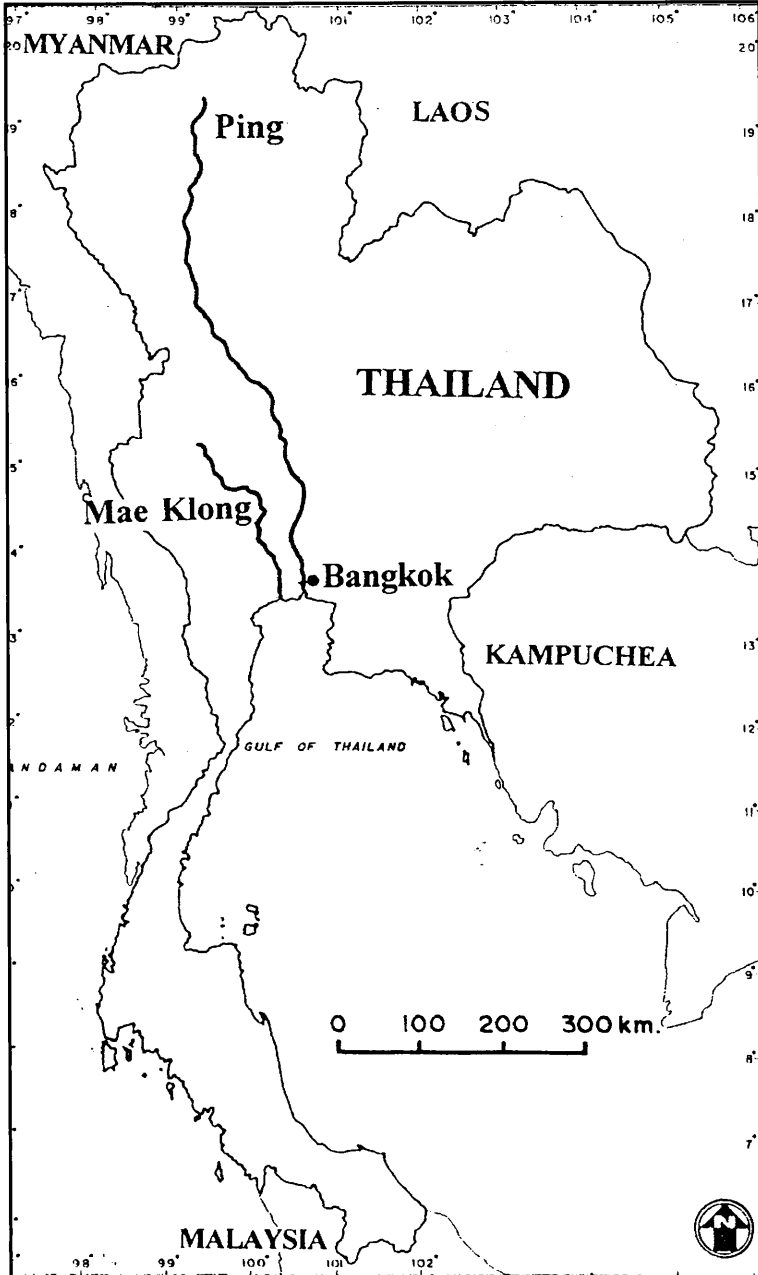


Thailand

Thailand-1: Mae Nam Ping

Thailand-2: Mae Nam Mae Klong



Introduction

Thailand is situated in the tropical monsoon zone of Southeast Asia and covers an area of 513 115 km² from latitudes 5° 30' to 21° N and longitudes 97° to 105° 30' E. The country is bounded on the west and north-west by Myanmar, on the north-east and east by Laos, on the south-east by Kampuchea and the Gulf of Thailand, and on the south by Malaysia. Thailand has maximum dimensions of about 2 500 km north to south and 1 250 km east to west, with a coastline of approximately 1 840 km on the Gulf of Thailand and 865 km along the Indian Ocean. The topographic features of Thailand comprise three main types of land forms: highlands, plains and plateaus. Highlands include several mountain ranges covered with forest extending from the northern part to the Peninsula through the entire western length. The coastal area east of the Gulf of Thailand is another part of the highlands. The central part of the country is occupied by an extensive alluvial plain, while the north-eastern region is formed by the undulated plateau. Thailand is a warm and rather humid tropical country. The climate is monsoonal, marked by a pronounced rainy season lasting from about May to September and relatively dry season for the remainder of the year. The monsoon season rainfall is around 90 per cent of the annual rainfall. The mean annual precipitation is 1 400 mm varying from 1 100 mm in the north-east Plateau to over 1 800 mm in the south Peninsula. The population in 1994 was 59 095 419.

The two rivers catalogued in this volume are the Ping and Mae Klong. They are the representative rivers in which the river flow is governed by the south-west monsoon. The Ping River is one of the main tributaries of the Chao Phraya River with origin in the northern mountainous watersheds. It flows southward and joins the Nan River at Nakhon Sawan where the Chao Phraya is formed. The basin experiences floods due to irregularity in seasonal distributions of rainfall. A major reservoir and a number of small irrigation weirs have been constructed in the basin. The Mae Klong River is the major water resource in the western region. It originates in the north-west mountainous watersheds. The basin is hydrogeologically divided into two parts, the upper and the lower. The upper part is a mountainous region traversed by the Kwaie Noi and Kwaie Yai rivers. The lower part is the flood plain extending from the confluence of Kwaie Noi and Kwaie Yai rivers to as far as the Gulf of Thailand. A major reservoir and a number of small barrages/weirs have also been constructed in the basin.

Acknowledgements

A working group was established for the preparation of the catalogue of rivers, where a number of government agencies and individuals collaborated. The working group consisted of:

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 Department of Mineral Resources, and
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