

Unit Twelve: Environment and Nature

Lesson 2 - The Hakaluki Haor

Hakaluki Haor is an important source of fisheries resources for Bangladesh. Kalibaus, Boal, Rui, Ghagot, Pabda and Chapila are the main fish species found here. From the Kushiara there are frequent upstream movement of fish towards the beels and tributaries of Hakaluki. The beels in Hakaluki haor provide winter shelter for the mother fisheries. In early monsoon these mother fisheries produce millions of fries for the entire downstream fishing communities. Floodplains are also an important source of fisheries resources within the area. However, many of the beels have lost their capacity to provide shelter for mother fisheries because of sand deposits from upstream rivers and canals, use of complete dewatering technique for fishing and lack of aquatic plants to provide feed and shelter for parent fish.

The haor is a very important resting place for migratory waterfowls flying in from the north. The most interesting species is the Barheaded Goose, which is now hardly seen in fresh water wetlands. Many other important species of waterfowls make the Haor their temporary home. Unfortunately, illegal poaching has been a threat to the waterfowl population in this vast wetland. Hakaluki haor is known as a good grazing land in winter. People from villages around the Haor and also from distant areas send their herds for grazing. During this time, herders make temporary shelters near the beels and graze their animals for a period of 4-5 months. The Haor had very dense swamp forests in the past, but deforestation and a lack of conservation practices have virtually destroyed this unique forest in the last two decades.

Two small patches of swamp forests still exist in the area of which one is in Chatla beel and the other near the village of Kalikrishnapur. With the exception of these two swamp forest patches, the vegetation surrounding Hakaluki haor is unique. It includes both swamp forest English For Today 98 as well as mixed evergreen rain forest. Thatching material is the most useful natural wetland product of the area. The haor system provides a wide range of economic and non-economic benefits to the local people as well as to the people of Bangladesh. These include fish production, rice production, cattle and buffalo rearing, duck rearing, collection of reeds and grasses, and collection of aquatic and other plants. The haor system also protects the lower floodplains from flash floods occurring in the months of April-May, maintains the supply of fish in other lower water bodies and provides habitat for migratory and local waterfowls.

The unique haor system contributes to the beauty of the landscape both during the monsoon and the dry season. In monsoon, its unique scenic beauty makes it a huge natural bowl of water and in the dry season it becomes a vast green grassland with pockets of beels serving as resting places for migratory birds. This unique natural system can be a major attraction for tourists.

A Choose the correct answer from the alternatives:

1x5=5

(a) The word 'tributary' refers to ----

- i. contribution ii. low land iii. Branches iv. fish

(b) 'Illegal poaching has been a threat to the waterfowl'. Here the meaning of 'poaching' is ----

- i. catching ii. driving iii. throwing iv. hunting

(c) In the past, according to passage, the Haor is full of-----

- i. floodplains ii. swamp forest iii. natural resources iv. wetland

(d) The word 'aquatic' refers to-----

- i. floating ii. fishes iii. existing in water iv. waterfowls

(e) Herders make temporary shelters near the beels and graze their animals ----

- i. winter ii. summer iii. dry season iv. rainy season

B. Answer the following Question:

2x5=10

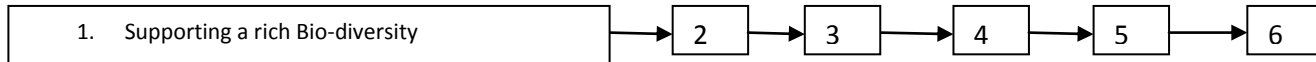
- (a) What are 'mother fisheries'? What do they do?
(b) Why is the haor economically important to the local people?
(c) What is flash flood? When does it occur?
(d) What is the identity of Hakalukihaor in the winter? How has the swamp forests been destroyed?
(e) "This unique natural system can be a major attraction for tourists"— How? Explain in a nutshell.

2. Read the passage and complete the table below with the given information.

1x10=10

| Who / what | significant | For | Where / place |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| (i)----- | Important resting place | (ii)----- | Coming from the north |
| (iii)----- | One of the most interesting species | Rarity and excusive look | (iv)----- |
| Hakaluki Haor | (v)----- | Local cattle | (vi)----- |
| (vii)----- | Staying in temporary shelters | (viii)----- | Near the beels |
| (ix)-----of water fowls | A great threat | Waterfowl population | (X)----- |

Or Based on your reading of the Passage below, make short notes in each of the boxes in the flow-chart showing the contribution of Hakaluki Haor to the environment and local people. (No. 1 has been done for you)



3. Summarize the text.

10