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Geographical range

Amazing Species: Giant Pangasius

Giant Pangasius, *Pangasius sanitwongsei*, is listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. One of the largest freshwater fish in the world, it inhabits main river sections of the Chao Phraya and Mekong rivers basins in Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam and possibly China (Yunnan province).

Threats to this catfish species include overfishing, pollution, habitat fragmentation and possible decline in their prey. Recent plans to construct mainstream dams on the Mekong, most notably the Xayaburi dam in northern Laos, represent a significant new threat. The Xayaburi dam site is critical habitat for the species and dam construction could disrupt migratory and spawning behaviour by altering water flow and cues to migration, block upstream spawning migrations, and slow downstream dispersal.

The threat status of Giant Pangasius necessitates regulation of harvest until the ecology, habitat and population status is better understood. Further research on the behaviour of this species is needed due to the lack of knowledge on migratory pathways and spawning habitat. A management plan based on ecology, conservation status and threats should be developed, together with freshwater protected areas to decrease fishing pressure.

Knowledge
Experts
Action
Get Involved



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