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# USAID WILDLIFE ASIA WORKSHOP FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERS ON REDUCING DEMAND FOR WILDLIFE PRODUCTS

Phitsanulok Province, Thailand  
March 13, 2021



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# CONTENTS

1	BACKGROUND .....	1
2	OBJECTIVES.....	1
3	PARTICIPANTS .....	1
4	AGENDA AND METHODOLOGY .....	2
5	TRAINING RESULTS AND OUTPUTS.....	5
6	SIGNING OF COMMITMENT POSTER .....	7
7	NEXT STEPS .....	8
	ANNEX 1 PARTICIPANT LIST .....	9
	ANNEX 2 WORKSHOP AGENDA (ENGLISH).....	11



## **I BACKGROUND**

The workshop was a collaboration between the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), USAID Wildlife Asia, the Sekhiyadhamma network, and the Bodhiyalaya Foundation, with resource persons from WildAid Thailand and the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP). The day-long workshop was held at the Phitsanulok Psychiatric Hospital, I Wang Tong District, Phitsanulok province, Thailand. This event marked the second time that Buddhist spiritual leaders came together to learn about how monks and nuns can be key influencers in efforts to reduce demand for wildlife products (such as skin, teeth, ivory, and meat) based on the perceived belief that these products bring good luck and protection from harm.

## **2 OBJECTIVES**

Building on the outputs of the Workshop for Spiritual Leaders on Reducing Demand for Wildlife Products in October 2020, the workshop aimed to strengthen the capacity and commitment of monks and nuns in key selected temples in Thailand to do the following:

1. Echo key messages of the two spiritual beliefs campaigns in their own teachings and respond to questions from people visiting temples and others with whom they come in contact
2. Provide information regarding the negative impact of consuming endangered species, based on findings from USAID Wildlife Asia's 2018 consumer research study, the 2020 Rapid Monitoring Survey of USAID Wildlife Asia's campaign messages, and other relevant studies
3. Develop messages aligned with USAID Wildlife Asia's campaigns that will be relevant in their particular temples and similar settings
4. Speak authoritatively and explain why the use of ivory, tiger, and other amulets derived from endangered species are not in line with Buddhist teachings
5. Disseminate USAID Wildlife Asia's spiritual beliefs campaign messages and engage their followers in discussions with participants to counter these spiritual beliefs

## **3 PARTICIPANTS**

The participants included 22 Buddhist monks and six lay representatives from 20 temples in 11 provinces from the Bodhiyalaya Foundation and Sekhiyadhamma network. These monks and lay persons will be the key influencers to promote the message to stop using wildlife products and stop killing wildlife. Please refer to Annex I for the list of representatives from the temples.

Participants also included representatives from each of the coordinating organizations, including Phitsanulok Psychiatric Hospital, Mahidol University, and presenters from DNP, USAID Wildlife Asia, WildAid Thailand, and the INEB team.

## 4 AGENDA AND METHODOLOGY

### TRAINING TOPICS

The training covered the following topics:

1. USAID Wildlife Asia Consumer Research on Demand for Wildlife Products 2018 in Thailand
2. Results of the 2020 Rapid Monitoring Survey
3. Illegal wildlife trade in Thailand
4. Buddhism's perspective on killing wildlife for use as spiritual items to bring good luck and prevent harm
5. Spiritual beliefs and Buddhism
6. What Thai law says about the ivory trade
7. What monks and nuns can do to help reduce consumer demand and counter illegal wildlife trade
8. Key outputs from the October 2020 Workshop for Spiritual Leaders on Reducing Demand for Wildlife Products

### TRAINING METHODOLOGY

The workshop methodology included group presentations, videos, and both large and small group discussions with presentations as described below:

- Presentations of USAID Wildlife Asia spiritual beliefs campaigns (two phases), 2018 Thailand Consumer Research, and the 2020 Thailand Rapid Monitoring Survey
- Group discussions led by facilitators and key resource persons from INEB
- Small group exercise about integrating messages into teachings
- Action planning by monks and lay persons
- Wrap-up and closing



*Large group discussion*



The presentations were delivered in Thai with some PowerPoint content in English. Videos were also included in the presentations. Please refer to Annex 2 for the full agenda.

Phra Khru Pipit Sutahorn, chairman of the monastics working on community development in upper northern Thailand, sharpened the workshop's focus in his opening comments by saying that sometimes people comply with the law, but do not sufficiently fulfill their moral responsibilities for wildlife conservation efforts and protecting wildlife. Here he highlighted the existing gap between law enforcement and moral authority and emphasized the workshop's objective to learn and share information with the monks.

Eleanora DeGuzman of USAID Wildlife Asia thanked the monks and other participants for attending the workshop. Her opening remarks highlighted that USAID Wildlife Asia is a regional program that covers the Mekong region, including Vietnam, Thailand, and China, where two campaigns have been implemented to reduce consumer demands for ivory and tiger products.

**Session 1** – Mr. Mongkol Khamsuk and Mr. Natthakorn Ketrakthong from DNP's Phitsanulok office provided an update on how Thailand is tackling the illegal trade of wildlife products such as ivory and tiger parts. This session focused on the legal definition of wildlife which is applied in wildlife sanctuaries and non-hunting areas. They also discussed the latest version of the law, which was passed in 2020. One challenge from the recent change in the law is how to prevent wildlife hunting on monastery grounds. Some species are protected within conservation areas, but may not be if they are found outside those areas.



*Session 1*

Thailand is a hub of international trading, with the laws varying among neighboring countries. Country borders are porous which makes enforcing the law difficult. A lively discussion followed with concerns raised by the participants regarding educating local people about these issues, including the use of wild animal products in local medicine; unequal enforcement of the law; and conservation of local resources by local people.

**Session 2** - Chinnapat Chin from USAID Wildlife Asia provided an introduction of USAID Wildlife Asia, the Spiritual Beliefs campaign “No Ivory, No Tiger Amulets”, and the Results of the 2020 Thailand Rapid Monitoring Survey. Next, Rabia Mustaq of WildAid introduced the background of the Spiritual

Beliefs “A Good Life is Free of Killing“ campaign. The campaigns focus on changing attitudes and social norms reflected through behaviors. Generally, the feedback from the social media has been positive. However, media channels need to continuously run the campaigns and users can be difficult to reach, especially persons in the 25–29-year-old age group. Chin closed by saying that these campaigns can be a call to action through which people can become involved by sharing their personal stories. Being adaptable to receiving these messages through offline and online media platforms will reach a wider audience.

**Session 3** – Ajarn Surin On-prom and Phra Win Siri wattano of the INEB team, led group discussion on the role of Buddhist monks in disrupting the illegal wildlife trade and consumption in Thailand. Ajarn Surin also highlighted the need to conserve the forest and its role in animal habitats near roads, dams, and other infrastructure. People need to learn how to coexist with the animals in their habitats without killing them.

The discussion included the following topics:

- Relationship between monks and wildlife, the role of monks
- Role of monks in campaign against use of wildlife parts
- Buddhist principals regarding use of wildlife parts
- “Prasuth Chadok” (Buddhist holy scripture teaching) on the virtues of wildlife
- Case studies of temples and wildlife conservation in Thailand
- The role of the monks in wildlife conservation and avoiding the use of wildlife parts/products
- Agencies involved in supporting monks in conservation efforts to end trade of wildlife parts/products

A monk who attended the previous workshop played his music (he composed the lyrics, which argue against the use of elephant ivory and tiger fang, during the last workshop). Click link below to view video: [https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=4568660079871130&id=100001815502457](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=4568660079871130&id=100001815502457).

**Session 4** - Chinnapat Chin, USAID Wildlife Asia, facilitated this session on creating and disseminating messages to deter use of wildlife parts. Chin presented the correlations between the 2018 Thailand Consumer Research and the 2020 Thailand Monitoring Survey. Overall, the data indicated positive changes in beliefs and attitudes, future buying behavior, and social norms, all of which favor reduced use of ivory and tiger products.

One key result from the survey is that respondents’ agreement on the perceived benefits of using wildlife products decreased from the baseline among four indicators:

- Ivory brings luck/good fortune decreased by 32.1%
- Tiger products bring luck/good fortune decreased by 13.7%
- Ivory provides protection from evil/ harm decreased by 31.8%
- Tiger products provide protection from evil/harm decreased by 10%

Overall, the pattern of people’s intention to buy tiger or ivory products has shifted, with a larger percent indicating that they will not purchase these products, as well as a decrease in the group that “will buy” or “possibly buy” these products in the future.

## 5 TRAINING RESULTS AND OUTPUTS

### SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The large group was divided into four breakout groups. The small group discussions were very productive as monks and lay persons sat together planning how to integrate key messages into their teachings. The key messages should effectively reduce the use of wildlife products and end the killing of wild animals.

The small groups were asked to make very short (60-second) videos to post on social media that were designed to reach their target groups and conveyed their specific messages. Dhanakhorn Thongdeang, INEB team member, gave some practical tips about how to make these short videos and to use a hashtag to identify it.



*Small group discussion*

Small group presentations given by monks and lay persons are summarized below:

#### GROUP 1

- First target group – Users or amulet masters, sellers of Buddhist statues, or those who have a strong belief in these products
  - Slogan – “*Stop Believing, Stop Buying/Using, Save Lives/Preserve Life*”
- Second target group – Children, youth, and young adults
  - Slogan – “*Save Wildlife – Save the Future*”
- Third target group – Spiritual leaders including monks and nuns
  - Slogan – “*Consecrating the ivory and tiger fangs = killing of elephants and tigers*”
- If animals are killed, people may not have an opportunity to know about these animals.
- Before entering the cycle of buying and using, prevent people from buying and using.
- Media channels will include Facebook, Instagram, Thai Public Broadcasting Service, and others

#### GROUP 2

- Four target groups – government authority, villagers (sub-groups including those who believe or do not believe wildlife products can protect them), traders or sellers, and sorcerers or

persons believing in black magic

- Messages will be developed for each target group which will be shared through several channels including radio, TV, Facebook, Line, YouTube, and other social media.

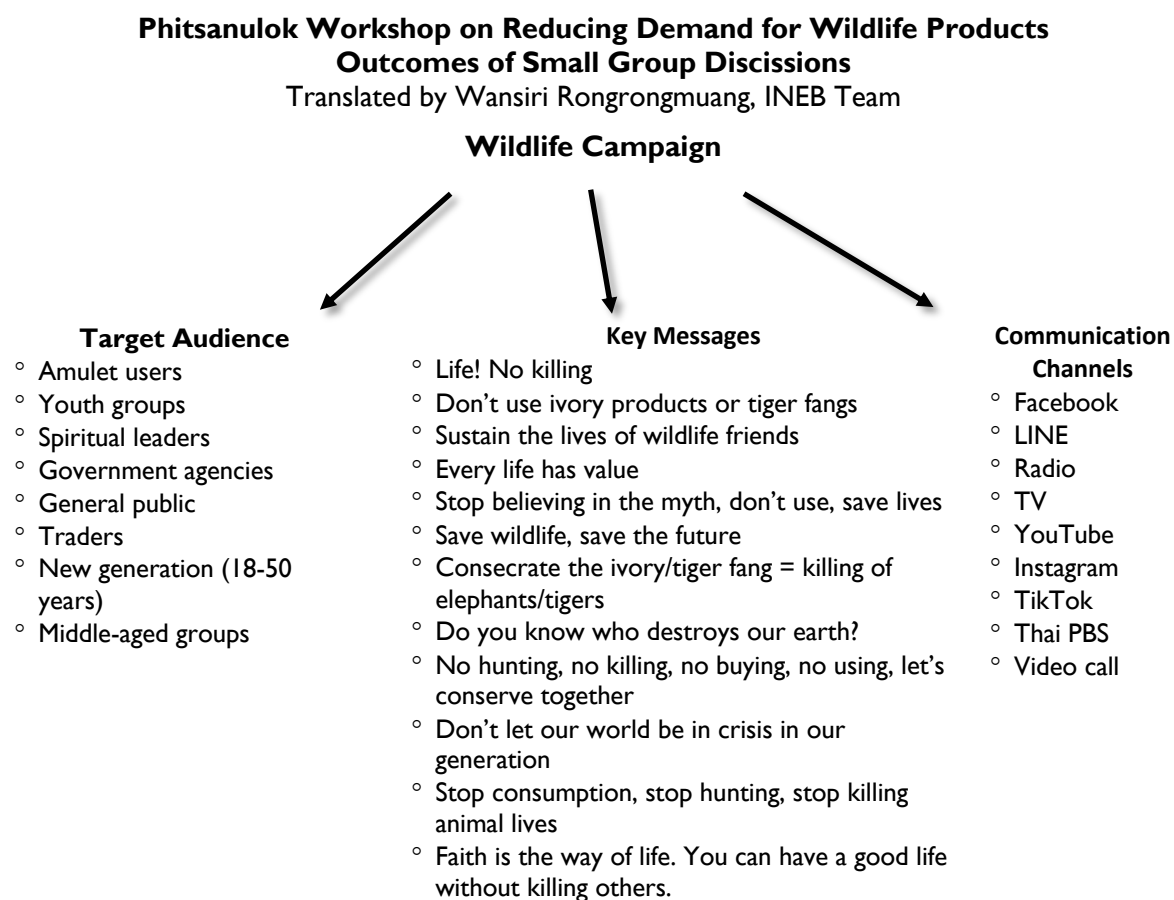
### GROUP 3

- Target groups – youth and middle-aged people who are 50 or over are the most difficult to change perceptions, need a positive message to reach them
- Another group is children of the earth
- Messages include “Stop eating, stop hunting, stop killing animals’ lives” and “Believe in yourself which doesn’t include killing. A good life does not include killing.

### GROUP 4

- Who, What, When, and Why?
- The target group is people 18–50 years old
- Main slogan – “No Hunting, No Killing, No Buying, No Using; Preserve Life”
- Channels include TikTok in social media
- This group explained the cycle process of supply and demand; if no one wants it, there will be no killing.
- Connected current issue of PM 2.5 to connect to the youth

The outputs from the small group discussions have been summarized into the chart below.









*Monks signing commitment poster*

## **7 NEXT STEPS**

The workshop participants were engaged in all of the discussions, with many monks and monasteries already involved in conservation efforts. As a whole, they had a very positive response to the workshop, with the groups from Chiang Rai and Mae Hong Song provinces specifically expressing their commitment to continue these activities. The third workshop in the series is scheduled for July 2021.

## ANNEX I PARTICIPANT LIST

No.	Name (English) ภาษาอังกฤษ	Name (Thai) ภาษาไทย
1	Phra Boonmee Thitaloko	พระบุญมี ฐิตาโลโก
2	Phrakhru Sangwonwachirawimon Kanong	พระครูสังวรราชวิมล
3	Phramaha Anuwat Wichairat	พระมหาอนุวัฒน์ วิชัยรัตน์
4	Phra Panya Supa	พระปัญญา สุภา
5	Phramaha Noppanat Numdokmai	พระมหานพนัช นาดอกไม้
6	Phra Boonyakronkornrawich Rangmueng	พระบุญยกรกรวิชัย หรั่งเมือง
7	Phrakru Authen Panyarangsi	พระครูอุเทน ปัญญารังสี
8	Phrakru Prawitwihankan (Ratsamee Sakhon)	พระครูประเวศวิหการการ (รัศมี สาคร)
9	Phra Worachai Boonyalee	พระวราชัย บุญญลีย์
10	Phra Uggij Worawong	พระอุกกิจ วรวงษ์
11	Phra Pun	พระบัน
12	Phra Wisit Wongsai	พระวิสิทธิ์ วงศ์ใส
13	Phra Vichien Tayati	พระครูสมุห์ (วิเชียร ทายะติ)
14	Phra Methawin Seanthi	พระเมธาวิทย์ แสนธิ
15	Phra Maha Thanakorn Kittipunyo	พระมหาธนกร กิตติปัญญา
16	Phra Satit Pothaset	พระสาธิต ไปธาเศษ
17	Phra Patsa Chaiyapanto	พระพัฒนสา ไชยพันโท
18	Phra Boonchuay Sirintharo	พระบุญช่วย สิริธโร
19	Phrakru Sophop Pariyatti	พระครูโสภพ ปรียัติ
20	Phra Yongyuth Theepako	พระยงยุทธ ธีปโก
21	Phra Palad Suradej Jirathummo	พระปลัด สุรเดช จิรธัมโม
22	Phrakru Sumon Thamthada	พระครูสุมน ธรรมธาดา
23	Mr. Khomchai Meeboonta	นายคมชัย มีบุญตา
24	Mr. Natthaphong Wongjai	นายณัฐพงษ์ วงศ์ใจ

25	Mr.Thawatchai Junjula	นายธวัชชัย จันจุฬา
26	Ms. Pornthip Inthachak	นางสาวพรทิพย์ อินทจักร์
27	Ms. Uthumporn Ketsunthorn	นางสาวอุทุมพร เกตุสุนทร
28	Ms. Siriporn Saisom	นางสาวศิริมล ไสสม



## ANNEX 2 WORKSHOP AGENDA (ENGLISH)

USAID Wildlife Asia, International Network of Engaged Buddhists, and Bodhiyalaya Foundation  
 Workshop on Reducing Demand for Wildlife Products  
 Saturday, March 13, 2021 (8:30 AM to 3:00 PM)  
 Phitsanulok Psychiatric Hospital, Phitsanulok Province

### AGENDA

Time	Session	Resource Person
08:30 – 09:00	Registration	International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB)
09:00 – 09:05	Introduction and welcome	INEB
09:05 – 09:10	Opening remarks	USAID Representative (TBC)
09:10 – 09:15	Opening remarks	Phra Khru Pipit Sutathorn (Chairman, Network of monastics working on community development in upper northern Thailand)
<b>09:15 – 09:20</b>	<b>Group Photo</b>	
09:20 – 09:40	Thailand update on tackling illegal trade of wildlife products such as ivory and tiger parts	Representative from Department of National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) (TBC)
09:40 – 10:30	Introduction of USAID Wildlife Asia Activity and Campaigns in Thailand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beautiful without Ivory</li> <li>• Spiritual Beliefs Campaign               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A Good life is free of killing (with WildAid)</li> <li>2. No Ivory, No Tiger Amulets</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	USAID Wildlife Asia
10:30 – 10:45	QA and Discussion on campaigns presented	USAID Wildlife Asia and WildAid
<b>10:45 – 12:00</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
12:00 – 12:30	Discussion on role of Buddhist monks in disrupting illegal wildlife trade and consumption in Thailand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship between monks and wildlife, the role of monks</li> <li>• Role of monks in campaign against use of wildlife parts</li> <li>• Buddhist principals regarding use of wildlife parts</li> <li>• “Prasuth Chadok” (Buddhist holy scripture teaching) on the virtues of wildlife</li> <li>• Case studies of temples and wildlife conservation in Thailand</li> <li>• The role of the monks in wildlife conservation and avoiding the use of wildlife parts/products</li> <li>• Agencies involved in supporting monks in conservation efforts to end trade of wildlife parts/products</li> </ul>	INEB Representative
12:30 – 13:00	Developing messages & materials to assist monks in disseminating messages to deter use of wildlife parts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying the audience (target segmentation)</li> <li>• Designing key message</li> <li>• Selecting channels for messages – Online Vs. Offline Channels</li> </ul>	USAID Wildlife Asia INEB
13:00 – 14:50	Breakout session for group discussion/action planning and Plenary Session: Presentation of group outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of messaging in teachings of monks / nuns</li> <li>• Video clip recorded and posted on participants’ Facebook page</li> </ul>	All participants (5 small breakout groups)
14:50 – 15:00	Closing	USAID Wildlife Asia Facilitator