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TUNWA CHAITEING : THE IMPACT OF FOREST MONKS ON THE
FOREST AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES CONSERVATION : A CASE STUDY OF
WATPRASITHSAMAKKEE (WATPAHBANTAI) SAWANGDANDIN DISTRICT,
SAKORNNAKHON PROVINCE. THESIS ADVISORS : OPAS PUNYA, Ph.D.
AIM THONGDI, M.A. SANCHAI SUTIPANWIHAN, M.Sc. 365 p. ISBN 974-
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Destruction of forest resources leading to reduction of wildlife is a serious environmental problem for Thailand. This is said to have been the result of development that puts too much emphasis on economic growth. This study is set to investigate the role of the forest Sangkha (Aranyawasi) in natural resource conservation. It also examines the impact they have on local people's management of such resources. The study applies the use of a qualitative research technique and of ecology surveys of forest resources and wildlife, both of which are confined within the Prasithsamakkee Buddhist temple.

The study found that forest and wildlife conservation undertaken by the forest Sangkha is a result of a Buddhist worldview, focusing on self-development with the aim of becoming a highly developed human being. This includes an emphasis on kindness and improved wisdom, both of which are considered, under Buddhist ideology, a higher human development. The serious Buddhist practice and its integration with the communities, through the traditional Isan culture —“Heet 12-Khong 14”, has drawn a lot of participation from the community. In conclusion, the conservation of forest and wildlife which takes place can be seen as a collective effort of the forest monks and the people of Ban Tai. It is a result of self-development guided by a Buddhist worldview. They have learned to live in harmony with the environment and have orientation towards sustaining the forest and wildlife ecology.