



ECOSF NEWSLETTER



Corona Virus - COVID 19: Situation in Numbers in the ECO Member Countries

Country	Total confirmed cases due to COVID-19	Total confirmed deaths due to COVID-19
Afghanistan	55,714	2,443
Azerbaijan	234,537	3,220
Iran	1,630,000	60,073
Kazakhstan	262,715	3,162
Kyrgyzstan	86,251	1,466
Pakistan	581,365	12,896
Tajikistan	13,308	90
Turkey	2,700,000	28,569
Turkmenistan	-	-
Uzbekistan	79,926	622
ECO region Total	3,723,565	112,541

Date Stamp: February 28, 2021

Source: <https://ourworldindata.org> **Note:** So far, no case has been reported in Turkmenistan.

2nd Islamabad Science Festival held, ECOSF joined as Partner

The 2nd Islamabad Science Festival was jointly organized by Campaignistan, ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) and Local Administration of Islamabad with the support of other national and international organizations on 13 February 2021 at Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA). First such event took place in 2019 in Islamabad with the collaboration of ECOSF, Campaignistan and the District Administration of Islamabad.

The event was inaugurated jointly by the Deputy Commissioner of Islamabad Mr. Hamza Shafqaat, President ECOSF Prof. Manzoor H. Soomro and the CEO of Campaignistan Mr. Farhad Jarral. The theme of festival was COVID-19 and students demonstrated their innovative solutions and exhibits with regards to the pandemic. Over 50 government schools from across Islamabad participated in the festival and displayed their projects. A large number of students, teachers and public at large visited the Science Fair.





The purpose of the festival was to provide a platform for the students, especially from government schools to showcase their creative ideas and projects through dynamic scientific models/exhibits. It was encouraging to witness that a significant number of girls participated in the Festival. The objective of holding this Festival was to fuel the public interest in science and technology and aware them of the boundless benefits of science for society. Besides, the festival provided an opportunity to young students to show their incredible talent and demonstrate their science projects and innovations.

During the festival, Mr. Rohan Khatwani a 9th Grade student from Tharparkar area of Sindh province also attempted to break the world record for the fastest arrangement of the periodic table. The existing record is 2 min 42 seconds and Rohan finished the task in 1 min 58 seconds. The demonstration was witnessed by Deputy Commissioner Islamabad and President ECOSF.



The event culminated with the closing ceremony and prize distribution by the honorable Chief Guests H.E. Mr. Shehram Khan Taraqai (Minister of Education, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province) and Mr. Rana Waqas (Additional Deputy Commissioner of Islamabad Capital Territory).

The winners of the festival were awarded prizes and certificates as under:

- 1st prize: Islamabad Model College for Girls (IMCG), F-10/2
- 2nd prize: Islamabad Model College for Girls (IMCG), I-8/1
- 3rd prize: Islamabad Model College for Boys (IMCB) Rawal Dam



It is well recognized that such events motivate youth and generate critical thinking amongst young students to pursue their career in STEM fields. Besides, such healthy activities create conducive atmosphere, which is essentially needed amidst the pandemic.

ECOSF in collaboration with PNCA and ICF co-organized the Pakistan Mother Languages Literature Festival-2021

ECO Science Foundation and Indus Cultural Forum (ICF) in Collaboration with Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) organized the 6th annual Pakistan Mother Languages Literature Festival 2021 (MLLF-2021) on February 21, 2021 to celebrate the linguistic and cultural diversity of Pakistan. A large number of intellectuals, poets, scholars, artists and general public participated in the festival. The objective of this festival was to commemorate the International Mother Languages Day 2021 and to provide a platform to intellectuals, writers and thinkers representing different languages to come together and present their work on various genres of art, literature, culture, science and education in mother languages of Pakistan. Eleven scholars were awarded lifetime achievement awards for their lifelong services for promoting languages and literature of Pakistan.



During the Opening Ceremony of the festival, Dr. Fouzia Saeed DG PNCA stressed that Pakistan has a rich cultural tradition and linguistic diversity of over 70 local languages. Dr. Saeed underscored the need for local communities to take an action to preserve their cultural tradition and saving these languages from extinction.



Later, Indus Cultural Forum chairperson Munawar Hassan highlighted the significance of this festival to pay tributes to living legends who had dedicated their lives to the promotion and protection of Pakistan's mother languages.

Secretary Department of Culture, Tourism and Antiquities, Government of Sindh, Mr. Akbar Laghari affirmed that Government of Sindh continues to cooperate with other provinces and federal institutions to promote cultural integration.

Country Director of Friedrich Nauman Foundation (FNF), Ms. Birgit Lamm in her remarks recognized the scholarly work by local artists and intellectuals to promote Pakistan's linguistic and cultural diversity by fostering critical thinking and learning through effective use of creative expression in mother languages.

Engr. Khalil Raza Scientific Officer ECOSF in his remarks highlighted scientific interventions to COVID-19. Mr. Raza underlined that it was due to remarkable potential of science and technology with which this pandemic has been brought under control. He called for the need of adequate investment in science and technology to strengthen national science capacities for effective response to global crisis such as this pandemic. Mr. Raza shared a number of scientific interventions by Pakistani institutions in fighting this pandemic. He further emphasized that humanity has to respect boundaries of nature by maintaining the biodiversity and environmental ecosystem to prevent any future pandemics.



Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro, President ECOSF contributed as a panelist in one of the sessions on Language and Science & Technology. During this session Prof. Soomro was joined by Mr. Tauseeq Haider as a moderator and Mr. Amar Fayaz, Technology Expert from Sindh as a panelist. Prof. Soomro emphasized that a mother language is crucial for a child as a medium of education, particularly in science education. Because at the time when children develop their mother tongue, there is a simultaneous development of many other essential skills such as critical thinking and literacy skills, he added. Prof. Soomro said that mother language actually builds up a child's social, personal and cultural identity, therefore, the role of mother language for any child is extremely vital at an early stage.



COVID 19 in the ECO Region: impact, status of health care and ICT infrastructure, and response by the Member States

ECOSF contributed to the Asian Research Policy (ARP) journal 2020 with an insightful article entitled ***“COVID 19 in the ECO Region: impact, status of health care and ICT infrastructure, and response by the Member States”***

The article highlights as to how the Member Countries have responded to the outbreak of this pandemic. It also reveals how COVID-19 has exposed the fragile limits of healthcare facilities and infrastructures around the world. The report also highlights as to how the COVID-19 outbreak may create significant additional pressure on an already overburdened health system in the Member Countries. The complete 2020 edition of ARP journal and the ECOSF's contribution can be downloaded from the following links:

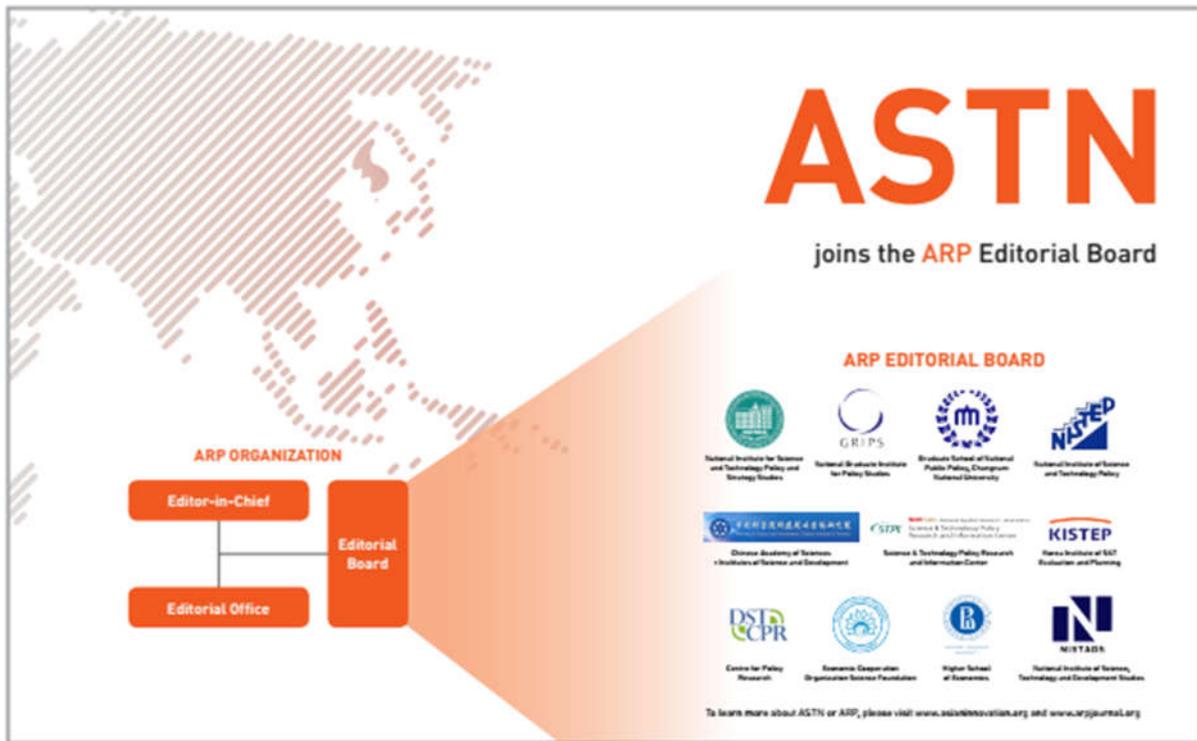
- Complete 2020 edition of ARP Journal: <http://ecosf.org/arp.pdf>
- ECOSF's Article: <http://ecosf.org/arp-article.pdf>

The Foundation therefore considers it as the high time that ECO Member Countries make strong commitment to invest significantly more resources in Science, Technology and Innovation, particularly in health and science education, so that they are adequately prepared to prevent unforeseen daunting challenges of the future.

ECOSF is delighted to report that Foundation joined as the Member Institute of the ARP editorial board in 2020, which is hosted by Korea Institute of S&T Evaluation and Planning (KISTEP). The Foundation encourages STI experts in ECO member Countries to write and share with us their articles for publication in ARP journal. It is pertinent to mention that prior to joining this editorial board, ECOSF had joined as a founder member of Asian STI Think Tanks Network (ASTN) that was launched during the 1st Asian Innovation Forum in 2015. Right from the very beginning, ECOSF has been actively participating in the joint initiatives and activities by the ASTN.

ECOSF has also co-organized a couple of sessions on critical themes of Green Innovation and Sustainable Development during the Asian Innovation Forums. Through these collaborative efforts and initiatives, the Foundation brought together experts,

scientists and governments to create a shared understanding of the role of governments, academia and business to promote green innovation and productive growth in Asia to achieve a sustainable future. The Foundation remains keen to assist any Member State in the matter.



ECOSF participated in the UNESCO lecture Series on Climate Neutrality, the Circular Economy, and Earth Materials

UNESCO Lecture Series: Earth Materials for a Sustainable and Thriving Society — Organised in collaboration with IUGS and iCRAG

Climate Neutrality, the Circular Economy, and Earth Materials

2 February 2021
 07.00 (Vancouver) * 10.00 (Toronto, Lima) * 15.00 (London) * 16.00 (Paris, Lagos) * 17.00 (Johannesburg) * 18.00 (Nairobi) * 20.30 (Mumbai) * 21.00 (Dhaka) * 23.00 (Beijing) * 00.00+1 (Tokyo) * 02.00+1 (Sydney)

Reimagining metal supply to meet demand and societal expectations.

Prof. John Thompson, PetraScience Consultants, Vancouver, Canada and Honorary Professor of Sustainable Resources, University of Bristol, UK, and Prof. Frances Wall, Professor of Applied Mineralogy, University of Exeter, UK.

<https://bit.ly/UNESCOlectures>

A live question and answer session will follow the lecture presentation.

All sessions will be conducted in English with live captioning in French, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Swahili, and Hindi.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization | International Decade Programme

Images (clockwise from top left): ©Shutterstock/BohdanHavranek; ©Shutterstock/Takidul; David; ©Shutterstock/pt; ©Shutterstock/yusufkhalid

UNESCO launched a series of lectures to highlight the importance of earth materials in the world. The 2nd lecture on Climate Neutrality, The Circular Economy, and Earth Materials was held virtually on 2 Feb 2021. It was attended by large number of earth scientists, researchers, academia and the students. On behalf of ECOSF, President ECOSF Prof. Manzoor H. Soomro, also participated in the Lecture.

It important to highlight that Minerals and other Earth materials are a key component in the development of a sustainable global society, providing essential raw materials for technologies and economic growth while respecting the natural world. The objective of holding this lecture was to provide diverse perspectives on Earth materials and their role in society for a global audience.

Prof. John Thompson, PetraScience Consultants, Vancouver, Canada and Honorary Professor of Sustainable Resources, University of Bristol, UK, and Prof. Frances Wall, Professor of Applied Mineralogy, University of Exeter, UK - the leading natural scientists delivered their key insights on reimagining metal supply to meet demand and societal expectations

The discussion during the lecture centered around as to how Earth materials could be critical to a sustainable future and how the minerals sector. The lecture also suggested best practices in the mining sector to contribute to society in a socially and environmentally positive way.

Development of Agricultural Export in Uzbekistan

Courtesy of Eurasian Research Institute (ERI)

Nowadays, it is widely accepted that agriculture and food industry have a strategic importance for every country. The agricultural sector is of great importance because it provides millions of jobs and billions of dollars in income for many countries. In countries with agrarian economy, agriculture constitutes a significant part of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as one of the main sources of economic growth. The agricultural sector, which consists of two main branches: crop and livestock, is the oldest sector of the world economy and an ever-growing sector in terms of economic performance. However, the agricultural sector has a number of problems that need to be addressed both at the state and small entrepreneurship level. Although the current industrial development of agriculture is significantly different from previous periods, the sustainability and increasing productivity of agriculture and ensuring food and livelihood security continue to be important for every country.

As it is known, the economic structure of Uzbekistan is mainly agriculture, and the agricultural sector creates the most jobs in the country. In this regard, agriculture continues to be one of the most important export income sources of the country. In recent years, the agricultural sector, which experienced rapid changes due to many reforms initiated during the presidency of Uzbekistan's President, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, has been on the agenda frequently. According to the forecasts of international financial institutions, in the next 10 years, Uzbekistan will become one of the fastest growing countries in the world.

Having a young workforce and being rich natural resources, Uzbekistan's GDP has attracted attention with its growth rates ranging between 5% and 8% in the last 10 years. Only 10% of Uzbekistan's land is suitable for agriculture, 46% of it consisting of plateaus and steppes, 41% of deserts and similar lands, and 3% of forests and wood-lands. Approximately 95% of the arable land can be irrigated. With this feature, Uzbekistan is the most productive country for irrigated agriculture among the Central Asian states. The fact that the country has a successful agrarian sector, despite the climatic conditions of the country not being suitable for the development of the agricultural sector, has made Uzbekistan an important agricultural country in the region for a long time. Especially during the Soviet Union period, the agricultural sector was the main center of the Uzbekistan's economy for many years. Therefore, Uzbekistan's post-independence economic policies have significantly focused on the agricultural industry.

While the Tashkent administration is dealing with the difficulties of its one-sided economic structure, which is mainly agricultural, it also seeks to develop the export of industrial products by creating new production areas. For this reason, efforts for economic transformation and improvement were implemented gradually, taking into account the basic economic structure of the country. However, all this has been carried out in an extremely difficult, unstable economic environment. First of all, it should be noted that the fruits of the reforms aimed at ensuring financial and macroeconomic stability in the country are felt in Uzbekistan's gradually improving macroeconomic climate.

Read more: <https://eurasian-research.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Weekly-e-bulletin-04.01.2021-10.01.2021-No-288.pdf>

Upcoming Events posted on ECOSF website and Facebook page

Launch of "FIZZIQ" - a free application to have a lab in your phone

The launch of new product "FIZZIQ" by French Foundation La main à la pate. It is a free application which turns any smartphone or tablet into a portable laboratory for scientific experimentation at school or at home.

This free tool offers a wide range of experimental functionalities, particularly in physics, but also in other scientific disciplines. It is a complement, and sometimes an alternative, to in lab experimentation for middle and high school students. Fizziq can be used in the classroom, in the field or at home. The application has been successfully used in locked down situations in France and Lebanon. It is available in 6 languages and is completely free.

To help teachers or trainers to get started with the application, they may join our digital introduction seminar.

They can choose one of the following slots depending on the time zone:

- Tuesday March 16 at 9 a.m. (Paris time)
- Tuesday March 16 at 6:00 p.m. (Paris time)

Read More: <http://ecosf.org/FIZZIQ>

2nd International virtual congress on Medicinal Leech and Its Applications

ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) in collaboration University of Tehran in collaboration is organizing the 2nd International virtual congress on Medicinal Leech and Its Applications, from 3rd to 4th March 2021. The objective of this virtual congress is to provide a platform for the students, researchers, industry, physicians and policy makers who hold keen interest in a wide range of subjects related to medicinal leeches and its applications. The topics of congress would include hirudotherapy, hirudiculture, pharmaceutical products, stock assessment and conservation, entrepreneurship, market and export challenges, biotechnology, veterinary hirudotherapy, leech biology, genetics and leech diseases.

Read more: <http://ecosf.org/Medicinal-Leech-and-Its-Applications>

Distinguished Visitors to ECOSF

Feb. 16, 2021: Prof. Dr. G. Raza Bhatti Vice Chancellor of Shaikh Ayaz University Shikarpur (center) and Mr. Rafique Ahmed, former Senior Officer of Planning Commission of Pakistan (right) making a courtesy call upon the President ECOSF at his office.



Feb. 15, 2021: Mr. Rohan Kumar, a student from Thar-Sindh, who broke the world record informally, called on President ECOSF (center) along with CEO of "Thar Education Alliance" Mr. Partab (right) at ECOSF. President ECOSF congratulated Mr. Kumar & wished him to break the record formally.

