

After a request for training in EEHV molecular diagnostics from the attendees of the 1st and 2nd EEHV Asia Working Group meetings in 2015 and 2016, Erin Latimer (Smithsonian's National Zoo), Supaphen Sripiboon (Kasetsart University), and Vijitha Perera (Elephant Transit Home) put together funding and planned a training workshop to be held at Kasetsart University in Thailand from Nov 13-15, 2017.

Participants were housed in a Kasetsart University dormitory and were transported to/from the airport and to the workshop each day by university vans. Side trips for meals, souvenir shopping, and a visit to a nearby temple were arranged and were well received by all. Trainees received hands-on instruction in DNA preparation, polymerase chain reaction (PCR), and DNA analysis, as well as lectures on EEHV in Asia, PCR, sample handling, field necropsies, and calf monitoring. They received reagents to start the testing in their own laboratories. A Facebook page was started to facilitate further education and collaborations amongst the participants and lecturers.

An evaluation questionnaire was given to the participants. All eight participants filled it out and returned it. Results can be found in Appendix A.

These new trainees will now be able to train additional colleagues in Asian range countries to further elephant conservation, EEHV monitoring, and EEHV research. A visit by Dr. Chia-Da Hsu of the Singapore Zoo to Sumatra is planned for March of 2018. He will train colleagues from Syiah Kuala University, University of Gadjah Mada, and VESSWIC. Additional trips are being considered for Myanmar and Vietnam; funding for PCR equipment needs to be obtained for both of these countries before these trips come to fruition. Planning for additional laboratories has been started for all of the range countries in Asia; a [spreadsheet](#) and [Google map](#) of current and possible future laboratories has been created to facilitate planning. A core group consisting of Supaphen Sripiboon, Erin Latimer, Chatchote Thitaram, Sonja Luz, Chia-Da Hsu, Amir Sadaula, and representatives from the Asian range countries will pursue funding, identify possible lab sites, and organize future training sessions.

The workshop and additional training trips were made possible by support from Asian Elephant Support, Kasetsart University, Zoological Parks of Thailand, Wildlife Reserves Singapore, and the Smithsonian Institution.



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Appendix A

Evaluation results for the workshop (n=8)

1 = Need to improve; 3 = Moderate; 5 = Excellent

Summary of each point (average)

- Your knowledge and skills gained	4.375
- Meet the expectations	4.625
- Knowledge of instructors	4.875
- Value/useful of the workshop	4.875
- Helpful of the organizers	4.75
- Workshop venue	4.625
- Lunch and coffee break	4.625
- Accommodation	4.375
- Overall experiences	4.75

7 out of 8 said after this workshop, they will be able to set up EEHV lab (either PCR or qPCR) in their own country. 1 out of 8 said maybe.

Recommended topics for the next workshop

- Sequencing
- International workshop on development of monitoring and treatment protocol with research institute and range countries
- Collecting of samples for live animals and dead elephants, storage and shipment
- Collaboration among EEHV diagnosis labs

Suggestions for improvement

- Better to conduct workshop in combination of health problems of elephants i.e. EEHV, TB, microbial diseases, parasitic diseases