

Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that adequate, dignified shelter and housing are a fundamental human right.

## 1.5 Location

The project is located on the outskirts of the village of Wiakhadi, which itself is situated some 25 km from the town of Sangklaburi (Sangkla) where The Whispering Seed's head office is located. Wiakhadi is only 8 km away from the Burmese border. Sangkla is approximately 200 km west of Kanchanaburi (Kan), capital of the province with the same name, one of a total of 75 provinces. Kanchanaburi is 130 km west of Bangkok. The area is very close to the Burmese border, in the hills wrapping around the northern tip of the Khao Laem reservoir, an artificial lake formed by the Khao Laem dam in the Kwaie Noi River. Sangkla is the last outpost before the infamous Three Pagodas Pass, the Thai-Burmese border crossing known for its flow of black-market goods and narcotics. There are several refugee camps along the Thai-Burmese border, accommodating refugees from Burma that have escaped the military regime.

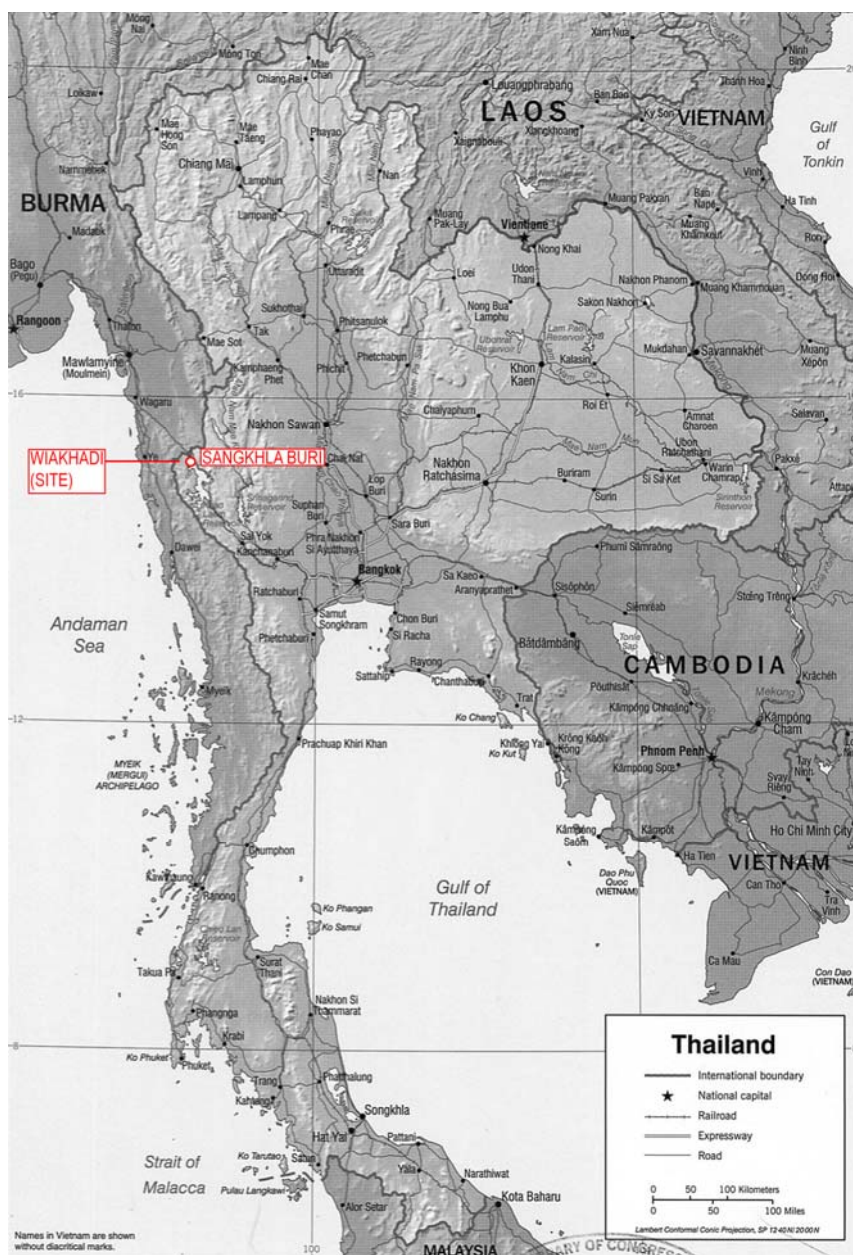


Fig.1 Map of Thailand, showing the location of the site. (source: <http://ww2.lafayette.edu/~stifeld/interim.html>)

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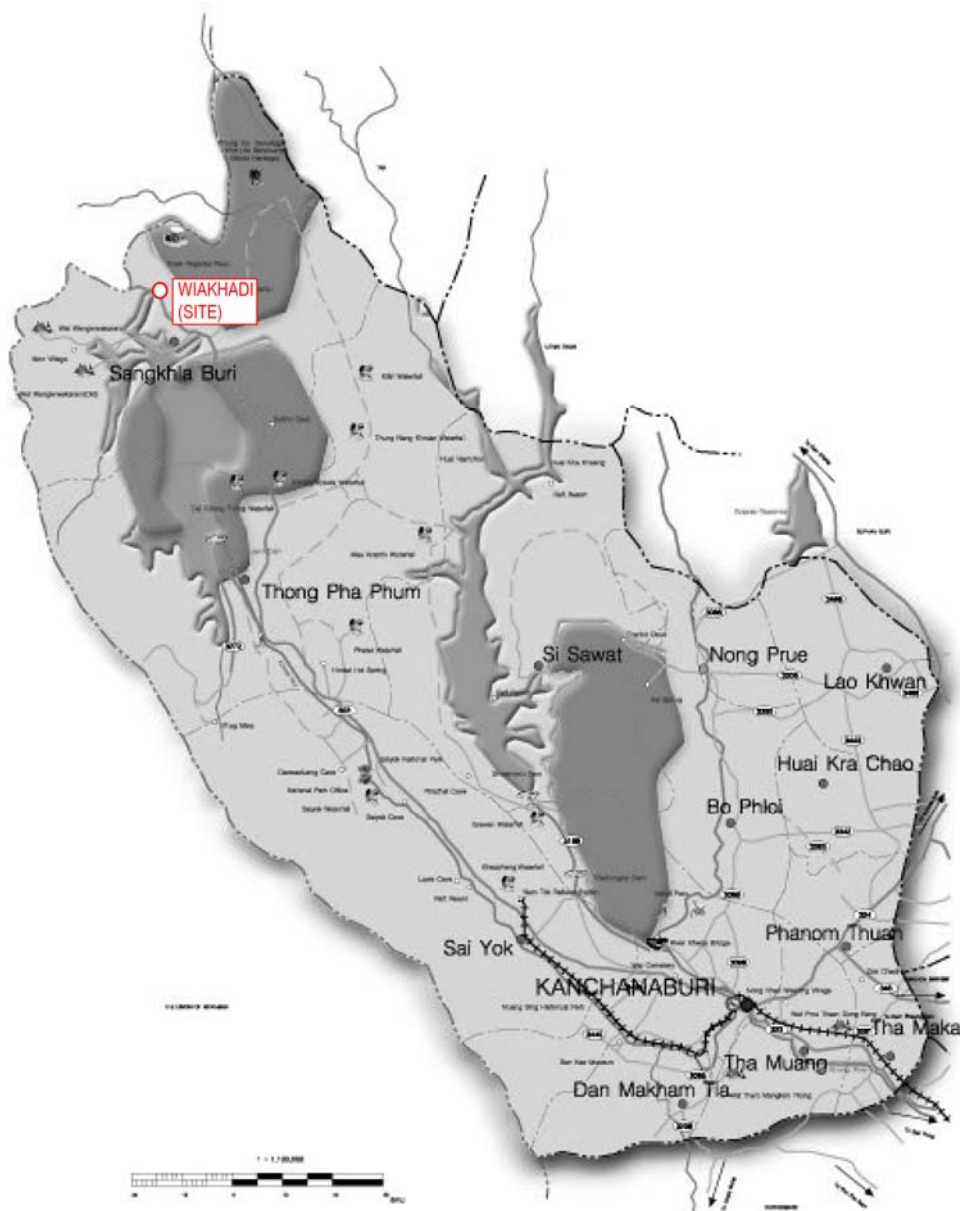


Fig.2 Map of Kanchanaburi Province, showing location of the site (Source: [www.kanchanaburi-info.com](http://www.kanchanaburi-info.com))

The village of Wiakhadi is a Karen village of about 500 inhabitants, and the next village down, Molaka, has about 300 inhabitants. Since June 2004 WS has set up and built their farm, located just outside Wiakhadi, on the way to Molaka. Before 2004 WS had been located in the Northern region of Thailand, in Phitsanulok. The farm is separated from the village by the river. During the dry season this river can be crossed by wading through it. However, during the rainy season the water level rises and it is impossible to cross the river without a bridge.

The majority of the people living in the local area are from three ethnic groups: Karen and Mon (hill-tribe groups from Thailand and Burma) and Burmese migrants (refugees or displaced people). Most of these people do not speak the Thai language, instead, Karen, Mon and Burmese are the main languages.