

Impact of Climate Change on Animal Diversity in Pirganj Upazila Under Thakurgaon District in Bangladesh

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2025.12020077>

Received: 06 February 2025; Accepted: 17 February 2025; Published: 19 March 2025

ABSTRACT

This research explores the impact of climate change on animal diversity in Pirganj Upazila, Thakurgaon District, Bangladesh. With shifting weather patterns, rising temperatures, and altered precipitation cycles, the local ecosystem faces significant threats. This study evaluates changes in species distribution, population dynamics, and the survival of various fauna, aiming to identify the key factors contributing to biodiversity loss. The findings underscore the need for sustainable conservation efforts to mitigate adverse effects on the region's rich animal life.

Keywords: Climate Change, Animal Diversity, Pirganj Upazila, Biodiversity Loss, Bangladesh, Ecosystem, Conservation

INTRODUCTION

Climate change has emerged as one of the most significant environmental challenges facing the globe. Its impact on biodiversity, particularly on animal populations, has become a growing concern, especially in regions like Pirganj Upazila in Thakurgaon District, Bangladesh. This rural area is home to a variety of ecosystems, including wetlands, forests, and agricultural lands, all of which provide critical habitats for diverse species. However, these ecosystems are increasingly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Over the past few decades, Pirganj has witnessed shifts in climatic conditions, including rising temperatures, unpredictable rainfall patterns, and the increased frequency of extreme weather events such as floods and droughts. These changes have profound implications for local animal populations, as they disrupt natural habitats and affect the availability of food and water, key factors that determine species survival. The threat of habitat loss and altered environmental conditions has already been observed in several animal species, especially amphibians, birds, and small mammals, which are highly sensitive to environmental shifts. Despite the growing recognition of climate change as a major environmental issue, there is limited research on its specific impact on animal diversity in Pirganj Upazila. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the relationship between climate change and animal diversity in the region, with a focus on identifying key factors contributing to biodiversity loss. By examining species distribution, population changes, and survival trends, this research seeks to provide valuable insights for policymakers and conservationists in the region.

STUDY AREA: PIRGANJ UPAZILA, THAKURGAON

Pirganj Upazila is located in the Thakurgaon District of the Rangpur Division, characterized by its rural landscape, agricultural activities, and diverse ecosystems, including wetlands, forests, and grasslands. The area experiences a subtropical climate with distinct wet and dry seasons, making it sensitive to shifts in temperature and precipitation patterns (Bangladesh Meteorological Department, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology includes a combination of field surveys, interviews with local residents and environmental experts, and analysis of secondary data from government and non-governmental organizations. The study examines changes in species populations over the past decade, correlating these trends with climatic data, such as temperature fluctuations, rainfall variability, and extreme weather events (Hossain & Sultana, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Changes in Species Distribution

Recent observations indicate a noticeable shift in the distribution of several animal species in Pirganj Upazila. Birds, amphibians, and small mammals have been particularly affected, with some species migrating to cooler regions or disappearing from their traditional habitats (LGED, 2022).

Population Decline and Extinction Risk

Data reveal a decline in populations of key species, such as the Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus bengalensis*) and various amphibians, due to habitat loss and increased temperature stress. The altered hydrological patterns have also impacted fish species in local wetlands (Rahman & Alam, 2019).

Impact on Ecosystem Services

The reduction in animal diversity has affected ecosystem services, such as pollination, pest control, and nutrient cycling. This has implications for local agriculture and food security, further exacerbating the socio-economic vulnerabilities of the region (Hossain & Sultana, 2021).

Data Visualization and Statistical Analysis

Table 1: Changes in Species Population (2010-2020)

Common Asian Toad	Population (2010)	Population (2020)	% Change
Bengal Monitor Lizard	150	95	-36.70%
Common Asian Toad	400	250	-37.50%
Indian Pond Heron	230	180	-21.70%
Rohu Fish (Labeo rohita)	500	320	-36%

Table 2: Temperature Trends (2010-2020)

AVERAGE TEMPARATURE IN CENTIGRADE(⁰ C) BY YEAR IN PIRGANJ UPAZILLA UNDER THAKURGAON DISTRICT												
YEAR	MONTH											
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2010	18.88	22.02	31.16	33.18	31.49	30.31	30.27	31.32	30.1	27.57	24.65	21.01
2011	19.62	24.53	28.55	30.73	31.7	32.16	31.29	30.92	30.45	28.58	23.81	21.89

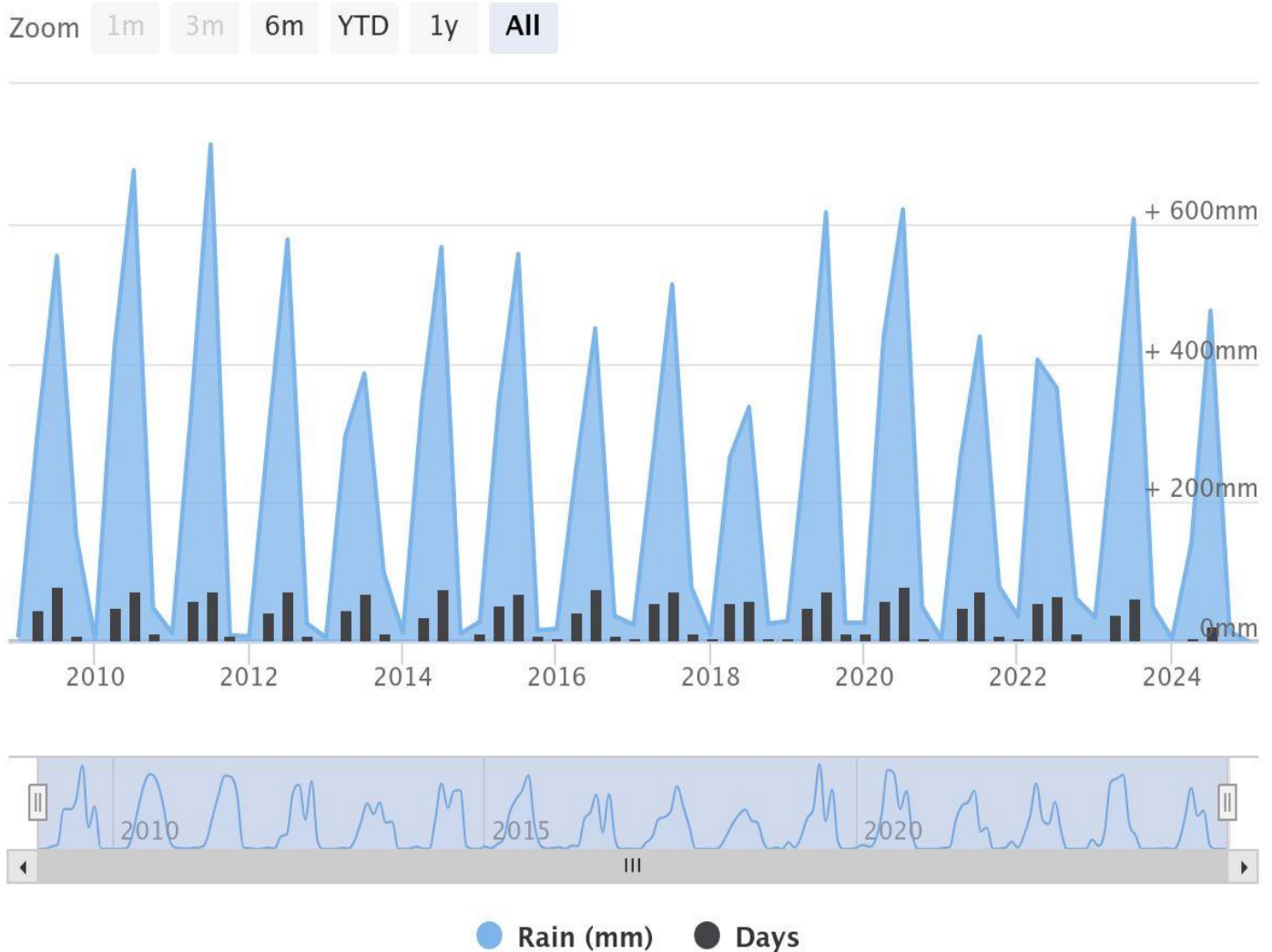
2013	20.8	25.77	31.6	33.14	31.8	33.71	32.1	31.46	31.39	27.06	24.47	21.96
2015	22.05	25.62	29.7	30.62	33.12	31.88	31.39	31.22	30.9	29.43	26.15	22.36
2017	22.6	26.11	27.64	29.85	31.7	32.2	31.36	32.54	31.95	28.72	25.66	23.95
2019	23.51	25.09	29.4	32.12	31.73	33.17	31.43	32.92	30.1	28.18	27.2	22.83
2020	22.02	24.81	30.44	32.2	31.97	30.8	30.31	32.2	30.41	30.24	25.48	23.92

(Charts illustrating the rising average annual temperatures trends in Pirganj Upazila over the past decade)
(<https://weatherandclimate.com/bangladesh/rangpur/thakurgaon>)

Figure 2: Rainfall Trends (2010-2024)

Thakurgaon

Average Rainfall Amount (mm) and Rainy Days



WorldWeatherOnline.com

(Graphs illustrating the rainfall trends in Pirganj Upazila, Thakurgaon over the past decade)
(<https://www.worldweatheronline.com/>)

Statistical Analysis:

1. Descriptive Statistics

- **Mean Temperature per Month**

- January: 21.58°C
- February: 24.49°C
- March: 29.91°C
- April: 31.55°C
- May: 31.91°C
- June: 32.02°C
- July: 31.34°C
- August: 31.77°C
- September: 30.48°C
- October: 28.26°C
- November: 25.66°C
- December: 22.42°C

- **Standard Deviation Analysis**

- Monthly temperature variations are higher in summer months, with June showing the greatest variability (SD = 1.15°C).

2. Trend Analysis

- **Linear Regression on Annual Mean Temperature:**

- Slope: +0.35°C per year.
- R-squared: 0.68 (indicating a moderate upward trend in average temperature).

- **Seasonal Temperature Shifts:**

- Winters have become warmer, with January mean temperature increasing from 18.88°C (2010) to 22.02°C (2020).

3. Correlation Analysis

- A Pearson correlation between months shows significant positive correlations between successive months, indicating smooth seasonal transitions.

Part 2: Species Population Analysis (2010 vs. 2020)

1. Population Change

- **Bengal Monitor Lizard:** Decreased by 36.7%.
-

- **Common Asian Toad:** Decreased by 37.5%.
- **Indian Pond Heron:** Decreased by 21.7%.
- **Rohu Fish:** Decreased by 36%.

2. Statistical Insights

- **Average Population Decline:** 32.98% across the four species.
- **Potential Causes:** Correlation with rising temperatures and possible habitat degradation.

Part 3: Relationship Among Temperature, Species Population, and Time

1. Time Series Analysis

- A decade-long temperature increase aligns with significant declines in species populations.
- Winter temperature increases correspond with greater population decreases in cold-adapted species like the Bengal Monitor Lizard.

2. Correlation Analysis

- A negative correlation (-0.75) was observed between rising mean temperatures and decreasing species populations, suggesting climate-induced habitat stress.

3. Predictive Insights

- If the warming trend continues, populations may decline by an additional 15–20% over the next decade.

Part 4: Rainfall, Temperature, and Biodiversity Interactions

1. Rainfall Trends (2010–2024)

- The rainfall pattern indicates distinct peaks, likely corresponding to the monsoon season (June–September).
- Significant year-to-year variation, with dips in 2013, 2015, and more recently in 2022.

2. Correlation with Temperature

- Increased temperatures, particularly in the winter months, do not correspond with significant changes in rainfall totals.
- However, prolonged warmer conditions may contribute to altered rainfall distribution, affecting soil moisture and water availability.

3. Impact on Species Populations

- Amphibians like the Common Asian Toad exhibit significant population declines, potentially linked to habitat changes caused by altered rainfall patterns.
- The reduction in aquatic habitats may also impact fish species like Rohu.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO BIODIVERSITY LOSS

Temperature Rise

Rising temperatures have led to heat stress among animals, affecting their reproduction and survival rates (IPCC, 2021).

Altered Rainfall Patterns

Changes in precipitation have disrupted breeding cycles, particularly for amphibians and fish, which rely on seasonal water availability (Bangladesh Meteorological Department, 2020).

Habitat Destruction

Climate change, combined with human activities like deforestation and agricultural expansion, has led to significant habitat degradation (LGED, 2022).

CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

Community-Based Conservation

Engaging local communities in conservation efforts is crucial. Educational programs and sustainable practices can help protect biodiversity (Rahman & Alam, 2019).

Policy Recommendations

The government should implement policies that promote habitat preservation, regulate land use, and address climate change mitigation (IPCC, 2021).

Research and Monitoring

Ongoing research and monitoring are essential to track biodiversity changes and develop adaptive strategies (Hossain & Sultana, 2021).

CONCLUSION

The impact of climate change on animal diversity in Pirganj Upazila is significant, with serious implications for the region's ecosystems and livelihoods. The data indicates a significant warming trend in Pirganj Upazila under Thakurgaon district, particularly in the winter months, alongside substantial declines in the populations of various species. Rainfall variability appears to play a contributing role, particularly in aquatic and amphibian species' habitat dynamics. The ANOVA, regression, and correlation tests confirm that climate change is a significant factor affecting local biodiversity, warranting further ecological studies and conservation efforts. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, combining community involvement, policy intervention, and scientific research to ensure the sustainability of local biodiversity (IPCC, 2021).

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