

## LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT IN THE COASTAL ZONE

### RAGHURAM PRASAD

Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority, Unnayan Bhavan, Salt Lake City, Kolkata 700 091, India.  
Member, Centre for Built Environment, Kolkata, India.

E Mail: itpi\_wbrc@vsnl.net

The complex coastal zone of the Bengal delta has human habitations and the State of West Bengal has elected village councils ( with one third women members ). But with the 73rd & 74th Amendment to the Constitution of India, the village councils have been provided more powers and responsibility. This has brought in scope for participatory development which at times is piecemeal and an integrated coastal zone management is required. Utilisation of remote sensing and satellite imagery and GIS has proved beneficial to the local administration. This has helped in the preparation of an integrated coastal zone management plan which is essential for effective governance. Information collection, analysis and dissemination as well as involvement of local people is an essential prerequisite for proper governance. There are a number of boards and authorities operating in the coastal zone of the Bengal delta – Sundarbans Development Board, Haldia and Digha Development Authorities are some of them in addition to rural local bodies etc. though the activities are to be coordinated by South 24 Parganas and partly Medinipur planning committee, Absence of broader regional plan is being felt. Environment Management is better achieved with such a plan. An integrated plan covering many village councils showing the spatial relationship needs to be developed. In the case of environment protection involvement of the local people as well as Citizen groups is a must for effective results.