

# Protected Areas Co-management in Bangladesh: Past, Present and Future

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and

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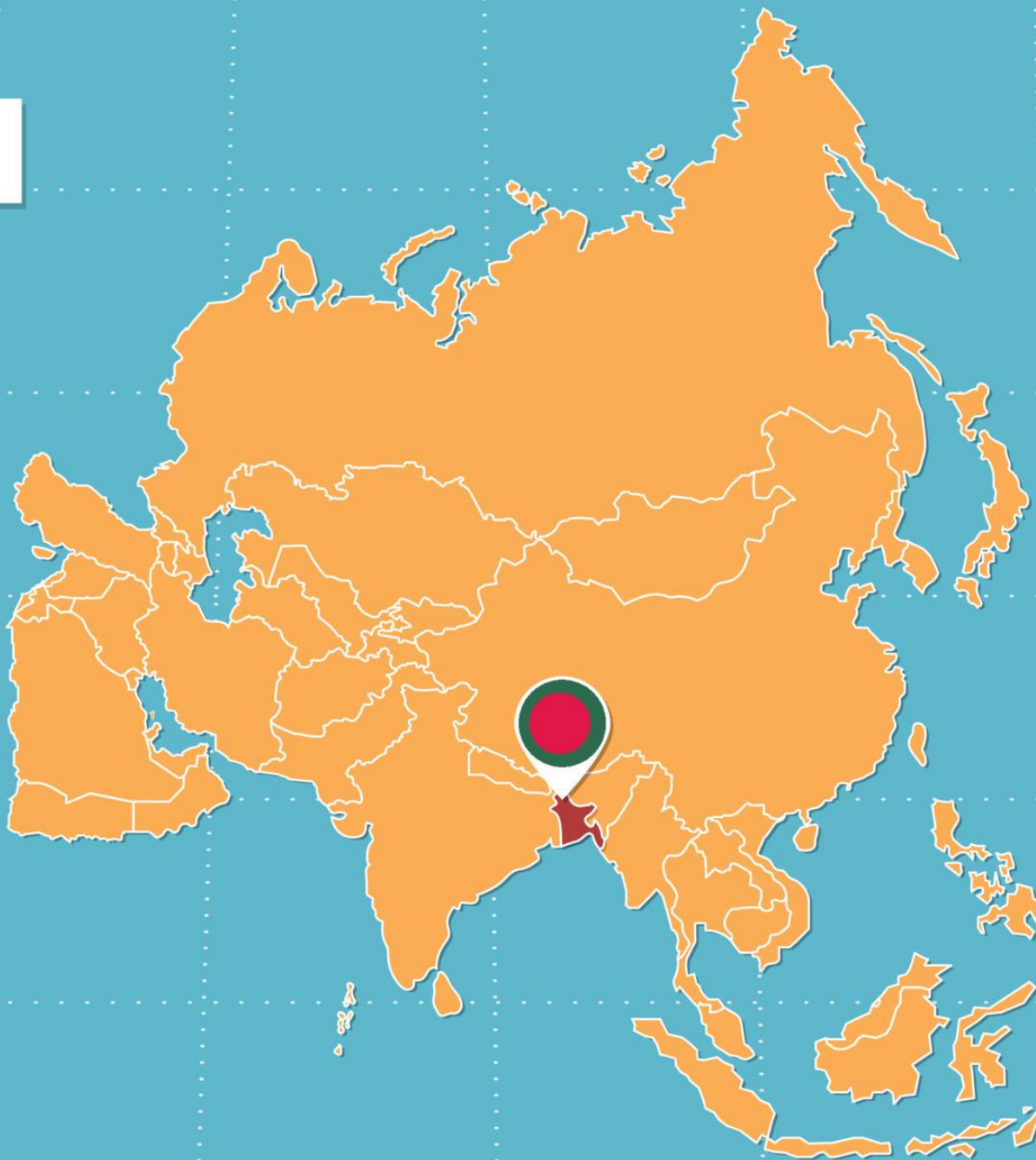


# Outline

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- Current state of protected areas
- Co-management in PAs of Bangladesh: History
- Strategies for PA co-management
- Major achievements in PA co-management
- Key challenges
- Opportunities





# Bangladesh

- High population density (1168 people/sq. km);
- Situated in the world's largest deltaic plain – the Ganges–Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) delta;
- Geographically, it falls near the Indo-Burma region – one of the global biodiversity hot spots and characterized by many species of flora and fauna;
- Bangladesh has the world's largest continuous mangrove forest – Sundarbans;
- The country faces numerous environmental challenges that affect its people, economy, and sustainable development.



# Major terrestrial ecosystems of Bangladesh

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# Protected Areas in Bangladesh

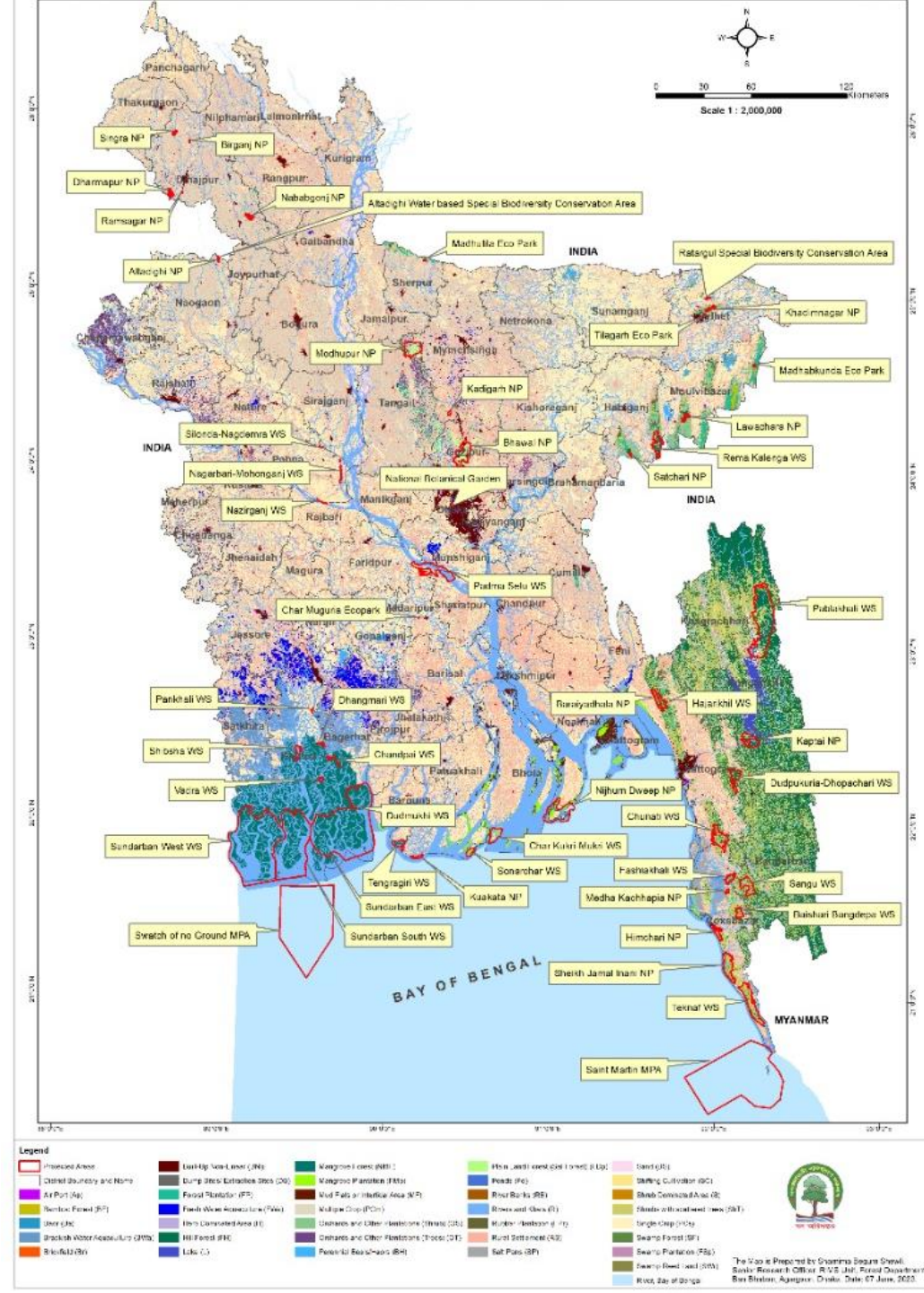
Total No. of PAs: 52 (terrestrial and marine)

Terrestrial PA – 6468 km<sup>2</sup> (4.61%)

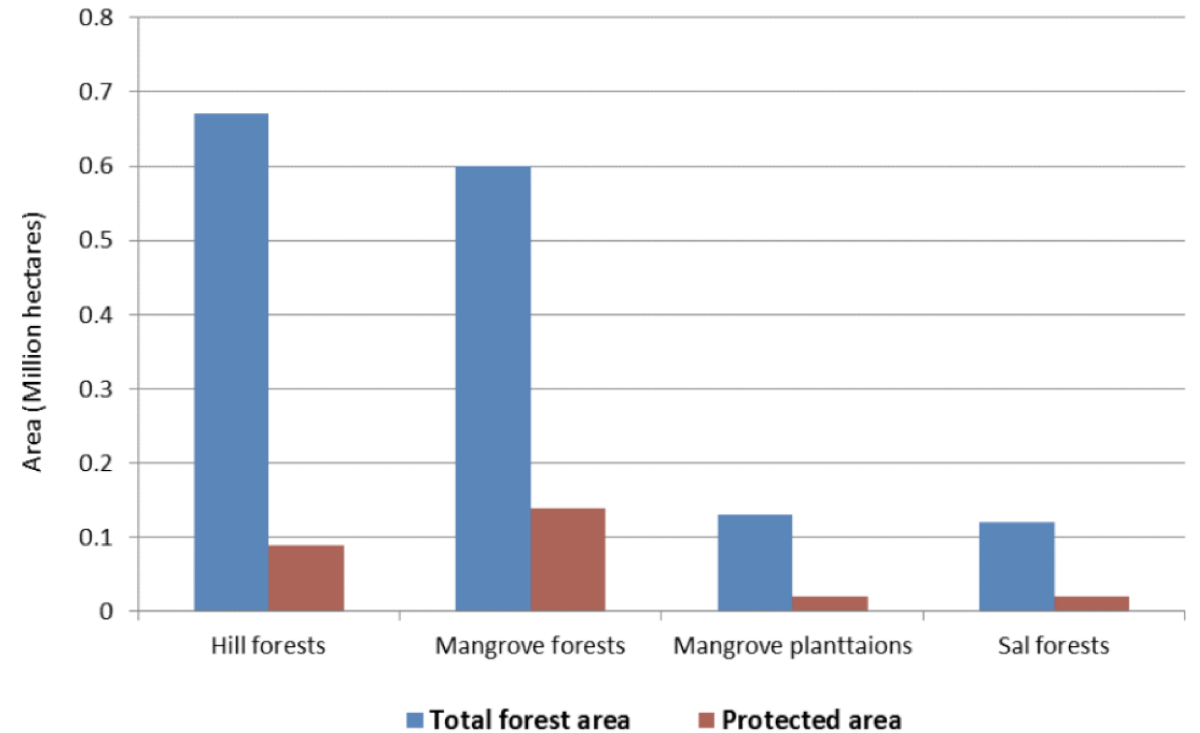
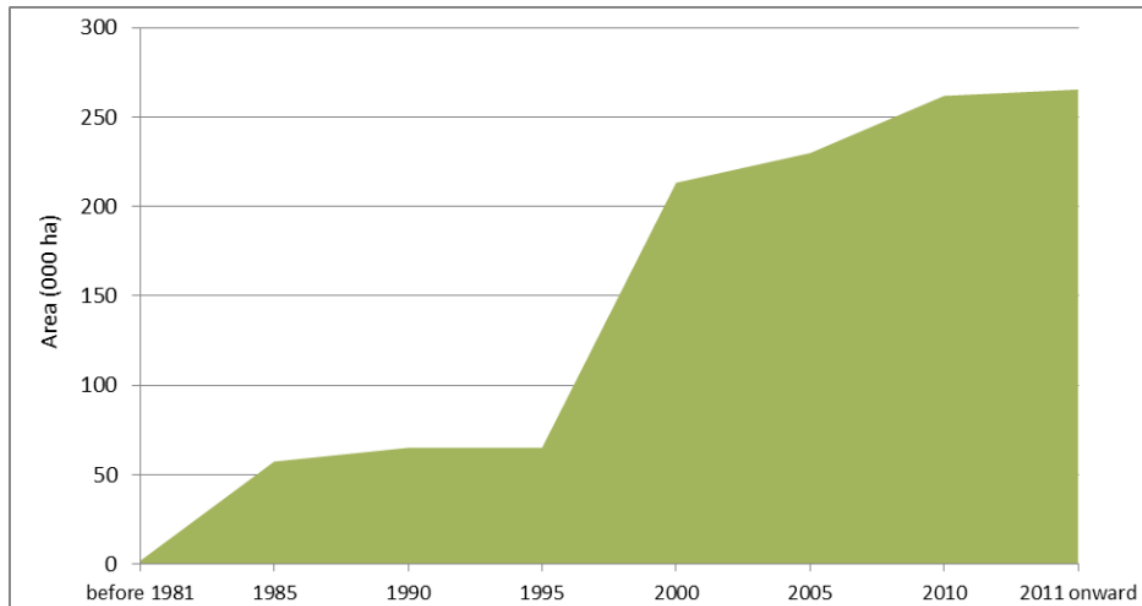
Marine PA – 6,726 km<sup>2</sup> (7.95%)

Under co-management – 21 PA

Source: Protected Planet 2024



# Status of terrestrial protected areas\*



\* IUCN Category II and IV  
Source: Mukul et al. 2017

# Study objectives

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To understand the PA co-management system in Bangladesh;

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To identify the major challenges in PA co-management;

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To provide suggestions for better PA co-management.

# Study method

- Qualitative data;
- Secondary Literature
- Key Informant Interview (KII)
  - PA managers, project staff,  
FD officials
- Focus Group Discussion (FGD)
  - community people, CMC  
members



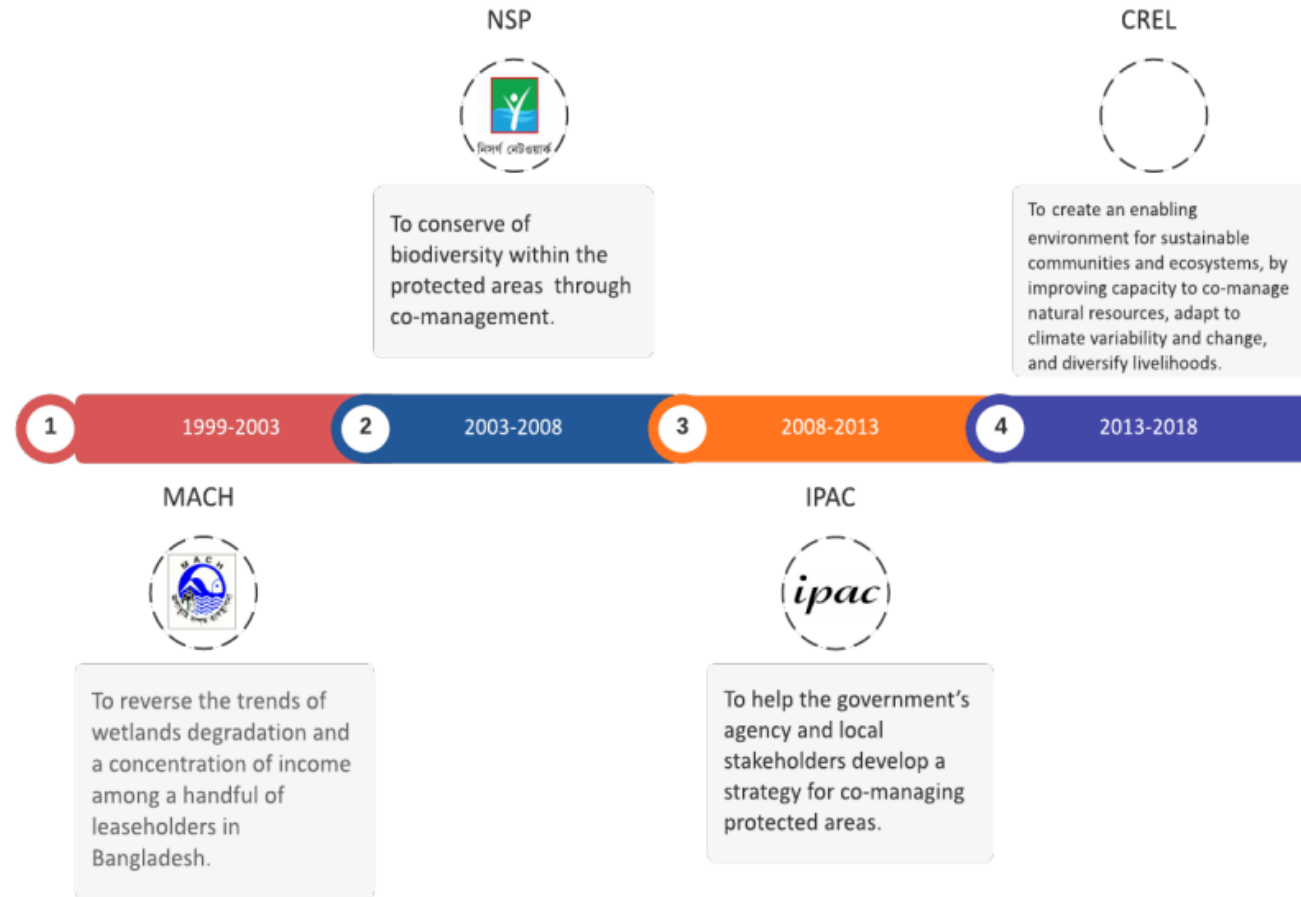


# Co-management in Protected Areas in Bangladesh

- The concept of co-management was first introduced in Bangladesh during MACH (Management of Aquatic Ecosystems through Community Husbandry) project (1999-2003) for the wetlands in Sylhet region;
- Co-management in PAs began with the USAID-funded Nishorgo Support Project (NSP) in 2003;
- Ideally, co-management enables local people to participate in PA management up to a certain level and offers local communities some direct and indirect benefits;
- The support is still inadequate, and mainly donor-dependent.



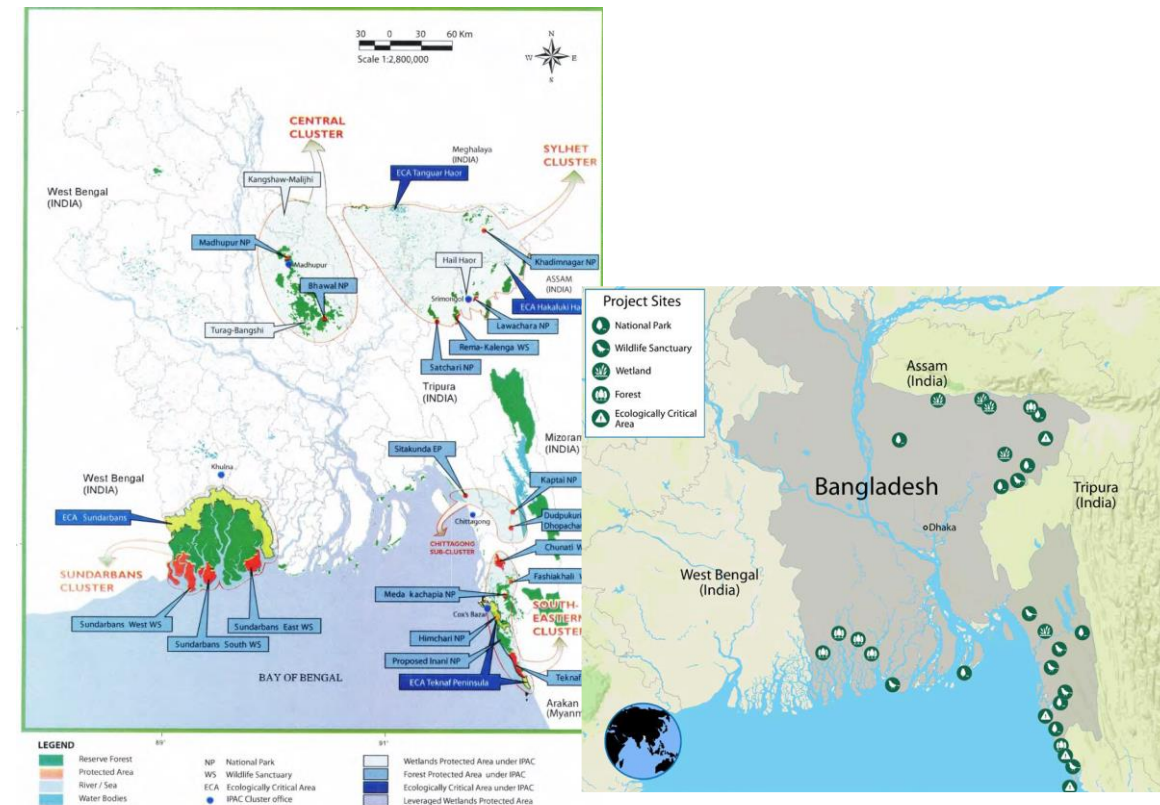
# Evolution of CO- management in Bangladesh



\*All supported by USAID Bangladesh

# Major PA co-management projects

- **Nishorgo Support Project (2003-2008):** 5 PAs in north-east and 2 PAs in southern Bangladesh;
- **Integrated Protected Area Co-management Project (IPAC) (2008-2013):** 18 PAs, 4 ECA;
- **Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihood (CREL) (2013-2018):** ecosystem-based adaptation approach; 30 terrestrial PAs, wetlands and ECAs;
- **USAID Ecosystems/Protibesh Activity (2021-2026):**
- Govt. stakeholders: Forest Department (FD), Department of Fisheries (DoF), Department of Environment (DoE).



IPAC (left) and CREL (right) PA coverage

# Major activities

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- Earlier projects: Baseline survey/ resource inventory, biodiversity surveys;
- Develop Draft Management Plans;
- Develop Co-management Institutions (CMC, etc.);
- Create Alternative Income Generating (AIG) opportunities (e.g. training for nursery/poultry/fisheries/livestock, loan for shop/rickshaw/van, eco-tour guide training);
- Improve local environmental awareness;
- Protect biodiversity and restore ecosystem;
- Ecotourism opportunity.



# Some AIG activities



# Major achievements

- Protected Area Management Rules (2017);
- UN Equator Prize 2012 Winner: Chunati Co-management Committee;
- Those who previously involved in illegal logging/hunting now working as protectors/guardians of the forest (forest patrol guard, etc.);
- Women empowerment ..



রেজিস্টার্ড নং ডি এ-১

বাংলাদেশ গেজেট

অতিরিক্ত সংখ্যা  
কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রকাশিত

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রবিবার, নভেম্বর ১২, ২০১৭

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গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
পরিবেশ ও বন মন্ত্রণালয়  
প্রজ্ঞাপন

তারিখ: ১৪ কার্তিক ১৪২৪ বঙ্গাব্দ/০৮ নভেম্বর ২০১৭ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

এস. আর. ও. নং ৩১৪-আইন/২০১৭।—বন্যপ্রাণী (সংরক্ষণ ও নিরাপত্তা) আইন, ২০১২ (২০১২ সনের ৩০নং আইন) এর ধারা ৫২ তে প্রদত্ত ক্ষমতাবলে সরকার নিম্নবর্ণ বিবিধালা প্রজ্ঞাপন করিল, যথা:—

১। শিরোনাম ও প্রবর্তন।—(১) এই বিবিধালা রক্ষিত এলাকা ব্যবস্থাপনা বিবিধালা, ২০১৭ নামে অভিহিত হইবে।

(২) বিধি ও এর বিধানাবলি সাপেক্ষে, এই বিবিধালার বিধানাবলি অধিশিষ্ট কার্যকর হইবে।

২। সংজ্ঞা।—(১) বিদ্য বা প্রসেক্টর পরিপন্থী কোনো কিছু না থাকিলে, এই বিবিধালায়—

(ক) “আইন” অর্থ বন্যপ্রাণী (সংরক্ষণ ও নিরাপত্তা) আইন, ২০১২ (২০১২ সনের ৩০নং আইন);

(খ) “উপকারভোগী” অর্থ রক্ষিত এলাকায় সহ-ব্যবস্থাপনা এবং সামাজিক বনায়নে অংশগ্রহণকারী কোন ব্যক্তি;

(গ) “কমিউনিটি টোল দল (Community Patrol Group)” অর্থ বিধি ১৯ এর অধীন গঠিত কমিউনিটি টোল দল;

(ঘ) “গ্রাম সংরক্ষণ ফোরাম (Village Conservation Forum)” অর্থ বিধি ১৮ এর অধীন গঠিত গ্রাম সংরক্ষণ ফোরাম;

(ঙ) “অভিবিল” অর্থ বিধি ২৯ এর অধীন গঠিত তহবিল;

(চ) “পিপলস ফোরাম (Peoples’ Forum)” অর্থ বিধি ১৫ এর অধীন গঠিত পিপলস ফোরাম;

( ১৬৭৮৯ )  
মুদ্র: টকা ২০.০০



# Limitations of PA co-management initiatives

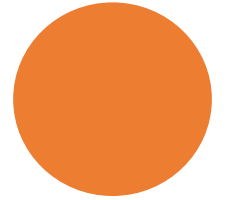
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- A large number of people remain outside of the AIG support;
- Complex institutional arrangement;
- Co-management committee dominated by local political elites;
- Lack of sustainable financing and high donor-dependency;
- Poor integration of co-management activities in FD forest management plan



# Other challenges

- High population density and poverty;
- Unsustainable/ irresponsible tourism;
- Lack of public awareness;
- Lack of political commitments and/or willingness;
- Illegal logging and land encroachment;
- Forest degradation and fragmentation due to unplanned development;
- Climate change;
- Alien invasive species, etc.

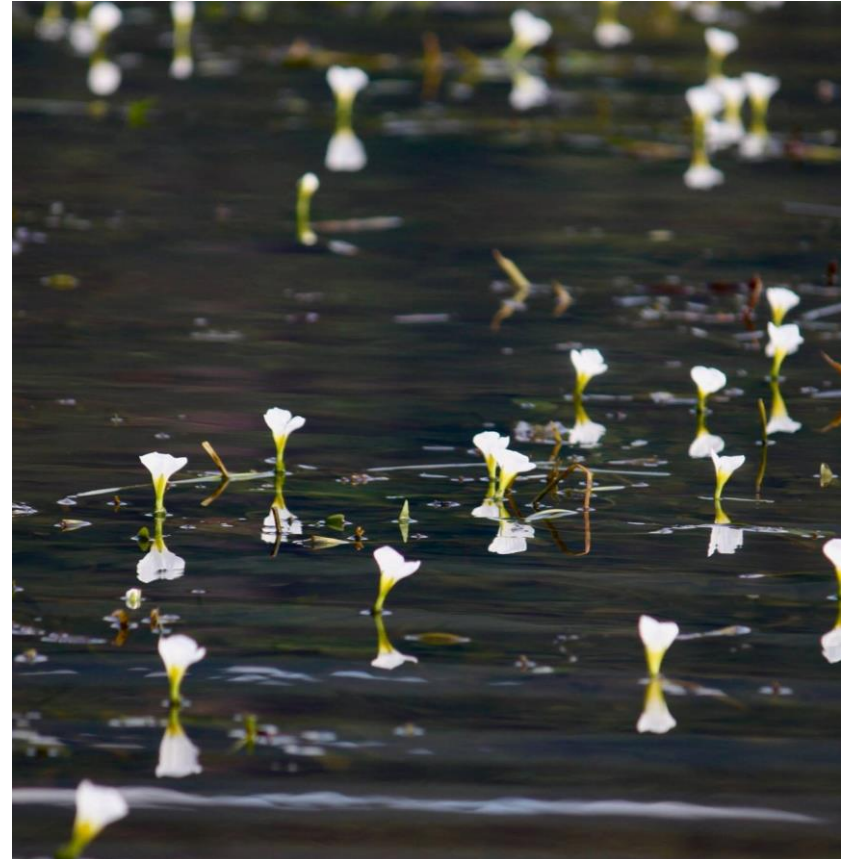




# For the future ..

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- Integration of the PA co-management system in the FD forest management system;
- Increase the coverage of AIG support;
- Sustainable financing of co-management institutions and initiatives (e.g. through carbon offset projects involving local community);
- Encourage public-private partnerships in conservation (e.g. CSR);
- Strengthen environmental governance through strict law enforcement, new rules/regulations, etc.;
- Increasing public awareness.



# Acknowledgements

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# Thank you !

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