

REPORT

for FSE Euro Speleo Project ESP-2016-01

Thailand – DAO 2016

February 22nd – March 9th 2016



Tham Nam (photo : John Gosset).

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1. Summary

Initial objectives:

1. To continue the exploration and survey in the Tham Lom system
2. To investigate the streams on the slopes of the Doi Nang mountain (north-west of Chiang Dao town)
3. To explore the limestone area to the south-east of Ban Arunothai



Results:

One day was spent exploring the riverbeds of several streams on the slopes of Doi Nang mountain. No drop of water was encountered. Tuf was observed in one of the river bed indicating a potential link with a cave outflow. A source was discovered at the base of the mountain.

One day was spent re-exploring the Chiang Dao cave to the final sump. The question marks mentioned in the 1985 survey were investigated. Some short passages and junctions were added to the survey. The northern sump was confirmed as diveable and unexplored passages were seen above it.

The rest of the expedition days was focused on the Tham Lom system that was partially explored in the previous years by other expeditions. The Dao 2015 expedition provided 3,2 km of surveyed passages in the Tham Lom cave. This year, Tham Nam and Tham Ngam cave, starting from the same doline as Tham Lom cave, were targeted. They were each previously surveyed for less than 300m.

Tham Nam and Tham Ngam were first linked by climbing a boulder choke. Tham Nam was then explored and surveyed for 5 days without reaching the end. Exploration was time consuming and tiring due to a lot of collapses, boulder piles to cross or climb and due to high CO₂ rate. The motivation remained strong as the end passage was large (30m across, 30m high).

In order to find an easier access to the end passage, an investigation of the surface was performed. This led to the discovery of a vertical cave, Tham Luek Kluai. This cave, trending to Tham Nam, was rigged, explored and surveyed for 3 days. This exploration was abandoned due to high CO₂ rate and consequently the exploration in Tham Nam restarted. 2 days later, the connection between Tham Nam and Tham Luek Kluai was made during the exploration of an upper passage in Tham Nam. The same day, the connection was also made at the base level. The upper passage was then partially explored and surveyed. The lead remains ongoing in a passage that is 15m across and 15m high.

Eventually, 4.3km of passages were surveyed in Tham Nam. The total surveyed length of the Tham Lom system is now close to 8km, making it one of the major cave systems of Thailand and the most important of the Chiang Mai province.

There was no time for the 3rd objective of the expedition.

2. Photographs



Tham Nam, entrance pitch (photo : Rolf Boller).



Tham Nam, the “easy” first hundred meter (photo : John Gosset).



Tham Nam, calcite “organ tubes” (photo : John Gosset).



Tham Nam, intermediate level (photo : John Gosset).



Tham Nam, high passage in the 1st kilometer (photo : John Gosset).



Tham Nam, eroded passage in the 2nd kilometer (photo : John Gosset).



Tham Luek Kluai, the 1-meter lizard skeleton (photo : John Gosset).



Tham Luek Kluai, the 20-meter entrance pitch (photo : Rolf Boller).



The first team, from left to right : Cécile Perrin, John Gosset, Martin Heusterspreute, Nicolas Boisard, Robert Harper.



The second team, from left to right : Nicolas Borchers, Cécile Perrin, Nicolas Boisard, Suthep (our host), John Gosset, Rolf Boller.

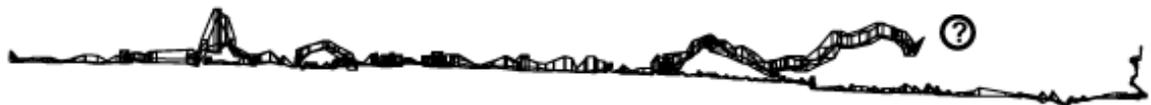
Tham Nam

Chiang Dao, Chiang Mai, Thailand
UTM 47Q 490680 2183992 Alt : 750m
Surveyed length : 4265m, VR : 109m

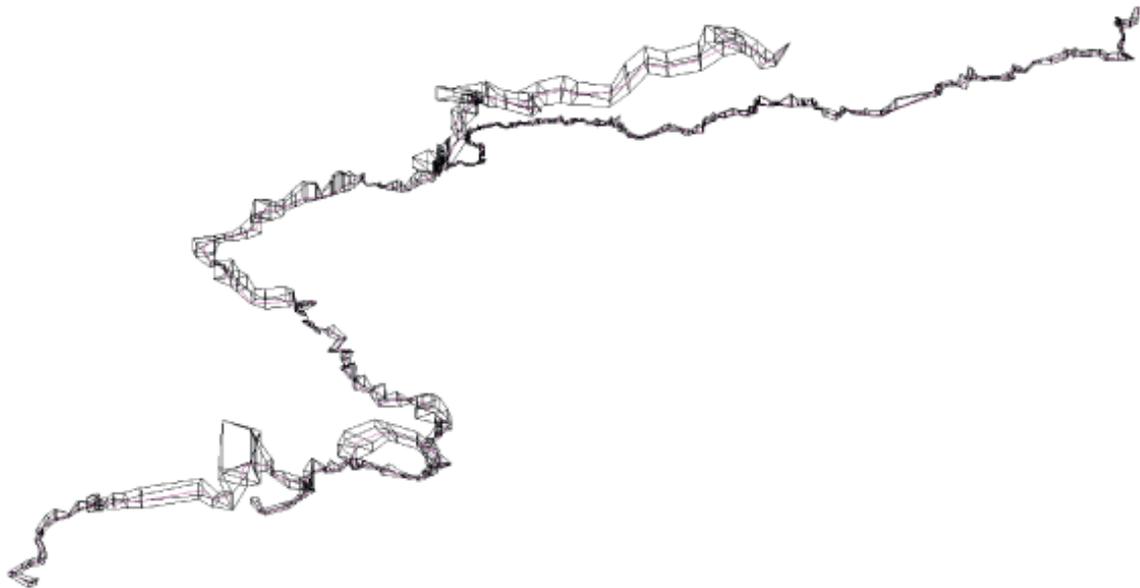
Plan



Profile



Tham Nam (3D view)
Chiang Dao, Chiang Mai, Thailand
UTM 47Q 490676 2184009 Alt : 750m
Surveyed length : 4265m, VR : 109m



3. Team 2016

<i>Country / Pays in/en Europe</i>	Nbr. Participants	Nom / Contact / Name	Email
Belgium	3	John Gosset Martin Heusterspreute Nicolas Borchers	johngosset@voo.be martinheusters@hotmail.com nborchers@pandora.be
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DAO 2016 expedition

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<http://esbhotnews.blogspot.be/2016/03/expedition-thailande-dao2016.html>

4. Financial report

Travel:

International flights ~800 EUR x 7 persons 5600 EUR

Domestic: flights, taxi, public transport, vehicle rental 1200 EUR

Administrative costs (incl. main guide/translator & permit):

Chiang Dao cave 100 EUR

Inland expenses (accommodation, food, donation for monks)

40 000 baht 1000 EUR

Communication

Mailing, telephone 50 EUR

Total cost 7950 EUR

Financial grant (other than from FSE) to be received from the Belgian Federation UBS (200 EUR).