



The Nishorgo Support Project

Under its partnership with the Government of Bangladesh, USAID is providing targeted technical support to aspects of the Nishorgo Program. The Nishorgo Support Project works closely with the Forest Department and key conservation stakeholders to develop and implement a co-management approach to help conserve the country's large tracts of Protected Areas, where partnerships for conservation are essential.

The Project is working at five initial pilot sites to begin adapting a Protected Area co-management approach for Bangladesh. Initial sites include the Lawachara National Park, the Rema-Kalenga Wildlife Sanctuary and Satchuri Reserve Forest (proposed as a new Wildlife Sanctuary), the Teknaf Game Reserve and the Chunati Wildlife Sanctuary.



Teknaf Game Reserve



The Project is implemented by IRG of Washington DC, USA in association with partners:

CARITAS, Community Development Center Chittagong (CODEC), Nature Conservation & Management (NACOM) and RDRS



What is "Co-management"?

Collaborative management -- or co-management -- is defined as "a situation in which two or more social actors negotiate, define and guarantee amongst themselves a fair sharing of the management functions, entitlements and responsibilities for a given territory, area or set of natural resources." (Borrini-Feyerbund, IUCN: 2000). In Bangladesh, co-management "actors" will include the Forest Department, as legal custodian of protected forest areas, and the local and national stakeholders that have a role in conservation management. The co-management approach has been a fundamental recommendation of the past two World Parks Congresses, and is actively advocated by recognized international conservation organizations such as the IUCN.



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Nishorgo

Saving Bangladesh's Forests for Future Generations



আমরা প্রকৃতিকে ঝাড়া আগামী প্রজন্মের জন্য

A Program of the Forest Department
Ministry of Environment & Forests
Government of Bangladesh

Nishorgo: What is it?

Bangladesh's forests come under relentless human pressure as its population grows. As a result, Bangladesh now has among the smallest areas of protected and intact forest in the world.

And yet, citizens clamor more than ever for places of natural beauty to which they can escape. A glance at the numbers makes it clear: the Botanical Garden receives nearly a million visitors per year and Bhawal National Park averages some 400,000. Even small Sitakunda Park near Chittagong received 50,000 in a single day recently.

Recognizing the urgency of citizens' needs for more and better opportunities to visit nature, and the need to conserve unique biodiversity before it disappears, the Forest Department has responded with creation of a new Protected Areas management program called "Nishorgo".



The Nishorgo Program is a comprehensive effort to improve the management of the country's Protected Areas of all kinds. "Protected Areas", as the term is used by the Forest Department, include such areas as Safari Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, National Parks and Game Reserves.

Rema Kelanga Wildlife Sanctuary

The name "Nishorgo" – proposed by a student from Jhinaidah District in response to a national competition – evokes the idyllic and even surreal beauty of nature within Bangladesh.

Nishorgo is a Government of Bangladesh Program that receives financial support for Protected Areas Management from USAID and the Asian Development Bank.

What Will Nishorgo Do?

The Nishorgo Program aims to protect and conserve Bangladesh's forests and biodiversity for future generations. At the heart of Nishorgo is a focus on building partnerships between the Forest Department and key local and national stakeholders that can assist in conservation efforts.



Dulhazara Safari Park, Phase III Extension

Expected activities of Nishorgo include the following, among others:

- ⇒ Development of formal co-management agreements for specific Protected Areas between the Department and stakeholders;
- ⇒ Sharing of economic benefits from Protected Areas with local participating stakeholders;
- ⇒ Formalization of processes for reducing local conflicts over Protected Areas;
- ⇒ Installation of visitor amenities in protected forest areas;
- ⇒ Improvement of Forest Department facilities with Protected Areas;
- ⇒ Refinement of the policy framework for Protected Areas management;
- ⇒ Facilitation of eco-friendly private sector investment that can provide key services to Protected Areas;
- ⇒ Support to applied research on Protected Areas that can improve future planning,

What Will Nishorgo Achieve?

The steady loss of our remaining protected forest areas can be stopped, and the Nishorgo Program aims to build the capacity and partnerships necessary to make it happen. Nishorgo Program activities are designed to lead to:

- ✓ A marked slowing of biodiversity loss in targeted Protected Areas;
- ✓ Active and formalized participation of local communities dependent on forest resources;
- ✓ An increase in the number of Protected Area sites and the capacity to receive visitors;
- ✓ Formalization of a Protected Area management system;



Vernal Hanging Parrot
Loriculus vernalis
Nov. 11, 2002
Copy-right: Ronald Halder

Satchuri Reserve Forest (a proposed Sanctuary)

- ✓ Improved hydrological and other services from forests;
- ✓ Improvement in the income and livelihoods of people living in and around Protected Areas;
- ✓ Job creation and enterprise development associated with Protected Areas and nature;
- ✓ A more active and vibrant partnership for nature conservation between citizens and the Forest Department

Most importantly, the Nishorgo Program will create more opportunities for Bangladesh's citizens - of present and future generations - to know the peace of nature that is implied by the name "Nishorgo".