

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.

Impacts of climate change—Need to Draw Strategy for Adaptation

The documentary—An Inconvenient Truth—developed by the former Vice President of the United States Al Gore is said to be an eye-opener for audiences around the world. Those who previously did not consider climate change as a real threat are reportedly revising their views after seeing the documentary. In view of this, many among us feel that in our own local context one does not need to sit and watch the whole documentary to be convinced of the threat for we have so many living examples to look at in this respect. In fact, we should realize that we are among those societies which have more than enough examples to be cognizant of the adverse impacts of this global phenomenon.

The crux of the problem is the manner in which we adapt ourselves to the changes that are bound to occur (in most cases, these have already occurred in our lives) due to global warming and climate change. Water scarcity, degradation of ecosystems and decline in livelihoods linked to these ecosystems, unpredictability in weather conditions, ever-increasing food scarcity, and water-borne diseases are some of the indicators in this respect. It is estimated that by 2080, around 50 million people globally could be directly threatened by such hazards. Evidences indicate that coastal areas are more vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. Pakistan's coastal areas are no exception.

Among all the coastal communities, Keti Bunder is considered as one of the most affected areas due to historical environmental changes. According to a recently concluded study by Emily Woodhouse, a researcher from Imperial College London, the area 'is faced with threats to ecosystems and livelihoods from climate change, in particular tropical cyclones which have increased along the Sindh coastline during the last 30 years.' Her research on assessing the "Resilience in the Socio-ecological System of Keti Bunder for Adaptation to Climate Change" reveals that while climate change is an urgent and global problem, there is a lack of research relating to the vulnerability of communities to the effects of climate change in Pakistan. The report underlines the need to understand the levels of vulnerability of the coastal communities—with particular reference to Keti Bunder—and their ecological foundations to base site specific adaptation and disaster strategies.

It is only the combined efforts to draw up site-specific adaptation and disaster strategies supported by sound research that a well-grounded strategy for adaptation to the adverse impacts of climate change can be usefully elaborated.



Programme Highlights



Partnership Fund Approves 11 Project Proposals

The Technical Committee (TC) of the Programme's Partnership Fund, in its second meeting held on 12 August 2008 in Karachi, approved 11 project proposals for grants to be implemented in six districts of Sindh. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Mushtaq Ali Memon, Secretary Forest and Wildlife Department, Government of Sindh.

Earlier, the Project Review Committee (PRC) of the Fund reviewed 35 project proposals received from various organisations in response to a call for proposals publicised in April 2008 through local newspapers, websites and email groups. The PRC recommended 17 proposals for grant including four proposals to be awarded through the Scientific Committee-Small Grants Programme of WWF-Pakistan. The TC approved 10 proposals for grant. Whereas the Scientific Committee approved one project out of the four during its 74th meeting held on 18 September 2008.

The Partnership Fund is a component of the Indus for All Programme designed to enable partners from government, academic institutions and NGO sectors as well as local community organisations to implement projects with the assistance of the Programme's fund scheme. The combined total budget of the eleven approved projects is rupees 36.4 million out of which an amount of Rs. 24.8 millions will be contributed by the Partnership Fund while Rs. 11.6 million will be borne by the organisations implementing the projects. Details of the approved project proposals are below.

No	Project Title	Department / Organization	Thematic Area	Target Area
1	Distribution, Status and Management of Smooth coated otter (<i>Lutrogale perspicillata</i>) in Indus Ecoregion	Sindh Wildlife Department, Sukkur	Conservation of Species	Nara, Khairpur
2	Assess the status of Palla (<i>Tenulosa illisha</i>) and the causes responsible for its decline in its natural habitat	Fisheries Department Govt. of Sindh	Conservation of Species	Indus river (Kotri – Sujawal)
3	Promote Alternate Energy for Sustainable Conservation of Indus Delta Ecoregion	Action for Humanitarian Development	Alternate Energy	Kharo Chhan Thatta
4	Alternative Energy Project-Dadu	Young Samaji Tanzeem Johi, Dadu Indus Development	Alternate Energy	Dadu
5	Forest Protection Project through Forest Protection Committees	Organization, Hyderabad	Conservation of Habitat	Matiari Forest, Matiari
6	Rehabilitation of Booharki Forest	Badin Development & Research organization	Conservation of Habitat	Booharki Forest, Badin
7	Development and Promotion of Biogas Technologies for Meeting Domestic Fuel Needs of Rural Areas	Shah Lateef Welfare Association, Sakrand, Nawabshah	Alternate Energy	Villages of Pai Forests, Nawabshah
8	Community Based Natural Resource Management Project	Participatory Development Initiatives	Conservation of Habitat & Livelihood	Kharo Chhan Thatta
9	Creating Sustainable Environment through Promotion of Awareness & Energy Efficient Technologies	Global Welfare and Development Organization	Alternate Energy & Livelihood	Villages of Keenjhar Lake Thatta
10	Rehabilitation of Fishermen Community and Keenjhar Lake through Participatory Approach	Keenjhar Fishermen Welfare Society	Livelihood support	Keenjhar Lake Thatta
11	Livelihood Support to Vulnerable Communities of Jubho Lagoon, Jati, Thatta	Sindh Rural Support Program, Hyderabad	Livelihood support	Jubho Lagoon, Jati, Thatta



Programme Director briefing the chairman of the Partnership Fund's Technical Committee during the meeting

Alternate Energy Technology—New Interventions

As part of the Programme's efforts to promote alternate energy sources, 16 solar units at selected schools and mosques, where there was no electricity, have been installed at three of the Programme sites, namely; Chotiari Reservoir, Keenjhar Lake, and Keti Bunder. Pakistan Council for Renewable Energy Technology (PCRET), WWF-Pakistan's Sindh Programme and the Indus for All Programme collaborated for the initiatives.

The schools have been given 400 watt units which can run two energy saving bulbs, two wall fans and a computer, simultaneously. Similarly, the mosques have been provided with 200 watt units that can run two lights, two fans, and a loudspeaker. The initiative is part of an overall collaboration between the Indus for All Programme and PCRET which will also be providing biogas plants to households at the Programme sites with good population of livestock. The HSBC Bank Middle East Limited is also supporting a project to install biogas plants to the Programme areas. These initiatives will surely reduce the burden on natural resources in the areas.



A solar panel being installed at a village in Keti Bunder

The Royal Netherlands Embassy Representative Visits Programme Sites

On 22 September 2008, Mr. Fred Smiet, the First Secretary of the Royal Netherlands Embassy visited Keti Bunder and

Programme Highlights

its creek villages. The purpose of his visit was to assess the different interventions and initiatives of the Programme aiming at improved natural resource management practices through introducing alternate sources of livelihoods in addition to lifting the living standards of local communities. He was accompanied by the Programme team led by the Programme Director, Dr. Ghulam Akbar. Mr. Smiet was briefed about the latest conservation and livelihood initiatives in the area. He later on visited creek villages of Bhoori and Tippun to observe interventions such as wind turbines, solar panels, potable water schemes, and thatched houses built under cyclone rehabilitation work. Mr. Fred also interacted with community members in the two villages for assessing the impacts of the initiatives in their lives.



Mr. Fred Smiet was warmly greeted by community members during his visit to remote creek areas of Keti Bunder

Training on Natural Resource Management using GIS and Remote Sensing

A series of weeklong trainings on “Geographic Information System (GIS) Concepts and Tools for Sustainable Resource Management” were organised from 14 July to 01 August 2008 in Sanghar, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto (Nawabshah) and Thatta districts. Officials from different partner institutions including government departments—such as Sindh Forest & Wildlife, Board of Revenue, Sindh Irrigation & Drainage Authority, and Fisheries & Livestock—attended the training.



Group photo after the concluding ceremony of the series of GIS workshops

The concluding ceremony was held at Fisheries Community Hall, Keenjhar Lake, where certificates were distributed among the participants. The Secretary Forest and Wildlife Department, Government of Sindh, Mr. Mushtaqe Ali Memon

was the Chief Guest. As part of the Programme's objectives to provide institutional support to the government departments, the Programme Director, Dr. Ghulam Akbar presented a CD of GIS software to the Secretary Forest & Wildlife.

Forum for Environmental Journalists Formed

The Programme organised a two-day event on environmental journalism on 28-29 August 2008, involving journalists' exposure visits to Chotiari Reservoir and Pai Forest followed by a full-day consultative workshop in Hyderabad. A number of journalists from Karachi, Hyderabad, Sanghar, and Nawabshah took part in the event.

During the workshop, the participating journalists shared their experiences of the exposure visits. The group that visited Pai Forest highlighted issues relating to deforestation, water shortage, hunting, and unsustainable utilization of forest resources by the dependant local communities resulting in habitat destruction. The group of journalists visiting Chotiari Reservoir noted issues such as water-logging and salinity, unsustainable fishing practices, settlement of displaced communities, and habitat degradation. Speaking on the occasion, the Programme Coordinator Nasir Ali Panhwar highlighted the effective role of journalists in addressing environmental issues. Mohammad Zafar Khan, Manager Environmental Education and Communications was the lead facilitator of the workshop. Mr. Naseer Memon also spoke on the occasion.

The establishment of the Indus Journalists' Forum was the highlight of the workshop. The forum is aimed to promote continued interaction among media professionals engaged in environmental journalism.



A significant number of journalists from different cities took part in the workshop

Nature Camping

To inculcate the spirit of nature stewardship in our youth for the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources in the Indus Ecoregion, the Programme sponsored a group of six students, and one staff member, from schools in remote areas around Chotiari Reservoir to participate in the National Children Mountain Conservation Meet (NCMCM)-2008. The annual event was held at Kaghan from 1-10 July 2008 by the Adventure Foundation Pakistan. Around 150 students from all over Pakistan participated in the event. A variety of activities were undertaken including; Basic Campcraft, Mountaineering Expedition, Trekking Trails, Wilderness Study Visits, First Aid and Team Building Exercises,

Programme Highlights

Installation of Solid Waste Management System at Lake Saiful Malook, Interaction with Tourists and Hut Keepers for Environmental Awareness and Wakeup Walks to boost participants' enthusiasm for nature conservation.



The students of Sanghar were happy to be with other students from all over the country at Lake Saiful Maluk

Organisational Management Training for the Office Bearers of Community-based Organisation

The Indus for All Programmes endeavours to develop local capacities through its capacity building programme intended for the staff as well as Programme partners. In this connection, the Programme organised Organisational Management trainings for its partner community based organisation (CBO's) during the months of July and August 2008. In total, 137 office bearers of 33 CBOs from the four sites attended the trainings, which were conducted at the Programme sites. The trainings relied on module developed on the basis of training need assessments of different stakeholder institutions. The overall aim of these trainings is to assist institutional development in areas such as planning, decision-making, monitoring as well as setting long-term objectives for the well being of people.



A view of the training of CBO representatives

The Programme Supports the Revival of Indus Eco-region Handicrafts

In order to promote handicrafts and other community-made products at Programme sites, a stall was set up at the "Womensa" exhibition organised by Women Development Department, Government of Sindh on 29-31 August 2008 at the Expo Centre, Karachi. The stall displayed products prepared by the communities in the Programme areas. The public's response to community products was very encouraging, especially to the *Gajj* (embroidery) work and basketry. Visitors appreciated the designs and products' diversification.

Dr. Fahmida Mirza, Speaker National Assembly, and the Provincial Minister for Women Development, Ms. Touqeer Fatima Bhutto, visited the stall and lauded the efforts of the Programme team with regard to the promotion of local handicrafts and supporting artisans.

Vocational Centres



Local women preparing handicrafts in a vocational centre, established with support by the Programme

The Programme has also embarked upon initiatives of providing skill development techniques to women through vocational centres. In this connection, two vocational centres in Keti Bunder and Keenjhar Lake area have been established.

The formal inauguration ceremony of vocational centre at Keenjhar Lake area was held on 30 June 2008. The centre has been established at Jhimpir Town in collaboration with women CBO Roshni Keenjhar Welfare and Development Organization. The vocational centre at Keti Bunder was inaugurated on 23 July 2008.

Policy Monitor

Fourth Meeting of Sub-committee (SC) of the IESC Held

The Fourth Meeting of the Sub-committee of Indus Ecoregion Steering Committee (IESC) was held on 05 August 2008 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Mushtaque Ali Memon,



Secretary Forest & Wildlife Department, Government of Sindh at the Committee Room of Forest and Wildlife Department. The meeting was attended by 14 participants. The committee discussed and reviewed several matters pertaining to different programme initiatives and the quarterly work plans of the last and the current quarters. Following the deliberations, the committee recommended that the Programme should share the reports of recently conducted baseline studies with the members. Further, DCO Thatta desired the programme to give a detailed presentation to the district administration on different Programme initiatives to enhance coordination and alignment of activities among various organisations working in the area. It was also recommended that the site-based issues would be discussed in the next IESC meeting in which DCOs from the respective districts would also participate.



The Secretary Forest & Wildlife, Mr. Mushtaque Ali Memon is being briefed by the programme Director about different initiatives

As the results of the valuation studies are intended to introduce natural resource scarcity values into benefit cost analysis, natural resource accounting, and regulatory policies, the Programme is already preparing the ground for this purpose with policy makers and planners. In this regard, the Ministry of Environment and WWF-Pakistan are collaborating in an exercise planned for 2008-2009 to develop Pakistan-specific guidelines on methodologies for conducting forest and forest product valuations.

The high standard of the work undertaken is reflected from the fact that the NUV results have already been accepted as a chapter for publication in an International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) book. The Programme has also been invited to submit TEV results in a forthcoming book being edited by Dr. Timothy Swanson of the University College London's Department of Economics, renowned for its work in the field of economic valuation. Finally, the Programme plans to circulate policy briefs of TEV results at the 10th Conference of the Parties (COP10) of the Ramsar Convention, 28 October-4 November 2008 in Changwon, Korea.

Strengthening Partnerships.....

The Programme continues to strive for the establishment of better working relationship through increased level of interaction with other partners from different sections of the society. In this connection, the Programme management participated in the following events organised by various partner organisations in order to convey the message of the Programme and discuss and deliberate upon common objectives:

- The Programme Coordinator, Nasir Ali Panhwar, participated in a seminar on "Coping with Coastal and Marine Challenges: Pan Asia Learning" organised by IUCN, the World Conservation Union, on 14 July 2008.
- Dr. Ghulam Akbar, the Director Indus for All Programme and Nasir Ali Panhwar, the Programme Coordinator, participated in a "Dialogue on Emerging Water Issues and Livelihood of People", organised by Shirkat Gah, on 24 July, 2008.
- The Programme Coordinator also participated in a "Conference on Parliament—Civil Society Interface" organised by the UNDP in collaboration with Strengthening Participatory Organisation (SPO) on 25 September 2008.

Poverty-Environment Watch

Programme's Economic Valuation Studies Getting Recognition

Five valuation studies—intended to reveal the true costs of using up a scarce environmental resource—for freshwater, deltaic, forest, rangeland and agricultural ecosystems at the four sites are underway. Although the studies are expected to be completed by end 2008, the findings based on the data collected are already getting recognition at the international level.

So far, a draft report of the Direct-use Value (DUV) of fisheries in the deltaic ecosystem at Keti Bunder, completed in June this year, is available. The preliminary DUV estimate is Rs. 72 mn per annum. Computation of remaining DUVs at each of the other Programme sites and for the different ecosystems is ongoing. DUVs are a part of a comprehensive Total Economic Value (TEV). Another significant component is Non-use Values (NUV) which reflect benefits derived by persons living away from the natural resource from knowing that the resource exists, and can be used or passed on to future generations. The calculation of NUVs for all sites is complete and preliminary results show that the NUV for Karachi city represents approximately one-fifth of the TEV for all Programme site ecosystems.

Glimpses from PIUs



PIU Keenjhar Lake

Otter Found at Keenjhar Lake

A dead male Otter (*Lutrogale perspicillata*) was found at Sonda village near Keenjhar Lake on 01 August, 2008. According to IUCN's Red List otter is vulnerable and also enjoys protected status under both CITES (Appendix 2) and the Sindh Wild Life Ordinance 1972. This is the first time ever that an otter has been found in the surroundings of the Lake. The animal was ran over and killed by a speeding vehicle on the road during night time. WWF-Pakistan and the Sindh Wildlife Department are collaborating for more interventions regarding otter conservation.



Programme staff examining the dead otter found at Keenjhar Lake area

Registration of Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

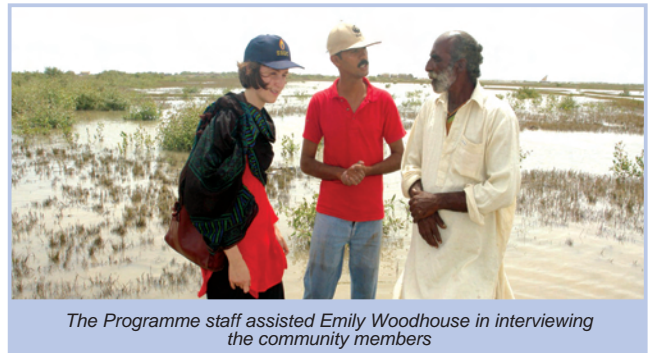
PIU Keenjhar Lake's social mobilization team helped formation of eight new CBOs, out of which seven CBOs have been registered under the Social Welfare Act 1961 and have received their registration certificates in September 2008.

PIU Keti Bunder

The Programme Continues to Support Research Institutions on Nature and Environment

As per its commitment to encourage research institutions and their students to conduct research on environmental resources and adverse impacts of their degradation on the Indus ecoregion, the Programme is facilitating a number of students in their research. In this connection, Emily Woodhouse from Imperial College London visited Keti Bunder and the adjoining creeks during the month of July 2008 to conduct her pre-doctoral research on Keti Bunder. The focus of the research was on "Assessing Resilience in the Socio-ecological System of Keti Bunder for Adaptation to Climate Change". Her research project aims to develop a comprehensive analysis of the linked socio-ecological system besides identifying the roles that institutions can play in supporting adaptive change.

Emily's visit was a part of the Pakistan Field Research Programme under which Government College University, Lahore and universities in the UK collaborate to facilitate the students in conducting research in Pakistan in the field of nature conservation.



The Programme staff assisted Emily Woodhouse in interviewing the community members

PIU Pai Forest

Community Members Around Pai Forest Taken to Exposure Visit

The Programme Implementation Unit, Pai Forest organised an exposure visit to Karachi and Sonmiani for the community members of the surrounding villages. The visit took place on 30-31 August 2008. As many as 28 participants—10 female and 15 male members of different CBOs including the Programme staff—took part in the visit. On the first day, the participants visited the "Womenza" exhibition at the Expo Centre, Karachi in which the Indus for All Programme also set up a stall displaying community-made products.

On the second day, the community members were taken to WWF-Pakistan's Wetlands Centre at Sandspit, Karachi where they were briefed about the Centre, the area and the initiatives taken by WWF-Pakistan in collaboration with local community to conserve natural resources including mangroves and marine turtles. Later on, the participants visited Sonmiani where Mr. Abdul Rasheed of local CBO Sonmiani Development Organisation (SDO) welcomed them. He briefed them about



A group photo of the community members and WWF-Pakistan staff at the Wetlands Centre, Karachi, during the visit



CBO initiatives related to mangrove and fisheries conservation, eco-tourism. The community members also visited Dam Bunder area where Mohammad Anwar of SSDCN, another local CBO, welcomed and briefed them about their initiatives in the area.

PIU Chotiari Wetlands Complex

Master Trainers Training in Environmental Education



Field visit was an important part of the Master Trainers' Training

The Programme organised a five-day Training Workshop for Master Trainers in Environmental Education from 26-30 August 2008. The venue of the workshop was Civil Society Club, Hyderabad. Participants included 18 potential teachers (10 Male and 8 Female) from schools and a college of Taluka Sanghar. The purpose of this training was to promote environmental education in schools around Chotiari Wetlands Complex by developing a cadre of master trainers who would further train other school teachers in their respective areas. The training was a mix of a number of indoor and outdoor activities developed keeping in view the needs of the diverse set of participants belonging to different areas and backgrounds. A visit to Miani Forest was also organised for the participants for gaining hands-on experience.

District Coordination Committee Meetings at Thatta, Nawabshah

Third meetings of the District Coordination Committee Thatta and Nawabshah were held on 25 July 2008 and 22 September 2008, respectively. Respective District Coordination Officers (DCOs) chaired the meetings.

H R N E W S

Training and Capacity Building

- Mr. Aslam Jarwar, Site Manager, Keenjhar Lake, participated in the "Introduction to WWF" course, held from 15-19 September 2008, in Gland, Switzerland. The course has been designed by the People Development Team of WWF-International.



Aslam Jarwar and Marriyum Aurangzeb presenting the Indus for All Memento to Jim Leap, Director General WWF International

- Mr. Mustafa Abbasi, GIS Analyst, participated in a three-day workshop on "Climate Change and NRM" from 15-18 July 2008 in Lahore. The training was organised by Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO).
- Mr. Adnan Hanif, Coordinator, Finance and Administration, participated in a five-day training on "Project Management" from 28 July to 1 August 2008. The training was organised by COMSAT Institute of Information Technology, Islamabad.
- Mr. Zahid Jalbani, Site Manager-Keti Bunder; Mr. Aslam Jarwar, Site Manager, Keenjhar Lake; and Mr. M. Zafar Wassan, Site Manager, Chotiari Reservoir, participated in a three-day training on "Wetlands Management" held from 5-7 August 2008 in Sukkur. The training was organised by Ministry of Environment's Pakistan Wetlands Programme.

Welcome onboard

- Mr. Nasir Ali Panhwar has joined the Programme as the Programme Coordinator on 07 May 2008.
- Mr. Shahid Panhwar has joined as Manager, Monitoring and Evaluation on 07 August 2008.
- Ms. Gulnaar Sultana has joined as Front Desk Officer on 25 August 2008.

Other News

Pakistan Wetlands Programme

Ecological Shock of Tourism: The Shandur Perspective

Shandur Lake is located at 3738 metres above sea level amid the rugged mountains of the Hindukush Mountain Range in Chitral. The Lake is a staging and wintering ground for migratory waterfowl. It is one of the most important wetland sites of the North Alpine Wetlands Complex which the Pakistan Wetlands Programme (PWP) is proposing for declaration as a Ramsar site.

The area's cultural values and its world famous Shandur Polo Festival continues to invite international tourists. Held each year in July, the festival boosts the local economy but also puts adverse impacts on the ecology of the area due to the absence of proper tourist management strategy which creates problems of solid waste management, water pollution, noise pollution, and uncontrolled and unregulated camping. In view of the situation, the PWP this year launched a solid waste management initiative during the festival following the recommendations made in a recently concluded research paper facilitated by the Programme and authored by David Johnson, a Masters student from Oxford University. This was the first ever attempt to hold an environment-friendly Shandur Festival. Many local community members, school students, and tourists volunteered to participate in the clean up operation.

By: *Mohammad Niaz, Sub-Divisional Forest Officer Wildlife, NWFP Wildlife Department*

- Dawood Corporation (Pvt.) Limited and WWF-Pakistan have signed an MoU for initiating a mechanism to make permanent the cleaning and awareness drives at Karachi's Sandspit turtle beach.



Dr Ghulam Akbar and Samad Dawood of Dawood Corporation signing the agreement

- Hong Kong & Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) has approved the project proposal for Promotion of Biogas as a Clean Source of Energy. Under the project, 15 biogas units will be installed in the project sites of the Indus for All Programme. The Bank has also provided support for establishment of a Mother-Child Health Care Centre at Kakapir Village, Sandspit, Karachi, through WWF-Pakistan to cater to the health needs of women and children of the village.
- A workshop for fishermen on the use of Turtle Excluder Device (TED) was held on 01 August 2008 at Wetlands Centre, Karachi. Syed Ali Hashnain and Mr. Babar Hussain, Conservation Officer, WWF-Pakistan facilitated the workshop which catered to 40 participants.

Indus for All Programme, WWF - Pakistan Programme Management Unit (PMU)

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Keti Bunder
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"Any rapid change in a regional climate is more likely to produce detrimental effects that far outweigh the beneficial ones." C. F. Baes