



Introductory Statement – Bangladesh

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It is a great pleasure for us to be associated with the Chapter on Bangladesh in the CCC Publication of Robbert Misdorp.

We all realise that climate change is becoming more and more a reality and Bangladesh will suffer heavily from its adverse impacts. The coastal area of Bangladesh is not only a vulnerable zone but also one of many opportunities. The coastal zone was badly hit by devastating cyclone “Aila” in 2009; some victims are still homeless and jobless. Increasing population, competition for limited resources, natural and man-made hazards, lack of proper economic opportunities, important ecological hot spots (Sundarbans, St. Martin Island) - are all issues that call for a continuation of the structured coastal management approach, particularly to address the negative, near-future impacts of climate change.

Considering this need, it is noted that with the support of the Governments of the Netherlands and the UK, the Ministry of Water Resources of Bangladesh through its macro-planning arm — “Water Resources Planning Organisation” — has already prepared the Coastal Zone Policy (2005), Coastal Development Strategy (2006), Integrated Coastal Resources Database (2006) and Priority Investment Programmes (2006) focusing on the vulnerabilities and opportunities in the coastal zone. We note with great satisfaction that our Government supported these efforts and activities by giving approval to all these documents in a timely way. Bangladesh is willing to carry out the next steps in implementation of the coastal policies, plans and programmes. However, these steps need strong support from the development partners to protect the people and fragile ecosystem of the coastal zone of Bangladesh.

In fact, international cooperation has played an important part in helping us to fulfil our commitment to the coastal community. We look forward to receiving further cooperation and assistance as a follow-up to the identified and initially analysed fields such as: “Vulnerability Assessment”, “First Steps ICZM”, “Estuary Water Monitoring”, “Polderisation” and “Priority Investment Programmes”. Renewed cooperation especially in the process of institutionalisation of ICZM, adaptation to climate change, strengthening of embankments, land reclamation and silt management are areas where assistance from others including the Government of the Netherlands is appreciated. Furthermore, development coordination is crucial for aid harmonisation and effectiveness. We whole-heartedly acknowledge the dedicated support of the Netherlands in the water sector in the past and wish that the bond of friendship for improving living standard of our most vulnerable people will always meet on common ground.

This Climate of Coastal Cooperation (CCC) publication will enhance the knowledge and understanding on the vulnerabilities of the coastal zone of Bangladesh to socio-economic developments, hazards and impacts of future climate change. The role played by the government agencies, development partners, NGOs, and communities is inspiring. Our efforts at implementing Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) to address coastal vulnerabilities will be helpful both for Bangladesh and for other coastal countries.