

*Workshop on  
Water Problem in South-west Coastal Region in Perspective of Climate Change*

REPORT



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**Organized by:**



**Initiative for Right View (IRV) &  
Bhairab River Basin Area Water Partnership**

**Supported by:**



**Bangladesh Water Partnership (BWP)**

Bangladesh Water Partnership

## *Workshop on Water Problem in South-west Coastal Region in Perspective of Climate Change*



### **Introduction:**

Global warming is accelerating rapidly already many countries ecosystems and people are suffering form its impacts. Global warming has affected weather patterns and disrupted variability and trends in climate. This is resulting in an increase in climate related extreme events like heavy rainfall, flood cyclone, storm surge, etc.

Bangladesh is already evidencing the adverse impact of global worming and climate change. Climate change poses significant risks, yet the core elements of its vulnerability are primarily contextual. A subjective ranking of key climate change impacts and vulnerabilities for Bangladesh identifies water and coastal resources as being of the highest priority in terms of certainty, urgency, and severity of impact, as well as the importance of the resources being affected.

The following impacts have been observed. Summer are becoming hotter, monsoon irregular, untimely rainfall, heavy rainfall over short period causing water logging and landslides, very little rainfall in dry period, increase river flow and inundation during monsoon, coastal erosion, river bank erosion. Climate change impacts are already adding significant stress to our physical and environmental resources, our human ability and economic activates.

Impacts of observed changes are felt most in the following sectors:

- Water resources
- Coastal resources
- Agriculture
- Health
- Livelihood
- Food security
- Habitat/settlement security

The water resources management is increasingly facing challenges of exogenous developments of a global nature, such as climate change and sea level rise, as well as of upstream river basin development beyond the border of the country. Similarly, endogenous development paying inadequate integrated water resources management are creating various water resources management problem and are the prime causes of inequitable development and improper utilization of water resources of this country. As a results, there is a growing need for maintaining the ecosystems through planning and implementing environment -friendly water management project containing eco-efficient infrastructures paying due attention particularly in the fish and wetlands resources.



Among the impacts of observed changes water resources are of paramount importance for sustaining life, development and the environment. The availability of water is the key determinant of economic growth and social prosperity. However, water is a finite resource and its use for one purpose reduces its availability for other purposes. Competing water needs trigger conflicts between disparate water users such as the rich and the poor, or between different sectors and regions, such as domestic and agriculture, agriculture and industry, agriculture and fisheries, upstream and downstream, rural and urban areas, and fisheries and flood control. Increased demand for water stemming from population and economic growth and ecosystem services on the one hand, and the problem of water management in flood control situations on the other, have posed significant challenges for the planning and allocation of its uses among competing demands (Syme et al. 1999).

#### **Program report:**

As a part of on going activities with the support of Bangladesh Water Partnership (BWP), Initiative for Right View (IRV) and Bhairab River Basin Area Water Partnership organized a training workshop on ***“Water Problem in South-west Coastal Region in Perspective of Climate Change”*** at Public Hall conference room in Khulna on 07 June, 2011.

Dr. Professor Mohammad Faekuzzaman, Pro-VC of Khulna University was present as chief guest. Among the special guests Md. Ramjan Ali Paramanik, Executive Engineer, Water Development Board, Division-1, Mollah Safikur Rahman, Associate Professor, Environmental Science Discipline, Khulna University were present. The workshop was chaired by Ad. Firoz Ahmed, Conveyer, Bhairab River Basin Area Water Partnership. Key not paper was presented by Kushol Roy, Lecturer, Environmental Science Discipline, Khulna University and the workshop was moderated by Marina Juthi, secretary, Bangladesh Women Water Network (BWWN) and Associate Coordinator, IRV.

At the beginning of the workshop Ad Firoz Ahmed, Conveyer, Bhairab River Basin Area Water Partnership delivered the inaugural speech emphasizing conservation of water resources and awareness creation among the people. He shared that southwest coastal region is the most vulnerable district in the world regarding climate change. Salinity, water logging and sea level rise have been hampering the environment and livelihood of the people of the southwest coastal region. So, necessary initiatives should be taken for



facing the problem. He gave thanks to the Bangladesh water partnership for their support and interest for the conservation and restoration of the environment and river.

After that Kushol Roy, Lecturer, Environmental Science Discipline, Khulna University presented his paper on “**Water Security and Climate Change**” through multimedia. The outline of his presentation was

- Climate Change tidbits
- Bangladesh Climate Change past and future projections
- Water Security issues; Immediate concerns
- Facts we should know

He concentrated his presentation on why climate important, why the water insecurity, crop colander and water use in Bangladesh, impact in dry season, impact on monsoon, impact; SLR and salinity, what is happening in southwest, A modeling exercise, coupling with crop performance, modeling result, water security,

Among the participant Shorab Ali shared that we are facing serious water crisis. River are losing its flow and gradually silting up. As a result rivers are losing its capacity to carry excess water. We are very much depended on tube well for drinking water. We have to develop reserves. The number of natural water reservoirs has been decreasing.



As special guest Md. Ramjan Ali Paramanik, Executive Engineer, Water



Development Board, Division-1 expressed his experience of water management. He shared that the embankment are now out of date. Now it is not working as a result it cannot able to protect the coastal areas from disaster like Sidr and Aila. The flow of River Gangage has reduced. Saline water has been increasing and destroying the sweet water areas. as per his opinion integrated water resource management is very much necessary for the effective management of the water resources. He shared that we should take initiative for better use of surface water and rain water. He recommended for developing reservoir for conserving rain water. Salinity is increasing in the southwest coastal region, so rainwater harvesting can be supportive for solving drinking water crisis. We need to re excavate canals, ponds and rivers.

Mollah Safikur Rahman, Associate Professor, Environmental Science Discipline, Khulna University also expressed that climate change has a great impact in the livelihood and water resources in southwest coastal region. Lot of research and study is needed to identify or addressing the issues. There is limited information on climate change. Even developed countries have no enough information on climate change. For drinking ware we are depending on tube wells. Research and study is necessary for batter management of water resources.



As a chief guest Dr. Professor Mohammad Faekuzzaman, Pro-VC of Khulna University shared that



southwest coastal region is rich in biodiversity, there are vast network of river, abundance of fish and other aquatic resources. People are living in peace. But due to climate change all the situation has changed within a decade. Due to climate change rainfall has been reducing during rainy season. in the past people have been used boat for local transport. Flood was the regular phenomenon of that time. There was no water purifying tablet on that time. People use pond water for drinking. We have lost our local varieties of fishes.

We have constructed unplanned bridge and culvert which hampered our river system. River need to be

dragging. We are facing crisis of drinking water. Male nutrition has been increasing. Pollution of water has been harming the fisheries resources. We need to be conscious and aware about the proper utilization of water resources.

In the concluding remarks chairman of the workshop Ad Firoz Ahamed shard that water is every where in this region but not a drop to drink. This shortage of water in this region makes the lives more critical along with other disaster. In the previous year scarcity of drinking water was not as much as it is at present. To meet the daily necessity of drinking water women and adolescent girls of the families have to carry water from long distance facing various social and physical problem. This may take three to four hours a day. As a result, they do not have enough time or energy to carry out other household duties like cooking, bathing, washing clothes, taking care of children and elders. Even the parents of this areas are not interested to give marry of their daughter. Last of all he invited all to join the up coming long march for conservation of river and water resources.

**Conclusion:**

Bangladesh has walked a long path in the development and management of natural resources for improvement of social livelihood. Earlier attempts were mainly concentrated to the optimal utilization of the resources but environmental consideration and efficient water management infrastructures were not at the update mark. However, under the changed concept of water management, eco-efficient water management and planning of environmental project is very much necessary for preserving the environment and ecosystem. And, the decision makers of Bangladesh are now thinking and trying to implement the concept of eco-efficient water management infrastructures in the coming futures.

