

Ecosystems for Life: Bangladesh and India Initiative

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The *Ecosystems for Life: A Bangladesh-India Initiative* is an IUCN lead multi-stakeholder dialogue process to promote insights into trans-boundary issues across the three major river systems: Ganges, Brahmaputra and the Meghna (GBM). The role of ecosystems services for environmental security is rarely considered in natural resource management practices. Given the hydro-ecological diversity within the region, ecosystems services assume varied dimensions and implications across the various systems depending on location, setting and bio-physical dynamics. This research is to focus on the types of ecosystem services in the riverine *chars* situated in the upstream and downstream reaches of the Brahmaputra-Jamuna and the Ganges river system of India and Bangladesh. The people living in these areas are amongst the least served and most marginalised, thus their livelihood strategies are completely based on ecosystem services unique to their environment. The research will identify ways to better incorporate their value into decision-making processes. IUCN has established a Joint Research Team comprising research groups from both Bangladesh and India. The IDSK team is pursuing the research on the 'chars' of the Lower Gangetic Basin, especially Malda and Murshidabad, i.e., upstream and downstream of the Farakka Barrage.