



BRIDGE 3S

Building River Dialogue and Governance in the Sekong, Sesan and Sre Pok (3S) River Basins



The 3S River Basins

The Sekong, Sesan and Sre Pok Rivers of Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam are the major transboundary tributaries of the Mekong. The 3S rivers, as they are collectively known, are instrumental in the hydrology of the Lower Mekong, contributing up to 18% of its annual total discharge.

The 3S basins are also a bread basket for over three million people, many of whom depend directly on resources provided by the rivers.

As the Asia region develops, and given the basins' high irrigation and hydropower potential, the 3S rivers are expected to continue playing a significant role in the economic growth of the basins and the Mekong region as a whole.

Over the past two decades, the 3S basins have seen a proliferation of human settlements as well as rapid social and economic development. A suitable long-term strategy to meet the needs of the growing population and the environment is required to relieve burgeoning pressures and ensure more equitable sharing of river benefits.

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Funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Building River Dialogue and Governance (BRIDGE) programme has been implemented in 14 transboundary rivers and lakes in five regions worldwide: the Andes, the Mekong, Meso-america, West and Central Africa and East and Southern Africa.

The programme in Asia is currently in its third phase. During Phases 1 and 2, from 2011 to 2016, the BRIDGE programme provided opportunities for key 3S basins stakeholders to participate in dialogue and training in co-operative hydro-diplomacy capacity building.



BRIDGE benefit sharing workshop, July 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

During this period, BRIDGE also facilitated the sharing of information on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and benefit sharing and consolidated data and studies to support technical discussions across the basins.

BRIDGE 3S has also developed a network of 'Water Champions' at the regional level in the 3S basins. These include representatives from both the government and civil society. The Members advise on the effective implementation of the BRIDGE programme in the 3S basins and are also part of various working groups, such as the ASEAN Working Group on Water Resources Management.

BRIDGE 3S Objectives (Phase 3)

Building on past achievements, Phase 3 of the programme will focus on the following elements:

- Enabling an environment for strengthening transboundary water cooperation in the Lower Mekong Basin;

- Strengthening the institutional framework for co-operation in the 3S basins through facilitation of transboundary working groups to develop a 3S strategy;
- Developing and disseminating specific and practical knowledge on and tools for the operationalisation of transboundary water cooperation in the 3S basins.

At the regional level, BRIDGE will support the ratification of international water conventions by Lower Mekong Basin countries and will provide tailored training and dialogue opportunities.



BRIDGE 3S seminar on the UN Watercourses Convention and regional cooperation for the 3rd Commission of the National Assembly, September 2015, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

“Awareness of the principles and laws governing use of international waters is the key to resolving conflict and strengthening cooperation in shared river basins.”

Dr Alejandro Iza, Head, IUCN Environmental Law Centre, Bonn, Germany

For more information, please visit the [BRIDGE 3S project page](#) or contact:

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