

World Environment Day- 2021

Theme of the Year: Preventing, halting, and reversing the degradation of ecosystems worldwide.

‘Role of indigenous knowledge, people, and communities in terrestrial ecosystem restoration’

**On Monday, June 07, 2021, 3:00pm-5:00pm at the
Auditorium of the University of Balochistan**

Meeting Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_4gwU4TibTAGCAVL8wH23lg

The United Nations General Assembly in its 6th March 2019 Resolution decided to observe ‘The Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030)’. The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration is a rallying call for the protection and revival of ecosystems all around the world, for the benefit of people and nature. It aims to halt the degradation of ecosystems and restore them to achieve global goals. Only with healthy ecosystems we can enhance people’s livelihoods, counteract climate change, and stop the collapse of biodiversity. The UN Decade runs from 2021 through 2030, which is also the deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals and the timeline scientists have identified as the last chance to prevent catastrophic climate change. Restoration is a monumental task. Over the next ten years, every action counts. Every single day. Every country, company, organization, and individual have a role to play. Against a backdrop of environmental crisis, the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration is a chance to revive the natural world that supports us all. A decade may sound like a long time. But it is these next ten years that scientists say will count most in the fight to avert climate change and the loss of millions of species. The 10 key strategic actions devised by the United Nations which will help restore ecosystem include: 1) Empowering a global movement, 2) financing restoration on the ground, 3) setting the right incentives, 4) celebrating leadership that takes the lead in restoration, 5) shifting behaviors towards ecosystems, 6) investing in research in resilience and sustainability of ecosystems, 7) building capacity of diverse stakeholders in ecosystem, 8) Celebrating a culture of restoration of ecosystems through art, music and other cultural entities, 9) building up the next generation giving importance to youth, and 10) Listening and learning processes.

Through the strategic actions we need to restore ecosystem from forests and farmlands to freshwater, oceans and coasts, mountain, grasslands, shrublands, peatlands and urban lands with a view that the vitality and diversity of Earth’s ecosystems are the basis of human prosperity and well-being. Unfortunately, we are degrading these precious resources in alarming ways. The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration is an opportunity to help turn the tide and give people and nature a sustainable future.

While celebrating the World Environment Day and observing the UN Decade commitments, the world needs to restore oceans and coasts by reducing pressure on marine ecosystems. There is a dire need of increasing mangroves cover, both naturally and by re-seeding or transplanting important species. Pakistan being a party to the international Conventions under the United Nations is committed to fulfill

its obligations related to protection of natural environment and the components thereof within its territory.

Pakistan is taking steps to declare marine and terrestrial protected areas because it is committed to global and national obligation towards ecosystems restoration for good of the country and the globe. Pakistan is signatory to various conventions and treaties to protect environment and biodiversity including marine and coastal biodiversity. It further plans to declare more areas as Marine Protected Area (MPA) as a result of further consultative meetings with custodian communities, provincial governments and other interest groups as the leadership in Pakistan believes that until we prioritize marine and coastal ecosystem restoration, we cannot make our development sustainable and even cannot strengthen economy and bring about prosperity.

When we talk about ecosystem restoration, we cannot forget that it has been indigenous knowledge that guided local communities live with nature and protect their environment. Since people depend on nature for their lives, food, livelihoods and shelter, they know how to benefit from the natural resources through sustainably acceptable levels but it has been commercialization and extractive practices that endanger the environment and nature. When extraction without replenishment of the nature goes unabated, then the nature gets hurt and lives and livelihoods of those who depend on nature through their traditional sustainable practices get suffered. Here we have been suffering from the process of extraction of natural resources without restoring ecosystems. No doubt that there has been technological and digital development but without protecting indigenous knowledge, ensuring people's pro-nature practices and enhanced role of communities in conservation and protection, we cannot really restore terrestrial ecosystems and conserve our resources. There is a need to discuss in details the **Role of indigenous knowledge, people, and communities in terrestrial ecosystem restoration** to reach an appropriate strategy to cope with these challenges.