

# WHY IS MEDHAKACHAPIA NATIONAL PARK IMPORTANT?

Medhakachapia National Park (MKNP) is nationally known for protecting the most extensive stands of mature critically endangered Garjan *Dipterocarpus turbinatus* trees in Bangladesh. The park is located in Chakaria Upazila, not far north of Cox's Bazar town in the southeast of the country. MKNP is tropical semi-evergreen forest on low hills in Fulchari Forest Range and covers 396 hectares. It was declared as a national park by a gazette notification of Ministry of Environment and Forest on 4 April 2004.

Originally the entire park area was a rich Garjan forest, but parts have been encroached with agriculture. Other associated native forest trees present include Telsur *Hopea odorata*, Boilam *Anisoptera scaphula*, Gamar *Gmelina arborea* and Chapalish *Artocarpus chaplasha*. Notable wildlife includes Hog Badger, and it is home to noisy flocks of White-crested Laughing Thrush and the globally vulnerable Great Slaty Woodpecker which attract bird enthusiasts.

MKNP is bordered by 13 villages where most of the people depend directly or indirectly upon the forest. Encroachment by settlements and agriculture has been associated with tree poaching, hunting, and collection of fuel wood, bamboo and cane and other forest products. This is encouraged by sawmills in the vicinity and unemployment

**Co-management** was established in Medhakachapia NP on 17 November 2009 when it was recognized through a Ministry of Environment and Forests order. Medhakachapia CMC formally works with and includes Bangladesh Forest Department as well as all key local stakeholders including local government and of course representatives of the surrounding 13 villages who are organized into a common forum. The CMC is active in promoting sustainable diversification of livelihoods away from forest dependence, promoting nature conservation, guarding the forest, and informing local people how to reduce vulnerability to climate change threats in an area of 707 ha around the NP.



Majestic tall groves of **critically endangered** Garjan *Dipterocarpus turbinatus* trees.

High species diversity:  
**13** amphibian species, **30** reptile species,  
**21** mammal species, **168** bird species.

Restoring forest here offers the scope to sequester **687 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per hectare** for climate change mitigation.

Local people are poor and depend on forest resources, **threatening for the Biodiversity**

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Please support our efforts to strengthen conservation. The work of Medhakachapia CMC and associated organizations involves local communities working with Bangladesh Forest Department and local government. These activities depend on support from grants and outside resources.

Medhakachapia CMC has a bank account (No 240000079, Agrani Bank, Khutakhali branch, Chakaria, Cox's Bazar) and can receive grants from domestic sources. For international assistance, funds can be channeled through Nature Conservation Management (NACOM) a national NGO which has helped establish the CMC. NACOM is registered with Bangladesh NGO Affairs Bureau, no. 481. NACOM focuses on environment, climate change issues, development of grassroots people and nature protection.

### Your donations to Medhakachapia CMC will support:

- Improving protection of forest, and their threatened species, through community patrols and forest restoration
- Creating awareness among the local people and increasing alternative income source
- Promoting eco-tourism (e.g., establishing visitor facilities and publicizing Medhakachapia)
- Increasing community sustainability (e.g. reducing disaster vulnerability and improving services)



CO-MANAGEMENT HELPS PROTECT  
CRITICAL FOREST HABITATS  
IMPORTANT FOR A WIDE RANGE OF  
CREATURES AND PLANTS, INCLUDING  
GLOBALLY THREATENED SPECIES ...

*Please support this important work.*



Photo: Obaidul Fattah Tanvir

### Garjan

*Dipterocarpus turbinatus*

This majestic tree is found in the humid eastern forests of Bangladesh and is globally critically endangered. Mature trees reach heights of 30 to 40 meters and present a striking image with their tall straight trunks and umbrella-like canopy. Distributed from northeast India to Vietnam, it is disappearing due to logging. Medhakachapia protects some fine groves of mature garjan but there were few saplings, encouraged by co-management local schools are planting and protecting seed so that future generations of people and wildlife can enjoy the forest.

## MEDHAKACHAPIA CO-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (CMC) KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Ensure long term conservation of biodiversity – notably mature Garjan forest
- Mobilize local people as environmental stewards and stakeholders
- Assist natural resource users to enhance and diversify their livelihoods, reduce extraction from forests, and reduce vulnerability to hazards and climate change
- Encourage eco-tourism, and provide adequate facilities for visitors
- Provide a forum for discussions, consultations, and conflict resolution

## Contacts

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## Medhakachapia National Park

Sustaining nature, biodiversity,  
and local communities



Photo: Obaidul Fattah Tanvir

Photo: Saurav Mahmud

### Medhakachapia Co-Management Committee

engages with local communities to conserve Medhakachapia National Park and its threatened species, including Garjan trees, through climate-resilient natural resources management and diversified livelihoods



USAID's Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CREL) Project