People of Sunderbans have a mythical belief which has been surprisingly successful in creating a strong communal existence among the Hindu and Muslim inhabitants. The guardian goddess, Bonedi, according to the belief, was born in Mecca and was sent to this tide country to maintain the balance between man and nature. The myth is deeply rooted in the history of early arrival and settling of the Muslim preachers in Bengal and it is a derivative of people’s early struggle to survive in a hostile land. It tries to ensure that no conflict of interest caused by differences in beliefs or necessities takes place. The goddess belongs to land and tide, not in an enclosed temple.

1. Kalasa (fish water and honey jar)
2. Haystacks, nipa palm stack
3. Mandapa, raised platform for sacred plants and rituals
4. Water control from one field to another
5. Small dikes
6. Stepped edge with water storage
7. Water control with different elevations
8. Water inlet from larger source such as river tides
9. Ritual platform and raised platform for cultural and social gathering, usually have an iconic sacred tree which gives shade and create space
10. Sitting platform from Islamic garden
11. Fountain that stores and distributes water, also becomes a sitting place
12. Painting showing Indian ‘vaana’- forest garden
13. Historic painting of the garden of the Taj
14. Image of a transplant of local sacred plants into a grid of an Islamic garden
LANDS WITHOUT AN OWNER
Gain
Loss
Over last thirty years
THE MOON TIDES
TIDAL INFLUENCES ON LANDFORM

'There are no borders here to divide fresh water from salt, river from sea. The tides reach as far as three hundred kilometers inland and every day thousands of acres of forest disappear underwater, only to re-emerge hours later. The currents are so powerful as to reshape the islands almost daily — some days, the water tears away entire promontories and peninsulas; at other times it throws up new shelves and sandbanks where there were none before.'

-Amitav Ghosh, The Hungry Tide
Plan traces and overlapping of visible dry land in satellite images during different tidal conditions. It should be considered that the existing dike system for agriculture does not allow the site to be flooded naturally. Rather, the overlapped traces are showing what happens when the water is allowed to come in. The merged traces generate a reference of possible water flow situations in case of dike breaching, what became a strategy of the design. This method was inspired by polder management programs, where the some of the old canals of the area were re-excavated and redesigned.