

Media Update-2

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PRESS RELEASE

FAO Empowering Rural Women to Achieve Food Security and Nutrition

Quetta – Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Representative in Pakistan a.i. Ms. Rebekah Ball and Minister for Livestock and Environment, Mr. Mitta Khan Kakar inaugurated water facilities in district Zhob, Balochistan. The inauguration ceremony was also attended by government officials from agriculture and livestock departments and the farming communities of district Zhob.

While speaking at the inauguration ceremony, FAO Representative in Pakistan a.i. Ms. Rebekah Bell said that these water facilities are the integral part of the Integrated Household Food Systems (IHFS), this also includes kitchen gardening, homestead poultry production and homestead dairy production. These IHFS are serving as nutrition education intervention, which are especially designed for the pregnant and/or lactating women and will help tackle child stunting and wasting through nutrition sensitive agriculture interventions.

She further said that contribution of women to agricultural development should be maximized by implementing solutions to the specific social, economic, legal and cultural problems they encounter, attention should be paid to strengthen the economic dimension of women's work in rural areas. FAO is playing a significant role to promote gender equality and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, she said.

The Minister for Livestock and Environment, Mr. Mitta Khan Kakar appreciated the efforts of FAO in providing guidance and support to the communities for the upscaling of proper nutrition education and awareness at all levels. He said

that this particular intervention will also provide a source of clean drinking water and will decrease the burden of rural women who fetch water from far-flung areas. He further stated that the government of Balochistan is committed to invest on economic and social empowerment of women and ensures their rights in decision-making, access to resources and equal participation in employment opportunities.

FAO team also appraised the government officials and farmers on USAID funded horticulture and the European Union funded GRASP projects which aim to reduce poverty, enhance sustainability and strengthening small scale agribusiness in horticulture and livestock sectors.

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PRESS RELEASE

FAO and Forest Department Improving Livelihoods through Restoration of Chilgoza Pine Forest in Balochistan

Quetta – Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Representative in Pakistan a.i. Ms. Rebekah Bell and Secretary Forest and Wildlife Mr. Mohammad Siddique Mandokhel inaugurated plantation campaign by planting chilgoza pine saplings under the project “Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Chilgoza Pine Forest in Pakistan” in District Sherani, Balochistan. The project is funded by the Global Environment Facility and implemented under the oversight of the Ministry of Climate Change. Furthermore, the project is additionally contributing 23 million trees to the Ten Billion Trees Programme of MoCC.

The Chilgoza project in Balochistan is working to restore and protect a unique and threatened ecosystem – chilgoza pine forests –situated in district Sherani along Takht e Suleman range at elevations of 6000 to 7000 feet above sea level. These forests, which include a mix of chilgoza pine trees as well as other species of coniferous trees hold tremendous importance from both ecological and economic perspectives.

FAO Representative a.i in Pakistan, Rebekah Bell said that the FAO under GEF funded Chilgoza project, with the support of forest department is working to support sustainable management of the pine nut ecosystem through number of initiatives to conserve pine nut forest in Pakistan. She said that the Chilgoza project is working with local communities to enable them to capture a greater share of the revenue from post-harvest processing of the chilgoza nuts. Provision of Chilgoza processing unit, harvesting toolkits and development of local processing and value-added capacity will provide further incentives to sustainably manage the chilgoza ecosystem in Balochistan.

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary Forest and Wildlife Mr. Mohammad Siddique Mandokhel said that for centuries, our ancestors have protected the natural ecosystems by sustainably using and managing natural resources, but it is unfortunate that we are losing our precious natural resources due to our negligence. He further stated that the Forest Department is working on conservation and development of natural resources and sustainable usage through stakeholders participation to ensure healthy environment, this includes management of existing forests, management of watershed to conserve soil and water, management of rangelands to boost production of forage and livestock, and education of public and other departments for tree plantation and provision of technical & advisory services.

Assistant FAO Representative Program, Aamir Irshad said that the project will continue to contribute by improving the environment, enhance resilience and creating livelihoods opportunities in Balochistan. He also urged the local community to plant maximum saplings to make the country green and said that it is a responsibility of everyone to restore the sustainable action needed to protect our natural resources and make the tree plantation campaign successful.

Natural Resource Management Advisor of FAO, Faizul Bari said that FAO with the support of Forest Department is conserving pine nut forests in Balochistan. He said that the Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) sites are being conserved with the help of local communities by signing terms of partnerships with them. Together with the Forest Department, FAO has employed care takers for ANR sites. These care takers ‘Nighebans’ are taking appropriate actions to guard their assigned ANR sites from grazing and controlling illicit cutting of trees.

The GEF funded project contributes to the restoration, protection and sustainable management of Chilgoza pine forests to provide global

environmental benefits as well as enhanced resilience and livelihoods to local stakeholders. The project focuses on the improved and sustainable management of Chilgoza forests while strengthening the National and Provincial Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) Policies and Legal Framework.
