



سندھ زرعي يونيورسٽي ٽنڊو ڄام

SINDH AGRICULTURE UNIVERSITY TANDOJAM

Public Relations Section

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HYDERABAD: Suleman G Abro, President Sindh Agriculture Forestry Workers Coordinating Organization (Safwco) talking on the occasion of World Rivers Day 2020, said the tail end people, specially coastal areas have equal right to the river to get water for agriculture crops and human consumption.

The event was organized jointly by Sindh Agriculture University (SAU) Tandojam and WWF-Pakistan at the university premises on Tuesday. Coastal community people hailing from Keti Bunder and Kharo Chhan, Thatta districts, researchers, environmentalists, students and academia participated in the event.

Abro said we do not have technology to store rain water, which sometimes create flood-like situation. For example, he said the tail end area people are experiencing rain flood, which has caused destruction and displacement all around.

He said there are reports that industries flow their untreated waste to the river and other fresh water resources, which provide water to the communities for drinking and agriculture.

He said there are findings that the fresh water canals have arsenic in some areas, causing human diseases and environmental degradation, killing many valuable species.

Saeed ul Islam, Manager natural resource management (NRM) at WWF-Pakistan gave a presentation, pointed out that almost all the rivers in the world are facing degradation and pollution due to many factors, mainly building dams and diversions and receiving industrial and municipal waste.

Islam said the River Indus has built sixth largest delta of the world long ago. Now it is home of hundreds of thousand species, which are fighting the war of their survival due to water declining in the river streams for more times of the year.

He said at present time rivers are considered a cheap source for generating Hydro power to meet the needs of growing population.

WWF focuses on environment conservation, forest, wildlife, alternative energy, oceans and river. In case the delta depleted it will have economic impacts on communities in terms of their livelihoods.

Islam realized the facts that the river is receiving industrial waste and municipal waste with directly and has turned polluted. Per capita water consumption is increasing day after the day. Thus water scarcity is increasing, and seems unable to meet the needs of agriculture and growing population.

Prof Ismail Kumbhar, a focal person of SAU said leading rivers in different countries have economic role. Because, the rights of these rivers have been recognized to flow smoothly to its ultimate end. In some countries, entire transportation system depends on the river, which have more water flow to provide space to water transport.

“We are losing fresh water resources and fertile lands together because of depleting fresh water sources,” he said.

Prof Kumbhar also talked on natural rivers, which have been blocked through development, causing urban and rural floods during the recent rain spells. He said earlier there were old rivers, which used to take rain flood water to the sea through different creeks. Now these old water ways have been blocked, leaving communities in helpless situation.

He urged upon participants to assist to policy makers for policy designing to save the river and its ecosystem.

Love Kumar, a fresh water expert at WWF-Pakistan talked on losing scenic beauty and nature which are formed by the river water system by bringing silt and sediments.

He said the environmental degradation is major threat to the river system due to climate change, global warming, and water scarcity. Water is life for humans and help maintain ecosystem, saving wildlife and marine life.

Saima Awan, a PhD scholar in water resources management, gave presentation on “water for all” said there is need of creating awareness among the communities regarding sustainable use of water.

The nature and ecosystem has also rights on water like humans and agriculture, she said.

She advocated for lower riparian to have water rights to survive through agriculture as well as for human consumption.

Dr Humaira Aysha of WWF in her concluding remarks said despite the ban on manufacturing and use of plastic bags, the authorities yet to implement their own law to save the water bodies, which are being polluted due to plastic bags.

She said the coastal people residing in the delta along the sea know the importance of fresh water, as they are experiencing difficulties to get safe water for consumption to live alive.

She said Covid 19 pandemic is the result of human intervention with the nature. We have to educate student cadre and communities to protect nature to avoid problems, like Covid-19, which has shaken the world.

At the end delta heroes, community mangroves protectors have been given appreciation shields in the recognition of their contribution to save natural resources.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
SAU TANDOJAM**