

A wide river at sunset with a person in the water. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with wispy clouds. The river is calm, and a person is visible in the water near the shore. The overall scene is serene and peaceful.

# INFORMAL DIPLOMACY IN BRAHMAPUTRA RIVER BASIN

*CAN IT BE AN ENTRY POINT TO TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION?*

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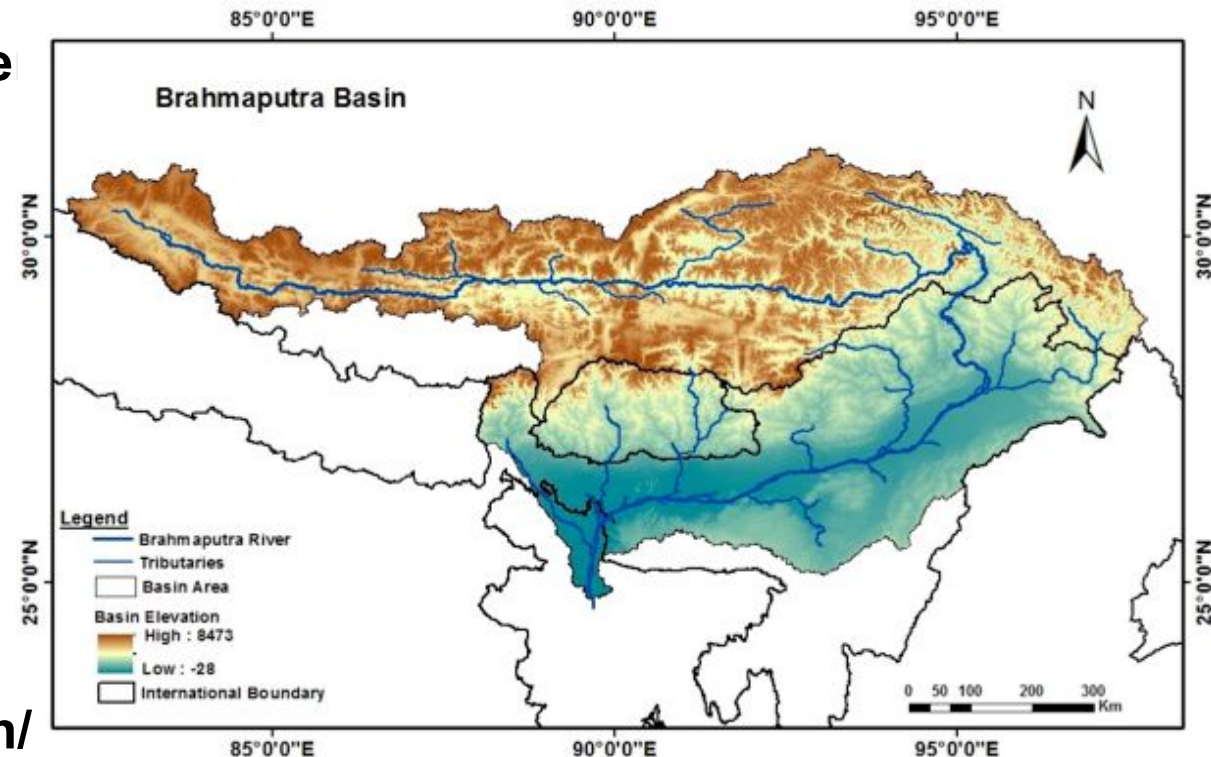
**Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, India**

# Yarlung – Zangpo – Brahmaputra – Jamuna River Basin (Brahmaputra River Basin )

- Shared by China, India, Bhutan and Bangladesh
- The 6<sup>th</sup> largest river in the world in terms of water resource
- Immense potential for regional development

## key challenges are

- Regional geopolitics
- Mistrust, suspicion, lack of communication
- Failure to identify opportunities of cooperation/ cost of non-cooperation
- Lack of institutional capacity



# What does Transboundary Cooperation means?

*(coordination between states, where they collaborate to achieve common interests with mutual benefits )*

- What are the common interests, who decides?
- What precisely can be the entry point of such cooperation?
- Can informal transboundary dialogues and diplomacy be an entry point of cooperation ?
- Are state the only and most important actors in international relations?

Formal Dialogues  
in  
Brahmaputra have  
not yielded many  
results so far

- **Why?**

- direct mutual benefits from the water resources
- diverse national interests of the riparian countries

- **Challenge ?**

- driven by the political moods of the riparian countries
- an official process of transboundary interactions
- complex and inherently political process

# Informal diplomacy in Brahmaputra River Basin

- **What?**
  - communication at different tracks and between different actors
  - Identify avenues of cooperation
  - broadening the definition of “cooperation”.
- **How?**
  - civil society collaborations on transboundary concerns
  - joint research by academics for knowledge creation
  - joint stories by media personnel for the river basin.
- **Why?**
  - build trust between multiple stakeholders sharing the same rivers
  - create socio-political environments that enable potential “formal” cooperation

## Brahmaputra River Symposium - 2017

2015-2017  
Track 3,  
2 and 1.5



Multilateral and  
Multi-  
stakeholder

## Phase II (2015-2017)

2014-2015  
Track 3  
and 2



Multilateral and  
Multi-stakeholder

2013-2014  
Track 3

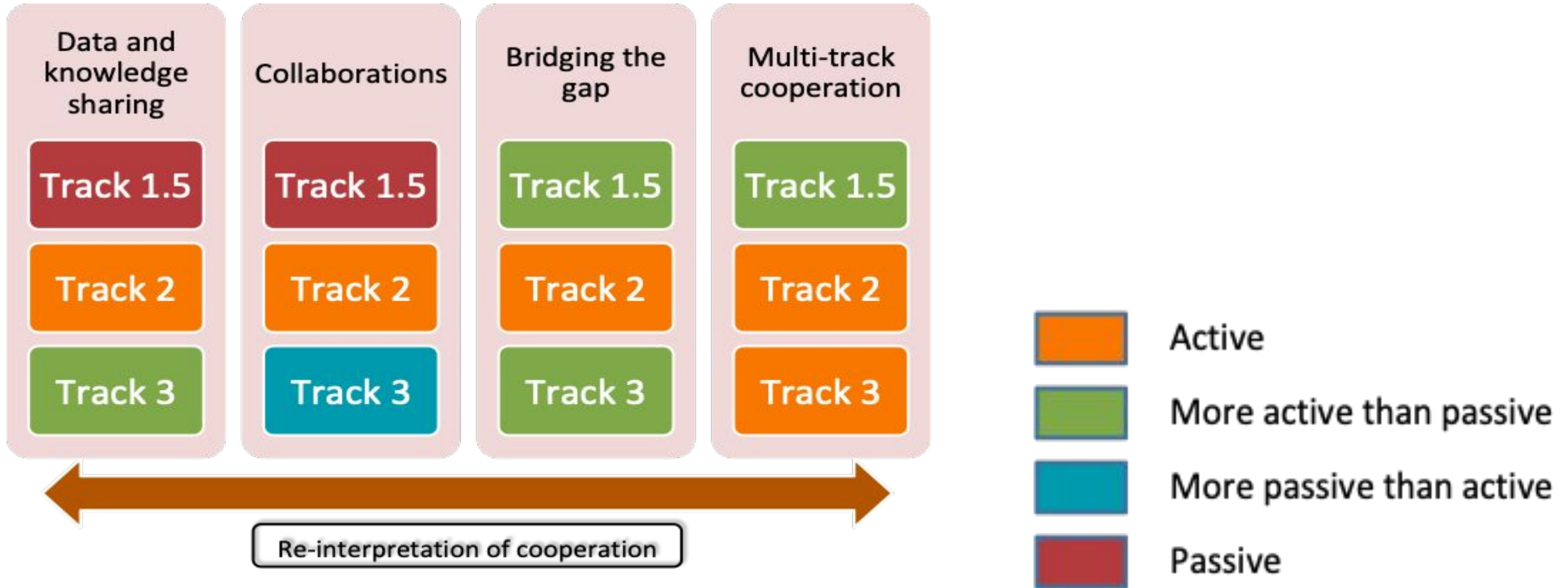


Bilateral

## Phase 1 (2013-2015)

Moving from informal  
to a formal process -  
**Brahmaputra  
Dialogue**

# Common Themes and Common Interest



# Challenges

- *Generating Political willingness*
- *Sustainability of the dialogue*
- *Gender ( women voices)*





# Entry point of cooperation in Brahmaputra River Basin

*"Multi stakeholder collaboration is already paving the way in the Brahmaputra Basin and can be seen as an entry point of cooperation among the Brahmaputra Basin countries"*

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*Thank you !*

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