



# ECOSF NEWSLETTER



## Talented Students from ECO Countries participate in “33<sup>rd</sup> China Adolescents Science and Technology Innovation Contest (CASTIC)” and OBOR Teenager Science Summer Camp 2018

The “33<sup>rd</sup> China Adolescents Science and Technology Innovation Contest (CASTIC)” and OBOR Teenager Science Summer Camp as well as numerous Teachers workshops on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education were held in beautiful Chongqing City of P.R. China from 15-20 August 2018. Some 35 teams from Asia, Europe, Oceania, North America, South America, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan comprising of 2200 science and technology educators & students and 300 representatives from 50 countries participated in the multiple events. The teams attending from ECO countries included; Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Pakistan and Turkey.

The competition was co-sponsored by the China Association for Science and Technology- CAST (including the CYSC and CACSI of CAST), the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Ecology and Environmental Protection, the General Administration of Sports, the Intellectual Property Office, the National Natural Science Foundation, the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, the All-China Women's Federation and the Chongqing Municipal People's Government.



Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and Chairman of the China Association for Science and Technology H.E. Mr. Wan Gang opened the event and welcomed all the distinguished guests from all over the world. In his speech, Mr. Wan Gang pointed out that the National Youth Science and Technology Innovation Competition provided a solid support for the cultivation of science and technology reserve talents, and built a broad stage for young people from all over the world to experience the beauty of science and innovation. At present, the world is in the midst of a new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial change, he said. He further said; “the world has been



experiencing a major change in the past 100 years". Developing science and technology is a strategic choice for mankind to meet global challenges and achieve sustainable development. The future of scientific and technological innovation and building a community of human destiny, are in the hands of the youth, were his words. He hoped that the science and technology innovation contest would expand the big pattern of openness and innovation, and strived to broaden the children's scientific vision; to spread the seeds of hope, to fully stimulate the children's curiosity and imagination; to guide the children to dare to have dreams and dare to chase the dreams.

The Mayor of Chongqing Municipal Party Committee Mr. Tang Liangzhi in his speech said that young people are the most energetic and have the richest dreams, and they

are the living force of innovation and entrepreneurship. It is necessary to continuously strengthen young people's science and technology education, vigorously improve young people's scientific literacy, use practical actions to popularize scientific knowledge, promote scientific spirit, disseminate scientific ideas, and advocate scientific methods, ignite the scientific dreams of young people, and make young people a powerful force for building innovative cities.

High Officials from Chinese Government and guests from relevant scientific and technological educational institutions from the United States, Finland, Italy, Luxembourg, and Tunisia attended the opening ceremony. ECOSF was represented by its President Prof. Manzoor H. Soomro as a special honourable invited guest of the CAST.

At the opening ceremony of the participating teams, the student representatives from all over the country and the international students appeared in debut, showing their love for technological innovation with their youth and vitality.

A welcome banquet was also arranged for the participants of the **"Belt and Road Science Summer Camp"** on 15 August 2018, wherein, the Chinese and foreign teachers and students had their own cultural performances accompanied by interesting interactive programs, making the whole party happy and harmonious. The splendid cultural performances brought the spiritual distance of young people closer and enhanced the understanding of each country's human resources. It laid a good foundation for enhancing understanding, harvesting friendship and strengthening exchanges.

It is observed that the internationalization level of this competition has been significantly improved, and the number of participating countries and people has reached a record high as compared to previous 32 CASTICs. It has become the largest science and technology competition in Asia with the largest number of participating countries. It was reported that the contest received more than 3,000 innovative projects and works. After the initial evaluation by experts, a total of 358 youth science and technology innovation projects and 201 counselors' science and technology education innovation projects were selected for the final evaluation of the competition. In the same period, a variety of exhibitions and exchanges such as the China-ASEAN Youth Innovation Competition, the One Belt and One Road Youth Technology Science Summer Camp, the China Science and Technology Association Youth Science and Technology Education Exhibition, and the 2018 China Youth Science and Technology Counselor Association Annual Meeting were also held.

Among the other events, **"OBOR Science and Technology Education Forum"** was held on 17 August 2018. Dr. He ZHU from the Chinese Association of Children Science Instructors (CACSI) moderated the forum. Nearly 70 Chinese and foreign science and technology teachers and science educators including those from ECO countries participated in the Forum. Eight speakers from five countries shared their experiences in conducting science education in their respective countries and fields.



President ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) Prof. Soomro was the main opening keynote speaker of the Forum. His presentation was entitled “***Inquiry Base Science Education (IBSE) for Sustainable Development in the ECO Region***”. President ECOSF was participating in the events on the special invitation of the hosts- CAST. Prof. Soomro in his talk introduced the strategies and programmes and results of the Foundation's promotion of inquiry science education implementation in ECO countries. He emphasized that technological innovation plays an important role in realizing the sustainable development of human society. Developing inquiry-based science education and cultivating students' scientific quality are important foundations for realizing scientific and technological innovation. To achieve high-quality science education, it is necessary to unite the power of the government, universities, and social institutions to conduct extensive international cooperation, he stressed. Subsequently on the same day, an activity “Sailing Ship” under the Maritime Silk Road of OBOR Curriculum course was successfully tested with science teachers participating in the Belt and Road Science Summer Camp. The CACSI and a Chinese STEM company, “Handsbrain Education” facilitated the activity.

Read more: <http://eco4science.org/33-CASTIC>

**Thailand NSM-IAP SEP International Forum on “Science Literacy through National Museums of ASEAN Countries” during the National Science and Technology Fair 2018**

The National Science Museum (NSM) of Thailand in Bangkok and Inter Academy Partnership Science Education Program (IAP SEP) with the support of Ministry of Science and Technology of Thailand organized an Exclusive Forum entitled; “Promoting Science Literacy through National Museums of ASEAN Countries” as a part of the National Science and Technology Fair 2018 from 16-26 August. The Forum was held on 25 -26 August 2018 at Impact Exhibition and Convention Centre, Nonthaburi, Bangkok, Thailand.



The aim of this Forum was to discuss the possibilities of the collaboration between science museum/centers and the national museums in the promotion of science literacy for the sustainable development for the whole community in ASEAN countries and beyond under the aegis of IAP SEP..

**Prof. Dr. Soranit Siltham**, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Science and Technology, Thailand opened the Forum and congratulated the organizers, where he shared the importance of Science and Technology through Science Museums in ASEAN Countries.

**Prof Rawin Ravingse** President National Science Museum delivered his welcome remarks in the opening ceremony. Prof. Ravings greeted the participants and highlight the importance of promoting Science through interactive learning.

**Dato Lee Cheong** Chairman of the IAP SEP Global Council and Honorary Chair of Governing Board International Science, Technology, and Innovation Centre for South-South Cooperation, Malaysia shared the objectives of the forum. **Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro**, President, ECOSF who is also the member of Global Council of IAP SEP participated in the forum as an invited guest discussant.

Later the participants of the Forum visited the National Science and Technology Fair 2018, the fair is an annual special event put together by the NSM and Ministry of Science and Technology to promote and foster public interests in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI). The Fair highlighted the latest innovations in STI along with several exhibitions and interactive activities. The



objectives of the fair were to inspire young students to see the importance of science and technology, encourage them to think scientifically and to learn how to use and manage technology wisely. One of the highlights of the event among many, was a cave exhibition which featured survival innovations to rescue stranded people in the context of recent Cave-stranded football team of Thailand. Apart from the cave exhibitions, there were also the displays in the honor of the Father of Thai technology and innovation, and an astronomy exhibition featuring images with multimedia aspects, demonstrating rare astronomical phenomena from all over the world as part of 150 years celebration of their King Rama-IV of Siam (Thailand), who had predicted a full solar eclipse two months in advance. The fair also included many interesting scientific experiments and activities to promote creativity and solutions based on science and technology.

It is pertinent to mention that the National Science and Technology fair 2018 was the biggest fair of the year in Science, Technology and Innovation during the occasion of National Science Week in Thailand. The Fair attracted more than a million visitors including children, parents and youth who actively participated in the exhibition.

**IAP SEP organized the Meeting of Working Group on Fusion of One Belt One Road (OBOR) Civilizations Curriculum Design during the National Science & Technology Fair 2018 at the National Science Museum of Thailand**

Inter-Academy Partnership on Science Education Programme (IAP SEP) organized the Meeting of Working Group on Fusion of One Belt One Road (OBOR) Civilizations Curriculum Design on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at National Museum of Thailand in Bangkok during the National Science and Technology Fair 2018.



The objective of holding this meeting was to review the resources, materials and identify the gaps. The working group also deliberated on the way forward and strategies for implementing the Curriculum in the OBOR region. President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro was invited as member of the Global Council of IAP SEP and participated in the meeting.

The working group has developed four modules on land silk road, maritime silk road, Karez/Kanat and architecture. This curriculum aims to demonstrate that no one civilization is superior to another and each has benefited from interactions through trade and travel from others and science is universal. It is envisaged that this curriculum will infuse spirit of peace and friendship for global peace and harmony among our young of all races with understanding that all human beings are same under the skin.

The idea of development of such a curriculum for school kids is to inculcate peace and harmony through evidence based science education for children in the light of the current conflict and increase in violence in societies, and terrorism resulting in atrocities and displaced persons.

It is pertinent to mention here that **ECOSF** is contributing to the development of this curriculum in collaboration with IAP SEP. The last working group meeting was organized by the ECOSF in collaboration with IAP SEP in Islamabad, Pakistan on April 9-10, 2018, where the working group members presented this curriculum based on the framework while highlighting the different aspects of scientific discoveries along the OBOR countries.

The outcome of this meeting held in Bangkok on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and its report can be accessed at:

<http://eco4science.org/uploads/files/IAP%20SEP%20Report%20on%20OBOR%20FoC%20Group%20Meeting%20in%20Bangkok%2024%20August%202018.pdf>

### Delegation of IMHE, Chinese Academy of Sciences called upon the President ECOSF

A delegation of Institute of Mountain Hazards and Environment (IMHE), Chinese Academy of Sciences located in Chengdu, P.R. China called upon the President ECOSF, Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro in his office on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The delegation comprised of Prof. Dr. Lijun SU Deputy Director of Key Lab and Prof. Dr. Yonggang GE, Vice Director of Science & Technology Division of IMHE. Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro warmly welcomed and briefed the delegation about the functions and programs of the ECOSF. It is pertinent to mention here that this Institute has been recognized as the International Centre of Excellence (ICoE) on Integrated Research on Disaster Risk Reduction (IRDRI) by the International Science Council (ISC). The discussion during the meeting concentrated on developing adequate Disaster Risk Reduction programmes along the Belt and Road (B&R) initiative of P.R. China.



Prof. SU appreciated and thanked Dr. Soomro and the Foundation for welcoming the delegation. He deliberated on various programs undertaken by the IMHE on DRR particularly in the mountainous regions along the B&R. Prof. SU shared with the hosts that IMHE is in the process of developing an Atlas with a database of potential hazards and disasters in the countries along the B&R.

It is important to mention here that IMHE in collaboration with Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan and other relevant stakeholders including the University of Peshawar, Quaid e Azam University Islamabad and National University of Science and Technology (NUST) in Pakistan, is establishing a Pak-China Earth Sciences Research Center. The objective of developing such a center is to formulate a mechanism and provide effective disaster risk reduction strategy for the infrastructure projects under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The center will work towards for identification of current and future natural hazards and it will also propose the strategies for mitigating the potential risks and hazards that are likely to affect the infrastructure projects under the CPEC initiative.

Read more: <http://eco4science.org/Chinese-Academy-of-Sciences>

### PCRWR in Collaboration with Australian High Commission in Pakistan and Charles Sturt University, Australia organized the Workshop on Technical Writing

Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) in collaboration Australian High Commission in Pakistan and Charles Sturt University, Australia organized a Three days' workshop on Technical Writing on 28-30 August, 2018. The workshop was inaugurated by the Additional Secretary, Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), Mr. Qaiser Majeed Malik and Acting Australian High Commissioner, H.E. Brek Bately. On behalf of ECOSF, Engr. Khalil Raza Scientific Officer participated in the inaugural session of the workshop.

Speaking on the occasion, the Additional Secretary MoST emphasized over adequate capacity building to address the water crisis in Pakistan. Mr. Majeed appreciated to have very strong partnership between Australia and Pakistan in water resources management and agriculture.

The Acting Australian High Commissioner, H.E. Brek Bately urged that capacity building is one of the key components in all support programs of Australia for Pakistan. The Acting Australian High Commissioner stressed that effective communication and technical writing skills are essential to make sound judgement for policy makers.



Acting Chairman PCRWR, Dr. Mirza Habib Ali, highlighted the significance of the workshop and said that technical writing skills are essential for engineers and scientists. Dr. Catherin Allan from Charles Sturt University said that this workshop is focused on learning how to put scientific data in context and drive key messages for different stakeholders. Earlier, Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, Director General, PCRWR, highlighted various cooperation projects being undertaken by PCRWR through Australian Water Program.

### Caspian Sea Nations Sign Landmark Deal

The leaders of Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan signed a landmark deal on Sunday on the legal status of the inland resource-rich Caspian Sea which boasts a wealth of oil and gas reserves and sturgeon.

The leaders of Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan signed the agreement on the status of the inland sea, which has been disputed since the collapse of the Soviet Union rendered obsolete agreements between Tehran and Moscow.

The host, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, said before the signing that the leaders were “participants in a historic event”. “We can admit that consensus on the status of the sea was hard to reach and not immediate, the talks lasted more than 20 years and called for a lot of joint efforts from the parties,” Nazarbayev said.

Read More: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1426714/caspian-sea-nations-sign-landmark-deal>

### Distinguished Visitors to the ECOSF

08 August 2018: DG Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Climate Change, Govt. of Pakistan, Mr. Irfan Tariq along with Mr. M. Saleem Khattak, Deputy Secretary called on the President ECOSF and discussed the organization of 7th Meeting of ECO Working Group on Climate Change in Pakistan and other matters of mutual interests.



**Upcoming Events posted on ECOSF website and Facebook page****2<sup>nd</sup> Belt and Road Teenager Maker Camp & Teacher Workshop, 15-21 November 2018**

The “2nd Belt and Road Teenager Maker Camp & Teacher Workshop” will be held from 15-21 November 2018 at Beijing, China. The Camp is being hosted by the Ministry of Science and Technology, People’s Republic of China and China Association for Science & Technology (CAST), organized by Children & Youth Science Center (CYSC) of CAST, while supported by InterAcademy Partnership on Science Education Program (IAP SEP), **ECOSF**, Networking of African Science Academies (NASAC) and Beijing Youth Science and Technology Centre (BYSTC).

To support the Belt and Road Initiative -China’s proposal to build a Silk Road Economic Belt and a 21st Century Maritime Silk Road in cooperation with related countries -unveiled by Chinese President Xi Jinping, China Association for Science and Technology and Ministry of Science and Technology of China have jointly launched the Belt and Road Teenager Science Camps annually including Belt and Road Teenager Science Summer Camp and Belt and Road Teenager Maker Camp & Teacher Workshop since 2017. Those events aim to strengthen cross-cultural exchange, promote international understanding and inspire innovation in young generation.

The camps give students the opportunity to cooperate with the best of their age at international level, to share ideas and study cutting-edge knowledge in science labs of top schools in China through hands-on experience and teamwork under guidance of experienced teachers.

**Read More:** <http://eco4science.org/2nd-Belt-and-Road>

**Global Teacher Prize 2019**

Varkey Foundation Announces Global Teacher Prize 2019 and applications are now open and will close on 9th September 2018

The Varkey Foundation believes that vibrant education awakens and supports the full potential of young people. Thanks to inspirational teachers, students develop the skills and knowledge that they need to lead successful lives and positively impact the world.

The Global Teacher Prize is a US \$1 million dollar award, presented annually to an exceptional teacher who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession. The Varkey Foundation established the prize in 2014, to recognise and celebrate the impact that teachers have around the world – not only on their students, but on the communities around them.

**Applications:** <https://www.globalteacherprize.org/apply/>

**Nominations:** <https://www.globalteacherprize.org/nominate/>

**International Conference on Silk-roads Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development**

The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), China Association for Science and Technology, Ministry of Emergency Management of the People’s Republic of China, and associated faculties of United Nations will jointly host the \*International Conference on Silk-roads Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development\* in Beijing, on May 11-12, 2019.

**Conference Theme**

Towards Safe, Green, and Resilient Silk Roads

**Important Dates**

On-line registration starts on October 20, 2018

Deadline for extended abstract submission: December 20, 2018

Deadline for early bird registration: April 20, 2019

International Conference May 11-12, 2019

For more details, visit conference website at <http://www.sidrr.com>

