

Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas of Bangladesh

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The CCAs in Bangladesh



- In Bangladesh the Wildlife (Protection and Welfare) Act, 2012 defines CCA as *“any area where in the land of government or community or individual, the plants and wild animal including traditional or cultural heritages are managed for conservation which are declared by the official gazette under section 18 of this Act .”*
- However, to conduct the present survey we followed IUCN’s definition *“either fully natural or modified ecosystems characterized by significant biodiversity, ecological services and cultural values, that are voluntarily conserved by indigenous and local communities through local laws or other effective means.”*

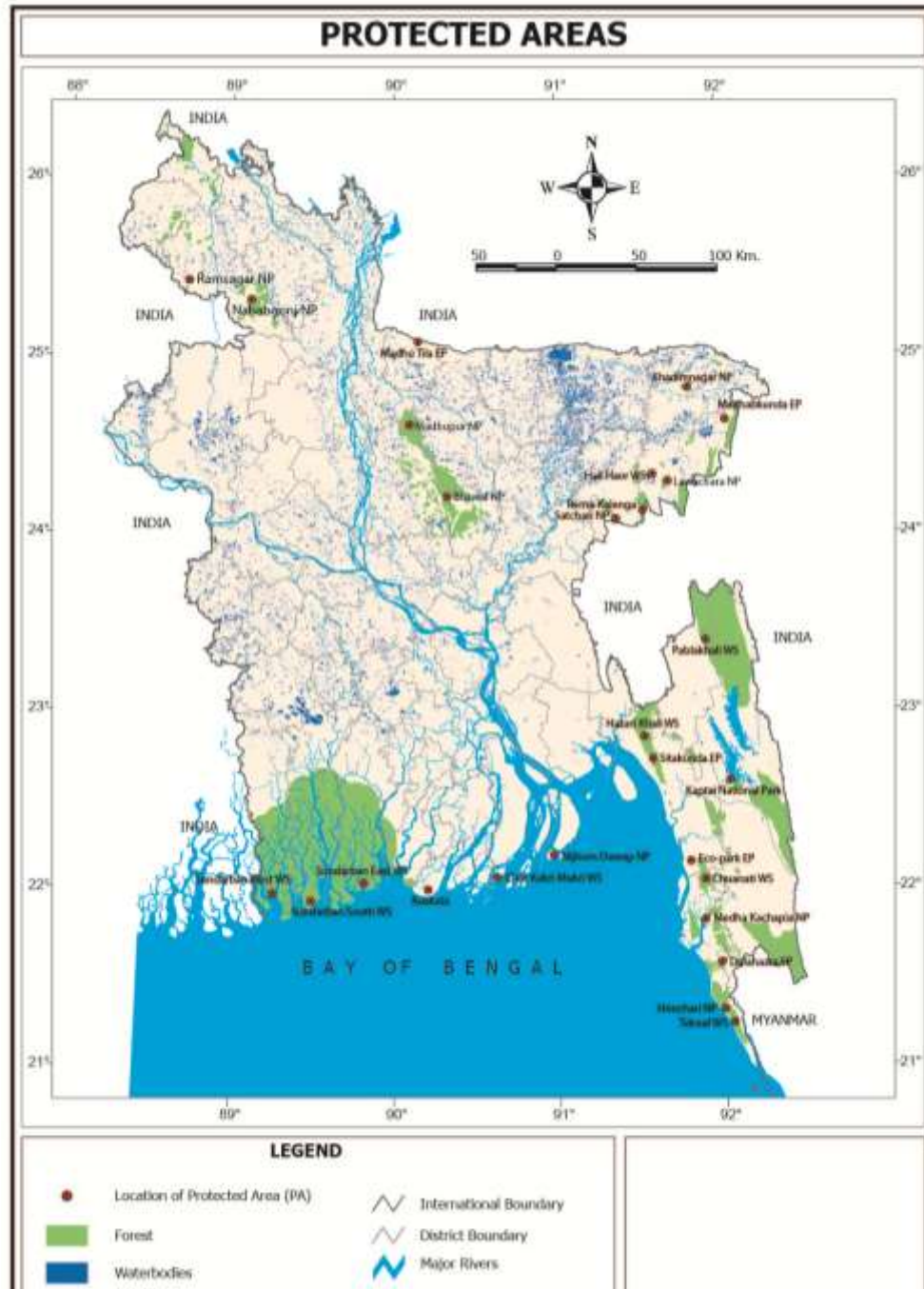
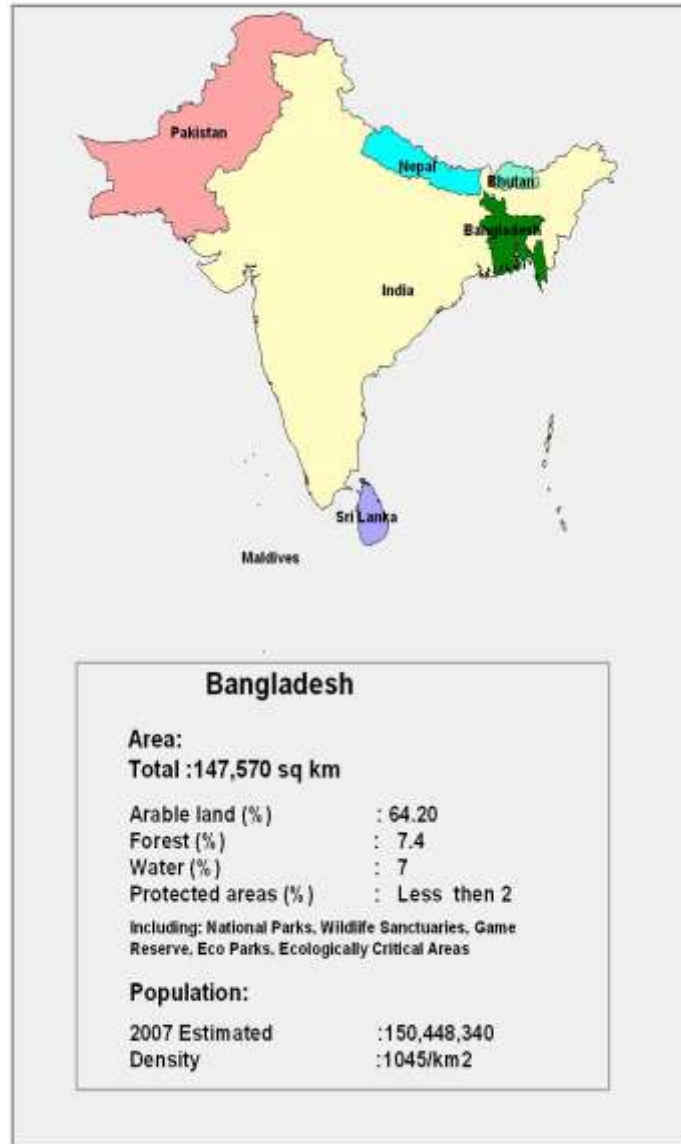
The CCAs in Bangladesh



Article 18. Declaration of Community Conservation Area: ~

- (1) Any owner or community of any land or wetland not included in landscape zone (The Government may, by notification in the official gazette and with the consent of the local community, declare any public or private area outside the reserved or protected forest area but adjacent to it as **landscape zone** or corridor for special development or to mitigate or control any kind of damage in such area and making such area suitable for the movement of wildlife) may apply to the Government for declaring such area as community conservation area to conserve the traditional or cultural values and uses of any animal or plant and for sustainable development and wildlife management of such land or wetland.
- (2) If any application is filed under sub-section (1), the Government may, by notification in the official gazette, declare the said land or wetland as community conservation area.
- (3) In so declared area under sub-section (2), co-management system can be started and concerned warden shall take necessary steps to implement the decisions taken by the co-management committee.
- (4) The Government shall, if applicable, compensate any affected owner of such declared area under sub-section (2).

PAs in Bangladesh



Nature and Types of CCAs

Aquatic or terrestrial, and are preserved for a variety of reasons:

- Spiritual or religious significance of certain species and natural areas
- Socio-cultural significance to the community
- Protection of biodiversity



The Status of CCAs in Bangladesh



- The status and spatial extent of CCAs in Bangladesh are not known with precision
- Historically, CCAs have been important common pool resources in the country
- Since the 1970s many of these CCAs have disappeared or been degraded



The Status of CCAs in Bangladesh



- Wildlife Trust of Bangladesh carried out a stocktaking of CCAs in the country:
 - Total 112 CCAs in CHTs recorded (size ranges from 3 to 260 ha)
 - Total area covered 7866 ha
 - Besides, a dozen of CCAs in other parts of the country
 - However, most of the CCAs face severe anthropogenic threats



13 CCAs in Khagrachhari

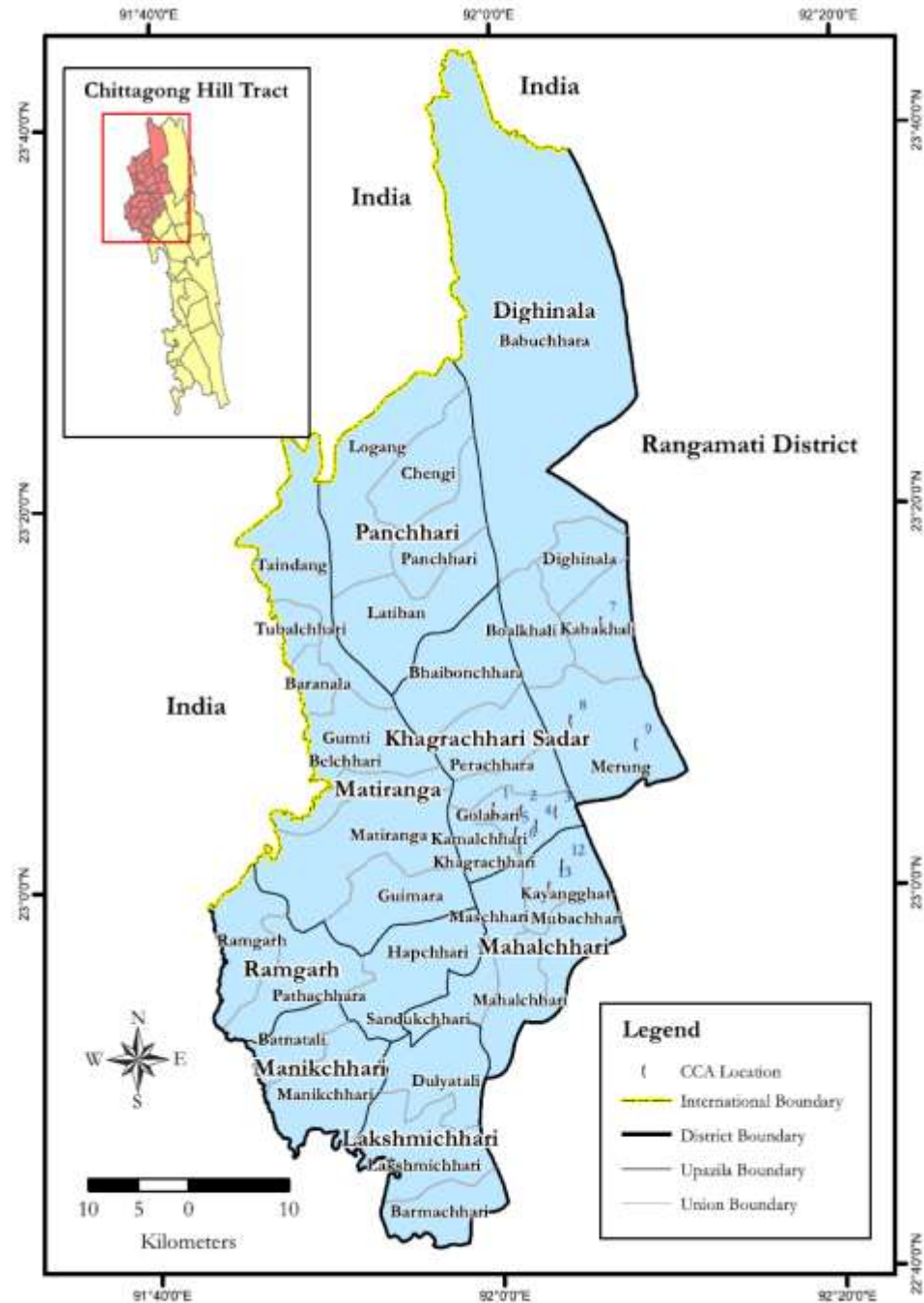


Figure 5.3. Location of CCAs in Khagrachhari district.

75 CCAs in Rangamati

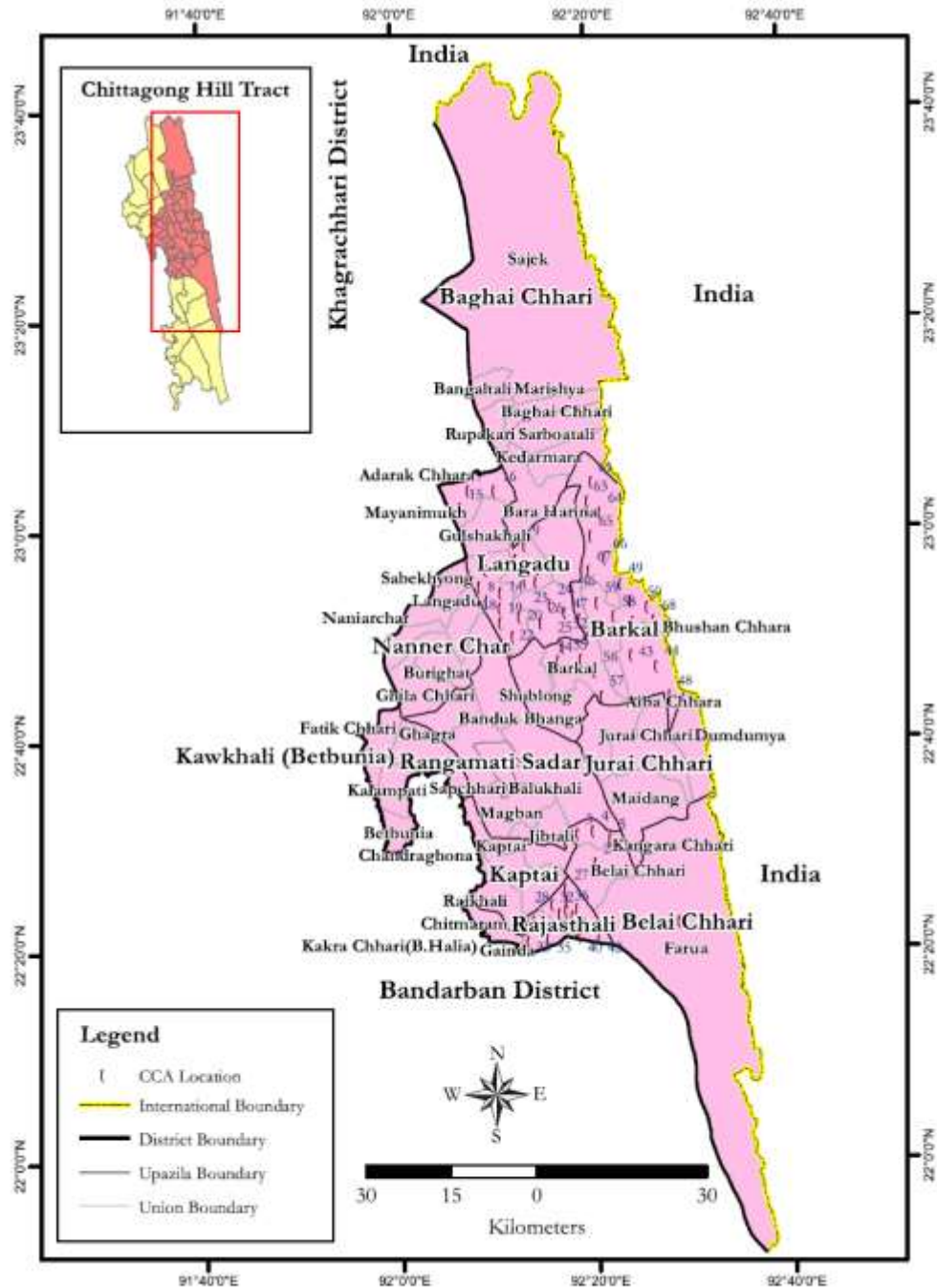


Figure 5.2. Location of CCAs in Rangamati district.

24 CCAs in Bandarban

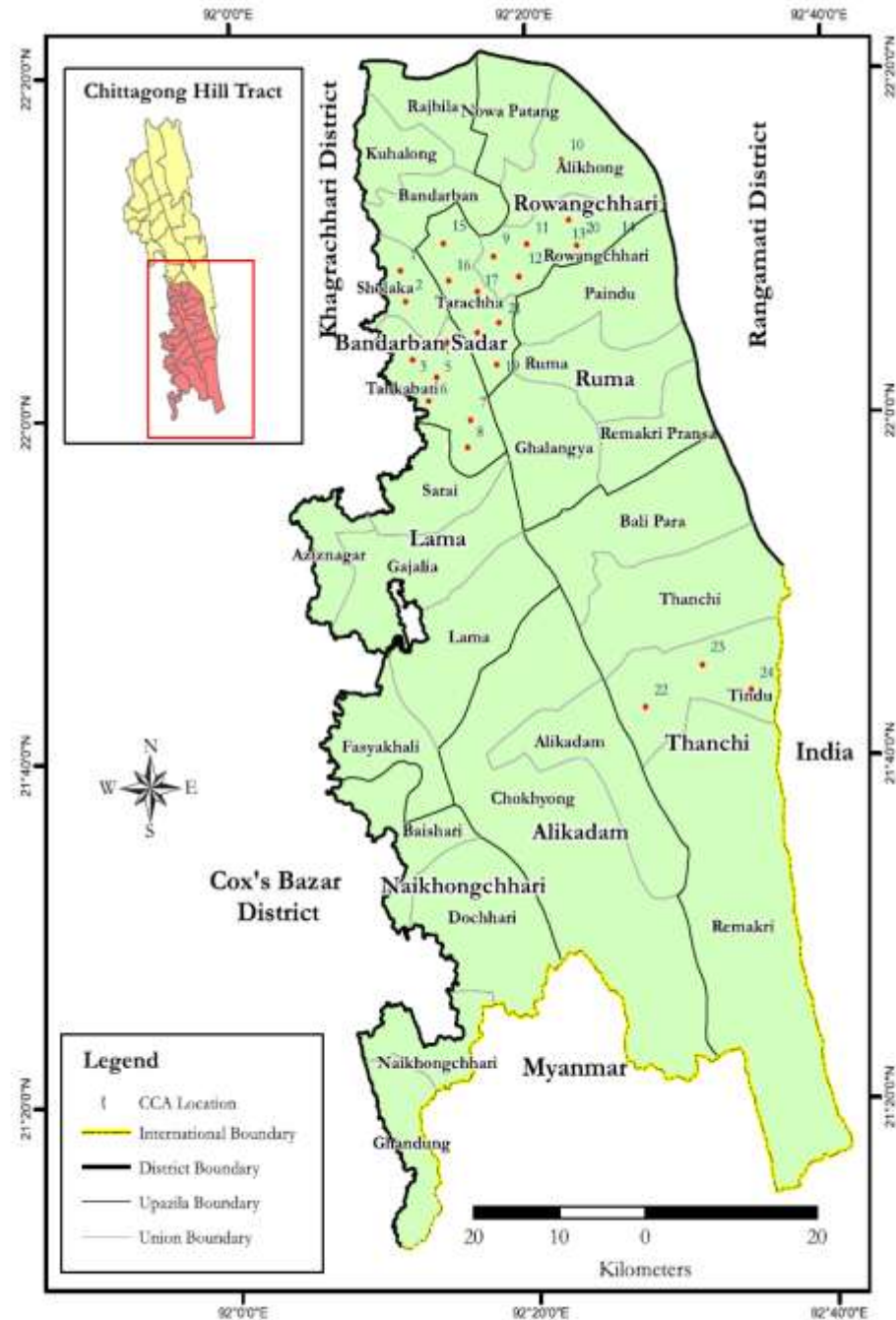


Figure 5.1. Location of CCAs in Bandarban district.

Case Study I:

Baghchari, Rangamati



- In Rangamati there is a Village Forest of about 80 ha. The forest is managed by a local committee, headed by the *karbari*, or village head. Maintaining a patch of forest adjacent to villages is a traditional practice of indigenous peoples of Bangladesh
- The community's primary objective is to provide sustainable access to water and forest resources
- The forest is mixed evergreen dominated by bamboo groves. Important species include the Hornbill, Asiatic Black Bear and Leopard



Case Study II:

Bayazid Bostami Shrine, Chittagong



- The Bayazid Bostami Shrine, named after a famous saint of Iran, has become a major place of pilgrimage for Muslims
- In front of the tomb is a large tank that houses roughly 300 freshwater turtles, locally known as Bostami Kachim (Bostami Turtle or Black Softshell Turtle)
- The turtles are looked after by the Chittagong Endowment Committee



Potential of CCAs to achieve Aichi Target



- Bangladesh has 34 PAs (17 NP, 17 WS)
- There are 5 Eco-Parks, 2 Safari Parks, and 12 ECAs
- The current PA network covers about 2% of the country
- One way to increase PA coverage in a meaningful way could be through conserving the CCAs



Status of legal recognition of CCAs in Bangladesh



- At present, CCAs are not well recognized in Bangladesh's policy and legislation
- The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation of 1900
 - Acknowledges the existence of VCFs
 - Does not recognize full community rights and ownership of VCFs
- Section 18 of the (Protection and Welfare) Act 2012
 - Outlines a process for declaration of Community Conservation Areas as PA

Status of recognition of CCAs through non-legal means



- Pochamaria Village Bamboo Grove, Rajshahi
 - Ten years ago, under the leadership of a young Union Parishad Chairman (national award winner) and a trustee of WTB, the local people formed a bird-conservation society to save a grove and roosting trees owned by the villagers
 - Roughly 10 Darters, 200 Asian Openbills, and 50 Large Cormorants use the grove and nearby trees as a roosting place in winter. Also, about 50 Black-Crowned Night Herons, 30 Little Egrets, 20 Little Cormorants and 15 Cattle Egrets use the spot as a breeding area.



Way Forward



- Proper policy and legislation that recognize CCAs as an important category of PAs
- Recognize the interfaces between CCAs, poverty and livelihoods, and climate resilience in strategic management
- Legal support for community ownership and management of CCAs
- A CCA Knowledge base
 - Stocktaking and monitoring of local CCAs
 - Knowledge networking in the region
- Awareness and capacity building in the community



THANK YOU!

