Rites and Rights:
Contrasting Visions and Local Initiatives

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Background of Salween

- **Salween** (China, Thailand and Myanmar)
- **Site of massive human rights violations and displacement from civil war**
- **World-class ecosystem integrity and biodiversity**
- **Great indigenous knowledge and heritage**
Rites and Rights as conceptual framework

- “Rights-based approach” is a formalized and legalistic approach to water governance normally recognized by the state.
- “Rites-based approach” is a locally-defined natural resource management approach that centers around cultural norms and local knowledge.
Objective of the Study is to highlight the need to recognize and promote “Rites” when engaging with the “Rights” approach.
A range of visions – or “pathways” – exist for the future of the Salween River reflecting on “Rites” and “Rights”

- Salween large dams big hydropower now, peace will follow
- Salween local solutions Peace and political settlement first, then truly sustainable local development
- Electricity generation, ranging from large dams to decentralized and renewable energy
- National parks and peace parks, for environmental conservation and ecotourism
- Regional economic integrations for national economic growth, and/or local approaches for local economies
Salween local solutions pathway
(Using Rites and Rights Approach)

• Moratorium on large dams
• Indigenous managed conservation areas
• Renewable energy for local electrification
• Sustainable economic initiatives
Strengthen Community-Based Water Governance (CBWG) mechanisms and models – the "Downstream Model"

• To support community-based water resources governance (CBWG) mechanisms for the protection of Salween River Basin areas.

• KESAN strongly supports a bottoms-up approach to river basin development and decision-making processes.
Community Learning Process towards Community Resource Management Plan
The Salween Peace Park
An innovative new protected area called Salween Peace Park, a vision for an indigenous Karen landscape for peace, biodiversity protection and cultural survival and protect the Salween River
POWERING UP HOMES AND COMMUNITIES
in Karen and Mon States

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Note to NGOs and CSOs
This brochure is intended to serve as resource for NGOs and CSO representatives in your work to raise awareness among communities in Karen and Mon States about the current energy situation in Myanmar, and the effects the government’s proposed plans have on the land, health and human rights of the communities. Information in this brochure will hopefully provide communities with knowledge and awareness of the different existing options to access electricity and should be considered a complement to larger campaigns against harmful development projects, such as mega hydropower dams, special economic zones, and gas- and coal-fired power plants. The brochure gives a brief overview of alternative energy forms. It is not intended to provide the reader with a detailed description of how these alternative energy forms function or how they can be installed.
Key Policy Recommendations

1. Recommend suspension of large-scale hydropower dam projects on the Salween River until formal peace agreements are reached.

2. Recognition of traditional and customary land practices of indigenous people by the Union government.

3. Local communities recognized as key stakeholders in decision making and implementation processes for development projects.

4. Reform of current national laws and regulations based on the principles of freedom, equal rights and self-determination, strictly adhered to by all stakeholders in development projects.
Thank You!

Salween, Not for Sale!

Salween means food for us!

Salween means livelihood for us!

Salween is our lifeblood!