

Media Update-2

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FAO

PRESS RELEASE

FAO presents Forest and Wildlife Action Plan for Sindh to fight climate change, food insecurity and malnutrition

Hyderabad (18/2/2022): A public consultation jointly organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Forest and Wildlife Department, Government of Sindh, saw participants from government, the conservation movement, academics, researchers, progressive farmers, and representatives from national and international organizations discussing the way forward for the fragile forests sector under the Sindh Agriculture Policy 2018-2030.

The government's draft Action Plan for Forests and Wildlife aims to help address all four objectives of the Sindh Agriculture Policy. It highlights the major challenges faced by the sector, which include extensive loss of forested lands to other uses, and reduced water availability in a changed climate scenario. Recommendations are included that aim to grow the forest products industry in Sindh; contribute to poverty reduction, food security and nutrition; and sustain natural resources in the province, including protecting and rebuilding biodiversity.

FAO Pakistan, through European Union-assisted Food Security and Nutrition Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation (FIRST) programme, is seeking to help deepen the dialogue between different sectors with a stake in food security, through its policy assistance service, supporting evidence-based decision making and analysis of proposed policy frameworks and action plans. In Sindh, it has helped build capacity of the government officials of the Forest and Wildlife Department over 2019-2021 in formulating its action plan, with a view to making the case for more targeted investment in the forest and wildlife sector to meet modern requirements for sustainably produced forest products

and ecosystem services, including clean water and well-managed wildlife reserves.

Head of FAO's Sindh Provincial Program, Ms. Genevieve Hussain, pointed out that forests can strongly contribute to food security and nutrition through their provision of edible forest and wildlife products. She said that good tenure governance for forested areas was important for providing secure forest-based livelihoods. She highlighted that forests generate income for local people and provide essential ecosystem services that support agriculture by regulating water flows, stabilizing soils, maintaining soil fertility, regulating local climates and providing habitat for both pollinators and predators of agricultural pests.

Additional Secretary (Technical) Sindh Forest and Wildlife, Dr. Abdul Jabbar Qazi, expressed his appreciation for the efforts of FAO in providing policy assistance to formulate an Action Plan for forests and wildlife in Sindh. As Chief Conservator Riverine and Inland Forest Sindh, he said that more appropriate use and care of the riverine forest zones was badly needed, for both commercial and environmental reasons.

Mr. Hyder Raza Khan, Conservator of Social Forestry, explained the current status of Sindh forests and wildlife, while Mr Khawar Parvez Awan, FAO Policy Specialist, presented the proposed Action Plan for the Sindh Forest and Wildlife sector. After today's public consultation, the Forest and Wildlife Action Plan will be presented before the Sindh Agriculture Policy Implementation Commission (SAPIC) for its endorsement, and will inform budgetary priorities in the coming year, they said.
