



REGIONAL FLYWAY INITIATIVE TRAINING SERIES: Workshop on Wetland Ecosystem Services and Nature-based Solutions **BANGLADESH**

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Identifying priority sites for migratory waterbirds in Bangladesh

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Importance of Bangladesh for migratory waterbirds

Image | Sayam U. Chowdhury



Image | Sayam U. Chowdhury



Image | Sayam U. Chowdhury

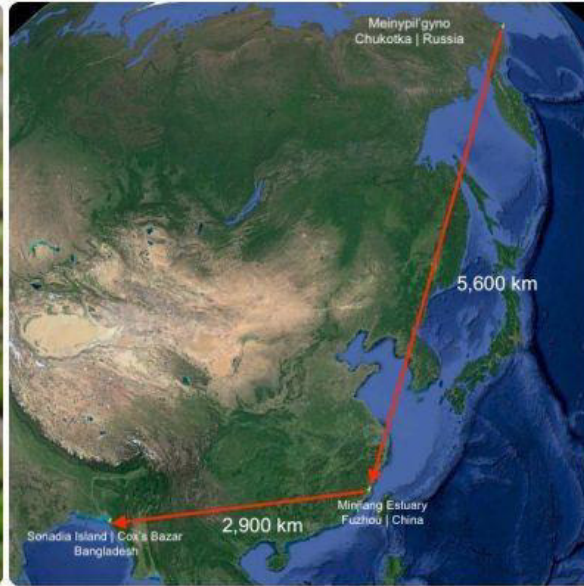
Image | Francis Franklin

1998.



- **Bangladesh** sits at the confluence of two 'flyways' – East Asian-Australasian Flyway and Central Asian Flyway
- Extremely rich deltaic coastal and floodplain wetlands
- Used by large congregations of migratory waterbirds
- **Spoon-billed Sandpiper** (CR), **Indian Skimmer** (EN), **Masked Finfoot** (CR), and several duck sp. (e.g., **Ferruginous Duck** (NT), **Common Shelduck**)

Bangladesh wetlands are key wintering sites for Spoon-billed Sandpiper



(Source: Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force/Bangladesh Spoon-billed Sandpiper Project)

- 'X7' Leg-flagged in Chukotka, Russia in July 2023,
- Staged briefly in Fujian (Minjiang Estuary), China in October 2023.
- Traveled to Sonadia Island, Bangladesh and was spotted in late November 2023 during BSCP surveys.
- Covering over 8,500 km!

RFI Site Selection Process for Bangladesh

CRITERIA

Biological importance

- EAAF migratory bird congregations
- Key waterbird life cycle events at site, i.e. critical staging ('refuelling') habitat, moulting area, etc.
- Critical sites for migratory connectivity of key species
- Extensive, high quality intertidal and associated habitats present (based on available data)

Conservation potential

- Conservation actions underway at site, with opportunities for strengthening, e.g. (stronger management)
- Opportunity to take effective action at site because of support from government and local community

Identifying the most important wetland sites in Bangladesh

Developing preliminary site list based on diverse data sources and national experts

Review by wetland/bird experts from BCST, BirdLife, Wetlands International, EAAFP, Universities

Compile and format recent bird count datasets using AWC data, and other surveys and studies

Calculate averaged max. counts for each species and benchmark against latest WPE6 1% thresholds

Compute site scores based on species %. Rank site by scores



RFI Site Selection Process for Bangladesh

Data source on internationally important sites for migratory waterbirds in Bangladesh

- **Asian Waterbird Census** (for Bangladesh)
- Site Information Sheets (**East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership**)
- Ramsar Information Sheets (**Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**)
- Project reports
- Published reports and peer-reviewed papers by researchers

Experts consulted

Doug Watkins, Taej Mundkur, Sayam U. Chowdhury (Bangladesh Spoon-billed Sandpiper Project, SCOPE, University of Cambridge) & Enam Ul Haque (Wetlands International)

RFI coordination team

Mike Crosby, Shelby Wee, Ding Li Yong and Tom Lambert (cartography)

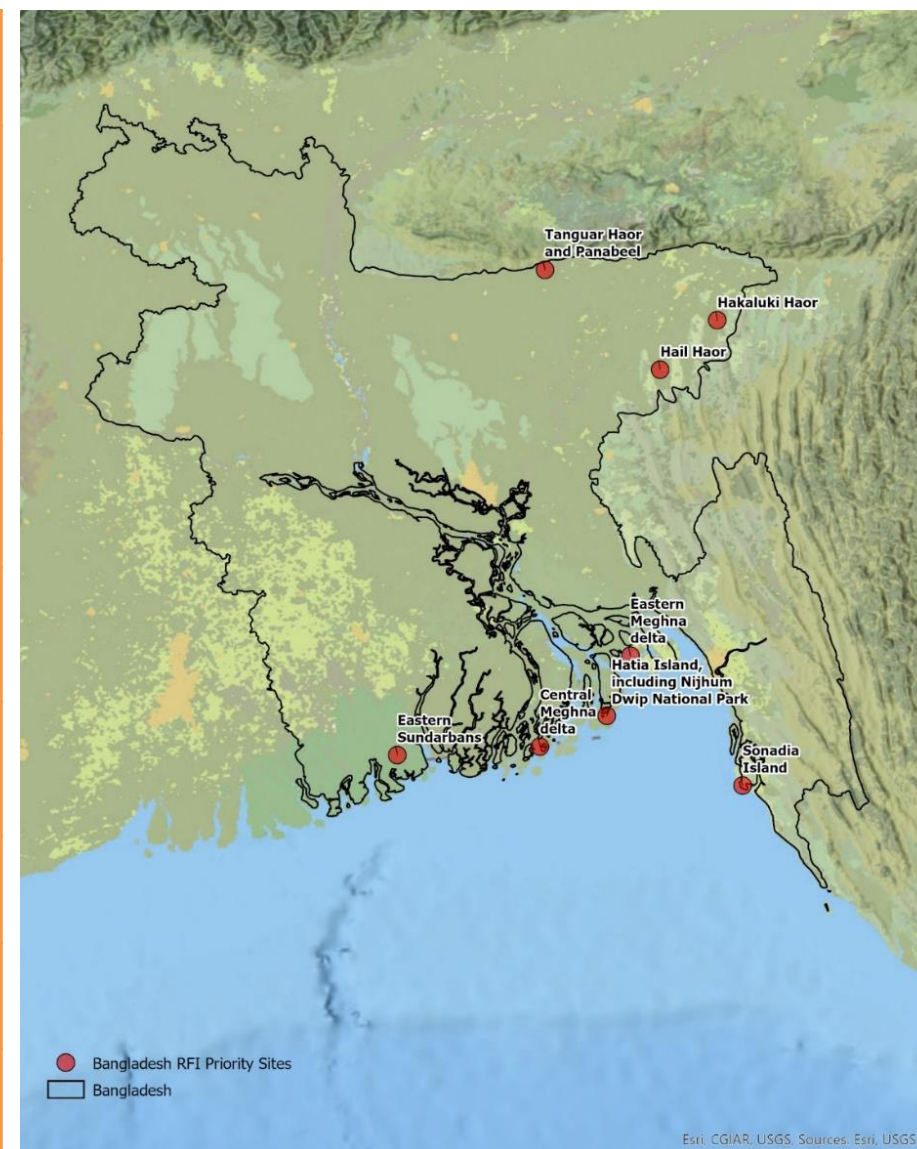
Summary of site prioritisation process

- Number of sites assessed · 8+
- Number of priority sites identified · 8
- Number of priority coastal sites · 5
- Number of priority freshwater sites · 3
- Number of sites overlapping with protected area(s) · 8
- Species occurring in large congregations ($\geq 1\%$) · 17 species including Spoon-billed Sandpiper (CR), Indian Skimmer (EN), Masked Finfoot (CR), several anatid sp. (e.g. Ferruginous Duck, Common Shelduck)
- Source of count and site data · Asian Waterbird Census, project reports, peer-reviewed papers



RFI Site Selection Process for Bangladesh

Site	Division	Species	Summed score for species meeting 1% thresholds (CSR1)
Eastern Sundarbans	Khulna	Ruddy Shelduck, Masked Finfoot* (CR), Lesser Sand Plover ¹	42.0
Eastern Meghna Delta	Chattogram	Indian Skimmer* (EN), Lesser Sand Plover, Spoon-billed Sandpiper (CR), Broad-billed Sandpiper	30.3
Hatia Island (including Nijhum Dwip National Park)	Chattogram	Indian Skimmer* (EN), Lesser Sand Plover, Black-headed Ibis	16.9
Tanguar Haor and Panabeel	Sylhet	Ferruginous Duck, Garganey, Black-tailed Godwit, Gadwall, Common Teal	16.2
Hakaluki Haor	Sylhet	Fulvous Whistling-duck, Ferruginous Duck, Black-headed Ibis, Asian Openbill	7.6
Sonadia Island	Chattogram	Lesser Sand Plover, Spoon-billed Sandpiper (CR)	4.9
Central Meghna Delta	Barisal	Black-headed Ibis, Lesser Sand Plover, Common Shelduck	3.5
Hail Haor (including Bakka Beel)	Sylhet	Pacific Golden Plover	1.1



Phase 2 of site selection process
Characterising the ecosystem
services value of candidate RFI
sites and refining list of sites of
high priority

Next Steps



SUPPORT

- Provide information on government priorities, data on sites, and central and local partners to engage (**completed**)



FOCAL POINT

- Identify focal point to move forward with dialogue on RFI development (**completed**)



PHASE 1: Site Selection Activities

- Questions/clarification on Phase 1 activities to date (**completed**)



PHASE 2: Ecosystem Services

- Initial response on Phase 2 activities and arrangements for the ES workshop (**ongoing, now!**)



PHASE 2: Capacity Development & Stakeholder Engagement

- RFI Capacity Building questionnaire for wetland managers (**ongoing, now!**)



Q & A



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