



27 November, 2013

DONATION TO PM'S FUND FOR AFFECTEES OF EARTHQUAKE IN BALOCHISTAN

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ISLAMABAD, Nov 26 (APP): Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) is working on the national agenda to have a sound and sustainable science and technological (S&T) research base to achieve socio-economic development of the country. Federal Minister for Science and Technology Zahid Hamid said this while addressing the inaugural session of the South and Central Asia Man and Biosphere (MAB) Network's (SACAM) 5th Meeting here today.

The two-day meeting was organized by MoST, Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF), Pakistan Museum of Natural History (PMNH) and UNESCO.

Chairman National MAB Committee/Secretary MoST Mr. Kamran Ali Qureshi, Co-Chairman National MAB Committee/PSF Chairman Dr. Khalil Ahmed Ibupoto, Secretary SACAM Mr. Ram Boojh, Secretary MAB Program UNESCO Mr. Qun Li Han and UNESCO Pakistan Country Director Dr. K.K. Nagata were also present on this occasion.

While appreciating the efforts of National MAB committee Pakistan, all the provinces of Pakistan, UNESCO Pakistan, the Secretary MoST and Chairman PSF for joining hands to activating the efforts of MAB-Pakistan for achieving the goal of sustainable development of natural resources, the Minister hoped that present SACAM meeting will serve as a catalyst for achieving the goal of "Harmonizing Community Livelihood with Biodiversity Conservation", which is the theme of this moot.

Mr. Zahid Hamid said UNESCO Biosphere Reserves are model regions for sustainable development. They protect biodiversity, support regional marketing and promote low-impact tourism as well as innovative and environment friendly agriculture, he said, adding, they advance education and research and interact in a world network.

They are particularly important today in times of obvious climate change, desertification and water shortage, the minister maintained.

He stressed that sustainable development is the alternative solution to encounter the escalating global climate change.

He said a further important aspect of biosphere reserves is to look at cultural landscapes. There is a

common recognition around the world that the diversity of life involves both the biological diversity and cultural diversity, he added.

Chairman National MAB Committee and Secretary MoST Mr. Kamran Ali Qureshi said sustainable use of natural resources through communities' involvement is vital to biodiversity conservation on which the future of our coming generations hinges upon.

He said the communities have proved the best preservation of their areas biodiversity. Co-Chairman National MAB Committee / Chairman PSF Dr. Khalil Ahmed Ibupoto said the adoption of Agenda 21 in Rio de Janeiro prompted necessary changes in political reasoning and action. He said in one year it has been able to get designation of one biosphere reserve, including Ziarat Juniper Biosphere Reserve, from UNESCO, submitted nomination of another biosphere i.e. Karakoram Pamir Biosphere Reserve and reviewed status of already declared Biosphere Reserve, the Lal Sohanara Biosphere Reserve.

The PSF Chairman said this shows the commitment and engagement of PSF in finding solutions to these complex questions through modern approaches.

“We are on our way by which the country can do justice to its responsibility towards future generations”. Secretary SACAM Mr. Ram Boojh, Secretary MAB Program UNESCO Mr. Qun Li Han, UNESCO Pakistan Country Director Dr. K.K. Nagata, PMNH Director General Mr. Akhter Javed and Country Focal Person MAB Pakistan Dr. Rafiq also spoke on this occasion.

They said the biosphere reserves are areas of terrestrial and coastal ecosystems, recognised by UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program, as being uniquely important culturally and ecologically, while promoting solutions to reconcile the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use”.

“Biosphere Reserves” are nominated by the country in which it is located for participation in the worldwide Biosphere Reserve Program under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Man and the Biosphere Program (MAB).

Areas are nominated by a country and recognized by UNESCO on the basis of their significance for research and study of representative biological regions of the world. Presently there is a worldwide network of 622 biosphere reserves in 117 countries, they maintained.

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