

## Meeting on Developing a Media Module and an Information Pack

July 7, 2014 ( Dhaka, Bangladesh)

### Meeting Minutes

The meeting was attended by Bushra Nishat, Project Manager, Ecosystems for Life : A Bangladesh – India Initiative, Bangladesh, AJM Zobaidur Rahman Soeb, communications officer, IUCN Bangladesh, Dipankar Aich , E4L dialogue coordinator, IUCN Bangladesh, , Mohammad Al Masum Molla, research associate, Development Media Ltd, Nazrul Islam, team leader, Development Media Ltd. From Calcutta Research Group (hereafter CRG)Atig Ghosh, Milan Dutta and Madhurilata Basu took part in the meeting .

At the beginning Bushra Nishat, welcomed the joint research team and gave an overall description of the project. She talked about the need to have a resource pack. It was followed by a power-point presentation by the team from Calcutta Research Group. Highlighting the need to incorporate research work from both deltaic Bengal and India's Northeast, the presentation gave an overview of the work done by the India Team. Journalists, researchers, activists and lawyers have worked together in this research endeavour and the issues of ecology, politics, resources, livelihood, displacement, everyday struggle and negotiation etc. have been addressed in their works.

Along with the above issues, the work by the Indian team also highlighted the following:

- The need to have an interface between journalists and academicians.
- Recognizing the vulnerable situation of the people living in protracted displacement, because of natural disasters and river erosion.
- The need to understand the nature and organization of grass-root resistance.
- The need to sensitize both media and policymakers.

### Comments:

It was suggested that while talking about a river, for instance Brahmaputra, then it should be mentioned as “Brahmaputra/Jamuna Valley” as the rivers' names are country specific.

It was also pointed out that officially, Bangladesh cannot write ‘Padma’ as they have to write Ganges.

The presentation by the Development Media, team followed. In their work they had provided basic information and an overview of the GBM basin and 54 common rivers, information about the catchment area of the GBM basin, etc. They have also mentioned various developmental projects, status on inland navigation. They also mentioned that copies of a few important treaties would also be part of their report.

**Comments:**

- India-China agreement on Brahmaputra needs to be added
- Inland navigation: status of Master Dredging project in Bangladesh to be added
- Criticism of JRC- it should be added by both BD and India

**Comments from IUCN on the Information Pack:**

- A river is not only a flow of water, but also many people’s life, history and culture. Our goal should be to convey this message to the reporters and in turn, to the policy makers
- We work with the government, so we cannot use any harsh language
- It is a very sensitive issue for both the countries, so we need to be very careful
- Overview of 54 rivers- some special characters of few rivers should be mentioned
- Further analysis of inland navigation is needed since it is very important for both countries’ trade and commerce (**mention of protocol routes**)
- A brief mention of the River linking project, cooperation on early warning on floods can be useful.

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About the Information Pack, the following things were discussed:

**Structure of the Information Pack-**

**Merged Executive Summary** (max 20 pages)



**Merged Index** (Key to Readers)



**Basic Information:**

1. History of the trans-boundary rivers- GBM as in BD report. India team will incorporate their comments
2. Description of 54 joint rivers including maps
  3. MET data- country wise
  4. River training- country wise
5. Inland navigation- India team will incorporate their comments



**Law/Treaties and Best Practices:**

1. Agreements/treaties between BD and India
2. Negotiation
3. JRC
4. History of JRC meetings
5. Successful treaties (Mekong river commission, Nile River Commission)
6. International laws, conventions, protocols, treaties
7. National laws (BD)/ Policies (India)
8. Fisheries, wetland and haor development
9. Convention on Biological Diversity
10. Ramsar Convention
11. ECA act

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**Ground Realities**

(This part will be separate: under each of the subheading- BD and India)

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**Media Perspective**

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**List of Resource Persons/Organizations and Glossary**

(This part will be separate)

- Both Development Media Limited and Calcutta Research Group have proposed for another meeting of three days to finalize the information pack. Tentative date: **July 18-July 21, 2014**.
- If the proposed meeting cannot be organized, the JRT will share the draft report on or before **July 31, 2014**
- Final information pack will be handed over to IUCN on **August 15, 2014**

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About the workshop a few ideas were exchanged. A three day workshop was thought to be important for testing both the Media Module and the Resource Pack. Other details pertaining to the workshop are as follows:

**Tentative Venue:**

It was decided that it would be better to organize the workshop in a third country, ( not in India or Bangladesh). The venue could be Bangkok (Thailand), Kathmandu ( Nepal). If things can be arranged, then Sunderbans, could also be an option for the workshop.

**Participants:**

India- 8, Bangladesh- 7. Total- 15

**Research Persons:**

India- 4, Bangladesh- 3. Total- 7

**Day 1:**

- Ice-breaking Session (**IUCN**)
- Introduction- overview of the whole theme (**1 RP**)
- Introducing the study material- Media Resource Pack (**CRG and DML**)
- Participatory sessions- open discussion
- Film screening followed by discussion

**Day 2:**

- Rivers and Development ( Lecture by 3 panelists): 2hours including 1.30hour of panel presentation and 30minutes discussion.
- Tea break: 11.00-11.30
- River Ecosystem (biodiversity, IWRM): 11.30- 1.30
- Lunch: 1.30-2.30
- Rivers, Connectivity and Inland Navigation ( 2 panelists): 1hour
- Sharing Experiences from the Field: 1hour
- Film screening followed by discussion

**Day 3:**

- Laws and treaties (2 panelists)- 1hour
  - Presentation on ideas and key questions
  - Lessons learned from the workshop
  - Lunch
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