

## Report on Validation Workshop on Blue Economy Study in South and South-East Asia

Date: 5-7 December, 2019

Venue: India Social Institute, Delhi, India

**Introduction:** SNEHA (Social Need Education and Human Awareness, [www.snehangt.org](http://www.snehangt.org)) based in Tamilnadu, India working with the small-scale fishers organized a validation workshop for study on Blue Economy (BE) in New Delhi during 5-7, 2019. A Study related to Blue Economy was conducted by a research team comprising from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Sri Lank and Thailand during October 2018 to March, 2019 in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand. COAST-Bangladesh, ICSF-India, EQUATION-India, DISHA-India, NAFSO-Sri Lanka, WFFP, Public Finance and Public Accountability Collective-India, Social Development Foundation - Thailand participated in the workshop. The objectives of the workshop are to i) to validate the study report and ii) to take preparation for International Tribunal in September 2020 in New Delhi.



### Country wise Findings of Study Reports:

#### Bangladesh:

##### Context:

- In South Asia, Bangladesh is one of the fast-growing states and is the most densely populated country.
  - The Bay of Bengal and its coastal zones become the backbone of Bangladesh economy.
  - Most of the people live in coastal zones and use the coastal and marine waters for their livelihood.
  - Fisheries play a vital role in the nation's economy and livelihoods.
- The concept of Blue Economy was adopted by the then government in an International Workshop on Blue Economy during September 2014.
  - Since 2014 onwards, all the development policy documents such as 7th Five Year Plan (FY2016-FY2020), Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100: Bangladesh in the 21st Century, emphasizing the BE
  - Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2010-2021 and Vision 2021 of Bangladesh are in-line with a blue economy which primarily focuses on Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture, Seabed mining, alternate energy exploration, Maritime transport, Boat and Ship recycling, Tourism, and recreation

### POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR BE:

#### • MARITIME BOUNDARY SETTLEMENT:

Blue Economy emerged only after the settlement of maritime boundary delimitation dispute with Myanmar (2012) and India (2014) which expanded the rights over the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

#### • 7TH FIVE YEAR PLAN (FY2016 – FY2020):

The components of the Blue Economy were incorporated in the Bangladesh 7th Five Year Plan (FY2016 – FY2020). "Unlocking the Potential of Blue Economy is a new horizon for the economic development of the coastal countries through utilizing the sea and marine resources at national and international level.

### Highlights of 7th Five Year Plan:

- Protecting and managing the fisheries for the present and future generations,
- Developing a strong renewable energy sector using ocean and atmospheric forces,

- Maintaining existing (e.g., shipbuilding) and developing new maritime industries;
  - Extending fishing areas using new technologies and methods even beyond EEZ in the international waters,
  - Substantially, increasing fisheries production and export earnings through improved Aquaculture and introduction of Mariculture,
  - Creating a competitive tourism industry, including ecotourism and marine cruises,
  - Maintain the inland river systems and ecosystems for the fishery, sediment transport, and inland shipping,



**COASTAL ZONE INVESTMENT PLAN:**

The

**coastal zone investments are :**

- West Gopalganj Integrated Water Management Project
- Improved Drainage in the Bhabadha Area
- Development of Water Management Infrastructure in Bhola Island
- Char Development and Settlement Project- V
- Program for Implementation of Rationalized Water Related Interventions in Gumti - Muhuri Basin
- Program for Implementation of Rationalized Water Related Interventions in Gorai-Passur Basin
- Rationalization of Polders in Baleswar – Tentulia Basin
- Rationalization of Polders in Gorai-Passur Basin
- Program for Implementation of Rationalized Water Related Interventions in Baleswar-Tentulia Basin
- Rationalization of Polders in Gumti -Muhuri Basin
- Rehabilitation of Water Management Infrastructure in Bhola District
- Integrated Coastal Zone Land Use Planning in Bangladesh using GIS and RS Technology
- Morphological Dynamics of Meghna Estuary for Sustainable Char Development
- The land beyond Land, Efforts to Reclaim lands at near Coast; Preparatory Surveys and Studies
- Structural interventions for managing sea level rise: preparatory surveys & studies
- Development of Climate Smart Integrated Coastal Resources Database (CSICRD)
- Study on Integrated Management of Drainage Congestion for Greater Noakhali
- Study on Tidal River Management
- Urirchar-Noakhali Cross Dam Project
- Integrated Land Reclamation Project of Hatiya Dhamar Char-Nijhum Dwip
- Southern Agricultural Improvement Project (SAIP)
- Exploration of the Production Potential of Coastal Saline Soils of Bangladesh
- Construction of Ganges Barrage and Ancillary Works
- **Total 23 Investment plans and equivalent to BDT 8,67,500 million and US\$ 10,932.**

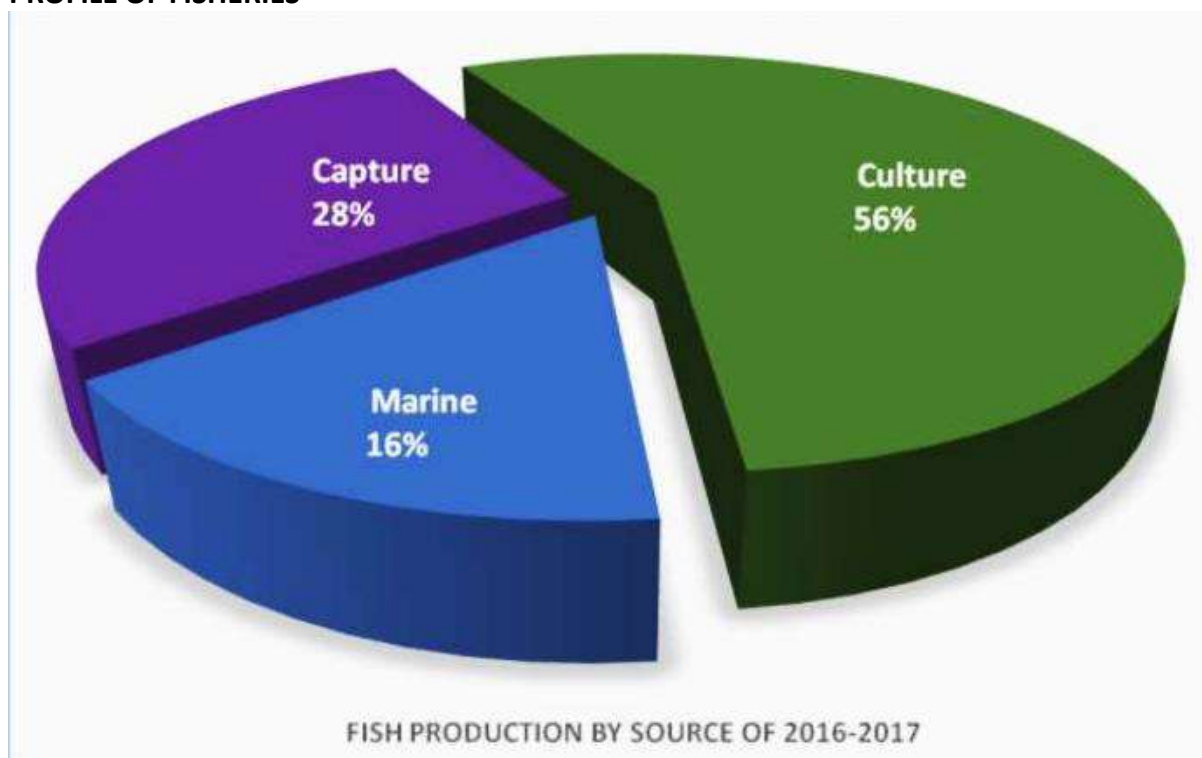
**MAJOR REGULATORY (POLICY and LEGAL) REFORMS FOR B.E**

Sector	Policies	Laws and Acts	Responsible institutions
Coastal Protection Climate change resilience and adaptation (including coastal protection)	Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) is to be completed by 2020. National Action Plan	The 2010 Climate Change Trust Act established the Bangladesh CC Trust, the Bangladesh CC Trust Fund, and the Bangladesh	Ministry of Environment and Forests Disaster Management Information Centre of Ministry of Food and Disaster Management

	<i>for Adaptation (NAPA) is to be completed by 2020.</i>	Climate Change Resilience Fund.	
<i>Existence of Biodiversity, including mangrove ecosystems (“blue forests”)</i>	<i>Coastal and Wetland Biodiversity Management Plan is under review</i>	Wetland Conservation Act; Environment Conservation Act, 1995, 2000, and 2002 Environment Conservation Rules, 1997, 2000, 2001 National Conservation Strategy, 2005, National River Protection Commission Act, 2013 Forest Act, 1927, Wildlife Protection and Security Act, 2012	The Ministry of Environment and Forests, The Bangladesh National Herbarium
<i>Waste Disposal, including addressing externalities from industrial and agriculture pollution creating marine dead zones</i>	<i>Bangladesh Water Act is under review and revision.</i>	Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), 2005 Participatory Water Management Regulations, 2014	Ministry of Water Resources
<i>Energy (including renewable energy from wave, wind, and solar from ocean areas and explicit gender dimensions</i>	<i>Renewable Energy Policy, 2008 and National Energy Policy, 2004 are under review.</i>	The Bangladesh Petroleum Act of 1974 supports planning, organizing, and implementation of exploration, exploitation, development, and production of petroleum wealth from the sea (including all territorial waters, continental shelf, and EEZ)	Ministry of Power, Energy, and Mineral Resources Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA), Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB), Local Government Engineering Directorate (LGED), Blue Economy Cell
<i>Living Resources: Aquaculture, including mariculture</i>	<i>National Aquaculture Development Strategy and Action Plan (2013-2020) is reviewed annually. 2014 National Shrimp Policy is under review.</i>	Fish Hatchery Act 2010; Fish Hatchery Rules 2011; Fish Feed and Animal Feed Act 2010; Fish Feed Rules 2011; Fisheries Research Institute Ordinance, 1984	Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock

<i>Tourism, including marine tourism</i>	<i>National Tourism Policy, 2009 is under review.</i>	Tourism Board Act, 2010 Bangladesh Tourism Protected Areas and Special Tourism Zone Act, 2010; Bangladesh Tourism Protected Areas and Special Tourism Zone Rules, 2011	Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Infrastructure Financing Facility Inland Water Transport Authority
<i>Ocean-based industry development and growth via access to finance</i>	<i>Comprehensive Credit Policy for SMEs, including encouraging investment in ocean industries</i>	Inclusive Digital Financial Systems, 2015	Ministry of Industries Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation Bangladesh Bank

## PROFILE OF FISHERIES



## HILSA FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN FOR BANGLADESH:

- Hilsa (Shad) is an important diadromous fish in the South and south-East Asia, especially in Bangladesh.
- It is considered as national fish in the country and contributes to the national economy, employment, and export.
- Hilsa has the highest contribution in the country's fish production as the single fish species.

- More than 11% of the country's fish production comes from Hilsa catch. In 2010-11 Hilsa production was 3.40 lakh MT, which values around 10,000 crore taka.
- Department of Fisheries (DoF) has taken some steps to strengthen *Jatka Conservation Project/Program* through establishing 5 Hilsa sanctuaries and fishers get with 30 kg of food grains/family/month during the ban periods for four months.



#### **FIELD OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS:**

- The field observations of the research team in *Cox's Bazar and Maheshkhali Island* revealed that BE projects have brought out the deteriorating economic status, denial of the right to resources and displacement of the coastal communities, especially fisher folks.
- The civil society organizations through their protests, litigations and advocacy interventions to claim rights for the small-scale fishers.
- The Dry-Fish Producers occupies an interior long stretch of coastline in the Cox's Bazaar city. The research team's observation revealed that the Dry-Fish Yard Workers are economic migrants from different parts of Cox's Bazar and adjacent districts.

#### **MAHESKHALI ISLAND:**

- The Maheshkhali Island covers 362.18 sq.km land and riverine area. The Agriculture, Marine, Inland and Culture fishing, Salt harvesting, Dry Fish production and handicrafts are the livelihood avenues. According to the 2011 census, the total population of the island 3, 21,218 (58,177 Households).
- The inland water transport plays major role in the everyday life of the Island people. The boats such as Wooden Dugout boats, Planck boats, speed boats, and large size double engine speed boats are used to move locally. Here fishing in Non- Motorized boats (Row boat), Motorized boats, Mechanized multi-day fishing Boat, Mechanized longline boats and Inland Shore Seine fishing.
- They are paid low for their work and also are not provided with water and sanitation facilities, and suffer from health issues.
- *The Fishery Officer of sub-district* disclosed that we are promoting culture fisheries in a large scale in the island because our island is rich in water bodies.

#### **FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH TEAM:**

- Industrial infrastructural projects paved way for more private investments in the coastal zones resulting in alienation of small-scale fishers from fishing, particularly women.
- Moreover, the informal labourers (farming communities, handicraft, aquaculture) of Maheshkhali island were displaced to Cox's Bazar and now employed as dry fish labourers.
- The Policy documents and WB project ensure better income living standards for women, but the coastal women are living in the most vulnerable conditions
- The expansion of commercial culture fisheries has encouraged public private partnership model where all existing and available freshwater ponds and estuaries are leased out for culture fisheries. As a consequence, marginalized fishers of Maheshkhali Island were curtailed access to freshwater ponds.
- During 1996 -2000, most of the shrimp farms were closed due to the attack of the white spot virus, and they were gradually converted into salt producing industries. The market for the salt production was increasing especially after the adoption of BE model.
- Thus, the increasing economic scope of salt harvesting transformed many aquaculture farms to salt producing land. As a result, there is a gradual increase in the groundwater salinity, heavy bore wells extraction of groundwater for saltpan, and leaves Island as water scarcity island.
- The area is being restructured with several economic industrial projects. These coastal economic investment projects are likely to degrade the coastal environment and ecology.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE RESEARCH TEAM:

- The WB BSCMP project should be designed from the socio-economic and political perspectives of fisheries and the state should take immediate measures to regulate the existing culture fisheries and stop commercial leasing out of freshwater ponds, creeks, and estuaries for culture fisheries as it will have larger implications on the coastal biodiversity and violate the rights of coastal communities over resources.
- The BE maritime cooperation Agreements between Bangladesh and India in Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean region should be withdrawn. Because, this agreement is against the interests of the fishers of Bangladesh and India.
- The Government should stop forced relocation the fishers in lieu of development projects.
- The government should go for such empirical researches to ensure the protection of marine biodiversity and rights of the coastal communities.

### Thailand:

#### Adoption of BE

- Changwon Declaration, 2012 adopted by Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA) : *'Towards an ocean based Blue Economy: Moving Ahead with the Sustainable Development Strategy for the seas of East Asia'*
- Abu Dhabi declaration, 2014
- Xiamen Declaration, 2014 adopted by Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation.
- Mauritius Declaration, 2015 adopted by Indian Ocean Rim Association.

#### ASEAN agreements:

- 2011 : China-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation Fund.
- 2012 : ASEAN-China strategic partnership, Agreement on Maritime Transportation
- 2016 : *Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration* on ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership – ASEAN's commitment to Belt and Road Initiative.
- 2018 : UNGA president - Belt and Road is a commitment to SDGs
- 2019 : RCEP – ASEAN, India, China, Japan, Korea, Australia,

#### Components of BE in Thailand

<b>Component</b>	<b>Government Programmes introduced</b>
<b>Fisheries</b>	<b>Marine Fisheries Management and Anti-IUU Plan. Mariculture and Intensive Aquaculture 2.0 (Closed System).</b>
<b>Maritime trade and transport</b>	<b>Eastern Economic Corridor. Thai Land Bridge Project. Kra Canal (Thai Canal)</b>
<b>Coastal tourism</b>	<b>UNESCO GeoPark. Thai Riviera Project,</b>
<b>Energy</b>	<b>Songkhla Energy Hub Project. Thermal complex – Krabi,</b>
<b>Sea mining</b>	<b>Near coastal mining in northern Andaman Sea</b>
<b>Climate change mitigation</b>	<b>Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA). China-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation Treaty. Seawalls, bio-walls, Artificial reef programmes.</b>
<b>Blue Carbon initiatives</b>	<b>Mangrove plantations, Seagrass cultivation</b>



**Field Interactions**

- Laem Chabong : Interactions with Port Authorities, Shipping and Petrochemical company representatives, academicians, fisherfolk and civil society members on Deepsea port expansion.
- Pak Bara : Interactions with Forest officials, sub-district elected officials, fisherfolk, civil society groups on Proposed Pak Bara deepsea port
- Discussion with FisherFolk Federation of Thailand on fisheries management laws
- Songkhla lake: FGD with lake dependent communities
- Interface with government officials Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation

**Implications**

- Denial of land rights in Industrial areas; Fishing rights not recognised. Fisherfolk identity under threat. Many youth in non-fishing occupations.
- Huge role of women in fisheries based micro-enterprises, informal sector. Destruction of local economy threatens to lead to feminisation of labour, violence.
- Loss of corals, mangroves remains, and will only get worse. Availability of fish stock, species diversity
- Expansion of the Laem Chabang deepsea transshipment port is located close to the Ranong Seismic Fault Zone. Potential development induced disaster
- Legalising multi-stakeholderism through coastal and marine resources committee
- Ministerial planning is now based on SDGs
- Centralisation of powers: Local governments increasingly powerless.

**India:**

Blue Economy Growth-Development Initiatives

- Marine Fisheries
  - Aquaculture
  - Coastal Tourism
  - Offshore Renewable Energy projects
  - Marine Transport and Trade (Port-led Growth)
  - Coastal Development: Urbanization of coastal Cities
- Extraction of Marine Resources-Mining, Oil and Gas
- Desalination Plants-Lakshadweep Islands
- Marine Conservation Site -Blue Carbon
- National Coastal Mission -Encore ICZMP
- Security and Militarization
- Global Multi-lateral Agreements on BE –12 Nations

**Policy Reforms for BE**

- Neel Kranti (Blue Revolution), 2016
- National Policy on Marine Fisheries, 2017
- Draft National Policy on Mariculture, 2018
- National Inland Fisheries And Aquaculture Policy,2019
- Department of Fisheries (MatsyapalanVibhag), February 2019
- 10-point ‘Vision for the Decade’ Budget 2019-20

**LEGAL REFORMS FOR BE GROWTH**

- Blue Revolution aims at doubling the income of farmers. In the last four & half years, Rs 1915.33 crore has been released for its implementation

- Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF) will create employment opportunities for over 9.40 lakh fishermen and entrepreneurs in fishing and allied activities
- NMFP Action Plan (yet to release)
- MFR Bill 2019
- National Conservation Action Plan 2019
- Shipping Corridor 2019
- Environment Act Amendment 2019
- Offshore Energy (Blue Energy), 2018
- Beach Guidelines, 2019
- Light House Heritage Conversation 2019
- The Ship Recycle Bill 2019

## **Sri Lanka**

### **Fisheries – Crafts and Gears:**

- Small-scale Fishing communities face challenges in safe-guarding their traditional livelihoods throughout Sri Lanka, commercial fisheries development is becoming the priority.
- Fisheries policies and development plans are focused on deep sea fishing and export markets. With increased attention on Northern fisheries, the Asian Development Bank initiated a major fisheries development project for the region focused on the construction of a large fisheries harbour for deep sea fishing.
- Such largescale infrastructure projects, excludes those engaged in small-scale fishing and ignores the need for investments to uplift their livelihoods.

### **Fisheries - North**

#### **Implications :**

- Military capture of coasts – little access to coasts
- Infra projects – desalination, naval base,
- IUU fishing by southern multiday boats and Indian trawlers
- Chundikulam National Park
- Onshore Wind mills – Anai Iravu and Mannar by Malaysian, Chinese, Indian companies
- Army's coastal tourism projects
- Parithithurai commercial port (Point Pedro)
- Offshore oil exploration in Pesalai and Trincomalee
- Industrial shrimp farming and Salt harvesting in Kilinochi
- Check dams preventing freshwater meeting the sea
- Inadequate social security measures for fishers
- Fisherwomen (82000 WHF) worst victims of displacement – many still in IDPs (All mixed)
- Forced to be labour in other sectors, in extremely vulnerable work conditions

### **Fisheries – South:**

#### **Implications:**

- Colombo Port City – massive destruction at large scale to coastal ecology and near-shore fishery resources. SSF no longer have adequate fish catch.
- Prone to Sea Erosion, Sea Water Intrusion, Coastal Flooding and vulnerable to natural hazards
- EU Fish trade ban – forcing SL to bring in “sustainable fishing”.
- High-Seas, Multi Day Deep-sea boats under VMS regime, Sea Food Exporters Association trying for MSC certification.
- BUT... EU vessels, based out of Seychelles and Mauritius continue to fish in the same areas as the SL high seas Deep-sea boats. Using SL fishers as labour often.
- For the Sri Lankan Multi Day Deep-sea boats , they're constructing fishing harbours in the north supported by ADB, infringing on northern fisher's rights.



## **People's Tribunal Towards Coastal Justice:**

A people's tribunal to transform coastal governance in South and South East Asia in the context of Blue Economy

### **Objectives:**

- Production of knowledge from the ground that explores the established dominant discourse on Blue Economy and its professed merits, and to explore the socio-economic political ecological implications of Blue Economy on coastal communities especially SSF and Women
- To establish a People's Tribunal towards evolving alternate jurisprudence for coastal and marine commons.

### **Expected Outcomes:**

- Regional solidarity is strengthened and participating groups and individuals learn from other country experiences and evolve common strategies for regional, national and local issues.
- Generating knowledge from a people centric perspective to advocate changes in the policies, institutions and jurisprudence to promote an alternate ecosystem in favour of traditional marine and coastal communities especially small-scale fishers.
- Promoting a platform for the voice of the Global South which will advocate for an international legal instrument for governance and user rights over marine and coastal commons for traditional marine and coastal communities
- Traditional Marine and Coastal communities in India and other participating countries are better prepared to defend their rights given their new familiarity with the consequences of the various facets of 'blue growth' as a result of their exposure visits and participation in Tribunal.
- Dialogue is initiated with policymakers at South Asia and South East Asia Level to change their perspective through influential fora like FAO, UNDP & movements like WFFP regarding the need to protect and promote the governance and user rights of the traditional marine and coastal communities using the Global South Declaration as the advocacy tool.

### **Working Group Tasks**

- Finalisation of country reports:
- Finalisation of single research report: All country reports will be integrated into a single research report.
- A peer review session for the research report.
- Thematic papers from experts and scholars:
- Planning meetings
- Conducting the Tribunal:
  - The suggested name of the Tribunal is **"Indian Ocean/Asia Pacific People's Tribunal on the Issues and Challenges in the context of Blue Economy"**.
  - To be held in September 2020 in New Delhi.

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