

Media Update

22 March 2021

United Nations

SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

--

MESSAGE ON WORLD METEOROLOGICAL DAY

23 March 2021

The ocean and the atmosphere are two titans of the Earth system.

Carefully balanced and inextricably connected, the relationship between air and sea dictates weather and climate around the globe.

Climate change is disrupting this delicate equilibrium.

Carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels has heated our ocean to record temperatures, making it more acidic and increasingly depriving it of oxygen.

These changes are harming marine ecosystems and reducing the ocean's ability to sustain the hundreds of millions of people who depend on it.

Sea-level rise has accelerated because of melting glaciers and ice caps, threatening coastal megacities and small island nations alike.

Science is also revealing how melting could affect mighty ocean currents, further exacerbating climate disruption.

Scientific research and better ocean observations are increasing our understanding of the changes taking place.

But, as we embark on the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, big gaps remain.

That is why this year's World Meteorological Day highlights the theme of the "Ocean, our Climate and Weather".

Only by understanding and protecting our planet can we ensure a sustainable future for humanity.

FAO PRESS RELEASE

FAO marks International Water and Forest Day 2021

ISLAMABAD 22 March 2021: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations marked World Water and Forest day in a joint event held with IUCN and Arid Agriculture University. The event was attended by experts from NGOs, INGOs , academia and Ministry of Climate Change.

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, Mr. Malik Amin Aslam speaking at the event highlighted the government's efforts in forest restoration in the country. He stated that the government has started ten-billion trees tsunami project in twelve ecological zones of the country, which is targeting over a million hectare of forest restoration. He said that the initiatives are people centered projects, which has created half a million green jobs. The restoration of forests go hand in hand with the development and wellbeing of the people living in those areas. This vision of Pakistan of planting ten billion trees is not just about timber, it's about the people who live in these areas and befitting from these initiatives in various ways, he added. A recent example is Mangroves in the south of Pakistan, which has increased by 300%, under this project, which is employing rural women folk along the coastlines, are getting jobs as protectors of these mangroves. He further stated that forest in Pakistan is not only necessary but they are essential for the wellbeing of the locals living there.

Speaking at the event, FAO Representative a.i Pakistan, Rebekah Bell stated that forest play important role in the environment; preventing climate change and improving local livelihoods. However, in many countries including Pakistan, the forest resource and related ecosystem are under a serious threat

of degradation. The situation demands a business as usual approach is no longer an option for managing forests and related resources in the current climate change context. The paradigm shift requires the identification, scaling up best practices and knowledge sharing by all partners. Pakistan is the fifth most climate-impacted country in the world and this is negatively affecting the livelihoods of the communities especially those living in the mountain areas of the country and who rely on forest ecosystems for their livelihoods. The density of the majority of Pakistan's forest is under 70% and requires efforts from all to bring these forests back to their potential by applying global best practices of Natural Resource Management, she said.

She further stated that FAO Pakistan is implementing number of projects, which contribute significantly to the government of Pakistan's efforts for forest restoration. The Chilgoza GEF funded project jointly implemented by FAO and the Ministry of Climate Change seeks to reverse forest degradation and deforestation in high conservation Chilgoza pine forest. The project have engaged the local communities in the provinces to improve forest protection, conservation and find new value addition outcomes of the forest products. An innovative approach of using the GIS based monitoring for the forestry resources through FAO collect earth tool is a significant step in introduction of advances tools and systems in forest management. For a successful natural resource management, integrated participatory approach is required to achieve sustainable results, she said.
