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How we can manage our marine resources better

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(antibiotics, anti-cancer, bioactive compounds, nutritional supplements, etc.) and food (marine fish, shrimp, seaweed farming). Nevertheless, BoB is the largest bay in the world but we know little about it. Therefore, we must acquire as much knowledge about it, or we will be unable to go towards economically and ecologically viable options.
The harvest of marine capture fisheries in the coastal and marine waters of Bangladesh was 3,548 m MT (DoF 2016), which is about 16.78 percent of the total fish catch. Hilsha is the largest and single most valuable species with an average annual catch of 340,000 MT, representing 50-60 percent of the global hilsha catch and generating employment

and income for 2.5 million people (BOBLME, 2012). There are about 486 types of marine fish species and 36 types of marine shrimp in our sea area. 225 industrial trawlers, 68 thousand mechanised boats and more than 0.5 million people are involved in marine fishery sector. A number of surveys examined the status of marine fisheries resources between 1970s and 1980s, but no recent and comprehensive knowledge is available on the fisheries, systematic, biological and ecological aspects of the coastal and marine fisheries of Bangladesh. While an impressive gas success ratio of 3:1 (3 exploration wells drillings, resulting in 1 discovery) was observed in the onshore area, the success ratio in the offshore is less impressive, i.e. 9:1. Until 2014, 19 exploratory wells were drilled

in BoB, resulting in only two gas discoveries, i.e. the Sangu and the Kutubdia, with small reserves. Bangladesh is yet to assess the true potential of its offshore oil and gas prospects. The Bangladesh government is likely to take up a Tk. 1600 crore project to explore the marine resources. Already, presence of uranium, thorium, white clay, glass sand, metallic monazite, zirconium, stornium, rubidium, chromium yttrium, niobium and ruthium have been detected in the Bay of Bengal. But we are yet to ascertain whether exploitation of these would be economically viable.
The concept of the Blue Economy is currently resonating among a number of countries across the world. Bangladesh is perhaps most vocal about the Blue

Economy. In September 2014, it hosted a major conference in Dhaka, and proposed the Bay of Bengal Partnership for a Blue Economy. At the core of the Blue Economy lies the idea of "optimisation of natural marine resources within ecological limits", and the "de-coupling of socioeconomic development from environmental degradation". Hence the management paradigm for our marine resources should consider these points. A number of challenges are associated for ensuring the proper management of marine resources. Firstly, the knowledge-gap with regard to ascertaining concentration and size of the resources. Secondly, there is lack of Ocean Governance Framework and adoption of "Ocean Policy" to address the complex

interactions of resource base, users, stakeholders, opportunities, threats and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) etc. and for ensuring smooth interagency co-ordination. Thirdly, legal and institutional framework needs further refinement, for example limit of maximum catch, fishing boats registration, maximum/minimum depth determination, environmental norms etc. Fourthly, lack of knowledge, research, needed human resources and technology base etc. is yet another stumbling block. Fifthly, there is a challenge in terms of environmental and social impact study. Sixthly, is a lack of investment. Seventh is improper allocation of roles and designation of focal points.

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