

UK- Bangladesh collaboration will Strengthen Flood Forecasting and Early Warning Systems – Environment Advisor

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Advisor to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and the Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), has said that the EnRICH Project will strengthen flood forecasting and early warning systems in Sylhet, Sunamganj, Cumilla, and Feni from September 2025 to March 2026.

She made this remark today while addressing a national event titled “UK-Bangladesh Collaboration on Ecology-Based Adaptation and Hydro-Met Services” held at Pani Bhaban, Dhaka, as the Chief Guest.

The Advisor appreciated the UK Met Office’s collaboration with RIMES, BWDB, and BMD under the new initiative, saying, “Our meteorologists often struggle to forecast sudden floods or upstream water surges accurately. Over the next six months, this partnership will enhance our analytical capacity to interpret rainfall and hydrological data more effectively.”

Emphasizing the need for stronger coordination between the government and development partners, Rizwana Hasan said, “The sustainability of NGO-led projects depends on establishing effective collaboration mechanisms with the government.”

Highlighting the importance of protecting Haor ecosystems, she noted, “If the Haor ecosystem collapses, our food supply will drop. Protecting Haor means protecting the country’s overall ecosystem.” Although the National Haor Master Plan has been finalized, she said, the Haor Development Board still lacks an approved administrative structure, which limits its

effectiveness.

The Advisor informed that the government has already drafted the Haor and Wetland Ordinance and a protection order under the Water Act covering Hakaluki and Tanguar Haor has been prepared. Once gazetted, these areas will be managed as climate- and agriculture-friendly ecosystems.

“Haor is deeply linked with our food system – when water or electricity supply falls, food security suffers. It is our national duty to protect this ecosystem for the wellbeing of our people,” she said.

Rizwana Hasan also mentioned that Haor communities are deprived of essential services, including healthcare. “We are exploring a boat-based hospital model that can operate both during floods and in the dry season,” she added, noting that such a project from the Health Ministry could be considered for approval under the Climate Change Trust Fund.

The event brought together over 150 participants, including government officials, development partners, academia, and civil society, reaffirming a shared commitment to climate resilience and locally led aBangladesh

Among the distinguished guests were Emebet Menna, Deputy Country Director – Programme, CARE Bangladesh; James Goldman, Deputy High Commissioner and Development Director, British High Commission, Dhaka; Professor Dr. Ainun Nishat, Advisor, C3ER, BRAC University; Selina Shelley Khan, Chief of Party, NABAPALLAB, CARE Bangladesh and roufa Khanum, Assistant Director, C3ER, BRAC University.

The event also showcased the achievements of the UK-funded NABAPALLAB Project in the Sundarbans Ecologically Critical Area (ECA) and announced its expansion to Hakaluki Haor, one of the largest wetlands in South Asia. A panel discussion featuring experts from ADB, CNRS, RSF, and the Bangladesh Forest Department underscored the importance of integrating

Nature-Based Solutions and Locally Led Adaptation into Bangladesh's national climate strategies.