



Strengthening the institutional framework for cooperative governance in the Mahakali/Sharda Basin in India and Nepal

BRIDGE workshop report

25-26 June 2018, Kathmandu, Nepal



Building River Dialogue and Governance (BRIDGE)



The designation of geographical entities in this report and the presentation of the material do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IUCN concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of IUCN, Oxfam, The Asia Foundation, TROSA programme partners, or the Government of Sweden.

This report has been made possible in part by funding from The Asia Foundation and the TROSA programme.

Published by: IUCN, Bangkok, Thailand

Copyright: ©2018 IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources

Reproduction of this publication for educational or other non-commercial purposes is authorised without prior written permission from the copyright holder provided the source is fully acknowledged.

Reproduction of this publication for resale or other commercial purposes is prohibited without prior written permission of the copyright holder.

Citation: IUCN BRIDGE GBM, 2018. *Strengthening the institutional framework for cooperative governance in the Mahakali/Sharda Basin in India and Nepal: BRIDGE workshop report*. Bangkok, Thailand: IUCN. 20pp.

Cover photo: Workshop participants ©BRIDGE 2018

Available from: IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)
Asia Regional Office
BRIDGE Programme
63 Sukhumvit Soi 39
Wattana, 10110 Bangkok
Thailand
Tel +66 2 662 4029
Fax +66 2 662 4387
asia@iucn.org

Table of contents

1	Background	4
1.1	About BRIDGE GBM and the objectives of the workshop	4
2	Workshop proceedings	6
2.1	Welcome remarks and introduction to the BRIDGE GBM Project	6
2.2	Water governance institutions in the Mahakali Basin	6
2.3	Presentation from partners on their water governance activities	8
2.3.1	<i>Institutions in the Mahakali Basin in India</i>	8
2.3.2	<i>Community concerns in the Mahakali Basin: Samvaads facilitated by INJAF</i>	8
2.3.3	<i>Current research activities and programmes on river basin management</i>	9
2.3.4	<i>The Pancheshwar Project: institutional arrangements and challenges</i>	10
2.3.5	<i>The UNWC and the Mahakali Treaty: a comparative view</i>	13
2.4	Results of the SWOT analysis: water governance in the Mahakali Basin	13
2.5	Visioning Mahakali 2022: priority actions and results	15
	Annex 1: Agenda	17
	Annex 2: List of participants	19

1 Background

Water governance institutions play an important role in fostering inclusive and cooperative governance in a shared river basin. Institutions provide a platform to shape decision making processes through conflict resolution, consensus building, and joint planning. Therefore, it is crucial that water researchers, policy makers, and managers have a common understanding of what institutions mean at different levels of the governance ladder, and in the context of river basin management.

The Mahakali Basin is a transboundary basin shared by India and Nepal. It is estimated that at least two million people live in the basin and depend on its ecosystem services such as fisheries, water for agriculture, and hydropower development. However, in recent times the Mahakali River Basin has been facing a variety of climatic and development pressure. The problem has been accentuated by the absence of a clear institutional mechanism and platform to support basin-level planning and the integrated management of the Mahakali River.

1.1 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 organisations (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 (TROSAs) 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.

To improve stakeholder understanding of the existing institutional and legal frameworks for the governance of the Mahakali Basin, IUCN, through BRIDGE GBM, facilitated the workshop *Strengthening institutional frameworks for cooperative governance in the Mahakali/Sharda Basin* from 25 to 26 June 2018, in Kathmandu, Nepal.

The workshop provided a platform to discuss water governance challenges and identify ways to strengthen existing institutional arrangements for the sustainable and inclusive management of the Mahakali Basin.

Specific objectives of the workshop are listed below. (See Annex 1 for the detailed agenda.)

- Improve stakeholder understanding on the existing legal and institutional frameworks, government policies, and mechanisms operating in the Mahakali Basin;
- Discuss and identify actions that will support the creation of an enabling environment for the Integrated Management of the Mahakali Basin; and
- Discuss how government and civil society can work together to improve the governance of the Mahakali River Basin.

The workshop was attended by more than 20 representatives from the government, academia and civil society organisations from India and Nepal. (See Annex 2 for the complete list of participants.)

This report provides a summary of the major themes discussed during the workshop, as well as priority issues and actions identified for future consideration by stakeholder groups.

2 Workshop proceedings

2.1 Welcome remarks and introduction to the BRIDGE GBM Project

The workshop opened with welcome remarks from Dr Prahlad Thapa, Country Representative of IUCN Nepal. His speech highlighted the role of water governance institutions in balancing the competing interests of users. He said that the structure of a water governance institution is context-specific and may range from joint bodies such as river, lake and aquifer commissions, tribunals, stakeholder councils or community water user groups at the micro-level. Research demonstrates that conflicts are less likely when the institutional capacity for dialogue and the management of disputes are present.

The presentation by Mr Vishwa Sinha, Programme Officer at the IUCN Asia Regional Office, introduced participants to the BRIDGE GBM Project, as well as to the objectives of the workshop. BRIDGE has been working in the GBM Basins since 2016, primarily focusing on engagement with CSOs working on water governance issues in the five GBM countries. A regional network of GBM CSOs was established under a common “civil society vision for connecting the people of the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) River Basin”. Now in its second phase, the BRIDGE GBM project is facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms and research to build consensus and common understanding for the cooperative governance of the GBM Basin, with particular focus on the Mahakali and Meghna Basins as a demonstration component. (See <https://www.iucn.org/theme/water/our-work/current-projects/bridge.>)

2.2 Water governance institutions in the Mahakali Basin

During the workshop, a group exercise was used to assess the participants’ understanding of the institutional mechanisms operating in the Mahakali Basin. The participants were divided into two country groups and were asked to list down formal and informal institutional mechanisms operating in the basin, as well as criteria which they feel are important for the success of any water governance institution. The outcomes of the group work are summarised in the following page.

Table 1: Formal and informal institutions in the Mahakali Basin

	India group	Nepal group
Formal	Local or provincial level	
	Municipality; <i>Gram Panchayat</i> , <i>Van Panchayats</i> ; Department of Forest and Environment; urban development agencies; Department of Irrigation; Department of Water and Sanitation; <i>Jal</i> boards; and the Public Health and Engineering Department (PHED)	Municipality; district irrigation offices; District Disaster Management Committees; forest user communities; and national parks
	National	
	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC); Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR); G. B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development; G. B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology; National Institute of Hydrology Roorkee; Kumaon University; and the Watershed Directorate of Uttarakhand	Mahakali Irrigation Project Phase III; Ministry of Water Resources and Energy and Irrigation, Nepal; Research Institutions such as the Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST); and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)
	Bilateral/multilateral	
At the regional level, international financial institutions such as Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank.	Pancheshwar Development Authority (PDA); and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).	
Informal	Womens' groups and NGOs/CSOs working at the community level on water governance issues	Womens' groups; water source conservation committees; local expert groups; and the Indo-Nepal Joint Action Forum (INJAF)

On criteria for building an effective institutional mechanism for the governance of a shared river basin, participants listed the following:

- **A neutral platform** - to be able to facilitate consensus-building based on evidence in a transparent manner;
- **Inclusiveness** - community participation in decision making processes;

- **Accountability and authority** - institutions shall have the means for efficient service delivery and the authority to convene stakeholders and ensure regular meetings of joint bodies or working groups constituted to support the cooperative development of a shared river basin; and
- **Subject matter knowledge and capacity** - the institution shall have the technical expertise and clarity on legal frameworks and mechanisms governing a shared river basin.

During discussions, most participants emphasised that being neutral, inclusive, and having technical expertise are important criteria determining the effectiveness of a water governance institution at any level.

2.3 Presentation from partners on their water governance activities

Below is a summary of presentations from organisations participating in the workshop. These presentations supported the identification of issues and challenges in the Mahakali Basin, providing critical inputs for the dialogue process.

2.3.1 Institutions in the Mahakali Basin in India

The presentation from Mr Nishant Alag of Environics Trust, India, highlighted the role of micro-level water governance institutions and community engagement in the sustainable management of the Mahakali Basin. Traditionally, village level institutions (such as *Van Panchayats*) were responsible for the management and protection of water and forest resources. This ensured community stewardship and use of local knowledge and traditional practices in the sustainable management of the river basin. Mr Nishant cited as an example, the '*naulas*' a surface-water harvesting method traditionally practised in the hill areas of Uttarakhand in India. However, he highlighted, due to shrinking spaces for local communities in project planning and implementation, and the adoption of modern irrigation facilities (such as lined canals, etc.) spaces for local practices and institutions have shrunk, leading to the disintegration or weakening of traditional water governance arrangements.

Central government schemes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and the National Mission on Himalayan Studies, have strong focus on water management and can provide a good entry point for engaging community level institutions and generating knowledge to support the sustainable governance of the Mahakali Basin. Furthermore, the irrigation department is one of the major institutional players in the Mahakali Basin, and needs to be engaged in the dialogue process. The mandate of the irrigation department includes securing drinking water supplies and providing disaster response.

2.3.2 Community concerns in the Mahakali Basin: *Samvaads* facilitated by INJAF

Representatives of the Indo Nepal Joint Action Forum (INJAF) from India and Nepal, Mr Tej Singh Bhandari (coordinator for India), and Mr Komal Niranjana Bhat (coordinator for Nepal), presented outcomes of their Mahakali *samvaads* (dialogues). The *samvaads* included a series of community consultations in India and Nepal. More than 250 stakeholders, including

members of state legislative assemblies, CSOs, *Panchayati Raj* Institutions (PRIs), representatives from district administrations, river basin communities, and media personnel from India and Nepal, participated in the process.

The *samvaad* captured community challenges and perceptions. Communities across the basin are concerned about water security, particularly the lack of water for irrigation purposes. They have been experiencing decreasing surface flow and receding water tables over last couple of decades. In Nepal, the community perception is that they are not receiving the allocated volumes of water they are entitled to under the Mahakali Treaty. The way forward is research and documentation of various water use challenges, water budgeting for communities, and the promotion of micro-level planning and project implementation with engagement from communities.

2.3.3 Current research activities and programmes on river basin management

Dr Deep Narayan Shah of Tribhuvan University, Nepal, shared insights on current research areas in the Mahakali Basin. He said that riverbed mining, ground water depletion, water-induced hazards, fisheries, and sedimentation are the most commonly discussed issues in peer-reviewed papers published regarding the Mahakali Basin. On transboundary issues, most research articles focused on governance and legal aspects, with less emphasis given to natural resources, biodiversity, and disaster management issues.

The presentation by Mr LN Thakural, a scientist from National Institute of Hydrology (NIH), India, discussed the activities of NIH. The institute is a nodal agency providing hydrological data to the Ministry of Water Resources to support river basin planning. It also conducts training and capacity building and has developed tools to support better water management, the example being snowmelt runoff modeling undertaken for the Sharda River to help forecast daily streamflow in the mountainous part of the basins. This is an important piece of work as snowmelt is a major source of runoff in the Mahakali River, as explained by Mr Thakural.

The presentation by Dr Ranjan Joshi, a scientist from GB Pant Institute of Himalayan Studies (GBPNIHESD), provided an overview of the activities of the institute. Established in 1988, GBPNIHESD is as an autonomous institute under the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) of India. The mandate of GBPNIHESD is to ensure the long-term ecological and economic security of the Indian Himalayan region (IHR) through facilitation of inter- and multi-disciplinary research, as well as community engagement. The institute is working with communities to identify and strengthen local ecological knowledge, and is also involved in the demonstration of technological packages and delivery systems for the sustainable development of the Himalayan Region.

To strengthen community engagement in the research process, the GBPNIHESD initiated a Citizen Science Programme. The aim of this programme is to assess and quantify forest ecosystem services (particularly pollination services) in the Indian Himalayan agro-ecosystem. Furthermore, through the Kailash Sacred Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative (KSLCDI), the institute is supporting equitable access and benefit sharing of biological resources. Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) were formed,

and the documentation of community rights and tools for the operationalisation of benefit sharing have been developed.

There are 12 major river basins and 46 medium river basins in India, and pollution is a big threat to both river ecology and sustainable human use. Highlighting these facts, Mr Brijesh Sikka, an adviser from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India, shared the activities undertaken by the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) to control river pollution in the country's 12 major rivers. Based on the 2015 report of the Central Pollution Control Board, 302 polluted river stretches are spread across 275 different rivers and were identified for project intervention. To reduce pollution load in the rivers, strategies such as diversion and treatment of sewage, low cost sanitation, riverfront development, public participation, and awareness programmes are being implemented under the NRCP.

However, there are challenges, such as the need for more water treatment capacity. But there is not enough funding to bridge this gap. Also, tackling non-point sources (agricultural runoff, solid waste, cattle-wallowing, idol immersions, etc.) still remains a big issue. There are technical and managerial constraints leading to delays in project implementation. The way forward is to strengthen capacity of State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) to address issues such as weak compliance and enforcement. There is also a need to engage CSOs and communities to support the implementation of the National River Conservation Plan.

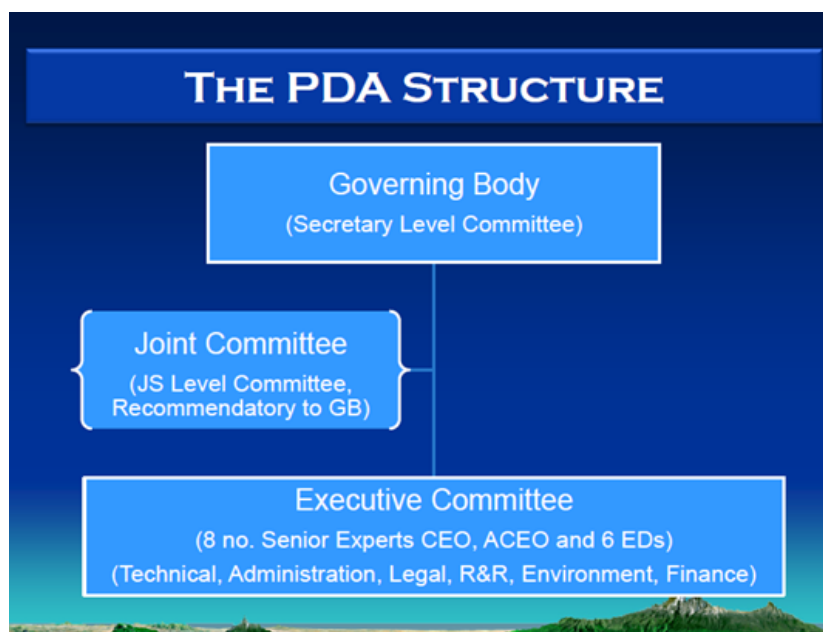
2.3.4 The Pancheshwar Project: institutional arrangements and challenges

Mr Mahendra B. Gurung, former CEO of the Pancheshwar Development Authority (PDA) shared the salient features of the Pancheshwar Project. He said that the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the PDA was approved by the governments of India and Nepal in August 2014. The TOR provides a framework for institutional set-up and defines the authority of the PDA. The TOR also established a Governing Body and an Executive Committee as two main organs of the PDA. The Governing Body works through the Joint Committee with members from both India and Nepal to facilitate administrative and financial matters.

Mr Gurung also shared the challenges linked to the implementation of the Pancheshwar Multi-purpose Project. Both India and Nepal recognise the benefits of the project, but there are differences of opinion on water sharing issues, particularly the method for calculating "existing consumptive use". For example, in India there is a demand that the water requirement of the Lower Sharada Barrage should be deducted from the calculation of "existing consumptive use", and Nepal gets priority in using the balance as required by the "prime consideration" clause of the Mahakali Treaty. On the other hand, Nepal argues that the balance should be shared equally after deducting only the environmental flow (e-flow) and 5% abstraction allowed for communities under the Mahakali Treaty.

Suggesting the way forward, Mr Gurung raised some questions: Can India be flexible and leave the claims for the waters of the Lower Sharada Canal under "existing consumptive use"? Can Nepal be flexible and let India use the water as it claims? He concluded that both parties need to sit together and develop a consensus in order to resolve these issues.

Figure 1: Structure of the Pancheshwar Development Authority (PDA)



Box 1: Perspectives from government and CSOs: working together for win-win outcomes

This box summarises the outcomes of the group work on strengthening government and CSO collaboration on water governance issues. Participants were divided into two groups: government and CSOs. Each group was asked to identify entry points and strategies to strengthen their programmatic collaboration, trust and communication.

Perspectives from the government group

1. Entry points for strengthening the engagement of CSOs on water governance issues:
 - *Public awareness:* arrange mass meetings, conferences, practices and production of outreach materials, which provide incentives for people to come to meetings.
 - *Issue identification:* use community consultation and social media channels to identify new issues.
 - *Program implementation:* design specific programs to mobilise communities in addressing local-level water governance challenges.
 - *Capacity building:* generate data on cropping patterns and water use efficiency in the agricultural sector. The community uses traditional methods of agriculture and are not usually aware about how to optimise their water use. CSOs can provide learning tools and facilitate capacity building workshops on innovative irrigation practices, cropping patterns, and other ways to increase income and maximise water use in agriculture.

2. How governments can support CSOs:

- *Supportive policies:* CSO-friendly policies can enable CSOs to work freely. Government can allocate budget and support CSOs with proper funding. There are programmes in both India and Nepal that promote and fund CSO-led actions on nature conservation issues. One example is the support provided by the environment ministry in India for CSOs to undertake awareness campaigns on nature conservation. (However, the CSO participants argued that the budget made available by ministry is not enough to enable active CSO engagement.)
- *Strengthening communication and trust between the government and CSOs:* CSOs need to develop a responsive system using modern communication tools such as information communications technology (ICT), to keep government agencies updated on the activities and results of CSO projects. Also, good governance, transparency, and sharing of performance evaluation reports with the government, will help strengthen trust and programmatic engagement between CSOs and the government.

Perspectives from the CSO group

1. How CSOs can support the government:

- *Data sharing:* governments need to be more open on data sharing on river basin parameters and issues. They need to be more willing to engage CSOs by providing spaces for CSOs in water planning and management.
- *Data collection:* collection of data on project-affected people, particularly those living in the tributaries of the Mahakali River is an important area of work. This will support the development of micro-watershed plans and the integrated management of the basin.
- *Demonstration projects:* CSOs work with communities and understand realities on the ground and community issues. Therefore, they can initiate demonstration projects and create models that could be adapted for replication by the government. CSOs could also support governments through project monitoring and evaluation.
- *Sharing of success stories:* sharing the impact of projects (positive changes in people's lives), and joint monitoring and exposures visits of government representatives to the CSO project areas by government officials, are important strategies for building communication, trust, and buy-in from the government.

2.3.5 The UNWC and the Mahakali Treaty: a comparative view

Mr Shawahiq Siddiqui, of the Indian Environment Law Organisation (IELO), introduced participants to the 1997 United Nations Watercourses Convention (UNWC) and also discussed the key provisions and contentious issues under the Mahakali Treaty.

He explained that the UNWC “codifies cooperation” in the context of shared water governance, while at the same time recognising the absolute territorial sovereignty in water resources and hydrology. However, the UNWC has not made much progress in South Asia. It was opposed by China; and India, along with 35 other nations, abstained from voting. Nepal and Bangladesh voted in favour of the UNWC but did not ratify the convention. Among the reasons given by the countries for non-ratification are:

- a) Article 5 (regarded as the core of the UNWC) which advocates for equitable and reasonable utilisation, has been drafted in an ambiguous manner;
- b) Article 3.3 (watercourse agreements) presumes there is existing good understanding and collaboration between the involved parties; and
- c) Article 33 (settlement of disputes mechanism) was not acceptable to many countries on the grounds of sovereignty.

Despite the concerns recorded by some countries, the accomplishments of the UNWC include how it:

- a) promotes the general principles of international water laws;
- b) establishes clear roles and duties of states that share freshwater resources; and
- c) acknowledges that cooperation is indispensable for achieving equitable and reasonable utilisation, preventing significant harm, and protecting shared ecosystems.

Mr Siddiqui explained that, in contrast, the Mahakali Treaty focuses largely on the river itself, despite the fact that the treaty talks about the integrated management of the Mahakali Basin. Also, there is a lack of research and data sharing diligence in the Mahakali Treaty.

On the positive side, the Mahakali treaty acknowledges the need to develop water resources in an integrated manner, recognising that Mahakali is a boundary river, and that it is important to take into account the inclusion of the principles of equal partnership, corresponding rights, obligations, and duties for the utilisation of river resources. The treaty also includes provisions linked to river flow issues, maintenance and preservation of the river eco-system in the downstream (Article 1 (2)), and allows for 5% allocation of surface flow to meet the demands of local communities.

2.4 Results of the SWOT analysis: water governance in the Mahakali Basin

Participants were again divided into two groups and were tasked to analyse and contextualise the Mahakali Basin in light of the preceding presentations and discussions. The highlights of the discussion on the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis are outlined below.

1. There is a need to strengthen institutional and legal frameworks concerning the Mahakali Basin.

There are plans and policies related to the Mahakali Basin that seek to support its cooperative governance. However, there is no existing basin-level commission, and local community institutions are also disintegrating. Thus there is a need to revise and strengthen the existing legal framework, the Mahakali Treaty, by making it more inclusive and ensuring that it supports the development of appropriate institutional arrangements at different levels to support integrated basin management.

The following were the specific arguments raised on revising the Mahakali treaty:

- The treaty is valid for 75 years from the date of signing and has provisions to be reviewed every 10 years. But it has not been reviewed since it was signed in 1996. Also, the current treaty is based on old water use data, therefore there is a need to quantify these changes.
- On data on water use and availability in the Mahakali Basin:
 - There are contentious water sharing issues between India and Nepal. Both sides are seeking to redress the allocation and the definition of “existing consumptive use” in the Mahakali Treaty; and
 - There is a need to initiate research to generate data on community water needs (water budgeting), and identify gaps in community knowledge. Research is required to create baseline information to support the development of management plans for the Mahakali Basin.
- The Mahakali Treaty mentions the integrated management of the basin, however, it is too focused on the main river and does not include its tributaries. Furthermore, the treaty is project specific and does not provide enough opportunities for the development of the basin in integrated manner.
- The treaty recognises the water rights of communities, but limits it to a maximum of 5% of the average annual flow at Pancheshwar. There is no data on the calculation of how much water is going to communities, and if the 5% provision is enough given the projected increase in demand for irrigation and other livelihood issues. CSOs can contribute by generating data on community water use.

2. How CSOs can contribute to strengthening water governance arrangements

- There are opportunities for collaboration between CSOs and governments to revive traditional water governance institutions in the Mahakali Basin (such as the *Van Panchayats*). In India, village level institutions (such as *Panchayati Raj* Institutions or PRIs) provide a good entry point to strengthen engagement and influence on water governance issues, and revive traditional institutions and community knowledge.

- The programmatic collaboration between CSOs and academia will support application of data and knowledge to achieve water security at the community level. The presentations about the activities of the GB Pant Institute and the NIH clearly indicate the need for linking research with local water management issues. Academic institutions are generating data, but they are not reaching out to CSOs. CSOs and academia could jointly develop projects to facilitate studies and capacity building workshops on water governance for key stakeholders from government and communities.
- It is important to advocate for an institutional mechanism that provides opportunities for the engagement of local people and representatives in the management of transboundary water resources. The current institutional set-up in the Mahakali Basin, like the PDA, does not provide space for civil society members in the governing body.
- It is necessary to develop tools, such as topographic and hydrographical maps to assist micro-watershed planning and community involvement. Multiple levels of institutional agreements involving communities, CSOs and academic institutions can contribute to this.

2.5 Visioning Mahakali 2022: priority actions and results

The final session of the workshop provided recommendations for strengthening cooperative water governance in the Mahakali Basin. Participants were asked to identify results they want to see in the Mahakali Basin by 2022, and what activities CSOs and other stakeholders could support to achieve these results. The summary is below.

Priority actions and results for 2022:

1. The Mahakali Basin Commission is established as per the provision of the treaty, using multiple stakeholder platforms.
2. Regular multi-stakeholder dialogues on the Mahakali Basin supports identification of gaps, and provides inputs for strengthening institutional structures at all levels.
3. A network of water governance institutions are functioning and supporting regular interactions of government bodies, CSOs and the academic sector, and providing spaces for consensus building on priority issues linked to the cooperative governance of the Mahakali Basin.
4. Joint research programs are initiated, and include government bodies, CSOs, and the academic sector, and focuses on the themes of community water allocation and needs mapping, climate change impacts and e-flows. The governments of India and Nepal shall pool resources to support the development of these joint research projects.

5. Charismatic flagship species such as dolphins are identified and used as entry points to create awareness and advocacy for transboundary cooperation in the Mahakali Basin.

6. Religious and women's groups create mass campaigns on river basin issues in the Mahakali. (Religious groups work on river clean up initiatives and have significant influence on people.)

Annex 1: Agenda

Strengthening the Institutional Framework for Cooperative Governance in the Mahakali/Sharda Basin

25 - 26 June 2018

Noordijk Hall, Hotel Summit, Kathmandu, Nepal

Agenda

Day 1: Monday, 25 June 2018 Noordijk Hall	
Time	Activity
08:30 – 09:00	Registration
Session 1: Workshop background and introduction of participants	
09:00 – 09:10	Welcome remarks by Dr Prahlad Thapa , Country representative, IUCN Nepal
09:10 – 09:30	Round of introductions
09:30 – 10:00	About the BRIDGE GBM Project and the objectives of the workshop (Mr Vishwa Sinha , IUCN Asia Regional Office)
10:00 – 10:30	Exercise: Institutions in the context of water governance
10:30 – 10:50	Screening of the movie <i>Rivers Beyond Borders</i>
10:50 – 11:15	Tea break and group picture
Session 2: Understanding the Mahakali/Sharda context: policies and institutions	
11:15 – 13:00	<p><i>Basin specific plans, institutional arrangement and water governance challenges</i></p> <p>Brief analysis and discussions on the outcomes of the individual exercise, 'water governance institutions'</p> <p>Presentations (10 minutes each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutions in the Mahakali Basin (Mr Nishant Alag, Environics Trust, India) • Insights from community interactions (<i>Samvaad</i>) in the upper and lower Mahakali Basin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Perspectives from India (Mr Tej Singh Bhandari, Member, INJAF India) ○ Perspectives from Nepal (Mr Komal Bhat, Member, INJAF Nepal) • Transboundary River Mahakali: Existing knowledge, issues and challenges (Dr Deep Narayan Shah, Tribhuvan University, Nepal) <p>Plenary discussions and reflections on the issues highlighted by the presentations</p>

13:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:30	Presentations (10 minutes each): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional arrangements and water governance challenges in the Pancheshwar Project (Mr Mahendra B. Gurung, Former CEO, Pancheshwar Development Authority) • Initiatives in pollution abatement of rivers in India under the National River Conservation Plan (Mr Brijesh Sikka, Advisor, MoEFCC, India) • Activities of the National Institute of Hydrology (Dr LN Thakural, Scientist, National Institute of Hydrology, MOWR, India) • GB Pant water governance activities (Mr Ranjan Joshi, Scientist, GB Pant Institute of Himalayan Studies, India)
15:30 – 15:50	Tea break
15:50 – 17:00	Plenary discussions: Synergising government and CSO priorities for win-win outcomes: strategies and entry points
18:30 – 20:30	Networking dinner
Day 2: Tuesday, 26 June 2018	
Session 3: Institutional frameworks for cooperation in shared river basins	
09:30 – 09:45	Recap from Day 1 (facilitated discussion)
09:45 – 10:15	Presentation: Comparative analysis of the UNWC and the Mahakali Treaty (Mr Shawahiq Siddiqui , Indian Environment Law Organisation, New Delhi, India)
10:15 – 10:45	Presentation: Story of the Danube River Basin management: a case study (Mr Vishwa Sinha , IUCN Asia Regional Office)
10:45 – 11:00	Coffee/tea break
11:00 – 12:00	Exercise: SWOT analysis of existing institutional frameworks for water governance in the Mahakali Basin
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch break
Session 4: Visioning Mahakali: strengthening water governance institutions	
13:00 – 14:00	Group work: Strengthening institutions: priority areas and strategies (what, who and when?)
14:00 – 14:45	Recommendations based on the outcomes of the group work
14:45 – 15:15	Next steps, participants feedback, and workshop wrap-up
15:15	End of workshop with coffee and snacks

Annex 2: List of participants

No		Name	Designation	Organisation
India				
1	Mr	Ranjan Joshi	Scientist	GB Pant Institute of Himalayan Studies
2	Dr	LN Thakural	Scientist	National Institute of Hydrology, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation (MOWR)
3	Mr	Brijesh Sikka	Advisor	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF and CC)
4	Mr	Shawahiq Siddiqui	Partner	Indian Environment Law Organisation (IELO)
5	Mr	Probir Bose	Program director	Grameen Development Services
6	Mr	Nishant Alag	President, Environment planning and URP	Environics Trust
7	Mr	Arun Singh		Environics Trust
8	Mr	TejSingh Bhandari	Representative	Indo Nepal Joint Action Forum (INJAF) India
9	Mr	Aditya Ranjan	Program officer	Oxfam India
10	Ms	Archana Chatterjee	Mangroves for the Future (MFF) national coordinator	IUCN India
11	Mr	Gitika Goswami	Programme director (Policy and planning)	Development Alternatives Group
12	Mr	Ayesha Dsouza	South Asia program coordinator	International Rivers
13	Mr	Ram Kaji Thapa	Superintending engineer	Department of Electricity Development
14	Mr	Sharad Kumar Singh	Group head and civil engineer	U.P. Irrigation

Nepal				
15	Mr	Surendra Bista	Mayor	Bhimdutta Municipality
16	Mr	Komal Bhat	Member	INJAF
17	Mr	Ashok Bikram Jairu	Executive director and founder president	Nepal National Social Welfare Association (NNSWA)
18	Mr	Ajay Mani Dixit	Executive director	Institute for Social and Environmental Transition (ISET) - Nepal
19	Mr	Dinesh Bajracharya	Head of WASH and water governance	Oxfam Nepal
20	Mr	Deep Narayan Shah	Professor	Tribhuvan University
21	Mr	Min Raj Dhakal	Senior divisional engineer	Mega Dang Valley Irrigation Project
22	Ms	Samira Shakya	Project officer, Transboundary Rivers of South Asia (TROSA)	Oxfam Nepal
23	Mr	Mahendra B Gurung	Former chief executive officer	Pancheshwar Development Authority
24	Mr	Thomas Svich	Communications volunteer	IUCN
25	Mr	Dinakar Khanal	Senior divisional engineer	Water and Energy Commission Secretariat (WECS)
26	Mr	Krishna D Hengaju	Program officer	IUCN
27	Dr	Prahlad K Thapa	Country representative	IUCN
28	Dr	Narendra Man Babu Pradhan	Program coordinator	IUCN
29	Ms	Anu Adhikari	Senior program officer	IUCN



INTERNATIONAL UNION
FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE

ASIA REGIONAL OFFICE
63 Sukhumvit Soi 39
Wattana, 10110 Bangkok
Thailand
asia@iucn.org
Tel +66 2 662 4029
Fax +66 2 662 4387
www.iucn.org/asia

