

Workshop on Natural Resource Management and Environmental Laws and Policy



USAID's CREL Project is supporting the Bangladesh Forest Department and the Department of Environment with drafting the Protected Area Management Rules (PA Rules) and Ecologically Critical Area Rules (ECA 2016 Rules). A high level workshop focused on ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the issues addressed in the newly drafted

PA and ECA Rules and their potential positive impacts was organized by CREL on August 6 at Cox's Bazar. 50 top level government officials participated this workshop including: Mr. Mohammad Shahidul Haque, Honorable Secretary, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs; Dr. Kamal Uddin Ahmed, Honorable Secretary, Ministry

of Environment and Forests (MOEF); Mr. Md. Yunus Ali, Chief Conservator of Forests; Mr. Shahabuddin Ahmed, Additional Secretary Ministry of Finance; and Mr. Md. Raisul Alam Mondal, Director General, Department of Environment. In this workshop the pertinent aspects of the PA and ECA Rules were discussed in great detail. The participants to the workshop were in complete agreement on the importance of approving of these laws as they ensure the long term conservation and viability of Bangladesh's forests, biodiversity and ECA via co-management.

Char plantation at Gabura- The worst affected area of Aila

For Gabura Village in southwest Khulna region, Cyclone Aila has never been forgotten due to the level of devastation and how it has changed the landscape of the area. The embankment adjacent to the mighty Shibsha River was left in a very fragile condition. With the assistance of the CREL Project, a char mangrove plantation effort in the areas is expected to act as protector from further storms and save the people, their land and their households. This plantation work has been a priority demand of the Gunari Forest Para



VCF and its importance has been further emphasized in recent years by both the Dacope-Koyra CMC and the Dacope Upazila's UNO. With CREL's support, a total of 19.2 hectares of char land has been planted in mangrove trees from Gunari Shasan Ghat to Rudra's house in Sutarkhali Union, Dacope. Every day eight laborers continue to protect and further expand the new plantation, and the ACF of Dacope-Koyra and CMC Vice-chairman themselves monitor the activity. Keora and Kankra tree species were planted in the char area. A total of 20000 seedlings will be planted by the time the char plantation restoration is complete. The mangrove plantation will ensure the protection of the embankment, create a suitable environment for crop cultivation and safeguard the settlements during severe storms for 150 VCF families in the area.

Three tube-wells installed in Chunati



USAID's CREL Project has supported the installation of three tube-wells at three villages of Banskhal, Chittagong via grants to Chunati CMC. These communities were suffering from a lack of irrigation water. Drinking water was also an issue because the tube-wells in the surrounding areas were contaminated with high amounts of iron. These three tube-wells will help the 130 adjacent forest dependent families to cultivate agricultural crops as well as mitigate the drinking water scarcity.

Park Vehicles Handed Over To Forest Department

The Honorable Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) of Bangladesh Forest department mentioned August 3 as a “Historic Day” in response to the handover of 11 vehicles to the Bangladesh Forest Department by USAID’s Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CREL) Project. He also commented that the addition of these vehicles would immensely increase FD’s ability in the field to work more pro-actively in the implementation of CREL- supported activities. These vehicles will be used by the officials of Forest Department to increase their surveillance in the management of Protected Areas, National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries of Bangladesh.



VCGs Awarded For Effective Management Of Fish Sanctuaries

Hakaluki Haor is one of the largest freshwater wetlands in South Asia and is an important breeding ground and habitat for indigenous fish species. In 2010 and 2011, the Ministry of Land declared a total of 18 Beels within Hakaluki Haor as permanent fish sanctuaries to ensure the conservation and sustainability of indigenous fish resources. After that time 6 out of the 18 beels were leased out to private businessmen. Out of the remaining 12, USAID’s Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CREL) project is involved in the support of 5 fish sanctuaries through Village Conservation Groups (VCGs): i) Koyerkona Beel through the Halla VCG; ii) Baiya Beel through the Judistipur VCG; iii) Gojuya Beel through the Akata VCG; iv) Tollar Beel through the Noyagaon VCG and v) Polovagra Beel through the Barodol VCG. From the beginning, The CREL project has supported further biophysical improvement of these sanctuaries. Through VCGs, guards for the protection of the sanctuaries have been appointed, submersible dams to enhance water holding capacity were constructed and bamboo and tree branches were placed to create safe habitats for fish. The CREL project also supported the planting of 190,000 Hijal and Korach tree seedlings on the banks of the sanctuaries to restore a more natural environment in Hakaluki Haor. The VCGs are managing and monitoring all activities of the sanctuaries, including taking quick action if any illegal fishing or hunting occurs within the sanctuaries. CREL supports the VCGs to arrange programs to enhance people’s awareness on the importance of creating and managing fish sanctuaries, the government Fish Act and other protective regulations. The CREL project has provided grants directly to VCGs for capacity building in sanctuary management and organization sustainability. In recognition of the successful management of Koyerkona and Baiya Beel fish sanctuaries, this year the Halla VCG and Judistipur VCG received awards by their respective Upazila Fisheries Departments and Upazila Administrations.

School Students In Dissemination of Climate Information

Prompt actions regarding climate change and natural disasters can be taken only when people have sufficient information. To ensure that rural communities have relevant information on climate change and natural disasters, CREL has organized 5 awareness events in five schools of the Chittagong region. A video show on climate change, a power point presentation and festoons on disaster preparedness were presented at each of the schools. Finally, the students took part in a drawing competition on the theme of actions they should take to face the impacts of climate change and natural disasters. They were

also taken for a field demonstration and role play on how to safeguard themselves from thunderstorms. Through this intervention, over 1200 students in 5 schools were provided with climate change risk and mitigation information.



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



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