



CARING FOR WETLANDS
an answer to climate change

World Wetlands Day 2010 - Celebrations of Life

Theme: Wetlands, Biodiversity and Climate change

Slogan: Caring for Wetlands - an answer to Climate Change

Caring for Wetlands - An Answer to Climate Change,

with this slogan countries around the globe launched into another enthusiastic celebration of the World Wetlands Day. Every year this day is celebrated on February 2nd, marking the signing of the 'Convention on Wetlands' in 1971 in Ramsar, an Iranian city by the shores of the Caspian Sea. It strives to highlight the importance of the fragile ecosystems of the world's wetlands to governments, academia, NGOs, media and the average citizen, and to promote conservation of wetlands of national and international importance. In effect, it creates awareness about constraints and opportunities in the sustainable management of wetlands and develop partnerships that lead to positive changes in the thinking of people regarding this vital natural resource.



This year's activities were largely adapted to the theme appropriately chosen by the Ramsar Bureau - "**Wetlands, Biodiversity and Climate Change**" since climate change has become an urgent topic and action is needed by nations throughout the world. Although Pakistan contributes just 2.85% of global carbon dioxide, it is suffering disproportionately from the effects of the continuing climate change which is manifesting itself in the form of shrinking glaciers in the Himalayas, higher average winter temperatures, and extreme events such as droughts, cyclones, excessive rains and more frequent Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs).



Pakistan Wetlands Programme

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Wetlands can help to mitigate global climate change by acting as sinks for carbon. The slogan for this year was designed to encapsulate this highly important role of wetlands in today's world.

As the premier platform in Pakistan devoted to the conservation of wetlands, the Pakistan Wetlands Programme (PWP), WWF-Pakistan, celebrated this event with special fervour a plethora of activities directed at the general public, government line departments, universities and schools were arranged by PMU Islamabad and all site offices of PWP. Many of the activities were repeated at different places and schools with the objective of targeting a diverse and large group of audience.



They encompassed cities as diverse as Lahore, Karachi, Gilgit, Rahim Yar Khan, Naushera, D.I. Khan, Chitral, Swat, Dir, Peshawar, Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Gawadar, Jiwani and Islamabad. **In fact, the programme spanned two months of vibrant events, starting on 21st December in the schools of Gilgit and culminating in a grand finale on 13th February at Bahria University, Islamabad.**

Educational/Promotional Material:

The material included:

- PWP Year Calendar
- Table Calendar (CD) with promos
- Climate Change Theme Posters (4)
- Theme Promo
- Environmental Song
- Turtle Poem Promo
- Wetlands, an indicators of Climate Change Brochure (English/Urdu)
- Climate Change Theme Banners / Backdrops / Streamers
- Save Our Species Quiz Game Poster
- Save Our Species Posters-Booklet
- Ramsar International Secretary General's message and Newspaper Supplement in *Farozaan Magazine*
- Participation Certificates
- Indus Blind Dolphin Winners Trophy
- Media Campaign
- Book Marks
- Console Calendar
- Souvenirs: Badges , Stickers, Turtles

Although the top schools had a high participation rate as before, underprivileged schools were especially engaged for the celebrations. Competitions were held not only in the categories of Essay Composition, Story Writing, Posters, 3-D Models, Quiz and Nature Photography but also in Play Performance, Poetry, Song Writing, Music, Handicrafts and Video Contests. Such a spectrum of categories undoubtedly tested the creative talents of our youth and brought out the best in them. The models, pictures, videos, posters and dramas they produced on wetlands theme showed just how interested is our youth in the conservation of the natural





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environment. These activities were also carried out at the university level, with a vibrant competition held with the students of the University of Arid Agriculture, Rawalpindi and the National University of Science and Technology (NUST). Every event was attended by decision makers from regional government departments, parents, teachers and other community members.

The WWD 2010 activities included:

1. Wetlands Art Competition
2. Wetlands Essay Competition
3. Wetlands Story Writing Competition
4. Play Performance
5. Puppet Show
6. 3-D Model Display Competition
7. Quiz Competition
8. Poetry Competition
9. Nature Photography
10. Song writing / Music Competition
11. Handicraft Competition
12. Video Contest
13. Information Corner: Different schools
14. Launch of Wetlands Cartoons Turtle and Dolphin
15. Documentary Show
16. TV & Radio Reports from February (2nd-13th, 2010)
17. Art Work Exhibition



But activities were not confined to school competitions. They ran the gamut of radio discussions, quiz competitions, awareness-raising among waterfowl hunters, advocacy walks and wetlands-related articles in newspapers throughout the four complexes of PWP. Sections of society as varied as government departments, non-governmental organisations, students, Youth Clubs, Boy Scouts, CBOs and the media were all caught up in this celebration of wetlands.

During the final celebration at Bahria University, not only were students, teachers, parents and other citizens of Rawalpindi/Islamabad in attendance, but the Federal Minister of Environment and senior officials from UNDP also lent their support and appreciation for PWP's efforts by their presence.

List of WWD 2010 Events:

- 21st- 23rd December, 2009 Gilgit Schools
- 13th January, 2010 Swat Schools
- 15th January, 2010 Dir Schools
- 26th January, 2010 D.I.Khan Schools with Wildlife Dept.
- 28th January 2010 Bahria University, Islamabad
- 28th January, 2010 Bahria Special Children School





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- 28th January, 2010 Bahria Primary Section, Islamabad
- 28th January, 2010 Imperial International School, Islamabad
- 30th January, 2010 Springfield School System, Rawalpindi
- **2nd Feb, 2010 Roots School System DHA, Islamabad**
- 2nd Feb, 2010 Ali Institute WWF-P Office, Lahore
- 2nd Feb, 2010 Rahim Yar Khan, Central Indus Wetlands Complex
- 2nd Feb, 2010 Noushera, Salt Range Wetlands Complex
- 2nd Feb, 2010 Chitral, Northern Alpine Wetlands Complex
- 2nd Feb, 2010 Gawadar, Makran Coastal Wetlands Complex
- 2nd Feb, 2010 Arid University, Rawalpindi
- 2nd Feb, 2010 Sindh Programme WWF and PWP, Karachi
- 8th Feb, 2010 Froebel's International School, Islamabad
- 8th Feb, 2010 Angelique School, Islamabad
- 8th Feb, 2010 Beaconhouse School Civil line, Rawalpindi
- 9th Feb, 2010 All Government Girls schools and Colleges, ICG F-6/2
- 10th Feb, 2010 All Government Boys Schools and Colleges, IMCB F-11/3
- 11th Feb, 2010 Sheikh Zayed International School, Islamabad
- 17th Feb, 2010 Military College Jhelum
- 18th Feb, 2010 Beaconhouse DHA Southern Region Schools, Karachi
- 23rd Feb, 2010 IESE NUST H-12, Islamabad
- 24th Feb, 2010 Cadet College, Batrasi
- **13th Feb, 2010 Closing Ceremony - Bahria University, Islamabad**

Of course, the celebrations would not be complete without the production and dissemination of extremely colourful and slick educational and informational material. This ranged from calendars, brochures, book marks, special Ferozaan magazine issue and souvenir badges to backdrops, streamers and Save our Species quiz game posters. School children and youth were highly motivated by a very beautiful environment song by Tahir Naeem, visually produced by Nasir Malik Coordinator Awareness-raising. And last but not least, a Turtle Poem Promo created especially by none other than PWP's own Nasir Malik, visually depicted the relentless killing of turtles for the sake of their body parts! It created a stir wherever it was shown.





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The inspired participation that every section of society showed during these two months of wetlands celebration proves that, given a committed leadership, the people of Pakistan can and do respond to environmental concerns and the need to conserve natural resources. In the field of wetlands, leaders like PWP continue to foster an environment for positive change in thinking and attitudes towards the idea of wetlands conservation and sustainable management. Such large scale events play a pivotal role in this regard.





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Wetlands Art Competition



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Wetlands Essay & Story writing Competition



Handicraft Competition



Song writing / Music Competition



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Play Performance



The Ministry of Environment's Pakistan Wetlands Programme

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3-D Model Display Competition





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Information Corner



Media Coverage



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Celebration of Life



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Thanks and Regards,

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