



Theerapat born in Bangkok on September 29, 1962. He is a graduate of BSc. Forestry Science at Kasetsart University, Thailand in 1984, Msc. Forestry Science at Kasetsart University, Thailand in 1987, and PhD. Conservation Biology at the University of Minnesota, USA in 1997.

From 2006 to 2007 he served as the Director of the Minister of the Natural Resources and Environment Office, after which, in 2008, he was promoted to the Director of the Planning and Information Bureau for the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation. In 2011, he worked as the Deputy Director General of the Royal Forest Department.

Theerapat, a former chief of the Royal Forest Department's Wildlife Research Station at Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuary, is well-known both in Thailand and abroad for his strong commitment on research and public awareness activities for wildlife in Thailand. For his doctoral dissertation, Theerapat chose to study gaur and banteng, which are two endangered species in Thailand. The importance of his work comes from the fact that not many large wild animals are systematically researched in Thailand. "Thailand's forest and wildlife policy has been emphasized on the protection side," said Theerapat. "Now I think it's time that we invest more on research, for both small and large wild animals. I know the large ones have not been the subject of studies because of all the difficulties, danger and diseases associated in the wild." For his dissertation, Theerapat installed radio transmitters on gaur and banteng for the purpose of monitoring their biology behaviors. The technology is still costly and not prevalent in Thailand. "I also want to adapt some forest management concepts here to use in our country. Adapt, not adopt. The situation here may not be the same as to other countries," said Theerapat.

THEERAPAT PRAYURASIDDHI

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For most Thai people, having an animal named after one is a real insult, particularly if that animal is a water buffalo, which is often made fun of as stupid, but environmentalist Theerapat Prayurasiddhi considers it an honor. Since 1996, the subspecies of wild water buffaloes in Thailand have been known internationally as *Bubalus arnee theerapati*. Australian taxonomist Dr. C.P. Groves named the endangered animals after Theerapat, who took the first photo of the live wild animals in

1987 in Thailand's Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuary. Wild Water Buffaloes had not been seen alive at all in Thailand for decades.

"The name (theerapati) honors Mr. Theerapat Prayurasiddhi, whose continuing fieldwork in Huai Kha Khaeng has added notably to our understanding of the ecology of gaur, banteng, and the 50-100 remaining wild buffaloes, laying a sound basis for their conservation," wrote Groves in his article on "The Taxonomy of the Asian Wild Buffalo." It was published in the International Journal of Mammalian Biology -- a Germany-based publication.

While working as the Deputy Director General of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, Theerapat intensifies his efforts to suppress the wildlife trade, especially at international airports and border checkpoints. "CITES has faulted us for being a hub for wildlife smuggling. Unfortunately, Thailand is a hub for regional transportation. What we can do right now is to come up with tougher wildlife trade inspection measures, especially at Suvarnabhumi Airport, where confiscations of wildlife have been increasing. Thailand will closely work with ASEAN – WEN and CITES to combat on illegal wildlife trade. In addition, he has established 30 wildlife operation units to monitor on emerging zoonotic disease threat in Thailand and worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperative and the Ministry of Public Health.

POLICY THAT REINFORCE BEST PRACTICES IN PREVENTING RISKS of Human Exposure to Emerging Zoonotic Disease Threats in SE Asia

Dr.Theerapat PRAYURASIDDHI

Southeast Asia is a hub of the international wildlife trade, functioning as supplier, consumer and import-export center. The increased of demand for wildlife species as pets, medicines and food from many countries leading to increase number of wildlife disease and facilitate additional infectious disease emergence. Emerging zoonotic diseases in Thailand enhance the interface between humans and wildlife both native and alien species.

Emerging diseases are dealt with in the environment with three major challenges including wildlife without border, ASEAN Economic Community and illegal wildlife trade. Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) strategies consist of Illegal wildlife trade control, develops wildlife health control unit and monitoring emerging disease.

According to Surveillance and Monitoring Emerging Diseases Planning, DNP set up 31 mobile units to surveillance, prevent and control emerging diseases from wildlife in protected areas with coordination from Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives and Ministry of Health. In addition, DNP ranger will be educated on occupational health and safety, personal health and hygiene.

Human health checkups and vaccination programs (e.g. Rabies, Tetanus and Influenza vaccine) are required to prevent and control zoonosis from wildlife.

DNP research and monitoring program include avian influenza surveillance program in wild birds are ongoing activities. Bird migration are studied by using satellite transmitter e.g. Brown headed gull, Asian opened bill and migratory routes from birds banding. Emerging infectious disease surveillance program in wildlife in 2013 research for emerging diseases such as Avian influenza and Nipah virus, study on the viral pathogen in non human primate and surveillance of Salmonella spp. isolated from illegal reptiles trade. Moreover, study on wildlife ecology such as bird migration study, mapping of migratory water bird population, mapping of roosting sites and breeding, study colony of water birds and surveying of bat caves and roosting sites in Thailand are important to prevent movement of diseases.

Management of diseases on wildlife usually requires a change in human activities. However, the most important way is by controlling translocation of wild animals to prevent movement of diseases and promote awareness on wildlife zoonosis to public.