

Towards sustainable use of natural resources

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following features: demand for expansion in all land uses (urban area, settlement, roads/highways, etc.); increasing demands for new uses (tourism, export processing zones and others); encroachment and conversion of land from one use to the other, e.g. crop agriculture to aquaculture, cropland to woods. Present per capita agricultural land of 0.05 hectares will decrease to 0.025 hectares by 2050.

To unlock the potential of the climate-smart "blue" economy, Bangladesh needs to improve its protection of ocean health, create sustained jobs and livelihoods, strengthen its management of vast marine resources and promote climate-resilient forest and landscape management.

Without effective measures to arrest this alarming trend the land available for crop production will continue to fall.

Degradation of land refers to loss of its potential production capability as a result of degradation of soil quality and also its loss for effective use. Estimates by Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) indicate that soil related problems may be a major constraint on agricultural growth.

Declining soil fertility, soil erosion, and salinisation affect 5.6-8.7 million hectares, 5.3 hectares, and 3.05 million hectares of land respectively. Soil erosion, being irreversible, is generally regarded as the most serious problem of soil degradation.

The exploitation of groundwater for irrigation for dry season rice farming (boro) has reached beyond capacity of annual recharge of aquifers, with adverse effects on the supply of safe drinking water. The irrigated area has expanded to over 5.5 million hectares out of 8.0 million hectares of cultivated land, and over three-fourths of the area is irrigated with groundwater, mostly by privately installed shallow tube wells. The arsenic contamination of drinking water in large parts of the country is often blamed on overexploitation of groundwater for irrigation with shallow tube wells. The process of desertification is defined by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, 1994, as "land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas resulting from various factors, including climate variation and human activities".

Coastal and marine resources

The coastal zone contains several ecosystems that have important conservation values: mangrove, marine, estuary, islands, coral, sandy beaches, sand dunes. The world's largest uninterrupted stretch of mangrove ecosystem, the Sundarbans, has been declared a World Heritage Site in 1997, whereas coral ecosystems are found around St. Martin's Island. These ecosystems are not only biodiversity hotspots, but also provide the ecological foundation for an important common access resource: the fisheries in the Bay of Bengal. The government has already declared several ECAs in the coast. Many sanctuaries have also been created. The most recent example is declaration of three

sanctuaries for dolphins in the Sundarbans.

Recently, Bangladesh won a landmark verdict at the International Tribunal on Law of the Sea, which sustained its claims to 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic and territorial rights in the Bay of Bengal. The verdict of the tribunal gave Bangladesh a substantial share of the outer continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles, which would open up possibilities for peacefully exploiting immense resources (gas, oil, fish, etc.). The tribunal also awarded Bangladesh a full 12-nautical mile territorial sea around St. Martin's Island, overruling Myanmar's argument that it should be cut in half.

One of the earliest interventions in the coast, since 1968, was the Coastal Embankment Project (CEP). The Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) constructed a series of polders. CEP was instrumental in enhancing productive potential of coastal land by protecting it from saline intrusion. Polders are now a natural feature of the coastal hydro-morphological setting. Sea dikes are considered as the first line of defense against the impacts of sea level rise. One unintended effect of CEP, however, has been sedimentation of the rivers resulting in severe waterlogging in the southern part of Khulna and Bagerhat districts. Tidal River Management adopted in Khulna-Jessore area shows a promising sustainable option. Rivers and canals need regular dredging in these areas.

Over the years, uncoordinated development activities have led to the depletion of natural resources like fish and forests and overall degradation of the natural environment. These activities have also sometimes created conditions of scarcity for the poor and the disadvantaged by different kinds of social, economic, technical or institu-

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tional barriers which limit access to common property resources on which they are dependent for their livelihood.

Use of fish resources

Bangladesh is among the world's leading inland fisheries producers with an annual production of more than 2.8 million tonnes. The government also has successfully embarked on a major sustainable effort to safeguard the national Hilsa fish. However, almost 30 percent of all inland fish species are threatened with extinction. There is a mounting concern that nine critically endangered species of inland fisheries are in danger of collapse, which would threaten livelihoods and diets, especially among the poorest.

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there remains a need for integrating environmental protection and management into national planning and strengthening environmental institutions, especially to respond to rapid urbanisation, industrialisation, and growing pollution.

To unlock the potential of the climate-smart "blue" economy, Bangladesh needs to improve its protection of ocean health, create sustained jobs and livelihoods, strengthen its management of vast marine resources and promote climate-resilient forest and landscape management, which can improve livelihoods and foster economic opportunities in rural areas helping attain SDGs 1 and 2 in addition to addressing goal 14 directly.

Renewable energy

The government had earlier prepared a Power System Master Plan (PSMP) 2010 to improve and expand electricity supply to support GDP growth in the 7-8 percent range. At present, PSMP 2015 is being prepared. To meet the demand with reasonable reliability, installed power generation capacity needs to be increased to 24,000 MW and 39,000 MW by 2021 and 2030 respectively. The Renewable Energy Policy obligates the renewable energy share to be 10 percent by 2020 (2,000 MW). To meet this target, the government has prepared a year-wise plan, which is a bit above the range of the policy target. Gradually, tapping renewable energies has to be emphasised to attain SDG 7.

The writer is Member (Senior Secretary), General Economics Division, Bangladesh Planning Commission and Lead Author of Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2010-2021; Sixth Five Year Plan 2011-2015; Seventh Five Year Plan 2016-2020; National Sustainable Development Strategy 2011-2021; and National Social Protection Strategy, amongst others.

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দেশের সকল জেলা ও গুরুত্বপূর্ণস্থানে অবস্থিত অগ্রণী ব্যাংক লিমিটেডের ৯৩টি শাখায় "রিয়েল টাইম অনলাইন ব্যাংকিং" এর আওতায় সব ধরনের ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদান করা হচ্ছে। কোন একক ব্যাংকের অনলাইন সেবাভুক্ত শাখার সংখ্যার বিচারে ইহা সর্বোচ্চ।

দেশব্যাপী ৯৩টি শাখার মাধ্যমে অগ্রণী ব্যাংকের নিম্নোক্ত সেবাসমূহ গ্রহণ করুন

<p>আমানত সেবাসমূহ :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> সঞ্চয়ী হিসাব চলতি হিসাব স্বল্প মেয়াদী আমানত স্থায়ী আমানত অগ্রণী ব্যাংক পেনশন স্কীম (এপিএস) অগ্রণী ব্যাংক বিশেষ সঞ্চয় প্রকল্প (এবিএস) 	<p>ঋণ সেবাসমূহ :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Capital Financing to Trade & Investment কৃষি/পল্লী ঋণ (৮%) সুদ কৃষিভিত্তিক শিল্প ঋণ মাইক্রো ক্রেডিট ঋণ শিল্প ঋণ/Term Loan রপ্তানী বাণিজ্য ঋণ আমদানী বাণিজ্য ঋণ এসএমই লোন, নারী অগ্রণী অগ্রণী বৈদেশিক কর্মসংস্থান সহায়ক ঋণ (৯% সুদ) 	<p>অন্যান্য সেবাসমূহ :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ৫টি শাখার মাধ্যমে ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা বিশ্বের ১৫০টি দেশ থেকে প্রেরিত প্রবাসীদের অর্থ বাংলাদেশের যে কোন স্থানে তাৎক্ষণিক টাকা পরিশোধের ব্যবস্থা সমগ্র দেশে ২৫০০টি ATM বুথের মাধ্যমে টাকা উত্তোলনের সুবিধা। যে কোন সময়ে রেমিট্যান্সের অর্থ উত্তোলনের জন্য রয়েছে "প্রবাসী অগ্রণী রেমিট্যান্স কার্ড"
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