Climate Change governance in the coastal region of Bangladesh: Roadmap towards sustainability

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The impacts of climate change are particularly severe in Bangladesh due to its extreme poverty and economic dependency on climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture, food, and fisheries. Geographical location, frequent disasters, changes in precipitation and temperature, and man-made local environmental changes have dramatically reduced the stability of the coastal environment. This study investigates the impacts of climate change on the two most vulnerable coastal districts (Khulna and Bagerhat) of Bangladesh between 2008 and 2009 by analyzing recent and predicted changes to the coastal environment and livelihood patterns. In particular, it examines what climate change adaptation strategies have been adopted at the grass-roots level, with the aim of proposing improved strategies for mainstreaming climate change adaptation and mitigation in order to achieve climate-proof development and sustainability in Bangladesh. The study finds that the south-western coastal region of Bangladesh currently experiences livelihood and food insecurity as a result of the changing pattern of climate and human-induced activities in the natural environment. Current climate change adaptation initiatives are inadequate to secure the livelihood of the huge number of people affected by climate change. This ultimately means that people are being displaced to urban areas. The study concludes by suggesting a framework for development, involving multi-stakeholder engagement through less overlapping and more effective integrated actions between communities, civil society organizations, NGOs and various local government departments to build, at the grass roots level, a sustainable community that is resilient to the impacts of climate change. Keywords: Vulnerability, Adaptation, Governance, Multi-stakeholder, Coastal region.