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**PAKISTAN**

# Celebrations of International Day for Biological Diversity Shamozai Valley, Swat-Pakistan

21-22 May, 2015



22 MAY 2015  
INTERNATIONAL DAY  
FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY  
BIODIVERSITY FOR SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT



## 1. BACKGROUND

The International Biodiversity Day (IBD) occurs annually on May 22nd. The theme for IBD 2015 was “Biodiversity for Sustainable Development”.

Keeping this in mind, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Wildlife Department with the support of BKP-Project have decided to celebrate the International Biodiversity Day at school level in Swat to raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity to life and promote its sustainable use.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVENTS

- Biodiversity and ecosystem services essentially contribute to human life and wellbeing in a number of ways. It is important to save this biodiversity for our future benefit. In order to make the youth aware of its importance, the events aimed at achieving the following objectives:
- To celebrate the International Biodiversity Day to spread the message of conservation of biodiversity.
- To promote awareness of biodiversity conservation and other environmental issues among schoolchildren.

## 3. EVENTS PROCEEDINGS

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Wildlife Department celebrated the International Day for Biological Diversity in Swat by organizing two separate awareness raising events i.e. puppet show, environmental game, drawing competition and distribution of environmental books, among male and female students. Govt. High School (Boys) Khazana and Govt. Girls High School Zarkhela Shamoza, Swat were identified for the events to increase the level of understanding of the students on biodiversity so; they can further convey the message to others. Two separate events were arranged both for male & female students jointly by the, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Wildlife Department and Education Department. Around 1150 students from the selected government schools were enthralled with the performance of the puppets and other awareness raising activities on International Day for Biodiversity.

It was the first awareness raising activity of its kind on biodiversity in the area which guided the students about biodiversity, environment and other related issues leaving a positive message in the student’s minds.

The show depicted various animated videos on environment, water use and cleanliness and presented skits in an interactive and entertaining way. Syed Fazal Baqi Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Wildlife Department in his welcome address highlighted the objective to



Figure 1. Divisional Forest Officer Wildlife Swat Syed Fazal Baqi communicating the importance of saving biodiversity on International Biodiversity Day

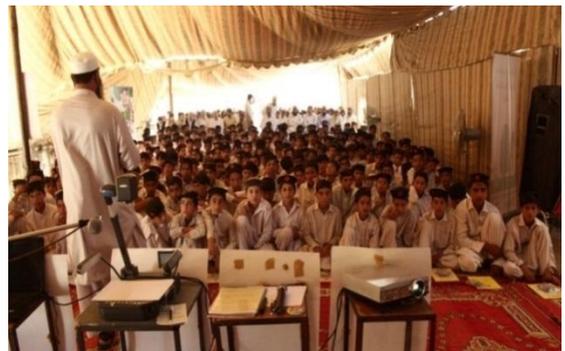


Figure 2. Youth are the change agents for biodiversity conservation. View of students attending the

celebrate the Biodiversity Day. He said Biodiversity is the variety of different types of life found on earth and their ecosystem and is extremely important to people and for healthy ecosystems. "Swat valley is rich in biodiversity and there is a dire need to protect and conserve it, so each of you must convey this message to five other people to strengthen awareness on biodiversity" he added. During the events the experts emphasized to protect biodiversity for future generation of the country by adopting the practical measures i.e. reforestations with local forest plants, to control of pollution, conserve wildlife, and keep the environment clean from all kind of pollutions. Through showing animated videos the message was clearly conveyed to the students that biodiversity provides different services to the people especially to majority of the population in the rural areas in the form of food, clean water and air, medicines, and shelter.



Figure 3. Youth is the future of biodiversity. View of International Day for Biodiversity celebration at Govt. girl's high school Zarkhela Shamoza Swat.

A presentation on making cartoons was also delivered followed by a painting competition among the students. The students participated in the environmental games with the puppets and enjoyed the unique activity. The response from the students to the questions asked by the moderator and wildlife department experts on biodiversity were really encouraging indicated that the message was well received by students. At the end, story books, sketch books and other information materials on biodiversity and environment were distributed among the students. On the occasion the host took a pledge from the children that they would care about the environment, trees flora and fauna and would play their key role in conservation of biodiversity.



Figure 4. Happy faces of the students, enjoying the puppet show on International Biodiversity Day at Swat



Figure 5. Students are participating in drawing competition



Pir Mehr Ali Shah  
**Arid Agriculture**  
University Rawalpindi

## International Biodiversity Day Celebrated at PMAS-AAUR



International Biological Diversity Day celebrated at Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR) by organizing a seminar, here on Friday, with the objective to raise awareness on biodiversity related issues and its significance.

Seminar was organized by the Department of Environmental Sciences in collaboration with ICIMOD, National Cleaner Production Center and Technology Times, with this year theme "Biodiversity for Sustainable Development. On the occasion, PMAS-AAUR Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Rai Niaz Ahmad was the chief guest and other participants were Dr. Abdul Wahid Jasra Country representative ICIMOD, Dr. Muhammad Khursheed DG Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency, Prof. Dr. Tariq Mahmood (Advisor R&D HEC), scientists from various organizations, representatives of environment and wildlife conservation agencies as well as a large number of students and teachers from University.

PMAS-AAUR, Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Rai Niaz Ahmad, highlighted the significance of biodiversity and emphasized the community role to conserve vegetation with collective initiatives. He said that biodiversity Pakistan is facing different threats and there is a need to protect biodiversity for future generation by adopting the practical measures. He said that sustainable use of biological resources is yet a challenge for society as a whole, and hence need collaboration and an integrated approach be adopted to promote sustainable use of

biodiversity. He said the young generation has immense potential but need directions to play their role. While talking about the posters and models displayed by the students, Vice Chancellor said that youth has great potential and they expressed their capabilities in an impressive way, by depicting their understanding on the burning issues related to science. "This surely shows their sensitivity & level of awareness to such issues", he added.

Prof. Dr. Tariq Mahmood (Advisor R&D HEC) and Dr. Muhammad Khurshid DG, EPA, while addressing, said that conservation of biological diversity ensures economic prosperity and ecological sustainability and is also the tool to fight against climate change. However, overexploitation and unsustainable use patterns are depriving ecosystems to deliver vital functions and services as well as its ability to withstand climate change, they added. They pointed that it is the need of hour to live sustainably with our biological capital and progress in various fisheries. On the occasion, Dr. Abdul Wahid Jasra, Country representative ICIMOD read the message of ICIMOD Director General **David James Molden**, on biodiversity and its importance for sustainable development.

Students of the Department of Environmental Sciences also organized competition of posters and models in connection with Biodiversity Day where they displayed their art work and scientific models. They highlighted the significance of Biodiversity conservation and importance of biodiversity in ecosystem. They also showed existing and emerging problems caused by biodiversity loss and prospects of biodiversity conservation. Students also presented a skit on biodiversity theme and it was excellent activity to express the conservation of biodiversity. Some students also participated in project idea presentation on biodiversity. The first prize in Poster/Model Competition was awarded to Ms. Shehrish Rubab of MS Environmental Sciences, second position was secured by Ms Huma Naseer of Environmental Sciences, whereas, third position was obtained by Afsah Khalid of MSC Environmental Sciences. In the Research Project Presentation Competition the first prize went to Muhammad Bashir Ahmad and second position was secured by Muhammad Sadaat Mazhar of MS Environmental Sciences. Winners of competitions were awarded prizes and shields by Prof. Tariq Mahmood (Advisor R&D HEC) and Chief Guest (Technical Session) Dr. Muhammad Khurshid DG, EPA. At the end, Dr. Azeem Khalid, Chairman, Department of Environmental Sciences thanked the participants and resource person for making this event successful.