

## Conservation for Whom?

### Elephant Conservation and Elephant Conservationists in Thailand

#### Abstract

This paper traces the historical development of elephant conservation in Thailand through the exploration of two interrelated state organizations: the Thai Elephant Conservation Center (TECC) and the National Elephant Institute (NEI). By examining their ideological construction, policies and interactions with society, as well as their conflicts with other elephant-related communities, this paper argues that despite all the state's attempts to take the lead in tackling elephantine problems, these organizations continuously faced the dilemma of elephant conservation during their development. Firstly, TECC struggled to sustain organizational survival while simultaneously concretizing their activities for internationally acclaimed elephant conservation in the \_\_\_\_s. Secondly, NEI experienced difficulty in balancing its expected roles after \_\_\_\_ in protecting elephants in collaboration with local communities, as well as functioning internationally as a lynchpin of the nation for elephant conservation.

Keywords: elephant conservation, domesticated elephants, Thai Elephant Conservation Center, National Elephant Institute, logging ban, Thailand, Phachan ritual