



Chotiari Conservation



Chotiari Wetlands Complex



Why Visit the Chotiari Wetlands Complex ?

The area is an ecological terrain, host to a rich mix of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems of deep water, shallow marshes, desert scrubs, sand dunes, riverine forests and agricultural land. It is located in district Sanghar of Pakistan's Sindh province and is surrounded by the silken sand dunes of Achro Thar desert. The quaint rainbow beauty of charming hamlets, with artistic cone-shaped straw cottages, is well worth seeing. The lower Nara Canal, which lies in the environs, provides an astonishing natural view of riverine forest patches. The area embraces a series of fresh and brackish water lakes, fringed with diverse vegetation; a number of lakes are embanked and have been converted into a larger storage reservoir named Chotiari Reservoir.

Biodiversity

This complex of multiple ecosystems is teeming with unique biodiversity, including species such as the smooth coated otter, the marsh crocodile, the fresh water turtle and a wide array of native fish. The Reservoir is a sanctuary for hog deer, and a nesting and breeding ground for various resident and migratory birds. Additionally, there are chinkara deer, houbara bustard, desert cat, desert hare, fishing cat, caracal, porcupine, wild boar, mongoose, fox, jackal, squirrel, monitor lizard, and diverse species of snakes. One also finds valuable medicinal and edible plants in the adjoining desert ecosystem.

Pied Bushchat

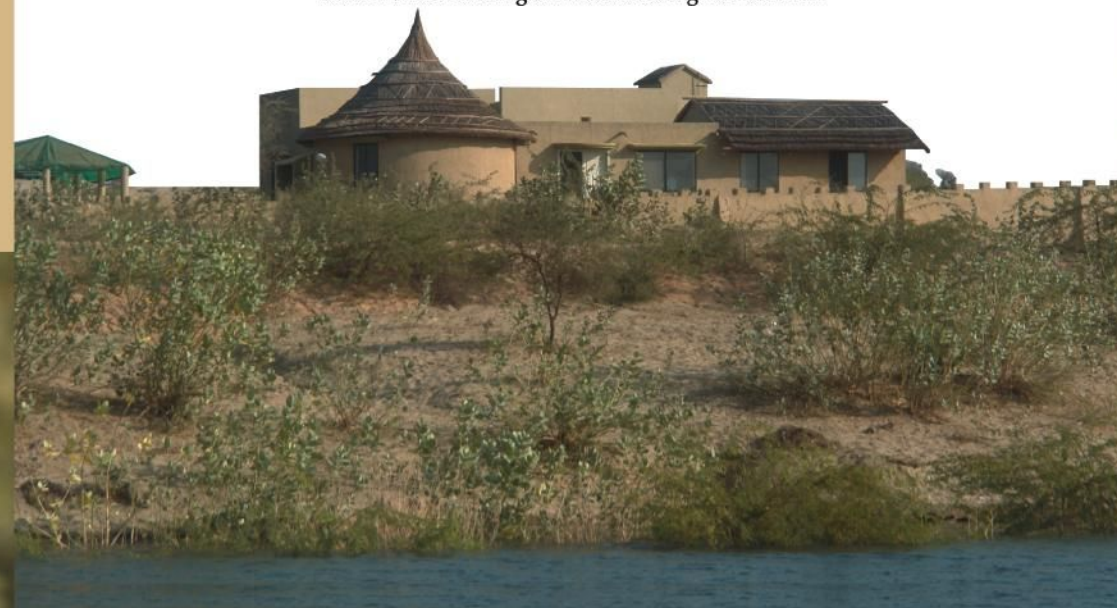


Chotiari Conservation and Information Centre

About the Centre

In order to conserve and sustainably manage the precious biodiversity of the Chotiari Wetlands Complex, the Indus for All Programme of the World Wide Fund for Nature - Pakistan (WWF - P) established a Conservation and Information Centre in the area. This multi-purpose facility is situated at the junction of multiple ecosystems (desert, brackish and freshwater). It hosts state-of-the-art facilities, keeping in view the various awareness needs, and elements of local environment and traditions. The Centre has a biodiversity resource space, a fisheries resource room, numerous environmental education exhibits, a conference hall, a tuck shop, a community handicrafts outlet and an administration office. The overall structure of the Center is compatible with the natural environment. Surrounding the Center is a botanical garden and a wild plant nursery, various teaching-learning exhibits, a bird watching tower and multiple information signboards. Energy is generated through a solar electrification unit at the site. The water supply to the courtyard is made efficient through a centralized drip and rainwater harvesting system.

The Centre seeks to educate and raise environmental awareness among local communities, through capacity building, school outreach programmes and cultural events. The Center also helps promote ecotourism, as a means to provide sustainable livelihood opportunities, and community-led conservation of ecosystem and indigenous cultural heritage. Furthermore, it provides a platform to stakeholders for conservation dialogues and meetings at the site.



Socio-Economic Profile

Chotiari Reservoir plays an important role in the economy of the province. It provides fertile agricultural land, covering an area of more than 750,000 hectares in Sanghar and Umerkot districts, and provides substantial amounts of fish for food. The widely spread rangelands of the area provide space for pastoral activities for around 50,000 livestock. The use of aquatic vegetation (Typha and Phragmites) in mat-making and housing is also one of the economic services of this junction.

Ecotourism Potential

The area has a great potential for ecotourism, owing to its biological diversity, and rich cultural and historical heritage. Here, the tourist can explore nature, meet indigenous people, seek adventure in the wilderness and enjoy the tranquil environment.

Livelihood through fishing



Lotus



and Information Centre

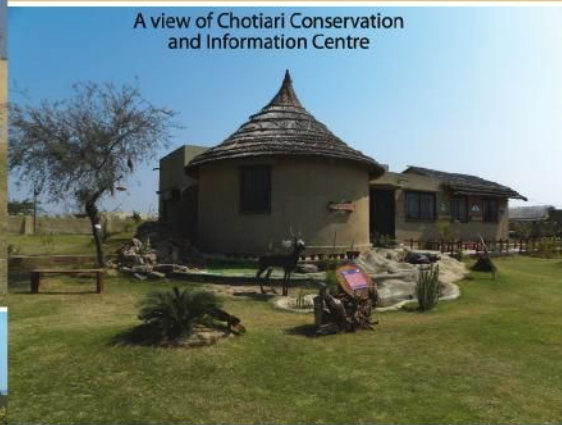


Nurturing Hope for a Sustainable Future

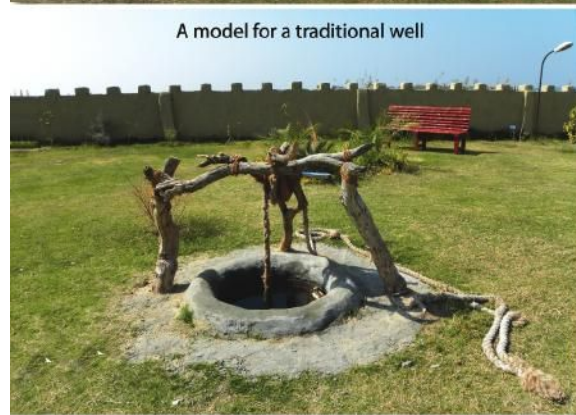




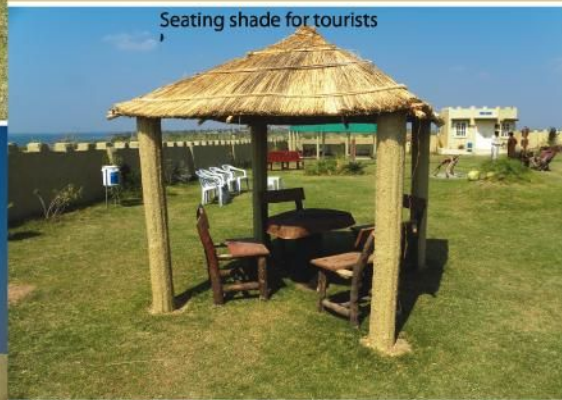
Solar electrification unit



A view of Chotiari Conservation and Information Centre



A model for a traditional well



Seating shade for tourists



Tuck shop

WHAT IT OFFERS

Multiple packages and customized activities are offered for all target groups:

Nature Study Camping

Adventurous and educational expeditions are organized, including wilderness camping, discovery walks, nature crafts, boat riding, bird watching, desert trekking, swimming, camel and horse riding, angling, and camp fire gathering with folk music and traditional food.

Camel Safari

Guided camel riding facility is offered, to explore diverse natural lakes spread over a wide area of Achro Thar, Direenh (a unique landscape of unstable sand dunes), archeological sites, rangelands and forest patches.

Boat Safari

Guided boat rides to different islands within the Chotiari Reservoir area are planned. The boat rides will expose hidden biodiversity hotspots hosting aquatic fauna and flora. Fishing, angling and swimming also form part of this safari.

Study Tour

Short trips are scheduled for students and other groups who wish to study the ecological richness of multiple ecosystems, including desert, wetlands, rangelands, marshes, forest and agricultural ones.

Guided Tour

Guided excursions take visitors to high wildlife concentration areas, community-managed wildlife protected areas, historical places and other tourist attractions.

Bird Watching

Wilderness walks, boat rides and road trips to community-managed bird protected areas and other hot spots are arranged. Bird watching equipment is provided to facilitate sighting of a range of resident and migratory birds. A 10 meter high bird watching tower is also constructed at the Centre.

Research Facilitation

A wide range of resource materials on the area's biodiversity and socio-economic profile is available for research students, development sector and scholars. Survey equipment can also be provided on demand.

Rental Facilities

A well furnished conference hall with audio-visual equipment is available for meetings, trainings, seminars and workshops.

Accommodation Facility

Double occupancy accommodation facility, furnished with traditional décor, can be booked for overnight stays at the Centre.

Community Traditional Handicrafts Outlet and Tuck Shop

Shopping for traditional handmade souvenirs, dresses and home decors is one of the highlights of the trip. Tourists can also enjoy a variety of traditional food available (on demand) at the Centre and at community-managed ecotourism huts at the Padhrio range of the Chotiari Wetlands.



Conference hall

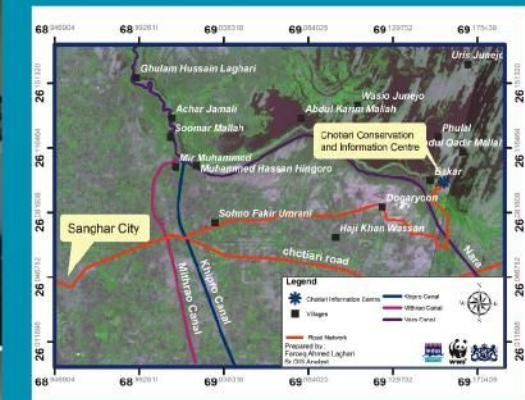


Guest room



Educational exhibits

Location Map



Site Manager, Chotiari

Chotiari Conservation and Information Centre
Indus for All Programme, WWF - Pakistan

Village Baqar, near Chotiari Reservoir outlet
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Manager Conservation Sindh

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