



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 of develop and implement a co-management approach to help conserve the country's large tracts of Protected Areas. The Support Project focuses on 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.



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



Community Development Centre (CODEC)-Chittagong, 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 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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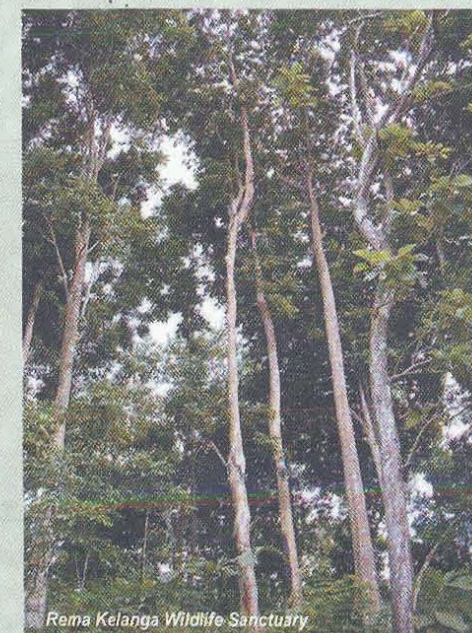
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Nishorgo

Bangladesh's Protected Area Management Program

Saving Nature for Future Generations



আমরা প্রকৃতিকে বাঁচাবো আগামী প্রজন্মের জন্য



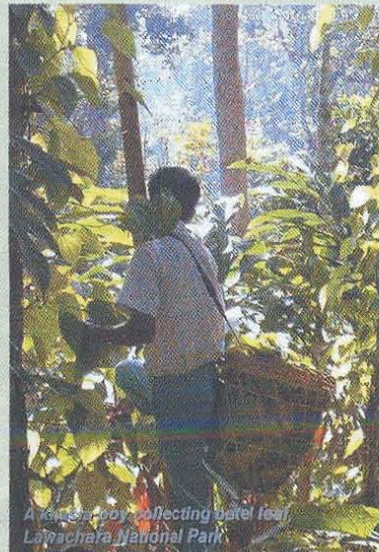
Nishorgo Support Project
Forest Department
Ministry of Environment & Forests
Government of Bangladesh

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".



A person collecting water from a tree in a forest.
Lawachara National Park

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.

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.

The name "Nishorgo" proposed by a student from Jhinaidah District in response to a

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

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 Areas;
- Improvement of Forest Department facilities in 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;

Expected Outcomes :

Nishorgo Program Activities are designed to lead to :

- A slowing of biodiversity loss in targeted Protected Areas;
- Active and formalized collaborative management of Protected Areas with local communities;
- Improvement in the income and livelihoods of people living in and around Protected Areas;

Achievements to Date :

- Formal recognition by the Government (under Government Order) of co-management Councils and Committees at all five pilot Protected Areas;



Vernal Hanging Parrot
Loriculus vernalis
Satchuri National Park

Nov. 11 2002
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- Clear and scientific evidence shows that the conservation activities at the northern Protected Areas is resulting in a re-establishment of key bird indicator species, including the jungle Fowl and the Puff-Throated Babbler, both offering evidence that the lower story of the forest is regenerating;
- Rapid expansion and acceptance by low income households of conservation- appropriate income improving activities;
- Effective joint community - Forest Department patrols result in near elimination of illegal logging in Lawachara National Park and Satchuri National Park;
- Approval by the Ministry of Environment & Forests of Revised entry fees for pilot Protected Areas, including a 50% retentive by local councils of entry fee revenues;
- Cross visit of Co-management Councils members, including forest Department, to West Bengal, India, resulting in an important impetus to rapid Council development here in Bangladesh.
- Establishment of ecotourism visitor services including 15 new hiking trails, 30 trail signs, 10 large road signs, 6 explanatory visitor brochures, Protected Areas Visitor's Guide, and much more.