

World Water Day 2011: A thriving Campaign held on March 22nd



Khabeiki Lake--The purpose of World Water Day 2011 is to draw global attention on the effects of rapid urban population growth, industrialization and suspensions caused by climate change, conflicts and natural disasters on water systems.

The theme for 'World Water Day 2011' was "*Water for cities: responding to the urban challenge*" which aimed to emphasise and encourage government, organizations, communities, and individuals to keenly engage in addressing the challenge of water management and conservation.

The campaign was organized by Pakistan Wetlands Programme. The Pakistan Wetlands Programme (PWP) is an initiative of the Federal Ministry of Environment and is being implemented by the World Wide Fund for Nature, Pakistan (WWF). The PWP's objective is to conserve the globally significant wetlands biodiversity in Pakistan while alleviating poverty. It is funded by a consortium of national and international donors including, but not limited to, the Global Environment Facility of the United Nations Development Programme, the Embassy of Kingdom of Netherlands, and WWF Network.



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The Pakistan Wetlands Programme deeply appreciates the cooperation and support of local government agencies, communities, schools and media in helping it to transmit the message of environmental conservation in general, and water conservation in particular, on March 22nd, World Water Day.



According to the theme “*Water for cities: responding to the urban challenge*” for World Water Day 2011, the campaign was framed to:

- 1) Raise the awareness of wetlands communities regarding water related issues;
- 2) Empower people to become active agents of sustainable and equitable water management and conservation;
- 3) Promote an understanding that communities can play a vital role by changing attitudes towards water issues; and
- 4) Advocate partnership which would ensure all stakeholders to have the benefits of a safe and clean drinking water with prosperous future.

The event took place on Khabeiki Lake, in which local students, communities, teachers and line departments staff participated. In order to address the above mentioned water issues; following communication tools were used in “World Water Day 2011 Campaign” “Awareness raising and educational material, Posters and brochures in English and Urdu disseminated, Banners Campaign for general public, Involving the local schools and media and Advocacy Walk “*World Walks for Water*” was conducted.

Advocacy walk was arranged in where students gripped posters and banners which not only created environmental awareness among wetlands communities but also imparted knowledge about water related concerns.

Ghulam Ayesha, a student of 7th class from Govt High School, Khabeiki expressed her views as “Our Prophet advises to use the water but not to waste it, and people who listens to our prophet’s advice, they are sheltered from hardships. We should always take care of water and trees”.

Students and teachers were also educated about causes and consequences of “Solid waste management” on Khabeiki Lake. The students seemed very enthusiastic and also helped out by removing trash and waste from the lake shores.



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A teacher from Govt High School, Khabeiki said "These activities are very important and we are thankful to "Pakistan Wetlands Programme" for arranging these kinds of programmes which are very useful for raising awareness and also leaves a positive impact on students."



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A social worker M. Shafi stated “I am working in my community to save wetlands, which our religion also teaches us, and to fulfil this goal, education is very important especially for girls”

Also, a student of 6th class, M. Qasim said “We should keep our environment clean, plant more trees, and avoid the wastage of water.”



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At the end of the campaign, the tour of Khabeiki Wetlands Information Centre was organised along with Pakistan Wetlands Programme's team.



Pakistan Wetlands Programme intends to work in partnership with organisations to hold advocacy campaigns to heighten awareness among masses about the significance of water and wetlands, and the natural resources of the country. Through this we would work into a larger perspective regarding the environmental state of Pakistan and the world.



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The Pakistan Wetlands Programme would be happy to provide all technical assistance in this regard. We are hoping that this would be the continuous commitment of the PWP in its mass media and communities outreach programme under the National Awareness Raising and Communication Component of the Pakistan Wetlands Programme.

You may visit our website www.pakistanwetlands.org for further information about our Programme and the Wetlands of Pakistan.

Nasir Iqbal Malik

nimalik@wwf.org.pk

Coordinator, Awareness Raising and Communication

The Ministry of Environment's Pakistan Wetlands Programme WWF.

House No. 62, St. No. 25, Sector F-10/1, Islamabad, Pakistan

Tel. +92 (051) 211 4125-29

Fax. +92 (051) 211 4130

Cell. +92 (0301) 553 6468

