



ECOSF NEWSLETTER



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

Country	Total confirmed cases	Total deaths
Afghanistan	31,238	733
Azerbaijan	16,968	206
Iran	225,205	10,670
Kazakhstan	21,819	188
Kyrgyz Republic	5,296	57
Pakistan	209,337	4,304
Tajikistan	5,900	52
Turkey	198,613	5,115
Turkmenistan	-	-
Uzbekistan	8,298	24
ECO Region Total	722,674	21,349

Date Stamp: June 30, 2020

Source: <https://ourworldindata.org>

Note: So far, no case has been reported for COVID 19 in Turkmenistan.

ECOSF celebrated the World Environment Day 2020

ECO Science Foundation celebrated the World Environment Day on June 8, 2020. World Environment Day is celebrated every year on June 5 to signify the importance of environment of our planet. Every year a specific theme is highlighted; this year the theme was "**Biodiversity, it's time for nature**". Recent events, from bushfires to locust infestations and now, a global disease pandemic—demonstrate the interdependence of humans and the webs of life in which they exist.

The objective of holding this webinar was to provide a meaningful platform to recognize the importance of our environment and biodiversity to inspire positive change.

Engr. Khalil Raza Scientific Officer moderated the panel discussion during the webinar. Mr. Raza introduced the panelists and participants on the importance of this webinar. He said biodiversity affects every aspect of human health, providing clean air and water, nutritious foods, scientific understanding and medicine sources, natural disease resistance, and climate change mitigation. The emergence of COVID-19 has made it clear that, when we destroy biodiversity, we destroy the system that supports human life.

President ECOSF, Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro in his opening remarks welcomed the speakers and participants to the webinar. Prof. Soomro emphasized that without biodiversity and nature, life on earth would not be possible. Prof. Soomro called upon scientific community, especially young professionals and scientists to work together at an individual and collective level to protect our planet and biodiversity for our future generations.

ECOSF
ECO Science Foundation

**This World Environment Day,
it's Time for Nature**

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

Moderator: Engr. Khalil Raza ECOSF

Join us on the Webinar on
World Environment Day 2020 | 8 June 2020
At 4:00 PM (GMT +5)

Prof. Alireza Sari
Professor of Marine Biodiversity,
School of Biology
University of Tehran Iran

Prof. Shafqat Saeed
Dean MNS
University of Agriculture
Pakistan

Prof. Munir Ozturk
Vice President
Islamic World Academy of
Sciences, & Professor (Emer.) of
Ecology & Environmental Sciences,
Ege University, Izmir-Turkey

Dr. Elnur Safarov
National Coordinator/Ocean
Expert– International
Oceanographic Data Exchange
Center, Azerbaijan

Mr. Saulet Sakinoy
Chief Technical Expert of the
UNDP/GEF Project on National
Communication on UNFCCC
and Biennial Development
Kazakhstan

www.ecosf.org

Prof. Alireza Sari, distinguished Professor of Marine Biodiversity at University of Tehran delivered his talk on “Current knowledge on Marine species diversity, challenges and threats”. Prof. Sari highlighted significant aspects of marine biodiversity of the ECO region. Prof. Sari underscored various anthropogenic pressures and threats on the marine biodiversity in the region. He proposed for integrative biodiversity monitoring and restoration strategies. Prof. Sari also called for scaling up research funding and strengthening collaboration amongst the scientific institutions using intergovernmental platforms, such as the ECOSF.

Prof. Munir Ozturk the Vice President, Islamic World Academy of Sciences, & Professor (Emer.) of Ecology & Environmental Sciences, Ege University, Izmir-Turkey participated as a speaker in the webinar. In his talk, Prof. Ozturk highlighted the important linkages between biodiversity and biomedicine and how our future depends on them. Prof. Ozturk discussed various evidences for the biomedical values of Earth’s species and shared how the traditional uses of different components of our biodiversity together with the most sophisticated scientific approaches could lead to breakthroughs in biomedicine. Prof. Ozturk also talked about his recently published book on “Biodiversity and Biomedicine – Our Future” which could be an important literary source to learn about molecular diversity of different species that presents the priciest reservoir for the future discoveries in medicine.

Prof. Shafqat Saeed, the Dean Faculty of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences at the Muhammad Nawaz Shareef University of Agriculture in Multan Pakistan delivered his presentation on the webinar theme. Prof. Saeed highlighted the critical aspects of pollinators and their role in biodiversity and our lives. Prof. Saeed underscored the decline of wild and managed pollinators in the region and its devastating impact on crop patterns. He concluded with a recommendation to use wide range of options to protect pollinators drawing on both scientific and indigenous/local knowledge.

Dr. Elnur Safarov the National Coordinator/Ocean Expert– International Oceanographic Data Exchange Center, Baku- Azerbaijan in his talk, presented the Modern Changes in Precipitation on the Caspian Coast of Azerbaijan. Dr. Safarov highlighted the significance of our oceans in the ecosystem and biodiversity and how recent changes in climatic conditions are changing the local weather patterns and their impact on precipitations in the region.

Mr. Saulet Sakinov Chief Technical Expert of the UNDP/GEF Project on National Communication on UNFCCC and Biennial Development, Kazakhstan delivered his talk on Climate Change Hazards for Biodiversity in Kazakhstan. Mr. Sakinov underscored how the changes in the climate will lead to extreme weather events that could have devastating impacts on the agricultural yields and overall food security in the country. He also shared an innovative project being undertaken on carbon sequestration in Kazakhstan. At the end, floor was opened for the Q&A session where panelists responded to the questions raised by the audience.

The event was also broadcasted through Facebook Live which can be accessible at: <https://www.facebook.com/ECOScienceFoundation/videos/691546541407937>

ECOSF and YPARD organized a joint Webinar on Locust Invasion – Challenges and the Future of Food and Agriculture

ECOSF and Young Professionals in Agricultural Research and Development (YPARD) in collaboration with Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MNFSR) Pakistan, YPARD Asia & Pacific Group and Why Farm Agricultural Organization organized a webinar on “Locust Invasion – Challenges and the Future of Food and Agriculture” in Pakistan on June 1st, 2020.

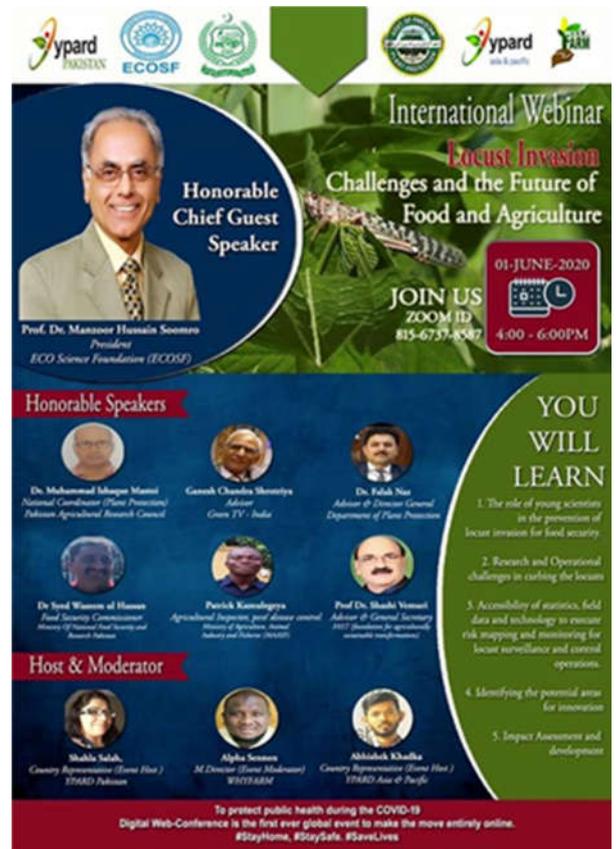
The objective of hosting this webinar was to discuss the challenges of the worst locust outbreak in decades that has devastated the agriculture crops and pastures in many countries in Africa, Middle East and the Indo-Pak Subcontinent. The webinar provided an opportunity for experts to review and discuss possible action plan for locust surveillance for effective control operations.

On behalf of YPARD Pakistan Chapter, Ms. Shahla Salah opened the webinar and presented her welcome note. Mr. Alpha Senon, Why Farm Agricultural Organization moderated the session. President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro was the Chief Guest speaker and presented the status of locust invasion in the ECO Member Countries; Iran and Pakistan.

In his speech, Prof. Soomro called for drastic measures to contain the locust invasion, and if it is not contained in an appropriate response, the impact on crops and vegetation will drive up hunger in regions already struggling with high levels of food insecurity, he said. Prof. Soomro further shared that the desert locust upsurge is threatening food security, nutrition and livelihoods as well as environmental and economic development in Pakistan and Iran.

The situation in both countries is of particular concern given the multiple risks the region is already facing, including the heavy impact of COVID-19, he added. Prof Soomro stressed that desert locust control is indeed an international responsibility, because locusts breed and move over wide areas so that events in one country rapidly affect events in others. Prof. Soomro concluded that improved coordination among the government agencies, FAO-UN and planning for potential locust outbreaks and control actions are very vital.

Later during the webinar, Dr. Muhammad Ishaque Mastoi National Coordinator (Plant Protection) PARC, Dr. Mohammad Ziauddin, Senior Entomologist President, Agri-Watch Society of Pakistan, and Dr. Falak Naz Advisor & Director General - Department of Plant Protection Ministry of National Food Security and Research Pakistan, including other experts also spoke and contributed to the webinar and shared their expert opinion.

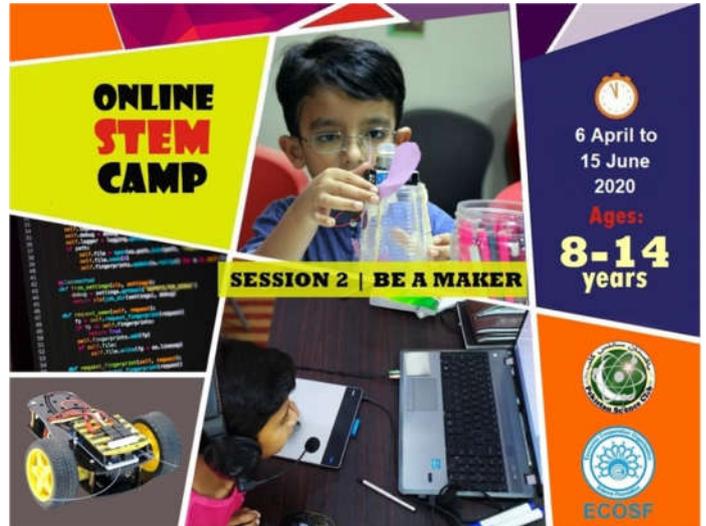


Coping with COVID-19, the Students and Families participated with great zeal in first “Online Family STEM Camp”, jointly launched by ECOSF and PSC

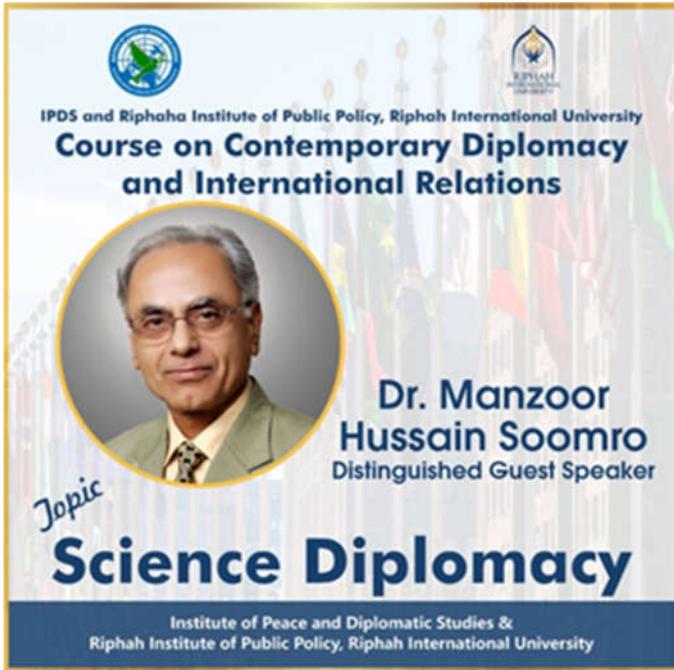
In the prevailing situation of global pandemic of COVID-19, Online Family STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Camp was launched by ECOSF and Pakistan Science Club (PSC) on April 6, 2020 to provide an opportunity to students and families who are stuck at home, to learn and show their scientific talent. Launching online camp was the first experience which proved very successful. Indeed, the online platform was available to everyone with no limits/borders.

During this STEM Camp, three batches were conducted from April 6th to June 15 2020. The age group (8 to 14 years) of students were enrolled accompanied by their parents and guardians. Some materials were provided by PSC and some were arranged by the students/parents themselves. Each session was of 75 minutes and were conducted live from PSC studio on PSC YouTube channel, this included basic theory, concept and step-by-step making of project.

Total of 540 families were registered and around 300 families joined the sessions, approximately 3 to 4 members each family was present. The activities designed were helpful in explaining the fundamental concepts, laws and applications of various scientific and engineering phenomena through the assignments/projects such as Air, Power Rocket, Motor Propeller Car, Rubber Band Powered Helicopter, Automatic Water Feeder for Birds, Robot Hand at Home, Coin Battery at Home, Generate Electricity from Wind Turbine, Astronomical Telescope, DIY Projector, Worm Robot, USB Table Fan, Water Pump, Air Cooler and Hovercraft. The participants also learned to developed the 21st century hands-on skills, team working and cooperation along with exploration.



President ECOSF lectures on Science Diplomacy in a Certificate Course on Contemporary Diplomacy and International Relations organized by IPDS and RIPP



President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro participated as distinguished speaker and delivered his lecture on June 18, 2020 on Science Diplomacy in an online Certificate Course on “Contemporary Diplomacy and International Relations” that ran from April to June 2020. The Certificate Course was jointly organized by the Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies (IPDS) and Riphah Institute of Public Policy (RIPP) of the Riphah University Islamabad. Ms. Farhat Asif the President of IPDS moderated the lecture and presented her welcome note to the speaker and the participants. A large number of diplomats, representatives of strategic think tanks, experts in the international relations, business people and scientists & academicians were participants of the course.

During his lecture, Prof. Soomro emphasized that Science and Technology have immense power to address issues of great importance to all societies, and how the Science and Diplomacy help each other’s objectives. Prof. Soomro elucidated that

technologically advanced countries are now capable of influencing nations by exerting soft-power to achieve their economic goals, and its efficacy and impact is often more persuasive than hard-power.

He further demonstrated the case of soft-power where tech-giants like Google, Huawei, General Electric and Apple: their products are so demand driven with high utility that even rival countries are left with no option but to use them. He shared the examples of CERN, SESAME, the International Space Station and the ICTP in Italy etc. That is how technologically advanced countries use science and technology in combination with persuasive diplomacy to gain their economic goals. Therefore, the developing countries including Pakistan and other ECO Member Countries have to move up the technological ladder to develop capabilities in STI to remain globally competitive.

Prof. Soomro shared that ECOSF is outcome of science diplomacy and the Foundation since its inception is actively promoting science diplomacy not only among the Member States but beyond the region by bringing expertise from advanced countries. He further shared a number of activities and programs that Foundation carries out in collaboration with its leading global STI organization. Our international partners and collaborators have been instrumental in enabling the ECOSF to achieve its intended goals, he added. He also proposed an idea of Science Ambassadors and Fellowship Programmes to promote Science Diplomacy for pursuing national goals as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

At the end, Prof. Soomro responded to participants’ questions and generated an interactive discussion amongst the participants.

ECOSF joined hands together with YPARD and other partners to co-organize the Webinar on COVID-19 and the Challenges of Global Economy

ECOSF partnered with the Young Professionals in Agriculture Research and Development (YPARD) and other partners to co-organize the International Webinar on “COVID-19 and the Challenges of Global Economy” on June 13, 2020. The idea of holding this webinar was to discuss the economic challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic with particular reference to agriculture. A good number of participants, including agricultural scientists, researchers and economists as well as students participated in the webinar. On behalf of ECOSF, Engr. Khalil Raza and Mr. Bilal Mehmood participated in the webinar.

The webinar provided an opportunity for experts to discuss and propose a way forward in response to the economic fall out of the COVID-19 pandemic. On behalf of YPARD Pakistan Chapter, Ms. Shahla Salah opened the webinar and presented her welcome note. While Mr. Alpha Senon, Why Farm Agricultural Organization moderated the session.

Dr. Mohammad Azeem Khan, Chairman Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) delivered his keynote speech during the webinar. Dr. Azeem Khan underscored that Covid-19 pandemic is now a global crisis that affects the global economic structure, while its impact on trade remains a significant challenge. Dr. Azeem Khan further underscored that the countries that rely on food exports, will be hit harder due to disruption of global supply chain. However, Pakistan is in a relatively better position as the country is net exporter and is self-sufficient in many agricultural food crops; which ensures the food security. Although, he further cautioned that the impact of COVID-19 may still be relevant in local farming communities and urban centers in Pakistan due to disruption in logistics and transport especially during the lockdowns.

Later on, many renowned experts/speakers also spoke and presented their perspectives on the devastating impact of COVID-19 on the economy and suggested interventions for the sustainable economic recovery.

International Webinar
Everyone has a role to play in keeping food safe.

COVID-19 and the Challenges of Global Economy
June 13, 2020, at 6:00pm Pakistan Time
Zoom ID: 892-9960-4545

Honorable Welcome Speaker

Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan
Chairman

PARC | Pakistan Agricultural Research Council <http://parc.gov.pk>

PMAS Arid Agriculture University in Collaboration with ECOSF organized the International Biological Diversity Day 2020

Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University (PMASAAU) in collaboration with ECOSF and other partners hosted a live webinar during International Biodiversity Day 2020 with a theme entitled “Nature for Life Solutions” on June 3rd 2020. The webinar provided an opportunity to a large number of participants from various backgrounds to interact and discuss importance of biodiversity for environment and planet.

On behalf of ECOSF, President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro participated as a speaker and presented his talk on “Farmer Education- A prerequisite for Conservation and Enhancement of Agro-biodiversity”. Prof. Soomro highlighted the importance of Farmers Field School (FFS) approach which

can strengthen the participatory method amongst the livestock professionals, farmers and service providers. Prof. Soomro shared that this FFS was institutionalized in Pakistan in 2001 and provided instruments to scale up the farmer-led IPM programme through integration of international and national efforts on various fronts.

International Biological Diversity Day 2020
“Nature for Life Solutions”
3rd June, 2020 at 10:15am

Patron-in-Chief: Prof. Dr. Qamar Uz Zaman,
Vice Chancellor, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi

Organizer: Prof. Dr. Rahmatullah Qureshi,
Department of Botany, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi

Our Distinguished Speakers

Prof. Dr. Manzoor Soomro, ECOSF	Dr. Muhammad Rafique, Ex-DG, PMNH	Prof. Dr. Shafiq Saeed, Dean, MNS-University of Agriculture	Dr. Abdul Aleem Chaudhry, CEO, Aleem Conservation Consultant	Prof. Dr. Rahmatullah Qureshi, PMAS-AAUR

Learn about the Biodiversity of Pakistan and its importance in our lives by joining this virtual International Seminar

Please join us @ <https://meet.google.com/rmu-dxis-fnd> or contact:
Email: rahmatullahq@uaar.edu.pk Cell: +92300-6730496

Earlier Prof. Dr. Rahmatullah Qureshi, Department of Botany, PMASAAU opened the webinar as an organizer and shared key facts on significance of Biodiversity for the mankind and nature. During the Webinar, Dr. Mohammad Rafique – Ex DG Pakistan Museum of Natural History (PMH), Prof. Dr. Shafqat Saeed Dean MNS University of Agriculture Multan and Dr. Abdul Aleem Chaudhary, CEO Aleem Conservation Consulting Pakistan also spoke in the session.

ECOSF participated in Webinar on New Normal and the Future of Education

Ban Ki Moon Centre for Global Citizens, Austria and Yeosijae Future Consensus Institute Korea in joint collaboration organized a live webinar- “New Normal and the Future of Education” on June 18, 2020.

The webinar was chaired by the Centre’s International Advisory Committee Chairman Dr. Won-Soo Yeo-si Kim (former UN Armed Forces High Commissioner), and contributed by valued speakers including Ms. Irina Bokova the former UNESCO Director General and Professor Lee Ju-ho, KDI Graduate School of International Policy and Science (former Minister of Education, Science and Technology), Ms. Monica Fröhler the CEO of the Ban Ki-moon Global Citizens Centre and shared in-depth opinions about the future of education in a new phase with COVID-19. On behalf of ECOSF, President Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro along with his team participated in the webinar and interacted with speakers during the Q&A session.

The panel emphasized that international cooperation is important to turn the current crisis into an opportunity, highlighting that the COVID-19 situation can be used to solve the problems of the existing education as well as the digital divide.



Madam Irina Bokova, former UNESCO Director-General stressed that education is essential for the transition to the new normal era. Education should be a political agenda for rapid response to the pandemic. Madam Bokova further said that kids out of school due to COVID-19 especially the girls, may never get back to school. She emphasized that if the future of education has to be digital, then we all need to come together to tackle the problem of digital divide.

Prof. Lee Joo-ho, former Minister of Education, Science and Technology of Republic of Korea said that we must play a leading role in the international community with new learning models such as digital learning with High-Touch and High-Tech approach. The COVID-19 experience should serve as a springboard for blended learning. He called upon authorities to upgrade the education to high tech & high touch from low tech & low touch. He said Korean education approach could be the model for other countries.

Ms. Monica Fröhler, CEO Ban Ki-moon Global Citizens Centre said that global citizen education is more important than ever. She stressed over to promote the model of Global Citizenship Education even more in tackling the crisis, where education can play a key role in developing resilience, adaptation, substitution & flexibility in communities.

The webinar recording can be accessed at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHJZi6S_KFg&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR1y56FDsKjIMesuYcQ7_pmWuY3lLy1M5S3MZr4s4yXLZfAzrqb_Lwe6F1

UNESCO Jakarta Office Organized a Webinar on Sustainability Insight # 2: Fostering Partnerships for Managing Water-Related Disasters.

UNESCO Jakarta Office organized the second session of the “Sustainability Insight” on 29 June 2020. In this series, UNESCO Jakarta invites one implementing partner at a time and learn from their knowledge, experience, and view of the post-pandemic new normal.

As a guest of the second session, UNESCO Jakarta invited Prof. Kuniyoshi Takeuchi, a long-time contributor of the UNESCO International Hydrological programme (IHP) in the Asia Pacific region. President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro and Scientific Officer Engr. Khalil Raza participated in the webinar.

Prof. Shahbaz Khan, Director of UNESCO Office in Jakarta and Regional Bureau for Science invited Prof. Kuniyoshi Takeuchi, Professor Emeritus of Yamanashi University to share his story of the early days of UNESCO International Hydrological Programme Regional Steering Committee (IHP-RSC) and the achievement of IHP-RSC. It is also important to mention that Prof. Takeuchi has also served as the Director, International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management (ICHARM) under the auspices of UNESCO,



Prof. Takeuchi introduced Catalogue of Rivers and Catalogue of Hydrologic Analysis (CHA) as important products of the IHP-RSC, which strengthened the national and regional collaboration throughout the process and earned international recognition among IHP community.

In addition, Prof. Takeuchi emphasized the value of trans-disciplinary approach, which should be practical, transparent, and engaged by stakeholders at different levels of governance in his view. He expects the UNESCO Jakarta, IHP to take a leading role in promoting trans-disciplinary approach.

The recorded video is available at https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=274303350306479&ref=watch_permalink

Prof. Manzoor Soomro presides over the Inaugural Meeting of Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on Agriculture of the Giga Group of Companies

The first and inaugural meeting of the Giga Group of Companies’ Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on Agriculture was held on 10 June 2020 at Al-Ghurair Offices in DHA-2, Islamabad. The meeting was presided over by Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro as the TAC President. Other Members of TAC who attended the meeting included; Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan, Chairman of Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC); Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, Chairman PCRWR; Dr. Muhammad Afzal, National Expert and Coordinator FAO Pakistan; Dr. Attaullah Khan, DG PARC Karachi. From the Giga Group, the Chairman of the Group, Mr. M. Amin Giga Pardesi, Lt. Col. (Retd.) Waqar Haider; Mr. Yaqoob Mehanti CEO; Lt. Col. (Retd) Asad Nawaz and Maj. (Retd) Mohsin Jamil joined the 1st TAC meeting.

Professor Manzoor H. Soomro in his official positions as well as in personal capacity has always been pursuing and promoting the University-R&D-Industry Cooperation; and this endeavour is in line with his same resolve that he has volunteered to nurture the initiative of the Giga Group of Companies in Pakistan.

During the meeting, Lt. Col. (Retd) Waqar Haider presented the Agriculture Vision of Giga Group, mainly focusing on the Cultivation of Sweet Sorghum crop in desert areas of Pakistan. After the presentation, a detailed discussion was initiated by Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro and following decisions were agreed upon/taken.

1. FELDA model adopted by Indonesia be considered for adoption in Thar Area for participation of local farmers. Chairman PARC/ DG, PARC, Karachi will further crystallize and suggest the model for discussion /adoption.
2. Water and Soil profiling of Cholistan and Thar Deserts may be shared with Giga Group.
3. Showcasing of Sweet Sorghum Crop model through AZRI Umerkot, Sindh is essential for farmers’ motivation to participate in the project.
4. Feasibility study of Sweet Sorghum Cultivation be prepared and presented during next meeting of the committee

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by the Chairman of Giga Group of Companies for the attendance of TAC members, wholehearted participation and their valued input and guidelines.

UNESCO arranges a webinar on “Reigniting Responsible Tourism”

Keeping in view the time of transformation, challenging the relationships with nature, community and our ways of living and working, UNESCO organized a webinar entitled “Reigniting Response Tourism” on 25 June 2020. The webinar was one of the series designed by UNESCO to help the Man and Biospheres (MAB) network to inspire and engage key biosphere stakeholders at this time of transformation. The webinar was moderated by Mr. Laurie Bennet of UNESCO and attended by the experts, environmentalists, nature lovers and others from different countries of the world. ECOSF was represented by Ghulam Abbas, Assistant Director.



An introduction of MAB programme of UNESCO was made. According to the webinar title, it was shared that the tourism plays a vital role in promoting various aspects of our daily life. Thus, it would be appropriate to engage tour operators to play their role for protecting the nature and improve climate change. During the webinar, two polls were conducted and different questions were posed in the polls. It was concluded in the polls that Tour Operators can engage restore the relationship between people and nature.

Breakout Rooms were also created where different groups joined and shared their views. Assistant Director ECOSF also joined a group and expressed that there is a good percentage of youth population world over who are also very energetic and equipped with state of the art technologies and active on social media, thus, it would bring a great impact if the youth is taken on board to promote awareness about climate change in the society. The suggestion was well praised in the room. It is pertinent to mention that ECOSF has been promoting the MAB programme of Biosphere Reserves in ECO member countries through organizing Network meetings and training workshops.

Condolence Message of the President ECOSF on the sad demise of Prof. Nisar Ahmed Siddiqui, Vice Chancellor Sukkur IBA University

I am extremely saddened to hear about the departure of my very good friend Professor Nisar Siddiqui for his eternal abode! May God bless his soul in heavens - Aameen.

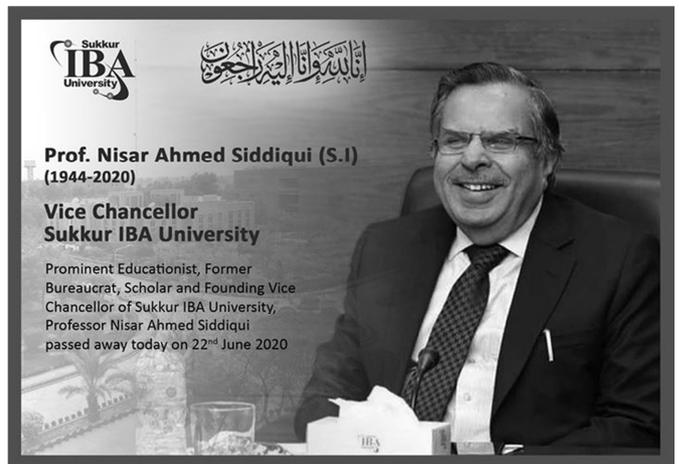
I would like to convey my deepest condolences on the sad demise of the Prof. Nisar Ahmed Siddique to his family, friends and entire Sukkur IBA fraternity. Prof. Siddiqui has been instrumental and made tremendous impact on education sector of Pakistan, particularly Sindh by nurturing and leading high-quality educational institutions right from primary level to tertiary education level.

Prof. Siddiqui was extremely committed and dedicated to promoting education in Pakistan, providing opportunities for equitable and quality schooling for students particularly in the marginalized areas of rural Sindh and rural communities from across Pakistan. His contributions in the shape of Community Colleges & Schools, and its linkages for quality higher education is an excellent model for the rest of Pakistani Universities.

I had an exclusive privilege of working with Prof. Siddiqui on many accounts. We worked directly for over 10 years on training of teachers of Community Colleges and Sukkur IBA schools and their capacity building using the Inquiry Based Science Education-IBSE approach. Our informal collaboration culminated in a recently signed MoU to take the expertise of Sukkur IBA University to other ECO Member Countries for teachers training and capacity building.

Indeed, we all have to return to The Creator, but his departure for eternal abode is such a great loss for education community of Pakistan; however, his strong influence in the field of education will continue to be felt for many decades to come. May Allah Pak grant him a high rank in Jannah and give strength to his family to bear this irreversible loss - Aameen.

Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro
President ECO Science Foundation



HEC held Condolence Reference for Prof. Nisar Ahmed Siddique: Participants emphasized that his legacy at Sukkur IBA must continue

Islamabad, June 28, 2020: A special online condolence reference was held on Sunday for late Prof. Nisar Ahmed Siddiqui, a renowned educationist and founder Vice Chancellor of Sukkur Institute of Business Administration (IBA) who passed away on June 22, 2020. He was a former senior civil servant with masters from MIT Boston USA.

Dr. Fateh Marri, Executive Director HEC, conducted the session. Among many other scholars, it was also attended by Dr. Ishrat Husain, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Institutional Reforms and Austerity; Tariq Banuri, Chairman HEC; Ms. Naheed Durani, Federal Secretary Climate Change; Fazulliah Qureshi, former Federal Secretary; Dr. A. Q. Mughal former Chairman UGC and ED, HEC, and many other friends and colleagues of Prof. Siddiqui including the President ECOSF Prof. Manzoor Soomro.

Prof. Nisar Siddiqui, who was also a Member of the HEC's governing body as representative of the Government of Sindh, became the Director of Sukkur Institute of Business Administration in 2004, after gaining wide experience in management, administration and academia at national and international levels. Later he became, founder VC of Sukkur IBA University which is now considered among leading institutions of higher learning in Pakistan.

In his remarks, Dr. Ishrat Husain said that the best way to remember Prof. Siddiqui is to sustain and improve his institution. "His personality was all about leadership, integrity, compassion and commitment, so his successor will have to keep these things in mind and to be strictly followed if the institution has to move forward as Prof. Siddiqui envisioned." Dr. Ishrat said that if the team at Sukkur IBA is not motivated, it will disperse. He emphasized that this is not a 9-5 job, it needs commitment and real leadership. He said that now employers, while hiring, do not differentiate between IBA Karachi and Sukkur IBA.

Chairman HEC Tariq Banuri said that Mr. Siddiqui was one of the most respected academic leaders in the country who had developed and introduced new approaches into education, enhanced the standard of service to society, and transformed a nascent institute to a leading national university. He assured that every possible effort will be made to continue Prof. Siddiqui's legacy.

Ms. Naheed Shah Durrani, Federal Secretary, Climate Change Division said that filling the void created by departure of Prof. Siddiqui was a big challenge. While praying for his family, faculty, staff and students, she said that Prof. Siddiqui was Sir Syed of his time. "He was an amazing human being, a teacher, an effective team manager, a doer and a visionary leader. He has left priceless contributions," she said.

Dr. A. Q. Mughal, former Chairman, University Grants Commission and former ED HEC shared an old memory with Prof. Siddiqui when during a visit to US institutions, the latter was focusing on the functioning of community colleges in US. "He not only observed their system keenly but, through his commitment, implemented the same in his area. Nobody could believe that such an institution can be built and run in Sukkur."

Dr. Raza Bhatti, Vice Chancellor, Shaikh Ayaz University, Shikarpur and former Member (Operations) HEC said that Sukkur IBA has three big distinctions from other universities in Pakistan. These are community colleges, a joint programme with OGDCL to bring poor students from all over Pakistan and the energy conservation at Sukkur IBA.

Professor Bhawani Shankar Chowdhry recited his poem that highlighted and galvanised the Sukkur IBA University and its Vice Chancellor (Late) Professor Nisar Siddiqui. Mr. Zahid Hussain Khand, Registrar, Sukkur IBA said that Prof. Siddiqui was their spiritual father. He gave a brief history of how a small institute affiliated with IBA Karachi became an independent and leading institution. "It was his dream to uplift the students who were not good in studies or could not afford education. His dedicated efforts led to transformation of families. He has created a team, including faculty and staff who are not only highly qualified but highly motivated to serve their community. Now his replacement is of utmost importance for future of this institution."

Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro, President, ECO Science Foundation, said that Prof. Nisar Siddiqui was a man with a vision and strategy. "In addition to university education, he gave due importance to school education as well as university-industry linkages and provided a working model of School-University-Industry-Community", he said.

Dr. Fateh Marri thanked all participants for taking out time on Sunday, discussing upcoming challenges of Sukkur IBA and how these can be collectively addressed. He said that Prof. Nisar Ahmed Siddiqui's commitment, foresight and leadership led Sukkur IBA to deliver high quality teaching, applied research, and focused training and capacity development. Imtiaz Solangi, Commissioner, Income Tax, Ehsan Laghari, former MD SIDA, Naseer Memon, MD, Thar Foundation, Dr. Juanid Alam Memon, PIDE, Islamabad and others spoke on the occasion.

1150th Anniversary of Great Oriental Thinker Abu Nasr al-Farabi Celebrated

Institute of Diplomacy and Peace Studies (IPDS), one of the collaborators of the ECO Science Foundation celebrated the 1150th Anniversary of Great Oriental Thinker Abu Nasr al-Farabi (872 AD – 950 AD) and featured his legacy in its monthly magazine The Diplomatic Insights published by the institute.



Abu-Nasr al-Farabi was born in present day Kazakhstan who was a renowned philosopher and jurist who wrote in the fields of politics, philosophy, metaphysics, ethics and logic whose name, heritage and life and philosophy are asset for the entire humanity. Al-Farabi is widely regarded as the father of philosophy within the Islamic World. The works of Al-Farabi make us appreciate his stature as an original philosopher and innovative thinker whose accomplishments extend across multi-disciplinary fields of knowledge and thought.

PIDE Organized a Webinar on “Doing Health Policy Better” President ECOSF was in attendance

A webinar entitled “Doing Health Policy Better” was organized by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad, Pakistan on 29 June 2020. The participants comprised of health care /public health experts, researchers, scientists, health educators and the students attended it. Prof. Manzoor H. Soomro, President ECOSF participated in the event.

PIDE is organizing a WEBINAR on
“DOING HEALTH POLICY BETTER”

CONCEPT NOTE
 To respond to a covid- like situation , a reasonably well functioning health services system technically and operationally is essential. It seems we do not have one. What do we have ? Can it do the job?. What is its structure and function and if that serves the purpose it is meant to?

GUEST SPEAKER
Dr. Samia Altaf
 Author, Physician and Public health specialist, Former Senior Advisor to USAID

MODERATOR
Dr. Saima Bashir
 (Senior Research Demographer, PIDE)

HOST
Dr. Nadeem ul Haque
 (VC,PIDE)

DR. SAMIA ALTAF WILL REFLECT ON :

1. Understanding Pakistan's Health Care System
2. Learning from the world
3. How do we change and reform
4. Roles of public and private sectors
5. Institutional mapping and governance
6. Personal and public responsibilities
7. Health insurance and personal cost

Monday, June 29, 2020 at 3:00-5:00PM

www.pide.org.pk @PIDEpk PIDE Official PIDE Islamabad

Dr. Nadeem ul Haq Vice Chancellor of PIDE gave an introduction and said that we are in the middle of the COVID-19 but yet a lot needs to be done in the health sector. He introduced guest speaker of the webinar Dr. Samia Altaf, a Public Health Specialist. Dr. Altaf has worked in Pakistan as well as in overseas. She has thorough understanding of the health system of Pakistan and USA and She has worked in health care system at all level at all area, such as policy, programme designing, evaluation and monitoring etc. Later, he invited the experts to deliver their talks.

Dr. Samia shared that there are many issues of public health ranging from sanitation, hygiene, primary care, healthcare funding, etc. She emphasized that that USA, Europe, and many countries are struggling due to excessive healthcare cost during the current pandemic. Every country has own health care training programme for the personnel so different approaches are being taken to tackle the pandemic.

Dr. Altaf further called for adequate investment in public health, education, nutrition, housing and infrastructure. It is important because if the communities remain healthy there will be less burden on the healthcare system. She was of the opinion that privatization of health services may not be a good idea, as it may create burden on the country as well as on the

common man.

She also expressed that health budget in the world including Pakistan is big challenge. USA spends 18% of its GDP on health care which is the highest in the world, whereas, Denmark spends 10% and Finland 9% but despite less spending than USA, the health care system of Denmark and Finland are much better in comparison of USA. She said that it’s a dilemma that almost 60% health budget of Pakistan goes unutilized during the fiscal year and this has been the trend since last 20 years. It is unfortunate that Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and other regional countries are doing better than Pakistan.

At the end, the questions/answers session was also held.

Upcoming Events posted on ECOSF website and Facebook page**IPBES podcast: Nature Insight - Speed Dating with the Future**

ECOSF is an accredited Observer/Stakeholder of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), which entitles the Foundation to nominate experts for various IPBES programmes. IPBES is a UN Scientific Organization with its secretariat in Bonn Germany meant for assessment of scientific facts & policies regarding biodiversity and ecosystem service.

In this context, an explanatory letter of Executive Secretary IPBES pertaining to **IPBES podcast: Nature Insight - Speed Dating with the Future** is shared to grab the opportunity/information about Nature.

Read More: <http://ecosf.org/Nature-Insight>

Call for contributions on indigenous and local knowledge

The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) is launching a “call for contributions on indigenous and local knowledge”, to invite Indigenous peoples and local communities from all over the world to support the three ongoing IPBES assessments:

1. The assessment of the sustainable use of wild species
2. The assessment on diverse conceptualisations of multiple values of nature
3. The assessment of invasive alien species

The IPBES Plenary, in decision IPBES-5/1, approved an approach to recognizing and working with indigenous and local knowledge in IPBES (available here), giving IPBES an ambitious and ground-breaking process for bringing indigenous and local knowledge to the core of large-scale assessments. The present “call for contributions” is part of the activities undertaken by IPBES to implement this approach.

Contributions from indigenous peoples and local communities will help assessment authors to reflect in the assessments the role of indigenous and local knowledge, practices, values and actions in biodiversity conservation, as well as current challenges faced by indigenous peoples and local communities, and ways forward. Through the assessments, this information can be brought to the attention of policy-makers.

We are hoping to receive materials that express community-based knowledge, practices, values, needs, and/or experiences related to one or more of the assessments. Materials can be submitted in national or local languages. We also welcome recommendations of individuals, communities, organizations and networks that could engage in the development of the assessments as reviewers or contributing authors.

To read more about the call for contributions and to participate, please follow this link: <https://ipbes.net/iik-global-survey>.

The deadline for the call is: **10 July 2020**

IPBES Call for Nominations: Workshop on Biodiversity and Pandemics

Considering the extraordinary situation caused by the novel Coronavirus and given the role, the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) has announced the Call for nominations of scientists/experts to participate in “**The Workshop on Biodiversity and Pandemics**” to be held from **27-31 July 2020 virtually**.

The workshop will be held as a “Platform Workshop” in accordance with IPBES procedures. It will review evidence regarding the origin of infectious diseases transmitted from wild animals, the relationship between pandemics and biodiversity, in particular the drivers of pandemics and options for action related to biodiversity and ecosystem services, in the context of the current crisis and the prevention of future outbreaks.

For more details, please click on the link:

[IPBES Call for Nominations - Workshop on Biodiversity and Pandemics \(27-31 Jul 2020\).pdf](#)