



NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING, REPORTING, AND MANAGING OTHER EFFECTIVE AREA-BASED CONSERVATION MEASURES (OECMs) IN BANGLADESH



Forest Department
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

April 2026

The designation of geographical entitles in this publication and the presentation of the material do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of Bangladesh Forest Department and Arannayk Foundation concerning the legal status of any country, territory, administration, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The information, database and views expressed in this publication are not necessarily reflecting those of the Bangladesh Forest Department and Arannayk Foundation.

The publication has been made possible by Bangladesh Forest Department with support from Arannayk Foundation.



Copyright: © 2026, Bangladesh Forest Department.
Reproduction of this publication for educational or other non-commercial purposes is authorized without prior written permission from the copyright holder provided the source is fully acknowledged.

Reproduction of this publication for resale or other commercial purposes is prohibited without prior written permission from the copyright holder.

Citation: Bangladesh Forest Department, (2026). National Guidelines for Assessing, Reporting and Managing Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in Bangladesh.
Bangladesh Forest Department, Dhaka, Bangladesh, pp v + 41

ISBN: 978-984-37-0575-4

Design: Arifur Rahman, Arannayk Foundation

Cover Photo: Front: Yang Ring Mro Para Ban, Naikyongchari, Bandarban
©Arannayk Foundation/Biplob Chakma
Back: Vhangamura Jadi Tug VCF ©Arannayk Foundation/Biplob Chakma

Published by: Arannayk Foundation

Available from: Office of the Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests, Education and Training Wing, Bangladesh Forest Department, Agargaon, Dhaka.



Photo: Forestry Science and Technology Institute ©Arannayk Foundation/Zawiyad Bin Mostofa

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Guidelines for Assessing, Reporting and Managing Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in Bangladesh provide a national framework to expand biodiversity conservation beyond formal Protected Areas (PAs). With less than 5% of Bangladesh's land currently under legal protection, OECMs present a vital mechanism to conserve biodiversity-rich landscapes, maintain ecological connectivity and contribute to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework target of protecting 30% of terrestrial and marine areas by 2030. The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) include a target to recognize 2,000 hectares of OECMs by 2030. The Government has recently enacted the Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act, 2026, which includes provisions for the recognition of OECMs under Section 23(4) and for the formulation of comprehensive management guidelines under Section 23(5). These guidelines will comply the commitments made under this Act.

These guidelines have been developed in line with global standards, drawing on the Site-Level Tool for Identifying Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs), First Edition (IUCN WCPA Technical Report Series) and the User Manual for the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and the World Database on OECMs: Version 1.6 (UNEP-WCMC). Adapting these international tools to the national context, the framework establishes a structured process for identifying, assessing, and managing OECMs across terrestrial, inland water and coastal & marine ecosystems.

A standardized assessment framework ensures that recognized sites deliver long-term biodiversity outcomes, uphold effective governance and safeguard ecosystem services. Verified sites are recommended for reporting to the World Database on OECMs (WD-OECM), ensuring international recognition and transparency.



The National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) formed by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change supported by the Forest Department, plays a central role in technical review, verification and coordination.

The framework emphasizes inclusive and equitable governance, recognizing that OECMs can be managed by government agencies, Indigenous peoples, local communities, civil society or private actors. Active participation, benefit-sharing and respect for local knowledge are central to legitimacy and long-term success. Awareness programs, knowledge-sharing platforms, and promotional initiatives are proposed to build broader support and integration of OECMs into national biodiversity strategies.

The guidelines also set out a monitoring and evaluation mechanism through a national database to track effectiveness, ecological outcomes and socio-economic benefits. A blended resource mobilization strategy is proposed, drawing on national funds, international partners, private sector investment and community-based financing. Innovative options such as carbon credits, eco-certification, corporate social responsibility and BIO-FIN's financing solutions are highlighted to ensure sustainability.

By institutionalizing OECMs within national biodiversity governance, Bangladesh can complement its protected area network, accelerate progress toward international targets and strengthen resilience against climate and ecological risks. The guidelines provide a clear pathway for recognizing community stewardship, integrating conservation with sustainable livelihoods and positioning Bangladesh as a leader in advancing OECMs in South Asia.

ACRONYMS

ABS	Access and Benefit Sharing
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HAC	High Ambition Coalition
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUCN-WCPA	IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas
KMGBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
OECMs	Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures
PA	Protected Area
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP-WCMC	UNEP- World Conservation Monitoring Centre
USP	Unique Selling Proposition
WD-OECMs	World Database on OECMs



Photo: Endangered Bengal Slow Loris at Pittachara forest in Khagrachari ©Mahfuz Russel



Photo: Begenachari Para VCF in Rangamati ©Arannayk Foundation photo library

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 01: Introduction	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2. Vision and Objectives	3
1.3 Context and Justification	4
Chapter 02: Components of OECMs Guideline	7
2.1 Policy and Legal Framework	7
2.2 Framework for Categorization, Identification & Designation of OECMs	9
2.3 OECMs Assessment Tools	10
2.4 Reporting OECMs	13
2.5 Governance and Management	15
2.6 Capacity Building, Innovation, and Knowledge Sharing	17
2.7 Stakeholder Engagement	17
2.8 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting	17
Chapter 03: The Unique Selling Proposition of OECMs in Bangladesh	19
Chapter 04: Institutional Arrangements for OECMs Program Management	21
Chapter 05: Resource Mobilization and Funding Strategy	22
Chapter 06: Conclusion	23
Annex A: Approval Letter from MoEFCC of National Guidelines for Assessing, Reporting, and Managing OECMs in Bangladesh	26
Annex B: MoEFCC Office Order Establishing the National Technical Assessing, Reporting, and Managing OECMs in Bangladesh	27
Annex C: OECMs Identification Tool	29
Annex D: OECMs Site Assessment Consent Form	38
Annex E: Summarized description and allowed values for the WDPA and OECMs database fields (Version 1.6)	39

CHAPTER 01

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Bangladesh is bestowed with mosaic of unique ecosystems, including tropical forests, fresh water wetlands, coastal and marine habitats and ecologically significant floodplains. These ecosystems support rich biodiversity and provide essential ecosystem services to millions of people. Protected Areas of Bangladesh Contribute significantly to the protection and conservation of rich biodiversity and ecosystem services. Many areas outside the protected area networks also contribute to the effective in-situ conservation of biodiversity. Appropriately recognizing, reporting and managing such areas is increasingly important in the context of biodiversity loss and climate change.

In the realm of global conservation policy development, it was for the first time in 2010 that the concept of "Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures" (OECMs) appeared. In 2018, it was formally defined through CBD Decision 14/8. Since 2018, the concept has been variously interpreted and implemented by a range of countries as a means to achieve large area-based conservation targets and reduce biodiversity loss. Although the overall conservation objective of establishing the Protected Areas (PAs) and OECMs for enlarging the conservation estate in the terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine realms are similar, there are certain pathways that have now to be aligned/ adopted while identifying, designating, managing, monitoring, and reporting the OECMs.

Conservation of natural resources other than Protected Areas, like Village Common Forests (VCFs), Sacred Groves in temples and pagodas, common public water bodies is in practice in Bangladesh. These need to be recognized.

Recognition of OECMs offers a significant opportunity to recognize de facto effective long-term conservation that is taking place outside currently designated protected areas. With formal recognition OECMs can contribute to ecologically representative and well-connected conservation systems, integrated within wider landscapes and seascapes, and in doing so, generate a range of positive conservation outcomes, such as:

- Conserving important ecosystems, habitats and wildlife corridors;
- Supporting the recovery of threatened species;
- Maintaining ecosystem functions and securing ecosystem services;
- Enhancing resilience against threats; and
- Retaining and connecting remnants of fragmented ecosystems within developed landscapes.

This tool guides an assessor through three steps to apply eight criteria which determine if a site qualifies as an OECMs as set out under the convention on Biological Diversity. For sites which do not currently meet all the criteria, they serve to highlight areas where further information or improvements in governance and management are required.

OECMs are integral to national commitments under Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and contribute to many other targets. They can be reported to the World Database on OECMs, held by UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Center.

Identification and reporting of an OECMs is voluntary and should be done by government agencies, or with the consent of the governing authority, and any indigenous peoples and local communities whose self-identified territory overlaps with the site, and where relevant, other right-holders and stakeholders.

1.2 Vision and Objectives

The vision of the OECMs guideline in Bangladesh is to recognize, support and integrate OECMs as a complementary conservation tool to protected areas, ensuring the long-term conservation of biodiversity, ecosystem services and sustainable livelihoods in Bangladesh.

The strategic objectives of the OECMs vision are:

- I. Identify and recognize OECMs across terrestrial, inland water, and coastal & marine ecosystems.
- II. Develop an OECMs Framework to build institutional capacity to identify, assess, monitor, and report OECMs at national and international levels.
- III. Integrate OECMs into national biodiversity strategies, policies and spatial planning frameworks.
- IV. Empower local communities, indigenous peoples, and stakeholders to sustain biodiversity conservation through inclusive governance mechanisms.



Photo: Meeting with Vante at Panchari, Khagrachari ©Arannnayk Foundation photo library

1.3 Context and Justification

Currently, less than 5% of Bangladesh's geographical area is under formal protection in the form of formally designated national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. But there are a large number of de facto conservation areas, viz. community conserved forests, sacred groves, private forests, tea estates, other biodiversity-rich areas in private/institutional lands, co-managed wetlands, fish sanctuaries, and coastal and marine hotspots that play a significant role in in-situ biodiversity conservation. Further, Bangladesh has international commitments, particularly the CBD Target 3, that require conserving 30% of land and sea by 2030. Under the limited scope to expand Protected Areas, Bangladesh has the opportunity to count on the abovementioned conservation areas, as OECMs, to meet this ambitious target to a significant extent.

OECMs with diverse governance systems, including community, private, and sectoral management can provide both benefits and co-benefits to a large number of stakeholders. OECMs have the potential to contribute to ecologically representative and well-connected conservation systems, integrated within wider landscapes and seascapes, and in doing so, generate a range of benefits, such as:

- a. Supporting a range of governance and management mechanisms for conservation led by stakeholders other than the Government such as the communities, local leaders, community-based organizations, corporates, women and youth and co-management models.
- b. Providing recognition to traditional knowledge, social practices, and cultural and spiritual beliefs that promote effective and equitable use of biological and genetic resources. This recognition also positively impacts their sustainability.
- c. Conserving important ecosystems, habitats and wildlife corridors.
- d. Restoration of degraded agricultural, forest and pasture lands.
- e. Supporting the recovery of threatened species.
- f. Maintaining ecosystem functions and securing ecosystem services such as: rejuvenation of springs and water bodies, aquifers, and improving groundwater table.

- g. Conservation and promotion of agro-biodiversity leading to food and nutritional security.
- h. Enhancing resilience against threats.
- i. Retaining and connecting remnants of fragmented ecosystems within developed landscapes.
- j. Promoting recreational benefits and responsible tourism.

Therefore, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of Bangladesh, has decided to identify and formally recognize the OECMs in Bangladesh, and to register them in the World Database on OECMs (WD-OECMs). With this end, the MoEFCC had established a National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) on OECMs on 18 December 2023 vide memo no. 22.00.0000.067.06.002.23.279 to perform the following functions:

- a. Provide guidance on the identification, assessment, evaluation, and documentation of OECMs sites in Bangladesh;
- b. Form “Verification Team(s)” as needed to assess potential sites for OECMs recognition;
- c. Prepare a standard assessment methodology for evaluating selected sites, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, using the CBD guidelines and global best practices; and submit the verified sites to the secretary of MoEFCC (CBD Primary Focal Point) for approval.
- d. Periodically inform the National Committee on Biodiversity of the progress of OECMs.

MoEFCC has reconstructed the committee in December, 2025 (Annex- B). The 13-member NTAC is headed by the Additional Secretary (Admin) – as Convenor, with the Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests (Forest Management Wing) serving as Member Secretary. The committee includes senior representatives from key government agencies such as the MoEFCC, Ministry of Land, Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, Forest Department, Department of Environment, Department of Fisheries, Bangladesh Haor and Wetland Development Board. It also involves representatives from IUCN Bangladesh and Arannayk Foundation, and two renowned technical experts (Botanist, Wildlife specialist). The committee may co-opt one or more experts or members as required.



Photo: First meeting of NTAC-OECMs at MoEFCC, 24-Mar-2024 ©Arannayk Foundation photo library

The NTAC, in its meeting on 28 April 2025, decided to develop a national strategy and methodological framework for the identification of the OECMs based on IUCN-WPCA guidelines.

CHAPTER 02

COMPONENTS OF OECMS GUIDELINE

2.1 Policy and Legal Framework

Bangladesh has enacted a range of legal instruments for the conservation of its forest, wildlife and biodiversity values, a summary of which is given below:

Table 1. A summarized overview of key Forest, Wildlife and Biodiversity laws in Bangladesh.

Category	Law/Act (Year)	Key Features / Provisions
Forest Laws	Forest Act, 1927 (Amended 2000)	• Classification: Reserved, Protected, Village forest • Regulates forest produce and logging • Penalizes illegal activities
Forest Laws	Social Forestry Rules, 2026	• Promotes community participation • Use of marginal/roadside lands • Benefit-sharing system
Forest Laws	Forest and Tree Conservation Act, 2026	• Conservation and sustainable management of forests and forestland. • Protection and conservation of trees both within and outside forestland. • Prevention, control, and recovery of encroached forestland.
Wildlife Laws	Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act, 2026	• Establishes Protected Areas • Prohibits poaching, capturing, trading • Wildlife Crime Control Unit
Biodiversity Conservation	The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan	• Establishes Protected Areas and OECMs • Prohibits poaching, capturing, trading • Wildlife Crime Control Unit
Biodiversity Conservation	Biodiversity Act, 2017	• Implements CBD • Access & Benefit Sharing (ABS) • Protects traditional knowledge
Fisheries Laws	Protection and Conservation of Fish Act, 1950	• Inland freshwater aquatic resources management

Category	Law/Act (Year)	Key Features / Provisions
Fisheries Laws	Marine Fisheries Act, 2020	• Coastal and aquatic resources management
Forest Policy	National Forest Policy, 2025	• Emphasis given on conservation and restoration • Keep provision of OECMs
Related Environmental Laws	Environment Conservation Act, 1995	• Broad environmental protections • Supports biodiversity conservation
Related Environmental Laws	Ecologically Critical Area (ECA) Management Rules, 2016	• Guidelines for the management of ECA
Related Environmental Laws	CHT Regulation, 1900	• Rule 41A authorizes the Mauza Headmen to conserve the natural resources of his mauza, control jhum cultivation and establish mauza reserves of bamboos, timber and other forest produce.
Related Environmental Laws	Hill District Council Acts of 1989 (as amended in 1998)	• Entrusted the three Hill District Councils (HDCs) with the management of natural resources, including the USFs that include many potential OECMs such as the Village Common Forests (VCFs).

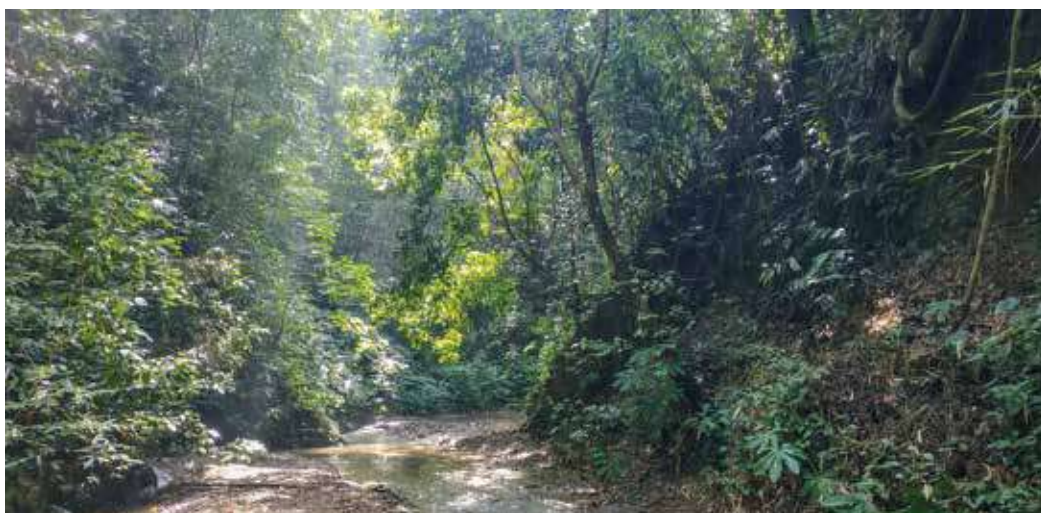


Photo: Bame Oijyangchari Para VCF, Barkal, Rangamati ©Arannayk Foundation/Biplob Chakma

2.2 Framework for Categorization, Identification & Designation of OECMs

Considering that Bangladesh has a diversity of tropical forests, freshwater wetlands, coastal and marine habitats, ecologically significant floodplains and areas under various land uses (canals, special economic zones, educational institution campuses etc.) that have the potential to significantly contribute to biodiversity conservation and human well-being and many of which are not under the purview of IUCN PA Classification. A 3-tier Framework OECMs classification is appropriate (Figure 1).

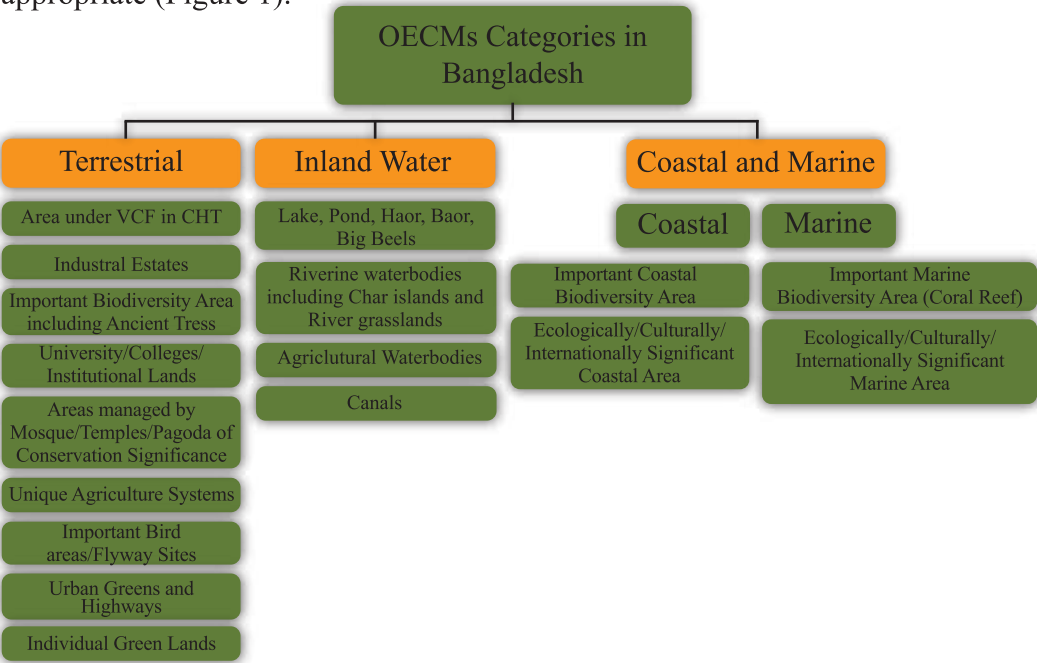


Figure 1. Framework OECMs classification for Bangladesh

The Terrestrial, Inland Water and Coastal & Marine Landscapes are further divided into 9, 4, and 4 categories, respectively. It is essential that a national scoping study to map potential OECMs sites using remote sensing, community mapping, and expert consultation need to be carried out to identify/refine potential OECMs sites as per this classification. A standardized OECMs assessment protocol, focusing on

- a) Long-term biodiversity outcomes,
- b) Effective governance and management and
- c) Recognition of ecosystem services and cultural values needs to be developed.

2.3 OECMs Assessment Tools

The site level assessment tools will guide whether an individual site qualifies as an OECMs as per the CBD definition and criteria (CBD decision 14/8) and IUCN guidance. The IUCN-WCPA Technical Report on OECMs provides further information, definition and explanations of how the CBD criteria are linked to the criteria in this assessment tools.

The assessment tool consists of three steps (Figure 2):

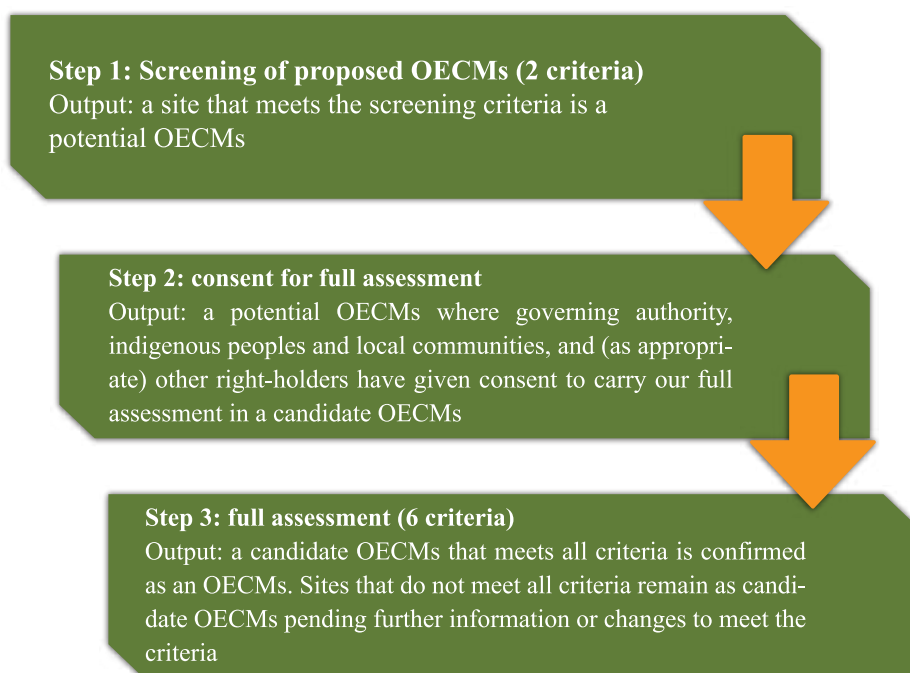


Figure 2: Illustration of the OECMs site-level tool assessment process

*Steps 1 and 2 can be carried out in any order, or combined.
Steps 1 and 2 should be completed before step 3 is implemented*

STEP 1: Screening uses basic information on a site to determine whether it is a potential OECMs. The screening test consists of two criteria

CRITERION 1: The site is not a Protected Area (PA) and

CRITERION 2: There is a reasonable likelihood that the site supports important biodiversity values.

- If the response to both criteria is ‘YES’, the site is a potential OECMs. The next step is to seek consent to carry out a full assessment (step 2), if this has not already been secured, and proceed for full assessment.
- If the response to either of the criteria is ‘NO’, the site is NOT a potential OECMs. The assessment does not proceed further.

STEP 2: Consent for full assessment.

In accordance with CBD decision 14/8, IUCN guidance and the operating procedures of the WD-OECMs:

- OECMs assessment can be done by any government agencies or ministries or the governing authority of the site.
- If an OECMs assessment is done by an entity other than the site’s governing authority, then the governing authority’s consent should be obtained for the assessment process, for the identification of the site as an OECMs and for reporting the site as an OECMs.
- Where a proposed OECMs overlaps the self-identified territory of Indigenous peoples or a local community, their free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) should be obtained for the assessment and for reporting of the site as an OECMs.
- If necessary, consent may be in two stages: first consent for the assessment, and later consent for the site to be identified and reported as an OECMs, if it qualifies.
- In addition, the CBD guidance recommends consultation with other landowners, rights- holders, stakeholders, and the public.

STEP 3: Full assessment uses the defined criteria to confirm that the site meets the definition of an OECMs. The full assessment contains six criteria, with a guiding question for each. There are six criteria for this step of full assessment:

CRITERION 3: The site is a geographically defined area.

CRITERION 4: The site is confirmed to support important biodiversity values.

CRITERION 5: Institutions or mechanisms exist to govern and manage the site.

CRITERION 6: Governance and management of the site achieve or are expected to achieve the in-situ conservation of important biodiversity values.

CRITERION 7: In situ conservation of important biodiversity values is expected to be for the long term.

CRITERION 8: Governance and management arrangements address equity considerations.

Screening (step 1) may be carried out as a desk exercise. Consent for full assessment (step 2) should be freely given by the governing authority, as well as by any Indigenous peoples and local communities who use, claim, or own the site, and (as appropriate) by other rights-holders, before the full assessment process (step 3) is conducted.

The response to each guiding question can be ‘yes’, ‘uncertain/ partial’, or ‘no’.

- A site with a ‘yes’ response to every criterion is a confirmed OECMs, subject to state verification by NTAC or stakeholder consent and approval by the governing authority.
- A site with a combination of ‘yes’ and ‘uncertain/partial’ responses, or with all ‘uncertain/partial’ responses, remains a candidate OECMs, until further information or other changes allow it to be confirmed as an OECMs.

- A site with one or more ‘no’ responses is not currently an OECMs, but might be re-assessed in the future if information suggests that the situation has changed.

The screening tool and full assessment have been designed with reference to the IUCN-WCPA Site-level tool for identifying OECMs¹, simplifying the process of reporting data once the full assessment has been completed. Where applicable, instructions are given on how to complete the information in line with the WD-OECMs data standards.

NB: The details of step 1, step 2, step 3 and assessment summary are presented in Annex B.

2.4 Reporting OECMs

Where a site meets all the OECMs criteria, the next steps are:

- The result of the assessment, with documentation, should be communicated to the NTAC for state verification or governance and management authority(ies), indigenous peoples, local communities and other rights-holders and stakeholders.
- Documentation of the assessment process and results, including supporting data, should be securely stored for future reference.
- Where initial consent (step 2) was only for the assessment to be carried out, consent should now be obtained for the identification of the site as an OECMs and for its reporting to the WD-OECMs.

¹Jonas, H. D., MacKinnon, K., Marnewick, D. and Wood, P. (2023). *Site-level tool for identifying other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs)*. First edition. IUCN WCPA Technical Report Series No. 6. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. <https://doi.org/10.2305/WZJH1425>

Once consent for reporting is secured, the site should be reported to the WD-OECMs following the UNEP-WCMC guidelines². The minimum (must) and complete (optional) data requirements are listed in Annex-E. Reporting may be done by the government, the governing authority, or another stakeholder with the consent of the governing authority. Data may need to be verified before being added to the WD-OECMs (see Table 2). NTAC may work as state verifier or independent expert or group of experts can be engaged for verification.

Table 2: Data providers and verification requirements for the WD-OECMs

Entity reporting the OECMs to WD-OECMs (the ‘data provider’)	OECMs that can be reported to WD-OECMs	Type of verification undertaken by WD-OECMs
Government data provider	OECMs under all governance types	Data is considered state verified, and is added directly to the WD-OECMs after formatting and data quality checking.
Non-government data provider	OECMs where the data provider - is the governing authority of the OECMs, or - has the consent of the governing authority	Data is verified either by state verifiers or expert verifiers, depending on the wishes of the data provider, before being added to the WD-OECMs. Formatting and data quality checking are also carried out.

²UNEP-WCMC (2019). *User Manual for the World Database on Protected Areas and world database on other effective area-based conservation measures*:
1.6. UNEP-WCMC: Cambridge, UK. Available at: http://wcmc.io/WDPA_Manual

- The OECMs should also be reported or listed, as appropriate, on any relevant national and local databases and documents. Where a national database of OECMs exists, it will often be appropriate to report data to this database in the first instance in order to support streamlined national reporting to the WD-OECMs.
- If the site is already reported in the WDPA as a PA but the result of this assessment concludes that the site is in fact an OECMs, then UNEP-WCMC should be informed and a request for change of designation made by the relevant authority.

2.5 Governance and Management

Every OECMs must have a governance authority representing ultimate ownership and having authority for conservation and management of the site. OECMs governance may be:

- Government: A site governed by government where one or more agencies have a mandate to govern and manage the site.
- Indigenous people or Community: A site where an Indigenous people or community has a mandate to govern and manage the site.
- Private Entity: A site where a private entity (individual, group or organisation) has a mandate to govern and manage the site.
- Mixed Governance: A site with mixed forms of governance and management where there is an appropriate institution, collective agreement or division of roles that results in necessary governance and management being carried out.

The MoEFCC, as the focal point of CBD, will play pivotal role in promoting OECMs in Bangladesh. It will play a supporting role to the governance authority in terms of assessment and reporting.

For the assessment of the potential/candidate OECMs sites, the NTAC will endorse a list of technical experts as “Assessors” and form a “Verification Team” for final state verification and endorsement of candidate OECMs for national recognition and reporting. The NTAC itself may also work as state verifier when and wherever required.

In the state verification process, the state verifiers and the NTAC will consider inter alia whether the candidate OECMs are governed equitably by their governance authorities as per CBD guidelines. Annex II (I/B) of CBD decision 14/8 on ‘Voluntary guidance on effective and equitable governance models’ states that governance of an OECMs should reflect the equity considerations adopted in the CBD, and defines equity in terms of three dimensions:

- Recognition: There is acknowledgement of and respect for the rights and the diversity of identities, values, knowledge systems, and institutions of rights-holders and stakeholders.
- Procedure: There is inclusive rule- and decision-making, transparency and accountability, and effective and fair law enforcement.
- Distribution: Costs and benefits resulting from the management of OECMs are equitably shared among different rights-holders and stakeholders (as identified at step 2).

A follow-up plan for the governance and management of the OECMs could be developed that defines the conservation objectives of the OECMs, including its role in the wider landscape/seascape; the need for continuing support and capacity development; and mechanisms for engagement between the governing authority and other stakeholders. Management of the OECMs is likely to include monitoring of the status of biodiversity, ecosystem services and threats over time, and will be essential to ensure that the OECMs continues to support the important biodiversity values for which it is identified.

2.6 Capacity Building, Innovation, and Knowledge Sharing

There is presently a lack of awareness and understanding of the OECMs concept, and therefore, the process of OECMs designation and management is weaker. The organization of a range of training programs for government officials, NGOs, academics, and local leaders is urgently needed. Creating a knowledge portal to share case studies, data, and best practices, along with building partnerships with various research institutions and universities, is needed to build the capacity of a large number of stakeholders.

2.7 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement and governance are absolutely central to the success of OECMs in Bangladesh. Since OECMs exist outside formal protected areas, they will have to rely heavily on local governance systems and multi-stakeholder collaboration to deliver long-term conservation outcomes. Developing inclusive governance frameworks that recognize customary rights and community institutions engaged with OECMs is a step in right direction.

In parallel, awareness and communication programs are essential to ensure that communities, local governments, and relevant institutions understand the concept and benefits of OECMs. This can be achieved through promotional initiatives such as community workshops, information campaigns, media outreach, and the development of locally tailored communication materials that highlight the ecological, cultural, and livelihood benefits of OECMs. Celebrating success stories and showcasing best practices can further motivate stakeholders and create wider social acceptance. Such measures will not only strengthen community participation but also generate national visibility and political support for OECMs.

2.8 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

This OECMs guidelines suggests the establishment of a National OECMs Database and Registry web-portal and to develop indicators for effectiveness, equity, and sustainability. This process will help facilitate reporting to the Global Database of OECMs maintained by UNEP-WCMC.



Photo: Modhyo Dhanpata VCF Khagrachari ©Arannayk Foundation photo library

CHAPTER 03

THE UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION OF OECMs IN BANGLADESH

The Unique Selling Proposition (USP) of the OECMs Strategy in Bangladesh lies in the fact that it seeks to promote community-driven conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable development potential which can be summarized as follows:

1. Community-Led Conservation Model

- Empowering local communities & Indigenous groups in biodiversity protection.
- Recognition of traditional conservation practices (e.g., Indigenous-managed forests, community fish sanctuaries).
- Incentivizing sustainable livelihoods (eco-tourism, agroforestry, sustainable fisheries).

Ensures long-term sustainability by aligning conservation with local economic interests.

2. Climate Resilience and Disaster Mitigation

- OECMs protect key ecosystems (mangroves, wetlands, forests) that act as natural buffers against climate change impacts.
- Reducing flooding, erosion, and salinity intrusion through community-managed conservation zones.
- Enhancing carbon sequestration through agroforestry and wetland conservation.
- Strengthens Bangladesh's response to climate change, aligning with global commitments (Paris Agreement, SDGs) and also supports sustainable adaptation strategies for climate-vulnerable communities.

3. Protecting Biodiversity Hotspots Outside Traditional Protected Areas

- Expands conservation beyond formal protected areas (PAs) to include ecologically important community lands, wetlands, and marine zones.
- Recognizes underrepresented ecosystems (e.g., haor wetlands, coral reefs, Indigenous forests).
- Supports endangered species conservation (e.g., Bengal Tiger, river dolphins, migratory birds).

Diversifies conservation strategies beyond national parks & reserves and also strengthens ecosystem connectivity, ensuring wildlife movement corridors.

4. Sustainable Development and Livelihood Integration

- Linking conservation with local economic development (e.g., eco-tourism, sustainable fisheries, carbon credits).
- Promoting nature-based solutions for income generation without harming biodiversity.
- Engaging the private sector & international donors in conservation financing.
- Creates financial incentives for local participation and helps achieve both conservation & socio-economic development goals.

5. Global Recognition & Policy Alignment

- Positions Bangladesh as a global leader in OECMs-based conservation under the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Supports Bangladesh's commitments under CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity), SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Strengthens Bangladesh's case for international climate and biodiversity funding.

Enhances global partnerships and access to conservation funding and helps Bangladesh meet international conservation targets efficiently.

CHAPTER 04

Institutional Arrangements for OECMs Program Management

While a large number of potential OECMs exist in Bangladesh, the site owners are aware of the opportunity of having their site recognized as OECMs. A national initiative is needed to make them aware of this opportunity and to encourage them to apply for assessment of their site for OECMs recognition. Presently there is no well-defined institutional arrangement for this purpose. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) chair the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) and serve as the state verifier, ensuring alignment of the OECMs process with national priorities and international reporting obligations. Bangladesh Forest Department serves as the secretariat for the NTAC, and an OECMs cell with necessary staff and facilities needs to be established to perform necessary activities related to identification and reporting of OECMs.

The functions of the OECMs cell of BFD would include information dissemination and promotional campaigns, invitation of proposals, organizing assessment of the proposed/candidate sites, development and maintenance of the National OECMs Database and Registry web-portal, send OECMs proposal to NTAC for state verification, data submission to WD-OECMs, monitoring of the OECMs, organizing knowledge-sharing and stakeholder coordination events/platforms, and providing/mobilizing technical support to the OECMs owners. Other government departments or agencies will be encouraged to establish thier own OECMs cell like BFD.

CHAPTER 05

Resource Mobilization and Funding Strategy

Effective resource mobilization is essential to sustain and scale up Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in Bangladesh. Securing adequate financial resources not only strengthens the management of these areas but also ensures long-term ecological, social, and economic benefits. Given the competing demands on national budgets and the growing pressures on ecosystems, OECMs require innovative and diversified financing mechanisms that draw upon national, international, private sector, and community-based sources. In this context, a structured funding strategy is critical to guide Bangladesh in mobilizing the resources needed to operationalize and maintain OECMs effectively. The following strategies outline potential pathways for achieving this goal.

- Seek national funding (Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund, Forest Department, Department of Environment, Department of Fisheries and other relevant ministries and departments).
- Secure international support (GEF, UNDP, World Bank, IUCN).
- Implement community-based conservation financing (user fees, eco-certification).
- Engage private sector engagement, particularly through eco-tourism ventures, carbon credit projects, and leveraging Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds from industries for conservation initiatives.
- Exploring innovative financing tools such as the UNDP-BIOFIN (Biodiversity Finance Initiative) plan, which provides a comprehensive framework to identify, prioritize and mobilize resources for biodiversity conservation at scale.

These mechanisms can create a blended financing framework that ensures both sustainability and scalability of OECMs management in Bangladesh.

CHAPTER 06

Conclusion

OECMs are undoubtedly a viable solution for expanding conservation efforts beyond protected areas. Government and community collaboration is key to long-term success. Financial incentives and sustainable business models will ensure sustainability. The key takeaways of Bangladesh's OECMs Guidelines are: (a) Community-led governance is the foundation of successful OECMs recognition, (b) Sustainable financing models (PES, eco-tourism, carbon credits, corporate engagement) ensure long-term viability, and (c) Integration of traditional knowledge & modern science enhances biodiversity conservation.

For Bangladesh, achieving the global 30x30 target to conserve 30% of terrestrial and marine and coastal ecosystem by 2030 will be extremely challenging if it relies only on expanding Protected Areas (PAs). In this context, OECMs provide the most practical and effective instrument to complement PAs and help Bangladesh meet this ambitious goal, while ensuring inclusivity and equity in conservation.

Recognizing and supporting OECMs in Bangladesh is therefore a critical step toward inclusive, community-rooted conservation, climate resilience, and achieving national and international biodiversity targets. This guideline lays the groundwork for a national OECMs framework that strengthens biodiversity governance, celebrates local stewardship, and advances sustainability for both people and nature.

Adopting the guidelines by the Government of Bangladesh, OECMs initiatives will get a momentum with active involvement of all stakeholders and right-holders. This will enable Bangladesh to establish its leadership in biodiversity governance through OECMs in South Asia.



Photo: Sriti Bikash Karbari Para VCF Khagrachari ©Arannayk Foundation photo library



Photo: **Gazon Para Bandarban** ©Arannayk Foundation photo library

Annex- A

Approval Letter from MoEFCC of National Guidelines for Assessing, Reporting, and Managing OECMs in Bangladesh

প্রধান বন সংরক্ষকের দপ্তর	পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়	তারিখ: 05 MAR 2026
আইডি নং: ১৫২	বন-২ শাখা	প্রদান বন সংরক্ষকের দপ্তর
তারিখ: ০৫/০৩/২৬	বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা	প্রদান বন সংরক্ষকের দপ্তর
১৫	www.moefcc.gov.bd	১৫

স্মারক নং-২২.০০.০০০০.০৬৭.০৬.০০২.২৩.১৩৩

স্মারক নং-২২.০০.০০০০.০৬৭.০৬.০০২.২৩.১৩৩

০৪ মার্চ ২০২৬

১৯ ফাল্গুন ১৪৩২

বিষয়: 'Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECM)' বা 'অন্যান্য কার্যকর এলাকা ভিত্তিক সংরক্ষণ ব্যবস্থা' মূল্যায়ন নির্দেশিকা সংক্রান্ত জাতীয় গাইডলাইন অনুমোদন প্রসঙ্গে।

উপর্যুক্ত বিষয়ের পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, 'Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECM)' বা 'অন্যান্য কার্যকর এলাকা ভিত্তিক সংরক্ষণ ব্যবস্থা' মূল্যায়ন নির্দেশিকা সংক্রান্ত জাতীয় গাইডলাইন পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত হওয়ায় পরবর্তী প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণের জন্য নির্দেশক্রমে অবহিত করা হলো।

সংযুক্তি: বর্ণনামতে।

মোহা: মোহাম্মদ আকতার বানু
উপসচিব
ফোন: ০১৭৪২১১২১১২

E-mail: forest2moef@gmail.com

স্মারক নং-২২.০০.০০০০.০৬৭.০৬.০০২.২৩.১৩৩

তারিখ: ১৯ ফাল্গুন ১৪৩২
০৪ মার্চ ২০২৬

বিতরণ (জ্যেষ্ঠতার ক্রমানুসারে নয়):

- ০১। সিনিয়র সচিব, জমি মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা
- ০২। সচিব, পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা
- ০৩। সচিব, মৎস্য ও প্রাণিসম্পদ মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা
- ০৪। অতিরিক্ত সচিব (প্রশাসন), পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়, ঢাকা
- ০৫। মহাপরিচালক, মৎস্য অধিদপ্তর, মৎস্য ভবন, রমনা, ঢাকা
- ০৬। মহাপরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ হাওর ও জলাভূমি উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তর, ৭২ গ্রীণ রোড, ঢাকা
- ০৭। মহাপরিচালক, পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা
- ০৮। প্রধান বন সংরক্ষক (ভোরশাও), বন অধিদপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা
- ০৯। মুদ্রাসচিব (বন), পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়
- ১০। ড. মোহাম্মদ আলী রেজা খান, বন্যপ্রাণী বিশেষজ্ঞ, প্রাক্তন ট্রেন্ডিংপাল ওয়াইল্ডলাইফ স্পেশালিস্ট, দুবাই সাফারি পার্ক, দুবাই
- ১১। প্রফেসর ড. আল মোজাম্মাদি আল কাসানী, উদ্ভিদ বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
- ১২। পরিচালক (প্রাকৃতিক সম্পদ ব্যবস্থাপনা), পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা
- ১৩। কাক্সি রিসার্চেনটেটভ, আইইউসিএন বাংলাদেশ, হাউজ# ১৪৩, বনানী, ঢাকা
- ১৪। নির্বাহী পরিচালক, আরণ্যক ফাউন্ডেশন, ইসিবি চত্বর, মাটিকাঠা, ঢাকা
- ১৫। উপ-প্রধান বন সংরক্ষক, বন ব্যবস্থাপনা উইং, বন অধিদপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা

অনুলিপি (জ্যেষ্ঠতার ক্রমানুসারে নয়):

- ০১। মন্ত্রীর একান্ত সচিব, পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়, ঢাকা (মাননীয় মন্ত্রীর সদয় অবগতির জন্য)
- ০২। প্রতিমন্ত্রীর একান্ত সচিব, পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়, ঢাকা (মাননীয় প্রতিমন্ত্রীর সদয় অবগতির জন্য)
- ০৩। সচিবের একান্ত সচিব, পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়, ঢাকা (সচিব মহোদয়ের সদয় অবগতির জন্য)
- ০৪। অফিস কপি

মোহা: মোহাম্মদ আকতার বানু
উপসচিব

Annex- B

MoEFCC Office Order Establishing the National Technical Advisory Committee on OECMs

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়
বন শাখা-২
বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা
www.moefcc.gov.bd

নম্বর- ২২.০০.০০০০.০৬৭.০৬.০০২.২৩.৬২৬

২৫ অগ্রহায়ণ ১৪৩২
তারিখ:-
১০ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫

অফিস আদেশ

বাংলাদেশের জীববৈচিত্র্য সংরক্ষণে লক্ষ্যমাত্রা পূরণের উদ্দেশ্যে জাতিসংঘের বৈধ জীববৈচিত্র্য সংরক্ষণ কর্মসূচি Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) কর্তৃক প্রবর্তিত “Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECM)” বা “অন্যান্য কার্যকর এলাকা ভিত্তিক সংরক্ষণ ব্যবস্থা” মূল্যায়নের লক্ষ্যে “জাতীয় কারিগরি উপদেষ্টা কমিটি” নিম্নবর্ণিতভাবে পুনর্গঠন করা হলো:

ক্রমিক নং	নাম, পদবি ও ঠিকানা	কমিটির অবস্থান
১.	অতিরিক্ত সচিব (প্রশাসন), পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়	আহ্বায়ক
২.	ভূমি মন্ত্রণালয়ের প্রতিনিধি (যুগ্মসচিবের নিম্নে নয়)	সদস্য
৩.	পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়ের প্রতিনিধি (যুগ্মসচিবের নিম্নে নয়)	সদস্য
৪.	মহাপরিচালক, মৎস্য অধিদপ্তর	সদস্য
৫.	মহাপরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ হাওড় ও জলাভূমি উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তর	সদস্য
৬.	প্রধান বন সংরক্ষক, বন অধিদপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা	সদস্য
৭.	যুগ্মসচিব (বন), পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়	সদস্য
৮.	ড. মোহাম্মদ আলী রেজা খান, বন্যপ্রাণী বিশেষজ্ঞ	সদস্য
৯.	প্রফেসর ড. আল মোজাম্মাদি আল হাসানী, উদ্ভিদ বিশেষজ্ঞ	সদস্য
১০.	পরিচালক (প্রাকৃতিক সম্পদ ব্যবস্থাপনা বিভাগ), পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর	সদস্য
১১.	কান্সি রিপ্রেজেন্টেটিভ, আইইউসিএন বাংলাদেশ	সদস্য
১২.	নির্বাহী পরিচালক, আরব্যাক ফাউন্ডেশন বাংলাদেশ	সদস্য
১৩.	উপ-প্রধান বন সংরক্ষক, বন ব্যবস্থাপনা উইং, বন অধিদপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা	সদস্য-সচিব

কমিটির কার্যপরিধি:

- ১) বাংলাদেশে OECM সাইট অনুসন্ধান, মূল্যায়ন ও তালিকাভুক্তকরণ বিষয়ে দিকনির্দেশনা প্রদান করা;
 - ২) উপযুক্ত সাইট চূড়ান্তকরণের জন্য প্রয়োজন অনুসারে ‘মূল্যায়নকারী’ দল গঠন করা;
 - ৩) যথাযথ মূল্যায়ন পদ্ধতি (Assessment Methodology) অনুসরণপূর্বক নির্বাচিত সাইটগুলো অনুমোদনের জন্য সচিব, পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয় বরাবর (CBD প্রাইমারি ফোকাল পয়েন্ট) প্রেরণ করা;
 - ৪) OECM বিষয়ে অগ্রগতি সময়ে সময়ে জীববৈচিত্র্য বিষয়ক জাতীয় কমিটিকে অবহিত করা; এবং
 - ৫) কমিটি প্রয়োজনে এক বা একাধিক সদস্য কো-অপ্ট করতে পারবে।
- ০২। যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমোদনক্রমে এ আদেশ জারি করা হলো।


(তুষার কুমার পাল)
উপসচিব
ফোন: ৯৫৪৫০২৬

E-mail: forest2moefcc@gmail.com

নম্বর- ২২.০০.০০০০.০৬৭.০৬.০০২.২৩. ৬০৬

২৫ অগ্রহায়ণ ১৪৩২

তারিখ:-----

১০ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫

অনুলিপি সদয় জ্ঞাতার্থে/কার্যার্থে (জ্যেষ্ঠতার ক্রমানুসারে নয়):

- ০১। সিনিয়র সচিব, জুমি মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা (প্রতিনিধি মনোনয়নের অনুরোধসহ, যুগ্মসচিবের নিম্নে নয়)
- ০২। সচিব, পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা (প্রতিনিধি মনোনয়নের অনুরোধসহ, যুগ্মসচিবের নিম্নে নয়)
- ০৩। অতিরিক্ত সচিব (প্রশাসন), পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়, ঢাকা
- ০৪। মহাপরিচালক, মৎস্য অধিদপ্তর, মৎস্য ভবন, রমনা, ঢাকা
- ০৫। মহাপরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ হাওর ও জলাভূমি উন্নয়ন অধিদপ্তর, ৭২ গ্রীণ রোড, ঢাকা
- ০৬। যুগ্মসচিব (বন), পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়
- ০৭। প্রধান বন সংরক্ষক (ভারপ্রাপ্ত), বন অধিদপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা
- ০৮। ড. মোহাম্মদ আলী রেজা খান, বন্যপ্রাণী বিশেষজ্ঞ, প্রাক্তন প্রিন্সিপাল ওয়াইল্ডলাইফ স্পেশালিস্ট, দুবাই সাফারি পার্ক, দুবাই
- ০৯। প্রফেসর ড. আল মোজাহীদি আল ফাসানী, উদ্ভিদ বিজ্ঞান বিভাগ, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
- ১০। পরিচালক (প্রাকৃতিক সম্পদ ব্যবস্থাপনা), পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা
- ১১। কান্নি রিপ্রেজেনটটিভ, আইইউসিএন বাংলাদেশ, হাউজ# ১৪৩, বনানী, ঢাকা
- ১২। নির্বাহী পরিচালক, আরগক ফাউন্ডেশন, ইসিবি চত্বর, মারিকাতা, ঢাকা
- ১৩। উপ-প্রধান বন সংরক্ষক, ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিকল্পনা ইউনিট, বন অধিদপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা
- ১৪। উপদেষ্টার একান্ত সচিব, পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়, ঢাকা (মাননীয় উপদেষ্টার সদয় অবগতির জন্য)।
- ১৫। সচিবের একান্ত সচিব, পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়, ঢাকা (সচিব মহোদয়ের সদয় অবগতির জন্য)।


(তুফার কুমার পাল)
উপসচিব

Annex- C

OECMs Identification Tool

STEP 1: SCREENING: IDENTIFYING A POTENTIAL OECMs

Information required:

Site Name: In English; in national or local language; temporary site name or site code (if final name unavailable)

Site location: Country; Sub-national administrative division(s); Other description of location (e.g., name of a river, mountain, area)

Site designation (if applicable): National or local designation of the site in national or local language, and in English; Regional or International designation e.g., Key Biodiversity Area, Ramsar site, etc.

Organisations/groups or individuals carrying out the screening process: Name, address and contact details

Date of the screening:

Main biodiversity value(s):

- (a) Rare, threatened or endangered species and ecosystems
- (b) Natural ecosystems that are under-represented in protected area networks
- (c) High level of ecological integrity or intactness
- (d) Significant populations/extent of endemic or range-restricted species or ecosystems
- (e) Important species aggregations, such as spawning, breeding or feeding areas
- (f) Importance for ecological connectivity, as part of a network of sites in a larger area).

Screening:

TESTS	QUESTIONS	RESPONSE	JUSTIFICATION
CRITERION 1: The site is not a protected area (PA)	Is the site OUTSIDE any recognized PA?	☐ Yes ☐ No	Briefly summarize the information that supports the response given
CRITERION 2: There is a reasonable likelihood that the site supports important biodiversity values	Does available information suggest that the site supports at least one of the following important biodiversity values? a. Rare, threatened or endangered species and ecosystems b. Natural ecosystems that are under-represented in protected area networks c. High level of ecological integrity or intactness d. Significant populations/extent of endemic or range-restricted species or ecosystems e. Important species aggregations, such as spawning, breeding or feeding areas f. Importance for ecological connectivity, as part of a network of sites in a larger area	☐ Yes ☐ No	List the biodiversity values likely to be present, and briefly summarize the information that supports the response

NEXT STEPS:

- If the response to both criteria is ‘YES’, the site is a potential OECMs. The next step is to seek consent to carry out a full assessment (step 2), if this has not already been secured.
- If the response to either of the criteria is ‘NO’, the site is NOT a potential OECMs. The assessment does not proceed further.

STEP 2: CONSENT FOR FULL ASSESSMENT

Information required:

- Contact details for organizations/groups or individuals carrying out the full assessment
- Mandate or role of the organization/group or individual carrying out the full assessment
- Governance or management of the site: Name and contact details of the governing authority (or authorities).
- Identify the representative of the governing authority for the site (the authority may be government, private entity, Indigenous peoples, local communities, or a combination of these; the governing authority should have a recognized mandate or right to make decisions on the overall management and use of the site.
- Name and contact details of any Indigenous peoples or local communities who claim ownership or rights in the site.
- Name and contact details of any other rights-holders or stakeholders who are involved in the process (government agencies, private sector or civil society organizations)

NEXT STEPS:

A potential OECMs that has met the screening criteria (step 1) and for which the governing authority(ies) and other rights-holders have given their consent (if other rights-holders' consent is needed) for a full assessment to be carried out is referred to as a ‘candidate OECMs’. The candidate OECMs should now be subject to a full assessment of the site against the OECMs criteria (step 3)

STEP 3: THE FULL ASSESSMENT

Information required:

3.1. The Site and its Biodiversity Values

Boundary of the site:

- Describe how the boundary of the site is defined (for example, with reference to natural, customary, surveyed, or administrative boundaries).
- Describe whether the boundary is mapped and whether the map is publicly available, and whether it is in a digital (GIS) format.
- Describe whether the boundary is physically demarcated in the field.
- Describe whether there are any conflicts over the boundary that impact the site's important biodiversity values

Size and configuration:

- Note the size of the site, if known (e.g., land and sea area in km²).
- Describe how the site's size and configuration relate to the conservation of its important biodiversity values.
- Describe whether the site is important because it connects other sites with important biodiversity values.
- Describe whether the site is part of a network of sites that, together, support important biodiversity values.

Confirmation of biodiversity values:

- Compile all available information that demonstrates that the site supports important biodiversity values such as:
 - Credible reports from reliable sources, including relevant traditional knowledge
 - Expert opinion from relevant experts

3.2. Governance and Management, and Effectiveness in In-situ Conservation

Governance and Management:

- Describe the long-term objectives for the site, as determined by the governing authority (for example: maintenance of water supply; sustainable production/ extraction of wild products; practice and preservation of spiritual values).
- Describe whether/how the long-term objectives for the site are linked to the conservation of the site's important biodiversity values.
- Describe the management activities (for example, protection, harvest controls, restoration), especially those that impact the biodiversity values and ecosystem services of the site.

Pressures and Threats:

- List any current pressures on the biodiversity values and ecosystem services of the site. These pressures may originate inside the site (e.g., illegal logging) or outside the site (e.g., pollution).
- Describe how and to what extent the governance and management of the site can mitigate the pressures on the biodiversity and ecosystem values.
- List any anticipated future threats that may affect the important biodiversity values and ecosystem services of the site.

Long-term basis for governance and management:

- Describe any legal, official, customary, or other recognized basis for the institutions/organizations involved in the governance and management of the site that contributes to making the governance and management arrangements permanent.
- Describe any legal, official, customary or other recognized status of the site (for example, forest reserve, military zone, customary land, Particularly Sensitive Sea Area, archaeological heritage site) that contributes to the site's long-term status.

3.3. Equitable Governance and Management

- Describe how and to what extent governance and management of the site recognize and respect the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities and other stakeholder groups (where applicable).
- Describe how and to what extent governance and management of the site enable the participation of indigenous peoples, local communities and other stakeholder groups (where applicable).
- Describe how and to what extent governance and management of the site encourage the equitable sharing of costs and benefits of conservation of the site's biodiversity values.
- List any recent or ongoing cases of abuse of individual or collective human rights involving the governing authority or other stakeholders (as identified in step 2), where these cases are connected to use, governance or management of the site.



*Photo: Concept Sharing & Site Selection meeting with VCF Network leaders at Bandarban
©Arannayk Foundation/Biplob Chakma*

Assessment:

TESTS	QUESTIONS	RESPONSE	JUSTIFICATION
CRITERION 3: The site is a geographically defined area	Does the site have clear boundaries?	☐ Yes ☐ Uncertain/Partial ☐ No	Briefly summarise the information that supports the response given
CRITERION 4: The site is confirmed to support important biodiversity values	Does information confirm that the site supports at least one of the following important biodiversity values? a. Rare, threatened or endangered species and ecosystems b. Natural ecosystems that are under-represented in protected area networks c. High level of ecological integrity or intactness d. Significant population/extent of endemic or range-restricted species or ecosystems e. Important species aggregations, such as spawning, breeding or feeding areas (f) Importance for ecological connectivity as part of a network of sites in a larger area	☐ Yes ☐ Uncertain/Partial ☐ No	List the biodiversity values likely to be present, and briefly summarize the information that supports the response

TESTS	QUESTIONS	RESPONSE	JUSTIFICATION
CRITERION 5: Institutions or mechanisms exist to govern and manage the site	Is there one or more institution(s) or mechanism(s) that govern(s) and manage(s) the site?	☐ Yes ☐ Uncertain/ Partial ☐ No	Briefly summarize the information that supports the response given
CRITERION 6: Governance and management of the site achieve or are expected to achieve the in-situ conservation of important biodiversity values	Do the governance and management of the site prevent and mitigate threats, and conserve the site's important biodiversity values, or are they expected to do so?	☐ Yes ☐ Uncertain/ Partial ☐ No	Briefly summarize the information that supports the response given
CRITERION 7: In situ conservation of important biodiversity values is expected to be for the long term	Is there a reasonable likelihood that the important biodiversity values for which the site is identified will be conserved in situ in the long-term?	☐ Yes ☐ Uncertain/ Partial ☐ No	Briefly summarize the information that supports the response given
CRITERION 8: Governance and management arrangements address equity considerations	Do the governance and management arrangements include efforts to address the three aspects of equity (recognition, procedure, distribution), where applicable?	☐ Yes ☐ Uncertain/ Partial ☐ No	Briefly summarize the information that supports the response given

ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Criteria	Response (tick one for each criteria)		
	Yes	Uncertain/ Partial	No
Screening assessment			
Criterion 1: The site is not a protected area (PA)		N/A	
Criterion 2: There is a reasonable likelihood that the site supports important biodiversity values		N/A	
Full assessment			
Criterion 3: The site is a geographically defined area			
Criterion 4: The site is confirmed to support important biodiversity values			
Criterion 5: Institutions or mechanisms exist to govern and manage the site			
Criterion 6: Governance and management of the site achieve or are expected to achieve the <i>in situ</i> conservation of important biodiversity values			
Criterion 7: <i>In situ</i> conservation of important biodiversity values is expected to be for the long term			
Criterion 8: Governance and management arrangements address equity considerations			

- A site with a ‘yes’ response to every criterion is a confirmed OECMs, subject to any stakeholder consent and approval by the governing authority.
- A site with a combination of ‘yes’ and ‘uncertain/partial’ responses, or all ‘uncertain/partial’ responses, remains a candidate OECMs until further information or other changes allow it to be confirmed as an OECMs.
- A site with one or more ‘no’ responses is not currently an OECMs but might be reassessed in the future if a change at the site means that all criteria are now met.

CONCLUSION:

- ☐ Confirmed OECMs
☐ Remains a candidate OECMs and might be reassessed in the future
☐ Not currently an OECMs but might be reassessed in the future

Annex- D

OECEMs Site Assessment Consent Form

সম্ভাব্য ওইসিএম (OECEMs) সাইটের মূল্যায়ন সম্মতি ফর্ম

জায়গার নামঃ
ঠিকানাঃ
বিবরণঃ
পরিচালনা কমিটির নামঃ

আমি/আমরা ঘোষণা করছি যে আমি/আমরা উপরে উল্লিখিত জায়গার সম্ভাব্যকারী ব্যক্তিবর্গের নির্বাচিত প্রতিনিধি।
আমি/আমরা এই মর্মে নিশ্চিত করছি যে, আমাদের উক্ত এলাকাকে রক্ষিত এলাকা বহির্ভূত “অন্যান্য এলাকা-ভিত্তিক কার্যকর জীববৈচিত্র্য সংরক্ষণ ব্যবস্থা” বা OECEMs (Other Effective Area Based Conservation Measures) হিসেবে স্বীকৃতি প্রদানের এবং সে উদ্দেশ্যে পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয় বা জীববৈচিত্র্য সনদ (CBD) সংক্রান্ত জাতীয় কমিটিকে তথ্য প্রদান সহ মূল্যায়ন কাজের অনুমতি প্রদানের কর্তৃত্ব আমার/আমাদের আছে।

আমি/আমরা এ বিষয়ে জ্ঞাত যে OECEMs স্বীকৃতির সঙ্গে কোনো আইনি, আর্থিক বা ব্যবস্থাপনা সংক্রান্ত বাধ্যবাধকতা থাকবে না এবং আমি/আমরা প্রয়োজনে আমাদের এই সম্মতি প্রত্যাহার করার অধিকার রাখবো।

আমি/আমরা (নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীগণ) _____ (সাইটের নাম)
-এর সম্ভাব্যকারী ক্ষুদ্র নৃতাত্ত্বিক জনগোষ্ঠী/ স্থানীয় সম্প্রদায়/ ব্যক্তি/ সংস্থা/ শিল্প প্রতিষ্ঠান-এর প্রতিনিধি হিসাবে উহার ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালনার জন্য দায়িত্বপ্রাপ্ত হিসাবে পুনঃনিশ্চিত করছি যে:

১. আমাদের এলাকাটি একটি OECEMs হিসাবে স্বীকৃত হতে পারে।
২. পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয় বা জীববৈচিত্র্য সনদ (CBD) সংক্রান্ত জাতীয় কমিটিকে এই সম্মতিপত্র অনুসারে OECEMs বিষয়ক বৈশ্বিক তথ্য ভান্ডার (WD-OECEMs)-কে তথ্য ও উপাত্ত প্রদানের জন্য অনুমতি দেওয়া হল।
৩. উপরোক্ত সিদ্ধান্তগুলি আমরা আমাদের সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণের নিয়মিত পদ্ধতি অনুযায়ী সদস্যদের সঙ্গে আলাপ আলোচনার যথাযথ প্রক্রিয়া অনুসরণ করে গ্রহণ করেছি।

ক্রমিক নং	পরিচালনা কমিটির প্রতিনিধির নাম ও পদবি	স্বাক্ষর	তারিখ
১			
২			
৩			

Annex- E

Summarized description and allowed values for the WDPA and OECMs database fields (Version 1.6)

Requirement	Provided by	Field Name	Type	Length	OECMs database accepted values
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	WDPAID	Number (Double)	N/A	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC. Unique identifier for an OECMs.
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	WDPA_PID	Text (String)	52	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC. Unique identifier for parcels or zones within an OECMs.
Minimum	Data provider	PA_DEF	Text (String)	20	Allowed values: 0 (meets the CBD definition of an OECMs)
Minimum	Data provider	NAME	Text (String)	254	Name of the protected area (PA) as provided by the data provider.
Minimum	Data provider	ORIG_NAME	Text (String)	254	Name of the protected area in original language.
Minimum	Data provider	DESIG	Text (String)	254	Name of designation.
Complete	Data provider	DESIG_ENG	Text (String)	254	Designation in English. No fixed values.
Minimum	Data provider	DESIG_TYPE	Text (String)	20	Allowed values: National, Regional, International, Not Applicable
Complete	Data provider	IUCN_CAT	Text (String)	20	Allowed values: Not Applicable
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	INT_CRIT	Text (String)	100	Allowed values: Not Applicable
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	MARINE	Text (String)	20	Allowed values: 0 (predominantly or entirely terrestrial), 1 (Coastal: marine and terrestrial), and 2 (predominantly or entirely marine). The value '1' is only used for polygons.
Minimum	Data provider	REP_M_AREA	Number (Double)	N/A	Marine area in square kilometres.
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	GIS_M_AREA	Number (Double)	N/A	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC.
Minimum	Data provider	REP_AREA	Number (Double)	N/A	Area in square kilometres.
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	GIS_AREA	Number (Double)	N/A	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC.
Complete	Data provider	NO_TAKE	Text (String)	50	Allowed values: All, Part, None, Not Reported, Not Applicable (if no marine component).
Complete	Data provider	NO_TK_AREA	Number (Double)	N/A	Area of the no-take area in square kilometres.
Minimum	Data provider	STATUS	Text (String)	100	Allowed values: Proposed, Inscribed, Adopted, Designated, Established.
Minimum	Data provider	STATUS_YR	Number (Long Integer)	12	
Complete	Data provider	GOV_TYPE	Text (String)	254	Allowed values: Federal or national ministry or agency, Sub-national ministry or agency, Government-delegated management, Transboundary governance, Collaborative governance,

						Joint governance, Individual landowners, Non-profit organisations, For-profit organisations, Indigenous peoples, Local communities, Not Reported.
Complete	Data provider	OWN_TYPE	Text (String)	254		Allowed values: State, Communal, Individual landowners, For-profit organisations, Non-profit organisations, Joint ownership, Multiple ownership, Contested, Not Reported.
Complete	Data provider	MANG_AUTH	Text (String)	254		Individual or group that manages the protected area.
Complete	Data provider	MANG_PLAN	Text (String)	254		Link or reference to the protected area's management plan.
Complete	Data provider	CONS_OBJ	Text (String)	100		Allowed values: Primary, Secondary, Ancillary.
Complete	Data provider	SUPP_INFO	Text (String)	254		Link or reference to supporting information on the OECMs, such as details of how it fulfils each element of the OECMs definition.
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	VERIF	Text (String)	20		Assigned by UNEP-WCMC. Fixed values: State Verified, Expert Verified, Not Reported (for unverified data that was already in the WDPA prior to the inclusion of the 'Verification' field).
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	RESTRICT	Text (String)	20		Not publicly available, for UNEP-WCMC use only.
Minimum	UNEP-WCMC	METADATAID	Number (Long Integer)	12		Assigned by UNEP-WCMC. Link to source table.
Complete	Data provider	SUB_LOC	Text (String)	100		Allowed values: ISO 3166-2 sub-national code where the PA is located. Separated by a semi-colon if multiple.
Minimum	Data provider	PARENT_ISO3	Text (String)	20		Allowed values: ISO 3166-1 Alpha-3 character code of country where the PA is located. Separated by a semi-colon if multiple.
Minimum	Data provider	ISO3	Text (String)	20		Allowed values: ISO 3166-1 Alpha-3 character code of country or territory where the PA is located. Separated by a semi-colon if multiple.

Source: UNEP-WCMC (2019). User Manual for the World Database on Protected Areas and world database on other effective area-based conservation measures: 1.6. UNEP-WCMC: Cambridge, UK. Available at: http://wcmc.io/WDPA_Manual



Photo: **Fern** - an endangered tree species in Bangladesh,
captured at Daine Dhonpata VCF, Khagrachari ©Arannayk Foundation photo library

Published by



Arannayk
foundation

Arannayk Foundation
Wasi Tower, 572/K ECB Chattar, Matikata,
Dhaka 1206
Email: info@arannayk.org
www.arannayk.org