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CASE STUDY TOPIC: Report on impact of global warming on Sunderban National Park, West Bengal     Submitted to: Prof. MANOJ ACHARYA                                    Submitted by: SURBHI PARASHAR   The Sunder bans National Park is a National Park, a Tiger Reserve, and a Biosphere Reserve in West Bengal, India. It is the part of the Sundarbans on Ganges Delta, and adjacent to the Sunderban Reserve Forest in Bangladesh. This delta is densely covered by mangrove forests, and it is one of the largest reserves for the Bengal tiger, found mostly in India. It is also home to a variety of bird, reptile and invertebrate species, including the salt-water crocodile. The present Sunderban National Park was declared as the core area of Sunderban Tiger Reserve in 1973 and a wildlife sanctuary in 1977.

On 4 May 1984 it was declared a National Park. It is a UNESCO world heritage site inscripted in 1987. It is considered as a World Network of Biosphere Reserve (Man and Biosphere Reserve) in 2001. The first Forest Management Division to have jurisdiction over the Sundarbans was established in 1869. In 1875 a large portion of the mangrove forests was declared as reserved forests under the Forest Act, 1865 (Act VIII of 1865). The remaining portions of the forests were declared a reserve forest the following year and the forest, which was so far administered by the civil administration district, was placed under the control of the Forest Department.

A Forest Division, which is the basic forest management and administration unit, was created in 1879 with the headquarters in Khulna, Bangladesh. The first management plan was written for the period 1893–98. 34In 1911, it was described as a tract of unexamined waste country and was excluded from the census. It then stretched for about 266 kilometres (165 mi) from the mouth of the Hugli to the mouth of the Meghna river and was bordered inland by the three settled districts of the 24 parganas, Khulna and Bakerganj. The total area (including water) was estimated at 16, 900 square kilometres (6, 526 sq mi). It was a water-logged jungle, in which tigers and other wild beasts abounded. Attempts at reclamation had not been very successful.

The Sundarbans was everywhere intersected by river channels and creeks, some of which afforded water communication throughout the Bengal region both for steamers and for native ships. Sunderban National Park is located in between 21° 432? – 21° 55? N latitude and between 88° 42? – 89° 04? E longitude. The average altitude of the park is 7. 5 m above sea level. 54 small islands compose the park and several distributaries of the Ganges River intersect it.

Action on climate change needed to save the SundarbansUnless immediate action is taken, the Sundarbans, its wildlife and the natural resources that sustain millions of people may disappear within 50 to 90 years, the study states. “ The mangrove forest of the Bengal tiger now joins the sea-ice of the polar bear as one of the habitats most immediately threatened as global temperatures rise during the course of this century,” said Keya Chatterjee, acting director of the WWF-US climate change program. “ To avert an ecological catastrophe on a much larger scale, we must sharply reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change we failed to avoid.” Sunder bans as the world’s largest mangrove forestThe Sundarbans, a UNESCO World Heritage Site shared by India and Bangladesh at the mouth of the Ganges River, is the world’s largest single block of mangrove forest. Mangroves are found at the inter-tidal region between land and sea, and not only serve as breeding grounds for fish but help protect coastal regions from natural disasters such as cyclones, storm surges and wind damage.

Providing the habitat for between 250 and 400 tigers, the Sundarbans is also home to more than 50 reptile species, 120 commercial fish species, 300 bird species and 45 mammal species. While their exact numbers are unclear, the tigers living in the Sundarbans of India and Bangladesh may represent as many as 10 percent of all the remaining wild tigers worldwide. Using the rates of sea level rise projected by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its Fourth Assessment Report (2007), the study’s authors wrote that a 28 cm sea level rise may be realized around 2070, at which point tigers will be unlikely to survive in the Sundarbans. However, recent research suggests that the seas may rise even more swiftly than what was predicted in the 2007 IPCC assessment.

EFFECT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON SUNDERBANSDue to climate change the Sundarbans faces several challenges. With rising sea levels, islands are disappearing and theincreasing salinity in the water and soil has severely threatenedthe health of mangrove forests and the quality of soil and crops. Additionally, there have been serious disturbances tohydrological parameters and change in fishing patterns, resultingin disastrous consequences for fishermen. Frequent cyclones anderratic monsoon raining pattern are damaging ecology andhumanity. CASE STUDY TOPIC: Report on impact of global warming on Sunderban National Park, West Bengal     Submitted to: Prof. MANOJ ACHARYA                                    Submitted by: SURBHI PARASHAR   The Sunder bans National Park is a National Park, a Tiger Reserve, and a Biosphere Reserve in West Bengal, India.

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