Introduction

- Approximately 5% of the Nu-Salween River basin lies within Thailand.
- The Salween River forms a 120 km border between Thailand and Myanmar. The border is also partly formed of the Moei River.
- The Salween National Park and Salween Wildlife sanctuary located on river.
- The history of the Salween River and the various plans is also partly a history of Thailand-Myanmar relations.
- We identify four pathways for Thailand.

Centralized power sector and large hydropower dams pathway

- Thailand’s electricity utility, EGAT argues that Thailand needs to secure more electricity because current supplies are insufficient to meet future demand and RE and EE are unreliable.

Method

- Indepth interviews:
  - Government agencies
    - Office of Natural resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP)
    - Department of Water Resources (MONRE)
    - Ministry of Energy
    - National Human Rights Commission of Thailand
  - Civil Society
    - Community Resource Centre
    - Earth Rights International
    - International Rivers
    - Mekong Energy and Ecology Network
    - Legal Advocacy Center for Indigenous Communities
  - Academics
    - Energy Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University
- Community research
  - Baan Sop Moei, Baan Mae Samlaep, and Tha Ta Fang villages
- Extensive literature review
  - Existing studies
  - Policy analysis

Thailand Salween pathways

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Large dams for water transfer pathway

- The Royal Irrigation Department proposes that water transfer from the Salween to Chaophraya river basins can mitigate water scarcity (drought) there.

Decentralized and renewable energy pathway

- Some civil society and academics have proposed that Thailand can prioritize demand-side management, energy efficiency and renewable energy to ensure the country's energy security.
- Thailand Ministry of Energy has an Alternative Energy Development Plan (2015-2036) which aims for 19,600 MW by 2036

Local livelihoods and human rights pathway

- Civil society groups and communities in Thailand have emphasized their desire to work with the government around a range of issues, including related to statelessness, support for local development initiatives, and their relationship with the national park and wildlife sanctuary.
  - Riparian communities have also opposed the Salween River dams.
  - The Thai National Human Rights Commission investigated and recommended the Salween dams be suspended.

Summary: Which path to take?

- We have identified four pathways for the Salween within Thailand:
  - Large hydropower dam pathway
  - Decentralized electricity pathway
  - Water diversion pathway
  - Local livelihoods and human rights pathway

- There is currently fragmentation between approaches and institutions including related to:
  - peace and security;
  - decentralization and community participation;
  - the Paris Agreement on climate change

- There is an opportunity now to “open up” and “broaden out” the decision-making on the Salween River to recognize and deliberate the multiple pathways that exist.
Thank you for listening

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