

ABSTRACT

Foreign ownership of land in Thailand has been a controversial issue for decades. Thailand has regulations to restrict foreign ownership of land; however, there are many ways that a foreigner is able to occupy land by avoiding such regulations. There was recently a proposal by a government minister to liberalize foreign ownership of land to attract foreign investments. It has been broadly criticized by academics and the public on the adverse affects such as increased land prices and difficulty for Thai people to access the land, as well as the national sovereignty and the national security. This study aimed to find out Thai opinion toward foreign ownership of land in Thailand and to advise Thailand's law and policy makers regarding foreign ownership of land. The study focuses only on lawyers or people who are working in legal fields, civil servants and people in private sectors. The research instruments were 120 questionnaires which were distributed to populations in three groups as mentioned. The questionnaire contains of 42 questions divided to four parts.

Data collected from questionnaires was analyzed by SPSS program. Findings of the study were that Thai people believed that the foreign ownership of land would boost economic growth and promote investments and the tourist industry. However, the majority of respondents thought that foreign ownership of land would be a risk to national security, affect agricultural activities and farmlands and cause a loss of national sovereignty. The respondents also thought that national policy on the foreign ownership of land should be more liberalized; however, they thought the laws and regulations on the foreign ownership of land should be strengthened more.