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An assessment of the blue economy opportunities of Bangladesh within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

Masug Hassan Ahmed¹ and Md. Mizanur Rahman²

Bangladesh has achieved much in her quest for economic and social development, but major is left undone. Significant growing in population and scarcity of food production has not been accompanied by the employment generation, needed to alleviate the massive poverty of the country. Government policy and actions through proper control and coordination of different ministries and maritime organizations can help to achieve the goal by promoting and protecting the country's vast sea wealth and activities. As the land-based resources are getting scarce day by day, the need for new resources will make more significant use of the sea soon. With the implementation of UNCLOS III, coastal nations are competing to increase their sea area to extract more resources. Bangladesh is also not in any way out of the misty atmosphere with enormous offshore living resources in the Bay of Bengal. Like any other coastal state and burdened with a large population, Bangladesh is focusing her interests on the long coastline and the vast offshore living resources to augment her internal assets. The study aimed at assessing blue economy opportunities within the Exclusive Economic Zone of Bangladesh. Both primary and secondary data were used in this assessment. Primary data was collected from the cadets of Marine Fisheries Academy who completed a one-year long internship in the sea. A map of the marine living resources; inherent problem and prospect of resources management for the future generation was prepared. The living resources were classified as Marine Capture Fisheries, Aquaculture/Mariculture, Marine Aquatic Products, Blue Biotechnology, Agriculture in Saline Soils and Mangrove as Carbon Sinks. Sustainable extraction of marine resources can boost up the economy drastically. A coordinated approach is required to convert the challenges into opportunities. Through the consultation with various stakeholders a maritime/marine spatial planning should be developed to achieve sustainable development.

Keywords: Resources, sustainable development, maritime, spatial planning

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