

Support the Co-Management Solution: CMOs help to Sustain Nature, Biodiversity, and Local Communities



The USAID-supported Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CREL) Project works with CMOs to strengthen their capacity as accountable, representative, and self-sufficient organizations. The main objective is climate-resilient ecosystems and communities, through support for co-management and diversified livelihoods. This includes linking the private and public sectors to achieve win-win solutions.

Much of the wetlands and tropical forests of Bangladesh have been converted into agriculture or heavily exploited fisheries. High population growth, limited livelihood opportunities, commercial interests, and a low policy priority for environmental conservation have resulted in degraded and deforested landscapes or ecosystems, even in designated Protected Areas (PA) and wetland sanctuaries. This has started to improve with the introduction of collaborative management or “co-management” in biologically significant areas of wetlands and forests. Co-management brings together representatives from local communities, local government, and concerned GOB agencies to develop management plans, prevent unsustainable extraction and ecosystem degradation, and reduce dependencies on natural resources through income-generation and the diversification of livelihoods. This not only benefits local communities and (formerly) resource-dependent households, it helps to preserve and protect Bangladesh’s few remaining biologically significant areas and PA landscapes for future generations.

Co-management is a collaborative partnership between the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) and local communities to conserve and protect natural resources.

A growing body of practice and research worldwide has shown that co-management can be more effective than just government agencies in curtailing environmental degradation and deforestation. Budget constraints tend to limit the financial and human resources needed for government agencies to effectively protect and manage PAs, while top-down approaches in the past alienated local communities. This makes building partnerships for environmental conservation and resource management all the more important.

Drivers of deforestation and degradation in Bangladesh:

- Population density
- High rates of poverty
- Lack of access to land or employment
- Lack of financial and human resources
- Climate change

In Bangladesh, multi-stakeholder co-management committees and community organizations (collectively known as CMOs) are working to improve planning, protection and management of PAs and biodiverse ecosystems. This increases accountability, participatory decision-making, and benefit-sharing, and creates incentives for local people to take a longer-term perspective as environmental stewards. The result has been greater compliance with conservation rules,

reduced tree felling, restoration of wetlands, improved communication among stakeholders, and increased sharing of resource management responsibilities.

Co-management is reducing the strain on GOB budgets and improving the lives of (formerly) resource-dependent households. However, to sustain their work, CMOs must continue to deliver valued services and benefits. Conservation is everyone’s responsibility, and the private sector and civil society can play important roles in making this happen.

Partnership opportunities and Corporate Social Responsibility

- Sponsorship to protect globally threatened species of wildlife (e.g., Asian Elephants in several sites, Gangetic Dolphins in the Sundarbans, and Spoon-billed Sandpiper and other waterbirds)
- Eco-tourism and related services within and outside of PAs (e.g., guide services training and tours, souvenirs, and cultural programs or products)
- Development or construction of tourist facilities
- Offset payments for carbon storage, trading and REDD++
- Cottage industry handicrafts and production groups
- Payments for community conservation areas
- Semi-private or private - community and public joint ventures (PPP) and CSR funds

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USAID's Climate Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CREL) Project

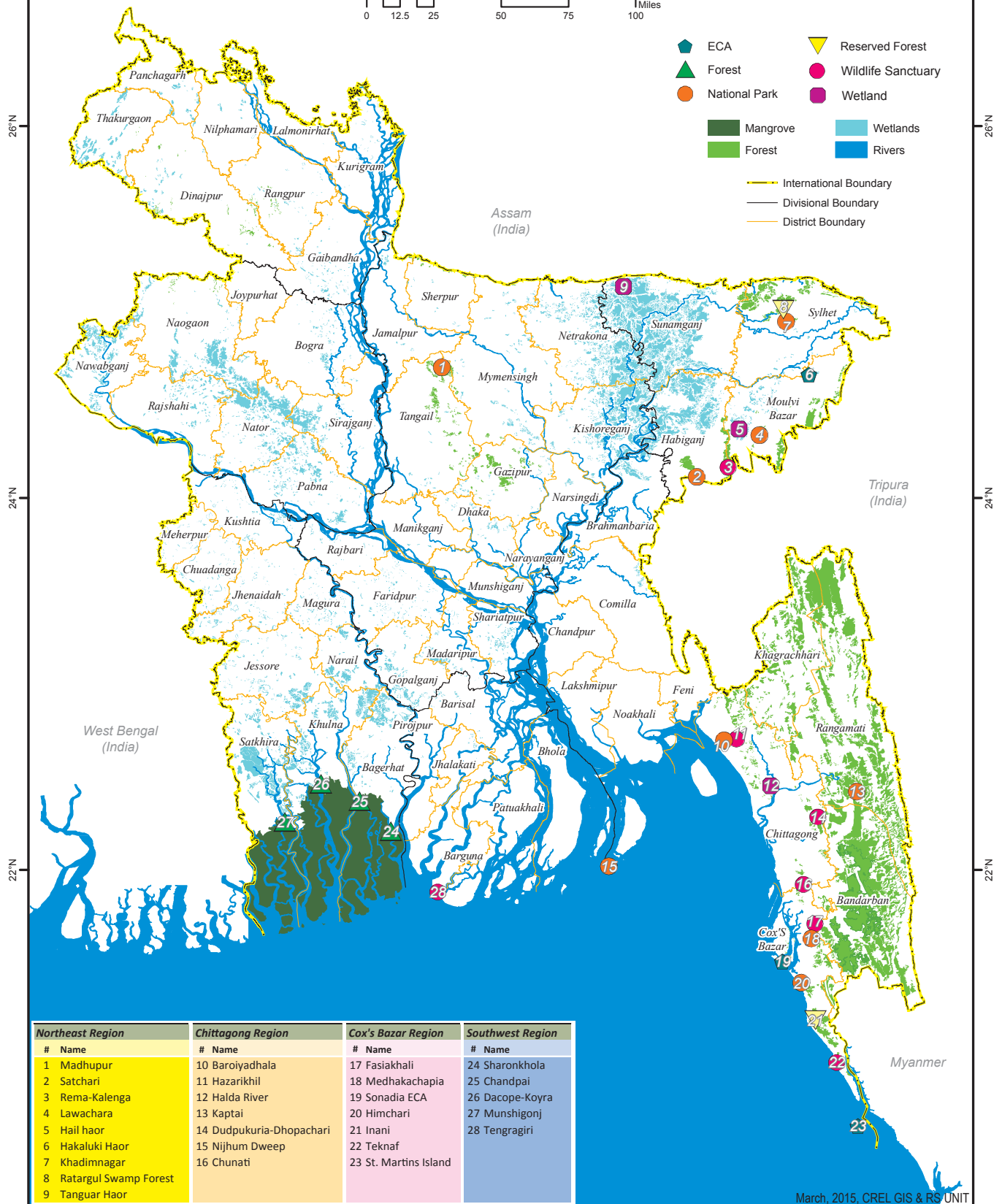


0 12.5 25 50 75 100 Miles

- ◆ ECA
- ▲ Forest
- National Park
- ▼ Reserved Forest
- Wildlife Sanctuary
- Wetland

- Mangrove
- Forest
- Wetlands
- Rivers

- International Boundary
- Divisional Boundary
- District Boundary



Northeast Region	Chittagong Region	Cox's Bazar Region	Southwest Region
# Name 1 Madhupur 2 Satchari 3 Rema-Kalenga 4 Lawachara 5 Hail haor 6 Hakaluki Haor 7 Khadimnagar 8 Ratargul Swamp Forest 9 Tanguar Haor	# Name 10 Baroiyadhala 11 Hazarikhil 12 Halda River 13 Kaptai 14 Dudpukuria-Dhopachari 15 Nijhum Dweep 16 Chunati	# Name 17 Fasiakhali 18 Medhakachapia 19 Sonadia ECA 20 Himchari 21 Inani 22 Teknaf 23 St. Martins Island	# Name 24 Sharonkhola 25 Chandpai 26 Dacope-Koyra 27 Munshigonj 28 Tengragiri

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