

## Legal Control for Private Zoo: Case from Thailand

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### Abstract

*Place that is open to the public has to be well control. Normally, public place usually belongs to governmental body. However, sometimes, the private sector might pose a specific place and open to the public access aiming at business purpose. The legal control of the place opened to the public is very interesting. Of several kinds of places that are opened to the public access, zoo is an interesting place. Zoo is a place that various animals are collected and demonstrated to the local people. The operation of the zoo might be by the governmental unit or private sector. The legal control for private zoo operation is necessary since poor control might result in abusing of animal, environmental adverse effect or public health problem. In the present report, the authors summarize and discuss on the specific scenario of legal control of private zoo in Thailand, a tropical country in Southeast Asia.*

**Keywords:** laws, zoo, private, public, business, government, legal control, health, South-east Asia, adverse

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### INTRODUCTION

Place that is open to the public has to be well control. Normally, public place usually belongs to governmental body. However, sometimes, the private sector might pose a specific place and open to the public access aiming at business purpose. Allowing of external people from the public to enter into a private place is commonly seen. The owners of the public health usually aim at getting visiting fee or sale of some products to the visitors. This is the common practice seen worldwide. The good example is the situation at any private tourist attraction. The owners of the private tourist attraction usually allow and invite visitor to pay for visit their places.

The legal control of the place opened to the public is very interesting. Of several kinds of places that are opened to the public access, zoo is an interesting place. Zoo is a place that various animals are collected and demonstrated to the local people. The operation of the zoo might be by the governmental unit or private sector. The legal control for private zoo operation is necessary since poor control might result in abusing of animal, environmental adverse effect or public health problem. In the

present report, the authors summarize and discuss on the specific scenario of legal control of private zoo in Thailand, a tropical country in Southeast Asia.

### Why Does a Zoo have to be Legally Controlled?

As already mentioned, zoo is usually a place that is opened to the public for visiting. The main function of any zoon is keeping and collecting of rare animal for demonstration. Visitor to the zoo can get knowledge as well as funny experience during visiting. In general, the children are the main group that loves to visit to the zoos. For sure, there must be good management of the zoo. Zoo usually contains various animals. Some might be dangerous therefore the control for safety is required. In addition, the good care of the collected animals is needed [1–6]. If there is no good control, the abusing to the poor animals might occur and this will become a big issue on animal rights. To protect the environmental is also an important consideration. The zoo might play a role in conservation of rare animal, but it might be the cause of suffering to the collected animal if there is no good operation. Finally, zoos collect several kinds

of animals. Animals might pose germs and pathogens that might transmit to the human and spread widely into the external environment [7].

For proper control, there must be a good standards and guideline. Also, the implementation of the specific laws for regulating the operation of zoo is required. For the governmental zoo, the operation might be easy according to the governmental guideline for officer to follow. However, for private zoo, the proper legal control must be set and clearly given to the private zoo's owner for following.

Specific laws for management of zoo are set and declared in several countries around the world. In the present specific article, the case of Thailand, a tropical Indochina will be further discussed.

#### **Thai Laws for Control of Private Zoo**

Specific laws for controlling of zoo have been implemented in Thailand for a very long time. In the past, all zoos in Thailand were belonged to governmental sector. However, when time past, there were some newly opened private zoos. Specific updated laws for controlling of private business on private zoo have been set for a few years.

A specific part of the Thai laws, Act on conservation and protection of wildlife (B.E. 2535) which has been issued for 27 years until now (2019) quoted for the specific control of private zoo operation. In brief, the zoo owner has to ask for permission and register to Thai Forestry Department. The Director-General of Thai Forestry Department can give permission to the private zoo owner for operating of the zoo. The private zoo can start function after getting official allowance form. Thai Forestry Department has rights to set a surveillance visit to survey the safety and sanitation of the place and might order for correction of the problem or withdraw the allowance form. The private zoo owner has specific duty to report the operation plan and annual summarization to Thai Forestry Department. The details on number of collected animals including to statistical data on importation, exportation, death or birth of animals in the private zoo

have to be reported annually. Also, the private zoo owner has to register the business to Thai Department of Internal Trade and has to follow the specific taxation laws. Finally, the private zoo's owner has to follow specific Thai Act on Public Health on sanitation and environmental control within the zoo.

#### **Existed Legal Problem to be Further Discussed in Thailand**

Although the specific laws are available for controlling the operation of private zoo in Thailand, there are still many legal issues for further discussion. A simple situation is the illegal opening of the private zoo without official permission. The other cases are the operating of illegal activities in the private zoo such as selling of meat of conserved wild animal to tourists.

In addition, in the present day, the private zoo might be co-operated with other kinds of businesses such as water theme park or fun amusing park. The control of the private tourist complex might be more difficult and several more laws have to be used in those cases.

Indeed, although there are many related laws for controlling of the private zoo operation, the problem is sporadically seen in Thailand. The crime relating to illegal operation and sale of wildlife meat is sporadically reported. Also, the outbreak of infectious relating to private zoo in Thailand has ever occurred [8–10].



**Fig. 1:** Example of a Famous Private Zoo with theme Park in Thailand. Source: Self-photography, 2018.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

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