



Water governance and regional cooperation in the GBM Basin

BRIDGE workshop report

09-11 April 2018, Bangkok, Thailand



Building River Dialogue and Governance (BRIDGE)



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1 Workshop background and objectives

1.1 Shared river basins and international cooperation

Global estimates show that more than 276 river basins are shared by more than one country. These basins are of special significance as more than half of the world's population depend on these river systems to meet their daily water needs (UN-Water, 2012). However, most of these basins are threatened due to the absence of a cooperative framework and clear agreements for their joint development and use. Large infrastructure and water diversion projects in these basins are being implemented with little international dialogue or cooperation among the riparian countries. A report by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Transboundary Water Assessment Programme (TWAP) concludes that in next 15-20 years, the risk of conflict and ecological degradation in shared river basins will increase in four hotspot regions: the Middle East; Central Asia; the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) Basin; and the Orange and Limpopo Basins in Southern Africa.

Although GBM Basin countries have signed a number of bilateral agreements and established joint mechanisms for coordination, these agreements do not adequately address the pressing issues confronted by the region. It has been a challenge for countries sharing the basin to find joint solutions and develop a common vision for their sustainable management.

1.2 About BRIDGE GBM and the objectives of the workshop

Building River Dialogue and Governance, or BRIDGE, is a global programme implemented by IUCN in more than 15 shared river basins across Asia, Africa and the Caribbean. The goal of the programme is to support capacities of countries and stakeholders sharing river or lake basins to implement effective water management arrangements through the development of a shared vision, benefit-sharing principles, and transparent and coherent institutional frameworks.

In the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) River Basin, the BRIDGE GBM project initiated its activities in July 2016 (Phase 1) supported by The Asia Foundation. The project facilitated the development of a regional network of more than 25 civil society organizations (CSOs) from the five GBM countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India and Nepal). This network also developed a common vision and actions to promote cooperative governance of the GBM Basins. For the project's second phase, funded by Oxfam Novib's Transboundary Rivers of South Asia (TROSA) programme, BRIDGE GBM is supporting activities aimed at institutionalisation of the network through the development and adoption of clear governance mechanisms and continued capacity building on water governance and river basin management issues. The goal of the BRIDGE GBM project is to build regional cooperation for sustainable and inclusive governance of the shared rivers in the GBM Region, promoting poverty reduction and healthy ecosystems.

From 9–11 April 2018 the BRIDGE GBM project facilitated the three-day workshop, *Water governance and regional cooperation in the GBM Basin*, in Bangkok Thailand. The workshop

provided a regional platform for capacity building and learning exchange on legal and institutional aspects of shared water governance.

The specific learning outcomes of the workshop are the improved understanding of:

- hydrodiplomacy, international water law (IWL), and benefit sharing principles, and its implications in building dialogue and transboundary cooperation;
- the Mahakali and Meghna River Basin contexts, as inputs for designing sub-basin dialogues under the BRIDGE GBM/TROSA programme; and
- the status of cooperation in the Mekong Region and strategies applied by the stakeholders.

1.3 Workshop participants

More than 20 participants from the five GBM countries – mostly from government ministries and academia, as well as CSO partners of the TROSA programme, participated in the workshop. (Please see Annex 2 for the detailed list of participants.)

2 Workshop proceedings

The workshop was structured into sessions which included technical presentations, discussions, and role play exercises on issues related to the governance of shared water resources. The sections below provide a summary of the discussions and the key learnings.

2.1 Highlights from the keynote speech

Mr Lyonpo Yeshi Dorji, Minister for Agriculture and Forests of the Royal Government of Bhutan, spoke about the increasing significance of water resources in the global political agenda. He cited the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6, which aims at "ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all." In particular, target 6.5 emphasises the "implementation of integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation by 2030."

Referring to water resource governance in Bhutan, Mr Dorji shared that his country has the highest per capita water availability in the world. The headwater of the GBM Basin lies in Bhutan, and the country is aware of its responsibilities as an upper riparian nation. In Bhutan, the Gross National Happiness (GNH) philosophy is applied in government planning processes, and their constitution mandates a minimum of 60% forest coverage with every citizen as a trustee. Such commitments at the highest levels of governance in Bhutan have allowed the country to maintain most of its rivers and wetlands in a pristine state. However, Mr Dorji also acknowledged that Bhutan faces the same challenges as its neighbors, such as the need for stronger coordination and communication mechanisms between key water governance agencies. To address this, Bhutan initiated the development of the Integrated River Basin Plans and has formed many river basin management committees. For example, in the Wangchu River Basin, a basin committee was formed with representatives from five districts coming together to develop and implement a common vision and plan for basin development.

The speech from Dr Alejandro Iza, Director of IUCN's Environmental Law Centre in Bonn, Germany, highlighted the importance of a clear legal framework in ensuring sustainable governance and conflict resolution within a shared river basin. He revealed that 60% of the world's shared river basins lack a cooperative management framework, hindering the development of basin-wide integrated management approaches. The GBM region is one example where cooperative frameworks exist. Generally, these frameworks are bilateral and narrow in scope. It is not common to see agreements that consider the basin as a whole, or which recognise the river as a complex ecosystem.

Dr Iza added that IUCN is working in many shared river basins across the globe in an approach that demonstrates the role of evidence-based decision-making and hydrodiplomacy in fostering the cooperative governance of shared river basins. He further emphasised the utility of a clear legal and institutional framework, accepted by all basin countries and stakeholders, in building a platform for long-term cooperation for the sustainable development of the shared river basin and its resources.

2.2 Role of hydrodiplomacy and IWL in the governance of shared river basins

One of the main objectives of workshop was to improve participants' understanding of legal and institutional frameworks and tools that can support the cooperative governance of shared water resources. The workshop included a presentation on the different aspects of hydrodiplomacy and IWL, and discussed challenges and opportunities in building a long-term transboundary cooperative mechanism in the GBM Region. Below are highlights from the presentations, as well as key discussions points.

2.2.1 Hydrodiplomacy: an approach to transboundary water cooperation

The presentation *Hydrodiplomacy: theories and practice* by Dr Imtiaz Ahmed, Professor at Dhaka University in Bangladesh, argued about the need for re-conceptualising hydrodiplomacy and broadening its scope. He said that current discourse on hydrodiplomacy is narrow and “statist”, focusing on why and how states cooperate or do not cooperate. He recommended the development of an approach that brings in community perspectives, and also history and culture. In this regard, he described following aspects of water diplomacy and raised some questions and points for the participants to reflect on.

- **Riverine diplomacy:** what are the issues and challenges faced by riverine communities, and how do they negotiate and adapt to changing rivers?
- **Culture and hydrodiplomacy:** every river has a story to tell, and is linked to local culture and history. We need to highlight these aspects when negotiating shared water governance.
- **Ecology of hydrodiplomacy:** it is important to consider water issues that are significant to human health and livelihood, such as quantity, quality, availability and accessibility, while negotiating water issues. With the projected increase in the demand for food, water and energy by 2030, we need to also consider the nexus between these issues and how it will be impacted by climate change.
- **En-gendering hydrodiplomacy:** Can gender help us reconcile statist and water-roots perspectives?
- **The use of technology:** for fixing water problems at all levels, such as the use of water-apps and smart phones as tools for early warning systems.

Dr Wang Yu from the School of Government of Sun Yat-Sen University, People's Republic of China, in the presentation, *Transboundary water governance under the “One Country, Two Systems” framework*, talked about intra-country water governance challenges. He explored the case of water sharing between Mainland China and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The city of Hong Kong is water scarce and has historically depended on mainland China for its fresh water supply. Although inter-governmental agreements exist between the two provinces and ensure a fixed quota of water supply to Hong Kong, it has not stopped water conflicts from emerging. There are concerns in Hong Kong regarding long-term water security and pricing. The case indicates that even within one country, ‘boundaries’ can exist among different social groups. Therefore, he said, we need to develop approaches that mobilise resources for reshaping the political and social discourses by removing the current “territorial” mentality. He emphasised that the state should not work in isolation; more emphasis should be paid to engage organisations, ensure good social relations, and use culture and history to build cooperation at all levels.


2.2.2 Governance of shared waters: legal and institutional aspects

Dr Alejandro Iza shared the presentation, *Governance of shared waters*. He provided an overview of internationally accepted laws and principles governing shared water agreements. He discussed that cooperation is the main principle governing negotiations around shared water resources. Other principles, such as equitable and reasonable utilisation, no significant harm, and protection of ecosystems, form the backbone of any shared river agreement.

Dr Iza introduced participants to the scope of the UN Watercourses Convention, a global treaty which provides the framework for the governance of shared basins. Countries that have not ratified this agreement can still apply the principles to solve both inter- and intra-country disputes. In the case of disputes among countries that are parties to the UNWC, these countries can approach the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for dispute resolution.

The presentation also highlighted the importance of formal and informal institutional mechanisms for cooperation. An institution in the context of shared water governance may have different names: commissions, committees, or authorities; and can include not only formal organisational arrangements, but also less formal meetings between appropriate agencies or representatives of the States concerned. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1: Types of institutions



Types of institutions

Type	Nature	Mandate
Committee	No permanent Staff	Discussion platform Facilitation
Commission	Staff and Technical Office	Regulation (eg. coordination and policy-setting) Monitoring (eg. data collection) and and
Authority	Staff and Technical Office	Development and implementation (in addition to the above)

Out of all TRB only 68 have some type of institution: 43 committees, 16 commissions and 9 authorities

2.3 Water cooperation in the GBM Basins

The presentation from Dr Shahab Enam Khan, Research Director of the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute, explored the issue of water tension and conflict management in the GBM Basin. He highlighted the need for the adoption of “multidimensional approaches” for managing regional water conflicts since tensions over water often lead to other kinds of

conflicts. Most disputes over shared waters are often on the quantity and timing of release of water by upstream riparian countries.

The potential role of hydrodiplomacy in trust building and conflict resolution has not been properly used in the GBM Region. The regional and international response to resolving water conflicts so far has mostly focused on the signing of international agreements and formation of river basin organisations or commissions. Dr Khan pointed to the need to de-politicise transboundary water management by expanding the variety of benefits that can be shared, rather than just the volume of water. A focus on technical solutions for shared basin problems is often not enough; it needs to be complemented by political engagement and community inclusion.

Mr Shawahiq Siddiqui, Advocate and Partner at the Indian Environment Law Organisation in Delhi, India, provided an overview of the current legal-institutional landscape of shared water cooperation in South Asia. He said that the region faces monumental water challenges both in terms of quantity and quality; this calls for a paradigm shift in current transboundary water governance approaches through the creation of new roles for sub-national players.

Mr Siddiqui said that bilateralism underpins cooperative agreements in the GBM Region. Most of the bilateral agreements do not consider the river as an ecological unit. Flood control, inland navigation, and irrigation benefits are the major themes tackled under bilateral water treaties. There are new advancements in international environmental law and water law (such as participatory inclusive governance processes and institutions) that need to be assimilated in the agreements on shared river resources. He also mentioned that no South Asian country has signed the UNWC. However, some agreements incorporate elements of UNWC and IWL, such as the Mahakali Treaty between Nepal and India, and the Ganges Treaty between India and Bangladesh.

2.4 Benefit sharing in shared water governance

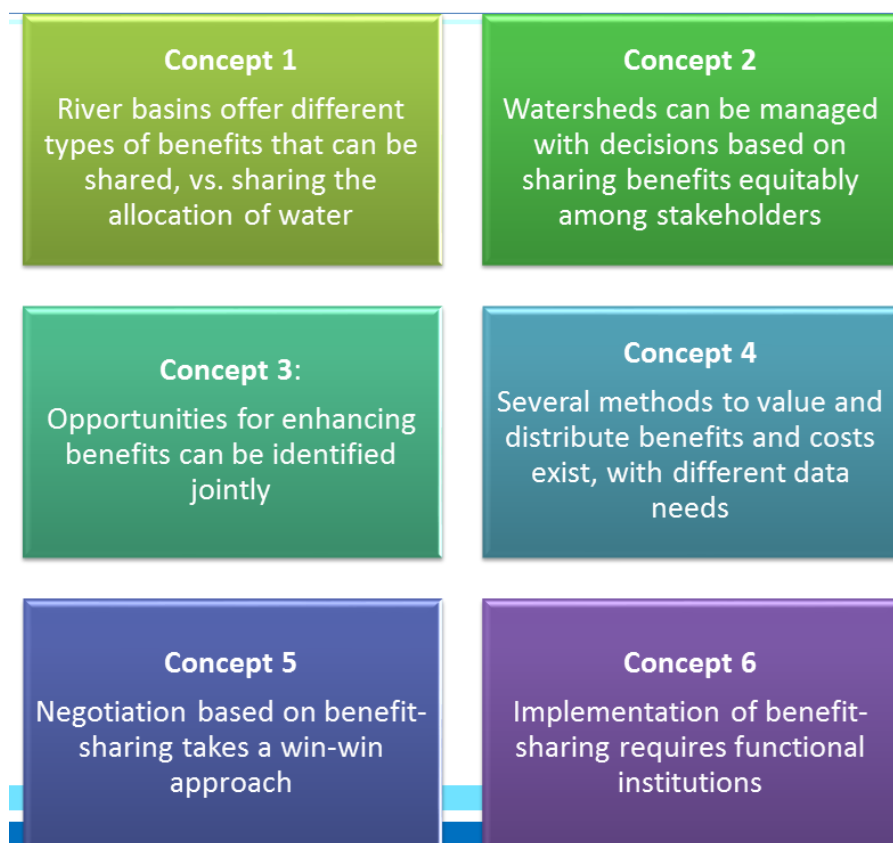
Benefit sharing is a key instrument for good water governance. It provides a framework for cooperation that takes into account stakeholders at multiple levels, as well as local and national interests. It also includes the key principles of IWL, such as reasonable and equitable utilisation, not inflicting harm, and achieving win-win outcomes.

2.4.1 The roadmap for benefit sharing

The presentation from Mr Vishwa Ranjan Sinha, Programme Officer at IUCN Asia, discussed the steps to negotiate and operationalise a transboundary benefit sharing agreement.

Benefit sharing is an alternative to conventional hydrodiplomacy, starting with the identification of a “basket of benefits” that can be shared among stakeholders, rather than thinking about the volumes of water allocation. Thus, the benefit sharing approach gives a better chance for development and operationalisation of integrated river basin approaches and effective agreements among stakeholders by allowing identification and implementation of benefit enhancing scenarios for win-win outcomes of larger groups of stakeholders.

Figure 2: The roadmap for benefit sharing



2.4.2 Ecological economics, IWRM, and river basin governance

Dr Nilanjan Ghosh, Senior fellow and Head of Economics at the Observer Research Foundation in India, spoke about ecological economics and integrated river basin governance. He explained that, in resolving water conflicts, parties need to work at multiple levels in identifying the variety of benefits and necessary trade-offs. The development of integrated approaches at both spatial and temporal scales is also important. The valuing of ecosystem services provided by a river basin can support decision making processes by identifying necessary trade-offs between sectors and stakeholders. Dr Ghosh highlighted a case study about the Upper Ganges Canal, which assessed water-use efficiency and development of yield enhancement scenarios. He said that the case illustrates the trade-offs between various human interventions in the agriscap and the impacts on downstream ecosystem services.

2.4.3 Challenges to operationalising benefit sharing agreements in the GBM region

The following issues and recommendations were raised during the plenary discussion:

- The benefit sharing approach gives new opportunities and entry points for building cooperation that can be explored in the GBM. However, it is still a conceptual approach. Therefore, the estimation of the cost of non-cooperation will promote the use of the benefit sharing approach in water negotiations.

- Power asymmetries exist in the GBM Region. Even if we have identified the basket of benefits, agreements on trade-offs are challenging. Data and economic valuation of benefits could be useful to overcome these power asymmetries and will support the development of effective benefit sharing agreements.
- The engagement of all relevant stakeholders is needed in benefit sharing agreements. However, in reality it is difficult to engage all stakeholders in the negotiation process. Actual negotiations on shared water resources do not happen in structured manner.
- A change of mindset is needed. Capacity building of stakeholders about practical steps leading to operationalisation of benefit sharing is needed at all levels.
- Equity and equality are important principles in benefit sharing, but difficult to operationalise in reality.
- We need to see beyond water. Learning from the Mekong experience, regional cooperation is based on the sharing of the basket of benefits and applying a nexus approach in planning – energy, trade, prevention of illegal logging and watershed protection. In the case of the GBM Basin, the 2011 Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal (BBIN) framework agreement provides a good platform to initiate discussions on benefit sharing agreements linked to energy and regional connectivity issues, which are the two priority areas of work for this regional platform.

2.5 Summary of key points from the plenary discussions

- It is important for the GBM Region to move from bilateral to multi-lateral mechanisms. In this regard the workshop highlighted the role that the UNWC could play. Developed in two decades of negotiations, the UNWC, which consolidates customary water laws, is a useful multilateral instrument. During the forum, the participants agreed that the UNWC could be a starting point and a central philosophy of the GBM countries in negotiating water agreements and basin planning.
- Incentivising cooperation is crucial. Incentives are needed to encourage countries to be actively involved in transboundary cooperation. In the GBM Region, water negotiations and agreements are centred on sharing of water. It is necessary to develop basin-level approaches and benefit sharing arrangements which deal beyond water.
- Rivers are complex ecosystems and living entities. Defining ‘river’ as a ‘living entity’ gives the opportunity to link rivers to local culture in order to inspire regional cooperation. There is a need to include this philosophy in the academic curriculum and use it when negotiating regional water issues.

- Gender discussions need to be part of shared water negotiations. The en-gendering of hydrodiplomacy is important since negotiators often neglect to consider how women's lives and aspirations are defined by rivers in the GBM Region. This issue was elaborated by Prof. Imtiaz who gave examples of women living in remote riverine islands (called *chaurs*) in Bangladesh, where river erosion has been a primary reason for the out-migration of women who move to cities for jobs, usually in the ready-made garment (RMG) industry. Varying situations related to gender need to be brought into the hydrodiplomacy discourse.
- There is a need to build stakeholder capacity and understanding on water governance institutions. While political will is important, technical expertise, community engagement, capacity building of stakeholders, and data and evidence to support transboundary dialogue and the consensus building processes are equally necessary.
- An integrated water management approach is important to tackle the problem of too much and too little water; and strategies such as nature-based solutions provide a good entry point for building integrated basin management approaches.
- There is a need to develop a regional multi-stakeholder platform for the GBM Region where discussions could take place. This platform will facilitate the development of a common legal framework. It is necessary to involve a wide range and stakeholders and local communities in the governance of transboundary rivers.
- There is also a need to identify ecologically sound solutions and build the capacity of stakeholders to implement these. Engineering structures, such as embankments, are not long-term solutions to control flooding. Participants cited the examples of Kosi and Meghna River Basins where embankments have been used as a flood control strategy. The structures led to increased siltation, and are regularly breached due to the increasing intensity of flooding events.
- In the case of China, the water governance sector is dominated by engineers due to the country's dependence on structural solutions to deal with water management and hazards. But in recent times, many universities have started work on water governance issues. This has created a constituency of experts in the university system who could be engaged in regional discussions under the BRIDGE GBM project.
- Nepal has been facing water governance challenges, such as floods and droughts, in the space of a single year. The last 70 years has seen a decrease in forest cover, and this has increased the vulnerability of downstream communities to flash floods due to sedimentation in mountain rivers. Dialogue and cooperation between GBM countries could help deal with the sedimentation issues through joint basin planning and development of innovative benefit sharing approaches.

- Efficiency of water use in agriculture may not ensure more water in rivers, but may be used to bring more areas under cultivation or other uses. Therefore, ecological economics and cost-benefit analysis is important for creating a replicable framework for evaluation of changing institutions, technology, and practices, by accounting the monetary value of various scenarios.

Box 1: Role play exercise and participants' feedback

To help participants apply the concepts and principles learned during the shared water governance workshops, IUCN has developed imaginary country scenarios to facilitate the role play exercise. The fictitious case used during this particular workshop was the “Taurontes River Basin” which is shared by five countries.

Participants noted the highlights and limitations of the role play exercise during the debriefing session.

Most participants enjoyed the process and used the principles of no harm, equity, etc. while negotiating their case. They said that the role play gave them a preview of actual water negotiations. Discussion on the results of the exercise highlighted that participants focused too much on hydropower related issues, and therefore failed to expand negotiations toward the “basket of benefits” provided by the basin.

A more holistic approach would have identified multiple entry points for solutions, taking the tension away from hydropower issues and moving the discussions to more cooperative ground.

2.6 Understanding sub-basin contexts and issues

In another exercise during the workshop, participants were divided into two groups: the Mahakali and the Meghna Basin groups. Major basin issues, opportunities and stakeholders in each basin were identified for initiating sub-basin dialogues under the BRIDGE GBM project. The inputs received from group work are summarised below.

2.6.1 Mahakali River Basin: issues and opportunities

- Issues
 - Implementation of the Mahakali Treaty is a challenge. There are contentious issues linked to the operation of the Sharda (1920) and Tanakpur (1991) Barrages, as well as the sharing of water from the Pancheshwar Reservoir.
 - The Environmental Impact Assessment (EAI) and environmental clearance for the development of Pancheshwar multi-purpose project has not yet been approved by Nepal, and the clearance from the Indian side is still pending.
- Knowledge and research gaps
 - An integrated approach to design and planning of mega projects;
 - Upstream-downstream linkages and impacts from the Pancheshwar projects;
 - Social implications and impacts of resettlement and rehabilitation;

- Benefit sharing opportunities in the Mahakali Basin;
 - Identification of ecologically sound alternative livelihoods for riverine communities; and
 - Basin-level flood control and management mechanisms.
- Opportunities
 - The formation of a joint river commission for the Mahakali Basin can foster integrated basin management. The Pancheshwar Development Authority (PDA) can coordinate joint efforts, but it is project-focused. It may also be useful to form a joint study team (India and Nepal) for basin health assessment.
- Support from IUCN and Oxfam
 - Awareness and capacity building on water governance and river basin management issues for different stakeholders, including government and communities;
 - Support for study and research;
 - Coordination between or among countries and key stakeholders;
 - Collection and consolidation of public concerns and views, and sharing these with relevant authorities; and
 - Bringing in resources to support the integrated governance of river basins for different purposes.

The Mahakali group identified a number of stakeholders from government. (See Annex 3.)

2.6.2 Meghna River Basin: issues and opportunities

- Issues
 - Sharing of information on the developments upstream, particularly on EIA, water quality parameters, etc.; and
 - Risk management and reduction through measures such as afforestation, and joint efforts between Bangladesh and India.
- Knowledge gaps
 - Sediment management in upstream areas; and
 - Climate change impacts – modeling studies on the impacts of extreme weather conditions and flow changes on fisheries, agriculture (rice) and flash floods.
- Opportunities
 - There is a need for a Meghna-focused Joint River Commission. The Meghna Basin provides opportunities for navigation linkages between India and Bangladesh, connecting to tourism in the *haors*;
 - Securing community livelihoods; and
 - Engaging civil society networks in the Meghna Basin.

- Stakeholders
 - At the national level (for all countries): Ministries concerned with water resources, agriculture, environment and forestry, disaster management and foreign affairs.
 - In Bangladesh: Wetland Development Board (BWDB); Department of Bangladesh Haor and Wetlands Development (DBHWD), Department of Agricultural Extension (DOAE); Land Records and Survey Department (DLRS); Department of Fisheries (DoF); Department of Environment (DoE); and District administration 6, Sylhet.
 - In India: State Governments of Meghalaya and Tripura; Water Resource Development Boards; Meghalaya Basin Development Authority; and Forest Departments.

- Support from BRIDGE/TROSA Programme Partners
 - Facilitate joint research on the Meghna Basin;
 - Advocacy for the establishment of the Meghna Basin Commission;
 - Provision of dialogue spaces and platforms on transboundary water governance issues for different stakeholders; and
 - Pilot projects on eco-tourism and alternative livelihoods, which are more sustainable and contribute to community engagement in water governance activities.

2.7 Learning from the status of cooperation in the Mekong Region

The final session of the three-day workshop provided opportunities for the GBM stakeholders to learn from the experiences of the Mekong Region.

The session started with the presentation from H.E. Mr Watt Botkosol, Deputy Secretary General, Cambodian National Mekong Committee, Cambodia. He provided an overview of the Mekong Region and discussed the issues and challenges linked to consensus building in transboundary water governance. He also elaborated on the role and activities of the Mekong River Commission (MRC) and the National Mekong Committee in resolving conflicts. The Mekong River Agreement (1995), signed by lower Mekong countries, provides a framework for cooperation and sustainable development in the Mekong River Basin. It sets high-level goals for achieving social and economic development, environmental protection, and regional cooperation through its implementation.

The Mekong River Agreement established the MRC with the mandate to provide a regional platform for consensus building, and to foster a strong basin development planning process. The MRC has established a Basin Development Strategy. The strategy is revised regularly based on the results of council studies, which are aimed at generating knowledge for the sustainable management and development of the Mekong River Basin, and the identification of impacts from the development of mainstream hydropower and other development projects.

The MRC also facilitates a stakeholders' consultation process at national and sub-national levels in each country to gather inputs for the finalisation of council studies. The MRC process also involves high-level commitments from the Mekong governments on regional water cooperation, with prime minister-level dialogues every four years, during the MRC summits. The most recent, the 3rd MRC Summit was held from 2 to 5 April 2018 in Cambodia.

During the plenary discussions, participants asked about the establishment of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC) by China, and its impact on the regional cooperation and functioning of the MRC. It was highlighted that the mandate of LMC is broader than that of the MRC, and offers a wide package of regional collaboration mechanisms in areas such as education, science, and climate change adaptation. Stakeholders and observers need to take a closer look at the impacts of LMC in regional cooperation and the MRC.

The workshop concluded with feedback from participants on workshop facilitation. Participants highlighted that the learning opportunities provided by the Mekong experience were useful. It gave them additional perspectives on consensus building processes adapted in the Mekong Region, and the important role of council studies in evidence-based decision making.

Annex 1: Agenda

**BRIDGE Workshop on Water Governance and
Regional Cooperation in the GBM Basin**
9-11 April 2018, Bangkok Thailand

Agenda

Day 1: Monday, 9 April 2018	
8:30 – 09:00	Registration
Session 1: Dialogue background and introduction of participants	
09:00 – 09:20	Keynote speakers H.E. Mr Lyonpo Yeshey Dorji , Minister of Agriculture and Forests, Bhutan Dr Alejandro Iza , Director, IUCN Environmental Law Centre, Bonn, Germany
09:20 – 09:40	Participants' introductions and expectations from the dialogue <i>Who is in the room? What we are doing? Why we are here?</i>
09:40 – 10:00	IUCN Hydrodiplomacy Programme and overview of BRIDGE GBM (15 mins) (Mr Raphaël Glémet , Senior Programme Officer, Water and Wetlands, Natural Resources Group, IUCN Asia Regional Office, Bangkok, Thailand)
10:00 – 10:10	Objectives and agenda of the workshop (Mr Vishwa Sinha , Programme Officer, Natural Resources Group, IUCN Asia Regional Office)
10:20 – 10:40	Screening of a movie on transboundary water governance
10:40 – 11:00	Coffee break and group picture
Session 2: Hydrodiplomacy and governance of the shared river basins	
11:00 – 12:30	Technical session I Hydrodiplomacy: an approach to transboundary water cooperation Speakers: Hydrodiplomacy: theories and practices (Prof. Imtiaz Ahmed , Expert on Water, Dhaka University) Transboundary water governance under the "one country, two systems" framework (Dr. Wang Yu , School of Government, Sun Yat-Sen University) <i>Plenary discussions facilitated by Dr Alejandro Iza</i>
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch Break
13:30 – 15:15	Technical session II Governance of shared waters: legal aspects (Dr Alejandro Iza , Director of the IUCN Environmental Law Centre, Bonn, Germany)
15:15 – 15:30	Coffee Break
15:30 – 16:30	Technical session III Water cooperation in South Asia (Mr Shawahiq Siddiqui , Advocate, Supreme Court of India, and Partner, Indian Environment Law Organisation, Delhi) (Dr Shahab Enam Khan , Research Director, Bangladesh Enterprise Institute) <i>Plenary discussions facilitated by Dr Alejandro Iza</i>
16:30 – 17:00	Practical session I Explanation of the role play exercise Explanation of the case study and the methodology for the practical exercise Grouping of participants into countries and sharing of background material

19:00 – 21:30	Networking dinner at Indus Restaurant, Bangkok
Day 2: Tuesday, 10 April 2018	
Session 3: Benefit sharing: building effective cooperation in practice	
09:00 – 09:30	Strategies for water governance in the GBM <i>Plenary discussions facilitated by Dr Alejandro Iza</i>
09:30 – 10:30	Technical session IV A roadmap for benefit sharing in a transboundary context and joint identification of benefits (Mr Vishwa Sinha)
10:30 – 10:50	Coffee break
10:50 – 11:20	Technical session V Ecological economics, IWRM, and river basin governance (Dr Nilanjan Ghosh , Senior Fellow [Professor] and Head of Economics, Observer Research Foundation, Kolkata Chapter)
11:20 – 13:00	Practical session II Group work: analysis of the conflict scenarios
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 16:00	Practical session III Role play exercise
16:00 – 16:20	Coffee break
16:20 – 17:00	Practical session IV Debriefing session
Day 3 – Wednesday, 11 April 2018	
Session 4: Planning the sub-basin dialogues (Mahakali and Meghna Basins)	
09:30 – 10:30	Understanding the sub-basins' contexts and issues The Mahakali/Sharda Basin (Ms Samira Shakya , Program Coordinator TROSA, Oxfam Nepal); The Meghna Basin (Ms Archana Chatterjee , Mangroves for the Future [MFF] Coordinator, IUCN India)
10:30 – 10:45	Coffee break
10:45 – 13:00	Group discussion based on thematic questions
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break
Session 5: Learning from the status of cooperation in the Mekong region	
14:00 – 16:00	The need and effectiveness of existing regional mechanisms for water cooperation: perspectives from the Mekong and the GBM regions Panelists: H.E. Mr Watt Botkosol , Deputy Secretary General, Cambodian National Mekong Committee, Phnom Penh, Cambodia Dr Apichart Anukularmphai , President, Thailand Water Resources Association (TWRA), Bangkok <i>Facilitated by Mr Raphaël Glémet</i>
16:00 – 16:20	Participants' feedback
16:20 – 16:45	Dialogue wrap-up, evaluation and next steps

Annex 2: List of participants

S/n	Title	Name	Designation	Organisation	Email
Bhutan					
1	H.E. Mr	Lyonpo Yeshey Dorji	Minister	Ministry of Agriculture and Forests	ydorji@moaf.gov.bt; kthinley@moaf.gov.bt
2	Mr	Kinley Tshering	Chief forestry officer	Ministry of Agriculture and Forests	kinleytshering1@moaf.gov.bt
Bangladesh					
3	Mr	Mohammad Nazmul Ahsan	Deputy director	Department of Bangladesh Haor and Wetland Development	nazmulcdr@yahoo.com
4	Ms	Begum Nuzhat Yasmin	Joint secretary	Ministry of Water Resources	dev1@mowr.gov.bd
5	Mr	Md. Mahmudur Rahman	Director	Joint Rivers Commission	jrcombd@gmail.com
6	Mr	Alamgir Mohammed Monsurul Alam	Additional secretary	Ministry of Environment and Forests	monsurulalam86@gmail.com
China					
7	Dr	Wen Zhuqing	Associate professor	School of Government, Sun Yat-sen University	wangyu86@mail.sysu.edu.cn
India					
8	Mr	B.B. Barman	Adviser	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change	bindhu-mef@nic.in; bbbdx.dy@gmail.com
Nepal					
9	Mr	Surendra Bist	Mayor	Bheemdatt Municipality	bheemdattcitymayor99@gmail.com
10	Mr	Mina Raj Dhakal	Divisional engineer	Mega Dang Valley Irrigation Project, Department of Irrigation	m77dhakal@gmail.com
11	Mr	Churna Bahadur Wali	Deputy director general	Department of Irrigation	cbwali69@gmail.com
12	Mr	Mitra Baral	Project director	Sunkoshi Marin Diversion Multipurpose Project	neaconsult@hotmail.com
13	Mr	Tirtha Raj Adhikari	Associate professor	Central Department of Hydrology and Meteorology, Tribhuvan University	tirtha43@gmail.com

Resource Persons					
14	H.E. Mr	Watt Botkosal	Deputy secretary general	Cambodian National Mekong Committee (CNMC)	wattbotkosal@gmail.com
15	Dr	Apichart Anukularmphai	President	Thailand Water Resources Association (TWRA)	apichart.twra@gmail.com
16	Dr	Shahab Enam Khan	Research director	Bangladesh Enterprise Institute	shahab.e.khan@gmail.com
17	Prof.	Imtiaz Ahmed	Professor and expert on water	Dhaka University, Bangladesh	imtiazalter@gmail.com
18	Dr	Nilanjan Ghosh	Senior fellow (Professor) and Head of Economics	Observer Research Foundation, Kolkata Chapter, India	nilanjan.ghosh@gmail.com
19	Mr	Shawahiq Siddiqui	Advocate, Supreme Court of India	Partner, Indian Environment Law Organisation (IELO), New Delhi, India	shawahiq.ielo@gmail.com
TROSA Project Partners					
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IUCN					
22	Dr	Alejandro Iza	Director	Environmental Law Centre, IUCN Germany	Alejandro.iza@iucn.org
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26	Ms	Archana Chatterjee	Mangroves for the Future (MFF) coordinator	IUCN India	archana.chatterjee@iucn.org
27	Mr	Raphaël Glémet	Senior program officer, Water and Wetlands	IUCN Asia Regional Office	Raphael.GLEMET@iucn.org
28	Mr	Vishwa Ranjan Sinha	Program officer, Natural Resources Group	IUCN Asia Regional Office	vishwaranjan.sinha@iucn.org

Annex 3: Stakeholders in the Mahakali Basin

S.N.	Stakeholders	Responsibility
1	Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation – Nepal	Takes lead in the formalisation of processes
2	Ministry of Forests and Environment – Nepal	Reviews and approves EIAs and environmental clearances in Nepal
3	Ministry of Environment and Forestry – India	Reviews and approves EIAs and environmental clearances in India
4	Ministry of Water Resources – India	Takes the lead in the formalisation of processes
5	State government, province 7- Nepal	Bridges central and local government units
6	State government of Uttarakhanda – India	Oversees the irrigation canal network
7	Ministry of Power – India	Provides support for design, capacity and distribution
8	Pancheshwor Development Authority (India and Nepal)	Oversees planning, designing, construction, commissioning, and handover of projects
9	Research institutes (India and Nepal)	Conducts studies
10	General public	Takes part in the EIA consultation
11	Civil society organisations	Plays a bridging role among stakeholders
12	Local government bodies (India and Nepal)	Takes part in the EIA, also final actors for consensus before a final decision is made



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