



For immediate release

National Consultative Workshop on; “Impacts of Climate Change on Indus Basin: Coping Strategies for Pakistan”

Pakistan, 20 May 2010 (IUCN)

A national consultative workshop titled: ‘Impacts of Climate Change on Indus Basin: Coping Strategies for Pakistan’ was organized by IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature in collaboration with International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) with the support of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Islamabad today.

The workshop was organized under an initiative of the ADB to address climate change challenge and to reduce vulnerabilities of countries in Asia. The aim of this initiative was to encourage regional cooperation on climate change, strengthen ADB Developing Member Countries’ response to climate change adaptation, and mainstream climate change adaptation considerations at Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The objective of the workshop was to have thorough analyses of the current knowledge to assess the gaps and the opportunities for future initiatives. The other purpose of this workshop was to bring together all the stakeholders on one platform for strengthening relationships and forging new partnerships between different government and non-governmental institutions.

Dr. Ishfaq Ahmad, Advisor, Science and Technology, Government of Pakistan was the chief guest) In his remarks, he said that Indus basin has crucial importance and is also being hit hard by the impacts of the changing climate. The country is facing abnormal weather patterns in the form of late winter and spring rains that has negative effects on the agriculture sector and also on the overall environment. The report compiled by the Planning Commission’s Task Force on Climate Change has set a road map for moving in the right direction to achieve economic development in an environmentally sustainable manner. The subject of climate change is at the top in the Planning Commission’s and Government’s agenda. He further said that the government is already taken various measures in this regard..

Dr. Peter Hayes a the Senior Climate Change Specialist, Asian Development Bank (ADB) said that for a country like Pakistan, the issue of climate change revolves around availability of adequate water. He said that ADB is focusing on the lessons learned from the Asian region and it has developed a robust portfolio of climate change related projects in the region.

Ms. Marvi Memon who is chair of the National Assembly’s Standing Committee on Climate Change said that climate change is a real big threat and the government is well aware of the importance of the issue. She very much appreciated the efforts being done and said that the Standing Committee on Climate Change would be looking forward to the deliberation made during this workshop and would ensure all possible support to take forward the climate change agenda.

The Director General (Environment), Ministry of Environment, Mr. Jawed Ali Khan speaking at the occasion said that Pakistan ranks high on the list of countries that are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. It is posing severe threat to livelihood of millions of people in the Indus basin, which is food basket of Pakistan and any change in temperature is adversely impacting livelihoods of people, he further added.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Mahmood Akhtar Cheema, Head IUCN Islamabad Programme Office said that the subject of climate change still needs a lot of study to better equip us against the

challenges being posed in all the sectors. A lot of research work has been done by institutions and individuals in isolation which needs to be shared and experiences from other countries of the region should be utilized to better understand the climate change issues and its impacts on bio-physical environment downstream.

An eminent expert on the subject of Climate Change Dr. Amir Mohammad, Rector of the National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences, said that Indus is lifeline of our economy and its is also the worst victim of the impacts of global warming. He added that the melting of northern glaciers have tremendous downstream impacts on agriculture and livelihoods, and Pakistan needs comprehensive preparedness to tackle the arising emergency in the country.

Malik Amin Aslam who is Executive Director of ENVORK and also the former Minister of State for Environment noted that climate change related impacts are giving rise to the related issues like food security and also a multiplier for issues like terrorism and is a threat to national security, he said.

Other experts who spoke on this occasion included Dr. Juerg Merz, Team Leader ADB- RETA project, Dr. Inayatullah Chaudhary, Regional Coordinator of the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Dr. Qamar-uz- Zaman Chaudhary, Director General of the Pakistan Meteorological Department, Dr. Shahid Ahmad, Member (Natural Resources) Pakistan Agriculture Research Council, Dr. Mohsin Iqbal, Head of Agriculture at the Global Change Impacts Studies Centre and Mr. Farrukh Iqbal Khan, Director (UN), Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Besides, a large number of representatives from different NGOs, governmental institutions, provincial government representatives and academia deliberated and presented their views on the current and potential threats being posed by climate change and suggested appropriate coping strategies for Pakistan.

Notes to editors

For more information or to set up interviews, please contact:

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About IUCN

Created in 1948, IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges by supporting scientific research; managing field projects all over the world; and bringing governments, NGOs, the UN, international conventions and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice.

The world's oldest and largest global environmental network, IUCN is a democratic membership union with more than 1,000 government and NGO member organizations, and almost 11,000 volunteer scientists and experts in some 160 countries. IUCN's work is supported by over 1,000 professional staff in 60 offices, and hundreds of partners in public, NGO and private sectors around the world. IUCN's headquarters are located in Gland, near Geneva, in Switzerland.

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Select Photographs of the Workshop



Left to right:

Mr. Jawed Ali Khan, Director General (Environment), Ministry of Environment,
Mr. Mahmood Akhtar Cheema, Head, IUCN Islamabad Office,
Dr. Ishfaq Ahmad Khan, Advisor (Science and Technology), Government of Pakistan
Dr. Peter Hayes, senior Climate Change Specialist (Asian Development Bank)



Left to right:

Dr. Amir Mohammad, Rector, National University for Computer and emerging Sciences
Mr. Malik Amin Aslam, Former Minister of State for Environment
Dr. Peter Hayes, senior Climate Change Specialist (Asian Development Bank)



General Participants of the workshop