



Indus Forever

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Indus for All Programme, WWF - Pakistan

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Indus Forever is the quarterly newsletter of the Indus for All Programme; the first five-year (2007-2012) implementation phase of a 50-year vision of the Indus Ecoregion Conservation Programme. Funded by the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Pakistan, the Programme is being implemented by WWF- Pakistan in close collaboration with the Government of Sindh. The Programme aims to conserve rich biological diversity of the Indus Ecoregion through livelihoods improvement of the local communities. The newsletter aims to keep the stakeholders of the Programme, other concerned organisations and individuals updated about the activities, progress and future endeavours of the Programme.

The Implementation Phase: Year 2

With the commencement of the 2nd quarter of the Year Two (2008), also started the envisioned second step of the implementation phase of the Indus for All Programme. The first step focused more on awareness raising and institutional capacity-building initiatives for the diverse range of partners and stakeholders. The preliminary baseline studies done during the 9-month inception phase (started from July-2006 to March-2007) served as the starting point of interventions in this respect.

While the Programme team is constantly involved in the awareness raising and capacity-building initiatives, the Programme envisages to gradually introduce and implement natural resource management (NRM) interventions from this quarter onwards. The strategy of simultaneously carrying out the awareness-raising initiatives is intended to complement the main objective of the Programme—sustainable management and conservation of natural resources. In this connection, the Programme will soon be embarking upon an extensive natural resource management plan at each site. Some of the interventions envisioned by the Programme include; better management practices (BMP) in agriculture sector; NRM-based enterprises; introduction of alternative energy etc. Each of the interventions has its own significance for the promotion of sustainable resource management practices. For example, to promote BMPs in each site, the Programme will soon engage in a consultative process with the farmers with regard to introducing drip irrigation technology to save water; ways to effectively manage water thirsty crops; and less use of pesticides. Moreover, given their economic condition, communities depending on NRM-based enterprises in each site such as mat-makers, honey harvesters, and those involved in net-making will be facilitated in access to the market through developing a viable strategy. In addition, with the successful introduction of five wind energy units in different creek and in-land areas of Keti Bunder the Programme intends to introduce alternate energy methods such as wind energy, biogas plants etc. in all the site areas. Surveys to identify potential sites in this regard are already underway and the process of installing additional units will be starting soon. The Programme has already initiated consultation with the local communities and line departments with regard to the participatory NRM interventions.

Furthermore, the commencement of the Partnership Fund Programme is also going to supplement the initiatives of the Programme through engaging the stakeholders in collaborative efforts that can lead the Programme to achieve the desired objectives of sustainable natural resource conservation and livelihood improvement.

Programme Highlights



World Environment Day Marked



Programme Director sharing some thoughts with CM, Sindh

Commemorating the World Environment Day, the Indus for All Programme organised and participated in a number of activities held in Karachi and the site areas. In this connection, the Programme Director, Dr. Ghulam Akbar, delivered a presentation on "Sustainable Management of Indus Ecoregion by Addressing Poverty-Environment Linkages" at a seminar on "Environmental Challenges in Sindh" held by Environment & Alternate Energy Department, Government of Sindh. Chief Minister Sindh, Syed Qaim Ali Shah was the Chief Guest at the opening session of the seminar. Moreover, the Programme held the following activities on the day:

- The Programme collaborated with WWF-Pakistan's Regional Office in Karachi to hold a Beach Cleaning activity at Sandspit Beach, Karachi. Sui Southern Gas Company and CDGK's Environmental Education section (Local Bodies' Wing) were the main partners in organizing the event in which around 500 students from different schools of the city participated. A quiz competition for the participating students was also held during the event.
- PIU Keenjhar organized an inter-school Painting Competition at the Fisheries Community Hall with the collaboration of a local NGO Global Welfare and Development Organization. 62 students of 26 government and private schools from Makli, Thatta, and surrounding areas, participated in the event. Ms. Humaira Alvani, Member of Sindh Provincial Assembly was the Chief Guest on the occasion and distributed prizes among the contesting students. While delivering a speech she reiterated about her government's commitment to enhance the flow of River Indus into the delta as per the Water Accord 1991.
- Chotiari Reservoir site team held a "Green Journey" to Nawabshah involving 38 students from 7 schools of the surrounding areas. Wearing T-shirts specially designed and arranged by the Programme, and displaying banners and placards, they started their journey from the site office Chotiari. On the way, they disembarked from their vehicles at Rawchani

and Shahpur Chakar and walked while displaying banners and placards and distributing leaflets. After reaching Nawabshah, they were warmly welcomed by Nawabshah Youth Group and PIU Pai Forest representatives. After a brief introductory session, they went to Pai Forest in Sakrand, where 400 trees were planted.



Ms. Humaira Alvani, MPA from Thatta, giving a shield to a student

4th Meeting of the Indus Ecoregion Steering Committee Held

The 4th Meeting of the Indus Ecoregion Steering Committee was held on 9 May 2008 in the Committee Room of the Planning and Development Department, Government of Sindh. The Additional Chief Secretary (Development), Sindh P&D, Mr. Nazar Hussain Mahar chaired the meeting. On this occasion, Mr. Nazar Hussain Mahar emphasized on the importance of immediate steps for the natural resource management and livelihood improvement in the Indus Ecoregion. He further appreciated the initiative of involving local communities by the Indus for All Programme. During the meeting, the committee was apprised of the progress of the Programme from November 2007 to April 2008. Discovery of three new-to-science plant species and several others findings from the baseline assessments, carried out by the Programme were appreciated by the participants. The committee was also informed of the Programme's Partnership Fund established to provide grants to the line departments, academic institutions and NGOs/CBOs for addressing the long-term vision of the Indus Ecoregion.



Mr. Nazar Hussain Mahar chairing the IESC meeting



Programme Highlights

Exposure Visit for Journalists

The Indus for All Programme organised an exposure visit for journalists to Keti Bunder with the objective to sensitise the media about environmental issues through a hands-on experience and exposure.

The visiting journalists were taken to a village namely Babu Dablo where they had an interaction with local communities. The community members informed the journalists about the environmental problems in the area especially sea intrusion attributed to reduction in the flow of River Indus into the delta, and destructions caused by cyclones. In addition, the journalists also came to know about the loss of livelihoods in the area due to the desertification agricultural lands, depletion of mangrove forests and decline in fisheries resources. The participants also observed the different initiatives taken by the Indus for All Programme.



Journalists interviewing villagers during the exposure visit to Keti Bunder

Programme Holds a TV Talk Show on Indus Delta

The Programme's Communications and Awareness Component liaised with one of the most watched TV channels in Sindh, Kawish Television Network (KTN) to organize a talk show on environmental issues of the Indus Ecoregion. The show was recorded on 1 June 2008 at the VIP Rest House of Sindh Irrigation Department, Government of Sindh at Keenjhar Lake

The Indus for All Programme identified, invited and facilitated the panelists for the talk show. Two of the Programme team members, Mr. Nasir Ali Panhwar, Programme Coordinator, and Ms. Rahila Memon, the Female Community Development Officer were among the panelists. The Provincial Minister for Culture and Tourism Ms. Sassui Paliyo was the main discussant while the Former DG Livestock and Additional Secretary Forests, Mr. Abrar Mirza was also one of the panel members. The talk show proved to be a useful forum for discussing different environmental issues of the Indus Ecoregion. It also

provided the Programme team members an opportunity to highlight the initiatives undertaken by the Programme.



Ms Sassui Paliyo, Provincial Minister for Culture & Tourism receiving a Shield

Training for District Government Officers on Natural Resource Management



Under the devolution plan forest, wildlife, fisheries and other departments are the local government subjects. Therefore, the Indus for All Programme took the initiative to strengthen the competencies of the district officers in planning, implementation and monitoring of NRM programmes. For this purpose, the Programme conducted training courses for the district officers of Nawabshah and Sanghar during the second Quarter of the year 2008.

The training course for the district government officers of Nawabshah was conducted on 6-7 June 2008 at the cultural heritage site of Sindh, Bhatt Shah. A total of 13 participants representing, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Water Management, Forest, Community Development and Wildlife offices of District Government, Nawabshah participated in the training including one field staff of the Programme Implementation Unit, Nawabshah.

A similar training for the district government officers of Sanghar was held on 17-18 June 2008 at the site office of the Programme in Sanghar. 11 officers from the departments of Forest, Livestock, Agriculture Extension, Poultry, Fisheries, Finance & Planning and Works & Services participated in the training.

Policy Monitor



Embarking on Environmental Mainstreaming in Pakistan's Development Plans

"A consultative workshop on Environmental Mainstreaming in Pakistan's PRSP and Medium Term Development Framework (MTDF): Case Studies on the Poverty Environment Nexus, was held on the 27 May 2008 at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute in Islamabad. This was the first in a series of policy-level dialogues that will be conducted over the next few years on integrating poverty-environment issues into Pakistan's economic policies and plans. A total of 30 of stakeholders from Government departments, civil society organisations, research institutions and donor agencies attended the workshop. The existing policy context, the existing knowledge base on poverty-environment relationships, and tools to enable integration of poverty-environment issues were the core themes deliberated upon during the workshop. This workshop provided an opportunity for stakeholders to gather at a single forum and express their views on environmental mainstreaming efforts in Pakistan. A total of thirteen minor and major recommendations were made during the workshop. Major recommendations raised at the workshop include establishing a poverty-environment forum that would facilitate improved coordination amongst stakeholders for integrating poverty-environment issues, planning a collaborative (Government of Pakistan and civil society) workshop to finalise poverty-environment indicators and strengthening Ministry of Environment's role in managing and disseminating various types of environmental data.



Group work was one of the important segment of the Youth Training Workshop

Poverty-Environment Watch

Pai Forest's Resource Consumption Profile

A principal source of primary data for the Programme's valuation studies due to be completed by end-2008 is a series of surveys targeting direct consumptive use of ecosystems.

One such survey, the forest ecosystem survey, was held in Pai, District Nawabshah, from 11-13 February 2008. The details of the resource consumption profile of the forest are follows:

Wood collection

Reliance on wood resources in the irrigated portion of Pai is high. Babul, Kandi and Lai, respectively, are the top three types of wood collected (see Fig. 1). Their reported use is mainly for firewood (82%). Few households use wood for construction or fodder (below 5%). Also, wood collected for direct sale is low (11%). Such wood sells approximately for PKR 120 per 40 kg.

Non-wood collection

Very close to half of the total households in the survey actively collect non-timber forest products (NTFPs). Of these, the overwhelming majority collect honey (70%) with average collection of 2 Kgs per trip, followed by another high proportion collecting cotton (20%).

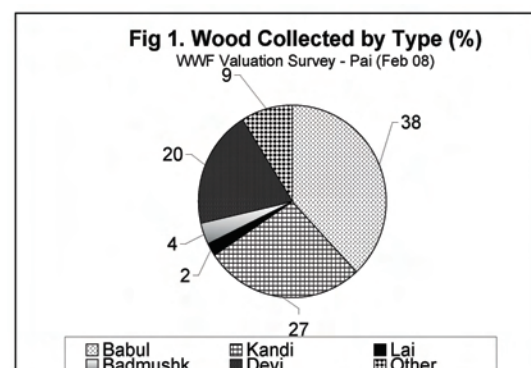
It is interesting to note that the sale quantities of the different types of NTFPs are very low in all the villages. Medicinal herbs are also no longer abundantly found.

Enterprise based on forest resources

Interestingly, only a handful of the 9 randomly sampled villages had any enterprise based on wood or NTFPs. The items reported were the manufacture of carts, tables and blankets.

Habitat loss and economic loss: what linkages?

A connection between habitat loss and economic loss can be seen in Pai. It has been observed that over-harvesting of grasslands has led to suffering of the livestock and decline in real incomes. There are very high numbers of households owning buffalo (59%). In villages such as Jaffar Jamali water shortage has affected





Glimpses from PIUs

pastures and grazing lands which poses a threat to cattle farming. Another threat to this principal occupation of locals is disease prevalence. Pai residents' real incomes are woefully inadequate for maintaining healthy and large cattle populations. Cattle, even if malnourished, are viewed as assets and safeguards for lean periods. Real incomes are fast declining owing to such factors as rising inflation.

Surely what may be expected next is an intensification of wood cutting to supplement incomes and expansion into other even more marginal and ecologically threatened lands. After all, "Government Farms", as Pai is called by the residents of village Marri Jalbani, drew a settlement from village Jaffar Jamali only 11 years ago. Many of its 40 households and the 1000 or so households in Mari Jalbani (200-250 year old village) may be forced to move if Pai's resources become exhausted.

PIU Keenjhar

Community Exchange Visit to Kakapir (Karachi) and Sonmiani (Balochistan)

A community Exchange Visit was organized by the PIU, Keenjhar for the communities' representatives of Keenjhar Lake on 9-10 May 2008. 23 participants from 5 local CBOs took part in the visit. The purpose of the visit was to provide the community members of the surrounding areas of Keenjhar Lake the opportunity to visit and have the hands-on experience of other communities' initiatives for sustainable natural resource management and alternate livelihood sources.

At the start of their trip, the community members visited PMU in Karachi where they were welcomed by the Programme Director and others. Later on, they visited WWF-Pakistan's Wetland Center in Sandspit area of Karachi where they met local community representatives and were briefed about the role of Kakapir Community in the conservation of mangroves and marine turtles.

On the second day, they visited Sonmiani area in Balochistan and had interaction with the local community representatives. At the Eco-tourism Center, established by Sonmiani Development Organization (SDO) with the support of WWF-Pakistan. Participants also visited the nearby Dam area and went to see the Jetty, constructed for the fishermen of the area.

Youth Training Workshop on Environmental Education and Advocacy

A two day's training workshop on Environmental Education and Advocacy was organized by the Programme on 19-20 June, 2008 at SPO Hyderabad for the youth of district Thatta.

Nominated by local CBOs of the respective sites, 22 participants including 20 boys and 2 girls participated in the training. Out of the 22 participants, 12 were from Keenjhar Lake area while 08 youths represented different areas of Keti Bunder.



Group work was one of the important segment of the Youth Training Workshop

The prime objective of this training was to educate the youth of Thatta about the environmental issues, community based natural resource management and the role of youth in conservation of natural resources. At the end of the training, the Programme Coordinator delivered a concluding note and distributed certificates among the participants.

PIU Keti Bunder

Dolphin Rescued in Keti Bunder

It was the morning of 6 June 2008 when the Programme staff at Keti Bunder office came to know about a Humpback dolphin which was caught by a local fisherman who wanted either to sell it alive to earn a handsome amount of money or kill it to sell to the fishermen involved in crab business who use its meat as bait. Mr. Zahid Hussain Jalbani, Site Manager, WWF Site Office Keti Bunder along with his team members pursued the fisherman to release the dolphin who was adamant not to release it with the contention that it was the culprit in damaging his fishing net. He also argued that the dolphins cause difficulties in their fishing activities. The fisherman was informed about the ban on hunting and harming dolphins. After a prolonged dialogue, the programme team succeeded to convince the fisherman to release the dolphin.



The tied dolphin before being released

Glimpses from PIUs

PIU Pai Forest

Project Proposal Development Workshop for Representatives of CBOs

A three-day training workshop on "Project Proposal Development" for the representatives of CBOs of Nawabshah District was organized from 9-11 June 2008 at SAFWCO HID Center, Hyderabad. Attended by 22 representatives of different CBOs of the area, the workshop aimed at to enhance the basic understanding and conceptual clarity of the participants, mainly women, in project proposal development. Specific objectives of the training course were to enable the women CBO representatives to write down their ideas of development in the form of a project structure and to enhance their project development skills. The training workshop was facilitated by Zahida Detho, female trainer, who has extensive experience in imparting training on different areas of development for communities, CBOs and NGOs.

Environmental Awareness through Sufi Music, Pai

PIU, Pai Forest organized a Sufi Music Festival and interactive theatre on 28 June 2008 in village Marri Jalbani. EDO Revenue Rashid Ahmed Zardari was the Chief Guest on the occasion.

On the occasion, Mehran Research Society, a local theatre and social club, presented an interactive theatre on the environmental issues of the area focusing on the degradation of Pai Forest. Afterwards, famous folk singer Sanam Marvi entertained the audience with sufi music. At the end of the activity, the Programme Coordinator presented an Indus for All Programme shield to the folk singer. He also offered her to be the ambassador of the Programme which she gladly accepted. Renowned educationist Professor Qalandar Shah Lakhari and notable journalist Mr. Naz Sehto were also present on the occasion.



Famous folk singer, Sanam Marvi, performing during the local festival

PIU Chotiari Wetlands Complex

Local Festival, Sanghar

The Programme Implementation Unit (PIU), Chotiari Wetlands Complex carried out a variety of activities during a day-long local festival organized on 27 June 2008. The venue of the event was Village Lotko Mori, Chotiari Road, Sanghar.

At the start, PIU Chotiari team organized a tree plantation activity for the general public at the site and arranged 1000 saplings of local species. Before the distribution of plants, participants were sensitized about the importance and significance of trees.



Local festival in Sanghar pulled a large crowd during the daylong event

Further, a Malakhro (a traditional sport) tournament was held in which a total of 24 well known Malhs (players) from different parts of the province took part. In addition to this, a competition of Belharo, a traditional Sindhi game, was also held which involved two teams representing local villages. The entire event was witnessed by over 4000 people from across 40 villages of Taluka Sanghar.

Furthermore, a theatre performance by Jagurta Theatre Group and a sufi music programme performed by folk singers was also held in the evening. The musical night with folk singers attracted the audience the most.

H R NEWS

Training and Capacity Building Initiatives

■ Mr. Naveed Ali Soomro, Environment Education Officer Sanghar; Mr. Majeed Thahim, Partnership Fund Executive and Mr. Amanullah Mahar, NRM Officer, Keti Bunder participated in a 3-day training workshop on "Logical Framework Analysis" held from 23-25 April 2008 by NGORC, Karachi.



- Ms. Sara Malik, Front Desk Officer participated in a 2-day training on “Essentials of Managing your Front Desk” from 12-13 May 2008 organized by Pakistan Institute of Management, Karachi.

Internship

- Mr. Arif Talpur worked as an intern under Programme Economist from 19 March to 20 April 2008.
- Ms. Wardah Erum worked as an intern under Programme Economist from 1 April to 30 May 2008.

Welcome onboard

1. Mr. Wajid Shams Memon has joined the Programme as Environmental Education Officer (EEO) at Keti Bunder site on 12 May 2008.
2. Ms. Kalsoom Memon has joined the Programme as Community Development Officer (CDO) on 11 June 2008. She is stationed at Keti Bunder site office.

Other News

Mangroves Forest Enhancement Initiative in Keti Bunder

In order to enhance natural resource conservation activities, WWF-Pakistan, in collaboration with the Sui Southern Gas Company, has embarked upon a project to plant about 30,000 mangrove saplings in village Gilli Sholani in Khobar creek, Keti Bunder. In this connection, the inauguration ceremony of the project was held on 25 June 2008 at the plantation site. Ms. Benish Kasim and Mr. Mohammad Ali Gohar from SSGC were the guests of honour during the inauguration ceremony of the plantation project. Apart from this, local community representatives and staff members of WWF-Pakistan participated in the inaugural ceremony. The mangrove saplings will be planted and managed through the local community members.



Pakistan Wetlands Programme

Teachers Training Workshop on Wetlands

As part of the awareness raising activities of the Pakistan Wetlands Programme, its department of National Awareness Raising and Communications has taken the initiative of conducting workshops throughout Pakistan for school teachers to raise their understanding of wetlands and their values for communities.

In this connection, a two days teachers training workshop on “Wetlands Awareness and Education” was organised by the Regional Operations Base, Gilgit in conjunction with the National Awareness Raising Department at the Gilgit Conservation and Information Centre from 25-26 March 2008. Nominated by the Northern Areas Education Department, twenty five teachers belonging to government schools in Ghizer, Gilgit, Astore and Skardu districts attended the workshop.

The first day of the workshop consisted of sessions introducing the participants to the existing environmental issues, the concept of wetlands, their benefits and the values and proximate threats to them due to human activities, with special reference to the Northern Areas. The role of communities, specifically that of teachers and students, in wetlands protection and management was also discussed and during the ensuing group work, the participants highlighted various means their respective communities could adopt to protect their wetlands. Resource persons included Babar Khan, Head, WWF-P, Northern Areas, Dr. Humaira Khan, Wetlands Specialist PWP and Darveish Ali, Deputy Director Northern Areas Department of Education. On the second day of the workshop Marriyum Aurangzeb, Coordinator, Awareness Raising and Communications for PWP, presented a slide show about various wetlands in Pakistan and about PWP interventions in selected wetlands complexes.

The closing session of the workshop was attended by Fida Hussain, Secretary Forests Northern Areas, as Chief Guest. Speaking on the occasion, he said that teachers are the pillars of society and their role is vital in spreading the message of environmental stewardship and wetlands conservation in their communities. Later on, he distributed certificates among the participants.

Dr. Humaira Khan, Pakistan Wetlands Programme, Regional Operations Base, Gilgit.

“Civilization began around wetlands; today’s civilization has every reason to leave them wet and wild.”

—Edward Maltby

Newsletter Indus Forever

Other News



ACS and Other Senior Sindh Government Officials Visit Wetland Centre

Additional Chief Secretary (Dev), P&D Department, Mr. Nazar Hussain Mahar, along with other senior officials of the Government of Sindh, was updated regarding WWF-Pakistan's ecoregion conservation efforts and the Indus for All Programme activities during their visit to WWF-Pakistan's Wetlands Centre at Sandspit, Karachi. Mr. Fazal Nizamani, Senior Chief (Water & Power), Mr. P. S. Rajani, Senior Chief (Environment), and Mr. A. B. Kalhoro, Chief (Agriculture) accompanied the ACS during the visit which took place on 18 April 2008.

Dr. Ghulam Akbar, Director, Indus for All Programme delivered a presentation on the Programme activities while Mr. Rab Nawaz, NRM Coordinator of the Programme gave a presentation on the mangroves of Indus Delta.

In addition, a number of other matters also came under discussion between the WWF-Pakistan officials and the visiting guests. In this connection, following are some of the main points on which the two sides were found in agreement to strengthen their partnership:

- WWF-Pakistan and Sindh P&D will work together to ensure that a comprehensive knowledge base of Sindh regarding natural resources is developed both in published form and as a web portal;
- With facilitation from Sindh P&D, WWF-Pakistan will provide input to Karachi Water & Sewerage Board to establish a water treatment plant in the area.
- WWF-Pakistan and Sindh P&D will compare GIS records of Government of Sindh and WWF Pakistan to avoid duplication,
- In place of electricity and gas, there is need of alternative options and both the sides will work together to introduce and encourage use of alternative energy resources in the province including solar, wind and energy produced through biogas plants.
- Regarding desalination plants, small initiatives can be taken. In this regard target oriented actions are required to be done.
- WWF-Pakistan shall identify the mangrove areas along the coastal belt, which can be transferred to Sindh Forest Department to ensure their better management and protection through legal cover.

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"The conservationist's most important task, if we are to save the earth, is to educate."
- Peter Scott