail drags and footprints revealed several suitable micro-habitats within their home ranges. Night-time surveys found up to four eyeshines. Small population of juvenile and sub-adult Siamese crocodiles were identified and the socio-economic point of view was studied. The full report was submitted to the government and await authorization of conservation strategies.



Photo 1. Bueng Boraphet Wildlife Reserve, Line transect #1 (17.38 km Yellow line), Line transect #2 (17 km Red line).



Photo 2. 1.2 m Siamese crocodile and footprints in Bueng Boraphet WR

In February 2018, twenty 1-year-old crocodiles were selected from several COCOT member captive breeding farms to prepare for reintroduction. They were DNA tested, health checked up, and undergone acclimatization program. For a pilot release, three individuals were tagged and released on April 23rd, 2018 in Pangsida National Park (see photos). One of them was equipped with a radio transmitter and will be monitored for at least six months. The others are being acclimatized and prepared for release soon.



Photo 3. Siamese crocodiles in acclimatization zone

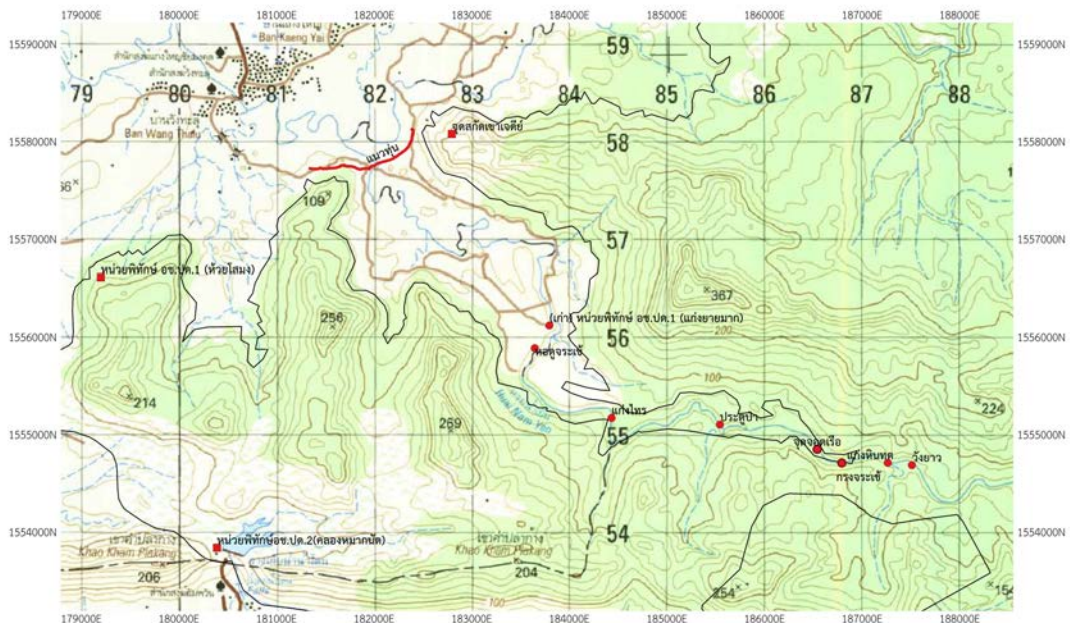


Photo 4. Pangsia National Park, temporary cage and release site (Red)



Photo 5. Released a transmitter-attached crocodile at Pangsia National Park

We have also funded for writing up a national standard for crocodile processing plant and the committee has been selected to review the drafted standard.

Thailand has successfully standardized the national crocodile farming standard and the crocodile breeding standard in 2016-2017. With these standards, Thai crocodile farmers will be able to meet GAP standard for aquaculture and GMP standard for processing. The standard harmonization program within ASEAN will be benefit for all range states of the Siamese crocodiles.
