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## Khadimnagar National Park

Khadimnagar National Park, which is located 15 km northeast of Sylhet city, was established to preserve the remaining natural hill forest of the Khadimnagar Reserve Forest in 2006, under the Bangladesh Wildlife Preservation Act of 1974 with an area of 678.80 ha. Plantations were established in Khadimnagar Reserve Forest in 1961. In early times, the forest was mostly covered with local bamboo species, which were gradually felled and substituted by tree plantations in the 1960s to create a tropical forest. Through this process the natural forest was gradually converted into a plantation forest with numerous indigenous species. The semi deciduous tropical forest area is undulating with slopes and hillocks, locally called tilla. The forest has a number of small, sandy-bedded streams, all of which dry up following the end of the rainy season in October-November.

### Biodiversity :

The forest has a total of 217 species of plants, 20 amphibians, 9 reptiles like the Cobra and Python, 26 species of animals, including the *Macaque*, *Capped langur*, *Fishing Cat* and 28 species of birds such as the *White Backed Vulture*, *Brahmini Kite*, *Hill Myna*, *Wildfowl* and *Oriental Pied Hornbill*. The forest due to its native habitat is especially rich in bamboo and cane.

### Local Communities :

Forest villages are not located within the Reserved Forest but there is an ethnic (Patra Samprodai) community located adjacent to the forest near Faringura village. There is a total of 2261 households with a population of about 12,500 individuals, with varying degrees of dependency upon the forest (e.g. fuel wood, medicinal plants, bamboo) in this village. There are six tea estates bordering the forest. Those who are not employed by the tea estates are involved with fuel wood collection. Traditionally, the local people have always been dependent on the KNP mainly for their daily requirement of fuel wood, construction materials, food, etc. They also collect some non-timber forest products for their household needs. About 11 different types of resources are extracted from Khadimnagar Reserved Forest on a seasonal basis. Fuel wood and bamboo are extracted on a large scale while timber and construction materials are extracted moderately. The locals use the natural resources for household means as well as a source of income by selling these products.

### Park Threats :

The biodiversity of the park faces many threats as the locals are directly dependent on many forest resources and engage in clear felling and illegal timber felling. Some activities like livestock grazing and coal extraction also have dire effects upon the forest, while sporadic game hunting and unplanned tourism leave their respective marks on the overall preservation of KNP.

### Nishorgo Network :

Khadimnagar National Park is a valued member of the Nishorgo Network, Bangladesh's growing group of forest and wetland Protected Areas (PAs) being conserved through co-management. Co-management brings together community, government and other stakeholders to work together to conserve Bangladesh's rich natural heritage and eco-system services in a manner that contributes to long-term sustainable development, increased food security, and integrated climate change adaptation and mitigation. Nishorgo Network co-management shares roles and responsibilities between communities and government, demonstrating economic benefits of PA conservation to local communities through eco-tourism and sustainable alternative income generation activities, as well as by actively involving them in conservation management of PAs through participation in co-management organizations and joint patrol initiatives. The Nishorgo Network actively engages women, youth and ethnic minorities in co-management, and provides a foundation of good governance.



*Cane Plantations at KNP*



*Tea Gardens in the Environs of KNP*



*Spotted Dove, a Common Resident*





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## Co-Management & KNP :

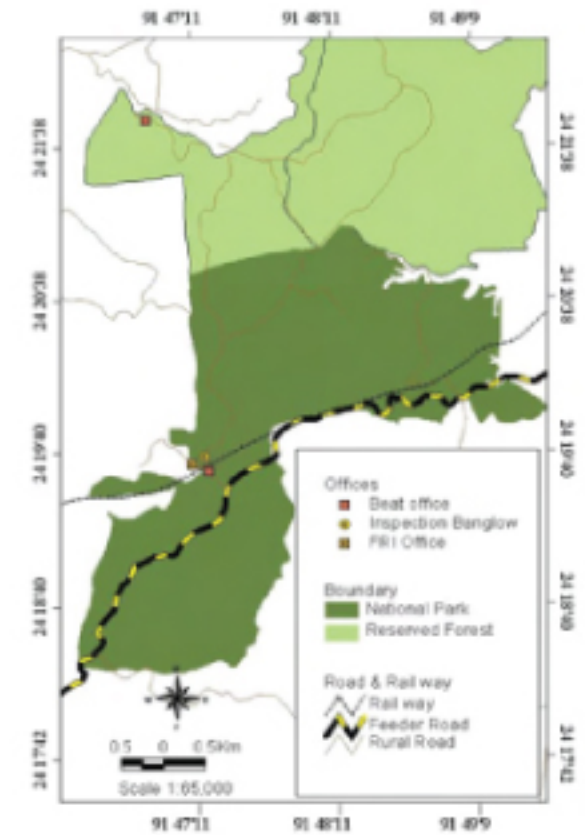
KNP is a worthy example of co-management for effective conservation, beginning with USAID's Integrated Protected Area Co-Management (IPAC) project implemented in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh's Ministry of Environment and Forests and Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock. Co-management highlights in KNP include the following:

- Formation and re-election of a co-management platform including a Co-Management Committee (CMC); 22 Village Conservation Forums (VCFs); and one Peoples' Forum (PF).
- Development of eco-tourism support for KNP, including training a cadre of 10 eco-guides from local.
- Entrance Fee Revenue collection and sharing mechanism in place, ensuring 50% of tourism fees accrue to the CMC.
- Alternative Livelihoods Development training and support for KNP-dependent communities, including sustainable value chain support and MoUs between local communities and national buyers in both fisheries and handicrafts.
- Training and capacity building as well as leveraging additional financial support to sustain effective co-management of KNP conservation into the future

USAID's Integrated Protected Area Co-management (IPAC) Project in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment & Forests (MOEF) and Ministry of Fisheries & Livestock (MOFL) has taken significant steps to conserve KNP including:

The Nishorgo Network through Integrated Protected Area Co-Management (IPAC) Project has initiated and identified several interventions to reverse the trends that are degrading the biodiversity of the National Park. Some of which include:

- Formation of Co-Management Committee (CMC) to overlook the Park's management.
- Formation of Village Conservation Forums (VCF) with 22 members to raise awareness and encourage conservation focused activities. To further awareness efforts, 22 Nishorgo Sahayaks (facilitators) have been trained to conduct VCF meetings and overlook their activities, while 6 Nishorgo Clubs also contribute to further awareness raising activities.
- Initiating Eco-Tourism in the Park in the form of trail development and information boards. Two marked trails of varying length have been developed to help manage tourist flow.
- Training the local youth as Eco-Tour Guides to guide and educate tourists along the marked trails of which ten are working regularly at the KNP.
- Eco-tourism initiatives include eco-cottage development, picnic spot development and tourist shops.
- Training forest dependent villagers on homestead gardening, fish pond culture and Improved Cooking Stove (ICS) to help reduce forest dependency and reduce resource extraction.
- Initiating livelihood improvement programs where mushroom culture has been widely accepted and practiced in the Landscape zone.
- Potential identified livelihood improvement programs include plantation nursery, cattle & poultry farming, production of woven products and traditional bamboo & cane handicrafts.



Children of the Patra Samprodai community



Tourists on the Guided Trails

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