

World Wetlands Day 2007



Today



Tomorrow?



And after tomorrow

Wetlands and Fisheries

2 February

World Wetlands Day





The Ministry of Environment's Pakistan Wetlands Programme

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Pakistan Wetlands Programme Celebrates World Wetlands Day 2007 **Wetlands Festival**

February 2nd-11th 2007

The Pakistan Wetlands Programme (PWP) arranged wide array of activities to commemorate the World Wetlands Day in order to mark the date of the signing of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands on February 2nd, 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar. It organised the Wetlands Festival and adopted the international theme for World Wetlands Day 2007 i.e. **'Wetlands and Fisheries'**, in recognition of the importance of fish and fisheries to all people around the world.



The Wetlands Festival was organized to celebrate World Wetlands Day, 2007, with the objective to undertake actions aimed at raising general public awareness on the value and benefits of the wetlands and promoting wise-use of wetlands.

The festive celebrations began on February 2nd this year by holding a Nation-wide Wetlands and Fisheries art competition and continued through out the week with a grand

closure on February 11th, 2007.

A programme of events took place during a two-day period at the Islamabad Club on February 10th and 11th 2007. The same programme was repeated on both days but to a different audience with the objective of targeting a diverse and large group of participants.



Day one at the Islamabad Club involved more than 400 people, including youth, representing different colleges, universities and schools. On day two the Programme hosted more than 500 people from the corporate, government, NGO sector and others members of the public took part.



Partnership with FM 89 for Media Coverage:

Nationally, in addition to the art competition, the PWP made formal arrangements with FM 89 for special wetlands day coverage.

This country-wide radio network broadcast special announcements and important information regarding wetlands through out the week, and even began their wetlands day quote run up three days before the festival began.



On Wetlands Day itself they carried a unique half hour interview with Mr. Richard Garstang, National Programme Manager of the Pakistan Wetlands Programme who shared his knowledge with the public. The phone in questions, and Mr. Garstang's responses, led to lively discussions during which time key issues and related wetlands concerns were discussed.

In another half hour talk an FM89 moderator and students participating in Wetlands Day activities aired their views and opinions.

The Wetlands Festival received prominent national media publicity. Virtually every major English and Urdu newspaper ran articles about the Wetlands Festival. Television coverage of the festival was also aired on all the major networks nation-wide. Even the private sector played a part with several major Islamabad restaurants

prominently displaying the Festival material and wetlands oriented posters. Among those participating were Gilletto Affairs, Golden Dragon, Hot Spot, and Olive Garden. Their public conscious raising efforts helped to make the Pakistan Wetlands Programme's World Wetlands Day 2007 a success.

Nation-Wide Wetlands and Fisheries Art Competition:

The nation-wide art competition was held simultaneously in Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad, for primary and secondary level schools, with an objective to encourage them to demonstrate knowledge and express their views on wetland conservation through the medium of art.



This day-long activity was embraced by approximately 25 participating schools with a about 100 students in Islamabad, 85 students in Lahore, 110 students in Karachi taking part in the competition.

The theme Wetlands and Fisheries, in line with the international wetlands day theme,





was well depicted in different art forms. An interesting combination of collage work with water, oil and dry-pastal colour medium were used to illustrate the student's concept about wetlands, their management and the interconnection of fish and water resources.



This hands-on fun activity helped kids learn about and become aware of not only wetlands in Pakistan but also the importance of wetlands to fish species.

Nation-Wide Wetlands and Fisheries Poetry Competition January 12th-February 5th 2007:

In another nation-wide event the theme for the Wetlands Poetry Competition was again Wetlands and Fisheries to provoke thoughts and the imagination of student, teachers and the public about the interconnectedness of wetlands, fisheries and humans. The poetry Competition gained a huge attraction from school students and teachers

Fish for Tomorrow ?

*Fish for tomorrow,
Fish for today.
Slimy, scaly, smelly &
delicate fish,
for life life under-water,
don't be selfish.*

*let's make a wish,
to save the fish.
We are destroying the sea
life by different ways,
Nobody likes to ruin their
home in these ways.*

*So please pity on marine
life,
and help to save the
marine life*

Fish for Tomorrow ?

*Every day the same old thought
Will my family soon be caught?
by those evil hooks of doom
That sweep the ocean like a broom
Will I ever get my wish?
That no one ever killed a fish
When the sun begins to rise
The fishermen begins their early tries
To catch as many fish
For their dinner dish
When the sun begins to set
Those horrible nets are still a threat
taking away friends and family
leaving behind tears and agony
I hope you learned a lesson here
To save the fish and what they fear*

Fish for Tomorrow ?

*please leave a fish for
tomorrow
Don't give them more pain
and sorrow
Fish is a beautiful
creature
It is part of wonderful
nature
Fishes Breathe through
their gills
They die in an oil spill
to save some fish
its my Heartiest Wish*

Fish for Tomorrow ?

*Where are all the fish
going
What are people doing
Will the next generation
just see their Pictures
Will they able to see their
features
The fish like have to fun in
the sun
But they would not like to
be eaten in bun
Lets all preserve fish for
tomorrow
There will be no fish but
Sorrow*

and more than five hundred poems were received from students and individuals in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi.

Wetlands and Fisheries Play Performance:

Meanwhile at the two day event hosted by the Islamabad Club students from schools in the twin cities were invited to participate in a play performance based on the theme of the day.



This encouraged students to express their knowledge of wetland conservation in an innovative and interactive way.

Creative plays such as; **Explore Beneath its Glowing Charm and Lets Conserve it as a Fish Farm** depicted the challenge most



communities face to harness the livelihood benefits of wetlands, while maintaining their other valuable functions.



This play also explained the role of the Pakistan Wetlands Programme and its objectives to alleviate poverty by providing alternative livelihoods to the local communities at four sites.



The dramatic work **'Sorrow of another World'** reflected the fact that none of the species live in isolation, but are connected by many relationships with other species of this ecosystem.

The students depicted the message that we as humans are unable to predict what will happen to an ecosystem due to interference and changes created by man. We should understand today for a better tomorrow, Indeed it is a sorrow of another world but it is connected.

Fish for Tomorrow? showed that as the demand and consumption of fish grows in urban as well as rural areas, we continue to take it for granted that the phenomenal variety of fish that once existed will always remain.



To avoid its complete disappearance and extinction due to pollution, netting, commercialization and toxic spills, we need to check our activities and put a halt to all this destruction.

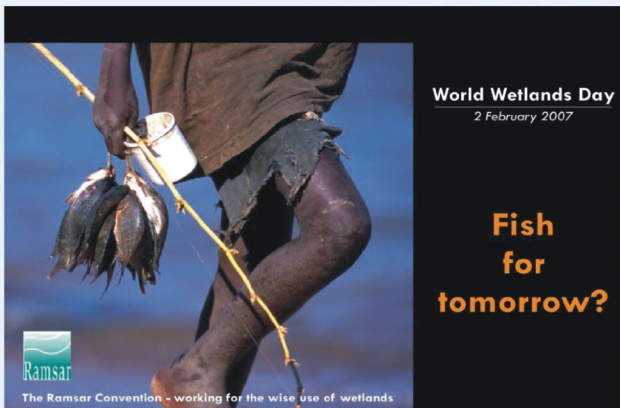


All three plays highlighted thought provoking issues related to wetlands. The competition was intended to raise awareness and increase general understanding on the relationship between wetlands and fisheries.

In keeping with the Pakistan Wetlands Programme's commitment to provide quality environmental education and scientific facts, numerous other events took place at the Club during the two-day period. These, too, highlighted the need for wetlands conservation, preservation and competent management.

Wetlands and Fisheries Documentary Show:

This documentary show included screening of various English and Urdu films highlighting a diverse range of environmental and developmental issues in general, and the importance of wetlands and associated biodiversity in particular.



The Festival screened various informative documentaries on this occasion starting from an introductory documentary on *World Wetlands Day* by CEPA, Ramsar Secretariat, *Wetlands of Pakistan*, *Miti da bawa*, *Still Water* and *Water for Life* were also shown

Wetlands and Fisheries 3-D Model Presentation:

Schools from the twin cities developed 3 D interactive models under the main theme Wetlands and Fisheries and Fish for Tomorrow? for display at the venue.

	Wetlands Themes	Class Level
1	Diversity of Fish in Pakistan	Montessori Level
2	Fish Habitat in Pakistan	Primary Level
3	Fish for Life	Secondary Level



This innovative approach to create awareness was part of the Programme's awareness raising and school outreach initiative and was successful to sensitise the junior environmental ambassadors, teachers and parents to care for and conserve these precious ecosystems (ecologically important constituent) of our environment.





The participating schools competed on the themes and winners were announced from each theme on the final day.

Wetlands and Fisheries Puppet Show:

A team of professionals from Rafi Pir Theatre workshop, Lahore, performed an informative and entertaining puppet show with song titled 'Jhilmailati Machlian' depicting the main theme i.e. 'Wetlands and Fisheries'.



The show was a big success and served as a cogent tool to spread the message and raise awareness of wetlands related issues and challenges to Pakistan in general and Pakistan Wetlands Programme in particular.



Wetlands and Fisheries Information corner:

There was an elaborate information corner at the event on both days.

The information corner had educational and promotional material including programme



brochures, educational leaflets, and other attractive items. Available free to the public were Wetlands and Fisheries booklets containing information and illustrations of 12 threatened Pakistani fish, their habitat and distribution, Wetlands and Fisheries Planner for offices, Wetlands and Fisheries Posters: A World Wetland 2007 poster and a Fisheries computer calendar.



Special Guests:

Prominent representatives from Programme Partners graced the event by distributing shields to the winners of all the competitions on the final day including:



Mr Abdul Qadir, Programme Officer, UNDP Pakistan, Dr. Bashir Ahmed Wani, Inspector General Forests, Ministry of Environment, Deputy Inspector General Forest, Ministry of Environment, and Mr. Sohail Malik, Country Head IUCN Pakistan.



The event provided a great opportunity for students, teachers, professionals and public at large to participate in a positive mix of activities i.e. education, entertainment and promotion.



In addition, it provided a platform for motivating young minds to demonstrate the wise-use of wetlands and accordingly educate their families and friends about the importance of this event.



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