



# Newsletter Wet Notes

www.pakistanwetlands.org

March - May, 2009



The quarterly newsletter of the Pakistan Wetlands Programme (PWP) is published to inform donors, scientists, academics, researchers, environmentalists and environmentally concerned individuals of all qualifications and ages about the Programme, its projects and upcoming events while giving insights and updates on research, education and habitat management activities. The PWP's objective is to conserve the globally important wetlands biodiversity in Pakistan while alleviating poverty. It is a progressive initiative of the Federal Ministry of Environment and is being implemented by the World Wide Fund for Nature, Pakistan (WWF-P). It is funded by a consortium of national and international donors including, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Embassy of Kingdom of Netherlands (EKN) and WWF Global Network.

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*"Nothing Slips By"*

Messengers of Nature

## Programme updates

### » PWP Signs MoU with PAF Base, Sakeser



To understand how best to promote the management of natural resources and eco-friendly solid waste disposal, the Pakistan Air Force Base, Sakeser took the lead to formally sign a memorandum of understanding, (MoU), with the Pakistan Wetlands Programme, (PWP). Implementation of this MoU is expected to have a positive impact on the wetlands

located in the Salt Range Wetlands Complex.

According to the MoU, PWP will facilitate the air base in:

- ◆ Preparation of a training module on natural resource management, (NRM): the base will ensure its incorporation in its curriculum of training;
- ◆ Arranging awareness raising campaign on NRM for faculty members and students of Fazaia College and Federal Government Secondary School;
- ◆ Provision of fibreglass dustbins carrying the PWP logo for the disposal of solid waste in the vicinity of the residential areas; and Provision of eco-friendly grocery bags to the adjoining communities to encourage them to discontinue the use of polythene bags.

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» **Lecture at Teachers Training Workshop, Naltar**

On May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009, a session was conducted by PWP on environmental issues and ways and means to impart environmental education in schools, during a teachers' training workshop arranged by a local teachers' association.

» **Training and Capacity Building**



To disseminate knowledge about wetlands and their management, the Training and Capacity Building section of PWP organised different courses from March to May, 2009. The purpose of these courses were to enable the participants to contribute towards the protection, restoration, and conservation of wetlands.

Training and Capacity Building

section of PWP conducted a number of trainings courses on Forest Fire Management, Pre-and Post Harvesting Techniques of Vegetables and Fruits, Introduction to Wetlands Management and Natural Resource Management. Eight training courses were conducted in the quarter in which almost 600 participants representing various departments and organisations were trained. The participants showed keen interest in the training courses and actively participated in the activities and field visits.

» **Introduction to wetlands Management**



The training course, on Introduction to Wetlands Management, was conducted in Muzaffarabad in which an activity of preparing a wetlands management plan was given to participants. Later, they were asked to identify the core

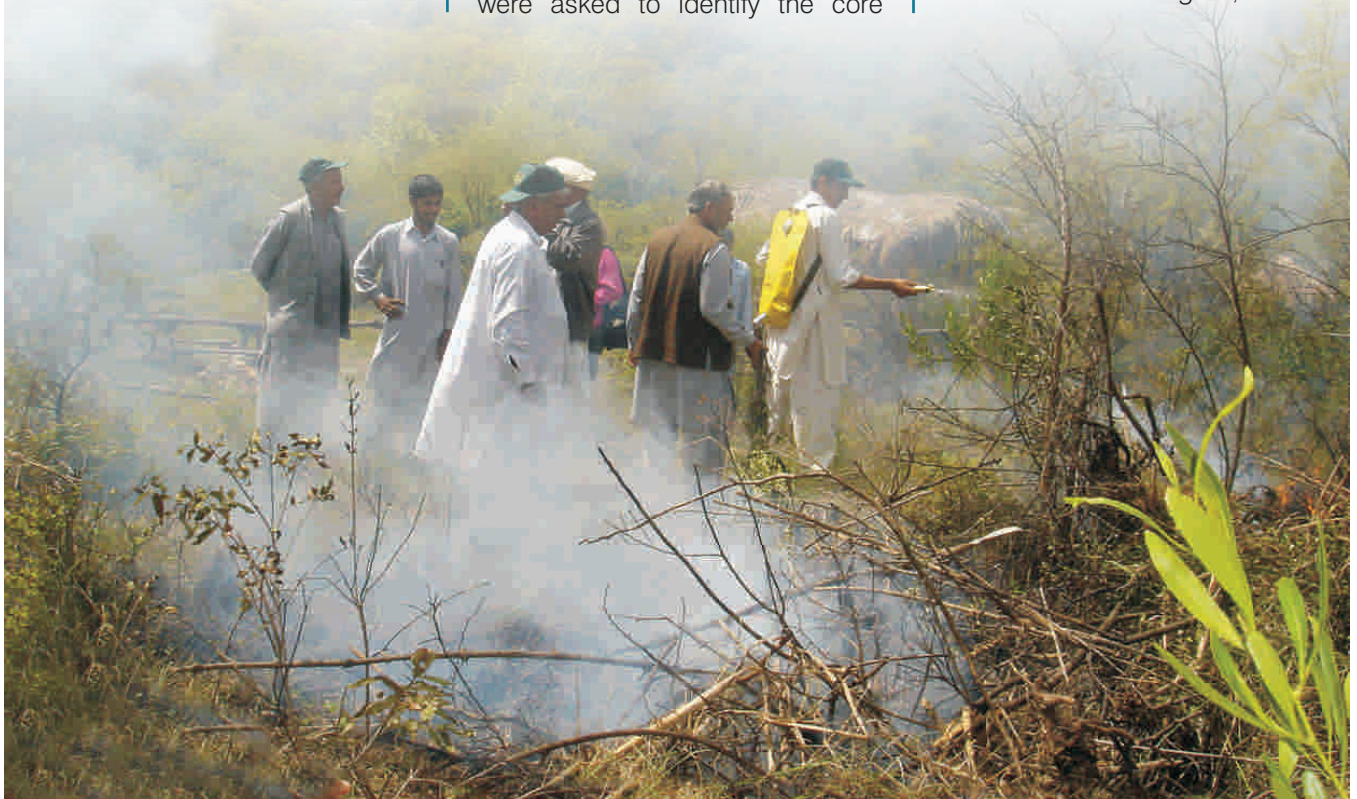
issues and explain their causes and effects. This was all done by using the participatory approach. Glimpses of the activities are:

» **Natural Resource Management for Desert Rangers**



In 1974, the Pakistan Rangers were made a component of the Civil Armed Forces (CAF), under the Ministry of the Interior. In 1995, the organisation was divided into two parts: Pakistan Rangers, Punjab with its headquarters in Lahore and Pakistan Rangers, Sindh, headquartered in Karachi. Each has a different uniform and command and control system.

Deployed along the vast and largely uninhabited stretches of the country's eastern border, Punjab Rangers play a significant role in the conservation of forests, wildlife, and wetlands. In this regard, the ban



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imposed by the rangers on illegal hunting was highly appreciated, especially the lodging of first information reports, (FIRs), against influential defaulters.

To enhance the awareness of rangers about the conservation of biodiversity, PWP organised a three day workshop on Natural Resource Management from March 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009 at the Desert Rangers Headquarters, Bahawalpur.

Seventy two officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers attended the workshop. To develop

an intimate understanding of conservation, local Wildlife, Forest and Irrigation Department officials were also invited to the workshop.

The workshop provided an excellent opportunity to the participants to understand and appreciate the work of the Pakistan Wetlands Programme, biodiversity conservation, and the factors leading to proper management of natural resources.

During the session on "Role of Rangers in the Conservation of Flora and Fauna", the presenters apprised the participants about the

complexities of deforestation, tree-logging for fuelwood, illegal hunting /poaching, and smuggling of wood, animals, and plant species. This generated a healthy discussion that culminated in creating an understanding of the various components of biodiversity and the role that they can play in keeping the environment in a state of stability. Discussions on ecotourism, water resource management, control of environmental pollution, and promotion of horticulture in areas under the jurisdiction of the Rangers, were greatly appreciated.

## International updates

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the Pakistan Wetlands Programme organised a one-day international workshop on "Sustainable Sanitation and the Significance of Constructed Wetlands". About 45 participants from the Capital Development Authority, Educational Institutions, WWF - Pakistan regional offices and national NGOs participated. Dr Roshan Raj Shreshta, Chief Technical Advisor of the Water for Asian Cities Programme, an initiative of UN-Habitat Nepal, was the resource person for the workshop. During the training session, Dr Roshan presented a series of practical lectures, highlighted by his experience with projects recently completed on sustainable sanitation and the importance, efficiency and applicability of constructed wetlands for grey water treatment.



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## Public events

### » 4<sup>th</sup> National Symposium on Fisheries

The 4<sup>th</sup> National Symposium on Fisheries was jointly organised by the Department of Fisheries, Govt. of Punjab, and the Pakistan Fisheries Society, in Lahore on March 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, 2009. More than 200 students and officials from the government and non-government organizations participated in the symposium. The aim of the symposium was to discuss the problem faced by the fisheries and come up with a set of unanimously agreed policy guidelines. Based on such guidelines, devise an implementation strategy for the fisheries sector. Issues and problems faced by the fisheries and wetlands were presented by the PWP in a manner to emphasize that all was not well with the fisheries in Pakistan. Awareness-raising material developed by PWP was also distributed among the participants.

### » International River Day



Seeking to protect the world's rivers from destructive dams and amplify the voices of dam-affected communities, a small group of volunteers formed International Rivers Network in 1985. Their vision was simple and yet remarkably ambitious: to develop a worldwide network of people working to protect rivers and promote just and sustainable water and energy development

In collaboration with PIEDAR and Shehersaaz, the PWP celebrated International River Day on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at Soan River. About 50 students from government schools participated in various activities, including plays, poetry, speeches

and posters competitions. A presentation was given by a PWP representative on 'Wetland Degradation and Mitigation Measures at the Individual Level'. PIEDAR highlighted the 'Importance of Rivers' in their presentation. The main objective of the event was to raise awareness about the significance of water and its associated biodiversity among the students. Towards the end of the event, prizes were distributed by the representatives of sponsoring organisations, among the competing students.

### » World Water Day

The international observance of World Water Day is an initiative that grew out of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Riode Janeiro.

The PWP arranged a joint quiz competition on "Wetlands and Biodiversity Conservation" on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 at Ishkoman village (Distt. Ghizer, Northern Areas) in collaboration with WWF-P Gilgit. About 180 participants, including students, teachers, and community members, participated. Chief Guest of the event was Head Master, FG High School for Boys, Ishkoman.

### » International Symposium on Climate Change



The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was intended to consider how to reduce global warming and to cope with temperature increases. Climate change is already happening and represents one of the greatest environmental, social and economic threats facing the planet.

The Pakistan Wetlands Programme

(PWP) sponsored and organised an International Symposium on Climate Change on March 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and held at Shah Abdul Latif University, Khairpur. Purpose of the Symposium was to hold discussions on the adaptability of biodiversity in response to climate change. Ahmed Khan of PWP presented a strategy on how to combat the adverse impacts of climate change, especially its impacts on the river Indus.

The Symposium was presided over by Mr. Mohammad Ayaz Soomro, Law Minister, Government of Sindh and attended by environmentalists, biodiversity conservationists, distinguished scientists from all over Pakistan and students (about 150).

Papers were presented by researchers, scientists and academia on different aspects of climate change and their impact on our environment. All the papers were so developed as to inculcate interest and create awareness in the participants to effectively combat the adverse impacts of climate change. On third day, a trip was arranged to Nara Desert and Pir Mehdi's Private Game Reserve for the better understanding the implications of environment and the adverse impacts of climate change on our biodiversity.

### » Wetlands Nature Carnival-Islamabad



WWF - Pakistan and PWP jointly organised a Wetlands Nature Carnival on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at Fatima Jinnah Park, Islamabad. The event was sponsored by NIDO, Nestlé - Pakistan to help raise awareness about the significance of nature conservation. The event was essentially for the benefit of the students. Coming from 20 government and private schools, students from Nowshera, Kharian,

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Jhelum, Rawalpindi, and Islamabad, participated in different competitions. They were especially invited to develop 3-dimensional models on the five pre-defined themes: (i) freshwater turtles; (ii) hazards of polythene bags; (iii) national parks of Pakistan; (iv) dengue virus; and (v) climate change.



More than 600 persons from various walks of life also visited the Carnival. Other activities like fun fair, lucky draw, puppet show, environmental quiz, and ballot and musical performance by a local band were also part of the event. For better understanding of wetlands and their role in the conservation of biodiversity, awareness-raising material was distributed among the participants.

Exhibits prepared by the students were evaluated by a panel of judges. Students who developed the best exhibits were awarded prizes by the chief guest, Mr. Hamid Ullah Jan Afridi, Federal Minister for Environment.

» **Spellathon-2009**

A spelling test of environmental terms and issues, Spellathon was developed for children of English medium schools. The main aim of the test is to increase children's awareness regarding environmental issues.

WWF-Pakistan's Spellathon for the year 2009 was sponsored by PWP. It's an educational-cum-fundraising activity designed in such a way that every age group within a school is provided with suitable information according to his/her capacity. A set of nine booklets (Levels 1-9) on diverse topics like climate change, water, Indus dolphin, and wetlands were distributed among the 10,000 students (of thirty four private schools) two weeks before the scheduled date for the spelling test.

Gift sets with the PWP logo were developed for the students and teachers that included a car sticker, a keychain, a poster, and a mini calendar. Animal Pattern Book containing 22 pages, a set of 10 stencils of wildlife species with brief description were also provided to the competing students. Gift packs were sent to schools within two weeks of receiving the results. As always, Spellathon was a great success in conveying the message of wetlands conservation to students belonging to different age groups.

» **Earth Day**

Earth Day celebrates its 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2009. What began in 1970 as a protest movement has evolved into a global celebration of the environment and commitment to its protection. The history of Earth Day mirrors the growth of environmental awareness over the last three decades, and the legacy of Earth Day is that the environment is a universal concern.



The PWP celebrated International Earth Day on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at Rawal Lake Park, Islamabad. The theme for this year was "Green Generation", highlighting the role ordinary people in general and the new generation, in particular, can play in nature conservation. This could be done through a variety of approaches: by engaging in individual and collective activities to find solutions to the most pressing issues faced by the mother Earth, nationally and globally. The event was a joint venture between WWF - Pakistan and Levis Strauss Pakistan. More than 500 students from local schools, colleges and universities took part in the celebrations.

The participants were divided into different groups for lake-cleaning; by collecting garbage and litter from the surrounding area.

For better understanding of wetlands and their associated biodiversity, awareness-raising material was distributed among the students, teachers, and other visitors. Environmental issues regarding water pollution were also part of the celebrations. At the end, prizes were distributed by the chief guest among the winning students who collected the most garbage.

» **Spring Gala at Uchali Lake**

The Pakistan Wetlands Programme organized a Spring Gala on April 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> for the faculty and children of Fazaia Inter College and Federal Government Secondary School located near Uchchali Lake. About 35 faculty members and 425 students - both boys and girls - participated in the Gala.

Faculty members and children greatly enjoyed the event. Their interest in the event was obvious from the number of pointed questions that the students raised during the Gala and the keen interest that they took in the exhibits. Besides presentations and briefings for the participants, art, drawing and photography competitions were also held. Speeches and quiz competitions about environment, especially wetlands were held. The participants also took part enthusiastically in trash collection and its proper disposal. Towards the end, the visitors were taken on a walk to identify local flora and fauna in the vicinity of the Lake.

» **Firefighters' Day**



International Firefighters' Day is a time where the world's community can recognize and honor the sacrifices that firefighters render to ensure the safety of the communities and environment. It is also a day

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when current and past firefighters can be thanked for their contributions.

To be a part of the celebrations at the world level, the Network for Human and Social Development organized an event for the International Fire Fighters' Day on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at the Convention Centre, Islamabad. Six hundred officials from NGOs, development and education sectors, disaster rescue network and civil servants participated in the event. Activities included a seminar on fire management, information material exhibitions, and presentations regarding fire fighting and rescue operations. A physical demonstration of fire and rescue management (first aid!) was carried out by the Emergency and Disaster Management (EDM) cell of the Capital Development Authority. The PWP team shared their experiences of capacity building initiatives on fire management and disseminated promotional material among the participants.

» **World Migratory Birds Day and First Paragliding and Solid Waste Management-Uchali**



World Migratory Birds Day is a global initiative devoted to promoting migratory birds and their conservation, worldwide.

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 two major events were celebrated by PWP:

The Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab (TDCP) organized the 1<sup>st</sup> Paragliding Festival and Solid Waste Management in collaboration with PWP and Pakistan Association of Free Flying (PAFF) at Uchchali Lake. Personnel of the Pakistan Air Force and representatives of NGOs, corporate

sector, media men, students and teachers, and local community members participated in the event. The second event was the World Migratory Birds Day held at all the regional complexes of PWP. The theme for this year was "Reduce Barriers to Migration".

Lastly, a solid waste management activity was carried out. For this purpose, a team of selected volunteers from the local school was constituted to collect solid waste generated during the event. The volunteers were given a brief on their areas of responsibility at the camp, collection of garbage, and general conduct. The PWP team and the volunteers wore jackets with the caption "Wetlands Warriors" and collected all the garbage. All the waste was separated according to waste type and disposed off at a selected site at Fazaia Inter College. The event was covered by the local and regional media men, newspapers, and radio and TV channels.

The team of Pakistan Wetlands Programme distributed information material, and displayed banners, leaflets, and posters. The leaflets highlighted the threats to Uchchali Lake and its biodiversity. Certificates and shields were distributed among the volunteers, the media and the participating organisations.

» **International Day for Biodiversity**

To increase the understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues, the UN proclaimed May 22<sup>nd</sup> as the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB).

A presentation and drawing competition was arranged at Sadpara Valley (District Skardu,

Northern Areas) on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009. 80 participants, including forest officials, community members attended the event. Chief Guest of the event was Director Education Baltistan Region, Raja Mohammad Nasir.

» **Environment Carnival at Forman Christian College University-Lahore**



A "Geography and Environment Carnival" was held at Forman Christian College University, Lahore, on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Federal Minister for Environment, Mr. Hameed Ullah Jan Afridi, inaugurated the carnival which had been organised by the Department of Geography. Organisations as diverse as Tourism Development Corporation, Punjab, Total Technologies, Multiline Books, Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation, WWF - Pakistan and PWP were the major sponsors of the event. Three dimensional models on environmental issues were developed by the participants. Participants and students of FCCU were distributed awareness material Wet Notes, brochures, posters, developed by PWP to know the significance of wetlands, the biodiversity that they support and its intricatelinkageto theenvironment. Participation certificates were given by the Head of the Geography Department to all the participating organisations.



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## Intern Corner

Just a few months into my internship, I have worked on birds' (both endemic and migratory) conservation data management besides participating in awareness-raising activities of PWP. I have also had the opportunity of writing parts of reports about the surveys conducted for the conservation of Ramsar Sites in Pakistan.

As a biologist, the work assigned to me was of my field and interest but it was my exposure to awareness-raising that fascinated me most. I even got an invitation to participate in National Tree Plantation Day. It was an entirely new and exciting experience for me: I not only enjoyed myself but learnt how to perform in such events and under such stressful conditions. Thanks, Awareness Raising Department!

After spending some time at PWP, I have been able to find out what conservation actually stands for. Besides that I have found all of my colleagues and guides to be very active, cooperative, supportive, and greatly enthused by their jobs. None of them were ever hesitant to discuss anything with me that had relevance with PWP or to my field of interest. Such fruitful discussions encouraged me immensely and tremendously enhanced my knowledge about the conservation of nature. For that, I will always be grateful.

Living and working under such an ideal environment, I hope that now I am sufficiently sensitized to contribute my efforts towards the conservation of Pakistan's wetlands.

Asia Saddozai

### » A Visit to Germany

An international workshop on "Otters and Environmental Impact Assessment" was organised by the ALKA Wildlife and the University of Cottbus, Germany in association with the IUCN SSC Otter Specialist Group on May 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>, 2009 in Cottbus, Germany.

The main aim of this workshop was to produce a series of standards that are considered necessary to determine the impacts of development on otter populations and the success of mitigation measures deriving from these results. These guidelines have become the official Otter Specialist Group Guidelines, and are distributed among the relevant authorities and project planner in all EU member states and other countries.

Speakers at the workshop shared their experiences of environmental

impact assessments of otters in a number of varied projects in different otter habitats. Masood Arshad and Uzma Noureen participated in the workshop from the Pakistan Wetlands Programme (PWP). Masood Arshad, in his presentation, explained impacts of development on otter population and habitats in Pakistan.

The Pakistan Wetlands Programme is willing to host an international training initiative on otters in the year 2010 to share international expertise for the survival of otters in the region. In addition to preparing an awareness poster on river otters of Pakistan, PWP will also conduct comprehensive population surveys to assess the population status and distribution patterns of the Indian smooth-coated otter (*Lutrogale perspicillata*) and Eurasian otter (*Lutra lutra*), the only two species found in the country.



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**Other news**

» **Keti Bander Community Festival**

The Programme Implementation Unit of the Indus for All Programme at Keti Bander organised a local festival on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2009, to spread the message of conservation through folk music, tableaux and interactive theatre. The chief guest of evening was Ms. Humera Alwani, Member Sindh Assembly. She applauded the efforts of WWF - Pakistan in saving the biodiversity of the Indus Delta and acknowledged local community support for the Programme's interventions at Keti Bander. Approximately 1,500 community members, both men and women, from numerous villages of Keti Bander took part in the event.

Muhammad Zafar Khan  
Manager, Communications and Environmental Education  
Indus for All Programme,  
WWF – Pakistan

» **Memorandum of Understanding signed by WWF - Pakistan and Beaconhouse School System**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup> 2009 between WWF - Pakistan and the Beaconhouse School System. Ali Hassan Habib, Director General WWF – Pakistan, and the Chief Executive of Beaconhouse School System, Kasim Kasuri launched "A Social Awareness Internship Programme" for the students of Beaconhouse. This is a country wide programme intended to provide an opportunity for the students to intern with WWF - Pakistan and understand the



importance and need for protection of natural resources. Recognising the need for awareness and conservation, both institutions have launched this programme in an attempt to sensitize student regarding nature conservation and their responsibilities towards a cleaner and greener Pakistan. During the course of this internship programme, the students will be engaged in environment and nature conservation related activities in order to provide the students with hands-on experience as well as an overview of the current condition

and needs of the country and society. By initiating such programmes, WWF - Pakistan and Beaconhouse School System are laying foundations to boost nature conservation awareness in Pakistan.

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**Central Indus Wetlands Complex**  
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Faiz Ul Uloom, Bandar Road, Sukkur.  
Tel: 071-5630687

**Makran Coastal Wetlands Complex**  
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**Northern Alpine Wetlands Complex**  
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