Haor's Song, Haor's Silence: A Visual Narrative of Tanguar

Welcome to Tanguar Haor, a vital wetland where people and nature thrive together. This photo story reveals how this rich ecosystem provides fish, clean water, and a lifeline for the communities who call it home. See how people and nature live side-by-side, relying on each other in this special corner of the world.

Nature’s Contributions: The Ecosystem Services of Tanguar Haor



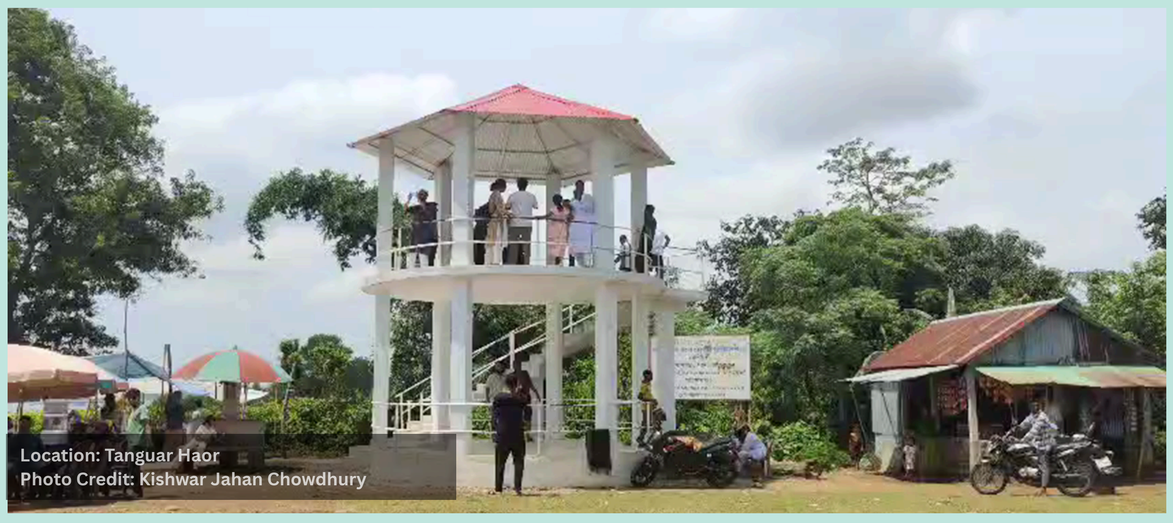
Fish Production: "Mother Fishery" Supporting over 40,000 People (en.wikipedia.org)



Houseboat tourism: inspired by Rabindranath Tagore’s tradition since 2021 (en.wikipedia.org)



Local people make traditional fish traps like ‘Chai’ and baskets from cane to catch and carry fish as part of the Haor’s ecosystem services



Bird-watching supports eco-tourism, an important recreational ecosystem service



Mobile shops enhance ecosystem-based livelihoods by ensuring access to goods and services for remote communities and tourists in the haor region



Locals run eco-cottages in the haor, offering nature-based hospitality

Act Before It’s Lost: Haor’s Threatened Treasures



Poor waste management harms the soil and pollutes the haor’s delicate environment



Ghost nets are damaging wetland plants by tangling, tearing, and blocking sunlight



Waste from tourist boats threatens water quality



Sound pollution by Houseboat threatens biodiversity

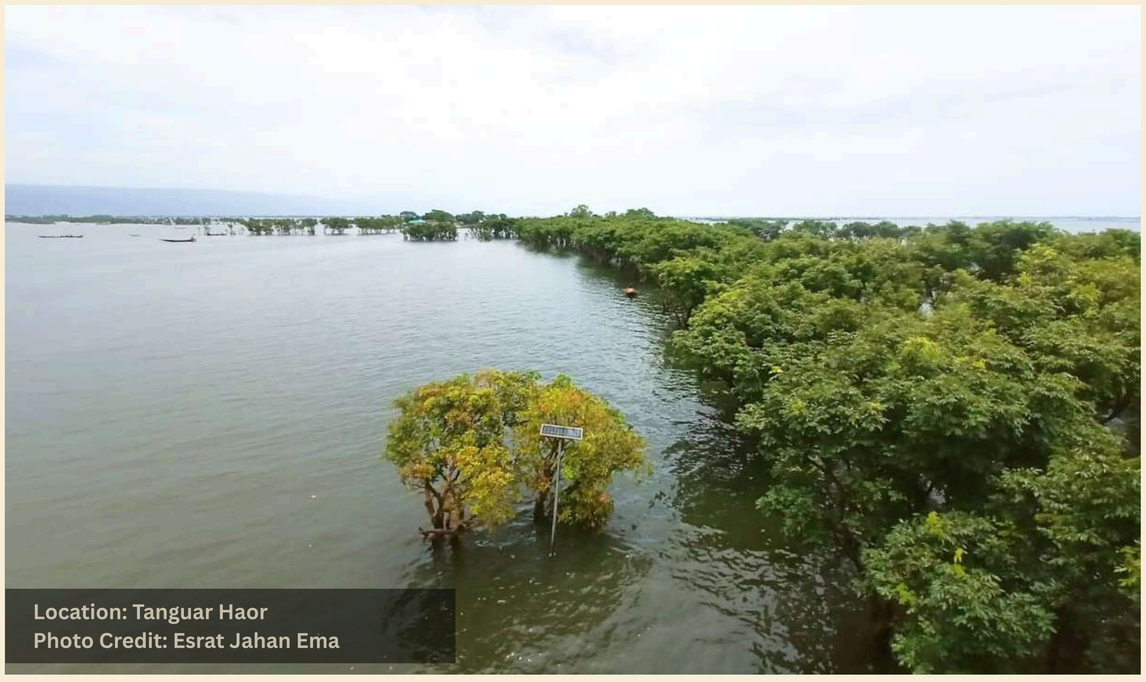
Scan to know about IUCN report - Assessing Ecosystem Services

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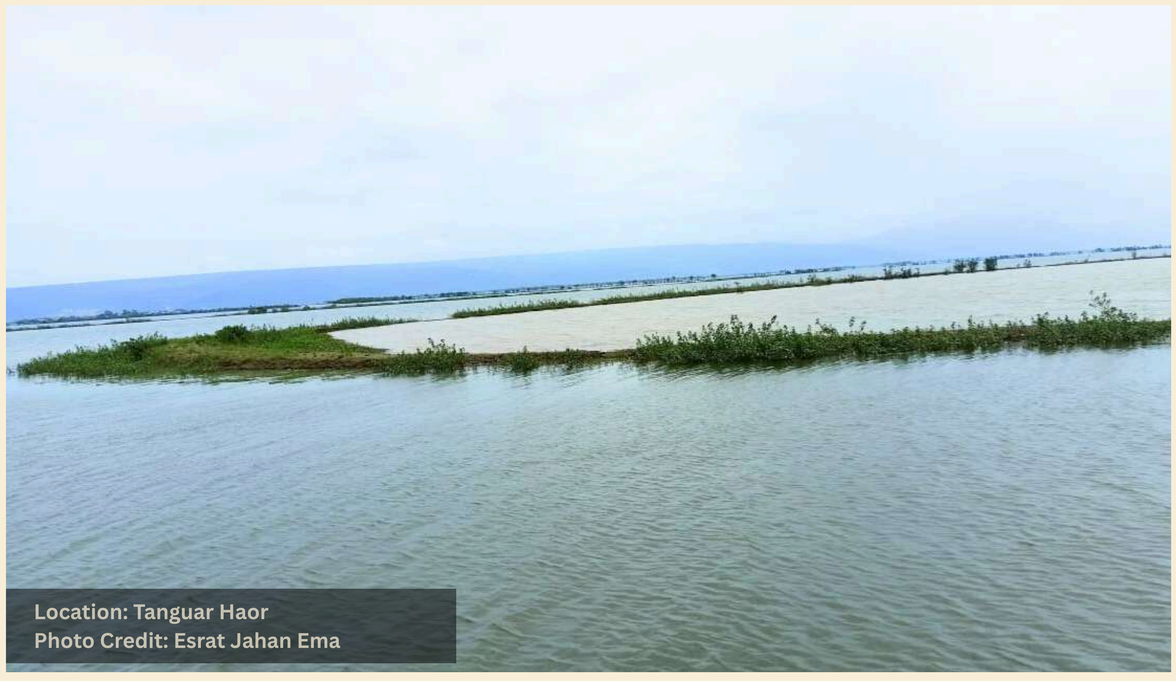
Living Waters: Nature-based Solutions to Sustain Tanguar Haor

Tanguar Haor, a Ramsar-designated wetland in northeastern Bangladesh, is a vital ecosystem supporting rich biodiversity, local fisheries, and thousands of livelihoods. This poster highlights how Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are being implemented to enhance ecosystem resilience, protect biodiversity, and improve the well-being of haor-dependent communities.

Current Community-led NbS Practices



The Hijal tree (*Barringtonia acutangula*) and Kancha. Hijal tree can withstand submersion for four to six months and protect the haor from Flash Flood Waves (AFAL)



Earthen embankment plays the role to safe Boro Crop and it also uses for local transport



Manmade “Ujaira Bon”: An example of buffer against Flash Flood Waves (AFAL)



A house in the middle of the haor is surrounded by water, where the plinth is protected using soil bags, bamboo, and Ujaira Bon, forming a natural buffer against flash flood waves (AFAL)



Koroch (*Pongamia pinnata*) tree for protecting haor from Flash Flood Waves (AFAL)



Kandas (transitional lands) are being eroded as soil is removed to protect homes from flood waves

Potential NbS can be tailored



Promote Floating Gardens



Expand Sanctuary Networks



Restore Native Vegetation on Embankments



Community-Based Wetland Fisheries Management

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IUCN's Nature-based Solutions

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Floating Futures: Resilient Livelihoods of the Haor

Tanguar Haor, Bangladesh's second-largest Ramsar site, is a vital wetland ecosystem in the northeast, supporting over 70,000 people across 46 villages. Rich in biodiversity and natural resources, it sustains local livelihoods through fishing, farming, and wetland-based activities. Beyond its ecological value, the haor acts as a buffer against floods and plays a key role in climate resilience. (Sources: en.wikipedia.org, researchgate.net, asia.fes.de)

The Livelihood Landscape of Tanguar Haor



Location: Tanguar Haor
Photo Credit: Fahmida Sultana

Agriculture in Tanguar Haor is seasonal and highly dependent on water levels. Farmers grow boro paddy during the dry months, but crops face constant threats from early floods and waterlogging, making food security and livelihoods increasingly vulnerable.



Location: Tanguar Haor
Photo Credit: Swapan Kumar/SUST

Fishing is a lifeline for thousands in Tanguar Haor. With over 140 species of freshwater fish, this wetland supports both biodiversity and the economy, feeding families, fuelling markets, and sustaining traditional livelihoods across ~46 villages.



Location: Tanguar Haor
Photo Credit: Esrat Jahan Ema

Boat-making is a vital craft in Tanguar Haor, where waterways dominate daily life for nearly half the year. Local artisans build traditional wooden boats that serve as essential transport, fishing vessels, mobile shops, and even floating homes, powering the wetland economy and preserving cultural heritage.

Stone collection provides essential income for many haor communities, offering seasonal work that supports families. However, unregulated extraction can lead to erosion, habitat loss, and long-term damage to the wetland ecosystem.



Location: Tanguar Haor
Photo Credit: Esrat Jahan Ema

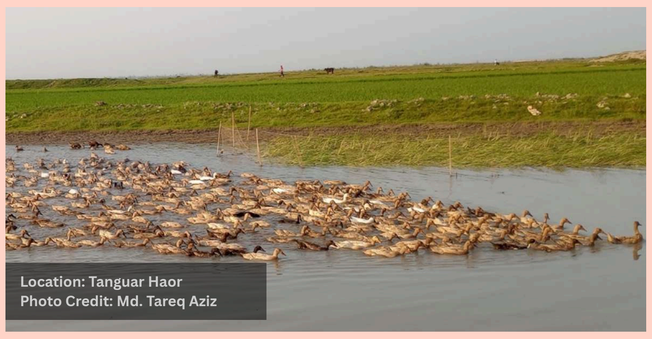


Location: Tanguar Haor
Photo Credit: Md. Tareq Aziz



Location: Tanguar Haor
Photo Credit: Esrat Jahan Ema

Local boat transport is a vital livelihood in Tanguar Haor, connecting communities, supporting trade, and sustaining families during the six-month flood season.



Location: Tanguar Haor
Photo Credit: Md. Tareq Aziz



Location: Tanguar Haor
Photo Credit: Esrat Jahan Ema

Local shop businesses support daily life, offering essential goods and income for families, especially during the flood season. Both men and women run and gather in these shops, making them vibrant social and economic spaces.



Location: Tanguar Haor
Photo Credit: Esrat Jahan Ema

Duck rearing and cattle grazing are key livelihoods in Tanguar Haor, providing food and income for local families. These practices are well-adapted to the seasonal wetland, though overgrazing can impact plant diversity and soil health.



Location: Tanguar Haor
Photo Credit: Kishwar Jahan Chowdhury

Young people earn a living by giving motorbike rides to tourists exploring the area



Location: Tanguar Haor
Photo Credit: Swapan Kumar/SUST

Mobile shops support local livelihoods by delivering products to remote communities and tourists

Scen to know about IIntroduction to Community-Based Haor by IUCN

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Amplify Youth Power to Shape Resilient Meghna Basin Futures

Youth are rising as changemakers in Tanguar Haor and across the Meghna Basin. Through workshops and exchanges, they are voicing bold ideas to protect wetlands and design climate-resilient futures.

Dreams in Still Water: Youth Voices from Tanguar Haor



Six Months of Silence

In Tanguar Haor, life moves with the water. For nearly six months of the year, the entire area remains submerged. During this time, many children are unable to attend school, the journey becomes too long, too deep, and too risky. With schools far away and no safe transport across the water, education becomes seasonal. Six months of learning, six months of silence



Dreams Drowned Too Early

Many young people lose motivation to continue school. The long distance, the cost of transport, and the pressure to support their families lead many to drop out. For some, survival feels more urgent than schooling. Instead of lessons, they take up work, fishing, farming, or running small boats. Their dreams get delayed, or sometimes, disappear beneath the waves



Fun Finds a Way

With no dry fields to play on, local boys turn this small shop into their playground spending free time around a carrom board during the long flooded months of the haor



Before the Play Begins, Life Begins

In the haor, many girls are married off at an early age, driven by poverty, limited access to education, cultural expectations, and climate-induced insecurity. While boys find moments to play, girls often stay home, tied to household chores and responsibilities.

Youth Perspectives on River Basin Management





At the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology workshop, youth called for stronger basin management, urging integrated planning, a more empowered JRC, youth inclusion, knowledge exchange, and climate action in the haor.





At a haor school workshop, children voiced strong concerns, calling to stop large infrastructure like airports, ban harmful hunting of fish and birds, and end the use of chemical fertilizers in haor agriculture.

Scen to know about
IUCN Youth Strategy 2022-2030

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