



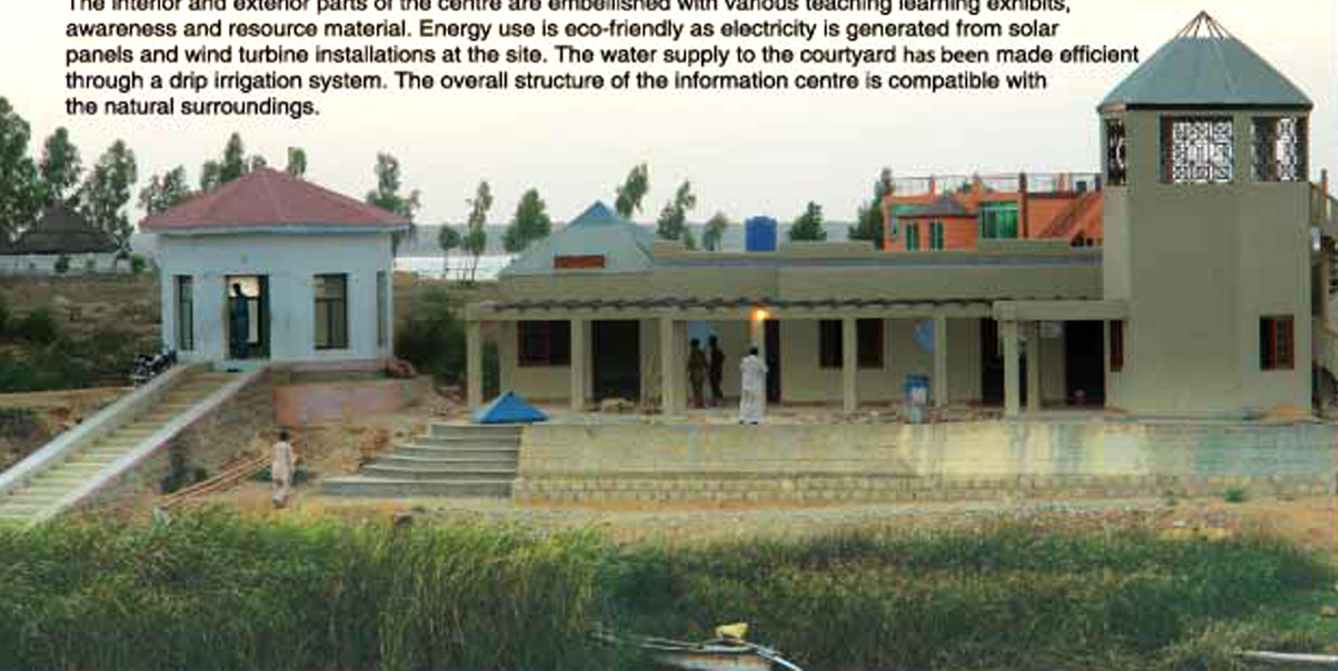
for a living planet®



Exploring the wealth of wetlands

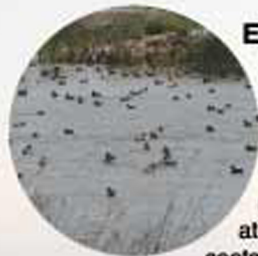
About the Centre

The centre hosts state-of-the-art facilities, set up keeping in view the multiple awareness needs and elements of local environment and traditions. It has a conference room, a fisheries resource room, a guestroom, a number of exhibits and an office with reception area. A watch tower providing a board view of the lake is another important feature of the centre. The interior and exterior parts of the centre are embellished with various teaching learning exhibits, awareness and resource material. Energy use is eco-friendly as electricity is generated from solar panels and wind turbine installations at the site. The water supply to the courtyard has been made efficient through a drip irrigation system. The overall structure of the information centre is compatible with the natural surroundings.



Why a Conservation and Information Centre at the Keenjhar Lake?

Because the lake is...



Ecologically Rich: Located in District Thatta of Sindh province, Keenjhar (also known as Kalri) Lake is one of the country's largest freshwater lakes, with an area of 13,468 hectares. To reflect its ecological richness and protect the associated biodiversity, the lake has been declared as a Ramsar site since 1976 (a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention) and a wildlife sanctuary (under the Sindh Wildlife Protection Ordinance). It is an important breeding, staging and wintering ground for a variety of waterbirds. At one occasion, 140,000 waterbirds were recorded at this lake. Many birds are migratory, of which the most abundant and regular winter visitors are the ducks, coots, waders, gulls and terns. Floristically the lake is one of the richest sites in Sindh hosting about 263 plant species from 55 families.



Socio-economically Significant: The lake is also of immense socio-economic importance as it provides drinking water to Karachi city, one of the biggest metropolises in the region. Moreover, it provides livelihood sources to about 50,000 people of the area, mainly dependent upon the lake's resources such as fisheries and aquatic vegetation. Lotus and Typha are aquatic plants found all along the banks of the lake. The former used as vegetable or medicine and the later used widely in mat making.



Fisheries Resources: The lake provides a rich habitat for a wide variety of fish. In 2008 the Indus for All Programme, WWF Pakistan recorded 55 fish species. Fishing has been the source of livelihood for nearly 50,000 people. There are four fish landing centres at the lake, viz. Khambo, Chilya, Sonehri and Jhimpir.

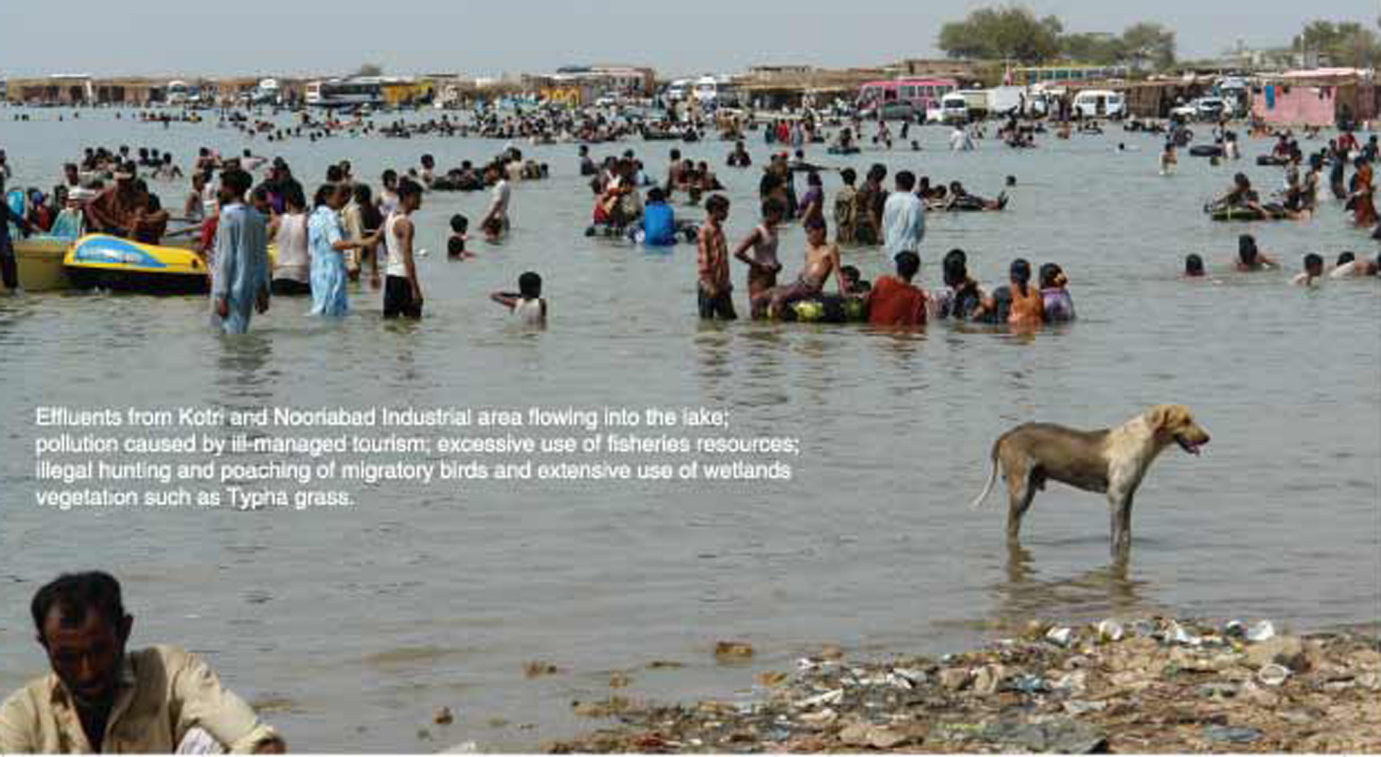




Tourism: Keenjhar Lake is visited by about 15000 visitors on any given weekend, mainly in summer. The main features of the lake are boating and swimming enjoyed by the families travelling from all over Sindh and other parts of the country. People also visit the tomb of Noori, the legendary character of the famous folklore in Sindh – Norri Jam Tamachi.



But the lake is under serious threats due to the following factors:



Effluents from Kotri and Nooriabad Industrial area flowing into the lake; pollution caused by ill-managed tourism; excessive use of fisheries resources; illegal hunting and poaching of migratory birds and extensive use of wetlands vegetation such as Typha grass.

Purpose of KCIC

The overall purpose is to serve as a hub of knowledge-sharing, awareness-raising and stakeholders facilitation for conservation of wetlands and associated ecosystems in the Indus ecoregion in general and Keenjhar Lake complex in particular.

The Information Centre serves to:

- Conserve the wetlands and their flora and fauna;
- Provide facilities in educational recreation for school groups;
- Encourage groups from various walks of life to develop an appreciation of nature;
- Facilitate displays, workshops, lectures, seminars, theatre performances, etc. by stakeholders on environmental issues;
- Develop cooperation with communities and other organisations for nature conservation and sustainable development; and
- Provide basic facilities to academia and research institution for scientific studies on ecosystem flora and fauna.




What the centre offers?

The KCIC organises several events. There is something for all age groups to explore.

Guided tours: Offered to general public groups, this is an opportunity to experience and explore the rich biodiversity of Keenjhar up close. A tour guide will be present to facilitate and lead visitors into high wildlife concentration areas, archeological sites and other tourist attractions. Boat Safari, nature excursions and camping arrangements will be made.

Nature camping: A fun way for students from all age groups to learn about different ecosystems and species. In this three-six day adventure, students get to enhance their appreciation and knowledge of nature through activities like discovery walks, nature crafts, boat safari, bird watching and nature excursion, amongst others.



Bird watching: Open to all age groups, bird watching activities will be organised and facilitated by a train guide. This is sure to be a great nature experience as the lake is home to numerous resident and migratory birds.

Educational day trips: Short day trips can be arranged at the centre for bird watching, boat safaris and nature and discovery walks. All age groups are invited to register.

Boat safaris: Traditional boats, led by an experienced guide, will take a limited number of passengers around the lake to catch sight of migratory birds, crocodiles, and other wildlife.

Research facilitation: Here, environmentalists, wetland scientists and other specialists can conduct their research. Extensive information is available with regards to individual species found at Keenjhar. Survey equipment may also be provided on demand.

Rental facilities: The conference hall and audio/visual equipment can be booked for meetings, seminars and workshops.

For further information and registration for any activity, please contact:

Incharge

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