



Photo credits: Pianporn Deetes

SALWEEN RIVER

Background

The Nu-Salawin-Thanlwin (collectively known as the Salween) flows 2,400 km through China, Thailand and Myanmar. It is the last large free-flowing river in the region and is of very high conservation value. A number of ethnic groups are settled in the Upper Salween Basin. The basin hosts very rich biodiversity, but there is limited information on the wildlife and plants both within the river and in the subtropical and coastal forests in the basin.

BRIDGE implementation

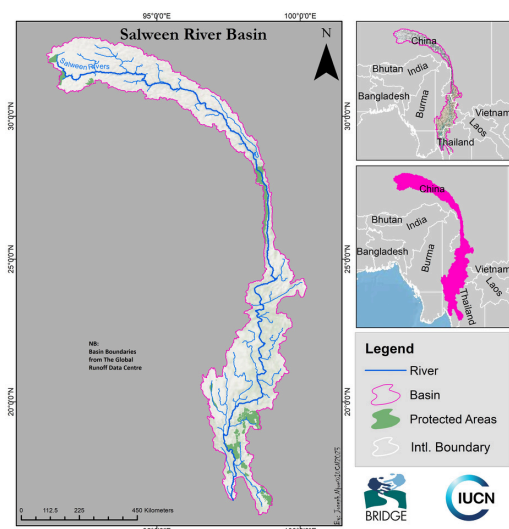
BRIDGE has operated in the basin since 2019. Due to recent political upheaval in Myanmar, BRIDGE is currently working directly with civil society organisations (CSOs) in Myanmar and Thailand to provide financial and technical support to their ongoing activities. The project supports enhanced local capacities and strengthened local governance of the river and its associated natural resources.

Key achievements to date

- Strengthened institutional and legal framework on transboundary water cooperation in close cooperation with ethnic groups and national governments.
- Strengthened CSO platforms to promote transboundary cooperation.
- Knowledge-based dialogue enabled through research, technical inputs and communications.
- Support to civil society in Myanmar and Thailand that are working on the conservation of the Salween and Indigenous People's rights.

Basin objectives for Phase 5

- Strengthen and scale-up best practices of Indigenous Natural Resource Management.
- Build research capacities of CSOs to document benefits provided by the river basin, including intangible benefits such as cultural identity.
- Support advocacy against high-risk water diversion and hydropower schemes that impact the Salween and the local communities that depend on it.
- Collect and analyse data to inform the development of a publication of the State of the Salween.



Basin at glance

Total area (km²): 283,500 (48% China, 7% Thailand, 44% Myanmar)

Population: 10.5 million

Climate zone: Sub-tropical to tropical

Rainfall (mm/yr): 1,196

Countries sharing: China, Thailand and Myanmar

BRIDGE operating in the basin since: 2019

CROSS-SECTORAL AND INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION

BRIDGE partners with International Rivers to support its implementation in the Salween River. The programme is also providing technical and financial support to five CSOs, who work on a number of topics, including documenting the biodiversity and cultural values of the site, Indigenous People's rights and ensuring equitable governance, legal support to inform community and civil society actions, and support to journalists to share information and stories from the basin.

Additional information

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

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

LinkedIn:
[IUCN Water and Wetlands](https://www.linkedin.com/company/iucn-water-and-wetlands)

BRIDGE contacts

Kathryn Bimson
 Kathryn.Bimson@iucn.org
 Water, Wetlands and Nature Programme Officer - Asia
 Regional Office