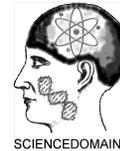




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# Climate Change Diplomacy- Apparatus for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation: A Reflection in the Context of Bangladesh

Mohammad Tarikul Islam<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Government and Politics, Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh.*

**Author's contribution**

*The only author performed the whole research work. Author MTI wrote the first draft of the paper. Author MTI read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this analysis is mainly to examine the current trend of climate change diplomacy carry forward by the Government of Bangladesh. This focus on effectiveness of Climate Change (CC) Diplomacy for the climate change victim nation like Bangladesh. Some interrelated issues addressed here are: (i) essence of climate change diplomacy for the developing nations mostly affected by climate induced disasters; (ii) performance of Bangladesh in the bilateral and multilateral negotiations. The findings of the analysis suggest that, climate change diplomacy of the government of Bangladesh is not formally fashioned yet to influence foreign governments and/or multilateral institutions towards extending highest support in mitigating and adapting the climate change impact. It is apparent that, climate change diplomacy does not seem to have emerged as an integral component of its international relations to complement the national efforts through tie up with international affiliations. The paper is concluded with a roadmap to make the climate change diplomacy more effective so that Bangladesh could avail optimum assistance from the international community/alliance to mitigate and adopt climate change for reduction of vulnerability of the community recurrently affected by climate change induced disasters. With the prominence of climate change diplomacy on the top, Bangladesh should have a strategy of playing a pro-active role at the international level in coming years. Such strategy would help Bangladesh to draw on the global assistance in favor of climate change mitigation and adaptation.

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\*Corresponding author: Email: [tarikul.islam81@gmail.com](mailto:tarikul.islam81@gmail.com);

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## DEFINITIONS

1. **Climate change** is any long-term significant change in the “average weather” of a region or of the earth as a whole. Average weather may include average temperature, precipitation and wind patterns. It involves changes in the variability or average state of the atmosphere over durations ranging from decades to millions of years. These changes may be caused by dynamic processes on Earth, external forces including variations in sunlight intensity, and more recently by human activities. Some scientists predict that climate change will cause severe disruptions, such as weather related natural disasters, droughts, and famines, which may lead to enormous loss of life. Global warming between 1.6 and 2.8 degrees Celsius over the next three decades would raise sea levels by half a meter.
2. **Bilateral diplomacy** or Bilateralism consists of the political, economic, or cultural relations between two sovereign states.
3. **Track II diplomacy** is a specific kind of informal diplomacy, in which non-officials (academics, scholars, retired civil and military officials, public figures, and social activists) engage in dialogue, with the aim of conflict resolution, or confidence-building. This sort of diplomacy is especially useful after events which can be interpreted in a number of different ways, both parties recognize this fact, and neither side wants to escalate or involve third parties for fear of the situation spiraling out of control.
4. **Multilateral diplomacy** is a term in international relations that refers to multiple countries working in concert/a group/alliance on a given issue.
5. **Cultural diplomacy** is a domain of diplomacy concerned with establishing, developing and sustaining relations with foreign states by way of culture, art and education. It is also a proactive process of external projection in which a nation's institutions, value system and unique cultural personality are promoted at a bilateral and multilateral level.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as increasing evidence of the impacts of climate change and those human actions are contributing to changes in climate. There is a growing apprehension across the world that attaining the consensus and commitment needed to take action call for positioning climate change in a broader foreign policy context. The perceived goal of traditional foreign policy is to provide stability and security as a foundation for human well-being, global harmony, freedom and prosperity. However, in today's increasingly inter-connected world, the traditional instruments of diplomacy are not always effective in tackling global threats. Established alliances and procedures are hard-pressed to be effective against a threat such as climate change, when the greenhouse gas emission is not the ambition of any one “unreceptive” influence.

In order to address the climate change challenge, it requires new thinking in foreign policy—thinking that considers engagement on climate change not only in the sphere of environment, but also outside the milieu container. Science (climate scientists) and politics (diplomats and Foreign Ministry officials) may not always speak the same language, but climate change diplomacy inevitably brings them together into a “marriage of convenience”.

With the intention of addressing the special needs of vulnerable countries like Bangladesh/Maldives, there is consensus between science and politics that the principle of “common but differentiated responsibility” offers the best paradigm and institutional framework to understand and confront the asymmetries in the international system. Although not a significant contributor to climate change, Bangladesh is one of the countries is most at risk from its projected impacts. Climatic events like cyclones, tornadoes and floods have in recent years become less predictable, and more severe and frequent. Bangladesh is one of the most disaster prone countries in the world with great negative consequences being associated with various natural and climate change induced hazards. The geophysical location, land characteristics, multiplicity of rivers, and the monsoon climate render Bangladesh highly vulnerable to natural hazards. The coastal morphology of Bangladesh influences the impact of hazards on the area. Especially, in the south eastern area, natural hazards increase the vulnerability of the coastal dwellers and slow down the process of social and economic development.

Since independence in 1971, the country has endured almost 200 disaster events – cyclones, storm surges, floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, droughts and other calamities – causing more than 500,000 deaths and leaving prolonged damage to quality of life, livelihoods and the economy [1]. Bangladesh is a low-lying deltaic country in South Asia formed by the Ganges, the Bharmaputra and the Meghna rivers. It is a land of about 136.7 million people within its 147,570 sq. km territory. More than 310 rivers and tributaries have made this country a land of rivers. Environmental displacement with the premise of increased frequency of natural disasters and the adverse impacts of climate change, human security seems to be in jeopardy. It is bordered on the west, north and east by India, on the south-east by Myanmar and on the south by the Bay of Bengal.

There is an increasing realization in the international community that achieving the consensus and commitment needed to take action requires positioning climate change in a broader foreign policy context. The ostensible goal of western foreign policy is to provide stability and security as a foundation for human well-being, global freedom and prosperity. However, in today’s increasingly inter-connected world, the traditional instruments of diplomacy are not always effective in tackling global threats. Established alliances and procedures are hard-pressed to be effective against a threat such as climate change, when the cause (greenhouse gas emissions) is not the ambition of any one “hostile” power. Addressing the climate change challenge requires new thinking in foreign policy—thinking that considers engagement on climate change not only in the sphere of environment, but also outside the environment box. The country pursues a moderate foreign policy that places heavy reliance on multinational diplomacy, especially at the United Nations. Since independence in 1971, the country has stressed its principle of friendship towards all, malice towards none in dictating its diplomacy.

As a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, Bangladesh has tended to not take sides with major powers. Since the end of the Cold War, the country has pursued better relations with regional neighbors. One of the core principles of the foreign policy of Bangladesh is to uphold the right of every people freely to determine and build up its own social, economic and political system by ways and means of its own free choice. This is a sign of venture of Bangladesh to ensure the right of its climate change affected communities.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) to the Government of Bangladesh has a major role to play in global Climate Change Diplomacy at the international level in the form of bilateral or multilateral modus. It is already clear that almost every significant bilateral meeting between

the foreign minister and her counterparts, such as Hilary Clinton, includes climate change diplomacy as an important topic. The recent ministerial level meeting of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) hosted by Bangladesh under the auspicious of the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) and the MoFA speaks about an excellent example of cooperation between these two ministries. Presence of UN Secretary General in the meeting displayed the sincere endeavor of Climate Change Diplomacy by the Government of Bangladesh.

The paper is intended to appraise role of Bangladesh at different steps of negotiation to draw attention of international community to mobilize resources for climate change adaptation in Bangladesh. The study is decorated with content analysis. However, it took place in Dhaka, Bangladesh from July -September 2012 through comprehensive examination of important articles, books and other sources pertaining to the study topic. In doing so, first the study has looked into the role of ministry of foreign affairs of the government of Bangladesh for its climate change negotiations efforts at different level. Simultaneously, an attempt is made to study consequence of climate change in Bangladesh.

## **2. CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION: DEFINITION**

Policy responses to climate change are rest with mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation addresses the root causes, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while adaptation seeks to lower the risks posed by the consequences of climatic changes. Both approaches will be necessary, because even if emissions are dramatically decreased in the next decade, adaptation will still be needed to deal with the global changes that have already been set in motion. Climate change mitigation is action to decrease the intensity of radioactive forcing in order to reduce the effects of global warming. In contrast, adaptation to global warming involves acting to tolerate the effects of global warming. Most often, climate change mitigation scenarios involve reductions in the concentrations of greenhouse gases, either by reducing their sources or by increasing their sinks.

The UN defines mitigation in the context of climate change, as a human intervention to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases. Examples include using fossil fuels more efficiently for industrial processes or electricity generation, switching to renewable energy (solar energy or wind power), improving the insulation of buildings, and expanding forests and other "sinks" to remove greater amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Some assert that also non-renewable sources of energy such as nuclear power should be seen as a way of reducing carbon emissions. The International Atomic Energy Agency advocates this approach. However, even while reporting to the UN, the IAEA is independent from it and in no way affiliated with the UNFCCC [2]. Scientific consensus on global warming, together with the precautionary principle and the fear of abrupt climate change is leading to increased effort to develop new technologies and sciences and carefully manage others in an attempt to mitigate global warming. Most means of mitigation appear effective only for preventing further warming, not at reversing existing warming. The Stern Review identifies several ways of mitigating climate change. These include reducing demand for emissions-intensive goods and services, increasing efficiency gains, increasing use and development of low-carbon technologies, and reducing fossil fuel emissions.

### **3. ESSENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE DIPLOMACY FOR THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: CRITICAL ANALYSIS**

Negotiation is a dialogue between two or more people or parties, intended to reach an understanding, resolve point of difference, or gain advantage in outcome of dialogue, to produce an agreement upon courses of action, to bargain for individual or collective advantage, to craft outcomes to satisfy various interests of two people/parties involved in negotiation process. Negotiation is the core part of Climate Change Diplomacy that ensures the involvement of each party for bilateral or multilateral discussion in order to gain an advantage for them by the end of the process. Climate scientists, activists and climate change negotiators often refer to the “overwhelming” scientific evidence of the impact of GHG (Greenhouse Gas) emissions: extreme climatic events (floods, shorter and warmer growing seasons), sea-level rise (causing erosion and salinity in coastal areas), melting of glaciers and many other phenomena [3].

While all of these are shared global problems, their impact will be much more severe in the developing countries exposed to climate change risk. Focusing on the impact of climate change on developing countries, the UN Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) found in its 2007 Synthesis Report that by mid-century, “climate change is expected to reduce water resources in many small islands, e.g., in the Caribbean and Pacific, to the point where they become insufficient to meet demand during low-rainfall periods”. Further, global sea-level rise is “expected to exacerbate inundation, storm surge, erosion and other coastal hazards, thus threatening vital infrastructure, settlements and facilities that support the livelihood of island communities,” and “erosion of beaches and coral bleaching is expected to affect local resources” [4]. The report also found that with higher temperatures, “increased invasion of non-native species is expected to occur, particularly on mid- and high-latitude islands”. Corroborating most of these findings, the UNFCCC Secretariat, in the 2008 Climate Change: Impacts, Vulnerabilities and Adaptation in Developing Countries, identified that “all Caribbean, Indian Ocean and North and South Pacific small island states will experience warming”. In an attempt to address the fundamental concerns, negotiation across level has emerged as an impending and worthwhile force. Climate change diplomacy results in promotion of mitigation and adaptation of climate change impact. For instance, at the Durban negotiations, countries focused on three steps to ensure the developed world can meet its agreed responsibilities: establish funding sources based on international trade; define annual targets for the scale-up; and adopt a transparent, centralized accounting system.

In order to be sustainable, climate change diplomacy must address the technological, financial and policy needs of SIDS in pragmatic ways. This is not a matter of “charity” or “aid”. It is an obligation owed to them by the international community as a whole. While global resources are never in short supply to achieve this, only a fair, equitable and distributive multilateral governance facility stands to protect and promote their needs and meet their expectations as vulnerable societies in a global village characterized by asymmetries and socio-economic inequalities between nation-States. The gravity of climate change diplomacy is rest with negotiations with different actors assertively to get the best out of the international provision responding to the mitigation and adaptation for the climate change victim developing nation. Climate Change Diplomacy envisages confidence building amongst different parties across level so as to ensure that, climate change victim is duly supported in all aspects for mitigation and adaptation.

It is now apparent that negotiators are rethinking to take "precautionary" and "adequate" measures to anticipate climate change, prevent or minimize its causes and reduce its adverse effects. This means taking action even amid scientific uncertainty. The types and sources of funds are also an issue. It is not clear what proportion of adaptation funding will be pure grants, loans with concessionary terms, or purely market-rate loans. Vulnerable countries are not able to repay loans for adaptation, nor should they have to. In addition, the Cancun texts promise 'predictable' funds, which is essential for developing countries to budget and plan for adaptation responsibly. But predictability has not increased since the 2009 meeting in Copenhagen, as wealthy governments have not mustered the will, political support or taxes to raise climate finance. "Scaled up" is another phrase that has not been adequately addressed [5]. After years of watching wealthy nations put token voluntary contributions into UN climate funds, developing nations pushed for meaningful, scaled-up funding at Copenhagen. Copenhagen and Cancun also promise "new and additional" funding. These much-debated words suggest climate finance will be over and above conventional development aid known as Official Development Assistance (ODA) - but their meaning in practice has been ambiguous.

Most donor countries have similarly failed to justify the way they divide the burden of confronting climate change. A recent study found that only two of 10 contributors that reported their fast-start finance activities to the UNFCCC indicated how they calculated their fair share of funding. The Copenhagen Accord and Cancun Agreements promised balanced allocation between adaptation and mitigation. Fast-start donors have pledged between \$4.8 billion (3.59 billion euros) and \$6.3 billion to adaptation, 19-25 percent of total climate finance - only a small rise on the 11-15 percent pledged a year ago [6]. Adaptation funds should go first to those most vulnerable to climate impact, as promised in several recent agreements, including Cancun. Vulnerable groups are not only geographically exposed to physical threats such as sea level rise, drought or disease, but are especially susceptible to harm because of poverty and powerlessness.

Despite pledges of transparency in Bali, climate finance has been poorly reported and impossible to track and verify. Climate finance is highly fragmented, with dozens of donors, including governments, multilateral agencies, private foundations and civil society organizations. With so many funding channels and very little information, it is difficult for both donors and recipients to assess where money is going. Developing countries are left not knowing how much support to expect, when and for what. There are three essential steps Durban delegates have directed efforts together to take toward robust, effective adaptation funding that fulfills past promises. Climate Change Diplomacy loose ends as an alternative and viable force in order to tackle climate change impact by achieving the following goals:

To fund the scale-up period and beyond, negotiators from climate victim nations should work out a series of financing mechanisms that are international, constant and substantial in size. Climate finance negotiations have a blind spot: the scale-up period from 2013 to 2019 [7]. In this period - after the fast-start years but before the \$100 billion-per-year pledge for 2020 - developed nations need defined targets for each year and mechanisms to keep the expansion of funding on track. Only then will they develop systems capable of generating the amounts committed by 2020. Notwithstanding the creation of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)-led funds, most money in the next few years will likely flow bilaterally or through multilateral channels not governed by the convention. This makes transparency and central accounting even more crucial. Durban negotiators is one of the evidences to press the need for creating a central accounting framework and registry, perhaps under the UNFCCC's Standing Committee; provide a global definition of "new and

additional" adaptation finance; and agree to standardize a format for more precise project-level reporting of financial flows.

To envisage the future climate change diplomacy, it is pivotal that any agreement going forward specify and deliver on fair and effective funding, as was promised in Copenhagen and Cancun. The funding must be adequate and predictable, and be delivered justly and transparently. Poor and vulnerable nations should be the first to receive funds, and should have a say in fund governance.

#### **4. WORLD CLIMATE CONFERENCES: COMPLIMENTARY TO CLIMATE CHANGE DIPLOMACY**

The principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" recognizes the asymmetries of the international system, especially the differential levels of technological, financial, economic and human capacities between industrialized/developed and developing countries in international environmental negotiations. Despite these asymmetries, every nation has an obligation to participate in joint efforts to tackle shared global environmental problems according to each nation's capacity and level of development. However, industrialized countries have an obligation to bear a greater burden of these shared problems. The First World Climate Conference was held on 12-23 February 1979 in Geneva and sponsored by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). It was one of the first major international meetings on climate change. Essentially a scientific conference, it was attended by scientists from a wide range of disciplines. The Conference led to the establishment of the World Climate Programme and the World Climate Research Programme. It also led to the creation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) by WMO and UNEP in 1988 [8].

The Second Climate Conference was held on 29 October to 7 November 1990, again in Geneva. It was an important step towards a global climate treaty and somewhat more political than the first conference. The main task of the conference was to review the WCP set up by the first conference. The IPCC first assessment report had been completed in time for this conference. The scientists and technology experts at the conference issued a strong statement highlighting the risk of climate change. The conference issued a Ministerial Declaration only after hard bargaining over a number of difficult issues; the declaration disappointed many of the participating scientists as well as some observers because it did not offer a high level of commitment. Eventually, however, developments at the conference led to the establishment of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), of which the Kyoto Protocol is a part, and to the establishment of the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS), a global observing system of systems for climate and climate-related observations. World Climate Conference-3 (WCC-3) was held in Geneva, Switzerland, 31 August - 4 September 2009 [9]. Its focus was on climate predictions and information for decision-making at the seasonal to multi-decadal timescales. The goal was to create a global framework that will link scientific advances in these climate predictions and the needs of their users for decision-making to better cope with changing conditions.

The Conference also aimed to increase commitment to, and advancements in, climate observations and monitoring to better provide climate information and services worldwide that will improve public safety and well-being. WCC-3 outcomes also intended to contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and broader UN climate goals, including the Hyogo Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Reduction. The

Conference theme complemented global work under way to help societies adapt to climate change in line with Bali Action Plan, especially the Nairobi Work Programme.

#### **4.1 Role of United Nations in Climate Change Diplomacy**

At the core of international efforts to address climate change are the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol. These two treaties represent the international response so far to the compelling evidence, compiled and repeatedly confirmed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, that climate change is occurring, and that it is largely due to human activities. Countries agreed on the Convention on 9 May 1992, and it entered into force on 21 March, 1994. But even as they adopted the Convention, however, governments were aware that its provisions would not be sufficient to adequately address climate change. At the first Conference of the Parties, held in Berlin, Germany in early 1995, a new round of talks was launched to discuss firmer, more detailed commitments. After two and a half years of intensive negotiations, a substantial extension to the Convention was adopted in Kyoto, Japan in December 1997 [10]. This Kyoto Protocol established legally binding emissions targets for industrialized countries, and created innovative mechanisms to assist these countries in meeting these targets.

The Kyoto Protocol entered into force on 18 November 2004, after 55 Parties to the Convention had ratified it, including enough industrialized countries - who have specific targets - to encompass 55 per cent of that group's carbon dioxide emissions in 1990. The debate surrounding climate change on future severity, how much is man caused, and what the solutions might be, has been becoming increasingly vigorous with data and reports providing concrete evidence for global warming. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), was established by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to assess scientific, technical, and socio-economic information relevant for the understanding of climate change, its potential impacts and options for adaptation and mitigation. It recently finalized its Fourth Assessment Report: Climate Change 2007. In October 2007 the IPCC and Albert Arnold (Al) Gore shared the Nobel Peace Prize. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) presents the appropriate forum to do this. It has been expanded by the Kyoto Protocol which includes emission reduction commitments for developed countries over the period 2008-2012 [11]. A new international climate change deal must be put in place in time to ensure that necessary action is undertaken immediately after 2012 when the current phase of the Kyoto Protocol ends. Therefore, comprehensive negotiations on a new climate deal need to begin without further delay.

The persistent United Nations Climate Change Conference is the biggest global forum of its member states, NGOs, CSOs and individuals to press the need for mitigation and adaptation of climate change adopting new policies/ road map unanimously. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warned in November 2011 that extreme weather will strike as climate change takes hold. Heavier rainfall, storms and droughts can cost billions and destroy lives. Estimates suggest that every dollar invested in adaptation to climate change could save \$60 in damages. NGOs and civil society have long provided their expertise and advocated for reform with regards to issues such as climate change, and the environment, to multilateral institutions and national governments. These efforts take a variety of forms, from advocacy to grassroots level education and action, to sharing experience and knowledge with policymakers, to publishing position papers, and to taking part in conferences surrounding these issues.

Since the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, an increasing number of NGOs and other members of civil society from all around the globe have participated in international conferences on the environment. Civil Society representatives have brought invaluable expertise and intervention strategies to international meetings. The 18th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Doha, Qatar ended with lot of promises to address climate change [12]. This is the first time that the UN climate change conference has been held in a Gulf country. Although developing countries have warned those refusing to join the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, they cannot enjoy the benefits of market mechanisms in the Kyoto Protocol, such as the clean development mechanism. Those countries not agreeing to the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol are happy not to make commitments and set emissions limits.

## 5. PROSPECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE DIPLOMACY OF BANGLADESH: AN OVERVIEW

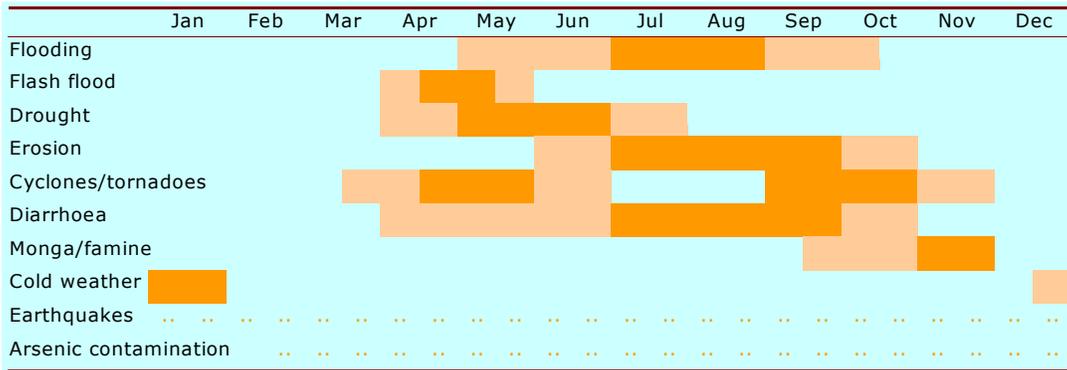
Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change due to global warming. According to current scientific understanding, the state of well-being and survival of the people in Bangladesh will be under serious threat from climate change over the coming decades. Being associated with various natural and climate change induced hazards, Bangladesh has been the worst victim in the world as would be evident from Fig. 1 as well as Fig. 2.

- One third of population below the poverty line and 17% or some 27 million people still live in extreme poverty
- Sea level rise has the potentials to displace nearly 30 million people living in the coast
- in terms of people exposed to Bangladesh is ranked globally:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> for floods, 3rd for tsunamis and 6th for cyclones
    - 14% GDP exposed to disasters per year – the highest ranking in the world
    - Between 1980-2008:
      - 219 natural disasters
      - more than seven disasters per year
      - causing over USD 16 billion in damage
        - 93% river flows coming across border

**Fig. 1. Disaster and climate profile of Bangladesh**

*Source: United Nations Development Programme, Climate Change, Environment and Disaster profile of Bangladesh, 2012*

As a country most vulnerable to climate change, Bangladesh has been experiencing sufferings caused by climate change. the National Adaptation Programme for Action (NAPA) highlighted prediction on changing pattern of temperature, rainfall and sea level rise in Bangladesh due to climate change impact (Fig. 3).



**Fig. 2. Disasters calendar of Bangladesh**  
 Source: World Food Programme Bangladesh, 2011

Year	Temperature change (°C) mean	Rainfall change (%) mean	Sea level rise (cm)
2030	1.0	5	14
2050	1.4	6	32
2100	2.4	10	88

**Fig. 3. Statistical data of predication for Bangladesh due to climate change impact**  
 Source: National Adaptation Programme for Action, Department of Environment, Government of Bangladesh, 2005

The above projections of climate parameters may be concluded that the country will be highly susceptible to: (a) increased flooding, both in terms of extent and frequency; (b) increased moisture stress during dry periods leading to increased drought susceptibility in terms of both intensity and frequency; and (c) increased salinity intrusion during the low flow conditions. These changes in the physical system of the country will directly affect a number of major productive systems that include (a) crop agriculture, (b) livestock production, (c) aquaculture and fish production, (d) coastal shrimp production, and (e) forest and vegetation and (f) livelihoods of poor and marginal households. Due to changes in temperature and humidity, human health will also be affected. The high susceptibility to water-based natural hazards will affect settlement of the population and also physical immobile infrastructure. Based on secondary sources, the following sub-sections provide brief understanding on anticipated impacts of climate change on bio-physical aspects of the country.

As a country most vulnerable to climate change, Bangladesh has been experiencing sufferings caused by climate change. Bangladesh's endeavor towards making best use of diplomatic affiliation in an attempt to address the issue of climate change is noticeable [13]. For example, China fully understands and respects the concerns of Bangladesh over it. During international negotiations on climate change, China has always been supporting the legitimate and reasonable requests of Bangladesh and the Least Developed Countries as a whole. As developing countries, China, India, Malaysia and Bangladesh should stick to the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" and work together to safeguard the common interests of developing countries. China and Bangladesh are both victims of climate change. On this issue, the two countries face the same challenges and our basic interests are the same.

Over the years, China has already carried out cooperation with Bangladesh in the area of adaptation. For example, China helped Bangladesh in projects of river dredging. The Chinese Government provided relevant training for Bangladeshi officials and technicians. Bangladesh should attempt to strengthen the cooperation with Bangladesh in this regard on the basis of "equal consultation, mutual benefit and common development. It is apparent that, Bangladesh government deliberately presents itself "as a worst victim, peace loving, and responsible actor" and "as a poor developing country." Both discourses are designed to accomplish the broader diplomatic agendas. The rhetoric of being "a responsible actor" enables Bangladesh to raise its international profile and pursue its interests more easily; and that of being "a poor developing country" underlines its need for foreign assistance to tackle the adverse impact of climate change.

In fact, the negotiations are for solving a global problem. Therefore, the world needs to work collectively. Another thing is the real negotiations happen behind closed doors, in corridors, near the swimming pools and places like that. However, Bangladesh, over time, has learned a lot. It has played a proactive role in several global negotiations. Negotiation of Bangladesh Delegates in the conference of parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was effective as they strongly presented the real case as the worst climate change victim nation. Bangladesh found to be in positive effort to play a leading role in the last COP. However, first it is useful to assess, dispassionately, the role that Bangladesh has been able to play so far, in order to see how this can be built on and improved going forward.

Role of Bangladesh in the recent Climate Change Conference held in Doha (November 2012) is considerable. Bangladesh had raised strong demands for paying compensation to the climate vulnerable countries as they are not responsible to the global warming [14]. As CVF chairperson, Bangladesh played vital role in negotiation with developed countries as to reduce the carbon emission in order to keep their pledges which speaks of Bangladesh's prospective attachment in the climate negotiations. At the conference, developing countries have asked developed countries to come out with a roadmap to show how the Green Climate Fund will be distributed between 2013 and 2020, and the fund should reach \$100 billion by 2020.

The Long-Term Cooperative Action deals with long-term issues such as the pledges of emissions reductions various countries have made and implementation of the goals that should be included in new climate change treaties after 2020. Long-term emissions reduction goals and negotiation results based on the Action should be further implemented in the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action and in future treaties. Though all the participants showed a smile of understanding, they are fully aware that it will not be an easy task to achieve the purpose as originally envisaged. To this end, all contracting parties should engage in inclusive consultations and negotiations. Assessment of Bangladesh's role so far would be to say that Bangladesh certainly played a "prominent" role but far from a "leading" role. They are very active in highlighting Bangladesh's position as a vulnerable country as well as the action that the country is undertaking on tackling climate change. However, banging one's own barrel (however, effectively) does not commend a country to its allies within the LDC Group or other vulnerable countries and it is felt that Bangladesh is only promoting itself. In order to be a leader, a country Bangladesh has to earn the trust of others, who will acknowledge them as leaders. Unfortunately, by promoting itself the opportunity to gain the trust of others was challenged. Hence, for playing a prominent role, the country should able to play a truly leadership role in global forum like COP.

For discharging role of negotiating on country's behalf on climate change, Bangladesh should think about appointment of the high level Climate Change Envoys. Climate change will remain central for Bangladesh for many years) to come and investing in such a High Level Special Envoy who has the trust of the government and the requisite diplomatic (rather than technical) background and skills, along with a team from the relevant ministries, is essential even now. It will also have to take a more nuanced and leading role on behalf of the vulnerable countries. An important element of the strategy going forward for these vulnerable countries is to no longer highlight their vulnerability alone but rather trumpet their actions (both on adaptation as well as on mitigation or low Carbon growth).

This is where they can gain the moral high ground and shame other countries (both the developed countries as well as the large developing countries who have become major polluters now) into action. With regard to gaining financial support from any new international adaptation funds, Bangladesh needs to make the case for getting its due share based on its performance and ability to do the right things with transparency and good governance, rather than staking an a priori claim for a certain share. By proving that Bangladesh can use money well, it will get more than its fair share without having to stake a claim to it in competition with others. Since climate change is an important issue for Bangladesh, it should have a permanent climate change negotiator, who should be a senior or retired ambassador having required skill and knowledge of diplomacy.

Bangladesh is known as one of the most vulnerable countries. We need to make a positive impression across the world. Bangladesh is, however, one of the first countries that prepared a climate strategy and action plan and formed a climate trust fund. Bangladesh has not waited for other countries' money for the fund. Now the challenge is using the fund as everybody is looking at Bangladesh. If Bangladesh does not spend the money well, it will spoil its reputation. It is a problem that the vulnerable countries are asking for funds. Yes, they need more money. But merely asking for money is not enough. The private sector has a tremendous role to play in reducing people's suffering at local, national and global levels. At the global level, it is said that the biggest polluters are the energy, transport and industrial and other companies, not the states. The private sector needs to change the way they run the businesses. They need to go for clean energy.

Bangladesh has good laws for environmental protections, yet it does not have a good track record on enforcing these laws. Sometime the laws are broken with the help of the government people. I have read an article that a big building is constructed on a wetland at the heart of Dhaka. These things are unfortunate. We have to have better enforcement of the laws. We also need to develop a productive relationship between the industries and the citizens and the government, who are the right people to say what has gone wrong. Doing whatever you wish, because you are powerful, is just undermining your own country and your children. Bangladesh's position in the global talks is very close to the least developed countries.

We have a strong bond because we produce the least emission of greenhouse gases yet we are the most vulnerable to climate change. Significant amount of emissions are released by the developed and the fast growing developing countries Brazil, South Africa, India and China. We need to persuade the rich and the fast growing countries realize that they have the right to develop, but they do not have any right to pollute. We must persuade them that there is technology for development keeping the level of emission low. Yes, these technologies are expensive. But they can afford it. Bangladesh foreign policy stands primarily on two pillars: security and development. Foreign policy covers the entire gamut of

foreign relations in such areas as, security, trade, manpower export, foreign direct investment, foreign aid, cultural matters, curbing terrorism, humanitarian, and environmental issues.

Foreign policy is no more confined to traditional diplomacy. Foreign policy includes economic and environmental diplomacy. The Research and Evaluation Division will conduct an in-depth research of regional and global events and its anticipated impact on Bangladesh. It will provide the government short-term and long-term policy options within which Bangladesh may likely to operate in 5 or 10 or 15 years [15]. Climate Change Diplomacy is also characterized by complex linkages between foreign and domestic policy and politics the connection between foreign and domestic policy inherent in environmental diplomacy bring new actors to the fore successful environmental diplomacy requires a cooperative, multilateral approach healthy competition for the mantle of international environmental leadership is needed to reinvigorate global environmental diplomacy. Environmental issues are increasingly intertwined with other more traditional areas of foreign relations, including trade and investment, development and human rights and even military security.

Climate Change Diplomacy tries to influence foreign governments and/or multilateral institutions towards certain policies and Climate Change Diplomacy seems clearly to have emerged as an integral component of international relations to complement the national efforts through tie up with international affiliations in mitigating and adapting the climate change. Climate change is growing in importance as a significant new arena of global diplomacy at the very highest levels. As a developing country that is particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change this presents a challenge for Bangladesh. At the same time, as the country gains in knowledge about the issue and starts to tackle it in earnest, it also represents an opportunity for it to play a leading role in the international diplomatic arena as well. In order to make the most of such opportunities different ministries of the government will need to enhance their capacities on the issue of climate change diplomacy. Some suggestions for action are described below.

As the lead ministry dealing with climate change the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) has been playing a leading role on behalf of the country at the meetings of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the annual Conference of Parties (COP), including the recent COP17 held in Durban, South Africa. Over the years the minister and officials of the ministry as well as expert advisers have gained considerable knowledge of and expertise in the different negotiating tacks and Bangladesh has been playing a leading role at the COPs within the Least Developed Countries (LDC) group to which it belongs. Bangladesh has an opportunity to take over as chair of the LDC group from next year as the chairmanship will move from Africa to Asia at COP18 held in Doha, Qatar in December 2012. This gives Bangladesh a year to lobby amongst the Asian LDCs to gain the chairmanship of the LDC Group.

In fact, negotiations trigger solving a global problem. Therefore, the world needs to work collectively. Another thing is the real negotiations happen behind closed doors, in corridors, near the swimming pools and places like that. However, Bangladesh, over time, has learned a lot in the area of negotiations to address the issue of climate change and therefore, it has been playing a proactive role at several global negotiations since the beginning of 21st century. Negotiation of Bangladesh delegates in the conference of parties (COP) of the United Nations framework convention on climate change was effective as they strongly presented the real case as the worst climate change victim nation. Bangladesh found to be in positive effort to play a leading role in the last COP. However, first it is useful to assess,

dispassionately, the role that Bangladesh has been able to play so far, in order to see how this can be built on and improved going forward. Case Study-1 below shows signs of negotiations skill of Bangladesh demonstrated for climate change adaptation in international arena.

### **Case Study 1. Bangladesh chair Climate Vulnerable Forum**

Bangladesh has been accredited for demonstrating leadership to bring all climate victim nations under a single platform. As part of such management, a two-day international conference of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2011, aiming to reach a consensus on various climate issues to work together at the upcoming COP-17 conference in Durban. Ministers and representatives of 33 member countries and observers from 26 countries took part in a discussion. The Dhaka meeting of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) was considered significant ahead of the COP-17 conference held in Durban from November 28 to December 9, 2011. Prime Minister of Bangladesh and UN Secretary General the inaugural session. The participating countries were Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh (Incoming Chair), Barbados, Bhutan, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, Kenya, Kiribati (Present Chair), Liberia, Maldives (First Chair), Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nepal, the Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tanzania, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Vietnam. The CVF was formed in 2009 at the initiative of the Maldives to make a broad-based platform of the most vulnerable countries to realize their common goals. A Dhaka Declaration and a Roadmap of Activities was announced and worked as means of negotiations to the Durban COP Conference.

As international finance for climate change from global to national level begins to flow in earnest, the Ministry of Finance, and particularly the Economic Relations Division (ERD) will need to enhance its knowledge of climate change finance, which is different from Official Development Assistance (ODA) with which they have traditionally been familiar. One significant difference between ODA and climate change finance is that ODA is given by developed countries to developing countries under a paradigm of "charity" (or "solidarity") while climate finance is under a treaty obligation under the paradigm of "polluter pays." Thus, the relationship of Bangladesh's officials when dealing with their counterparts from the same developed countries needs to be very different when discussing ODA (where Bangladesh has to accept what is offered on the terms on which it is offered) from discussing climate finance (where Bangladesh can dictate some of the terms). A good example is the position of the LDCs that only grants are acceptable and not loans for climate finance.

The foreign ministry needs to provide regular briefings on climate change diplomacy to its missions abroad and in the longer term should send some junior officers for higher studies in climate change diplomacy. The prime minister is already finding that climate change is a regular topic on the agenda of her meetings with other heads of state and she is quite knowledgeable on the topic. However, given the importance of this topic for Bangladesh in future, she should consider appointing a personal "Special Climate Change Envoy/Adviser" to represent her at important high level international meetings.

A number of both developed as well as developing countries have appointed such "special climate change envoys/advisers." The skills needed for such a position are those of diplomacy, especially within the UN system, rather than scientific expertise. So a current, or

former, senior diplomat who has been posted to either New York or Geneva would be a suitable candidate for such a position. The government of Bangladesh should equally reiterate the lexicon of harmony in the international climate policy negotiations. By using metaphors with positive connotations, it sets out to consolidate solidarity and togetherness with the developing world. "Our homeland" and "Mother Earth" in particular can be interpreted by the global community as universal values that "play an important role in argumentation because they allow us to present specific values, those upon which specific groups reach agreement, as more determined aspects of these universal values".

The international community must act in accordance with the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol. It must be aware of that helping others is helping oneself and harming others is harming oneself, actively tackle climate change, and work together to make our homeland a better place". Bangladesh's participation in the multilateral dialogues has been shown to be an indicative of its integration into the global society. Bangladesh badly needs the financial and technological support of the West to adopt with the change posed due to climate change. Rhetorically, Bangladesh finds it more feasible to speak of the needs of all developing nations as a group rather than its own interests.

Bangladesh should enhance bilateral relations with neighboring countries not want to be left alone in the negotiations and therefore, should tie up with regional alliance to raise strong voice to draw the attention for resource mobilization for CC adaptation. Nevertheless, Bangladesh should maintain its favorable image as a cooperative partner of the international community. The fear of losing face may constrain its behaviors. A policy cell could be developed by MoFA who will be responsible for Climate Change Diplomacy. MoFA can train diplomats in its Missions abroad who can play a vital role in raising international awareness to the environmental problems of Bangladesh. It should be emphasized that by focusing on environmental issues we are not asking for more aid or charity but rather for international recognition of the environmental importance of Bangladesh. It is a technical and knowledge-intensive affair and all delegations to international negotiations/conferences should be formed accordingly. Delegation members should be selected with appropriate background, continuity in participation and institutional expertise/memory developed over time.

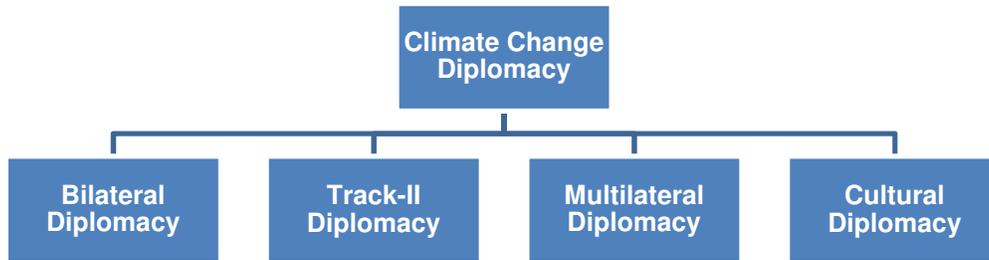
Multilateral diplomacy is not just important but engrained in the conduct of Bangladesh's foreign policy since the country gained its independence. Bangladesh has been working actively towards a global political and socio-economic stability and security within the multilateral system. Bangladesh will therefore promote security, international law as well as development through its active participation in the international fora, especially the United Nations system and its specialized agencies. Climate change diplomacy plays a tremendous role in building consensus, resource mobilization for climate change adaptation and mitigation. The following liner flow chart (Figure 4, developed by author himself) speaks about end result (climate change adaptation and mitigation) of climate change diplomacy.



**Fig. 4. Liner flow chart shows consequences of Climate change diplomacy**

The United Nations through its universal membership and its Charter occupies the central and indispensable role within a multilateral system of governance. Bangladesh recognizes

the need to address the pressing social and economic needs of the developing countries and as such looks to the United Nations to advance the development agenda related to underdevelopment and the eradication of poverty. Through Bangladesh's participation in the multilateral fora, Bangladesh has to be vocal with the belief that resolution of international conflict should be peaceful and in accordance with the United Nations and international law. Bangladesh is supporting all initiatives aimed at strengthening the UN and multilateralism. Bangladesh has to play a prominent role in advancing the development agenda of the South through its leadership roles in the NAM and OIC. Diagram in Figure 5 (developed by the author himself) could be considered as an option to promote Climate change diplomacy as the new dimension of diplomacy could be flourished in the form of bilateral diplomacy, track-II diplomacy, multilateral diplomacy as well as cultural diplomacy.



**Fig. 5. Different means of Climate change diplomacy**

On the top, a road map is proposed for Bangladesh to applause diplomatic negotiations in a win-win agreement. In order to show up the road map, a set of strategies and tactics that are designed to get the country like Bangladesh to the best possible outcome following four steps i.e. defining goals and objectives; promoting research and educate the officials of MoFA about the prevailing global focus, the competition and the other party; defining strategies; as well as defining tactics. In addition to these, MoFA should focus on the following way forwards for outcome-oriented Climate Change Diplomacy:

1. Focus on the problem at hand rather than the people. The goal here is to preserve relationships with the other party (bilateral discussion with other government or between government and international organizations/alliance).
2. Seek to understand the reasons behind any bargaining position (also, look for hidden agenda and personal motivators).
3. Brainstorm alternative agreements and options (track-II diplomacy or cultural diplomacy for unfolding the common interest of two nations)
4. Use objective criteria (pro-active and strong vocal in the international negotiation platforms gaining confidence and support of other climate change victim nations )
5. Know what your best alternatives to the initial negotiation objectives are. (showcase the worst impact of climate change in the international community along with adaptation capacity of the government and the people of Bangladesh)

## 6. CONCLUSION

It is apparent that, the countries that are most threatened by climate change, like the Bangladesh, must do all they can to break the deadlock. To stress the urgency of arriving at a serious global agreement soon, the governments of Bangladesh can engage in what might

be called “anti-diplomacy.” given the fact that climate change has become a national security issue, our governments must act in the same manner that they would respond to a national security threat. It is often forgotten how critical a role a single individual, who is both knowledgeable and respected by others, can play at the international level, even if the country he or she comes from is not the biggest or richest. If the Prime Minister and the government are willing to be proactive on climate change diplomacy issue it is quite possible that in a few years’ time Bangladesh may also produce such a universally respected individual in climate change diplomacy at the global level. Bangladesh certainly has the potential capability of playing a leading role amongst the fellow-vulnerable countries on the issue of climate change if it plays to its strengths which include capable officials, ministers and a committed prime minister as well as many experts and NGOs who are involved both at home as well as well-networked internationally. With the prominence of Climate change diplomacy on the top of mind, Bangladesh should have a strategy of playing a pro-active role at the international level in coming years to reduce the sufferings of climate change induced disaster victims drawing the global assistance in the area of mitigation and adaptation.

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## **COMPETING INTERESTS**

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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