

Improving Governance for Sustainable Protected Area Co-management



CREL is working with the GOB and community-based groups to improve policy guidelines and frameworks for protected area co-management. Good governance and policy reforms are pivotal to sustaining Bangladesh's progress in establishing partnerships for viable protected area co-management that extend well beyond the life of the CREL project.

A total of 14 reforms are being proposed, including laws, rules, and guidelines relating to forests, wetlands, and ecologically-critical areas (ECA) as well as a new protected area declaration. These were identified as key targets, based on a comprehensive policy gap analysis. The reforms are designed to ensure a solid legal and structural basis for co-management, by clearly delineating both rights and responsibilities.

Multi-stakeholder initiatives facilitated by CREL are creating a framework for more effective and enduring co-management institutions. CREL is bringing together concerned government ministries, line agencies, and diverse constituencies across multiple (and sometimes conflicting) sectors at different levels for participatory consultations and policy formulations. This has resulted in securing more public lands as protected areas for co-management, greater understanding of the effects of climate change and improved climate-resilience, and increased multi-stakeholder support for co-management. Forest related policy reforms include forming a legal basis for co-management institutions for protected area landscapes,

IR 1 works with local communities, local government institutions, and department line agencies, as well as the Ministry of the Environment and Forests, Ministry of Land, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock to identify and promulgate important policy reforms or guidelines aimed at strengthening natural resources management and increasing biodiversity in protected areas (forests and wetlands) in partnership with community-based co-management institutions.

the development of more efficient revenue-sharing, and the expansion of co-management organizations and forest protection. Several milestones are also expected to be achieved through establishing and strengthening community-based management in wetlands through the Ministry of Land, with an amendment to the National Wetland/Jalmohal Management Policy (2009), the development of wetland sanctuary management guidelines and open-water fisheries co-management guidelines, and the new designation of permanent wetland or swamp forest protected zones. For Ecologically Critical Areas, CREL is enhancing co-management capacity-building support for the Department of Environment to develop ECA organizations.

CREL policy-related work also supports ongoing activities in the three other components and cross-cutting issues, such as gender equality and payment for ecosystems services. This has included working for legal mandates in protected

area spatial and resource planning and landscape management, supporting pro-poor and women inclusive decision-making, and advancing GOB enforcement of protected area protection.

Key accomplishments

- First draft of PA Rules completed, including provisions for revenue-sharing, co-management in Sundarbans (non-timber forest products revenues), and the reformation of co-management organizations
- Proposed draft amendments to 2009 Wetland Leasing Policy
- Hail Haor permanent sanctuary expansion
- Additional permanent wetland sanctuaries proposed
- Co-management organization (CMO) representatives inducted into 55 Union Parishad Standing Committees

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