
ENVIRONMENT NEWSLETTER

Year 17, No. 35-36 (September 13, 2020)

Presented by **Bangladesh Environment Network (BEN)**

www.BEN-Global.net and www.listserv.emory.edu/BEN

This issue of the Environment Newsletter includes the following items:

- 1) Green Voice Tree Plantation Program at Moheshkhali island in Cox's Bazar
- 2) United Nations Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) Response Plan on 2020 Bangladesh Flood
- 3) Climate Change and Wildfire-A Global Perspective

1) **Green Voice Tree Plantation at Moheshkhali island in Cox's Bazar**

The environmentalist youth organization Green Voice is organizing a nationwide tree planting program in Bangladesh. A group of young people of Green Voice are carrying out this program all over the country with the conviction of greening Bangladesh. Following this initiative, Cox's Bazar District Green Voice has launched a week-long program. As part of this program, Green Voice Cox's Bazar District Branch inaugurated the program by planting 3000 saplings of various types of fruit and medicinal plants in different educational institutions of Maheshkhali Upazila.



Photo: Tree Plantation by Green Voice Bangladesh

Speaking as the chief guest, Ashish Kumar Majumder said that youth is our main driving force, because it is the youth who can make all the impossible possible. He also appreciated the way Green Voice is working with the conviction of building a green Bangladesh and hoped that

RDRS Bangladesh would always be by the side of this great initiative of Green Voice. Joining the online platform, Green Voice Central Committee co-coordinator Tariqul Islam Ratul noted that The Bangladesh government had to cut down millions of trees to accommodate the forcibly displaced Myanmar citizens. The damage done is absolutely irreparable. The deforestation has had a huge adverse impact on the biodiversity of Cox's Bazar. He continued to say that Green Voice has undertaken the tree planting program to restore the normal environment so that we can balance the environment at least a little bit. In 2020 September, more than 5,000 saplings will be planted in Cox's Bazar Sadar Upazila, Chakoria, Maheshkhali, Ramu, Teknaf, Ukhia and Kutubdia Upazilas in phases.

2) United Nations Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) Response Plan on 2020 Bangladesh Flood

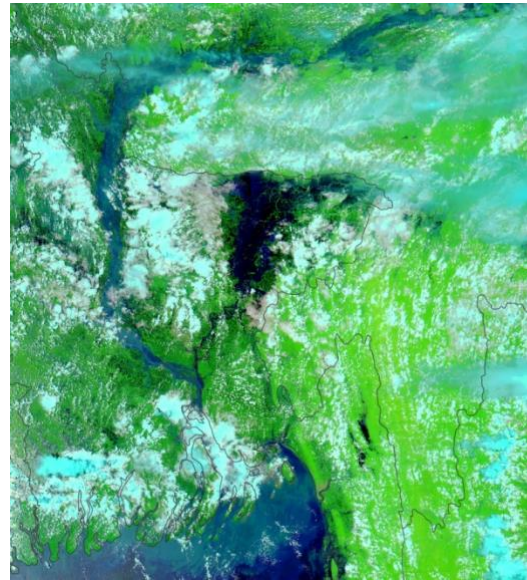
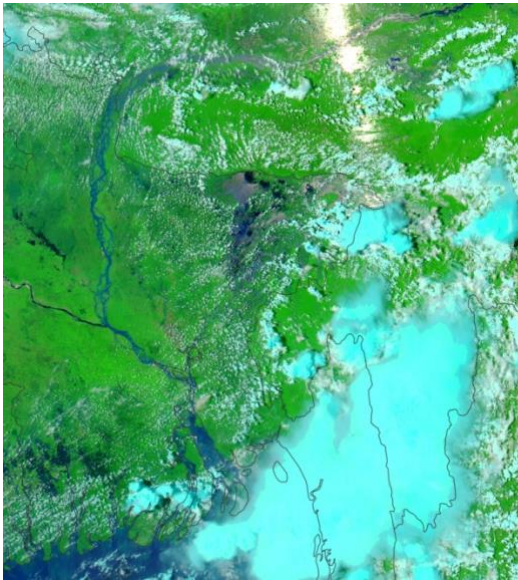


Photo: The satellite images above show northeast Bangladesh on June 2 (left) and July 25 (right). Water appears navy blue and black; clouds are white or cyan; and vegetation is bright green.

United Nations Bangladesh recently published the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) Response Plan on 2020 Monsoon floods report. The humanitarian community, together with the Government of Bangladesh, estimated likely impacts of the floods and took action early on. The response plan covers social protection; water supply sanitation and hygiene promotion; food security and nutrition; Shelter, etc. Since early June 2020, monsoon-related floods have devastated millions of people in Bangladesh, at least a quarter of which was inundated. Officials reported that more than four million people have been affected and at least 100 had died. About 80 percent of Bangladesh's rain falls during monsoon season which typically cause some level of flooding. The flooding in 2020 is one of the worst in a decade and the longest-lasting since 1988.

The report has a section on coordinated impact assessment of the situation in collaboration with national authorities and partners. The primary purpose of the assessment is identifying the actual impact scenario, identifying immediate and mid-term needs through contextualized primary and secondary information. Priority Geographic areas are ranked among the moderately and severely impacted 15 districts by index-based calculation of three major dimensions e.g. hazard impacts, vulnerability and response capacity. Based on this index the top three impacted districts were Jamalpur, Kurigram and Lalmonirhat. The report also includes Key Immediate Needs (KIN) analysis to identify relief items and services. Based on the analysis the two most KIN were identified as drinking water supply and food packages.

Link to the Report: <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/hctt-response-plan-monsoon-floods-united-nations-bangladesh-coordinated-appeal>

Satellite Image Source: <https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/147057/intense-flooding-in-bangladesh>

3) Climate Change and Wildfire -A Global Perspective



Photo: Flames from California wildfire. Credit: NOAH BERGER / AP

Recently, a series of wildfires (about 8000) have burned more than 3 million acres of land across the state of California of the United States, making 2020 the largest wildfire season recorded in California history. Not even a year ago, the world saw the devastating Australian

bushfire which burned about 18.6 million hectares of land and affected nearly three billion terrestrial vertebrate. A few years ago, the 2016 Fort McMurray wildfire, the costliest disaster in Canadian history, burned about 1.5 million acres of land in Alberta, Canada.

The world has witnessed an increasing number of wildfires in the past few decades. While every fire needs a spark to ignite and fuel to burn, the hot and dry conditions in the world's atmosphere increase the likelihood of a forest fire. The graph below shows annual wildfire acreage since 1983 in US, displaying an upward linear trend.

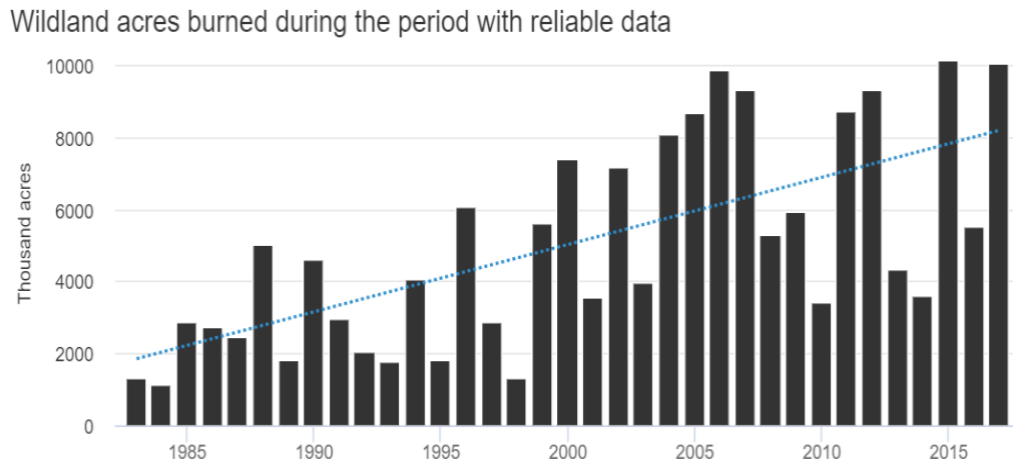


Figure: Annual wildfire acres since 1983 in US. Blue shows linear trend. Data from the US National Interagency Fire Center

High temperatures and low humidity are two essential factors behind the rise in fire risk and activity, affecting fire behavior from its ignition to its spread. Over the past several decades, as the world has increasingly warmed, so has its potential to burn. Since 1880, the world has warmed by 1.9 degrees Fahrenheit (1.09 degrees Celsius), with the five warmest years on record occurring in the last five years. The magnitude, duration and frequency of wildfires have varied greatly over time and space, chiefly as a result of the complicated influences of climate change and climate variability. International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recently mentioned in its report that with increasing warming, climate zones are projected to further shift pole ward in the high latitudes where warming is projected to increase disturbance in boreal forests, including drought, wildfire, and pest outbreaks (high confidence). Besides climate change, human land management is as important to consider as any other factor. Globally, some place on Earth is always on fire and most of those fires are set by people, either accidentally in wildlands, or on purpose, for example, to clear land or burn agricultural fields after the harvest to remove crop residues. Humans and climate together are really the two factors that are shaping the fires around the world.

More Read:

<https://www.carbonbrief.org/factcheck-how-global-warming-has-increased-us-wildfires>
<https://climate.nasa.gov/news/2912/satellite-data-record-shows-climate-changes-impact-on-fires/>
<https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/our-natural-resources/forests-forestry/wildland-fires-insects-disturban/climate-change-fire/13155>

https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2019/08/4.-SPM_Approved_Microsite_FINAL.pdf

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