

## Headwaters

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To arrive at the top of the Sixaola River Basin, the “Cordillera de Talamanca”, is no easy feat. According to residents, people who don’t live there—called *sicua* in Bríbrí—don’t typically even make the attempt.



### HEADWATERS OF THE COEN RIVER, ALTO COEN, TALAMANCA

The headwaters, where the rivers are born, boost themselves with a series of 100 foot *cascadas* (waterfalls) and throngs of playfully packed electric blue morpho butterflies (*Morpho achilles*), each the size of your face, that bounce like a silk ribbon off the mist, as they dance in upward-spirals towards the jade jungle canopy and blazing sun.



#### **BIBRI TERRITORY, TALAMANCA**

These mighty flows are nestled at 3,700 m, or approximately 12,000ft— similar in height to Mt. Hood in Oregon’s (USA) Cascade Volcanic Arc. The only option to cross this river system is to traverse it not once but nine times, zigging and zagging through the hurried waters from one side to the other.

Every step is taken with calculation and care. Climbing and jumping the smooth rounded boulders using both hands—sometimes with a baby on your back and carrying 30 kilos of goods from the township below, high above your head — this is the only way to get “there.” And it is in this place where the *Sixaola River Basin Story*, begins...



#### BRIBRI TERRITORY, TALAMANCA

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This text is an excerpt from “*Navigating Cultural Currents: The Sixaola River Basin Story*,” that can be found here:

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