

Are Laws effective to manage Sundarbans mangrove forest in Bangladesh?

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This paper is about failure of laws and policies that are supposed to protect the natural ecosystem the Sundarbans mangrove forests. Although laws are formulated with the intent of governing the forest, wildlife and fisheries resources of the SMF in Bangladesh, the gap between such intent and the actual implementation remains wide. The study was carried out during August 2006 to February 2007, was based on secondary data and multiple qualitative data collection techniques such as key informants interviews, informal interviews, PRA tools. The existing laws, rules and regulations are obsolete, inadequate, incomplete, uncoordinated, non participatory and often contradictory causing difficulties in implementation. The enforcement lapses are inherent in the impractical nature of the laws, where regulations have been issued without considering the socio- economic impacts and technological changes that have taken place. In a 'top-down' approach, the constraints that lead to implementation failures are identified. Enactment of a new comprehensive law comprising forests, wildlife and fisheries resources, introducing collaborative management with involvement of the all the stakeholders and changing from a single sector institution to one that is capable of managing a multidimensional resource are recommended for sustainable management of the Sundarbans mangrove forest.