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Anja SENZ, Dieter REINHARDT (eds.)

**Task Force:  
Connecting India, China  
and Southeast Asia –  
New Socio-Economic Developments**





Title:

**Task Force: Connecting India, China and Southeast Asia – New Socio-Economic Developments**

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**Abstract:**

The border regions between Northeast India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Southwest China are characterized by close historical, intra-ethnic relations and a developing civil society sector as well as violent conflicts and disputes about hydropower and resource extraction projects. What is more, this region will be affected by climate change. The articles reflect expanding regional economic relations, resource extraction projects, climate change challenges, minority issues and the potential for further involvement of the civil society.

**Zusammenfassung:**

Die Grenzregionen zwischen Nordostindien, Myanmar und Südwestchina sind geprägt von engen historischen, intra-ethnischen Beziehungen, von einer sich entwickelnden Zivilgesellschaft sowie von Gewaltkonflikten und Konflikten über Wasserkraft- und Ressourcengewinnungsprojekte. Diese Region wird zudem vom Klimawandel betroffen sein. Die Aufsätze behandeln die wachsenden regionalen Wirtschaftsverbindungen, Ressourcenerschließungsprojekte, Herausforderungen des Klimaschutzes, Minderheitenfragen sowie Möglichkeiten des zivilgesellschaftlichen Engagements.

**Keywords:**

India, Northeast India, Myanmar, Yunnan, China, ethnic minorities, economic development, hydropower, resources, climate change

**Schlagwörter:**

Indien, Nordostindien, Myanmar, Yunnan, China, ethnische Minderheiten, Wirtschaftsentwicklung, Wasserkraft, Ressourcen, Klimawandel

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## Content

Preface. . . . .	7
Acknowledgement by Bread For The World – Protestant Development Service. . . . .	8
(I) Closer Cooperation in the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Region – A New Success Story of Asian Regionalism?. . . . .	9
<i>Dieter Reinhardt and Anja Senz</i>	
1 Old and new regionalism analyses and Asian regionalism . . . . .	9
2 Sino-Indian relations, Bangladesh and Myanmar . . . . .	10
3 Troubled border regions, resource exploitation and civil society organizations (CSOs) . . . . .	11
4 Three BCIM institutions: Forum, Business Council, Economic Corridor and perspectives. . . . .	12
Bibliography . . . . .	13
(II) Myanmar’s Economic Relations with China and India. . . . .	15
<i>Laura Blumenkemper, Marina Natschke, Nadya Slonskaya and Jelte Wingender</i>	
Introduction. . . . .	15
1 India’s and China’s development strategies. . . . .	15
1.1 India’s ‘Look East Policy’ . . . . .	15
1.2 China’s ‘Go West Strategy’ . . . . .	16
1.3 Comparing both strategies . . . . .	16
2 Myanmar’s economic relations . . . . .	16
2.1 Myanmar as a recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI). . . . .	16
2.2 Myanmar’s trade linkages. . . . .	17
3 Myanmar: A center for rivalry over natural resources between India and China . . . . .	18
3.1 The Sino-Myanmar oil and gas pipelines. . . . .	18
3.2 The Letpadaung copper mine, bargaining and social protest . . . . .	20
4 Conclusion . . . . .	21
Bibliography . . . . .	21
(III) Regional Hydropower Projects: What Can be Learned from Successful and Unsuccessful Public Resistance? . . . . .	24
<i>Tarina Greyling, Jennifer Knippers &amp; Yana Tumakova</i>	
Introduction. . . . .	24
1 Hydropower projects of Chinese companies in China. . . . .	24
1.1 Completed and construction of hydropower projects. . . . .	25
1.2 The case of a stopped hydropower project . . . . .	26
2 Hydropower projects of Chinese companies abroad . . . . .	26
2.1 Completed hydropower projects. . . . .	26
2.2 Stopped or halted hydropower projects . . . . .	26
3 Hydropower projects of Indian companies in India. . . . .	27
3.1 Completed hydropower projects. . . . .	27
3.2 Stopped or halted hydropower projects . . . . .	28
4 Reasons for successful and unsuccessful public resistance. . . . .	28
5 Conclusion . . . . .	30
Bibliography . . . . .	30
Annex: Existing guidelines on the development and construction of dams . . . . .	33
(IV) Regional Strategies and Potentials for the Protection of Minorities . . . . .	34
<i>Annika Malinowski, Daria Napieraj, Maike Holzmüller</i>	
Introduction. . . . .	34

1	Definitions and legal background	34
2	Three case studies	35
2.1	Northeast India: Hydroelectric power projects at the river Teesta	35
2.2	Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) and Yunnan: Mining project at the sacred mountain Kawagebo	36
2.3	Yunnan (China): The Lashihai watershed ecotourism project	37
3	Options of action	38
3.1	Public relations	38
3.2	Participation	39
3.3	Empowerment	39
4	Perspectives	40
	Bibliography	41
(V)	Status and Untapped Potential for Climate Change Adaptation & Mitigation Projects in the Himalayan Region of Northeast India & Southwest China	44
	<i>Katharina Malek, Nicole Drechsler, Maria Schönfeld, Eileen Lemke</i>	
	Introduction	44
1	Types and quality of cooperation	44
1.1	Political framework for the environmental commitment of the German Federal Government in Northeast India and Southwest China	44
1.2	The Sino-German Strategic Partnership	45
1.3	The Indo-German Development Cooperation	45
1.4	Networking of actors in NE India and the role of the GIZ	45
1.5	Political framework for the environmental commitment of the European Union in NE India and SW China	47
1.6	A valuable partner in the region: the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)	47
2	Requirement and needs analysis	47
2.1	China	48
2.2	India	49
3	Recommendations and conclusion	49
3.1	The local level in NE India	49
3.2	The local level in SW China	50
3.3	Shared recommendations for the local level of NE India and SW China	50
3.4	The regional level	50
3.5	The international level	51
	Bibliography	51
	Annex	53
(VI)	Regional Non-state Actor Networks in the Field of Environment Policy and Natural Resources Exploitation	58
	<i>Clelia Minnetian, Shabnam Nawid, Patrick Paul Pilorz, Marcus Römer, Virginia Sroka</i>	
	Introduction and Method	58
1	Building up successful cooperation between civil society organizations (CSOs)	59
1.1	Instrument 1: CSO database	59
1.2	Instrument 2: Cooperation potential	60
1.3	Instrument 3: Framework conditions	62
2	Conclusion and recommendation	65
	Bibliography	66
	Annex: Types of Civil Society Organizations	68

## Preface

The present publication offers findings from a research seminar on political, economic and social relations of the border regions of Northeast India, Southwest China, Bangladesh and Myanmar. This research was done in a so called “task force seminar” at the University of Duisburg-Essen in the winter semester 2013/14. These seminars are offering policy consultancy to external partners from business, politics or civil society. Students are asked to present their research findings to professional audiences of these partners. Since 1999 young researchers and students enrolled in Master programs at the University of Duisburg-Essen are taking part in such task force seminars.

In winter term 2013/14, eighteen students of the University of Duisburg-Essen, enrolled in the MA program “International relations and development policy” at the Institute of Political Science as well at the MA program “East Asian Studies” at the Institute of East Asian Studies, took part in this task force seminar and summarized their research results in this publication under the guidance of the lecturers Dr. Anja Senz and Dr. Dieter Reinhardt.

The partner of the task force seminar was Bread for the World – Protestant Development Service (Berlin/Germany). Three desk officers of this organization, Mrs. Kirleis (South Asia), Mrs. Pfeiffer (Myanmar) and Mrs. von Reden (China), were friendly to discuss with the participants of the seminar five specific topics of the border regions that target the interest of their organization and in particular their Indian NGO partners at the beginning of the seminar. Five student teams worked during the seminar on these topics, interviewed experts, evaluated sources in Western languages as well as in Chinese and prepared on every topic a ten minutes presentation for the final event, a discussion at the headquarters of Bread for the World in Berlin on 10th February 2014.

The present publication contains the following chapters: After an introduction of the two lecturers and editors of the publication who describe the backgrounds of the topics and the situation in the border regions, five chapters of the student working groups are presenting their individual research results on Myanmar’s economic relations with China and India, regional hydropower projects, regional strategies and potentials for the protection of minorities, status and untapped potential for climate change adaptation and mitigation projects in Northwest India and Southwest China, and regional non-state actor networks in the field of environment policy and natural resources exploitation. These chapters were deliberately kept short because they are less striking to scientific detail as to political know-how and are going to invite for a critical discussion of each respective topic.

We like to thank very much Mrs. Kirleis, Mrs. von Reden and Mrs. Pfeiffer for offering our young researchers an excellent opportunity to collect practical experiences in the field of policy advice. We also like to thank all seminar participants very much for their great engagement and hard working for preparing the here published results of their working groups.

Duisburg, September 2014

*Anja Senz and Dieter Reinhardt*

## **Acknowledgement by Bread For The World – Protestant Development Service**

It has been a great and unique opportunity for us to cooperate with University of Duisburg-Essen in this initiative. While we are engaged in supporting partner organisations in their development efforts in Northeast India, Southwest China, Bangladesh and Myanmar, there rarely is the opportunity to be deeply involved in academic research of the context in which our partners are acting. We have therefore been benefitting very much from the findings of the research initiatives that have emerged during the seminar at University of Duisburg-Essen. We will share these with our partner organisations in the region for information and further discussion.

The responsibility for the contents and views expressed in this publication, however, rests entirely with the authors and the articles may not necessarily reflect the views of Bread For The World – Protestant Development Service.

Through this cooperation, research and development practitioners could meet and mutually inform each other. We are indebted to Dr. Anja Senz and Dr. Dieter Reinhardt as well as the students and authors of this publication and take this opportunity to thank all for the excellent cooperation.

Bread For The World – Protestant Development Service

*Edda Kirleis* (South Asia Desk)

*Andrea Pfeiffer* (South East Asia and Pacific Desk)

*Dr. Bettina von Reden* (South East Asia and Pacific Desk)

Berlin, September 2014



## (I) Closer Cooperation in the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Region – A New Success Story of Asian Regionalism?

*Dieter Reinhardt and Anja Senz*

The border regions between Northeast India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Southwest China are characterized by close historical, intra-ethnic relations and a developing civil society sector, but also by violent conflicts between rebel groups and army units. In this region several hundred ethnic groups are living, most of them are closely related and their settlement areas are divided by the state borders. Despite these violent conflicts, India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Southwest China are establishing regional institutions and thus adding to another example of different types of Asian regionalism.

In 2013, these four governments agreed to build up a *Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor* (BCIM EC). The aims are a) to expand the infrastructure between Kolkata (West Bengal), Northeast India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Southwest China, which have been blocked for many decades, b) to accelerate the exploitation of the resource-rich region (including hydropower, wood, coal, natural gas, copper, nickel, bauxite) and c) to establish zones of industrial growth. With the consent to BCIM EC, India has – at least officially – ended its years of blockade policy regarding the opening of international borders to Northeast India. Previously, there were concerns that the opening of the border would increase the import of cheap Chinese products and displace Indian producers. There were also fears, that it would ease the weapon supply to Northeast Indian rebel groups and thus would complicate the fight of Indian security forces against them.<sup>1</sup> This BCIM EC is part of the so-called “Look East Policy” strategy of the Indian government, by which the relations to China and Southeast Asia should be enhanced. It is also part of the so-called “Bridgehead Strategy” of the Chinese government, by which China is developing its border regions and their economic relations to Russia and all the other Asian neighbors.<sup>2</sup>

This BCIM EC project is mainly the result of an improvement of Sino-Indian relations on the diplomatic level. How far the improvement also includes a process to overcome the bilateral security dilemma and replaces a geostrategic security discourse of mutual distrust by a collaborative modernization discourse in practical terms, remains an open question. While the army and other security actors in both countries traditionally focus on the security dilemma complex, big business companies of both countries, parts of the government administration and provincial governments are very much interested in intensifying regional resource exploitation and regional trade. But these exploitation policies can lead to violent conflicts, because they are generally based on a technocratic approach, ignore the economic and political interests of minority groups and in their practical implementation process are often connected to corruption.

Since May 2014 India has a new government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). There are signs that the new government will continue to improve the relations to China and stay engaged in the BCIM EC project.

### 1 Old and new regionalism analyses and Asian regionalism

Analysis of the emergence of political and economic regions and regional institutions were dominated by the EU model during the East-West conflict. This ‘old regionalism’ research was replaced afterwards by the ‘new regionalism’ research, which dissolves the fixation on the EU by describing – among other things – the global diversity of regionalization processes.<sup>3</sup> Since 2000, analyses of the so-called third phase ‘of regional studies’ describe in more detail the relationship between regionalization and globalization, the function of non-state actors in regionalization and the emergence of new types of regions.

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1 Goswami 2014.

2 Liu 2013.

3 Fioranmanti 2012.

These new types are based inter alia on export processing zones or environmentally defined, regional ecosystems.<sup>4</sup> Civil society often takes over – so the assumption – a ‘catalyst function’ in these new regionalization processes. International NGOs and networks of migrant organizations establish new non-state forms of regionalization.<sup>5</sup> Regionalism research can be differentiated between the macro-level (large regions, such as the EU, African Union), the meso (sub-regions such as ASEAN) and the micro-level of domestic areas. Types of regions differ in terms of the depth of integration and the institutional design. Regional integration generally increases the complexity of socio-economic relations as well as the density of civil society networks and leads to regionally structured collective identities. Supranational or intergovernmental regional institutions serve for dispute resolution and decision-making; main sponsors of regionalization include economic, political or socio-cultural groups.

There are numerous different types of regionalization processes. “Asian regionalism” is characterized by the influence of the three regional hegemonial powers PR China, India and Russia and their relations to each other as well as their respective relations to smaller Asian states.<sup>6</sup> But the scope and influence of civil society organizations (CSOs) networks has extended and in some countries their relationships with governments are increasingly confrontational.

## 2 Sino-Indian relations, Bangladesh and Myanmar

The depth and quality of the regionalization in the BCIM region depends very much on the Sino-Indian relations. Analysis of these relations reflects the basic assumptions of international relations theory. Neorealist analysis state that the security dilemma between the two countries, tensions over the disputed borderline in the Himalayas and harsh competition over economic and military spheres of influence in Asia, will also dominate their relations in future.<sup>7</sup> Neoliberal institutionalism analysis however point to the existing bilateral cooperation and unused potential to increase it. The potential is not fully used because both countries are in “tough competition”<sup>8</sup> or in a “conflict” in some policy fields.<sup>9</sup> The relations of India and China include both the potential of increased co-operation as well as growing security tensions. Hence, the relations are characterized by a parallelism of cooperation and competition.<sup>10</sup> However, meanwhile, both players respect each others’ “fundamental strategic interests” and are politically defusing their border conflict.<sup>11</sup> While both countries are “strategic partners” in global issues – like climate change negotiations – their “regional cooperation” is poorly developed.<sup>12</sup> But the effects of the “security dilemma” are decreasing and “complementarities of economic interests” are growing.<sup>13</sup> Many neoliberal institutionalism analyses are in line with the following cautious statement of Acharya: “It is theoretically possible that the PRC and India could develop and possess both the resources and political will and standing to provide collective goods and lead Asian regionalism, but their mutual rivalry might prevent this.”<sup>14</sup>

While India and China belong to the group of internationally emerging countries, Bangladesh and Myanmar belong to the poorest countries of Asia. Bangladesh is heavily dependent on India, whose territory almost encloses the entire border of Bangladesh, while a minor part of the border is shared with Myanmar. Bangladesh tries to reduce this dependence by intensified contacts with China, the U.S. and the EU. The new government of Myanmar tries to reduce its dependence on China by building stronger relations with the U.S. and India. A long period of stagnation of the regional Indian foreign policy was ended when the Indian prime minister, for the first time after 12 years, visited Myanmar in 2011 and

4 Muntschick 2012.

5 Shaw/Grant/Cornelissen 2011: 16–17.

6 Acharya 2014, Urata 2013.

7 Gilboy/Heginbotham 2013, Chellaney 2012.

8 Wulf 2013: 11–12; 2014.

9 Wagner 2012: 5.

10 Gilboy/Heginbotham 2013: 127.

11 Zhang/Li 2013: 8–9.

12 Shisheng/Jing 2012: 365–366, Reinhardt/Senz 2010.

13 Das 2013: 115.

14 Acharya 2014: 19.

Bangladesh after 25 years in 2012. The regional economic and strategic interests of India and China clash in Myanmar, but there are also examples of a “coexistence” of interests.<sup>15</sup> The comprehensive reform process in Myanmar since 2011 has caused a setback for Chinese interests; but China is quickly adjusting to the new political implications of this process.<sup>16</sup>

**Figure 1: Borderlands between Northeast India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Southwest China and planned road connection Kolkata (West Bengal)–Kunming (Yunnan)**



Source: THE HINDU, 14. 3. 2012, unter [www.thehindu.com/news/international/chinese-lawmakers-propose-all-weather-border-highway/article2992000.ece](http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/chinese-lawmakers-propose-all-weather-border-highway/article2992000.ece) (Accessed on March 10, 2013).

Cartography: Harald Krähe / Google Earth

### 3 Troubled border regions, resource exploitation and civil society organizations (CSOs)

There are close historical, intra-ethnic relations and a developing civil society sector in the border region of Northeast India/Bangladesh/Myanmar/Southwest China. But the region is as well characterized by several regional ethno-political, resource and border conflicts:

- a) *Regional ethno-political conflicts:* For over three decades, the armies of India and Myanmar are trying to break up in vain rebel groups in Northeast India and in North and Southwest Myanmar; these groups are mainly recruited by ethnic minorities and demand greater autonomy or an independent state.<sup>17</sup> Some of them have signed ceasefire agreements with local governments, which often failed after some time.<sup>18</sup> Between 2005 and 2012, almost 4,000 people were killed in violent conflicts in Northeast India; a third of them in Assam and another third in Manipur. Since 2008, the total num-

15 Wagner/Cafiero 2014: 2.

16 Hilton 2013.

17 Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research 2013: 83–84.

18 Das/Goswami 2014.

ber of fatalities continuously decreases throughout Northeast India.<sup>19</sup> But in 2012, the Heidelberg Conflict Barometer was still assigning violent conflicts in Northeast India to its category of ‘limited wars’.<sup>20</sup>

- b) *Resource conflicts*: Land use conflicts between immigrant Bangladeshis and local groups are contributing to conflicts in Northeast India for over two decades. The unregulated interstate use of rivers, rising in the Himalayas, has caused tensions between China, India and Bangladesh. The construction of hydroelectric power plants and the exploitation of mineral resources (including oil, natural gas, coal, wood, nickel, uranium) in Northeast India, North Myanmar and Yunnan caused conflicts over land use rights and environmental issues; in some cases local – “partly violent” – protests have delayed or prevented these projects. Climate change will affect extensively the BCIM region and will partly contribute to these conflicts.
- c) *Border conflicts*: The Government of India has set up a fence at three-quarters of the common border with Bangladesh, which has a length of more than 4,000 km. China lays claim to nearly the entire surface of Northeast Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh and named it as ‘Southern Tibet’; it is part of the Chinese territory on official maps.<sup>21</sup> The border regions between Northeast India and Myanmar and between Yunnan and Myanmar are affected by extensive trafficking of drugs, weapons and other goods.

Central governments and also companies from India, Myanmar and China are jointly implementing some resource extraction projects. Most of these projects stand in the tradition of a technocratic or technocratic militarized-based project policy, which aggravate non-violent as well as violent conflicts. It remains an open question, to which extent the BCIM governments will follow these technocratic policies or orientate towards new regional, cooperative oriented project policies based on the participation of local governmental and social actors and socio-environmental sustainability and thus, contribute to conflict transformation. While intergovernmental cooperation is growing, regional cooperation between civil society organizations (CSOs) is still very weak. But local CSOs and social movements are at least temporarily able to hinder, impede or transform some of those projects that threaten to have negative impact on local livelihoods.

#### 4 Three BCIM institutions: Forum, Business Council, Economic Corridor and perspectives

In 1999 the *Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Forum for Regional Cooperation* (short “BCIM Forum”) was established in Kunming, the capital of Yunnan, by the Institute of Chinese Studies (New Delhi), the Centre for Policy Dialogue (Bangladesh), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Myanmar and the Yunnan provincial government. The Government of Yunnan province was since the beginning and still today is one of the main promoters of the BCIM process.<sup>22</sup> Since 1999, the aim of this Forum is the opening up of new border crossings and the expansion of infrastructure and regional cooperation in the fields of economy, energy and science.<sup>23</sup> In 2012, the *BCIM Business Council* was established by the four most important national trade associations of the respective countries – among others the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). In 2013, as mentioned above, the four governments agreed on the establishment of the *BCIM Economic Corridor* (BCIM EC). The objectives of the BCIM EC include the promotion of regional “physical connectivity”, “environmentally sustainable development”, “trade in goods, services and investment, including finance” and “people-to-people contacts”.<sup>24</sup> In December 2013, these governments established a “Joint Study Group BCIM EC” to conceive projects to achieve these objectives until the end of 2014.<sup>25</sup> In February 2014, for the first time, the Indian central govern-

19 Haokip 2012.

20 Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research 2013: 73.

21 Zhang/Li 2013.

22 Bhoothalingam 2013.

23 BCIM Forum 2013.

24 Embassy of India/Beijing 2013.

25 Ibid.

ment, the CII and all governments of Northeast Indian states held together a conference on the topic “Unlocking North East India’s growth potential through Infrastructure and Connectivity” in Guwahati, the capital of Assam.<sup>26</sup>

At least on the level of diplomacy, India and China are in the process to overcome their bilateral security dilemma and to replace a geostrategic security discourse of mutual distrust by a collaborative modernization discourse and by a joint implementation of regional projects. While the four central governments and the *BCIM Business Council* have similar interest in developing better regional infrastructural connectivity, border trade and resource exploitation, there is no single platform in which civil society actors of all four countries cooperate. There is only very few bi-national peace, human rights and environmental co-operation of NGOs in the BCIM region. NGOs and other civil society actors are only able to prevent technocratic or technocratic militarized-based unsustainable resource projects in exceptional cases. There is a big unused potential for closer “people-to-people” contacts as well as academic and NGO cooperation. The use of this potential would be one crucial precondition to solve regional violent conflicts, to establish structures for a sustainable use of the rich regional resources and to eliminate poverty.

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26 Government of Assam / Planning Commission Government of India 2014.

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## (II) Myanmar's Economic Relations with China and India

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### Introduction

In 2011, the almost 50-year-long military rule in Myanmar ended and a reformist government came to power. However, along with that profound change, Chinese investments in the country dropped significantly from 12 billion US dollars in 2008 to only 407 million US dollars in 2012/13.<sup>1</sup> How can this drop be explained, and is Myanmar's growing confidence leading to a turn away from old partners and towards new, seemingly less overpowering ones? These circumstances will be discussed in this chapter and can be explained by answering the central question: What is the influence of India's and China's development strategies on Myanmar?

Starting with an introduction of both India's *Look East Policy* and China's *Go West Strategy*, the chapter continues with an overview of Myanmar's economic linkages to China and India, with a focus on its border regions of Northeast India and Yunnan. Finally, two case studies namely the Sino-Myanmar Oil and Gas Pipeline and the Letpadaung Copper Mine illustrate the scope of China's and India's engagement with Myanmar and the changing nature of Myanmar's position towards these two partners.

### 1 India's and China's development strategies

In order to gain a better understanding of the behavior of both the Chinese and the Indian government in the regions bordering Myanmar, it is useful to take a look at the countries' development strategies. In the recent years, China has given greater leeway in economic matters to its provinces in the West under the *Go West Strategy*.<sup>2</sup> In India, too, there is now greater attention being paid to connecting India's *Look East Policy*, originally a foreign policy initiative to foster economic relations, with Southeast Asia.<sup>3</sup> In a next step, both of these strategies will be compared.

#### 1.1 India's 'Look East Policy'

The 1990s was a period witnessing rapid economic development and growth of Asian countries. Southeast Asia came to be recognized as a region with vast economic potential and the Indian subcontinent was fast emerging as an economic and political force to be reckoned with. This is when the Indian leadership, under the then Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao, launched the *Look East Policy (LEP)* in 1991/92. It is an economic and foreign policy of engagement with Southeast Asia, seeking to create and expand regional markets for trade, investments and industrial development. India also began strategic and military cooperation with countries concerned by the expansion of China's economic and strategic influence. Thus, from the very beginning, India's strategy has focused on forging close economic and commercial ties as well as increasing strategic and security cooperation.<sup>4</sup>

One aspect of the *LEP* aims – which up to now has not been achieved – is the creation of Northeast India as an economic hub. Especially after the inclusion of Myanmar into ASEAN as full member in 1997, the development of physical connectivity between Northeast India and Southeast Asia has been seen as a prerequisite for further economic development. Thus the Indian government pays greater attention on enhancing connectivity through all possible modes of infrastructural development, such as land routes, railways, air connectivity, energy infrastructure development both in field of hydroelectric, and hydro-carbon and telecommunication linkages.<sup>5</sup>

1 Sun 2013: 1.

2 China's western region encompasses the municipality of Chongqing, the provinces of Yunnan, Guizhou, Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu and Shaanxi, and the autonomous regions of Tibet, Xinjiang, Ningxia, Inner Mongolia and Guangxi.

3 Northeast India comprises the so-called *Seven Sister States* of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, with Sikkim later joining as the eighth state.

4 Rahmann 2013.

5 Ibid.

## 1.2 China's 'Go West Strategy'

In the two decades since the end of the 1970s, most of China's rapid economic growth occurred in the East and Southeast coastal regions. This was a result of these regions' better natural endowment, basic infrastructure, favorable human resources and especially massive inflows of foreign capital.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, China has been characterized by great regional disparities.<sup>7</sup> The Chinese government, however, has not reversed its preferential policies until the end of 1999 when the new *Go West Strategy* was launched. Five areas have been singled out as development priorities: the construction of major infrastructure projects, the improvement of the ecological environment, economic restructuring, the promotion of science and education, and the further opening of the region to the outside world.<sup>8</sup>

As a gateway into Southeast Asia, Yunnan started to develop transnational linkages in the early 1980s and trade along its southern border has continued to grow ever since.<sup>9</sup> Since then the province has a long and active history of transnational linkages and it has been acting as the interface for China with Myanmar and the countries of mainland Southeast Asia respectively.<sup>10</sup> Currently, trade between China and Myanmar occurs mainly along the border of Yunnan and Myanmar's Shan and Kachin states. In 2005 the Governor of Yunnan Province declared in a meeting with Myanmar's Prime Minister that Yunnan had an important role to play in further strengthening Sino-Myanmar relations.<sup>11</sup>

## 1.3 Comparing both strategies

The main difference between China's *Go West Strategy* and India's *LEP* is that the former originated as an internal development program targeted at China's large western region while the latter began as a foreign policy strategy to enable the Indian government to reach out to Southeast Asia. In contrast to China, India does not have a comparable Northeastern development strategy in place, even the *LEP's* focus towards the Northeast is of recent nature and far from being a coherently-articulated strategy. However, both governments have realized that their strategies cannot be run in isolation from the adjacent states and from domestic imperatives.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, the provincial government of Yunnan plays a far more active role in China's efforts to build bridges with Southeast Asia than the Northeast Indian states. According to political scientist Sanjib Baruah, "this is no minor irony since China's political system is centralized and authoritarian while [India's] is democratic and federalized."<sup>13</sup> The strongest similarity between the two strategies is their focus on improving transport and communication links between the respective country and its peripheries in order to support economic development. Moreover, a well-developed infrastructure is also a prerequisite for establishing stronger ties with Southeast Asia.

## 2 Myanmar's economic relations

### 2.1 Myanmar as a recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI)

Within the ASEAN region Myanmar plays a minor role as a receiver of FDI. Although the inward FDI flows increased nearly tenfold from 251 million US dollars in 2004 up to 2 243 million US dollars in 2012,<sup>14</sup> the inward FDI stock as a share of GDP is rather low compared to other ASEAN member states. In 2012, Myanmar's inward FDI stock accounted only for 20,62 percent of GDP, which is the second lowest ranking within the ASEAN states. With regard to the latter the Asian Development Bank found out that Myanmar's openness towards FDI is even constantly falling since 2004.<sup>15</sup>

6 Tian 2004: 611.

7 Goodman 2004: 318; Lai 2002: 432.

8 Tian 2004: 622.

9 Jakob 2010: 134.

10 Summers 2012: 447-448.

11 Jakob 2010: 135.

12 Ibid. 128.

13 Baruah, quoted in Jakob 2010: 129.

14 UNCTADSTAT 2013.

15 ADB 2014.



Even though the international comparison shows a minor role of Myanmar concerning FDI inflows, it is nonetheless important to break down the distribution of FDI inflows by country. Noticeable is the concentration of FDI coming from adjacent neighbors like China and Thailand or other countries from the Asian region like Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, Japan and Vietnam. Here, it is unusual that India's contribution of FDI to Myanmar is rather insignificant, although it is comparable with China regarding economic size and population. In 2011, the major part of foreign investment of permitted enterprises came from China with a total amount of more than 4.3 billion US dollars, which is nearly sixty times higher than that of India with a foreign investment of 73 million US dollars.<sup>16</sup> However, even with such low FDI India managed to be the third largest investor in 2011. In 2012, China remains the highest investor, but with 407 million US dollars it only reaches less than one tenth compared to the previous year. In the same time India's FDI was reduced down to 2 million US dollars. The top ranking of the United Kingdom as third highest investor with 233 million US dollars is partly due to the high investments from the British Virgin Islands whereby the exact origin of the investors is uncertain. This is why the official investment of China might actually be understated due to transactions in example via Hong Kong or the Cayman Islands.<sup>17</sup>

China's massive investment into Myanmar is a result of the growing demand for energy and resources like gas and oil. Nonetheless, this import diversification is not only a strategy to sustain the high growth levels of the past but also to connect the western provinces like Yunnan to its neighbors.

The main sources of FDI inflows into Myanmar are projects in the extractive and energy industries and in which China is predominantly involved in the investment. Prominent projects are the Shwe oil and gas pipeline, which helps to circumvent the detour along the Strait of Malacca, or the Letpadaung copper mine, which holds the largest copper deposit in Southeast Asia.<sup>18</sup> Beside these two sectors, hydropower is a major destination of FDI. About two-thirds of the energy capacity that is installed in Myanmar comes from hydroelectric dams and finds its way as energy exports crossing the border to Yunnan.

## 2.2 Myanmar's trade linkages

To explain Myanmar's international interconnectedness with regard to trade, it is important to not just look at the trade patterns itself but also at the proportion of cross-border trade. The geographical proximity to China and India could lead to the assumption that the trade between Myanmar and these two giant economies is comparable. However, the economic strength of India is barely measurable at the over 1 600 km long shared border.

According to the Myanmar Ministry of Commerce, only two official border trade areas exist between India and Myanmar, three at the border to China, four with Thailand and two with Bangladesh.<sup>19</sup> However, these official trade areas are only monitoring the legal trade but neglect the transfer of illegal goods like drugs and weapons or the goods that are smuggled apart from the official roads.

Regarding cross-border trade China is the biggest trading partner for Myanmar. In 2009, about 38 percent of China's total trade took place at the 2 185 km long border and accounted for 1 076.8 million US dollars. Thailand is the second-largest border trading partner with 274.7 million US dollars. Due to a lack of infrastructure and political instability in the Northeastern regions of India the border trade is the lowest with only 13.7 million US dollars. This accounts for only 1 percent of India's total trade with Myanmar and puts India even behind Bangladesh, which traded goods for more than 18.4 million US dollars.<sup>20</sup>

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16 MNPED.

17 OECD 2014: 56.

18 Ibid. 58.

19 DCCA.

20 Htun et al. 2011.

### 3 Myanmar: A center for rivalry over natural resources between India and China

#### 3.1 The Sino-Myanmar oil and gas pipelines

After a long time of negotiation and construction work, both the Sino-Myanmar oil and gas pipelines have started operating in 2013. The construction of the oil and gas pipelines started in 2010 after an agreement has been signed between the China National Petroleum Company (CNPC) and the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) in 2009. The gas pipeline begins at the offshore natural gas terminal and runs 793 km through Myanmar before entering China at the city of Ruili in Yunnan province. The crude oil pipeline also leads into Yunnan and ends in the metropolis of Chongqing.<sup>21</sup> For almost the entire distance across Myanmar it runs parallel to the gas pipeline.<sup>22</sup>

##### 3.1.1 The Shwe gas field and the Sino-Myanmar gas pipeline

The Shwe natural gas fields, which are situated in the Andaman Sea in the West of Kyaukpyu, consist of three independent gas discoveries: The Shwe, Shwe Phyu and Mya fields. For about two years the gas discovered in the Shwe gas fields was presumed to be destined for India.<sup>23</sup> A pipeline was supposed to be built through Bangladesh to deliver gas for Indian consumption. To seal the deal, India would have to give way to specific economic demands which Bangladesh proposed if a pipeline was to cross their territory.<sup>24</sup> India was not able to compromise on those demands and tried to explore alternative options, but in the end could not offer Myanmar a route for the pipeline. Due to the ongoing armed conflict in Northeast India, it was considered too expensive to let the pipeline run through their Northeastern territory.<sup>25</sup> At the end of 2005, the former military government signed a Memorandum of Understanding to sell the gas from the Shwe fields to the China National Petroleum Company which is a privately owned Chinese oil and gas company.<sup>26</sup> In June 2008 they signed an agreement which allows the export of 6.5 trillion cubic feet of natural gas to China for 30 years.<sup>27</sup> Although India missed out on building the pipeline, it is still involved in the overall project. The Shwe Consortium which represents the Shwe natural gas field ownership consists of five different stakeholders: Daewoo International (South Korea, 51 percent of shares), Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC Videsh Ltd., India, 17 percent of shares), MOGE (Myanmar, 15 percent of shares), Korean Gas Cooperation (KOGAS, South Korea, 8 percent of shares), Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL, India, 9 percent of shares). Nevertheless, India, which is involved with two different companies, only holds 26 percent of shares in total. This is 33 percent points less than South Korea owns, who is also involved with two different companies. The stakeholders were responsible and paid for the development of the Shwe gas fields. In contrast, the ownership of the onshore natural gas pipeline looks quite different. Although it consists of the same stakeholders, plus the China National Petroleum Company, the shares of the different stakeholder differ significantly, with CNPC owning 51 percent of the shares.<sup>28</sup> In July 2013, the 14.2 million US dollars gas pipeline was completed and began to deliver natural gas to China's Yunnan province.<sup>29</sup>

##### 3.1.2 The Sino-Myanmar oil pipeline

Beside the gas pipeline, the CNPC has also built a crude oil pipeline which runs parallel to the gas pipeline. CNPC who also financed the pipeline owns 51 percent of shares while the MOGE owns the remaining 49 percent. The pipeline was built to transport oil from the Middle East and Africa to Southwest China.<sup>30</sup> Oil tankers carry the oil to Myanmar's port of Kyaukpyu. From here the pipeline is expected to transport about 22 million tons of crude oil every year.<sup>31</sup>

21 Zhao 2011: 94.

22 Singh 2013: 6.

23 Zhao 2011: 92.

24 EarthRights International 2011.

25 Bhaumik 2013.

26 EarthRights International 2011: 1.

27 Zhao 2011: 92.

28 EarthRights International 2011: 3.

29 Radio Free Asia 2013.

30 EarthRights International 2011: 4.

31 English.news.cn 2013.

### 3.1.3 What's in for the stakeholders?

For China, the main reason to invest in both the oil and gas pipeline is to secure energy resources for its increasing demand. So far most of China's piped gas has been imported via the Strait of Malacca. The overland pipeline through Myanmar is an alternative to this import from the seabed which decreases the risk of gas shortages.<sup>32</sup> The newly built oil and gas pipelines are opening a fourth route for China to import oil and gas, after ocean shipping via the Strait of Malacca, the Sino-Kazakhstan crude oil and natural gas pipelines, and the Sino-Russian oil pipeline.<sup>33</sup> This fourth alternative route for energy import further improves China's strategy for energy diversification and reduces the cost for transportation.<sup>34</sup> CNPC states that the gas pipeline is expected to deliver 12 billion cubic meters of natural gas per year, which will reduce coal consumption by 30.72 tons and decrease carbon dioxide emission by 52.83 million tons per year.

Myanmar also profits from the increasing energy resources, but in comparison to China by a much smaller scale. The project is supposed to provide 2 million tons of crude oil and 2 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually. Additionally, the pipelines also provide numerous job opportunities for Myanmar's citizens. Nevertheless, the biggest benefit for Myanmar is the increased foreign investments, and revenues which it gains through taxation and transit fees. For Myanmar foreign investments are a major asset in developing the economy and improving the economic infrastructure after the political transition.<sup>35</sup>

The other stakeholders of the Shwe gas fields, namely Daewoo International, ONGC, MOGE, KOGAS and GAIL have their interest in gaining profits from the gas extraction. Although the Indian companies gain profits from the extraction of gas as well, there is also still an interest in keeping the Shwe gas fields a possible resource for serving their own energy security. Since relations between Delhi and Dhaka have been improving, India has requested Myanmar to start new negotiations on the pipeline.<sup>36</sup> Having a look at the current situation, it seems quite clear that India is losing out on the struggle for natural resources in Myanmar. This does not mean that it cannot become a serious competitor to China in the future, given that India keeps on following its track to deepen economic relations with Myanmar.

### 3.1.4 Critical voices and civil society movements

Since the pipeline project was launched, there have been different actors who raised concerns about the negative impacts affecting local citizens in Myanmar. The project is blamed to have caused land confiscations leading to forced resettlements. Thus, the resettled households lost their source of income by losing their land. Furthermore, the project was also highly criticized due to environmental concerns and that there have not been enough measurements to keep those negative impacts as small as possible.<sup>37</sup> In addition there are concerns that the whole project lacks transparency and mainly serves Chinese interests while Myanmar only receives a fractional amount of what it should receive. During the construction there have been protests in both countries, although the protests in China were mainly concentrated in Yunnan. In Myanmar there have been both local protests against inadequate compensation for land and unfair salaries for local workers, as well as larger protests to express concerns over environmental and socioeconomic effects. The Shwe Gas Movement, an international NGO based in Thailand tried to raise awareness on the environmental and social concerns. Its activists organized and covered protest movements and actions both in China and Myanmar. Despite these protests the project was completed without making compromises or changing the conditions stated in the contract. The civil society groups had no chance in changing the project's conditions mainly due to a lack of resources. Nevertheless, there are still some civil society groups in Myanmar that support the concerns of local citizens and try to help them claiming their rights.<sup>38</sup>

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32 Song 2013; Singh 2013: 6.

33 Zhao 2011: 95.

34 Singh 2013: 6.

35 English.news.cn 2013.

36 Bhaumik 2013.

37 Song 2013.

38 Radio Free China 2013.

### 3.2 The Letpadaung copper mine, bargaining and social protest

The Letpadaung copper mine displays the bargaining capacity of Myanmar's government towards Chinese investors and serves as an evidence for Myanmar's ability to defend its interests towards economically powerful China.

Letpadaung is a joint venture between Chinese Wanbao Mining Ltd.<sup>39</sup> and the military-owned Myanmar Economic Holdings (MEHL). Its total investment estimated 1.065 billion US dollars.<sup>40</sup> Wanbao carries all investments and operational risks and protects Myanmar's side from economic loss.<sup>41</sup> Final negotiations about the project took place in 2010 and ended by signing the agreement during a visit of the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. First construction works started in spring 2012. Nevertheless, the production stopped in June due to local protests against land grabbing and environmental pollution.<sup>42</sup> Three months later construction works continued despite the local protests until they stopped again in November 2012 due to heavy anti-Chinese protests. Myanmar's government brutally crushed down the protests.<sup>43</sup> However, mass protests pushed the government to make a detailed investigation in terms of negative ecological and social effects.<sup>44</sup> The investigation commission chaired by Aung San Suu Kyi concluded in March 2013 that the project can be continued. However, it stated that there should be a proper compensation for local farmers, transparency of the project as well as social and environmental impact assessments, which should be fulfilled before the production of the mine can be continued.<sup>45</sup> The international community was concerned with these problems as well. The Heinrich Böll Foundation asserted Wanbao Company for confiscating 7 800 acres of land from people of 26 villages and forced relocation of livelihoods by authorities in its report in June 2013. Moreover, the report states that Chinese investors are not conducting environmental and social impact assessments of the projects.<sup>46</sup> Wanbao's reaction to the report was a denial of these accusations. Wanbao claimed not to relocate people by force, but voluntarily and to compensate them higher than required by law.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, Wanbao asserted to engage the international consulting company, Knight Piesold<sup>48</sup>, to update the previous environmental impact assessment and carry out a special impact assessment which was originally accomplished by the previous investors of Letpadaung.

Despite these facts, a 15-member high-level committee decided to revise the previous contract to raise the government's share of the project's profits. According to the previous agreement of 2010, Myanmar's government had 4 percent of the profits, MEHL 51 percent and Wanbao 45 percent.<sup>49</sup> It was mentioned that originally Myanmar's government got 16.8 percent of the shared profits.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, after the negotiations in July 2013, a new agreement was announced. The profit's share was changed in favor of Myanmar's government. It attained 51 percent of the benefits; MEHL received 19 percent and Wanbao 30 percent.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, 2 percent of net profits should be applied for corporate social responsibility in the areas of the affected communities. Additionally, Wanbao is committed to spend 2 million US dollars annually for development of environmental protection programs.<sup>52</sup> This is included in the Wanbao's leaflet which says that 2 million US dollars annually will be applied to ensure international standards of environmental protection. The environmental plan will be adjusted towards the future when the mine will eventually be closed.<sup>53</sup> Besides, there are other obligations made on the part of the Wanbao Mining.

39 A subsidiary of China's state-owned China North Industries Corporation (NORINCO).

40 Sun 2013: 5.

41 Wanbao 2013a.

42 Sun 2013: 5.

43 Ibid. 6.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 Khine 2013: 48.

47 Wanbao August 2013b.

48 Knight Piesold is an international consulting company providing engineering and environmental services for the mining, power, water, transportation and construction sectors. <http://www.knightpiesold.com/en/>.

49 Sun 2013: 6.

50 Than 2013: 27.

51 Ibid.; Wanbao 2013a.

52 Than 2013: 26.

53 Wanbao 2013a.

For example, some criteria for employment for the landless peasants were formulated. If a family living in one of the 26 affected villages loses up to 10 acres of land, 1 job per household will be provided. If there is a loss of more than 20 acres, the family is provided with 3 jobs per household. In other cases, solutions are made individually.<sup>54</sup> At present, Wanbao spends 1 million US dollars per year to invest in the local communities' infrastructure, such as the provision of electricity, healthcare or construction of roads and schools.<sup>55</sup>

In the meanwhile, the protests against Wanbao and the mining project of Letpadaung continue to challenge the production of the mine. People are concerned about the environmental impact of the Letpadaung mine. Some households were resettled but did not get enough compensation. Sulfuric acid coming from the factory that purifies copper for the mining project affects crops, soil, water and air, as well as destroyed the religious site of the mountain.<sup>56</sup>

What the case displays is that Myanmar's government basically is able to hold China responsible and to boost its own economic interests. Myanmar's government managed to improve the agreement conditions of the Letpadaung copper mine project and attained 51 percent of the benefits. Whether the government persists on bringing Chinese investors to conduct what they promised regarding environmental protection programs and accountability for local communities is still arguable and whether China will behave as a responsible investor and a promoter of sustainable economic development can only be seen in the future.

#### 4 Conclusion

Myanmar is strategically important both for China and India. Both states are interested in energy security and both are dependent on oil imports. However, China's *Go West* and *Open up* strategies, in comparison to India's *Look East* policies, are consistently applied strategies. Thus, China's infrastructural and economic development of the border regions fosters the economic development in these regions and in Myanmar. India has all the prerequisites to forge economic development in Myanmar, while India's engagement in the region is lagging behind. However, its underdeveloped Northeastern region hinders India's plans. Furthermore, the Chinese province of Yunnan in comparison to India's Northeastern states has more autonomy regarding local cooperation with neighboring countries.

After many years of military dictatorship, economic development for Myanmar is on the top of the political agenda. Myanmar profits from FDI inflows. China became an indispensable economic partner and investor for Myanmar. Its FDI top destinations are energy and security sectors. Since, neither India nor other states could substitute decreasing Chinese FDI in 2012. India's trade volume and FDI are still far behind the Chinese one.

India recognizes that its lack of economic engagement in Myanmar has disadvantageous consequences for its economy. Therefore there is a kind of pressure for India to rethink its policies towards Myanmar.

Myanmar benefits from Chinese direct investments and Myanmar's government proceeds to support Sino-Myanmar projects despite civil society protests and anti-Chinese sentiments. However, Myanmar's government can act firmly and persistent while bargaining with an economically powerful China.

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> The Irrawaddy 2014; Khine 2013: 50.

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### (III) Regional Hydropower Projects: What Can be Learned from Successful and Unsuccessful Public Resistance?

*Tarina Greyling, Jennifer Knippers & Yana Tumakova*

#### Introduction

Hydropower projects are increasingly in demand, especially since they are considered to be environmentally friendly. This trend does not take into account the social, cultural and ecological destruction that accompanies dam construction. Therefore, the decision to build a hydropower plant cannot be made by a country's government alone, but has to take into account a large variety of stakeholders with at times widely diverging interests. In the course of this paper, a closer look is taken at why and how civil resistance against such dam constructions were successful and if any patterns could be identified that future protesters could apply. In this context, resistance is understood as any conscious action undertaken against a hydropower project, such as protests, petitions, reports or media campaigns etc.

With regard to hydropower, both the government of China and India heavily rely on this form of power generation to supply the electricity necessary in order to sustain their rapid economic development. Today, China already has the most hydropower plants installed worldwide, even though it has tapped only 24 percent of its total hydropower potential.<sup>1</sup> Among the Asian countries, its role in hydropower productions has noticeably increased, from 2.9 percent in 1973, to almost 20 percent in 2011.<sup>2</sup> In India, the situation is similarly tempting, since only about 19.9 percent of its hydropower potential has been developed thus far<sup>3</sup> and in the face of constant rising energy consumption and the demands of the world community for "clean" and sustainable energy sources, both countries are coming to rely heavily on hydropower plants to fit the bill.

In the light of these facts, 14 prominent dam construction projects that received international media coverage are described in this chapter. These projects are analyzed in order to identify potential factors that could contribute to a more successful protest with regard to public anti-dam resistance. Focusing on the eastern Himalayan region, five cases of hydropower plants of Chinese companies in China, four cases of Chinese dam building companies engaging in projects located on neighboring states' territory, excluding India, and five cases of Indian companies building hydropower plants in India were closely reviewed.<sup>4</sup> This was done by analyzing completed or to-be-completed projects, where resistance failed, as well as stopped or halted ones, where counter-measures proved more successful.

#### 1 Hydropower projects of Chinese companies in China

The market for energy obtained from hydroelectric power plants is flourishing in China. The high energy demand, fueled by the even higher development goals for the economy, creates a profit potential Chinese hydropower companies are more than willing to seize. As a consequence, the country's hydropower capacity rose from 100 gigawatts in 2004 to 213 gigawatts in 2010 according to China's National Energy Administration, with projections for 2020 predicting a further increase to 400 gigawatts.<sup>5</sup> However, possible construction sites for these large-scale projects are often found in inhabited areas, which would need to be resettled for the land to be flooded and the dam to be built, destroying the local wildlife, as well as the livelihood and cultural heritage of the moved. In the following, five highly protested examples of Chinese dam building companies operating within China are reviewed with the aim of deriving different courses of action for the affected population.

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1 OECD/IEA 2010.

2 OECD/IEA 2013.

3 Wirsing 2012.

4 Multiple names exist for the projects analyzed. Internationally known names were used.

5 Beitarie 2011.



## 1.1 Completed and construction of hydropower projects

In 2004, the Chinese government approved the proposal to build the highly controversial *Pubugou hydropower project* in the province of Sichuan in South West China. With a capacity of 3,300 to 3,600 megawatts, the large dam would resettle more than 100,000 people, or roughly 30 percent of the local inhabitants and would flood about 14 percent of the local farmland.<sup>6</sup> The population, feeling left out of the decision-making process, set out to forcefully protest against the construction, occupying the building site with more than 100,000 protesters.<sup>7</sup> Due to the aggressive nature of the protest and the threats made by anti-dam groups to attack the site with explosive devices, the Chinese government perceived the resistance as a danger to their power and decided to quickly dissolve the protest. Among many others, Chen Tao, the leader of the protest was arrested and imprisoned. He was later sentenced to death for allegedly having killed one police officer during their demonstration.<sup>8</sup> Although the dam opponents achieved a temporary halt in construction in September 2006, the dam was successfully completed in 2010, hence deeming the strategy of protesting dam construction sites in China by means of political pressure and violent conflicts as counter-productive.

The destruction of the regions' unique wildlife, the extinction of endangered fish species and fear of heightening the risk of earthquakes in an already seismically active region were three of the most pressing reasons the inhabitants of a village in Xiluodu, located at the border of Yunnan and Sichuan, decided to protest against the construction of the *Xiluodu dam*. China's Three Gorges Cooperation started its building in 2003, but after it was discovered that the dam constructors were operating without a valid Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), construction had to be suspended.<sup>9</sup> In the course of its erection, the second largest hydropower project in China would resettle 32,000 to 50,000 people – a measure that was vindicated with the government's West Development Strategy, which is said to promote the economy of diverse parts of China's West.<sup>10</sup> Hence, in 2005, the Chinese construction company resumed its building activities despite the initially missing license, estimating that the dam will be operational in 2014.

Beginning construction in 2009, the *Zangmu hydropower station* in Tibet will make use of the Brahmaputra River streams. Integrating its construction in the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, the dam project is planned to promote the development of Tibet's hinterland regions, spurring infrastructure investments and the local economy.<sup>11</sup> Among the neighboring states, especially India, skepticism remains towards its construction, fearing the diversion of the river and the lack of water resources downstream,<sup>12</sup> especially since China is not releasing any information pertaining directly to the project. The dam is expected to be finalized in 2015.

Whether or not the *Xiaonanhai dam* in the city of Luohuang, 700 kilometer upstream of the Three Gorges dam is going to be finalized remains uncertain. The prestige project of former party secretary of Chongqing Municipality Bo Xilai, that was planned to dam the Jinsha river was halted in 2012, after its dubious decision-making process came to light. In an open letter to Wen Jiabao, the dam challengers – which includes numerous intellectuals, scientists and spokespersons of renowned international NGOs – expressed their doubts regarding the economic feasibility of the hydropower project and their fears of far-reaching ecological impacts.<sup>13</sup> As an alternative, the dam contestants proposed that the electricity needed to remedy the local power shortages should be provided by using hydro energy generated by already established dams upstream.<sup>14</sup> Whether or not the projects will be scrapped for good, remain to be seen.

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6 Mertha 2008: 68.

7 Beitarie 2011.

8 BBC News 2006.

9 International Rivers 2012.

10 Water-Technology 2014.

11 Yunnan/Haining 2011.

12 Varma 2010.

13 Shi 2012.

14 The Economist 2013.

## 1.2 The case of a stopped hydropower project

One of the most prominent sites of a successfully halted hydropower project is the *Tiger Leaping Gorge dam* in the province of Yunnan. One of the deepest river canyons worldwide, the Chinese government in 2004 announced their plans to erect a dam in this legendary gorge, deciding to resettle some 100,000 peasants of the local Naxi minority. With the help of numerous internationally renowned non-profit organization and environmental NGO's like Friends of Nature, Greenpeace or International Rivers,<sup>15</sup> but also by obtaining various professional expert opinions, the dam construction was stopped in 2004 and has not been resumed since. The anti-dam movement peacefully protested the building site, arguing not only with the destruction of a World Heritage Site and the potential environmental consequences, but also suggested alternative locations for a hydropower project to be built.

## 2 Hydropower projects of Chinese companies abroad

As mentioned before, the opportunities offered by hydroelectricity in the energy market are steadily on the rise, not only in China, but in neighboring Asian countries as well, in this case Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar. The Chinese dam builders are looking to reap their share of the profit of being involved in these projects.

### 2.1 Completed hydropower projects

The *Nam Mang 3* Hydropower project in Laos was completed in 2005,<sup>16</sup> after a rough start in 2001 without an EIA. This was a joint-venture project between Chinese builders and the Electricité du Laos (EDL), which at the time was state-owned and had a budget of 63 million US dollars,<sup>17</sup> and was allowed to continue due to EDL applying for "Emergency Procedures" status from the Ministry of Industry and Handicraft. A small-scale local protest occurred in November 2002 that drew the attention of the World Bank, the IMF and the Asian Development Bank about project approval processes and procurement procedures. The protest caused a five-day halt in construction, although nothing further came from it, even though the project impacted 15,000 people of which at least 2,700 had to be relocated and no compensation plans were disclosed to them.<sup>18</sup> The resistance had little effect in the face of the Government of Laos' ambition to provide water and electricity so as to graduate from its Low Development Country status by 2020.<sup>19</sup>

### 2.2 Stopped or halted hydropower projects

Construction on the *Weigyi dam*, one of five dams proposed on the Salween River in 2005, has still not started. It was in 2005 that the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Myanmar to develop the area to provide electricity and foreign income, with Sino-hydro as the proposed builder.<sup>20</sup> The projects lie in the Karen State in Myanmar, which has a history of violent conflicts with the national army, with bad impacts on the Karenni minority. Resistance has usually been in the form of NGO reports on the situation of the Salween river and its wildlife as well as the state of the people and the livelihoods of the estimated 30,000 that will be affected.<sup>21</sup> 2013 saw a large local protest against construction which included thousands of Karen, Buddhists monks and a Christian pastor.<sup>22</sup> While protests have delayed the start of the project, the strong desire of Myanmar and Thailand to develop their hydro potential has not seen a cancelation of the project.

The *Lower Sesan 2* hydropower project in Cambodia has experienced similar government backing. As in November 2012, it received approval from the Cabinet Office, even though its EIA failed to meet

15 International Rivers 2012.

16 Hydropower Kunming Engineering Corporation 2012.

17 China International Water and Electric Corporation 2014.

18 International Rivers Network 2003.

19 Phouthonesy 2012.

20 Burma Rivers Network 2008.

21 Salween Watch/SEARIN 2004.

22 Karen News 2013.

international best practices.<sup>23</sup> A study by the National Academy of Sciences, released in the same year, showed that the dam would cause irreparable damage to the wildlife and has significant impact on the villages along the Sesan, Sekong and Srepok rivers.<sup>24</sup> The project though was a joint venture by Cambodia's Royal Group and China's Hydrolancang International Energy Co. with an estimated cost of 781 million US dollars. Resistance came in different forms: In June 2013, international donors (such as Australia, Finland, Japan and the USA) called on the Cambodian government to submit the project to the Mekong River Commission's prior consultation process due to its transboundary impact, and affected riparian villagers sent a petition to the Chinese Embassy to call a halt to the project in February 2014.<sup>25</sup> Inopportunistly, the previous year, the project commenced with a law that provided guaranties to the investors and was only halted in October 2013 due to allegations that the logging to clear the site was happening outside of the allowed area.<sup>26</sup> Even though it was halted, the January 2014 release of the relocation and compensation plans show that the project has not been given up.

The controversial case of the *Myitsone dam* in Myanmar was agreed upon by the military government and China Power Investment in 2005. Construction began in 2007 but there has been very strong disagreement to the project which is located in the troubled Kachin State, where hostilities resumed again in 2011. Resistance has been seen in many forms but Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi has been a vocal opposition leader and has drawn international attention to the dangers both environmental and social that the project poses.<sup>27</sup> The project was called to a halt in September 2011, and further discussion postponed till after the 2015 elections. However, China Power Investment has been pushing the government to restart the building as 90 percent of the energy is to go to China,<sup>28</sup> but March 23, 2014 saw the start of a long-march protest from Yangong to the dam site – a journey of 2,400 km and two months.<sup>29</sup> This can be seen as an expression of the people's doubt in the idea that the government will pay attention to the reports about the damage the dam will cause and may cave in to Chinese pressure to resume construction.

### 3 Hydropower projects of Indian companies in India

The Indian government and its Central Electricity Authority have prioritized the development of hydropower projects throughout Northeastern India, and Indian dam building companies tend to be state-owned businesses. In comparison to China, resistance in India has easier access to specific legal instruments and uses intensively lobby instruments, such as demonstrations, petitions, open letters or media campaigns. In spite of the existence of these instruments, their use does not guarantee success of action, but nevertheless they constitute a legitimate alternative for the opponents of dam building.

#### 3.1 Completed hydropower projects

Despite the ongoing mass protests against the construction of the *Lower Subansiri dam* on the border of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh states, and the hunger strike of the anti-dam activist Akhil Gogoi, the resistance was still not successful. Even though it included many conceivable forms, such as organized protests by multiple local organizations (e.g. the peasants' body Krisham Mukti Sangram Samiti or All Assam Students Union),<sup>30</sup> demonstrations, blockades, open petitions<sup>31</sup> and petitions directed to a court,<sup>32</sup> the project is currently almost completed. However, there remain some instruments of alleviating the negative effects of the dam construction such as the petition to the National Green Tribunal (NGT), which has accepted a case concerning ecological issues downstream of the project.<sup>33</sup>

23 Mekong Watch 2013.

24 3S Rivers Protection Network 2014.

25 Naren 2014.

26 International Rivers 2013.

27 Asia News 2014.

28 International Rivers 2011.

29 Asia News 2014.

30 The Shillong Times 2012.

31 Gogoi no date

32 The Telegraph 2012.

33 Web India 123 2014.

### 3.2 Stopped or halted hydropower projects

Characteristic for the Indian government is the argument that dam construction contributes to the development of the respective region. This argumentation rarely coincides with reality and the corresponding label of the protest may have helped to stop the *Tipaimukh Dam* in Manipur. Protesters used such strong arguments, as half of Manipur is to be sacrificed for a little bit of electricity and additionally endangers food security of the region. The dam construction would result in a submersion of more than 275 km<sup>2</sup> of forests and displacement of 60,000 people in Manipur, including the indigenous Zeliangrong and Hmar communities, besides a negative impact on 40,000 people in Bangladesh.<sup>34</sup> They also claimed that the economic independence of the region is put at risk, which is exactly the opposite of what was promised. Another obstacle for the dam constructors was the fact that Bangladeshi NGOs put pressure on their government who was not informed about the construction plans beforehand<sup>35</sup> and at first did not take the risks seriously.<sup>36</sup> They subsequently negotiated with the Indian government, which could have contributed to the protesters' success.<sup>37</sup>

As already mentioned above, the Himalayan region is seismically vulnerable,<sup>38</sup> which makes the region an unsuitable site for any construction, especially large and heavy reservoirs that are necessary for hydropower plans.<sup>39</sup> Dams can induce earthquakes, known as Reservoir-Induced Seismicity,<sup>40</sup> and at the same time earthquakes can destroy dams and release large amounts of water devastating downstream settlements. Thus, a dam can endanger the stability and security of the region, and the reference to earthquake risks in such areas might reinforce the likelihood of stopping the dam construction (as it was in the case of the *Tipaimukh Dam* and the *Dams on the Teesta River*).<sup>41</sup> Moving resistance from being a local issue to a national one, by for example addressing national responsible stakeholders like the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC), might prove more effective. Forest clearance is often a prerequisite of dam construction and the FAC is responsible for forest conservation and thus could constitute a veto player, as in the cases of the *Tipaimukh* and *Dibang Dams*. There, experts rejected flooding forests, concluding that the proposal for clearance of forest land "is disproportionate to [their] power generation capacity."<sup>42</sup>

Another strategically important step could be the involvement of influential stakeholders who could be a symbol of the resistance, attracting media and governmental attention. Numerous parties could be identified that were involved in the resistance, such as experts giving their opinions and publishing studies, national institutions (like the FAC – in the case of *Tipaimukh* and *Dibang Dams* – or the NGT – in the case of *Lower Subansiri Dam*), national prominent figures (as in the case of Loharinag Pala Hydro Power Project, where the renowned Professor G.D. Agrawal announced an indefinite hunger strike), and also neighboring states (as in the above mentioned *Tipaimukh* case).<sup>43</sup> Potentially the Supreme Court could be an influential stakeholder as in the case of the Uttarakhand region, where it prohibited any further dam construction projects.<sup>44</sup> Due to concerns over regional flash floods, the Court required a scientific cumulative impact study of hydropower projects over doubts about the possible inducement effects caused by the projects.

## 4 Reasons for successful and unsuccessful public resistance

The outcome of public resistance against the building of hydropower projects is significantly related to the relative political power and social leverage, the previously mentioned respective actors bring to the table. The dam building companies in India and in China exert considerable influence due to the high

34 International Rivers (no date) b.

35 Wiser.org 2011.

36 NewAge 2009.

37 Asia Times 2011.

38 Cf. Paudyal/Panthi 2010.

39 International Rivers 2009.

40 International Rivers (no date) a.

41 Yunnan Natural and Cultural Heritage Conservation Council (no date).

42 Mehta 2013.

43 Wiser.org 2011.

44 Hindustan Times 2013.

investment volume of their industrial sector against which the objections of opposing groups can rarely compete. In both countries an initial success in halting the hydropower project does not necessarily result in its definite abandonment. The protest policies in both countries have similarities as well as differences due to the distinctions of the two political systems.

The nature of the relationship between the government and the affected people influences the government's tolerance of specific forms of resistance. In China, where the government traditionally has a rather extensive influence on virtually every sphere of life, overly rigorous protests are quickly dispersed by official forces, whereas these forms of resistance might still be within the acceptable scope of action in other Asian countries, like in India. In contrast to China, Indian protesters have at their command more diverse legal instruments – such as demonstrations, petitions or institutional pressure – to express their counteraction against the dam building. In China there remains less room for maneuvering, since resistance is being interpreted either as legitimate/norm-conform or state-endangering/development-endangering/nation-endangering. Therefore, more peaceful and rather subtle forms of resistance in China are proving more promising than confrontational actions that could be interpreted as a coup – e. g. publication of studies and expert opinions or reference to existing laws or guidelines.

There are several potentially successful instruments and strategies of which dam protesters in India and in China can make use of to improve their chances of stopping a dam building project:

- Raising the local as well as the international awareness for the risks and damages the dam construction would impose on the resident population, can emerge as a quite persuasive argument in favor of the opponents. The importance of the resilience and empowerment of the local civil society and civil society groups with regard to long-term resistance cannot be overstated. Once the protest obtains an international audience, the affected population's concerns reach a much greater audience, considerably increasing their arguments' effectiveness.
- The involvement of scientific expertise is relevant to verify the negative ecological, social and economic impacts of a respective dam construction project. Those arguments indicate the extent of necessary resettlement and deforestation resulting from damming and point to the destruction of economic and ecological livelihood of the site while taking into consideration the risks of heightened seismic activity through dam building.
- The involvement of an internationally respected expert or renowned public figure for the protest brings the resisters cause to a more personal level, since it becomes associated with an effected face.
- One of the most crucial aspects for the success of the resistance was to initiate it early enough to counter the later large investment sums while ensuring that the opposition movement endured, keeping it rolling even in times of weakening public interest and media coverage. In addition, making use of spill-over effects of a successful resistant action in one region can prove to be a promising strategy.
- Realistically it cannot be assumed that abandoning hydropower completely is an option, and therefore a certain degree of willingness to compromise is crucial, e. g. by agreeing upon an alternative construction site. Proposing a less destructive location for a dam construction can be part of this policy.
- Institutional pressure on different political levels and branches shows evidences of being a promising strategy. Insisting on the proper execution of an EIA is a crucial aspect of it.

The analysis of the cases mentioned above showed that the application of these instruments and strategies does not necessarily guarantee success. It is not always clear why resistant action fails as in some cases a variety of anti-dam measures were utilized without success. Whatever the case may be, adjusting the combination of the instruments and strategies of resistance and the subsequent labeling of the action should be taken into account for each individual case so as to lead to a more promising outcome.

In summary, when considering a resistant action against a dam construction project, it is vital to keep in sight a balance between focusing on a well-planned and appropriate strategy, the timing of the start of the action, as well as the stakeholders involved, and all this while taking into account the respective political and cultural context of the dam project's location.

## 5 Conclusion

The initial goal of this paper was to identify possible patterns of resistance which could be used by future dam contesters. However, this proved to be problematic, as in each of the analyzed country sample projects, fundamentally differing circumstances underlay the action possibilities available to the various protestors. Among others, the paper's approach had the restriction of a lack of access to relevant information about protest and financing and in some cases even to the current status of the project.

In China's current Five Year Plan, the government heavily relies on hydropower energy to replace coal-fired power plants in order to further reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.<sup>45</sup> Villages located too close to potential building sites become collateral damage of the general public interest to meet the continuously growing energy demand. Until now, opposition against these projects did not prove to be highly effective, and when they were, the means of resistance were adjusted not to be critical of or violent against the Chinese regime. No ultimate dam refutation could be identified, that was universally successful in blocking the Chinese government's attempts to dam a river, but generally, critique was better received when referring to the collective gain the Chinese people would have renouncing a dam construction.<sup>46</sup> Also, interpreting government policies and official development plans for own purposes are suitable means of protest.<sup>47</sup>

In the case of Chinese companies in neighboring Asian countries, negotiations around these projects involve large sums of money, where the government or a state-owned company is involved. This has significant impact on the local communities, often minority groups, who tend to be on unfriendly terms with their governments. Therefore, attention to the form of resistance can be considered, but frequently, the individual nature of the settings, the stakeholders, the political climate, and country involved has greater effect on the continuation of the project.

The analysis of the cases in India showed gaining public interest, applying pressure on different institutions like ministries and involving national renowned personalities could be a good combination for achieving the goal of stopping a dam project, that has too much of negative developmental impact in comparison to its economic gains.

In general, both the Chinese and the Indian governments have not yet signed the UN Convention on the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (1997) or any bilateral agreements, which would provide a legal framework for action to prevent harm for downstream partners and local communities. Guidelines exist which could perhaps be used as an alternative platform by which protestors can claim their right against dam construction companies.<sup>48</sup> Due to the large initial investments, the incentives to pursue hydropower projects despite probable inefficiency is very high and dam construction companies are unlikely to withdraw due to 'sunken costs' that can never be reclaimed. For this reason, the timing as well as the maintaining of resistance is very important. However, mitigation of negative impacts is possible through discussion of alternative locations as well as being open to compromises on relocation and compensation. Important in this process is that all stakeholders come to the table.

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45 KPMG 2011.

46 Collective gains among others included the preservation of cultural heritage or endangered fish species, the conservation of scarce (water) resources and the containment of possible negative impacts due to dam construction downstream.

47 For example by referring to the compliance of dam constructors to Environmental Impact Assessments.

48 See Annex for various relevant guidelines.

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## **Annex: Existing guidelines on the development and construction of dams**

### **World Commission on Dams Guidelines 2000**

They presented a report that reviewed the effectiveness and alternatives to large dams as an energy resource. They also developed acceptable criteria, standards and guidelines concerning all aspects of the dam building process. For more information see: <http://www.unep.org/dams/WCD/>.

### **Asian Development Bank Safeguard Policy Statement 2009**

This statement deals with the policies that projects take towards the environment, indigenous peoples and the involuntary resettlement of those affected and works towards promoting the sustainability of the projects they are involved in. For more information see: <http://www.adb.org/documents/safeguard-policy-statement>.

### **Guidelines for Environmental Protection in Foreign Investment and Cooperation 2013**

These guidelines were given out by the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China on how Chinese companies should behave with regard to environmental protection in foreign investment and cooperation projects, with regards to social responsibility and sustainability. For more information see: <http://english.mofcom.gov.cn/article/policyrelease/bbb/201303/20130300043226.shtml>.

### **Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol 2011**

This protocol was released by the International Hydropower Association and is an enhanced sustainability assessment tool that deals with the four main stages of hydropower development. For more information see: <http://www.hydrosustainability.org/Protocol.aspx>.

Other guidelines related to individual companies and banks are:

Guidelines for Environmental and Social Impact Assessments of the China Export and Import Bank's Loan Projects 2007

Sustainability Framework of Sinohydro's Environmental Policy 2011

## (IV) Regional Strategies and Potentials for the Protection of Minorities

*Annika Malinowski, Daria Napieraj, Maike Holzmüller*

“Minorities in all regions of the world continue to face serious threats, discrimination and racism, and are frequently excluded fully from taking part in the economic, political, social and cultural life available to the majorities in the countries or societies where they live.”

*Navanethem Pillay*, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights  
(Statement on Human Rights Day, December 10, 2009)<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

In order to find out which strategies can be used to protect minorities, it is crucial to know their legal status as well as the real situation of minorities and which obstacles they face. To examine potential ways to protect them, possible threats and risks must be identified. This chapter focuses on access on natural resources and its impact on minority groups. Geographically, it will concentrate on Northeast India, Yunnan province and the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) in China as bordering regions with a huge percentage of minorities. The chapter is structured as follows: First, a brief overview about definitions of “minority” used and its legal aspects will be given. Secondly, three case studies will describe the negative and positive impact of resource exploitation and development projects on minorities; NGO protests against these negative impacts will be examined. The focus will be on mining, dam construction and tourism. Finally, on the basis of these case studies, options for action to strengthen the position of minority groups in the Eastern Himalaya Region are described and potentials for further action are filtered out.

Resource exploitation projects and tourism very often destroy the livelihood as well as the cultural foundation of minorities, which have in many cases a specific identity-related meaning. Through the construction of a dam, neither their land is accessible any more nor their cultural sites. A special type of the destruction of culture can be found in certain forms of ecotourism which includes so called minority parks or minority villages. They are built with the argument that they support minority group’s lives. Unfortunately, in many cases, the people who work there are exploited, and the villages are causing alienation of the cultural tradition through exaggeration. But there are some examples where these villages and ecotourism can also help minorities to earn their living and to overcome prejudices. These villages are organised by minorities themselves. One of such projects will be described.

### 1 Definitions and legal background

Since the term “minority” has not yet been defined under international law, a definition by Francesco Capotorti, former UN special rapporteur of the minority subgroup, has been chosen for this chapter because it is substantially recognized. According to Capotorti a minority is a group that is characterized by four elements: numerical inferiority in comparison to the overall population, a non-dominant position in the state, religious, ethnical or linguistic similarities and the citizenship of the residential state.<sup>2</sup> This definition is broad and can be applied to Indian as well as Chinese minority groups.

Both India and China are huge countries with an immense population that is highly diverse. Officially, India’s population consists of 16.6 percent Scheduled Castes and 8.6 percent Scheduled Tribes, according to the census of 2011.<sup>3</sup> The Constitution Orders of 1950 list 1,108 castes and 744 tribes in its First Schedule.<sup>4</sup> China, by comparison, consists of 56 “nationalities”, including the Han Chinese people and 55 minority groups.<sup>5</sup> It is important to stress that neither the Han Chinese nor the minorities in India

1 UN 2009.

2 Capotorti 1979.

3 Census India 2011.

4 Indian Constitution .1950.

5 Senz 2010.

and China are homogeneous groups. In many cases, these categories are external ascriptions, while the minorities themselves have a different self-perception and might feel they belong to different groups. Furthermore, ethnic identity does not stop at national borders. Often, minorities are located on both sides of a border.

India and China have some similarities regarding the legal status of minorities in their countries: both countries guarantee mutual rights for minorities, they prohibit any oppression and discrimination and have created some additional laws specifically in supporting minorities. Besides fundamental human rights, the Indian Constitution provides a three-pronged strategy to improve the life of minorities under the section “Cultural and Educational Rights” in its Constitution. In addition to this special protection, a National Commission to the Scheduled Tribes was set up to further secure minority interests and ensures that these specific rights are guaranteed.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution includes concepts of district and regional autonomy in the tribal area.<sup>7</sup> This clause and other constitutional provisions related to the Northeast offer different degrees of autonomy and self-management (including natural resource management) to indigenous communities. That is to say according to the Indian Constitution, minorities are well protected and secure.

In the Chinese case, Article 4 of the Constitution from 1982 prohibits any discrimination against minorities and ensures that all Chinese people are equal before the law.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, apart from Chinese provinces, there are five “autonomous regions”, which are legally recognized by the Autonomy Law of 1984. This law ensures a certain degree of autonomy for some regions with a significant number of minority groups, including TAR. In addition, the state guarantees certain advantages for members of minority groups: they have e. g. a preferential access to the educational system and the one-child policy does not apply to minorities with less than 10,000 members.<sup>9</sup>

It can be seen that the Constitution and additional laws formally protect the rights of minority groups in China and India.<sup>10</sup> However, these rights are above all formal rights, which are not fully implemented in reality. Each country has somehow restricted these rights: in the Indian case, the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) was introduced in 1958 to prevent riots. It authorizes the military with extensive powers,<sup>11</sup> which override basic human rights and can be misused to suppress minorities. In the Chinese case, article 52 of the constitution prohibits any position challenging the unity of China – a clause that can be used against those groups seeking autonomy or self-determination. Furthermore, China is not a state governed by the rule of law, wherefore rights can be asserted before the court.

Therefore, even though India’s and China’s laws formally protect minorities, those minorities face many restrictions with regard to their rights.

## 2 Three case studies

Three case studies will describe how cultural and environmental safety of minorities is affected by dam construction, a mining project and by tourism. Some insights will be provided into effective ways of strengthening minority rights. NGOs played an important role in expressing and achieving the rights of minorities.

### 2.1 Northeast India: Hydroelectric power projects at the river Teesta

Despite their guaranteed special rights by the Indian constitution there are many examples of resource exploitation projects that gravely affect minorities and their resources. Minorities are especially jeopardized because of a lack of information, political power and representatives of their particular rights and

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6 Indian Constitution 1949.

7 Indian Constitution/Schedules 1949.

8 Chinese Constitution 1982.

9 Ibid.

10 Senz 2010.

11 Indian Government 1958.

interests. When considering the impacts on these population groups in Northeast India and on their use of resources, it becomes clear that dam construction and hydropower projects play a major role.

One example which will be addressed in greater detail is the influence of hydropower station and embankment construction at the river Teesta and the arising risks for the livelihood of many local minorities. Northeast India, which is referred to as the “future power house”<sup>12</sup> of the country by the government, offers many possibilities for large hydropower projects. The government, only in the district of Sikkim, has planned twenty-six hydropower projects concerning the river Teesta, and contracts with private operators are already signed.<sup>13</sup> Mostly affected by these projects is the Dzongu province and the local Bhutia-Lepcha minority. The Teesta-IV project, which is one of seven projects in a cascade on the Teesta, endangers a variety of animal species. Furthermore it also threatens the resources of the region, the cultural and religious background of the Bhutia-Lepcha and all together their livelihood.<sup>14</sup> Various researches showed that fourteen villages with a population of more than 14,000 inhabitants would be affected directly by the land acquisition process.<sup>15</sup> Considering also other impacts of the project, the aggregated number of affected persons would be even higher.

A site inspection report, initiated by the National Board of Wildlife (NBWL), states that “extensive tunnelling in geologically fragile areas, dumping of excavated debris into the surrounding landscape and unevaluated social and environmental impacts, apart from the loss of culturally significant ecologies, make them [the dams and hydroelectric power projects] a threat to the local communities and their way of life.”<sup>16</sup> The report, which was finalized in August 2013, advised the Ministry of Environment and Forest to freeze the on-going construction of the hydroelectric power projects. Consequently, the project was stopped following the recommendation.<sup>17</sup>

The extensive work of various NGOs and indigenous communities of Sikkim also contributed to the successful protection of the resources and livelihood of the Bhutia-Lepcha minority. Especially “Affected Citizens of Teesta”<sup>18</sup>, “The Sikkim Bhutia Lepcha Apex Committee”<sup>19</sup> and “International Rivers”<sup>20</sup> played a significant role in the protest against the construction by various ways and means, for instance through (online) petition, environmental assessments and campaigns or even a hunger strike to generate attention.

## 2.2 Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) and Yunnan: Mining project at the sacred mountain Kawagebo

The Tibetan plateau is rich in natural resources, especially minerals, including copper and gold. Mining projects of Chinese or foreign mining companies are criticized in many ways, such as not being legitimized due to the Tibetan plateau’s state as an occupied territory, the weak enforcement of law in the area and the general opposition by local Tibetans.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, workers in the mines are often brought in from outside, giving Tibetan workers only slight chances for employment.<sup>22</sup> After the construction of a railway line to Tibet in 2006, mining activities primarily by Chinese, but also by overseas mining companies, mainly from Canada and Great Britain have been steadily increasing.<sup>23</sup>

To exemplify the negative impact of mining activities, the case of Mount Kawagebo in the border area of Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) and Yunnan was chosen to show how minorities react to mining in sacred areas and how action against mining is possible, especially with the support of NGOs, even

12 International Rivers (no date).

13 Ibid.

14 International Rivers 2013.

15 Ibid.

16 Safe the Teesta (no date).

17 International Rivers 2013.

18 Affected Citizens of Teesta 2013.

19 The Sikkim Bhutia Lepcha Apex Committee 2012.

20 International Rivers 2013.

21 Free Tibet 2007.

22 The Economist 2013.

23 Central Tibetan Administration 2009.

in the contemporary TAR. In February 2011, a Chinese mining company started mining for gold at the Western side of the Mount Kawagebo. The company had not sought for consent by or even informed the local communities, consisting of several Tibetan villages.<sup>24</sup> In Tibetan culture, Mount Kawagebo is perceived as the home of the God of War named Kawagebo and constitutes one of nine mountains in Tibet that are considered sacred. The eastern side of the mountain is part of the “Three Parallel Rivers of Yunnan Protected Areas UNESCO World Heritage site”.<sup>25</sup>

In the eyes of the Tibetan villagers, mining the mountain meant defilement of a sacred area, the God’s spiritual home, as well as the pilgrimage route and the sacred caves and scenic areas at the side of the mountain. Hence protest arose with several hundreds of villagers involved. Due to constantly mounting tensions, the local government finally gave up and closed the mine on January 23, 2012. The case became internationally known due to public relations work of the Chinese environmental NGO Green Earth Volunteers, of which one member had been on the scene, a noteworthy anomaly, considering that reports about protests in Tibet are usually suppressed. However, an embankment project in the UNESCO Heritage site on the Eastern side of the mountain, that was first stopped after protests in 2004, but illegally activated again in 2011, poses a consistent threat of defilement to the Kawagebo Mountain.<sup>26</sup> Thus, the local Tibetan groups were able to achieve their rights, in which they were supported by a national NGO. However, securing their rights on the long run seems to be a difficult task to achieve.

### 2.3 Yunnan (China): The Lashihai watershed ecotourism project

To exemplify the positive usage of tourism as an economical resource, we chose the case of the Lashihai Watershed nature reserve in Yunnan province, in which ecotourism is being promoted.

In the Chinese media, minorities are often presented as “traditional” in contrast to the Han Chinese as “modern”, creating stereotypes and an image of backwardness in the eyes of the audience. This picture is being supported by the creation of so-called “minority parks”, in which minorities’ traditional ways of living are being presented and parts of their material culture are being commercialized and sold.<sup>27</sup> This is especially the case in Yunnan province, where local governments promote a “Great Ethnic Culture Province” since the late 1990s, promoting minority culture as a renewable resource, turn traditions into marketable commodities in order to foster economic growth and regional development.<sup>28</sup> However, often rather Han Chinese hotels and tour guides benefit from tourism in the area and negative effects including the so-called “disneyfication” can be observed, leading to an erosion of minority culture.<sup>29</sup>

The Lashihai watershed is a provincial-level nature reserve, initiated in 2001 by the “The Nature Conservancy (TNC)”, which is a US-based international environmental NGO. It aims at a positive usage of ecotourism to local economic benefit and as means for long-term biodiversity protection. The Lashi Lake wetlands encompass a highly diverse flora and fauna; the area around the lake is inhabited by people from the Naxi and Yi minority. However, tourism in combination with inappropriate local farming and fishing endangered the Lashihai watershed and therefore the livelihood of the local communities. To counter this development, environmental education, ecotourism and alternative energy projects were organized. To foster the involvement of the local minorities in the ecotourism project, TNC initiated the “Lashihai Watershed Ecotourism Working Group”, in which members of the local government, the local tourism bureau, the TNC, and the local community met to discuss the project. This led to the creation of ecotourism guidelines and the training of local ecotourism guides. Moreover, through the creation of the “Northwest Yunnan Ecotourism Association” and its website, tourists are being informed about the nature and culture of the area, as well as about the ecotour guidelines. Thus, the local community

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24 Minority Rights Group International 2012.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

27 Senz 2010.

28 Wilkes (no date).

29 Sydenstricker, Pearl 2014.

is directly involved in the profits of tourism and the cultural and environmental education of visitors. Through the guidelines, the scope of tourists entering the reserve is being controlled and therefore their influence on the minorities' environment can be limited.<sup>30</sup>

### 3 Options of action

There are three basic options for a more effective protest work: (1) public relations, (2) participation, and (3) empowerment.

#### 3.1 Public relations

The Indian constitution clearly states the rights to freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Therefore, public relations in form of advocacy and presswork are mostly effective and important means of action for the protection of minorities. Public relations can be used on a local, national and international level to protect and promote the rights of minorities. In addition to the general public relations work, lobbying and advocacy work provide supplementary support. Due to the complex threats minorities are exposed to, many organizations aim on a comprehensive protection of social, economic and cultural rights.

There are various Indian and international NGOs as well as local indigenous communities operating in this field in Northeast India. An example of an international organization is the "International Rivers Association",<sup>31</sup> which works in more than sixty countries, as well as the international network "TEBTEBBA", which "is an indigenous peoples' organization born out of the need for heightened advocacy to have the rights of indigenous peoples respected, protected and fulfilled worldwide".<sup>32</sup> The work of some local organizations as "Naga Peoples' Movement for Human Rights"<sup>33</sup> especially focuses on the rights of the Nagas, which include more than thirty ethnic groups, who mainly live in the Northeast Indian states.

In the case of China, public relations inside the country are a difficult task to come by due to strict state supervision. In Yunnan, national and international NGOs, universities and local activists seem to have more freedom in researching and addressing problems, often in collaborations. Inside the TAR, public relation work is limited and NGOs have very limited room for action.<sup>34</sup> Public relations inside China have been taken over mainly by non-Tibet based Tibetan activists, such as Wooser<sup>35</sup> in Beijing, or Chinese NGOs, such as the "Green Earth Volunteers",<sup>36</sup> as in the case of the Kawagebo Mountain. Public relations in an international context are also highly depending on the region. In Yunnan, cooperation between national and international NGOs, especially across its direct borders, is being practiced, for example in the case of the planned embankment of the Salween (Nu) river.<sup>37</sup> In the special case of the TAR, public relation in an international context is being done by a vast amounts of human and minority rights organizations, such as "Human Rights Watch"<sup>38</sup>, as well as pro-Tibet NGOs like "Students for a Free Tibet".<sup>39</sup> Also, exile-Tibetan organizations, such as the "Central Tibetan Administration"<sup>40</sup> or "Free Tibet" and exile-Tibetan individual activists, such as Canada-based Tashi Tsering,<sup>41</sup> inform the public about the negative influences of resource extraction projects in Tibet.

30 Shimizu, N. 2006.

31 International Rivers (no date).

32 TEBTEBBA (no date).

33 The Naga Peoples Movement for Human Rights (no date).

34 Lum 2013.

35 Wooser (no date).

36 Green Earth Volunteers (no date).

37 Salween Watch 2014.

38 Human Rights Watch (no date).

39 Students for a Free Tibet (no date).

40 Central Tibetan Administration 2009.

41 Tashi (no date).

### 3.2 Participation

The different possibilities of participation are also enabled by the national Indian law – for instance due to the freedom of assembly stated in the constitution. The two most important practices of participation to protect minorities and their rights in Northeast India are petitions and demonstrations. Often and successfully used, they are effective and efficient means for NGOs in this particular field. Examples are the demonstrations and online petitions of the organization “Affected Citizens of Teesta” against various projects concerning the projects on the river Teesta and the Lepcha minority.<sup>42</sup> The essential rights for these activities are on the one hand stated in the Indian constitution, and on the other hand are restricted by the before mentioned AFSPA in various cases.<sup>43</sup> This complicates and disables the work of respective NGOs and does affect the activities of local and national organizations in Northeast India as well as those of international organizations in the country. However, the latter have more flexibility and a wider scope concerning their actions and their engagement in favour of the minorities – especially while working outside of the country.

Just as public relations, the possibilities of participation inside China are limited. Petitions are often not successful, while demonstrations are being suppressed. In Tibet, protests have been increasing and became more violent, especially since 2009.<sup>44</sup> Self-immolation has been used as a form of general protest against policies of the Chinese government and for Tibetan freedom.<sup>45</sup> From a Chinese point of view, self-immolation is often perceived as proof of Tibetan barbarity, leading to increasing prejudice against Tibetans. Still, there are positive cases in both Yunnan and Tibet, in which protest was successful, as in the case of Kawagebo Mountain. Agreements with local governments were reached, and extraction of resources was stopped. However, in many cases, agreements were subsequently broken in the years after. Or, just as in the case of Mount Kawagebo, one stopped project endangering minority rights was replaced by another.<sup>46</sup> Outside of China, participation is mainly focused on Tibetan issues. In general, international NGOs or exile-Tibetan organizations display active participation. The NGO “Students for a Free Tibet” is especially active when it comes to demonstrations.<sup>47</sup> Petitions include the 2013 Tibet Justice Centre report, in collaboration with Boston University, to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in favour of the rights of the Tibetan people in China.<sup>48</sup> However, they seem to have been without particular success.

### 3.3 Empowerment

The last important option of action that will be pointed out in this chapter is empowerment. Some of the most important activities are the promotion of self-organization, the creation and development of networks and also educational work. The latter includes especially the provision of information about their rights and possibilities, how to claim them, but also about sustainable use and management of natural resources to ensure the conservation of the resources and protect biological diversity. Another important activity is the reduction of prejudices regarding other cultures between all the actors involved.

Many organizations in Northeast India concentrate these activities especially on the empowerment of women, as for instance the “Zo Indigenous Forum”.<sup>49</sup> Another important actor for the empowerment of indigenous people in this region is the previous mentioned international network “TEBTEBBA”, as well as the NGOs the network comprises.<sup>50</sup>

In China, empowerment plays an important role in Yunnan, where national and international governmental and non-governmental organizations cooperate in many projects, such as the Lashihai watershed.

42 Affected Citizens of Teesta 2012.

43 Asian Human Rights Commission (no date).

44 Free Tibet 2007.

45 International Campaign for Tibet 2014.

46 Schertow 2010.

47 Students for a Free Tibet (no date).

48 Tibet Justice Center (no date).

49 Zo Indigenous Forum (no date).

50 TEBTEBBA (no date).

Important national and international NGOs include the Yunnan Natural and Cultural Heritage Conservation Council,<sup>51</sup> Green Watershed,<sup>52</sup> and the Poverty Alleviation Fund. In the case of the TAR, empowerment is on the agenda of some international NGOs, such as the Mountain Institute,<sup>53</sup> and exile-Tibetan NGOs, such as the Tibetan Justice Centre,<sup>54</sup> that informs about the rights of Tibetans. Inside the TAR, empowerment work appears to be limited due to the governmental restrictions on NGOs and the overall difficult political situation.<sup>55</sup>

#### 4 Perspectives

From the previously described options, as well as the overall knowledge gained in the research process, the following potentials for a more effective NGO work could be derived.

Even though many of the foregoing described options are already in use in Northeast India, there is still potential to improve them in the future. The biggest potential lies in the further development of the main options of action: public relations, participation and empowerment. Especially in the fields of public relations and empowerment, the potential for further improvement and expansion seems to be high. One important way to improve NGOs work is the stronger application of educational work to raise awareness for the specific needs and rights of minority groups. It is crucial to adopt this for both the members of minorities and the other parts of the population. This applies to the local and national as well as the international options of action and to the respective organizations. The NGOs and local indigenous communities should furthermore observe the laws thoroughly and adjust their activities to the legal framework and possibilities. Due to the fact that law and regulations vary between the different states in Northeast India, no single best solution can be formulated.

In China, to further develop options of action, public relations and petitions should focus on existing goals of the Chinese government, such as the goal of achieving a “Harmonious Society”<sup>56</sup>, and of reaching environmental improvement and protection as part of China’s development objectives.<sup>57</sup> The extensive influence environmental pollution, especially on the Tibetan Plateau, can have on the overall global climate could also be a starting point for international actors to address negative effects of mining and embankment projects. Also, the “New Environmental Impact Assessment Law”, implemented in 2002, could be used to make minorities’ interests public and influence the extraction of resources, an option successfully applied to stop the planned embankment of the Tiger Leaping Gorge in 2005.<sup>58</sup> However, the implementation of the law is still highly inadequate, as an UNESCO report in 2013 showed.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, dialogues between Han Chinese and Chinese “national minorities” should be increased in order to reduce prejudice and foster mutual respect, aiming at a peaceful resolution of inter-ethnic conflicts. Empowerment work, especially education, could be used to increase cultural knowledge and intercultural communication capabilities on all sides. Moreover, tourism could be used positively to reduce prejudice on the side of the Han Chinese. In this context, the increasing trend of travelling in China could pose an opportunity.

Thus, there are still opportunities to improve the NGO work in the East Himalayan area. However, cooperation across the borders connecting Northeast India, the Tibetan Autonomous Region, and Yunnan province seems to be difficult to achieve. All in all, there are still extensive limits to the successful use of the options of action presented in this chapter. The successful examples mentioned, however, show that opportunities to strengthen the rights of minorities in the East Himalayan region do exist and should not be missed.

51 Yunnan Natural and Cultural Heritage Conservation Council (no date).

52 The Green Watershed (no date).

53 The Mountain Institute 2014.

54 Tibet Justice Center (no date).

55 Lum 2013.

56 Chan (no date).

57 Ministry of Environmental Protection (2007).

58 Waking The Green Tiger (no date).

59 UNESCO (2013).



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## **(V) Status and Untapped Potential for Climate Change Adaptation & Mitigation Projects in the Himalayan Region of Northeast India & Southwest China**

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### **Introduction**

This chapter aims to identify project opportunities to support climate change affected communities in establishing and integrating adaptation and mitigation measures in order to foster a community's resilience vis-à-vis climate change risks. The focus lies on the geographical region of the Himalayas and its river basins, as the region is known to be impacted heavily by climate change and is home to many vulnerable communities with limited coping capacities. Among the manifold ways livelihoods in the Himalayas are threatened are e. g. the melting of glaciers and changing weather patterns that cause shortening resources of drinking water, land and food production. In order to identify project opportunities, the working group looks at current Sino-German and Sino-European cooperation and strategic partnerships and official development assistance (ODA) with the Northeastern Region of India (NERI). A special focus is given to the marginalized Autonomous Region of Tibet and Yunnan province (China), and the Indian Federal States of Sikkim, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Tripura.

The chapter addresses the following research question: What is the current status of Germany's and the EU's climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts in the Himalayan region. What potential exists to improve living conditions of the marginalized population and foster further development cooperation? The working group has chosen varying methodological approaches including a purpose-built database of existing projects<sup>1</sup> and measures illustrating categories such as type of project, level addressed (regional/national/local), civil society engagement and thematic focus (water management/ forestry). Findings are based on qualitative research of media analysis, expert interviews and institutions' web presence and information. The paper also refers to the current academic discourse, aggregated data, and above-mentioned interviews to derive a needs assessment and recommendations for action, too. The working group encountered some obstacles in accessing project evaluations from the KfW Development Bank and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) conducted projects. With regard to the database, it is important to note that the implementation or presence of a project is no indicator for the (positive) effects or success of the project and may conceal potential for action. The chapter consists of three consecutive parts: the first identifies current type and quality of development cooperation, the second formulates a needs assessment, and the final part gives recommendations for action.

### **1 Types and quality of cooperation**

In order to be able to create a comprehensive needs analysis and to formulate recommendations for future engagement in the region, we have first analyzed the type and quality of environmental cooperation by the German government with Northeast India (NE India) and Southwest China (SW China). In the following, the type of cooperation, responsible ministries and the contents of the currently implemented projects will be examined.

#### **1.1 Political framework for the environmental commitment of the German Federal Government in Northeast India and Southwest China**

Since the German Federal Ministry for Economic Development (BMZ) is responsible for the fundamental conception of the development cooperation of the Federal Republic of Germany, it also arranges the

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1 The database (see Annex) records not only the currently ongoing projects, also projects that were carried out since 2001 and have already been completed, are included. The project database aims to show which project approaches were used and who were the cooperation partners in the past. However, the needs analysis focuses only on current projects.

objectives and measures for climate change adaptation programs in India and China. For the practical implementation of the programs, the so-called implementing organizations and non-governmental organizations are consulted and supported financially by the BMZ. To ensure the timelines of the project plan, only those projects that are currently carried out or ended in 2013 were recorded by our working group.

In addition to the Federal Ministry for Economic Development, the Federal Ministry for the Environment also supports a series of climate change adaptation programs in China and India as part of the international climate protection initiative. However, we could not identify projects that are directly addressing NE India and SW China.

## 1.2 The Sino-German Strategic Partnership

The engagement of the German Federal Government in the Himalayan region, especially regarding China and India, differs significantly in the type of cooperation. Given the immense development success in China and its changing role in global politics and economy, the German Federal Government ended the development cooperation with China in 2009.<sup>2</sup> Since 2010, the German-Chinese Strategic Partnership provides the political framework for the cooperation between the German Government and China. The focal points of the partnership are environmental policy including environmental and climate policy, renewable energies and energy efficiency as well as economic and legal reforms.<sup>3</sup> Within the new development partnership, the contribution from both, the German and the Chinese Government is based on the level of development and the performance of China. At the same time, if possible, the German economy tries to be more involved.<sup>4</sup> Considering the projects that are currently carried out in China by the German government, no regional focus on SW China can be identified.

## 1.3 The Indo-German Development Cooperation

In contrast to China, India is still one of the partner countries of German development cooperation. Germany works closely with these partner countries on the basis of intergovernmental agreements.<sup>5</sup> The Indo-German development cooperation focuses rather on structure-building programs than on individual local projects. Focal points of the cooperation are the promotion of renewable energies, sustainable economic development and environmental and climate protection. The projects are linked to India's own efforts and reform programs. The aim of the programs is to advocate solutions and qualify the partners involved, to enable them to independently continue and expand the projects. In 2013, India obtained resources from the federal budget in the amount of 1.089 billion Euros. Of this amount, 1.06 billion Euros represent the financial and 29 million Euros the technical cooperation.<sup>6</sup> The currently implemented programs in NE India have a regional focus on Sikkim, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Tripura.

Comparing the thematic focus of the cooperation between the German government with China and India, it becomes clear that the partnership with China is rather focused on the energy sector, while the cooperation with India concentrates on environmental protection and resource conservation as well as the preservation of livelihoods especially regarding marginalized communities.

## 1.4 Networking of actors in NE India and the role of the GIZ

Since the networking of actors that are involved in the German development cooperation in NE India represents a certain complexity, an overview of the networking of relevant stakeholders, above all, GIZ, KfW Development Bank and the Indian ministries is given (see Annex, Figure 1). The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDONER) plays a central role in the development cooperation between the German government and NE India. MDONER receives financial assistance of up to

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2 Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (China) 2014.

3 German Federal Foreign Office (China) 2014.

4 Ibid.

5 Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (India) 2014.

6 Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Indien) 2014.

76 million Euros by the KfW Development Bank in the framework of the “North East Climate Change Adaptation Program (NECCAP)”<sup>7</sup>. The KfW Development Bank provides financial support to the Indian government for the development of regional action plans at state level to adapt to climate change and protect vulnerable population groups in NE India.

To identify the most vulnerable districts, a study by the Indian Institute of Science<sup>8</sup> based on data on soil conditions, infrastructure and socio-economic factors (e. g. poverty ratios) in conjunction with historical and projected climate data was taken into account.<sup>9</sup> Thus, there are criteria and parameters to prioritize districts in the program area by the vulnerability of population groups and sectors. The distinction is made by identifying the regional threats to agriculture, the forest, the ground water and the threat caused by floods. This process led to the selection of 15 out of 57 districts in the five participating NECCAP states of Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Sikkim.<sup>10</sup> The NECCAP program funds adaption measures such as reforestation, erosion control, groundwater protection and water storage at local level.

Beside the NECCAP program, the German Federal Government addresses the MDONER as well as a federal enterprise by providing technical cooperation in the framework of the “Climate Change Adaptation Program in the North Eastern Region (CCA-NER)” implemented by GIZ.<sup>11</sup> The national leading executing agency is the Indian Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF). GIZ advises the local governments, partner institutions and communities in setting up policies and tools to promote the adaptation to climate change in the framework of state action plans on climate change. The different sub-projects are: Eric Peace Silk-Slow Fashion, Indigeous Rice Development, Regional Training of Trainers, Biodiversity and Culture Significance at Kabi Lungchok Scared Preserves and Mapping, Modelling Management Guidelines for Oak Forests.<sup>12</sup> In the framework of these sub-projects, GIZ offers capacity development measures and in particular promotes awareness rising, training of multipliers and strengthening of training facilities, which are important in relation to climate change in the Northeastern region. In addition, GIZ has established a network of international and national actors from the public and private sector to develop affordable financial products for the rural population. As a result, several customized financial instruments are expected to finance necessary measures to adapt to the impacts of climate change as well for rural target groups as for public investment. In addition, GIZ promotes knowledge management and regional networking for joint resolution of issues and problems related to climate variability and change.<sup>13</sup>

The state of Tripura, which borders on three sides with Bangladesh, is one of the most isolated and underdeveloped states in NE India. Therefore, the BMZ decided to carry out the project “Socio-economic integration of tribal groups and poor rural populations and protection of natural resources in the Indian state of Tripura”, with GIZ and the government of the Indian state of Tripura from 2009 to 2013.<sup>14</sup> The objective of this project was the planning, implementation and monitoring of public and private investment programs to improve the management of natural resources. For that purpose GIZ designed economically viable models for micro-enterprises that are managed by tribes and the poor population in order to get access to natural resources through public and private investment.<sup>15</sup> The project has been able to support five producers’ communities in five pilot villages in the establishment of micro-enterprises. These are dedicated to the production of selected agricultural products in the short term, which means products carry a yield in the first six months, and thus generate income.<sup>16</sup>

7 On behalf of the Federal Government, KfW Development Bank is in charge of the financial cooperation of Germany in more than 100 developing and emerging countries in Africa, Asia, South and Central America, the Middle East and the Caucasus.

8 Ravindranath 2012.

9 KfW Entwicklungsbank 2011.

10 Stewen 2012: 342.

11 The project duration is from 2009 to 2014.

12 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GIZ / Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region 2012.

13 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (Climate Change) 2014.

14 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (Empowerment) 2014.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

## 1.5 Political framework for the environmental commitment of the European Union in NE India and SW China

The framework for the cooperation in the field of environment policy of the EU with India and China is the “Joint Action Plan” for India and the “EU-China Partnership on Climate Change”, both from 2005.<sup>17</sup> The Indo-European cooperation focuses on the preservation of livelihoods as well as to a much smaller extent on energy efficiency. The cooperation between the EU and China, in contrast, has a clear focus on energy efficiency and renewable energies. A difference can be seen in the regional focus. In contrast to the German cooperation that has a regional focus on several states in NE India, the EU cooperation has no regional focus and rather refers to the whole country. The involvement of the civil society in the climate change adaptation programs of the EU in the region is done by capacity development, sensitization activities in individual projects and the strengthening of the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) as a regional partner.

## 1.6 A valuable partner in the region: the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

A valuable partner in the Himalayan region, that is already a partner of the BMZ and the European Union and could be also interesting as a partner for local NGO's, is the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). ICIMOD is a regional intergovernmental learning and knowledge sharing center serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush Himalayas: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan – and is based in Kathmandu, Nepal.<sup>18</sup> The network aims at improving the living standards of the Hindu Kush Himalayan region by supporting regional transboundary programs that help the rural population to understand climate change, adapt to it and create new opportunities.

The German Federal Government supported the strengthening of ICIMOD as an organization and service provider for the region in cooperation with GIZ until 2012.<sup>19</sup> The aim was to support ICIMOD in his role as the voice of the Hindu Kush Himalayas in the global negotiation processes on natural resources and climate change. The EU is currently working with ICIMOD as a regional partner in the 2013–2017 ongoing project “Rural Livelihoods and Climate Change Adaptation in the Himalayas initiative (Himalica)”. The project budget amounts to 12.5 million Euros, of which the EU contributes 10 million Euros.<sup>20</sup>

## 2 Requirement and needs analysis

In the following, some important deficits of existing projects and initiatives in NE India and China, especially Tibet and Yunnan, are outlined and analyzed. The assessment of the sample projects taken is largely based on a project database, which the working group generated in the process of the task force seminar.

Climate change will inevitably lead to climate migration. Bangladesh, China and India are already among the states with the most climate change migrants worldwide, and it is predicted that by 2050 there will be an estimated number of 150 to 200 million environmental refugees.<sup>21</sup> Climate change will cause strong changing weather conditions, like deficit rainfall and high temperatures or severe droughts in the NE Indian states of Manipur, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Assam,<sup>22</sup> and water engulfs Bangladesh – a so-called “downstream effect” whose long-term impacts are still unknown.<sup>23</sup>

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17 European Union 2005.

18 International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development 2014.

19 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, URL: <https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/14259.html>.

20 International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development 2014.

21 Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge 2012: 32.

22 Das 2009: 33–34.

23 Eriksson 2009: 13.

In both cases, i. e. India and its northwestern states as well as China's Southwest, a number of bilateral and multilateral projects between the EU and the German Federal Government with India or China, intended to promote the impacts of climate change on the regional level, have been worked out. Despite national (China) and regional (India) climate change action plans, it can be said that there is still little effort from both Germany and the EU to implement such programs and projects in the Himalayan region concerned. One of the many projects between Germany and India is in cooperation with India's MDON-ER and the BMZ<sup>24</sup> on CCA-NER<sup>25</sup>, a GIZ project mentioned above. Although the program covers a wide range of topics, it is taken as one example for the requirement and needs analysis showing that not only China, but also India lacks initiatives on wide-ranged water, waste and disaster management initiatives. Furthermore, a cross-linked cooperation between Indian and Chinese governments,<sup>26</sup> and a support securing of the population concerned, e. g. women, children or disabled, is still missing.

## 2.1 China

Concerning disaster management, China's government has promulgated and implemented the "National Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Plan" (duration: 2011 to 2015).<sup>27</sup> Still, there is no evidence that Tibet and Yunnan are dealing with glacial melting and floods in the Himalaya region, although those two threads are serious climate change results<sup>28</sup> that negatively affect peoples' lives. China shows deficiencies with regard to the content of the programs and dealing with climate change impacts in Yunnan and Tibet, in general. A reason for these problems could be that project work in Tibet might be difficult to realize due to the political situation. However, Yunnan province could be a "bridgehead" on a sub-regional level for implementing new ideas as well as for engaging with Myanmar, India, Laos and Vietnam.<sup>29</sup> The working group has not found any local or regional measures that were supported by the German Federal Government.

Although China's Government has recently initiated programs on waste management, there aren't any projects in rural and urban areas that are elaborated well enough and cover Tibet or Yunnan. "World Bank (2005) indicates that China has surpassed the U. S. in 2004 and became the world's largest municipal solid waste generator".<sup>30</sup> A case study was conducted by World Bank in 2007 in the county of Eryuan, Yunnan Province, on behalf of the Government of Yunnan Province to prove whether there is willingness among the population to pay for an improved solid waste collection and financially support projects regarding waste management. The study clearly demonstrated that even the poorest households were willing to pay in favor of a solid waste collection and disposal. Although the collected amount of money could probably not cover the total costs for a project, it "can still justify for project implementation".<sup>31</sup> Despite some small local Chinese initiatives and NGOs that work on waste and water management situated in the Himalaya region, there is no evidence of any projects supported from the EU or Germany.

In the case of China it is important to stimulate awareness of the society and of local governments for climate change and its impacts. Unfortunately, despite China's strenuous efforts to engage the public society, NGOs and the media,<sup>32</sup> there are no signs that the goal of sensitizing the public, local stakeholders and government employees has been reached. The interview, taken by the authors with Oxfam Hong Kong, showed that the organization doesn't even know or has heard of any climate change adaptation or mitigation measures taken by the EU or Germany.<sup>33</sup> Still, "local government's awareness of climate

24 In India, BMZ is running at least two main projects in cooperation with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and some more small initiatives, as well as working together with ICIMOD on four programs regarding climate change adaptation and mitigation.

25 CCA-NER = Climate Change Adaptation in India's North East Region program, implemented by GIZ.

26 Rana 2012: 319.

27 The National Development and Reform Commission 2012: 15–16.

28 Eriksson 2009: 3.

29 Rana 2012: 65–66.

30 Wang 2011: 6.

31 Ibid.: 15.

32 The National Development and Reform Commission 2012: 21.

33 Survey interview with Binbin Wang, OXFAM Hong Kong (February 25, 2014).



change is low and sometimes they resist the policy released by the central policy-makers.”<sup>34</sup> Chinas local cadres need professional support in formulating and implementing climate change regulations and rules<sup>35</sup> in order to be able to start a dialogue between different policy planners. Civil society actors can play a part in this process by providing advocacy work.

## 2.2 India

Concerning climate change adaptation measures for local agriculture, GIZ is working together with Nagaland Empowerment of People through Economic Development (NEPED) on the mentioned initiative “Indigenous Rice Development Rice Seed Exchange” within the framework of CCA-NER. This initiative aims at fostering the exchange among farmers in four districts of Nagaland. Another example for effective adaptation measures on climate change is the initiative of “Trout Farming”, lead by the Government of Meghalaya, but without foreign support. Here again, the adaptation of local agricultural production in NE India, e. g. high crop yields, fishery and silkworm breeding, with the goal for a growing resilience in case of economic losses due to climate change, is still not satisfactory.

Applicable to almost every program is that focal points for projects led or supported by the German Federal Government are the Indian states of Meghalaya, Nagaland and Sikkim,<sup>36</sup> with exclusion of other northeastern parts of India. Despite of a nationwide climate-induced threat, India still has an unequal distribution as well as insufficient extend of projects that deal with causes and consequences of climate change. Only a few projects on a regional level are initiated by EU or Germany.

## 3 Recommendations and conclusion

In order to address demand as well as to improve and encourage further potential of development and cooperation, we will furnish recommendations of action for the adaptation and mitigation of climate change and its consequences in the following section. The recommendations of action are restricted to measures that are feasible especially by means of local as well as regional or international non-governmental organizations and to problem areas that can be directly influenced by the mentioned actors. For reasons of applicability and comprehensibility, the recommendations of action will be divided into local, regional and international level advocacies, mainly focusing on NE India and SW China.

### 3.1 The local level in NE India

As shown in the needs assessment, the regional distribution of climate change adaption programs is not in conformity with the occurrence of climate change induced events in NE India. Therefore, the integration of the federal states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur and Tripura in already existing initiatives and at the setup of new projects respectively is to be recommended. Especially governmental undertakings such as the CCA-NER lobbying at the local German GIZ office in Shillong, seems to be meaningful.

In addition, the stronger incorporation of local and responsible functional elites in order to ensure necessary infrastructure for projects can be recommended. Some areas in NE India such as Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura are characterized by weak statehood, separatist movements and security issues.<sup>37</sup> These circumstances make the identification of corresponding (maybe even unofficial) partners and appropriate forms of cooperation, the contention for processing non-transparency in order to achieve an efficient and effective project output, as well as assuring the safety of project staff, highly advisable.

The sensitization of the NE Indian population regarding climate-induced migration in the federal state of Assam can be recommended as it may facilitate mutual understanding and social inclusion. Since the 1970s, the conflict between the local Hindi population and the mostly Muslim immigrants from Bangladesh is simmering and reached another peak in 2012 leading to the death of 30 and the displacement of

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34 Survey interview with Binbin Wang, OXFAM Hong Kong (February 25, 2014).

35 Ibid.

36 e. g. Climate Change Adaptation in the North Eastern Region (CCA-NER) program.

37 Lehmann/Lehr/Mitra 2001.

about 100,000 people.<sup>38</sup> Appropriate measures in order to de-escalate the conflict and to foster mutual religious and cultural awareness could be, for instance, different common workshops between the Bodo<sup>39</sup> as well as other local communities and immigrant municipality, information campaigns, as well as the establishment of a community center and an arbitration board.

### 3.2 The local level in SW China

The provincial and sub-provincial administrative tiers, especially in such sensitive areas as Yunnan and Tibet, favor economic growth and social stability over environmental issues,<sup>40</sup> as the central government evaluates cadre performance according to goal attainment. This often results in ignoring and delaying of the implementation of environmental regulations and legislature. Therefore, a sensitization of local cadres in Yunnan and Tibet for the consequences of climate change and their potential negative impact on economic performance and stability, as well as the stimulation of realization of already existing legislation seems to be important. Furthermore, the conduct of optional workshops and training seminars as well as campaigns addressing accountability for violations of law and environmental wrongs is highly advisable.

Apart from that, the drafting of community-based action plans<sup>41</sup> concerning climate change adaptation at the local level in Yunnan and Tibet is to be recommended. Despite the potential of local Environmental Protection Bureaus (EPB) to implement environmental legislature independently,<sup>42</sup> these institutions often lack necessary financial and personnel resources.<sup>43</sup> In order to facilitate a code of conduct regarding environmental issues and a minimum of climate change adaptation policies for the specific needs of different communities within the provinces of Yunnan and Tibet, cooperation between the local EPBs, the community members and civil society organizations is commendable.

### 3.3 Shared recommendations for the local level of NE India and SW China

The extension of training measures in the communities in NE India and SW China concerning the causes as well as impacts of climate change and the corresponding adaption opportunities, especially for the most vulnerable groups such as children and women can be recommended. Recommendable measures would be school projects like “environmental weeks” or the visit and support of nearby environmental initiatives as well as lessons at local community centers.

In addition, the diffusion of local and subject-specific knowledge is to be recommended. Since NE India and SW China are characterized by a high linguistic and cultural diversity as well as widespread illiteracy, the translation into local languages and the reconditioning of information material for illiterates seems to be helpful in this regard.

Another important factor is the capacity development of the project realizing local and non-governmental actors.<sup>44</sup> This requires advanced training of staff, the learning of new action forms and project approaches as well as the endeavor for further cooperation.

### 3.4 The regional level

On the one hand, an intensification of the interregional interconnectedness of actors in order to achieve a more effective and efficient planning and implementation of measures is to be recommended. Due to some structural, political and communicative obstacles there is still a great potential for cooperation between non-governmental and semi-governmental<sup>45</sup> organizations in the field of climate change and environment.<sup>46</sup>

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38 Bhattacharyya/Werz 2012: 37.

39 Bodo are a minority group in northeastern Indian states of Assam and Meghalaya, and in Bangladesh.

40 Lo/Tang 2006: 202–203.

41 Brot für die Welt 2013.

42 Mertha 2005.

43 Hofem 2010, Heberer/Senz 2011.

44 Survey interview with Binbin Wang, Oxfam Hongkong (February 25, 2014).

45 In the case of China that refers to actors such as government organized non-governmental organizations (GONGOs).

46 See also the contribution of Sroka, Minnetian, Nawid, Pilorz und Roemer in the same tome.

On the other hand, the working group recommends the setup of issue-specific, border-crossing projects between NE India, SW China, Bangladesh and Myanmar. Especially in the healthcare sector, the integration of the state of research regarding climate change induced impacts on health<sup>47</sup> into border-crossing national as well as non-governmental programs should be ensued, as for example a shift of weather pattern and climate zones has led to a change of the habitat of mosquitoes that could transmit malaria or dengue fever in the whole region. Most of these rapidly developing problems seem only resolvable if all concerned areas and actors work together on a solution.

### 3.5 The international level

As for the international level, stronger lobbying concerning the agreement of China and India on international environmental and climate protection conventions, especially regarding the installation of a post-Kyoto regime, would be important. Indeed, both states have pointed out that they are interested in a new climate protection agreement, starting 2020, but they are still referring to their status as non-industrial countries in negotiations and their need of higher production and emission rates in order to gain on. As a consequence, local non-governmental organizations should take the opportunity to sway local governments towards a more favorable position, and regional as well as international non-governmental organizations should ally and implement awareness campaigns.

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47 Survey interview with Dr. Helga Fink, GIZ, Office Shillong, India (January 23, 2014).

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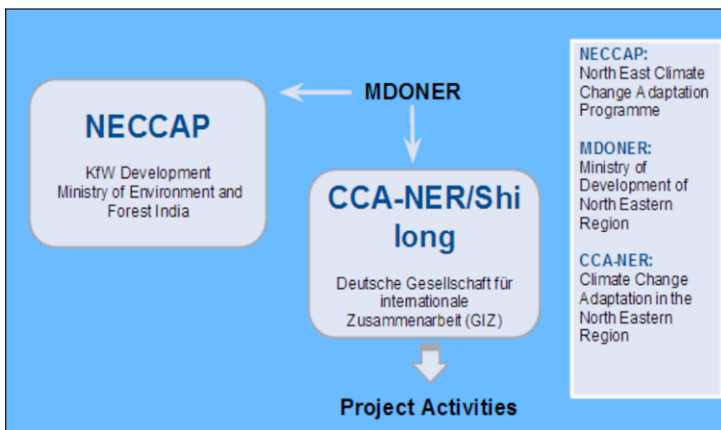
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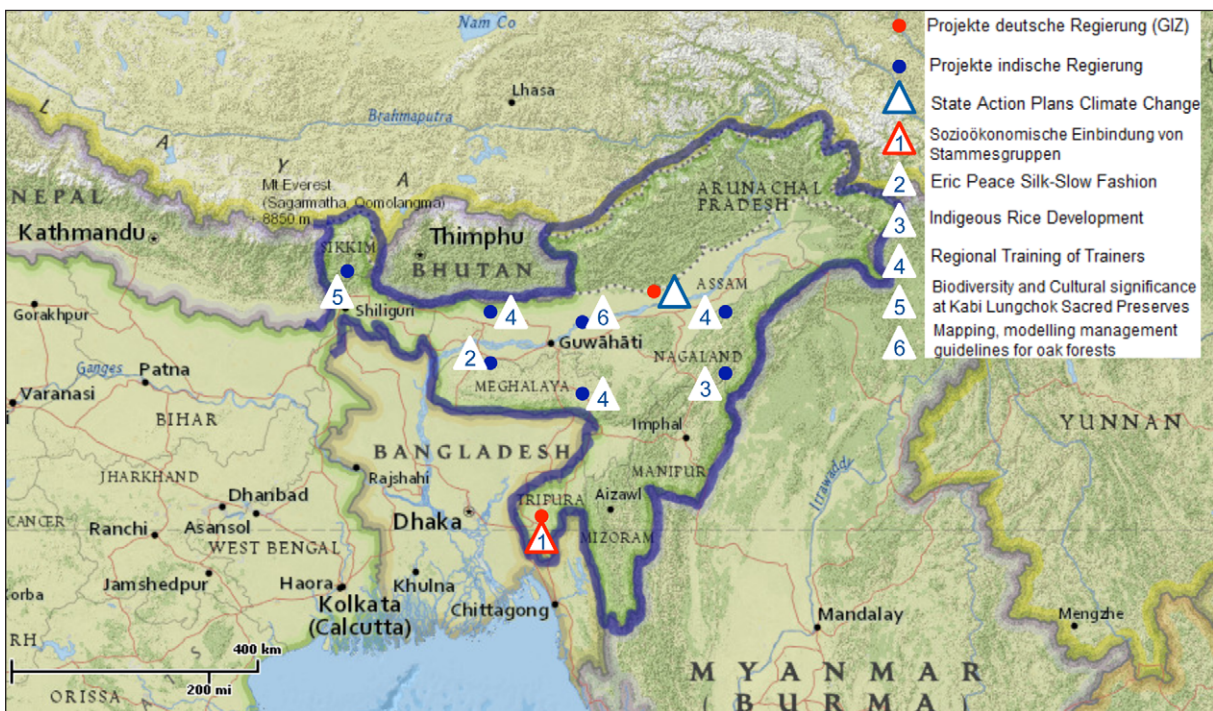
### Annex

Figure 1: NECCAP, MDONER, and CCA-NER



Source: Own research

Figure 2: GIZ sub-projects



**Table 1: Project Database**

Time frame (e. g. project period, year of signing)	Name of the intervention	Type of intervention	Level of intervention (national/regional/local)	Country	Initiated by / executing agency (EU / Federal Republic of Germany / national / local)	Cooperation partner	Budget
since 2001	Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF)	Program support initiative	National	China, India, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal	Global Environment Facility (GEF)	BMZ, UNDP, UNEP, WB	US\$ 299.1 m. (German contribution 2011: US\$ 25 m.), 27 % to Asia
2003–2010	Strengthening capacity building for decentralised watershed management	BMZ project	National	India	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	Indian Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India	not specified
2004–2008	European Commission (EC) – India Disaster Preparedness Support Program	Program	National	India	EU / National	UNDP, Government of India	EC contribution: € 10 m. (92 % of total)
2005	EU-India Joint Action Plan	Cooperation agreement	National	India	EU / National	Government of India	not specified
2006	EU-China Partnership on Climate Change	Cooperation agreement	National	China	EU / National	Government of China	not specified
2008–2012	Protection of Sustainable Policy Initiatives in the Management of Natural Resources in the Hindu Kush Himalayas (ICIMOD)	BMZ project	National	India	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)	not specified
2008–2013	Umbrella Programme on Natural Resource Management	BMZ project	National	India	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Partner Development (NABARD)	In the first two years, NABARD sanctioned investments of over € 19 m. in 50 projects in 11 states and one union territory
2009–2012	Policy Options to Engage Asian economies in a post-Kyoto regime (POEM)	Binational project	National	China / India	EU	Among others: Indian Institute of Management, Tsinghua University	Total cost: € 1.089 m. / EU contribution: € 971,500
2009–2013	Socio-economic empowerment of tribal and rural poor and protection of natural resources, Tripura	BMZ project (GIZ)	National	India	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	Government of Tripura	not specified
2009–2014	Climate change adaptation in rural areas of India	BMZ project (GIZ)	National	India (Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal)	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF)	not specified

Approach	Thematic area	Working method / Instruments for the implementation	Contact	Homepage
Programmes are to be country-driven, cost-effective and integrated into national sustainable development and poverty-reduction strategies	support adaptation to climate change, technology, capacity building, energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry and waste management; poverty-reduction; and economic diversification	Loans, Public-private programs, capacity development	Ms. Saliha Dobardzic; Phone: (+1)(202)4735943; E-mail: sdobardzic@thegef.org / Mr. Rawleston Moore; Phone: (+1)(202)4738231; E-mail: rmoore1@thegef.org	<a href="http://www.thegef.org/gef/SCCF">http://www.thegef.org/gef/SCCF</a>
Institutionalization consortiums of service providers for capacity building in three pilot state governments (Uttarakhand, Rajasthan and Karnataka), in order to support the large centrally sponsored watershed management scheme	Watershed management	Capacity building for decentralised watershed management, consortiums with Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (Ministry of Agriculture), the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), and the National Institute for Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE)	Vera Scholz, E-Mail: vera.scholz@giz.de	<a href="http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/16067.html">http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/16067.html</a>
Develop & institutionalize earthquake preparedness / response plans & practices	Awareness building, education, disaster management/prevention/preparedness	Research/studies/developed & institutionalised earthquake preparedness /response plans & practices	not specifield	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/echo/policies/prevention_preparedness/dipecho_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/echo/policies/prevention_preparedness/dipecho_en.htm</a>
EU-India Environment Forum, Joint Working Group on Environment, EU-India Energy Panel, EU-India Initiative on Clean Development and Climate Change	Energy efficiency, reducing environmental damage	High-level consultations, research, knowledge sharing, awareness building	Delegation of the EU to India; 65, Golf Links, New Delhi – 110003; Phone: +91-11-49496565; Fax: +91-11-49496555; E-mail: delegation-india@eeas.europa.eu	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/international_cooperation/india/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/international_cooperation/india/index_en.htm</a>
China-EU Seminar “Towards a Global Carbon Market: Using Market-Based Mechanisms to Combat Climate Change”, bilateral consultations, workshop on “the development of clean coal policy for China”, Memoranda of Understanding were signed between the European Commission and Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) of China	Energy efficiency, energy conservation, renewable energies, clean coal, collection of carbon dioxide	High-level consultations, research, knowledge sharing, awareness building	EU Delegation of the EU to China; 15 Dongzhimenwai Daijie, Chaoyang District, Beijing – 100600; Phone: (8610)84548000; Fax: (8610)84548011; E-mail: delegation-china@eeas.europa.eu	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/international_cooperation/china/index_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/international_cooperation/china/index_en.htm</a>
ICIMOD and its partner organizations develop regionally consistent approaches and strategies for adapting to climate change and for sustainable resource management and apply them	Management of natural resources	Data collection, promotion of ICIMOD’s priority programme Environmental Change and Ecosystem Services (ECES)	Manfred Seebauer; E-mail: manfred.seebauer@giz.de	<a href="https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/14259.html">https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/14259.html</a>
Improve the effectiveness of selected public and private investment programs in conservation and management of natural resources	Management of natural resources	Loans, Public-private partnerships, capacity development	Hansjoerg Neun; E-mail: hansjoerg.neun@giz.de	<a href="http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/16606.html">http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/16606.html</a>
Develop a portfolio of policy options including both international and national policies as well as institutional frameworks for international cooperation	Socio-economic development, energy efficiency, poverty alleviation	Research, field work, surveys, studies	Administrative contact: Camilla Jacobsohn, Göteborg, Sweden; Tel: +46-317723504; Fax: +46-31821928	<a href="http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/226282">http://cordis.europa.eu/projects/226282</a>
Planning, implementation and monitoring of public and private investment programs in Tripura have been improved in a way that natural resources are used more effectively than in the past and are used for the sustainable economic development of the region	Livelihood, management of national resources	Investments at the village level in two of the state’s tribal districts, participatory planning, institution building, improvements in the productivity of degraded land, natural resources management and livelihood promotion	Hansjoerg Neun; E-mail: hansjoerg.neun@giz.de	<a href="https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/16609.html">https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/16609.html</a>
State-level vulnerability and risk assessments, Developing and testing adaptation measures, Climate proofing of public investments and rural development programmes, Development of financial instruments for adaptation, Information and knowledge management, State-level action plans on climate change (in four of India’s federal states)	Adaptation to climate change	Multi-level approach: public investments, financial instruments, knowledge management	Peter Saile; E-Mail: peter.saile@giz.de	<a href="http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/16603.html">http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/16603.html</a>

Table 1 (continued)

Time frame (e. g. project period, year of signing)	Name of the intervention	Type of intervention	Level of intervention (national/regional/local)	Country	Initiated by / executing agency (EU / Federal Republic of Germany / national / local)	Cooperation partner	Budget
2009–2014	Agreement on the Cooperation on Addressing Climate Change	Memorandum of Agreement	Regional	China / India	China / India / National	NDRC (China) and MoEF (India)	not specified
2009–2015	Management of natural resources and community forestry	BMZ project	National	Bangladesh	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), Integrated Protected Area Co-Management (IPAC) – Projekt von USAID	not specified
2009–2015	Wetland Biodiversity Protection Project	BMZ project	National	Bangladesh	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	Department of Fisheries (Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock), Bangladesh Water Development Board (Ministry of Water Resources)	not specified
2011–2014	Urban Reduction of Green House Gas Emissions in China and Europe (URGENCE)	International project	National	China	EU / Chinese Government	Among others: University of Exeter (coordinator), UK / City of Stuttgart, Germany	not specified (EU funded)
2011–2014	Climate change adaptation in India's North East Region (CCA-NER)	BMZ project (GIZ)	National	India	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDONER)	not specified
2011–2014	Sustainable development and biodiversity conservation in coastal protection forests	BMZ project	National	Bangladesh	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF)	not specified
2011–2016	Memorandum of Understanding on Conservation of Sundarban	Memorandum of Understanding	Regional	India, Bangladesh	India, Bangladesh, National	Government and non- government agencies	not specified
2011–2017	Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund	Sector policy support programme	National	Bangladesh	EU / National	Ministry of Environment and Forests, World Bank	€ 140 m.
2012–2015	Preserving biodiversity in the Kailash region	BMZ project	Asia supra-regional	Asia supraregional	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)	not specified
2013–2018	Myanmar Climate Change Alliance	Project	National	Myanmar	EU / National	Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry, Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (Ministry of Transport), Department of Planning (Ministry of National Planning and Economic development), UN Habitat, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	€ 4.065 m.
Year depending on the state	India's State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCC)	Action plan	Local	India / all seven states of northeast India	The Indian Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF)	GIZ, UNDP, World Bank, other members included Principal Secretaries, Commissioners, Secretaries of the various line departments, research institutions, NGOs, academia	not specified



Approach	Thematic area	Working method / Instruments for the implementation	Contact	Homepage
Strengthening the bilateral dialogue and practical cooperation on climate change	Climate change mitigation, programs, projects, technology development, greenhouse gas emission reduction (energy conservation efficiency, renewable energies, clean coal, methane recovery and utilization, afforestation and sustainable management of forests and ecosystems, transportation and sustainable habitat)	High-level consultations, research, knowledge sharing, awareness building		
Support the implementation of Bangladesh's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, provided to support local services, forest management and the development of alternative sources of income	Implementation of the Climate Action Plan of Bangladesh, management for effective monitoring of forest areas, decentralization in the forestry sector, developing alternative sources of income	Trust-building campaigns related to income-generating activities, interest-free microcredits, awareness building, first forestry congress in Bangladesh	Otilie Mooshofer; E-mail: <a href="mailto:ottilie.mooshofer@giz.de">ottilie.mooshofer@giz.de</a>	<a href="https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/14858.html">https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/14858.html</a>
Strengthening participation by the poor in the decision-making process for wetlands management.	Biodiversity, water, food safety	Training courses on income-generating activities and social issues, awareness-raising and sensitisation activities, strengthening of partnerships between the stakeholders	Otilie Mooshofer; E-mail: <a href="mailto:ottilie.mooshofer@giz.de">ottilie.mooshofer@giz.de</a>	<a href="http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/14855.html">http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/14855.html</a>
Assessment of the overall risks and benefits of alternative greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction policies.	Health risk assessment, urban energy demand, urban planning and supply scenarios	Research, development of a modeling platform and a related database for urban impact assessment	Clive Sabel, PI; E-mail: <a href="mailto:c.sabel@exeter.ac.uk">c.sabel@exeter.ac.uk</a> and Nicky Cocksedge, Project Manager; E-mail: <a href="mailto:n.cocksedge@exeter.ac.uk">n.cocksedge@exeter.ac.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.urgenche.eu">http://www.urgenche.eu</a>
Among others: Strengthening of Meghalaya draft water policy; Disaster preparedness management plan, Sikkim; Mapping, modeling and management guidelines for oak forests, Sikkim; Community forest management in Mawlyngbna, Meghalaya; Biodiversity and cultural significance at Kabi Lungchok, Sacred Preserves, Sikkim; Umiam water resource management and land use modeling, Meghalaya; Preparation of village water security plans in Tendong Hills, Sikkim	Water, forest, livelihood	Knowledge exchange, capacity development, development of a policy framework	Regional Office in Meghalaya, Dr. Helga E. Fink, Project Director, GIZ/CCA-NER; Kench's Trace Laban, Behind Sankardev College, Shillong – 793004, Meghalaya; Phone: +91(0)3542501105; E-mail: <a href="mailto:helga.fink@giz.de">helga.fink@giz.de</a>	<a href="http://cca.ner-india.org/">http://cca.ner-india.org/</a>
implementation of the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan especially regarding disaster management, capacity building and institutional strengthening	Fisheries, agriculture, ecosystem management, conservation of biodiversity, protected area management	Advice and training, knowledge management, skills development, mediation	Otilie Mooshofer; E-mail: <a href="mailto:ottilie.mooshofer@giz.de">ottilie.mooshofer@giz.de</a>	<a href="http://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/14867.html">http://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/14867.html</a>
Strengthening the management of the Sundarban across the two countries	Biodiversity, forest	Information and knowledge sharing, capacity building, education promotion, trainers' training and exchange	not specified	<a href="http://pmindia.nic.in/MOU-%20Sundarban%20_Final_.pdf">http://pmindia.nic.in/MOU-%20Sundarban%20_Final_.pdf</a>
Support Bangladesh in implementing the Government's Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan	Agriculture, coastal management, infrastructure, land management, natural resources, education, development, poverty reduction	Adaptation to climate change, disaster risk reduction	The World Bank Office; Plot No. E-32, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka, Bangladesh; Tel: +880-2-8159001-28; E-mail: <a href="mailto:bccrf@worldbank.org">bccrf@worldbank.org</a>	<a href="http://bccrf-bd.org/Default.aspx">http://bccrf-bd.org/Default.aspx</a>
Requirements for the cross-border protection of biodiversity in selected ecosystems in the Kailash Sacred Landscape are created	Transboundary protection of biodiversity	Regular meetings and joint field trips, advisory services, the deployment of experts, surveys and materials and equipment	Manfred Seebauer; E-mail: <a href="mailto:manfred.seebauer@giz.de">manfred.seebauer@giz.de</a>	<a href="http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/14266.html">http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/14266.html</a>
Mainstream climate change into the Myanmar policy development and reform agenda	Development, poverty reduction	Adaption to climate change, mainstreaming of climate change	EU Delegation to Myanmar; E-mail: <a href="mailto:EU-Office-Yangon@ceas.europa.eu">EU-Office-Yangon@ceas.europa.eu</a>	<a href="http://www.gcca.eu/national-programmes/asia/gcca-myanmar">http://www.gcca.eu/national-programmes/asia/gcca-myanmar</a>
In line with the objectives of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) and ensure its implementation at state level.	In line with the objectives of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) and ensure its implementation at state level.	In line with the objectives of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) and ensure its implementation at state level.	Ministry of Environment & Forests; Paryavaran Bhavan CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi – 110003, India; Phone: +91-11-24361669	<a href="http://moef.nic.in/ccd-sapcc">http://moef.nic.in/ccd-sapcc</a>

## (VI) Regional Non-state Actor Networks in the Field of Environment Policy and Natural Resources Exploitation

*Clelia Minnetian, Shabnam Nawid, Patrick Paul Pilorz, Marcus Römer, Virginia Sroka*

### Introduction and Method

The Eastern Himalayan region is rich in biodiversity and its natural resources as well as in its cultural heterogeneity. To promote fair and sustainable development, the empowerment of the civil society is an important factor, since major economical development decisions are often made in the capital far from local communities. For India and China, this region offers big economical opportunities, as it provides additional power supply through hydroelectric power production<sup>1</sup>, natural resources like wood<sup>2</sup> or minerals as gold and copper. Furthermore, the region is geo-strategically important for future overland trade routes between South Asia and Southeast Asia. However, major water projects or mineral mines are often insensitive to local cultures and vulnerable ecosystems, and negative impacts on local traditions or neighboring states are not taken seriously into account. This is also a major problem for the riparian states Myanmar and Bangladesh, which have minor political opportunities against the two regional hegemony, China and India. In addition, due to the political situation and the limitation of civil rights, participation is even more difficult.

The regional scope of this chapter is the Eastern Himalayan region, which includes the Northeastern Indian (NE India) states, the Chinese (SW China) province Yunnan, as well as Myanmar and Bangladesh. The thematic focus lies on the respective civil societies and its organizations, its activities, and its cross border cooperation regarding natural resources. Because the Eastern Himalayan region has commonalities beyond its national boundaries and the effects of major economical projects on the region are plenty, civil societies could especially gain additional power through transborder cooperation. This chapter deals with three particular questions: (1) Which civil society actors currently exist in the Eastern Himalayan region, working predominantly on natural resources? (2) Which cross border cooperation do already exist and which potential can be identified for establishing new and broaden existing networks between civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Eastern Himalayan region? (3) Finally, how can further successful cooperation be achieved among CSOs with regard to country specific conditions?

The chapter describes three steps for building new cooperation between non-state actors:

(1) First the existing CSOs are researched on the basis of intensive literature and internet research<sup>3</sup> as well as online interviews with experts.<sup>4</sup> The research resulted in a database with local and international CSOs, which provides a wide range of information that can be used for further cooperation.

(2) Building on the database, the second step identifies the cooperation potentials in the region. The intensity of existing cooperation across borders and their additional value for further activities are illustrated, as well as information about important characteristics of the collaborating CSOs.

(3) Step three explores four important dimensions for successful civil cooperation along with country specific information. The four dimensions law, politics, structures and communication are crucial aspects for CSO activities. Considering given limits but as well potentials, expertise can be developed, which enables long-term successful cooperation.

This way provides important tools for future work for and with NGOs and other CSOs. They offer a structured method for analyzing existing cooperation and enhancing (further) empowerment of civil society actors.

1 In following, hydroelectric power production is subsumed under the term water, though water also includes other kinds of water management or water protection.

2 The term 'wood' is used as a category for different aspects: it subsumes the natural resource wood as well as the problem of land-grabbing, nature protection and biodiversity.

3 The internet research includes databases, blogs, homepages and annual reports of CSOs, as well as governmental information.

4 Two interviews were conducted with members of NGOs in Bangladesh, one with an INGO in China and one with a NGO member in Germany, who is an expert on the Eastern Himalayan region (see questionnaire in Annex).

## 1 Building up successful cooperation between civil society organizations (CSOs)

### 1.1 Instrument 1: CSO database<sup>5</sup>

The Eastern Himalayan region is characterized by a myriad of various civil society organizations. An increasing number of CSOs tackle the issue of limiting the effects of misused natural resources, which impacts development of society and nature alike. As a response, the CSOs across the region mobilize actors of the civil society to make use of their rights and to make politicians on all levels aware of the effects of abusing natural resources. Especially the NGOs' proximity to the local level and access to the international arena enables the NGOs to have an extensive expertise for approaching an issue. This profound knowledge empowers the NGOs to use their broad repertoire of exerting an influence to hold the state and other actors accountable. Despite of the great capacities among the civil society, many CSOs hesitate in collaborating with each other.

In the first step, we compiled a database, which does not reflect a complete evaluation of the situation itself but represents a starting point for further complementing research. The database embraces numerous CSOs and their context specific characteristics. The database is also useful as an instrument for practical work, to engage with new CSOs and it facilitates in building relations, such as to cooperate with CSOs on certain natural resources, to join networks, to build synergies with INGOs or to enlarge collaborations. Before focusing on specific examples and illustrating the results of the CSO database, definitions of various CSO types are described. The identification of different CSOs helps to understand which CSO types are usually dealing with natural resources. In addition to defining CSOs, this supports a more distinguished comprehension on country specific understandings of CSOs. A table in the annex lists such different types with additional detailed explanations, additional results, such as in which country this type is common and examples are listed. The definitions have been developed during our research.

As a whole the database consists 87 national, local and international civil organizations, research bodies and several state and semi-public organizations. 37 percent of them work in the field of water management, nine percent in the rights of minorities and 54 percent in the exploitation of natural resources like forests (32 percent) and raw materials (22 percent). From this amount, 29 international organizations can be identified. They research and participate in development projects or even implement them on their own in the region of SW China, Bangladesh, NE India or Myanmar. "Climate Himalaya" is one of them. It is an international, non-state network, which has its headquarters in Uttarakhand in India and works on issues like climate change, natural disasters and sustainable water and environmental management. Besides this organization, the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Forum for Regional Cooperation (BCIM) can be mentioned. Some think tanks and state actors of these four countries are involved in this forum, which assisted the establishment of the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM EC) by the four governments in 2013.

In addition to the international CSOs the database contains 58 national and local organizations. 15 of them work in SW China, 11 in Bangladesh, 16 in NE India and 16 in Myanmar. Out of this, we identified 15 networks, which include inter alia the Burma Environmental Working Group (BEWG) and the Indian Social Action Forum (INSAF). While BEWG unites ten central NGOs in Myanmar, that are committed to the management of natural resources, the protection of human rights or the transparency in the energy sector, INSAF represents more than 600 Indian non-governmental organizations that work on similar issues. Both can, therefore, be regarded as large organizations in their countries. Along with such networks that exist in different forms in the entire Eastern Himalayan region, the database lists numerous single NGOs that work on specific topics. In this context, the Chinese organization Green Watershed can be mentioned. It wants to enforce the integration and participation of the local population in the planning of large hydropower constructions like dams and the management of several river basins in the Kunming region. To achieve this objective, the organization implements advocacy as well as research projects. Furthermore, it does not only work together with other local partners, but also cooperates with NGOs

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5 The database is publicly available and can be downloaded under <http://tiny.cc/2440cx>.

from other states in Eastern Himalaya. One of these is Salween Watch from Myanmar that is similarly interested in environmental protection and the reduction of dam projects.

While it is possible to extract detailed information on such leading non-state as well as government related INGOs and networks that are working on ethnic minorities and the management of natural resources in Eastern Himalaya, the usefulness of the database becomes evident. It can be used as an instrument for building up cooperation between development organizations and for identifying potential partners in this region. In this context, the listed INGOs can play a crucial role. They are potential direct partners, but can also be seen as intermediaries that are able to link different local or international organizations with each other by using their networking skills. Following this, they form the basis for new cooperation and therefore can be catalysts for the creation and implementation of new projects.

## 1.2 Instrument 2: Cooperation potential

Cooperation between different non-state actors is not completely unusual in the Eastern Himalayan region. This chapter refers to the aforementioned investigation on active CSOs in the Eastern Himalayan region. The table “cooperation in the Eastern Himalayan region” (see below) accumulates the results of the CSO database and aims to illustrate two aspects: *Firstly*, it gives an overview of existing and missing cross-border cooperation between local CSOs, which work in Bangladesh, SW China, NE India or Myanmar. The focus lies on cross-border cooperation between CSOs from two different countries. Cooperation between two actors was identified when the CSOs organize a common event (e. g. workshop, panel discussion) or linked each other on their websites. Dark grey colored squares indicate that at least one cross-border cooperation was investigated. White colored squares show that our research has given no results regarding non-state cooperation. *Secondly*, the table of cooperation shows the amount of INGOs which operate across borders and are having projects in one of the Eastern Himalayan countries.

The table of cooperation is deduced from the local NGOs and INGOs in the generated database. Obviously, an INGO can work in several countries simultaneously, e. g. the WWF, Climate Himalaya or ICIMOD. These international actors are especially important because of their potential function as intermediaries that interconnect local CSOs in various countries. INGOs have the personnel and financial capacity to fulfill this role, and are therefore able to offer a platform, e. g. in form of workshops and conferences, where interested partners have the opportunity to share their knowledge with each other. The most important results of each country are summed up below.

**Table 1: Cooperation in the Eastern Himalayan Region**

Countries	Cross-border Cooperations of Local Actors				Amount of International Actors
	Bangladesh	China	India	Myanmar	
Bangladesh					11
China					21
India					17
Myanmar					11

*Bangladesh.* All in all, the civil society in Bangladesh is very active and consists of various local NGOs that are mainly financed by foreign donors (Asian Development Bank, 2008). They carry out almost as many activities as the state and are quite autonomous. Primarily, research institutes and think tanks in NE India and Bangladesh cooperate with one another. Relations between the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) and the two Indian organizations Development Alternatives (DA) and the Centre for Environmental Education (CEE) have been analyzed. Sharing knowledge and presenting new research results are the main aims of this cooperation. However, establishing contact with Chinese NGOs is still a challenge. As one interviewee from a Bangladeshi NGO said, ideas of working methods and the understanding of civil society are frequently at odds with each other. Our investigation has not found any cooperation with CSOs from Bangladesh’s neighbor Myanmar.

*China.* According to our database, there are no SW Chinese CSOs that cooperate with NGOs from NE India or Bangladesh. A potential for more cooperation between SW China, NE India and Bangladesh is

obvious. In the aforementioned interview, it has been explained that cooperation with Chinese GONGOs is especially complicated. GONGOs are working on national and social topics but often act according to the state's ideology. This is contradictory to a common self-conception of NGOs outside China as an opposing power to state control. This makes cooperation with Chinese GONGOs difficult and to get in contact with Chinese NGOs is also not easy. Many members of the older Chinese NGOs have worked in the former state's administration and have still strong ties to the apparatus of the state.<sup>6</sup> We have investigated the cooperation between the Chinese NGO Green Watershed and Salween Watch, a NGO from Myanmar. This could be a good model for further cooperation. Salween Watch is especially very well connected to INGOs, like Earth Rights International, International Rivers Network and Burma Rivers Network.

*India.* There exist cooperation between Indian and Bangladeshi CSOs in the field of scientific research, which sometimes are also funded by the state. Think tanks and research institutes share their knowledge with each other regarding topics related to natural resources and climate change. For example, the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), a public interest research and advocacy organization conducts and implements workshops, seminars and training programs, inter alia with Wateraid Bangladesh, the Bangladesh Institute of Planners as well as other non-state and state actors. A reason for this kind of highly qualitative cross-border cooperation lies, among other aspects, in the culture of the country itself. Social commitment is part of the Indian culture;<sup>7</sup> this might explain the high number of NGOs which are working on almost every political and social topic. On the other hand, the relations to Myanmar and China on a civil society level could be broadened. The already mentioned Shwe Gas Movement, which works out of Thailand with activities mainly in Myanmar, also has counterparts and members in India. The NGO Aaranyak with its office in Guwahati (Assam) contributes research towards the protection and management of biodiversity in the Eastern Himalayan region and works hand in hand with CSOs from Bangladesh, China and Myanmar.

*Myanmar.* All in all, few cooperation have been investigated, like the already mentioned cooperation of Green Watershed, Salween Watch and Shwe Gas Movement. The civil society in Myanmar consists of a huge traditional part and a smaller modern part. The traditional civil society in Myanmar is mostly represented by faith-based organizations that are led by monks. Since 2011, when the democratization process in Myanmar started, the modern civil society has gained self-confidence and is seen by western INGOs as a potential, open-minded cooperation partner.<sup>8</sup> Interesting results of the investigation were the well-linked networks in Myanmar. The Burma Environmental Working Group (BEWG) functions as an umbrella organization for other networks and CSOs in Myanmar with focus on the sustainable use of natural resources. Different types of members belong to this network, e. g. the aforementioned Shwe Gas Movement, the NGO Arakan Oil Watch – which applies political pressure through research, awareness-building and their public relation department – but also the CBO network Bridging Rural Integrated Development and Grassroots Empowerment (BRIDGE) with environmental projects supporting initiatives on a local level in Kachin state. The networking function of BEWG could serve as a starting point for interconnecting more CSOs with each other, especially across borders. Myanmar particularly lacks a higher amount of research institutes that focus on the sustainable use of natural resources and biodiversity.

In conclusion, a high potential for cooperation among CSOs in the Eastern Himalayan region can be identified. Think tanks and other research institutes have the possibility to build up relations to the existing cross-border cooperation between NE India and Bangladesh. Further expertise from new actors could bring an additional value for these existing collaborations and would be beneficial for all actors. In every country, active local CSOs working on natural resources have been investigated. Some of them are already interconnected, but many still do not have cross-border cooperation partnerships. An exchange of knowledge and different working methods could encourage synergies for the region. But for building up new networks and strengthening existing ones, country-specific conditions also play a crucial role.

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6 Hsu 2010: 273.

7 Kuhn 2006: 1.

8 IrinNews 2011.

### 1.3 Instrument 3: Framework conditions

Knowledge about the status quo of cross-border cooperation is the basis for further activities. However, it is also important to know about the country-specific conditions regarding CSOs if cross-border cooperation are to be built. Certain country-specific limitations, advantages and commonalities have to be taken into account. For this purpose, four dimensions to cover the most important aspects are useful. Firstly, the *legal dimension* was examined, which deals with aspects of registration, monitoring or evaluation of CSOs as well as other laws that influence civil participation. The second dimension is the *political dimension* and covers aspects such as the relationship between state and society and ways of political participation of local communities. The third dimension is a *structural* one: it subsumes the local infrastructure and typical organizational aspects of local CSOs. The final dimension covers all kinds of *communicational aspects*: what has to be considered if a CSO is being contacted, what kind of specific cultural aspects have to be considered. In the following, these four dimensions are surveyed relating to each country.

#### 1.3.1 Bangladesh

The NGO sector in Bangladesh is one of the largest in the world. In 2011 more than 220,000 registered NGOs were counted, which also included religious and charitable institutions.<sup>9</sup> The NGOs are established and registered under Societies Registration Act of 1869, Trust Act of 1982, the Companies Act of 1913, The Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Regulation and Control) 1960 and with the Foreign Donations (Voluntary Agencies) Registration Ordinance 1982. It requires that organizations are not only financed by foreign funds, but also provide annual reports on foreign funded projects. The registration takes place at the NGO Affairs Bureau (NAB) which is attached to the office of the Prime Minister. With the NAB, the government is trying to control some areas of NGO activities, and therefore, every single project has to be applied to the NAB. Due to the shortage of human resources in the NAB, the processing of applications takes up a long time and this causes dissatisfaction among the NGOs. In the event of an infringement the registration can be revoked. The government supports the activities of NGOs as long as they are not in political fields and not against the government. However, the Bangladeshi NGOs are advanced and organized and tend to direct criticism and movements against the government when their work is related. One cannot necessarily assume that the government does not interfere. Although the state has declared its support of NGOs, it is a fact that many projects will not be approved and thus conflicts arise. Furthermore, there are strict rules concerning travel. For instance, each organization must obtain permission from the authorities to take part in regional events. In the areas of gender discrimination, the disabled and the disadvantaged as well as countless other areas, the state and NGOs try to work complementary.

The majority of the population in Bangladesh are Muslims, followed by Hindus, Buddhists, and a small percentage of Christians. Although religions may be practiced freely, it is important to be sensitive in this regard. In the local greetings it is not common to shake hands, unless it is a business partner. Despite this, men should avoid shaking hands of females. Also, there are certain places where it is advisable to follow the dress code. Moreover, corruption is one of the most important problems in Bangladesh and in the NGO landscape. On the Corruption Perceptions Index 2011 of Transparency International, Bangladesh is ranked on 120 out of 182 countries. Furthermore, the underdeveloped infrastructure in Bangladesh is an important point which has to be noted when seeking cooperation. The poor road conditions, the insufficient power supply and the low level of education are some of the main obstacles NGOs have to deal with. Except the executives, NGO employees scarcely have a high level of education or university degrees. In addition, it is always important to develop a personal relationship and build trust, before discussion business proposal is appropriate. Bangladeshis are proud of their culture and their language. In this respect showing appreciation and support by learning a few sentences in their local language is an asset. All these aspects and determining factors should be considered and are essential for building a long-term and dynamic cooperation.

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9 Zingel 2013.

### 1.3.2 China

During the reform process in China, new possibilities and needs for civil engagement arose with the withdrawal of the state from many social issues.<sup>10</sup> The Ministry of Civil Affairs (MOCA) identifies three categories of CSOs: Social organizations, private non-enterprise units and foundations.<sup>11</sup> CSOs in China are often organized as GONGOs like the All-China Women's Federation. They play an important role in Chinese society, as they function as a connection between state and society and typically have a close relationship with the state.<sup>12</sup> However, the focus in this chapter lies on genuine civilian forms of CSOs like grassroots NGOs, regarding the aim of civil empowerment in order to oppose large-scale projects by the government. The legal system in China limits the diversification of CSOs through different kinds of restrictions, like the limitation of one organization per topic, or the zoning of the working area on the province, where the organization is registered. To become registered, a CSO has to be sponsored by the government, the party or a mass organization. Additionally, financing is restricted and only the government and a few GONGOs are allowed to raise funds.<sup>13</sup>

The Chinese state supports civil engagement, not in the sense of individual rights but as the strengthening of collective rights – mainly through mass organizations. The term NGO is often mentioned in a negative relation to destabilization and external influence on Chinese society. In contrast, an INGO is much more accepted when it cooperates with an existing Chinese partner instead of working on its own – like Greenpeace who is registered as a scientific institute at a university. CSOs fulfill important tasks in the field of social welfare and are supported by the state. But often, they are not allowed to articulate sensitive political topics. Besides, the cooperation with state or semi-governmental activists is seen as an important factor regarding the efficiency of CSOs. Instead of confronting the state, the CSOs often work closely with the state and maintain close ties to the authorities.<sup>14</sup> It is also expected that CSOs prove their efficiency and act proactively in reporting.

If we look at the NGO landscape in Yunnan, we can see a growing confidence in their work which goes along with a growing expertise. This became especially evident after the Sichuan earthquake in 2008.<sup>15</sup> Since the 1990s, grassroots NGOs are becoming more active. But still, many NGOs are not registered at all and therefore do not have any legal protection; some use the label of an enterprise unit to work in China – e. g. the WWF.<sup>16</sup> Established Chinese NGOs and their internal structures are shaped by founders who came from governmental organizations. However, the younger generations of NGOs are often more classical grassroots NGOs. This influences their way of work and their ability for cooperation. As mentioned above, cross-border cooperation is not easy with Chinese organizations because of their close relation to the state, but also because of their focus on Chinese topics and the limitation to specific social issues. Therefore, it is important to identify common problems and the additional value of a regional cooperation. And, instead of taking a position of opposing the state, it may be helpful to partner with governmental organizations and to establish contacts with officeholders.<sup>17</sup>

In the last aspect regarding communication, it is important to consider the cultural background. Long-term and personal relationships are viewed as valuable – while on the other hand short and superficial contacts are not. Other important aspects are the principle of seniority and to maintain honor and dignity. To deepen one's relationship, it is common to spend time at business dinners, to get to know each other more personally, and to bring gifts. Only on a long-term basis of trust, contacts are seen as reliable.<sup>18</sup>

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10 Hsu 2010: 159, Yang 2005: 47.

11 Shieh/Deng 2011: 183.

12 Xie 2009: 30.

13 Lehrack 2004: 12, Shieh/Deng 2011: 184.

14 Hsu 2010: 267, Shieh/Deng 2011: 186.

15 Shieh/Deng 2011: 194.

16 Deng 2010, Shieh/Brown-Inz 2013: 4.

17 Shieh/Deng 2011: 186, Lehrack 2004: 12.

18 Heberer/Senz 2013: 58.

### 1.3.3 Northeast India

Social commitment can be seen as a central value of Indian society. Therefore, it is not astonishing that official claims of the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs refer to a number of 1.2 million NGOs which are registered in the country.<sup>19</sup> Although it now could be supposed that the Indian NGO sector can develop freely and without any control, the activities of civil organizations are strongly observed by the state administration. The Indian government uses several political and legal instruments<sup>20</sup> of which the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FRCA) is one of the most effective one to prove intentions of NGOs and to collect data from them. Originally enacted to prevent the funding of subversive organizations, the FRCA obligates all NGOs to register at the Ministry of Home Affairs and to submit audited annual accounts and details of each financial transfer from foreign partners. In addition to this financial control, Indian NGOs have to accept numerous guidelines which, inter alia, do not allow them to criticize political issues in public or to publish magazines or newspapers with political comments.<sup>21</sup> Relying on these aspects, the situation in Northeast India is even more complex. Here, the central government has proclaimed several areas like states of Assam and Nagaland as well as parts of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Tripura as “disturbed”. This status leads to a limitation of human rights like the freedom of assembly, and gives the Indian army special powers.<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, the relationship between the state administration and NGOs has improved in the last decades. Despite the aforementioned difficulties, their cooperation on sensible issues like child labor, corruption and the rights of women could be deepened. This circumstance should not belie the fact that several NGO projects on these topics repeatedly lead to conflicts between state authorities and civil organizations.<sup>23</sup>

As previously described, legal and political conditions in India and the Northeastern region have to be considered in the process of cooperating with and contacting potential Indian partner NGOs. Moreover, local particularities and cultural characteristics also have to be taken into account. The infrastructure, especially the road, rail and internet sector, is not highly developed in the Northeastern region or in most of the rural areas. Nevertheless, these sectors improved in the context of India’s “Look East” policy. The internet market presently has a growth rate of 30 percent.<sup>24</sup> Even if a large amount of NGOs in Northeast India can be contacted via E-mail, it cannot be guaranteed that the process of contacting a potential partner organization will become easier. Direct contact and personal relations are quite important. Regarding this, it is not unusual that E-mails or written requests from an unknown person are not answered the first time.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to visit a potential partner to have a deeper contact and to build up long-term cooperation. Another characteristic of Indian culture is a flexible attitude to time, where it is not always impolite to be late at an arranged meeting.

### 1.3.4 Myanmar

The conditions for cooperation with NGOs in Myanmar are mainly influenced by political aspects of democratization, which are important to know if new cooperation is aimed at. The choice of the cooperation partner is especially crucial for the possible success or failure of cooperation. Myanmar’s civil society consists of a variety of different organizations.

The military junta institutionalized the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) 1988 as the country’s main GONGO, which complies with the Chinese concept of GONGOs. It still exists and deals with various topics. Its employees are former members of the military government. Another organizational form in Myanmar is that of professional organizations. They are similar to the organiza-

19 Jalali 2008: 8.

20 These include, inter alia, the Societies Registration Act (1860), the Indian Trusts Act (1882), the Charitable and the Religious Act (1920). Additionally, NGOs as well as charity foundations can register under section 25 of the Companies Act (1956) at the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs.

21 Jalali 2008: 8.

22 Armed Forces Special Powers Act (1958: section 4).

23 Kuhn 2006: 3.

24 Auswärtiges Amt 2013.

25 Opiel 2008: 1–2.



tional and personal structure of GONGOs but differ in that they are experts in just one topic. Because of their well-connected members, professional organizations have a high potential for mass mobilization in Myanmar. The Myanmar Health Assistant Association consists of members of the state's health ministry, but like other professional organizations they do not call themselves GONGOs. The competition with non-state activists is quite imbalanced because GONGOs are preferred by the state's financial contribution.

Non-state organizations either belong to the traditional civil society or to the smaller modern civil society. The main part of traditional civil society are represented by faith-based organizations (FBOs), whose number increased significantly after the military junta's prohibition of social movements in 1964.<sup>26</sup> FBOs enjoy a high reputation among the population, which is why they are almost never criticized in public. There is a huge amount of Buddhist initiatives, but Christian, Muslim and Hinduist ones can also be found. They take on the job of welfare tasks in the health and education system and have expansive nationwide networks. Their attitude is rather conservative as they do not work on topics regarding sexual health for example. Associations are focused on social and religious topics, they have well established organizational structures and some of them have existed since before the colonial history, whereas the modern local NGOs were founded in the last two decades. They are often dependent on international donors. CBOs are mainly civil grassroots organizations that work voluntarily. Volunteers come from their local community and dedicate their work for the beneficiaries. Examples could be microcredit groups or committees on rural development. INGOs usually offer training, credits and funds. International donors usually prefer working with modern CSOs because of their "open-mindedness" and their commonalities with western standards. But, on the other hand, religious CSOs are already well-connected and have a high potential influence on the local level. Their opinion is highly respected, which is why the traditional CSOs should especially be taken into account as cooperation partner. As Walter Davis, program manager for Paung Ku, a consortium of international and local organizations to strengthen civil society in Myanmar stated correctly: "Myanmar has a long history of using accountability mechanisms related to religious donations, with Buddhist monks playing a key check and balance role. Strengthening these existing frameworks may ultimately be more effective in building accountability than continuing to use imported concepts."<sup>27</sup>

## 2 Conclusion and recommendation

This chapter particularly focused on cooperation and networks, predominantly among non-profit orientated activists in the civil society in the Eastern Himalayan region. In this context, the question was raised of how to achieve greater cross-border cooperation among the civil society actors, dealing with the extraction of natural resources and its impacts on society and nature alike. Using the three practicable instruments, effective information on the potential of civil society cooperation can be gathered.

Along with the financial significance of natural resources in the Eastern Himalayan region for the economy, the increasing expertise and activities of the civil society is noteworthy. Civil society often opposes large-scale projects from the state, which wishes to predominantly accommodate economic interests. In every country various CSOs use a wide range of activities as entry points into discussions and into policies to inform the responsible actors about the consequences of their decisions.

Referring to the instruments, the database identifies activities of CSOs on the topic of natural resources within the national borders of the countries. Large NGOs as well as INGOs act as intermediaries for local NGOs in order to work in a win-win cooperation. While INGOs offer access to knowledge, financial and personnel capacities, local CSOs can offer access to the local population, cultural knowledge and legitimacy, as well as accountability.<sup>28</sup>

Furthermore, the second instrument 'Cooperation Potentials' signifies that most of CSO activities are concentrated on the local and provincial level and barely take place on the national or international lev-

26 Kramer 2011: 8–9.

27 IrinNews 2011.

28 Hsu 2010: 259.

el. Thus, it is less likely to observe coherent cross-border collaborations in the form of institutionalized networks. The lack of cooperation is not necessarily a sign of insufficient capacities but rather a result of lacking mutual knowledge. Positive signs of synergies are registered between local NGOs who are close at the borders of the respective other country.

Finally, the third instrument – the country-specific conditions – offers the respective knowledge about difficulties due to cultural and communicational differences, as well as legal and political discrepancy. Using this knowledge can pave the way for new successful cooperation. Above all, sensitivity for cultural considerations pays off and gives networks a chance to develop. Considering the third instrument helps to empower CSOs to take the chance for cooperation.

*Recommendations.* Cross-border networks are exceptions rather than the norm, but the Eastern Himalayan region holds a big potential. The analysis clearly calls for sharing knowledge among the CSOs in order to empower a civil society which is equipped with a full reservoir of expertise and which is sensitized for political and cultural aspects of its neighboring partners. Using this knowledge, the Eastern Himalayan civil society can be a strong voice for the marginalized. This could be achieved through using INGOs as intermediaries and building up new networks on the basis of existing CSO capacities. Besides, in some cases, the degree of CSOs' impact can be expanded and deepened sustainably if the CSOs' activities complement, rather than provoke, politics.

The three instruments are not complete. Moreover, they need to be developed continuously for the steady identification of new potentials. The Eastern Himalaya's CSO landscape is getting off the starting blocks for more collaborative synergies.

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## Annex: Types of Civil Society Organizations

CSO type	Details	BD	CH	IN	MY
<b>CBO</b> (community-based organisation)	A NGO that operates within a single local community	-	1	1	2
Example:	Bridging Rural Integrated Development and Grassroots Empowerment (BRIDGE) (Myanmar), Yunnan Mountain Heritage Foundation (China)				
<b>DIS</b> (Department/ Institute of Science)	An institute with scientific working groups dealing (scientifically) on issues and which are embedded at a university.	1	1	-	-
Example:	Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies				
<b>FBO</b> (faith-based organisation)	A NGO based on religious beliefs.	-	-	-	1
Example:	Pa-Oh Youth Organization (PYO) (Myanmar)				
<b>GONGO</b> (governmental non-governmental organisation)	A GONGO is a NGO with governmental influences. The influence can be a financial one, in the decision-making process by people from the government on the board, or the organisation is fully accountable to a governmental body. Thus, GONGOs are not solely run by the civil society and are not comparable with the “western” understanding of NGOs (see NGO). They are attached to the current government.	-	-	1	-
Example:	Friends of Nature (China)				
<b>INGO</b> (international non-governmental organisation)	A NGO operating across borders and having projects in at least one other country ( <i>one INGO can operate in all the countries of the region</i> ).	11	21	17	11
Example:	Bridging Rural Integrated Development and Grassroots Empowerment (BRIDGE) (Myanmar) and Yunnan Mountain Heritage Foundation (China)				
<b>Network/UBO</b> (umbrella organisation)	An institutionalised collaboration of different NGO types working for a common aim by using the different available capacities.	5	2	2	6
Example:	Indian Social Action Forum (India), Burma Environmental Working Group (BEWG) (Myanmar)				
<b>NGO</b> (non-governmental organisation)	A NGO is solely run by the civil society and indifferent from political interests in the country it operates. NGOs are financially relying on themselves and they finance their projects by donations or by the help from the ministry through a specific proposal. Thus, NGOs are accountable to their members and their donors. NGOs are not profit-orientated and mostly based on voluntary work.	3	8	11	6
Example:	Arakan Oil Watch (Myanmar), Coastal Development Partnership (CDP) (Bangladesh)				
<b>SM</b> (social movement)	A large, informal group of individuals or organisations, campaigning for a social issue.	-	-	-	1
Example:	Save the Mekong (Myanmar)				
<b>SO</b> (social organisations)	A Chinese understanding of an NGO (see NGO).	-	2	-	-
Example:	Volunteers' Association for the Protection of Black-Necked Cranes (China)				
<b>TT</b> (Think tank)	An institution with scientific working groups that uses the scientifically elaborated issue for political consultancy.	-	1	-	-
Example:	Yunnan Health and Development Research Association (China)				
<b>VO</b> (voluntary organisations)	A Bangladeshi understanding of an NGO (see NGO).	2	-	-	-
Example:	Surjodoy Somaj Unnayan Foundation				

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