



Purnagora River, Dawki, Meghalaya, India @IUCN Vishwa Sinha

MEGHNA BASIN

Background

The Meghna River Basin is shared by Bangladesh and India. The basin can be defined as a "biogeographical gateway," as it is located in the transition zone between Indian, Indo-Malayan and Indo-China biogeographical regions. The ecosystem services provided by the river basin support the life and livelihoods of more than 50 million people, including Indigenous communities such as the Khasi, Garo and Jaintia.

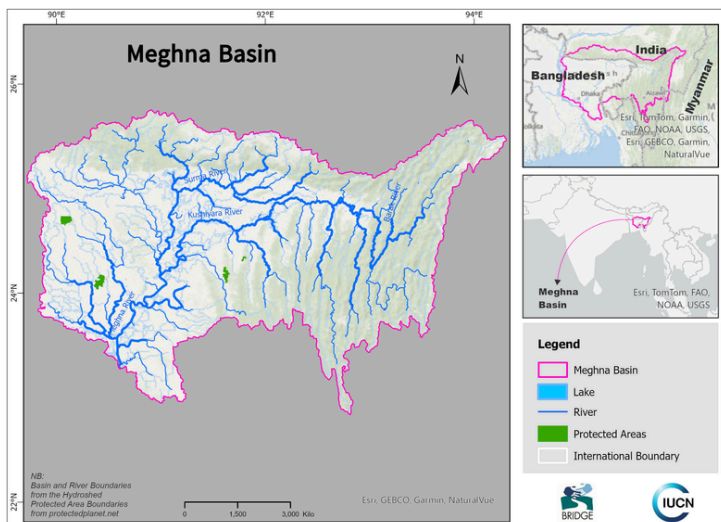
BRIDGE implementation

Since 2018, IUCN has been facilitating joint research and multi-stakeholder dialogues to support the implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and climate-resilient development of the Meghna river basin.

Key achievements to date

- Consolidated and published the [Meghna basin profile](#), highlighting various benefit-sharing opportunities between Bangladesh and India. These include collaborative forest management initiatives for flood and erosion control, development of transboundary navigation and ecotourism circuits.
- Engaged more than 50 different organization from Bangladesh and India in multi-stakeholder basin dialogues.
- Facilitated joint-research leading to improved understanding of land-use changes, water policies and the application of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) amongst the stakeholders.
- Facilitated the first ever [Meghna Knowledge Forum in 2021](#) documenting key messages from different stakeholders on cooperative governance of the basin.

*IUCN's activities in the Meghna Basin until 2022 (phase I) was supported by SIDA through the Oxfam TROSA project, and supplemented by contributions from the US State Funded Shared Waters Cooperation Facility. Since 2023 (phase II), the activities are funded jointly by SIDA and SDC.



Basin at glance

Total area (km²): 82,000 (43% in Bangladesh, 54% in India, <1% in Myanmar)

Population: 50 million

Climate zone: tropical

Rainfall (mm/yr): 11,872 mm at Mawsynaram

Countries sharing: Bangladesh, India and Myanmar

BRIDGE operating in the basin since: 2018

Basin objectives for current phase (2023 - 2026)

- Strengthened community livelihoods resilience through improved data and analysis of climate change impacts on the primary sectors (agriculture, forestry, fisheries) and communities;
- Promoted inclusive management of ecosystems and protection of biodiversity through capacity building and piloting of locally-led Nature-based Solutions;
- Strengthened youth capacity and participation in dialogues and actions related to the management of the Meghna river basin.
- Improved understanding of governance mechanisms for the implementation of IWRM across the Meghna river basin.

CROSS-SECTORAL AND INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION

BRIDGE activities in the Meghna cuts-across the priorities of several central ministries and departments working on water, forest, land-use, disaster management, agriculture and fisheries planning, and rural development. To ensure the BRIDGE outputs are designed and implemented jointly with the government, IUCN works closely with the Meghna River Basin Advisory Group (MAG).

The multi-stakeholder dialogue and joint research activities under the project is jointly implemented with several reputed academic institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs) and youth networks working in the basin.

Key implementing partners in Meghna basin during BRIDGE 5 are:

- Assam University (AU), Silchar
- Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka
- Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services, Dhaka
- Center for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS), Dhaka
- North-East Affected Area Development Society (NEADS), Jorhat
- North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong
- South Asia University (SAU), Delhi

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Additional information

BRIDGE website:
www.waterandnature.org/initiatives/bridge

Water Law and Governance website:
www.waterlawandgovernance.org/bridge/

BRIDGE contacts

Vishwaranjan Sinha
 Programme Officer, Water and Wetlands - Asia Regional Office

Vishwaranjan.Sinha@iucn.org

Social media

@IUCN_Water (Twitter)
 @IUCN Water and Land Management (LinkedIn)