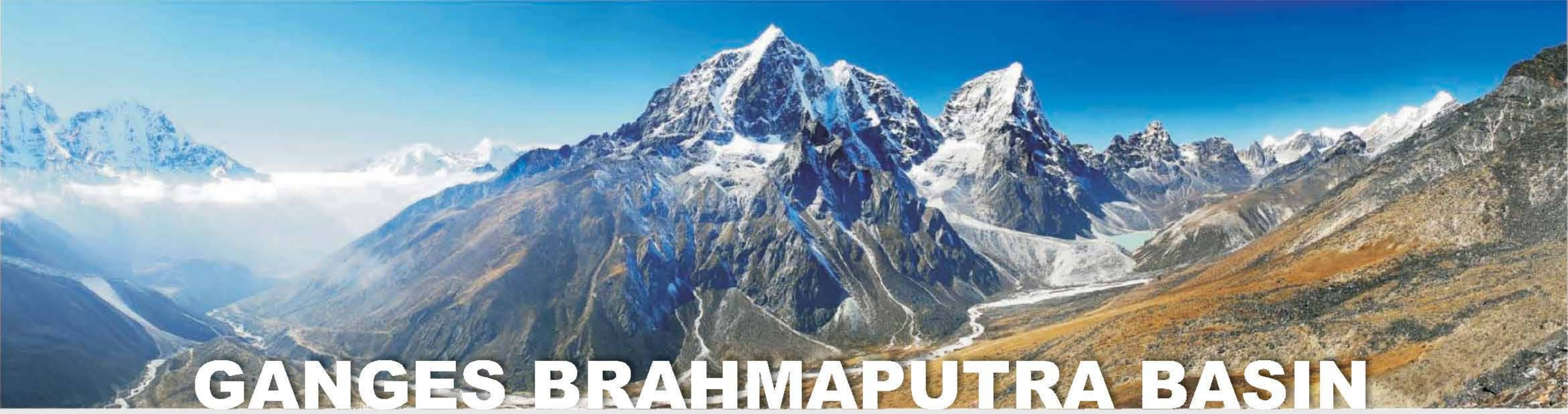

GANGES BRAHMAPUTRA BASIN

Bangladesh Part

Introduction

The Ganga is one of the important rivers in India and also plays vital role in the economy and life of people in Bangladesh where its name is Padma.The Brahmaputra that flows north slope of the Himalyan through China and later take turn to east enter India and Bangladesh and meet with Padma and fall to the Bay of Bengal in the name of The Meghna.

Blockage in the river, withdrawal of water for irrigation, interference due to urban and rural road network restricting necessary propagation of such resource. In this context FAO has taken initiative for basin based approach. through jointly organised by NIE a rigional scoping workshop during 17-20 November 2009 in New Delhi. It is hoped that through this process/.activity (scoping workshop) and programme implementation will ensure food security and strengthen biodiversity. This will achieve through integration of inland fisheries in economic activity as well as taking care of the requirement of fish habitat/environment with a harmony for a sustainable resource maintenance and harvest. This out put has been prepared by the participants of the workshop from Bangladesh

Objective

The main objective of the Ganga Brahmaputra Basin's scoping workshop is to discuss, review of status of fisheries habitats, related issues and to share experiences for making a better Basin Management Plan to benefit fisheries and regional cooperation.

Jamuna (Brahmaputra)

The Brahmaputar River enters Bangladesh in Kurigram area and continues as this name till bifurcation of Old Brahmaputra and the Jamuna River. In fact Jamuna carries most of the water and Old Brahmaputra River has become a distributary of it. Similarly Northern Dhalaeswari River also works as distributaries. Jamuna River is is important for fisheries. It also carries millions of Fish hatchilings and disperse to the floodplain in the basin. However, the flood control embankment restricts the entry of carp hatchlings all along the right bank of the Brahmaputra-Jamuna River.

Basin Features

Following are the main focus points of the Basin:

- Geography and Morphological aspects of the river and the basin
- Main Rivers that support the aquatic environment of the basin.
- Adjoining Floodplains of the main river and other floodplain within the basin.
- Dependent areas of the rivers and the oxbow lakes -beel and floodplain

Padma (Ganges)

The Ganga River enters through Rajshahi. This river flows down to Meghna River. While going down Brahmaputra River (Bangladesh's part Jamuna River meets at Aricha. Mahananda River is also an important Fisheries (Important Fish Breeding Ground) falls to Padma.

Among the distributaries and on the way of long term eastward River migration, Padma generated number of distributaries which are also important to supply freshwater to the southeast area specifically to the Sundarbans.

The Meghna Estuary is one of the important Estuaries in the world in terms of fish breeding ground, grazing area, nursery of marine, brackish and freshwater fish and non fish organisms. This estuary is one of the important Hilsha breeding ground.

Merit of Inland Fisheries in getting Priority in Overall Basin Plan

For Bangladesh and India in particular the Ganga (Padma and the Meghna in Bangladesh) and the Brahmaputra River and its dependent Basin area is very important for Fish. This is because river plays for Fish Migration role and breeding and grazing ground for riverine fish.

Millions of people and their livelihoods are dependent on fishing in these basin area. About 30 percent (in wet season about 70%) rural population go for subsistence fishing. Thus fish habitat, fish and fisheries resources play vital role and deserve adequate attention in Basin Planning.

Salient Features of Basins of Bangladesh Part

- Within the Ganga Brahmaputra Basin the features also vary from Mountain, flat land to coastal areas. Within Bangladesh part of the two river basins there are special features and following aspects are within that:
- Tidal Flow in the GDA mainly and to some extent to BDA.
- Salinity influenced habitat in the south-west region of Bangladesh and southern part of the GB which is affected by availability/flushing of freshwater from the Ganges.
- Major part of World's Largest Mangrove Forest -The Sundarbans is within the GB
- The presence of Cahrlands/islands within the Main Rivers and the Coast
- Fish Migration occurs massively in both the basins and Major Breeding Grounds also prevail here.
- Hatchling Drift-Migration takes from the Padma and the Brahmaputra in to the river and also to the floodplains

Recommendation

- Forest Protection and Enhancement (certainly not plantation) in the hills and upland areas
- Discouraging Cropping Pattern that invites soil Erosion from Mountain, hills, near Rivers
- Sustainable Mountain Development (Like ICIMOD and other programmes in Nepal)
- Riverside Ecotone Area Declaration (with ECA declaration where necessary) and Management with Swamp Forestry with swamp Plants and Reeds
- River Connectivity Areas both Tributaries and Distributaries and also with adjoining
- River connectivity in seasonal nature over the river larvae
- Floodplains if applicable to bring under proper management
- Settlements, market development, mills, factories to be with set back distance (out side Ecotone Area-if required draw Ecological boundary (though total basin is sort of ecological boundary) of the River Corridor)
- Un-biased decision among the Sectors
- To give weight of ecological aspects to some sub-sectors rather than economic return
- Studies both in country and comparative between/among countries

Problem Created by Human Action: Issues and Challenges

Following are some such human activities that posed threat to the environment particularly to the aquatic environment affecting negatively inland open water fisheries.

- Modification of River Flow due to barrage, sluice gate and water retention structures affect connectivity, river depth and early timely migration and breeding of fish
- Abstraction of Water for Irrigation, this also modify river flow to some extent
- Water Logging also appears due to water management structures especially in tidal river areas due to siltation in front of the sluice gates. Though water becomes more but that remain as stagnant, become clear and less fish breeding and change species composition.
- Excessive Shrimp Cultivation that takes place in coastal and pit basin areas affecting natural biodiversity and lot of social problems. This activity along with coastal poldering affects marine fisheries also.
- Biased Decision usually that takes giving priority to Agriculture say for example depriving fisheries sub sector or environment itself.

Let us come to protect the aquatic environment, maintain social harmony and to bring prosperity

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