

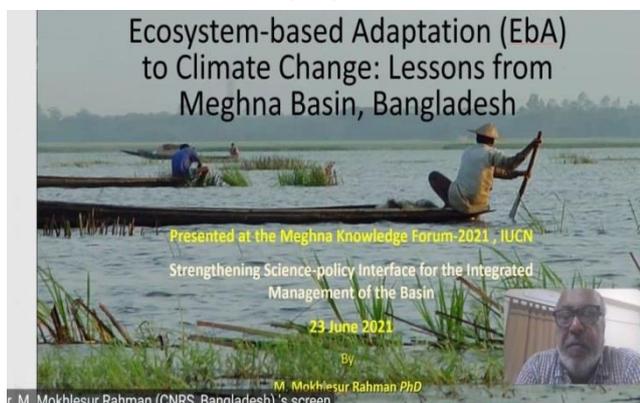
Report
Special Event on Climate Change
on
Data and information on the climate change impacts in the Meghna river basin
Parallel side event 3 (Day 2)
(MKF Side Event Room 3)
23 June(Wednesday) 2021
Indian time: 14:00-15:30
Bangladesh time: 14:30-16:00

Aaranyak was a partner in the Meghna Knowledge Forum (MKF) 2021 that concluded on June 24 last. The MKF, organised by the IUCN during June 22-24 was the first such intensive scientific symposium with the broad objective of exploring possibilities of transboundary cooperation in the Meghna River Basin(MRB) shared by India and Bangladesh for equitable benefit sharing of collaborative initiatives in Integrated Water Resources Management(IWRM) focussing on research, governance and policy. A side event on 'Data and information on the climate change impacts in the Meghna River Basin' was put together by Aaranyak, Guwahati and Nadi Adhikar Mancha of Bangladesh. The aim of this event was to (i) take stock of the existing data and knowledge-base on climate change in terms of indicators and impact on natural resources, environment and livelihoods of people and (ii) explore the potential for using Nature-based solution such as Ecosystem-based adaptation for improving community resilience through joint initiatives in the basin by Government of both countries involving scientific and community and civil society actors.

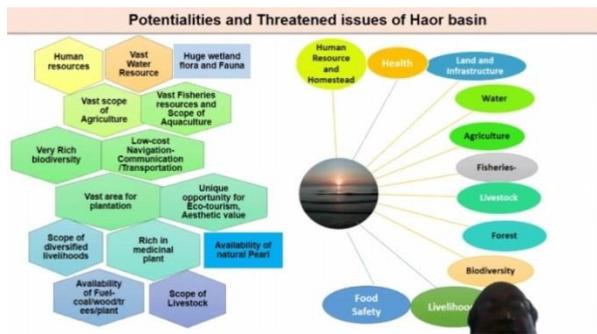


The session was facilitated by Dr. Partha Jyoti Das, Head of 'Water Climate and Hazard Division' of Aaranyak. At the beginning of the session, Dr. Das refreshed the speakers and the audience about the broad objectives of the main symposium as well as the special discussion forum on climate change in the given geographical socioecological context. The session featured five speakers, two from India and three from Bangladesh. The first presentation with an introductory exploration of key issues of the entire basin was followed by four thematic presentations.

Mr. Shamsher Ali, Member-Secretary of the Nadi Adhikar Mancha provided an overall view of the Meghna river basin highlighting the location, population, environmental concerns and climatic issues. Dr. Arun Jyoti Nath, Associate Professor of Assam University, Silchar talked about the trends in rainfall and temperature in the Meghna basin. Dr. Syed Ali Azher (Community Development and Mobilisation Expert, Department of Fisheries, Govt. of Bangladesh) highlighted ecological changes observed in the wetlands of the Meghna River Basin in Bangladesh that have affected livelihoods of people. Dr. Marbakor Mary Lynrah (Project Scientist from Meghalaya Climate Change Centre, Shillong) presented the present and projected climate sceneries of the state of Meghalaya in Assam focusing on results of scientific research done at the initiative of the State Government. Mr. M. Mokhlesur Rahman(Executive Director from Centre for Natural Resource Studies) described how Ecosystem-based adaptation approach was used to restore the habitat of haors(permanent swampy areas in low lying flood plains Bangladesh) to help the ecosystems and people to deal with the impact of climate change on agriculture, biodiversity and natural hazards.



At the end of the session, the speakers responded to some queries put forth by a few participants. Dr. Partha Jyoti Das said in his closing remarks that important information and insights accrued out of the deliberation of the session which would be useful in enriching the knowledge domain in both countries and at the same time in



future discourse on transboundary cooperation for climate change risk management in the MRB. He thanked IUCN for providing the opportunity to Aaranyak and Nadi Adhikar Mancha to organise the discussion on climate change as part of the MKF. He expressed gratefulness to all speakers for providing valuable information and perspectives on their given themes within the larger realm of climate change in the MRB. He conveyed gratitude on behalf of the organisers to all participants for their active engagement during the deliberation; Dr. Das

concluded by observing that the outcome of the session would help in addressing climate vulnerability in the MRB where Nature-based solutions and Ecosystem-based adaptation would be crucial for building community resilience against climate change impacts.