

INTERNATIONAL THE NEWS

Call to conserve ecosystem, fresh water resources

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Karachi

Speakers at a workshop called for taking urgent actions to conserve ecosystem diversity and avoid wasteful exploitation of natural resources, particularly fresh waters.

Keenjhar Lake provides 78 per cent water to Karachi which is used for civic and commercial purposes, therefore it is the need to hour to conserve it besides bringing an end to the pollution in the lake, they said at the workshop organised by the World Wide Fund for Nature Pakistan (WWF-P) at a local hotel on the theme of Integration of Environmental Values into National Income Accounts.

Addressing the workshop as chief guest, Aurangzeb Haq, Chief Economist, Planning and Development Department, Government of Sindh, said natural resources should be used carefully because their wasteful exploitation is risky. He said that we should conserve our ecological systems in line with modern and natural sciences. "Keenjhar Lake is an important resource of Karachi, therefore we should make joint efforts to conserve it. Karachiites will have to suffer a lot if this water source dries up."

He said that our decision making is not proper, therefore we would have to make proper planning to develop declining natural resources like Keenjhar Lake, Haleji Lake and many other natural water sites across the country.

Aurang Zeb said that donor agencies including World Bank have set tough conditions for releasing funds for development projects and they are not satisfied at mere hollow slogans. They want practical work and its effective implementation, he added.

He hailed WWF-P for its work to conserve natural resources, particularly fresh waters and helping communities depending on them. The Chief Economist also called for strengthening of planning based on acknowledgment of the monetary value of natural resources. WWF-P official and program moderator Ali Dehlavi highlighted WWF-P's achievements in conserving natural resources and developing them. He said that Keenjhar Lake is one of the important water resources of Sindh because of the fact that it provides 78 percent water to Karachi.

He urged the government to implement WWF-P suggestions in developing natural resources. He said that Keenjhar, Haleji Lake and Ketti Bandar sites are highly valuable, therefore urgent steps should be taken by the government and all stakeholders to support communities living in these regions. These sites must be developed and their water resources saved from pollution and other hazards.