



# ECOSF NEWSLETTER



## Pujiang Innovation Forum 2021 held at Shanghai, China- President ECOSF was among the Key Note Speakers

Annual Pujiang Innovation Forum – 2021 was organized in hybrid mode from 31 May – 4 June 2021. Theme of the event was "Innovation for A Better Life for Mankind". A sub-forum entitled; Belt and Road Initiative Innovation Cooperation on Green Development, Health Innovation and Digital Development Issues was organized by the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Technology for Development (CASTED) in collaboration with the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China, and the Science and Technology Commission of Shanghai, at Shanghai, China.



The Pujiang Innovation Forum, in Shanghai, is the largest and the most important gathering of its kind in the world, this year it was held for the 14th time. Every year, the Forum brings together hundreds of important participants from politics, academia, industry and the media. Last year, in 2020, Serbia was the country/guest of honor.

Renowned experts from the World attended the Forum and delivered the speeches and presentations, covering the latest technologies and hot topics. For example, Mohammed Al-Hashmi, Chief Technology Officer of the Dubai World Expo said that the 2021 Pujiang Innovation Forum was an important symbol of a new level of cooperation between China and the United Arab Emirates in technological innovation and has led to many opportunities for cooperation and innovation. Branislav Djordjevic, Director of the Serbian Institute of International Political Economy, pointed out that Serbia and China's cooperation in science and technology innovation is of a high level. Tang Zhimin, Director of the China-ASEAN Studies Center of the Thai Chia University School of Management, believed that under the "One Belt One Road" initiative, Thailand and China can focus on the theme of science and technology poverty alleviation and make full use of digital and green technologies to carry out more innovative cooperation to help the two countries to achieve the inclusive development.

The BRI Sub-Forum was presided over by Mr. Liu Dongmei, Vice President of CASTED. Mr. Ruan Xiangping, the first-level Inspector of the International Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Science and Technology delivered the opening speech whereas, Xie Wenlan, Deputy Director of the Shanghai Municipal Science and Technology Commission, and China Science and Technology for Development Strategy Research Dean Hu Zhijian also spoke in the BRI Sub-Forum. The Forum invited experts of technology innovation think tanks from countries along the “Belt and Road” such as Dubai (UAE), Pakistan, Serbia, Thailand, the World Bank representative office in China, and well-known domestic think tanks such as Fudan University, Shanghai Academy of Sciences, Renmin University of China, Chongqing University of Posts and Telecommunications, etc. Experts delivered keynote speeches to jointly explore ways and plans to strengthen technological innovation cooperation in the fields of health, digital, and green development, and deepen the development of the B&R Innovation Road.

The Experts generally believed that it was necessary to further deepen cooperation in the field of digital technologies among countries and regions along the “Belt and Road”. The Experts also agreed that green development and low-carbon development are major opportunities for technological innovation cooperation between countries and regions along the "Belt and Road" in the new era. The countries and regions along the route have continued to invest in technological innovation, green technologies and sustainable technological development. In terms of green technology development, every country has the same starting line, and China can become a global leader by helping cooperating countries.



As an invited keynote speaker, Prof. Manzoor H. Soomro, President ECOSF made an online presentation; “Catalyzing Emerging Technologies for Sustainable Development in the Belt & Road Region”. He said that the Belt and Road Initiative provides great opportunity for countries along the route to open a new era of trade, economic and industrial growth, and will help China and developing countries in achieving a win-win scenario. In order to maximize the benefits of BRI, the participating countries require developing adequate technological workforce and engaging in an alliance for promotion of cross-border cooperation in the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) sectors, said Prof. Soomro. He further said that BRI can lead to Global Peace and Harmony by

nurturing cooperation and collaboration; though the competitors can pose a threat as well and the BRI has to prepare for that as well.

The week-long Innovation Forum provided excellent opportunities to the participants who presented their innovative ideas & techniques and discussed the ways to develop collaboration in cutting edge technologies.

### Secretary to Ministry of Science and Technology of Pakistan paid a visit to ECOSF Secretariat

H.E. Mr. Nadeem Irshad Kayani, Secretary to the Government of Pakistan for Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) paid a visit to ECOSF Secretariat on June 16, 2021. He was accompanied by senior officials of the Ministry.

President ECOSF Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro warmly welcomed the Secretary for his maiden visit to the Foundation after assumption of the Charge as the Secretary MoST on 18 May 2021. During the meeting, Prof. Soomro briefed the Secretary about the establishment of the Foundation and about the core functions & programmes of ECOSF to promote Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in the ECO region, including Pakistan.

Mr. Khalil Raza, Scientific Officer of ECOSF made a PowerPoint presentation and highlighted the major programmes and scientific activities of the Foundation. Mr. Raza underlined that the Foundation has a clear vision and strategy to uplift the human resource skills and as well as the institutional capacity in scientific research and technological development. Mr. Raza also demonstrated that ECOSF is actively engaging with Member Countries towards establishing linkages amongst the scientific institutions of the ECO region in delivering tangible projects with meaningful developmental impacts across the region. He further shared that ECOSF has established a strong collaboration with a several global leading players in STI to bring their knowledge tools and applications into the region.



Secretary MoST appreciated the Foundation for its proactive role in promoting STI in the ECO region. Mr. Kayani endorsed the programmes and activities, and he further coveted that the Foundation would continue to implement such programmes to promote STI with wide ranging potential for socio-economic impact. Secretary MoST assured of full support by the Government of Pakistan towards further strengthening of the Foundation with required financial and governing support.

**Prof. Manzoor Soomro wins recognition as Foreign Fellow of AAET**

ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) is pleased to share that ASEAN Academy of Engineering and Technology (AAET) has admitted Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro, President ECOSF as a FOREIGN FELLOW of AAET. The decision was taken during the 2021 Annual General Meeting of AAET held on 29 May 2021 in Kuala Lumpur- Malaysia. As a Foreign Fellow of AAET, Prof. Soomro has become part of an eminent group of successful ASEAN engineers, technologists, industrialists and promoters of Engineering, who play a key role in the overall development of the ASEAN region and beyond.



The ASEAN Academy of Engineering and Technology (AAET) is a professional association of engineers and technologists, policy makers, the public and the private sectors from Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states. It was founded in 2004 and was registered with the ASEAN Secretariat as an affiliated civil society organization in 2007.

Fellowship of the academy is awarded to individuals from academia, research institutes, industry, and government who have demonstrated successful leadership or outstanding contributions to engineering and technology over an extended period.

Prof. Soomro is well recognized eminent scientist of Pakistan who has headed important national and regional organizations. He is a proponent of Science, Engineering, Technology and Innovation across the board, especially for the young people. He is Vice President of BRISECC (Belt & Road International Science Education Coordinating Committee); Member of Board of Directors of AETDEW (Acad. of Engg & Technology of the Developing World); Member of IRIS-UNESCO Governing Board, Member, ISTIC Governing Board; Member of IAP SEP Global Council; Member of International Advisory Board of *La main a la pate* Foundation of France; Founder Member of the Asian Innovation Forum (AIF) & Asian STI Think Tanks Network-ASTN as well as the Distinguished Overseas Expert of China Association for Science and Technology (CAST). He has been the Chairperson of Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) and has also worked with international/national organizations including FAO-UN at senior positions.

**President of Tajikistan visited Pakistan- Various MoUs/Agreements signed**

President of Republic of Tajikistan, H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon along with a large delegation of Ministers, Businesspersons and Senior Officials visited Pakistan on 2-3 June 2021. The visit was made on the special invitation of Prime Minister of Pakistan H.E. Mr. Imran Khan. The two countries share common views on major regional and international issues and cooperate closely at various multilateral forums.



PM of Pakistan received the President at PM House and a guard of honour was presented to him on the arrival at the House. President Rahmon has visited Pakistan seven times since 1994; however, his last bilateral visit was in November 2015. In the multilateral context, President Rahmon visited Pakistan for the 13th ECO Summit held in Islamabad in March 2017. Both the leaders held discussions/talks on various strategic and economic matters. One-on-meeting was also held between both the leaders on the matters of investment, trade, agriculture, connectivity and healthcare.

The two leaders discussed and signed MoU on how to meet Tajikistan's requirement for the kind of weapons that Pakistan makes. MoUs in the fields of Academic, Commerce and Industry, Financial Control, Art and Culture and International Road Transport were also signed on the occasion.



Pakistan has also offered its seaports to Tajikistan since they offer the shortest route to connect with Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Africa, and beyond. The connectivity offered by Gwadar seaport would further lead to strengthening of trade ties and in other areas such as education, science and culture.

Peace in Afghanistan also came under discussion as both countries are the neighbours of war-torn Afghanistan. The wars have negatively affected the country heavily, socially and financially. Joint Declaration on Next Steps in Building Strategic Partnership for Regional Solidarity and Integration was also signed and issued.

The visit concluded very successfully and the Tajik President thanked the Government and people of Pakistan for their warm welcome and hospitality.

**2<sup>nd</sup> General Conference of Parliamentary Assembly of ECO held in Islamabad**

Second General Conference of Parliamentary Assembly of ECO (PAECO) was held from 31st May to 3rd June 2021 in Islamabad, Pakistan. Theme of the Conference was "Promoting Parliamentary Partnership for Regional Integration". The conference was hosted by the Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan H.E. Mr. Asad Qaiser; whereas, the Speakers/Deputy Speakers of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan attended the conference. I.R. of Iran and Turkmenistan joined virtually.



The 4-Day conference was opened by H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi President of Pakistan. In his inaugural address, Dr. Alvi said that “your voice will be heard on the global platform only if you are economically strong and stable”. He stressed the need for viable regional integration through an open trade market for sustainable development.



In welcoming remarks, the Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan Mr. Asad Qaiser said that the ECO countries were sole route for international trade between West and East, thus, the multilateral cooperation was imperative for regional development and economic prosperity. He remarked that ECO region with an area 8 million Square kilometres and vast population of 460 million has immense potential of mutual cooperation in the spheres of trade and economy.

In his virtual address, ECO Secretary General Dr. Hadi Suleimanpour spoke in favour of a strong regional financial system, as well as the creation of banks and a regional payment system to support trade activities in the ECO region. He said that building regional tourism networks and supporting the ECO's annual budget could help ensure the realization of the dream of development and prosperity.

Mir Rehman Rahmani, Speaker of the Wolsi Jirga of Afghanistan; Ms. Sahiba Gafarova, Speaker of the Mili Majlis of Azerbaijan; Mr. Talant Mamytov, Speaker of the Supreme Council of Kyrgyz Republic; Mr. Zokirzoda Mahmudthohir, Chairman of the Majlisi Namoyandagon of the Majlisi Oli, Republic of Tajikstan; Mr. Mustafa Sentop, Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey; Mr. Ismoilov Nurdinjoin, Speaker of the Majlis Oli of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Mr. Mynbay Darkhan as Heads of the delegation of the House of Representatives of Kazakhstan also addressed the inaugural ceremony of the conference. Whereas Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, the Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran and Ms. Gulshat Mammedova Chairperson of the Mejlis of Turkmenistan, virtually addressed the conference.



In their addresses the guest Speakers appreciated Pakistan's effort to bring ECO member Parliaments on the platform of PAECO. They also mentioned about vast opportunities in the field of economy and trade. They mentioned of the need of close cooperation and connectivity among ECO member states. The Speakers mentioned that PAECO is a platform for regional parliamentary diplomacy through dialogue, consensus, synergy and alignment of national Parliaments of the member states. Speakers also mentioned that peace and tranquillity without eliminating the threats to solidarity and cooperation on a global scale, and especially without international consensus and cooperation on issues such as war, violence and the countering against terrorism is not possible.

The agenda of the conference included discussions on the impact of COVID-19 on implementation of Sustainable Development Goals, the role of parliaments in enhancing trade and connectivity, and advancing tourism for development and poverty alleviation. The aim of the conference was to help and push the governments to further strengthen economic and trade relations, and boost people-to-people contacts between the member states.

PAECO was founded in 2013 and its first Inaugural meeting was held in Islamabad in Feb 2013, with an aim to support the member states in enhancing socio-economic development of the region.

### Online Maker Summer Camp - 2021

**Pakistan Science Club (PSC) and ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF)** have been organizing multiple Summer Science Camps for students and children every year during summer vacations through engaging in various scientific activities and projects. Last year (2020), COVID-19 pandemic suddenly erupted in the world which brought heavy challenges in education sector. The education institutes in world went into the shutdown and children confined in their homes; resultantly, their education suffered. Keeping in view the situation, **Online Summer Camp** was planned and the scientific activities were arranged at the homes. Along with the children and students, their family members were also invited to join, thus, the first-ever online **Family STEM Summer Camp was arranged successfully**. It was



not only fun learning and engaging experience for kids of different age groups but adults and parents/guardians also enjoyed with their children. Nine online camps from April 2020 to January 2021 were conducted; each with a duration of 15 days and 8 hands-on projects. Students of age group 8-14years accompanied by their parents and guardians were enrolled.

As the pandemic has continued, this year, Online Maker Summer Camp-2021 has also been arranged by PSC and ECOSF; wherein, children, students and family members are being invited to join. The camp is based on an awe-inspiring theme of **"Electricity and Magnetism"**. Young makers will have interactive sessions on how to generate electricity, the relation between electricity and magnetism, and its wonderful applications. There will be step by step how-to-do guidance and conceptual explanations from the experts.

**1<sup>st</sup> Batch:** 1<sup>st</sup> Batch was organized from June 12 to July 3, 2021. The projects included in the batch were Anti-gravity pencil, Electrical motor, Automatic Swing, Electricity Magic "Tesla Coil", Shake Generator, The Electric Telegraph & Morse Code, and Summer Special Project Mini Air Cooler.

Total of 50 families were registered and around 25 families participated from different parts of Pakistan and also from Saudi Arabia in the 1<sup>st</sup> Batch. Around 3 to 4 members of each family were present.

**President ECOSF Participated in Webinar on Prospects for Economic Integration on the Euro-Asian Continent and Its Implications for CAREC**

The CAREC Institute in partnership with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) held a webinar on the prospects of integration and cooperation processes on the Euro-Asian continent and the implications for CAREC on 22 June 2021. On behalf of ECOSF, the President Prof. Dr Manzoor Hussain Soomro participated in the event.

Distinguished speakers and panelists (both from within the CAREC region, as well as from major neighbors, including the People’s Republic of China, India, Russia) provided policymakers and the broader concerned public with a spectrum of views and ideas about opportunities, obstacles, and desirable policies and measures related to the topic.



Dr. Johannes Linn (Brookings Institution, former World Bank Vice President) set the stage by providing an overview of the world order, economic and political clustering since 1955, major disruptive events that happened over time, and realignments that took us to today’s world order. He noted lessons from the experience of the Ancient Silk Road that carry over to today and stressed that institutional and political factors will be crucial in determining whether and how Euro-Asian economic integration progresses.

Dr. Evgeny Vinokurov (Chief Economist at the Eurasian Development Bank and the Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development) highlighted energy, water, digital connectivity, and labour migration as particularly important areas for cooperation. He mentioned that Eurasian integration can produce tangible results for the continent if the approach is pragmatic, focuses on doable things, and addresses the issue of significant trust deficit. “Trust can be called talking clubs,” Dr. Vinokurov said. He described the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as very influential as it set in motion many other initiatives by other regional and world players. He further elaborated on-premises set out in his book titled “One Eurasia or Many?”

Mr. Ishrat Hussain (Adviser to the Prime Minister of Pakistan for Institutional Reforms and Austerity) briefed the audience about the reform of the regulations that the Pakistani government is undertaking, mentioned Pakistan’s national single window project which will unite 26 governmental agencies for client convenience. He also mentioned the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and appreciated its customized approach. He highlighted that the debt trap is a myth and while external shocks typically trigger the financial crisis, the impact on individual economies is heavily influenced by domestic policy frameworks and choices.

Both Mr. Fanil Kadirov (Head of the Department for Economic Research of the International Institute of Central Asia, Uzbekistan) and Prof. Biliang Hu (Professor and Executive Dean at the Belt and Road School, Beijing Normal University) echoed each other that over time interaction and cooperation is improving on the Euro-Asian continent. If 10 years ago, it was very difficult to find a linkage, now there are numerous mutually beneficial projects and complementary activities taking place.

Mr. Safdar Parvez (Director, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division, Central and West Asia Department, ADB) concluded the event by highlighting that ADB will continue to support the CAREC program by trying to maintain the momentum in implementing physical infrastructure projects together with the soft projects, also will look into areas where efforts need to be enhanced, such as the water-energy nexus, economic corridor development, and human capital development. He emphasized that ADB sees the CAREC program as an open and inclusive platform for multilateral and bilateral development partners.

**Mahathir Science Award – 2020 won by Professor Sir Alimuddin Zumla**

Mahathir Science Award (MSA) – 2020, the most prestigious International Science Award for Tropical Sciences (by Malaysia) was won by Professor Sir Alimuddin Zumla, a Zambian-UK national. This is the first time a recipient of the Award has been presented with the prize abroad as Sir Alimuddin received the prize from Mr. Zahid Rastam, Chargé d’Affaires at the Malaysian High Commission in London, where he lives.



In previous years, the prize was presented by the Malaysian King in a private ceremony in Malaysia. It was also first time that the awarding ceremony was held virtually and broadcasted live on 29 Jun 2021. The ceremony was witnessed by the peoples from all walks especially the scientific community. Prof. Manzoor Soomro, President ECOSF as a Foreign Fellow of ASEAN Academy of Engineering and Technology (AAET) and the Member Governing Board of International Science, Technology and Innovation Centre under the auspices of UNESCO (ISTIC) Malaysia, was invited to join the ceremony and he witnessed the ceremony virtually.

Sir Alimuddin is Professor of Infectious Diseases and International Health at University College London, UK and Consultant Infectious Diseases Physician at UCL Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, London. In his acceptance speech, Sir Alimuddin said that he has been fortunate enough to work with thousands of wonderful people worldwide. He added that the Award of the very prestigious Mahathir Science Award to him reflects the commitment, dedication and hard work of his research teams, collaborators and friends across the world.

The Mahathir Science Award is positioned as Malaysia’s most prestigious Science Award for tropical sciences, and bestowed on any scientist, institution or organization worldwide in recognition of contributions and innovations towards solving problems in the tropics through science and technology and to be awarded to the most deserving based on merit. As such, this extends beyond the boundaries of Malaysia in order to encourage excellence in tropical science that will accord direct benefits to countries in the tropics and indirectly to the global community. The award is granted in following categories:

- Tropical Agriculture
- Tropical Architecture and Engineering
- Tropical Medicine
- Tropical Natural Resources.

Nominees for the Mahathir Science Award go through a rigorous selection process modelled on the Nobel Prize (scientific) selection procedures to ensure that the Award is presented to the best candidate. MSA Laureates receive USD100,000, a solid gold medal and a certificate as their prize.

**President ECOSF Participated in a webinar on "Science Diplomacy"**

The Pakistan Nuclear Society in collaboration with Virtual University of Pakistan organized a webinar on "Science Diplomacy" in association with Pakistan Academy of Science (PAS) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of Pakistan on June 25, 2021.

A large number of researchers, scholars, experts, linguists, academia, students, etc attended the event. From ECOSF, President Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro participated in the webinar

Science Diplomacy has been an emerging interconnection of science and diplomacy that can address humanity's greatest challenges and some of its most promising opportunities which are regional and global. The invited experts deliberated on how scientific teamwork between nations can solve human problems and improve international relationships. Considering the importance and potential of Science Diplomacy to advance Pakistan's national interests and participate effectively in the global science and technology ecosystem, it is essential to create awareness of Science Diplomacy.

**Pakistan Nuclear Society in collaboration with Virtual University of Pakistan**  
**Presents Webinar on SCIENCE DIPLOMACY**  
**Date:** 25 June, 2021 (Friday) **Time:** 03:00 PM to 05:00 PM

- Introduction to Science Diplomacy**  
**Prof. Dr. Arshad Saleem Bhatti (S.I., T.I.),**  
 Rector, Virtual University of Pakistan.
- Bridging Gaps through Science Diplomacy: Pakistan's Perspective**  
**Prof. Dr. Muhamamd Aslam Baig (H.I., S.I., T.I.),**  
 Distinguished National Professor, National Center for Physics.
- Science Diplomacy in the Era of COVID-19**  
**Prof. Dr. Raheel Qamar (T.I.),**  
 Head of Science and Technology Sector, ICESCO, Morocco.
- Foreign Office of Pakistan's Perspective on Science Diplomacy**  
**Mr. Muhammad Kamran Akhtar Malik,**  
 DG (ACDIS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Science Diplomacy - The Global Scenario**  
**Dr. Imtihan Elahi Qureshi (T.I.),**  
 President, Pakistan Nuclear Society.

**Moderator:**  
**Dr. Shazia Fatima, Member Executive Council,**  
**Pakistan Nuclear Society.**

**Collaborators:**  
 • Pakistan Academy of Sciences  
 • Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Registration Link: [bit.ly/sciencediplomacywebinar](https://bit.ly/sciencediplomacywebinar)  
 E-Certificate will be provided to all the participants

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Rector, Virtual University of Pakistan, Prof. Dr. Arshad Saleem Bhatti gave an introduction to science diplomacy during the webinar. Distinguished National Professor, National Centre for Physics, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Aslam Baig gave his talk on bridging gaps through Science Diplomacy: Pakistan's Perspective while Head of Science and Technology Sector, ICESCO, Morocco, Prof. Dr. Raheel Qamar shared his views on Science Diplomacy in the era of COVID-19. Director General (ACDIS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Muhammad Kamran Akhtar Malik spoke on Pakistan's Perspective on Science Diplomacy and President Pakistan Nuclear Society presented his viewpoint on Science Diplomacy the Global Scenario.

**President ECOSF attended a training workshop on "Integrated Disease Management" at Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS AAUR), Pakistan as a Special Guest Speaker**

A three-day training workshop on "Integrated Disease Management" at Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS AAUR) Pakistan on 07-09 June 2021

The workshop was organized by the Department of Plant Pathology of PMAS-AAUR in collaboration with the Pakistan Phyto-pathological Society and the Pakistan Society of Nematologists.

The core objective of this workshop was to equip the agricultural personnel with the latest developments in the field of disease management in plant pathology which will provide deep insight into different aspects of



integrated disease management (IDM) and will give an overview of biology, and management of pathogens for sustainable crop production under changing climate. President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro participated in the event as an invited Guest Speaker in the inaugural session.

While talking to the participants, Prof .Dr. Qamar uz Zaman, the Vice-Chancellor of the university said Integrated Disease Management of Plant Pathology is a key for food security and human health. While highlighting the significance of the workshop Prof. Zaman said that there is no shortcut for the practical experience and this training provides that opportunity to the participants, which will enhance the practical capability of the stakeholders by the use of innovative development in the field of plant disease management.

### **President ECOSF Participated in ECO-RCC second webinar in the series entitled “Sustainable Food Systems: Concept and Practices in ECO Countries”**

The Economic Cooperation Organization-Regional Coordination Centre (ECO-RCC) has been organizing a series of webinars within the framework of sustainable food systems. The second webinar in the series entitled “Sustainable Food Systems: Concept and Practices in ECO Countries” on 1 June 2021. The webinar was organized within the scope of an FTTP II project that aims to strengthen the ECO Regional Coordination Centre for Food Security (ECO-RCCFS). At the present time, food security in the ECO region is facing multiple challenges linked to high food prices, locust infestations, drought, and the COVID-19 pandemic, among other reasons.



The goal of the webinar was to assist member countries of ECO in better understanding the food systems concept and approach as well as the objectives and processes of the UN Food Systems Summit 2021. On behalf of ECOSF, President Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro Participated in the event.

The webinar was opened by Volkan Güngören, ECO-RCC Coordinator and Deputy General Director for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Turkey, and Sumiter Broca, Senior Policy Officer, FAO Sub-regional Office for Central Asia. Highlighting the fact that the ECO covers a region with more than 460 million inhabitants, Güngören explained that making the food systems of this region more sustainable would have a huge impact with the potential to touch nearly a half billion lives. Güngören also noted that the capacity of the ECO-RCC is growing day by day, and that the Centre will play a significant role in facilitating regional endeavours to improve food security and develop sustainable food systems.

Broca emphasized the importance of a strong partnership between ECO-RCC and FAO and recalled that this partnership was made possible by generous funding provided by the Government of Turkey within the framework of the FAO-Turkey Partnership Programme on Food and Agriculture. Broca also informed the participants about the upcoming 2021 UN Food Systems Summit in July.

Following the opening remarks, Jessica Fanzo, the Bloomberg Distinguished Professor of Global Food Policy and Ethics at the Berman Institute of Bioethics, Johns Hopkins University, delivered an introductory lecture focusing on the food systems approach and illustrating the basic concepts. Following Fanzo’s lecture, the webinar continued with sessions on the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 and case studies on a food systems approach to addressing the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The webinar provided the participants with comprehensive information about the food systems approach and related concepts and practices. Several more ECO-RCC and FAO training sessions aimed at capacity development are planned for the coming months.

### China-Pakistan Sugarcane Industry Cooperation and Exchange Forum held, President ECOSF joined in

China-Pakistan Sugarcane Industry Cooperation and Exchange Forum was held virtually on June 04, 2021, where experts from both China and Pakistan participated and exchanged views. During the Forum, Dr. Gu Wenliang, Agricultural Commissioner of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan said that Pakistan and China can produce high-grade sugar in abundance and export it across the world. What the two 'iron brothers' need to do is to enhance cooperation to uplift sugarcane industry in Pakistan

Dr. Gu further called for to connect people and experts from China & Pakistan and provide them engaging platform. This is what China and Pakistan should join hands to promote sugarcane production and processing to produce high-grade sugar, he added.

Mr. Liu Kui, Director of International Cooperation Department, Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences (CATAS), introduced different aspects of CATAS, and gave an impressive industrialization application of 'Tissue Culture' which, according to him, can bring revolution in the production of sugarcane. Liu said CATAS has been transferring technology and Pakistan can also benefit from it. During the past three years, the center has finished the in-vitro cultures of about 140 varieties which belong to more than 40 families," Mr. Liu said. CATAS can extend training to Pakistani experts as well as initiate transfer of technology.

During the Forum, President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro stressed over the need for strengthening collaboration between Pakistan and Chinese institutions in agriculture sector. Taking part in discussion, Dr. Fateh M. Marri, Vice Chancellor of Sindh Agriculture University Tandojam said that there lies great scope of cooperation between China and Pakistan in agriculture sector including 'sugar industry'.

### President ECOSF attended in the Inaugural Session of an Advanced Training Course on "How to Establish Halal Food Testing Laboratory?"

COMSTECH organized the inaugural session of An Advanced Training Course; "How to establish Halal Food Testing Laboratory" on 08 June 2021 at COMSTECH Secretariat-Islamabad in a hybrid mode. It was attended by a large number of people online and some 80 individuals in person. On behalf of the ECOSF, its President Prof. Manzoor H. Soomro attended the event physically.



3-Day Training was inaugurated by H.E. Mr. Shibli Faraz, Minister for Science and Technology, Government of Pakistan. In his address, Mr. Faraz said that Islam sets food standards for the humanity, and Pakistan would expand its scope of research in the field of 'Halal Food' to other Muslim countries. He emphasized that research in relevant aspects of the field should bring benefit to the people of Pakistan and the entire humanity. The Ministry is paying focus on strengthening its institutions and taking steps for developing coordination between market and universities, added the Minister. The Minister emphasized on ensuring quality of Halal food items and said that the labs should have capacity to determine *Halal* and *Haram* (unlawful) with the focus on complete food value chain. The Minister encouraged all Halal industry-related institutions to develop mechanisms for increasing capacities and advised that universities should be part of this as well.



Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator-General COMTECH, in his welcome speech said that Halal accreditation and certification is a niche in which we can achieve excellence. He further said that the Halal business is growing by over 20% and there are no major Halal certification bodies in Muslim countries, thus, there is good opportunity to work in this field. He also said that they at COMSTECH are focused on science-based commercialization and developing capacity in OIC member states focusing on the application of scientific research output. Theme of the event was relevant to the industrial development of Pakistan and OIC, he added.

Mr. Ihsan ÖVÜT Secretary-General of the Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC), Turkey, said that we need to develop common standards with the commitment to practice them to compete internationally.

The inaugural session was also addressed by Ms. Ismat Gul Khattak, Director General of Pakistan National Accreditation Council, Mr. Akhtar A. Bughio, Director General of Pakistan Halal Authority and Prof. Dr. Syed Ghulam Musharraf of Dr. Panjwani Center for Molecular Medicine and Drug Research, ICCBS, Karachi.

**ECOSF Participated in the Virtual Launch of 7<sup>th</sup> edition of UNESCO Science Report ‘The Race against Time for Smarter Development’**

UNESCO virtually launched the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the Science Report ‘The Race against Time for Smarter Development’ during a virtual ceremony held on June 11 which featured a video and expert discussion on the report’s key findings. UNESCO Director-General, H.E. Ms. Audrey Azoulay, and Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, Ms. Shamila Nair-Bedouelle presented their remarks during the launch. The Editor-in-Chief of the report, Dr. Susan Schneegans provided an overview of trends in their region. These regional overviews were followed by a Q&A session. President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro as one of the science leaders was invited and participated in the virtual event.

The UNESCO Science Report is a global monitoring report published regularly by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Every five years, this report maps the latest trends and developments in national and regional science policy landscapes, against the backdrop of shifting socioeconomic, geopolitical, and environmental realities.

The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the UNESCO Science Report’s subtitle, ‘The Race against Time for Smarter Development’ captures the urgency to rethink development models by 2030, the deadline for reaching the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Since 2015, most countries have aligned their national policies with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are engaged in a gradual transition to ‘green’ economies. Governments are stepping up support for smarter production and consumption systems.

In parallel to their green transition, governments are digitalizing public services and payment systems to improve service delivery, support business and combat corruption and tax evasion. Policies are fostering the emergence of a digital economy, including smart manufacturing, smart finance (fintech), smart health care services like telemedicine and smart agriculture. The report’s subtitle is also an allusion to this form of ‘smarter development’ driven by digital technologies such as artificial



intelligence (AI) and robotics, big data, the Internet of Things and blockchain technology which are converging with nanotechnology, biotechnology and cognitive sciences to form the bedrock of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (also known as Industry 4.0).

**President ECOSF joined as Chief Guest the 16<sup>th</sup> Nematological Event: Present Era of Ecofriendly Nematode Management Strategies organised mainly by the Pakistan Society of Nematologists**

The two-day training session was jointly organized by Pakistan Society of Nematologists (PSN), the National Nematological Research Centre (NNRC), University of Karachi, and supported by the Pakistan Science Foundation on 17-18 June 2021. It was held at the UoK's NNRC and attended by a total of 50 participants including trainees from Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi, Islamia University Bahawalpur, Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan, Sindh Agriculture University Tandojam, Plant Disease Research Institute Tandojam, Sindh Agriculture University, Umerkot Campus, Lasbella University of Marine and Agriculture Sciences Uthal- Balochistan, Jinnah University for Women Karachi, Department of Agriculture and Agribusiness Management UoK, etc.. President ECOSF joined the event as Chief Guest.



The UoK VC Prof. Dr. Khalid M. Iraqi underlined that NNRC has a significant role to promote field of nematology in the country. He stressed that ecofriendly nematode management strategies should be adopted across the country to have fruitful results.

On this occasion, the UoK Dean Faculty of Science Prof. Nasira Khatun emphasized on maintaining health and environment as the primary goal as an essential. Parton-in-Chief of Pakistan Society of Nematologists and President of ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro underscored the role of the UoK NNRC in promoting the subject of nematology and said that the Centre ever since its establishment in the 1970s has been promoting research skills among young researchers.

The Director NNRC Prof. Ms. Saboohi Raza briefly highlighted the contributions of NNRC in the field of nematology and shed light on the importance of nematodes, their identification, and eco-friendly management strategies.

She informed the audience that so far, more than 1,000 research papers have been published by the centre in reputed journals. The centre has produced 21 PhDs, five MPhils and has close linkages with 50 national or international universities and institutes for collaborative research work.

Meanwhile, President, Pakistan Society of Nematologists, Prof. Tariq Mukhtar praised the role of NNRC in organizing seminars, conferences, and training workshops regularly and mentioned that the centre holds training workshops after every two years and this is the sixteenth nematological event.

The speakers urged to use of new nematode control measures instead of synthetic chemicals to reduce possible adverse effects on human health and the environment. They observed that biological control, organic and inorganic soil amendments, natural occurring nematicides, induced resistance, interruption of host recognition and transgenic plants have a direct effect on pollution prevention, resource-saving, and recycling.

Earlier, rich tributes were paid to late Dr. M A Maqbool and meritorious Professor Dr. Shahina Fayyaz for their research accomplishments in the discipline of nematology and devoting their lives to develop and strengthen the NNRC. The NNRC seminar library was named after Dr. Maqbool while the molecular laboratories were named after Professor Dr. Shahina in recognition of their long and sincere professional services and immense contributions to the field and the Centre.

**PASTIC's project "National Digital Archive of Research published in Pakistani Journals" launched- President ECOSF joined the launch**

Pakistan Scientific and Technological Information Centre (PASTIC) Is a premier organization in the country established for the dissemination of scientific & technological information for catering to the information needs of scientists, researchers, academicians, industrialists, entrepreneurs, planners, and policy makers.

The official launching ceremony of PASTIC's project; "National Digital Archive of Research Published in Pakistani journals" was held on June 24, 2021. The project objectives and goals and the scope of work was shared with the stakeholders i.e., Publishers of Scientific Journals and other relevant participants. Through this project, PASTIC aims to develop Networking of Journals' Publishers, Community, Preservation of National Research Content in Full-Text Format, Standardization of Scientific Journals Repository and development of Visualization Model to Review and analyse research trends. PASTIC will support Journal publishers by providing free Journal Hosting, Data import and Backup Services, Financial Assistance for Digitization, and Capacity Building of Publishers/editors / Scientific Community.



Chairman Pakistan Science, Prof. Dr. Shahid Mahmood Baig (SI), and two former Chairpersons of PSF; Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro President ECOSF, and Prof. N.M. Butt Chairman of Preston Institute of Nano Science & Technology (PINSAT), Islamabad, Pakistan joined the launch and spoke on the occasion.

Director-General, PASTIC Prof. Dr. Muhammad Akram Shaikh gave a brief introduction of PASTIC services. The project Manager, Mr. Saifullah Azim gave a brief introduction about the project, saying that the project is aimed to provide a single electronic platform to Scientific Journals published in Pakistan for preservation and dissemination of research published in indigenous Journals of Pakistan. Chairman, PSF appreciated PASTIC's role in the support and promotion of research through its various activities.

**KSS Lahore organized webinar on Biodiversity and its Conservation in Pakistan with a special focus on Birds and Insects on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

Khwarizmi Science Society (KSS) organized a webinar on "Biodiversity and its Conservation in Pakistan" with a special focus on Birds and Insects on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The webinar was a part of a series by KSS to celebrate the biodiversity in Pakistan and inform the general audience about the threats faced by some endangered fauna species, and the need to conserve them. As recommended by the President ECOSF Prof. Soomro, the webinar featured Prof. Zahid Baig Mirza who is one the most experienced naturalist and ornithologist of Pakistan and has



gained widespread international and national recognition for his dedicated work as a field scientist. The webinar provided an exciting learning opportunity about some of the most interesting features of the birds of Pakistan.

**ECOSF participated in a webinar on Disaster Risk Reduction, Reflection of the Past and the Present**

UNESCO in collaboration with UNDP Accelerator Lab – Indonesia and U-Inspire Alliance organized a webinar on “Disaster Risk Reduction, Reflection of the Past and the Present” on June 25, 2021. The objective of holding this session was to reminisce and discuss what was envisioned in the past about the present disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resiliency. The experts sought to understand and learn from disaster experts of the 1st World Conference on Natural Disaster held in Yokohama (1994) with the 10 strategies for a safer world, The Hyogo framework of action (2005-2015) with the five specific priorities for Action, and the Sendai Framework for DRR (2015-2030) with the seven targets and four priorities for action. The discussion during the webinar centered around as to what and how they envisioned the future at that time, what did and did not materialize at the present, and how and why they think it works or failed. The outcome of this webinar underlining the understanding on future thinking based on lessons learnt from Yokohama, Hyogo, and Sendai on how decision in the past reached the DRR achievements.



**Future Thinking of DRR**

**BTBU-ECOSF Joint Training Program - 2<sup>nd</sup> Virtual Trainin: Low Carbon Development and New Energy Vehicles**

BTBU-ECOSF Joint Training Center – 2<sup>nd</sup> Virtual Training on Low Carbon Development and New Energy Vehicles scheduled on July 6th and 7th, 2021. The objective of this training is to build the human resource capacity to accelerate the transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient development in the Belt & Road Countries. The training will address three focused areas of low carbon development;

- (a) Renewable and clean energy development;
- (b) Smart and resilient power transmission and distribution grid infrastructure, and
- (c) Sustainable Transport Sector and latest electric mobility practices in the emerging markets.

