

Indus FOREVER

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Indus Forever is a quarterly newsletter of the Indus for All Programme; the first six years (2006 - 2012) implementation phase of a 50 - year vision of the Indus Ecoregion Programme.

Funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands 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 stakeholders, other concerned organisations and individuals updated about the activities, progress and future endeavours of the Programme.

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SPOTLIGHT

Banking on Mangroves: Learning from Japan's Tsunami

The disastrous earthquake and tsunami that occurred in March 2011 has left a trail of suffering in Japan. While the entire world condoles with the Japanese, each new natural disaster offers an opportunity to review where we have gone wrong. Having reached our present summit of technological development, nature is still there to remind us to take the right path.

It is now an established fact that dense mangrove forests can reduce the impact of the waves generated during tsunamis. Mangrove forests not only work as natural barriers in the case of a tsunami or a cyclone, but are also cheaper alternatives to stonewalls or other man-made structures, which might be effective for normal sea waves but cannot withstand high tides caused by a cyclone.

Japan has cultivated amid 200- and 300-metre-wide coastal belts for forests which successfully buffered most of the wave energy when the tsunami hit the country. Better land use planning, for example locating the majority of the population and financial centers farther away from the coast, could have reduced the death toll and disaster expenditure. A tsunami hit the Pakistani coast in 1945 at which time over 5,000 lives were lost, but the loss could be many times more if such a disaster hit the coast today. Recent cyclones that have caused deaths and devastation along Sindh's coast include A-2 Cyclone in 1999 Yemyin in 2007 and Phet in 2010.

Mangroves, which are both the natural guardians of Pakistan's coast and the identity of Indus Delta, have all but disappeared. The Indus Delta occupied an area of about 600,000 ha, consisting of creeks, mudflats and mangrove forests between Karachi in the north and Rann of Kutch in the South. There were 17 major creeks making up the original delta that was characterized by many minor creeks, mud flats and mangrove forests. The Indus Delta was until only a few decades ago home to almost 97 percent of total mangrove species in the world. Local communities use them for fuel wood, timber, fodder, grazing of livestock, etc. Mangroves are breeding grounds for commercial fish species, such as shrimps, crabs and lobsters and protect the harbor against erosion, tsunamis, strong winds and cyclones. Mangroves also act as a protective barrier that is becoming essential given the increased frequency of cyclones that characterizes the current spate of climate variability. Clearing this shield will make coastal towns and communities more vulnerable to natural disasters.

Mangrove Forests thrived where freshwater provided ideal growing conditions along the coast, east and west of the Indus Delta and in the delta itself. They provided an important source of wood along with the environment for crustaceans and fish. The coastal mangroves have now been greatly reduced and represent a fraction of their earlier luxuriance. If the Indus waters are further harnessed and if the dry period at the mouth of the Indus is lengthened from the present two to three months, if present heavy development pressure on the coastal areas continues and if domestic and industrial pollution continues unchecked, mangrove forests could reach a tipping point in the next fifteen to twenty years at which time financial outlays for recovery of the species will be unaffordable.

Keenjhar Conservation & Information Centre Inaugurated



Provincial Minister Fisheries Mr. Zahid Ali Bhurgari inaugurating the Centre

The Minister Fisheries, Zahid Ali Bhurgari, said that fishermen should exploit fish resources on a sustainable basis and awareness-raising is imperative for the protection of wetlands, while speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the Keenjhar Conservation and Information Centre developed by WWF - P under its Indus for All Programme. The Minister said that the fishermen community has traditionally lived in the area and depended on fisheries resources but warned that unsustainable fishing practices would jeopardize the resource base. He said that after the agriculture sector, fisheries play a vital role in the economy but this sector was ignored by the previous governments. He said that the present government attaches a high priority to the sector and efforts have been made to improve the situation. He lauded the efforts made by WWF - P in setting up a Conservation and Information Center at Keenjhar Lake and hoped that this would contribute significantly in creating awareness among the visitors and local community.

The Programme Coordinator, Indus for All Programme, Nasir Ali Panhwar said that WWF - P has established eight information centers in the country. However the Centre at Keenjhar is the first of its kind, which would enhance awareness in the tourists and provide facilities for researchers to conduct research. He said that a watch tower provided a broad view of the Lake, and added that guided tours, nature camping, bird watching, educational day trips and boat safaris would also be undertaken.

The Director General Fisheries Ghulam Mohammad Mahar said that the use of banned nets and over-exploitation of fish resources has affected the sector negatively. He said that water shortages and climate change has had negative impacts on the wetlands of Sindh. These factors have disturbed both aquatic life and the entire food chain. He said that the Fisheries Department was in the process of developing low cost cages built with local materials. These cages would be used at Keenjhar to promote sustainable livelihoods and sustainable fish catch.

Writer, Rasool Bux Dars, also present at the occasion, said that research should be conducted on the decline of migratory bird species seen at Keenjhar Lake. He added that untreated industrial effluent from Kotri is the major cause of pollution at the lake. DCO Thatta Mr. Jaffar Abbasi, Mr. Ghulam Mujtaba Wadhar, Director Fisheries Inland, Mr. Umeed Khalid Natural Resource Management Coordinator and Hafeez Gambheer, Site Manager, Indus for All Programme, also spoke at the occasion. The ceremony was attended by large number of fishermen, students, representatives of government and non government organizations.

12th Meeting of sub-Committee of Indus Eco-region Steering Committee held

The 12th meeting of Sub-Committee of Indus Eco-region Steering Committee was held under the Chairmanship of Mr. Mushtaque Ali Memon, Secretary Forests and Wildlife Department, Government of Sindh on 31 March 2011. Ms. Khadija Zaheer, Manager Policy and Partnership Fund, Indus for All Programme, briefed the participants about the progress of the decisions taken at the 11th meeting of Sub-Committee of IESC held on 10th August 2010.

Mr. Nasir Ali Panhwar, Programme Coordinator, Indus for All Programme, while briefing the participants on the Programme's progress said that implementation of natural resource management plan and livelihood development plan was ongoing at the four sites. He said that the Hog Deer sanctuary and the observatory hut at Pai Forest have been completed, where one pair of Hog deer would be kept for breeding purposes. The Committee was also informed of the community based shrimp and crab culture ponds that have been established in Keti Bunder. In Keenjhar and Chotirai, information and conservation centres have been established to raise awareness among the visitors about the two significant ecosystems. He highlighted different Programme activities including the institutional support to CBOs, awareness raising activities, Partnership Fund and flood relief activities in Thatta and Dadu.



Secretary Forest & Wildlife Department, Mr. Mushtaq Ali Memon presiding over the meeting

Mr. Altaf Sheikh, Policy Analyst, Indus for All Programme, briefed the audience on issues of special concern including deforestation and water logging at the Chotiari Wetlands Complex.

The meeting was attended by Mr. Fazal Nizamani, Senior Chief Water and Drainage, Planning and Development Department, Mr. Ghulam Muhammad Maher, Director General Fisheries, Mr. Saeed Baloch, Conservator Sindh Wildlife Department, Mr. Shafiq-ul-Rehman, EDO Works and Services Thatta, Mr. Nawab Qureshi, EDO Agriculture Sanghar, Mr. Waqar Ahmed Phulpoto Director EPA, Ms. Mehar Marker Noshirwani from the Trust for Conservation of Coastal Resources (TCCR) and Mr. Ghous Pirzado from Shirkat Gah - Women's Resource Centre.



First Conservation and Information Centre inaugurated at Chotiari Reservoir

There is a strong case for all segments of civil society to play their due part for conserving and protecting Sindh Province's natural resources and biodiversity, which are gripped by unchecked environmental degradation and unsustainable use.

First Secretary Environment and Water at the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Mr. Jan Willem Cools, expressed these views at the inauguration ceremony of the Chotiari Conservation and Information Centre (CCIC) held on 3 March 2011 at Baqaar Lake in Sanghar district.

The CCIC has been established by WWF - P under its Indus for All Programme. He said that it is heartening to see that the province is replete with unique wildlife and abundant natural resources, but their illegal hunting and indefensible use have harmed them so much.

He hoped that the Centre would play an effective role in raising awareness about threats to the local biodiversity and natural resources and sensitize local community members and social networks to join WWF - P in its efforts towards the protection and conservation of biodiversity.

He lauded efforts of the Indus for All Programme's team for going the extra mile in conservation and protection of biodiversity in and around the Chotiari Reservoir.

"I am really impressed by various initiatives launched by the Programme team, which have helped in discouraging illegal hunting and helped promote environmentally friendly and alternative means for a healthy lifestyle".

Team Leader of the Indus for All Programme, Mr. Rab Nawaz, appreciated the support provided by the Government of Sindh and civil society organizations for implementing the Programme at four priority sites in the Indus Ecoregion.

Mr. Nasir Ali Panhwar, Programme Coordinator, Indus for All Programme, spoke about the aims and objectives of the Centre and described it as a great facility for teachers, students, researchers and other members of civil society to build up their knowledge about different facets of the local wildlife, forests, vegetation, water lakes and other natural resources.

"The Centre holds promising economic potential and would also help promote ecotourism in the area, which opens up new avenues for livelihoods for the locals. Besides, a tuck shop has also been established at the Centre which would help promote local handicrafts and strengthen local artisans' income sources," he said.

Eminent educationist Prof. Qalandar Shah Lakiari pointed out that unchecked population has pressured natural resources. Besides, the industrialization, which speeded up the pace of unplanned urbanization has added more to the environmental degradation and polluted our waters. He underlined the need for environmental-friendly urbanization and urged urban planners, both in government and in the private sector, to introduce and promote urban plans that do not enter in conflict with rural life styles and the environment.

On this occasion, Majeed Mangrio of the Chotiari Conservation Forum, environmental writer Ishtiaque Ansari, Prof. Amar Leghari, Aziz Ranjhani, Nawaz Kumbhar, Programme's Keenjhar Site Manager Mr. Hafeez Gambheer, Keti Bunder Site Mr. Manager Ghulam Rasool Khatri, Pai Forest Site Manager Mr. Usama Anwar and others also spoke.



First Secretary Environment & Water Mr. Jan Willem Cools and Senior Programme Officer Mrs. Yasmin Jawed at the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands inaugurating the Centre

Friends of Indus Forum Calls for Rehabilitation of Environment in Flood Hit Areas

The Friends of Indus Forum has called for efforts to rehabilitate the environment and adapt to the impacts of the changing climate by adopting reforestation and promoting water efficient management programmes.



Meeting with stakeholders at Dadu

The Forum visited Dadu on 5 March 2011 and met with various stakeholders including district government and civil society organizations to assess the post flood situation. The meeting was attended by the office bearers and members of the Forum including Mr. Naseer Memon, Mr. Nasir Ali Panhwar, Mr. Badar Abro, Mr. Arbab Nek Mohammad, Mr. Ali Akbar Rahimo, Dr. Ali Murtaza Dharejo, Mr. Hakim Ali Shah Bukhari, Mr. Aziz Ranjhani, Prof. Ismail Kumbhar, Mr. Shoukat Soomro, Mr. Shahid Panhwar, Mr. Naveed Soomro, Mr. Gul Sher Panhwar, Mr. Majeed Thaheem, and Mr. Ali Mohammad Shaikh, among others.

The members of the Forum said that the 2010 floods have been devastating and the emergency situation is not over. In Sindh the floods have exacerbated an existing problem that requires a structural intervention in the national reconstruction response.

Members of the Forum also urged donors to ensure that the budgets allocated for rehabilitation of the flood victims are managed transparently and utilized effectively.

The Forum demanded that the Government of Pakistan should integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into all development programmes.

The participants pointed out that massive deforestation in riverine areas and Kaacho (arid region) is taking place and this must be controlled.

DCO Dadu, Dr. Niaz Abbasi, assured the Forum that the district government would extend full support to the cause of the Forum and strict measures would be undertaken to control logging.

Earlier during the meeting, Mr. Ghulam Haider Birkhmani, briefed the participants about WWF - P's interventions with the support of IRD in two flood-hit union councils of the Dadu district. He said that about 28,000 people have been helped in two union councils namely Mitho Babar and Gozo.

Changing Winds: Pakistan's (Draft) Climate Change Policy

After much deliberation and participation in an array climate talks and negotiations, the Government of Pakistan has decided to design its own "National Climate Change Policy." Currently in draft form the proposed policy is an initiative of the Ministry of Environment. The draft policy draws on the "National Economic and Environmental Development Study" (NEEDS) which was developed by the Ministry of Environment with the financial support of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and through consultation with experts. It was heartening to note that the authors of the draft policy organized a series of provincial consultations soliciting comments and suggestions from members of the provincial governments and civil society organizations. By adopting this participatory and transparent process the authors have laid the groundwork for widespread ownership of the draft policy. However, it remains to be seen to what extent and how effectively the comments that were solicited have been incorporated into the policy.

The draft policy has been conceived holistically. In that, it describes the current climate related threats and risks facing Pakistan; the adaptation and mitigation related strategies and actions that may be developed and implemented to reduce or manage these risks; and the threat of natural hazards and their impact on the population and the economy. The authors of the draft policy have taken some pains to ensure that these risks are contextualized i.e. the particular sectors that may be affected by risks such as industry, energy, fisheries, agriculture etc are identified and discussed. Similarly, with regard to the disaster component, the draft policy identifies the nature and scope of disasters that may threaten Pakistan (keeping in mind previous experiences) and describes a series of policy measures that can be deployed to reduce the impact of these hazards.

The momentum around the draft policy must not stall. It is essential that the Ministry of Environment pushes for the approval of the draft policy. And soon after, they need to embark on a series of consultations with provincial governments for the adoption and implementation of the National Climate Change Policy at the provincial level. Once the policy is approved, a series of 'action plans' will be required to support its implementation. Moreover, this implementation will require inter-agency cooperation because it will involve not only relevant departments such as Planning and Development, Irrigation, Agriculture, Fisheries etc but also the district government and the Provincial Disaster Management Authorities. It is hoped that the Ministry of Environment and the Government of Pakistan will forge ahead with this process and deliver concrete results. While the provincial governments and relevant agencies will step up their engagement to ensure effective policy implementation.

"A healthy ecology is the basis for a healthy economy" - Claudine Schneider



"Phase II Socio-economic baseline: Helping WWF-P's Partnering Stakeholders to Leverage Their Resources"

Ahead of the release of the Phase II socio-economic baseline report, this article identifies some general trends as they relate to income per capita, disease prevalence, and dependence on flora and fauna at Khebrani, Nara, Manchar and Kharo Chan. Data collected during the 28 December 2010 and 12 January 2011 surveys at these sites is still undergoing analysis and peer review, and as such the preliminary findings reported here must not be interpreted as final in any way.

- While comparing proportions of individuals from sampled households at all four sites falling below poverty lines, the report finds Manchar communities living on the banks of the lake to show the highest incidence of poverty. Besides Pakistan's official poverty line that is calibrated to reflect expenditure on a daily adult calorific intake of 2,350 calories, this finding for Manchar is also true for the latest international poverty line of USD 1-1.25 that uses 2005 purchasing power parity. The report places Nara and Kharo Chan at comparable levels, and places Khebrani in a least worse off category by this measure. Details of six step tests on income estimate robustness and methodology for inflation adjustment of poverty lines up to 2011 will be available upon release of the report.

As regards disease prevalence, household responses at all Phase II sites are reported for diarrhea, typhoid, malaria, respiratory disease, cholera, jaundice, eye disease and skin disease. Given the known exposure of communities to high concentration of salt and arsenic at Manchar, combined with their abject poverty and recent complete losses of homes (the lake burst its banks on 16 September 2010 during the floods affecting 168,000 households in Jhangar and Bajara towns), WWF-P was pained as it pieced together its baseline. Rough skin with black dots and arsenical lesions especially on the face, arms and feet in 30-40% of households at Bobak village in a 2009 study quoted in the base line has been linked to high arsenic concentrations in Manchar's surface water (157 ug/L) and groundwater (96 ug/L). Compounding factors (for which WWF-P has collected 2010 baseline information) relate to malnutrition, improper medical facilities, and synergistic actions of other toxicants in ground and surface waters.

A high dependence on natural resources is evident at all sites, underlining the need to carefully manage things such as stock of fish and forest. As the report deals with village-level findings, WWF-P will easily target locales where its interventions are most needed. At Kharo Chan, for example, exclusive fishing is not characteristic at Haji Hameer Memon and Babiyo villages where the focus is on growing of cash crops (wheat, rice, sugarcane, and cotton) and fruit/vegetables (bananas, ribbed gourd, and betel leaf). Meanwhile, with the exception of Essa Balani, Jamot Chuta Khaskhali, and Haji Hameer Memon where boat ownership is reported at 2 in some cases, 19% of all sampled households own 1 boat and 79% do not own boats (in contrast to Ketu Bunder where in 2008 56% reported owning own 1 boat, and 35% owned none). It is hoped that such information will also strengthen the hand of WWF-P's partnering stakeholders who can focus on specific locales as they assist with boat repair, net and boat engine provision, and make use of WWF-P's total fish biomass estimates for sustainable fisheries management.

Three Projects launched in Ketu Bunder

While addressing attendees at an inauguration ceremony in Ketu Bunder, Member of National Assembly Dr. Abdul Wahid Soomro declared that social and environmental conditions of the Indus delta need attention from various stakeholders. Dr. Soomro inaugurated a series of the Programme's initiatives at Ketu Bunder, including a fish landing platform at Ketu Bunder Town, a community based crab pond at village Meero Dablo and a shrimp pond at creek village Gilli Sholani. He said that poverty has risen manifold in the area due to environmental changes. He said that non availability of fresh water is a major issue and perennial release of water is essential for the Indus delta. He said that government should allocate more financial resources to improve infrastructure in the area. He lauded the efforts of WWF - P for improving natural resource management and livelihood through active community participation. He hoped that crab and shrimp ponds would bring better results and that line department would come forward to replicate such models.



MNA Dr. Abdul Wahid Soomro inaugurating the project

Programme Coordinator, Indus for All Programme, Mr. Nasir Ali Pahwar, said that various projects have been initiated to promote sustainable use of natural resources and to ameliorate the sufferings of local people. He said that alternate energy has been promoted through provision of solar and biogas in the area. He said that a fish landing platform was needed in the area and hoped that this would provide fishermen communities greater convenience in their handling of fish and would save considerable time to avoid any losses. He said previously, in the absence of a fish landing platform, fishermen faced numerous problem in loading and unloading of fish. Much of their time was wasted in waiting for a high tide or low tide for easy access. He said that rehabilitation of a drinking water facility would also cater to the drinking water needs of communities living in creeks and inland areas.

Site Manager Ketu Bunder, Mr. Ghulam Rasool Khtari, said fish catch has declined in recent years and has allowed middlemen to exploit poverty stricken fisher communities indebteding them to a greater degree. He said that the crab and shrimp ponds would provide alternatives to fishermen for income generation since crabs and shrimps are commercially recognized and are competitively priced. The ceremony was attended by local people, representatives of community based organizations and area notables.





World Water Day observed at Keenjhar

Speakers urged the government and non-government organizations to invest more on provision of safe drinking water, as five million people die every year due to water-borne diseases. They were addressing the participants of a seminar held on 22 March 2011 at Jhimpir near Keenjhar Lake. The seminar was jointly organized by the Indus for All Programme and Keenjhar Youth Welfare and Development Organization to mark the World Water Day.

Speaking on the occasion Mr. Rasool Bux Dars said, "Every form of life is dependent on the water, which is fast becoming scarce. However, there is serious need for conservation of the water resources in all possible manners."

He pointed out that the Keenjhar Lake is being heavily polluted by untreated industrial effluents of the Kotri and Noriabad site areas.

Rasool Bux Dars warned that if pollution is not controlled, the Keenjhar lake would become another Manchar Lake. Prof. Dr. Ali Murtaza Dharejo said that due to change in water cycle the rainfall has declined. He believes that environmental education can play a vital role in sensitizing resource dependent communities and controlling water-borne diseases. The Programme Coordinator, Mr. Nasir Ali Panhwar, said that almost all water bodies in Sindh have become contaminated due to the disposal of untreated effluents.

He observed that while access to safe drinking water in rural and urban areas is declining, provision of safe potable water to the people is as yet on a risk priority for the government.

Mr. Nasir Ali Panhwar said that climate change has also affected the quantity and quality of water.

He pointed out that the non-release of 10 MAF water into the Indus delta as per the Water Accord 1991 has further aggravated the delta eco-system.

Manager Keenjhar PIU, Mr. Hafeezullah Gambheer said that Thatta district is home to important wetlands and a number of Ramsar sites are also located here. But, the state of most of the Ramsar sites is deplorable due to falling level of rainfalls and decreasing water flows in the river system.

Mr. Razak Barach, Mr. Mohmmad Umar Atho, Mr. Haji Raza Mohammad Palari, Mr. Fateh Mohammad Behrani and others also spoke on the occasion.

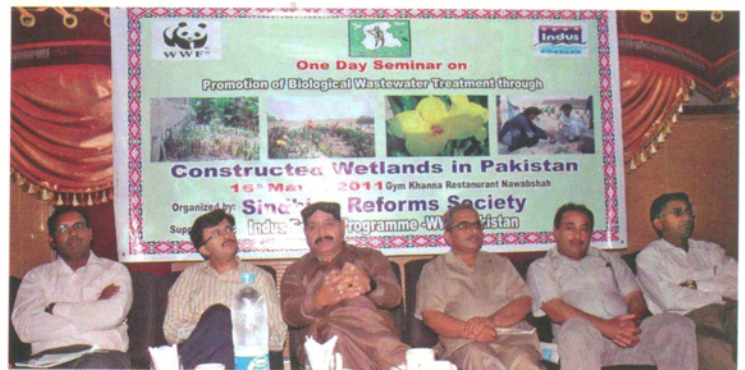
Experts for promoting biological wastewater treatment

Experts at a seminar have called for promoting biological wastewater treatment to tackle the looming threat of water crisis and control increasing water pollution.

The seminar 'Promotion of Wastewater Treatment through Constructed Wetlands' was jointly organized by the Sindhica Reforms Society and the Indus for All Programme in Sakrand on 17 March 2011.

The speakers said that wastewater is a major source of surface and ground water pollution. However, they added that constructed wetlands provide a viable solution to the problem. DCO Shaheed Benazirabad, Mr. Jamal Mustafa Sayed, said that government alone cannot address growing environmental problems, but with the support of public and civil society organizations improvement could be made possible.

The DCO assured that that the public health engineering department would be mobilized to adopt the concept of constructed wetlands to improve the sanitary conditions and promote reuse of wastewater.



Speakers at the Seminar

Programme Coordinator, Mr Nasir Ali Panhwar, said that poor sanitation has emerged as a major challenge. Mere provision of toilets and sewerage lines is not enough to ensure environmental-friendly sanitation.

"Drainage schemes initiated by the Public Health Engineering Department are defunct due to inadequate funds needed for operation and maintenance of the system. Given the situation, the idea of the constructed wetland provides a workable, low-cost solution to the drainage and sanitation problems," he said.

Coordinator Natural Resource Management, Indus for All Programme, Mr. Umeed Khalid, said that WWF - Pakistan has established five constructed wetlands in district Shaheed Benazirabad and Sanghar to demonstrate its environmental services. However, he pointed out that there remains a strong further need for government to promote this constructed wetland technology.

Mr. Ameen Keerio of Sindhica Reform Society said that Pakistan's first constructed wetland has been established in village Majeed Keerio with the support of the Indus for All Programme and UN-Habitat.

On this occasion, Mr. Akash Santorai, Prof. Dr. Niaz Memon, Prof. Kishan Chand, of Quaid-e- Awam University of Engineering and Technology, Dr. Daulat Jamali, Mr. Rafique Jamali and other also spoke.

Inauguration of Information Technology Centre at Jhimpir

An information technology centre has been established at Jhimpir in Thatta under the Indus for All Programme's Livelihood Development Plans.



IT Centre being inaugurated

The Centre was inaugurated on the eve of the World Water Day on 22 March 2011. The centre, the first of its kind in the area caters to the needs of youth for computer literacy. As many as 50 students were enrolled for the first course out of which 36 obtained certificates. During the second course, 46 students were enrolled, who are expected to receive their certificates courses in June 2011.

World Forest Day Marked in Shaheed Benazirabad

A ceremony was held to mark World Forest Day at Pai forest on 21 March 2011. The ceremony was jointly organized by Indus for All Programme, Sindh Forest Department and District Government Shaheed Benazirabad. A large number of students, teachers and civil society organizations attended the event and planted about 500 saplings of native species in Pai.

DCO Mr. Jamal Mustafa Sayed, said that forests are an essential component of a balanced ecosystem and that the district government is focusing on urban plantation. He said that local species are being given a high priority. He added that youth has a vital role to play in improving environmental conditions and it is imperative that they are sensitized about deteriorating environmental conditions. The DCO emphasized the need to engage civil society organizations in increasing forest coverage and assured full support on behalf of the district government.



Students planting saplings

Programme Coordinator, Indus for All Programme, Nasir Ali Panhwar, said that Pakistan has the highest deforestation rate in Asia and currently forests exist only on 2.5 percent area, which

should ideally be 25 percent. Under the Millennium Development goals, he said that government is committed to increase six percent forest cover by the year 2015. He said that forests in Sindh are facing multiple challenges and political will is required to protect remaining forest and enhance the forest coverage.

The DFO Tariq Irfan said that collective efforts are needed to protect forests, which are depleting at fast pace. Site Manager Mr. Usama Anwar said that vegetation cover of indigenous trees have great potential for sequestering carbon and mitigating climate change.

Mazhar Abro, Rafique Jamalai and others highlighted the importance of forests. Students of nature clubs presented tableaux and participated in speech competition, while the winners were awarded shields.

Oxfam-GB's partner organisations inspired by Indus for All Programme's interventions

A delegation consisting of 16 representatives from Oxfam-GB's partner organisations including Research and Development Foundation (RDF), Participatory Development Initiatives (PDI) and Doaba Foundation visited the Programme's Pai Site office. The visit was organised on 27 January 2011. The participants applauded the Programme's initiatives related to conservation and Better Management Practices (BMP) for agriculture in district Shaheed Benazirabad.



Group photo of delegation

Mr. Usama Anwar, Site Manager, Pai Forest, shared details of completed and on-going interventions implemented in the Pai forest area. He also facilitated the delegation during their site visit.

The participants expressed a keen interest in the Programme's BMP interventions. They also met with local farmers and discussed the results and benefits of these interventions. During the tour, the participants visited the demonstration plot of the Farmers Field School (FFS) in village Marri Alam Jalbani. At the FFS they learnt how these schools are helping farmers improve crop cultivation and reduce their input costs. The FFS's field officer, Muneer Ahmed Kerio, and other facilitators, delivered a comprehensive presentation on the aims, objectives and importance of the FFS.

The delegation also visited a biogas installation and livestock model farm under the Programme's Natural Resource Management (NRM) initiative at village Nazar Muhammad Bhatti, a constructed wetland at village Majeed Keerio, and a drip irrigation system at village Gulsher Machhi.

Orientation Programme - Lahore Head Office

The newly inducted Mr. Subhash K. Dawani-Manager Conservation, Mr. Umeed Khalid-Coordinator NRM, Mr. Ghulam Rasool Khatri-Site Manager Ketibunder Office and Mr. Vinod Kumar-NRM Officer Pai office participated in the orientation to WWF Pakistan by visiting the Head office, Lahore from 20 - 21 April 2011 for an overview of WWF Pakistan's history, goals, objectives, on-going activities and an explanation of core values, vision and mission.

Staff Capacity Building (National)

- Mr. Chettan Kumar, Community Development Officer, Keenjhar participated in one day training on SPHERE Minimum Standards for Food Security on 18th January 2011 organized by Indus Institute for Research and Education, Church world Services Pakistan/Afghanistan and PVDP.
- Mr. Faisal Abbas, Finance Officer participated in one month training on International Financial Reporting Standards from 22-Jan-11 to 22nd Feb 2011 organized by ICMAP-Pakistan.
- Mr. Ghulam Rasool Khatri, Site Manager Ketibunder attended a two day workshop on Climatic Change Mitigation & Adaptation Skills from 6th-7th January, 2011 from HID Center Pakistan, Qasimabad, Hyderabad
- Mr. Ali Dehlavi, Programme Economist participated in a workshop on Forest Carbon Stock Assessment for RDD from 13th-18th February 2011 organized by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad.
- Mr. Majeed Thahim, Partnership fund Executive attended a training Basics of Business English from 14th-18th March, 2011 organized by Pakistan Institute of Management, Karachi.
- Ms. Sharmeen Qazilbash, Asst. Manager HR & Contracts participated in a 2 days workshop on Conducting Effective Investigations from 28th-29th March, 2011 organized by Narejo Human Resources (Pvt) Ltd.

New Induction

- Mr. Subhash K Dawani has joined Sindh Programme as Manager Conservation on 21st March 2011.
- Mr. Umeed Khalid has joined as Coordinator NRM in Indus for All Programme on 10th Jan 2011.

Indus for All Programme, WWF - Pakistan

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Programme Implementation Units (PIU)

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District Sanghar, Sindh.
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Keenjhar Lake
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Hashimabad Sociey Makli,
District Thatta, Sindh
Tel: 0298-772318, 772319, 610426

Keti Bunder
Adnan House, Rano Mori Stop,
P.O. Keti Bunder,
via P.O. Mirpur Sakro,
District Thatta, Sindh
Tel: 0298-620406, 610976, 619366

Pai Forest
House # A-3, M.U.C.E.T Employees
Co-operative Housing Society,
District Shaheed Benazirabad, Sindh
Tel: 0244-366364, Fax: 0244-282496

UNFCCC Top Official Call of Measures to Counter Climate Change



Deputy DG WWF Dr. Ejaz Ahmed briefing the delegation

Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Ms. Christiana Figueres, said that the post flood crisis in Pakistan has proven to be the worst natural calamity induced by climate change. She made this remark on the occasion of her visit to WWF - Pakistan's (WWFP) Wetland Centre at Sandspit in Karachi on 7 February 2011 after visiting floodhit areas including Dadu and Sehwan.

Ms. Figueres said that the global community has to come forward and go well beyond the relief and recovery phase and engage meaningfully in a reconstruction phase.

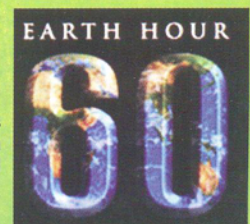
“Because of climate change, more floods in Pakistan cannot be ruled out. However, the solution lies in the adoption of appropriate measures to counter the factors that cause climate change,” she said.

She commended WWF - P, IUCN Pakistan and the Government of Sindh's efforts for the protection of coastal areas through mangrove plantation. She noted that while coastal areas are more vulnerable to climate change, mangrove plantation can help avoid or reduce the intensity of natural calamities such as cyclones and sea intrusion.

Her visit with WWF-P concluded with a tour of the Wetlands Center where she planted mangrove saplings and released turtle hatchlings into the sea. Advisor to Sindh Chief Minister on Planning & Development Department Mr. Qaiser Bengali, Secretary Forest and Wildlife Mr. Mushtaque Ali Memon, Mr. Syed Mujtaba Hussain, Deputy Secretary (Climate Change) Ministry of Environment, Deputy Director General WWF- Pakistan Dr. Ejaz Ahmed, Regional Director WWF - Pakistan Mr. Rab Nawaz, Country Representative IUCN Mr. Shah Murad Aliani, Indus for All Programme Coordinator, Mr. Nasir Ali Panhwar, Coordinator Natural Resources Management Mr. Umeed Khalid and Manager Corporate Relations WWF - Pakistan Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb were also present on the occasion.

Earth Hour Observed

Earth Hour was observed across Sindh on March 26, 2011 to join the international community as part of a global climate change campaign.



In Sindh, which was declared Earth Hour Province this year, all lights of government buildings, offices and institutions, including the Sindh Assembly, remained switched off, while many citizens also observed Earth Hour in a joint effort to show Pakistan's commitment to this global environmental movement.

A walk was organised by the WWF and Environment and Alternate Energy Department, Government of Sindh at the mausoleum of Quaid-e-Azam, in which a large number of people, including children and environmental activists, participated to celebrate Earth Hour.

Minster for Environment and Alternate Energy Mr. Shaikh Muhammad Afzal led the walk, during which participants carried candles in their hands, highlighting the importance of natural and clean energy sources for meeting growing energy demands. The ceremony was attended by the Chief Secretary Sindh Mr. Abdul Subhan Memon, Secretary Environment & Alternate Energy Department Mr. Mir Hussain Ali, Earth Hour Ambassador Ms. Atiqa Odho, Regional Director WWF Mr. Rab Nawaz, Manager Corporate Relation WWF Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, Programme Coordinator WWF, Mr. Nasir Ali Panhwar and Coordinator NRM WWF Mr. Umeed Khalid and others.