

The Nation

IUCN, WWF, SCOPE beef up efforts to conserve environment in Sindh

KARACHI, Oct 25 (PPI): Three environment groups IUCN, WWF Pakistan and SCOPE have beefed up efforts to conserve environment and natural resources in Sindh. The three have expanded their programs which have widely been hailed by the government and environmental experts.

"Over 2000000 acres of land has been eroded by sea in coastal belt of Sindh due to non-flow of Indus water from Kotri downstream to sea. It is the need of the hour that the government and NGOs should make joint effort to save more land from sea intrusion, says Abdullah, Senior Vice President of Delta Development Organization Kharochhan while talking to PPI. He said that there is need to conserve biodiversity in Indus Ecoregion and WWF is palying good role in this connection.

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He said that the government should also provide compensation to those whose lands have been eroded by the sea. There is also need to save recently planted mangroves trees at Keti Bunder, he added. <

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International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Pakistan and Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FPCCI) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding at the Federation House through which would use their convening power to leverage for positive change for biodiversity conservation. They will now chalk out the way forward about how the industry can reach its objectives without being detrimental to the environment.

Gulzar Firoz, Chairman, Environment Committee, FPCCI informed the audience that the purpose of the partnership was to enable both organizations to build a lasting relationship in order to enhance environmental conservation in the industrial sector of Pakistan.

Javed Jabbar, IUCN Global Vice President and Regional Councilor called the MoU a milestone in the history of Pakistan as two leading representative organizations in the industrial and environment sectors had agreed to work together for the protection of the environment.

Shah Murad Aliani, Country Representative IUCN Pakistan said IUCN wanted to educate and inform the industrial sector about the best practices to be followed for achieving sustainable development. Sultan Ahmed Chawla, President, FPCCI urged the industry to adopt Green Thinking and work to provide healthy livelihood environment to the people. He said this MoU was going to create a relationship between the industry and IUCN to for the protection of the environment.

WWF Pakistan has also expanded work on its 50-year-long Indus For All Program under which it will safeguard four new priority sites that include Shah Bunder (Deltaic

Ecosystem) in district Thatta, Manchar Lake (Freshwater Wetlands Ecosystem) in district Dadu, Nara Wetlands Complex (Desert-Wetlands Complex) in districts Khairpur and Sukkur and Khebrani Forest (Riverine Forest) in district Matiari.

WWF's Indus Ecoregion Programme is a long-term initiative to conserve biological diversity in the lower Indus basin through participatory natural resource management and poverty alleviation. The first six-year (2006-2012) implementation phase of the programme is known as the Indus for All Programme. <

Implemented by WWF Pakistan in close collaboration with Government of Sindh and other stakeholders, the Indus for All Programme is operational in four of the fourteen priority sites of the Indus Ecoregion. The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has generously provided financial support to implement the first phase in the four priority sites, which represent the critical ecosystems in the Indus ecoregion. These include deltaic ecosystem (Keti Bunder) and freshwater wetlands ecosystem (Keenjhar Lake) in District Thatta, forest ecosystem (Pai Forest) in District Shaheed Benazirabad and desert-wetlands ecosystem (Chotiari Reservoir) in District Sanghar.

The SCOPE (Society for Conservation and Protection of Environment), a member of International Land Coalition (ILC), held a roundtable on the theme of "Corporate farming: A wise development strategy or land grab" in which majority of speakers termed corporate farming harmful for the country and farmers.

They said it would affect local growers and give benefit to multinational companies expected to establish corporate farming in the country. However, government officials termed it beneficial for progress of agriculture sector and said that it would create employment opportunities.