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Generating Global
Environmental Benefits - GEB

EIMS: ADDRESSING KEY ISSUES & WAY FORWARD FOR PAKISTAN

August 6th, 2019
Abbottabad

REPORT OF A 'LECTURE' ORGANIZED BY
GENERATING GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS (GEB)
IN COLLABORATION WITH FORESTRY DEPARTMENT,
ABBOTTABAD

*GEB - A joint initiative of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
& Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC)*





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	1
Inauguration.....	1
Welcome Remarks by Mr. Azhar Ali, Chief Conservator, Abbottabad.....	1
Opening Remarks by Dr. Saleem Janjua, National Project Coordinator, UNDP-GEB.....	2
Lecture by Prof. Dr. Muhammad Irfan, Environment Expert.....	2
Interactive Session.....	5
Souvenir Distribution.....	6
Impact Assessment Results.....	6
Press Release.....	8
Gallery.....	11
Group Photo.....	13

Executive Summary

GEB project, funded by the UNDP/ Global Environment Facility (GEF), is being implemented by the Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC) that aims to remove barriers to environmental information management and mainstream global environment concerns into the economic decision-making of Pakistan. As per the AWP-2019, a lecture was organized by PMU, GEB project with the title of “EIMS: Addressing Key Issues & Way Forward for Pakistan” on August 6, 2019. The objective of the lecture was to ‘educate selected stakeholders/representatives regarding the integration of environment and development and thus enhance their commitment and capacity for ensuring environmental sustainability’.

Environmental data and information serve as a tool in monitoring and enforcing compliance with regulations, standards, and environmental policies. While providing an important instrument for policy integration, they also assist in informed decision-making. Consequently, it has become imperative to deliver essential and reliable information on priority environmental issues to decision-makers, and ability to harmonize with international standards and classifications. The purpose of this lecture was to brief about the importance of environmental information and arrangement, as well as address barriers and challenges that government departments, private, and public sectors are facing in the country and find innovative solutions.

It was agreed among the participants that lectures such as this one are important to increase environmental understanding of the concerned stakeholders/participants as they have a vital role to play in raising environmental awareness as well as forming public views and perceptions on development projects. Participants of the subject lecture appreciated the activity and efforts of GEB team and wished that it might continue in future through different forums so that they are capacitated with the right information on environment.

Inauguration

Mr. Lutfullah Khalid Assistant Project Officer of GEB project, formally began the lecture by welcoming the participants. He requested Mr. Zahid Khan for the recitation of the Holy Quran. This was followed by round of introduction from the participants. He then requested the Chief Guest Mr. Azhar Ali Khan, Chief of Conservator Forest, Northern Region II Abbottabad for the welcome address.

Welcome Remarks by Mr. Azhar Ali, Chief Conservator, Abbottabad

Mr. Azhar Ali Khan welcomed all the participants and appreciated a good mix of stakeholders and quoted that developmental activities bring change in ecosystems and people are required to be sensitized about the environmental issues. GEB will play a positive role in raising awareness among the people through close coordination with the community. He appreciated the activities of GEB project under the leadership of Dr. Saleem Janjua and welcomed all the participants for participating in the lecture.



Opening Remarks by Dr. Saleem Janjua, National Project Coordinator, UNDP-GEB

Dr. Saleem Janjua, National Project Coordinator GEB delivered the opening remarks and welcomed all participants to the lecture. He thanked Mr. Azhar Ali Khan, Chief Conservator of Forest, Forest Region II, Abbottabad for the facilitation with the venue and all the arrangements. He explained the purpose of this lecture by briefing about the importance of environmental information and management, as well as barriers and challenges that government departments, private and public sectors are facing in the country w.r.t data collection, generation and analysis. He said that environmental data and information is being produced from different departments but the main issue is that the information is patchy, unreliable and inconsistent. This makes it difficult for the authorities to make decisions because they don't have complete information. It is imperative to discuss basic issues and challenges regarding environmental information and certain themes in a simple way. GEB is an initiative of UNDP, where Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC) is going to implement this project, with the focus on three main themes Climate Change, Bio-Diversity, and Land Degradation. Also he discussed the feedback of the International Conventions related to these themes

Dr Saleem Janjua also said that development and implementation of any project/plan are incomplete without reliable information and evidence-based data. Data is important and it is not only formulation of the projects, in fact, their executions and monitoring are also important. Thus, there is a severe need to remove barriers and build an environmental information management system.

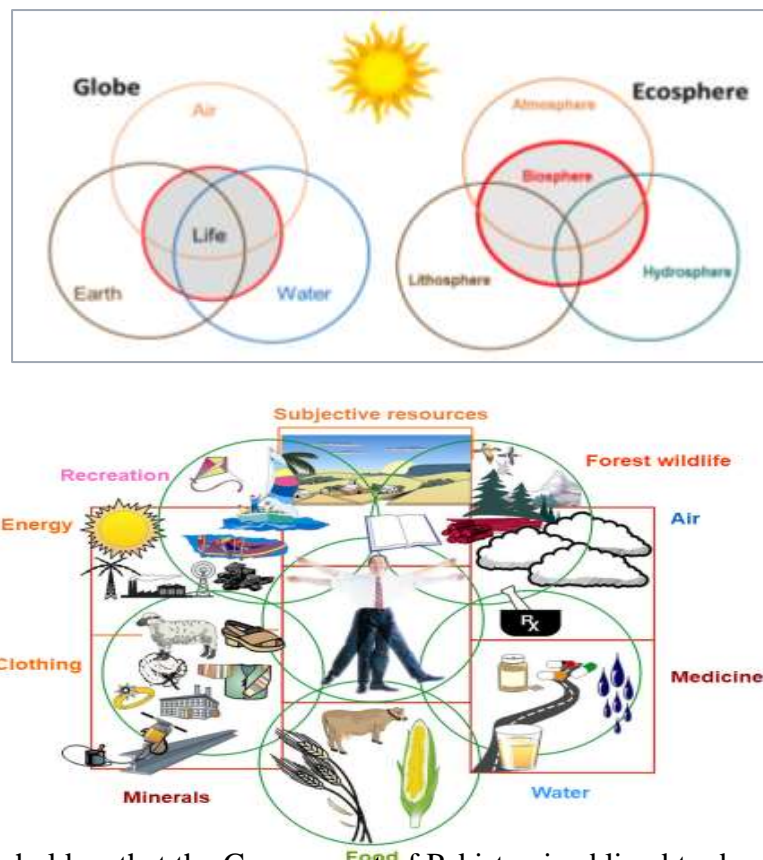


Lecture by Prof. Dr. Muhammad Irfan, Environment Expert

Prof. Dr Muhammad Irfan Khan started his lecture in an interactive mode involving stakeholders to understand clearly the importance of environment as life support system, hence the management of information about environment is vital for sustainability of our life support system. He elaborated the importance of data, the analysis of which provides information and from that information knowledge is acquired to gain wisdom. Then he linked this discussion with knowledge economy. It is an economy in which the production of goods and services are primarily based on knowledge-intensive activities. In knowledge economy, a large portion of economic growth and employment is generated as a result of knowledge-intensive activities. He said



that any activity that involves the collection and analysis of data, synthesis of information, innovation and understanding is a knowledge-intensive activity. He further elaborated that in the modern development planning and policy making, quick availability of information is a pre-requisite. This is because development planning is best guided by environment and socio-economic data and information collected continuously over time and space. This information can provide a basis for preparing the current status, future scenarios, and decision-making. He said that in the absence of accurate, reliable and timely information people, organizations and governments make bad decisions; they will be unable to help or persuade others to make better decisions; and no-one will be able to ascertain whether the decision made by particular individuals, organizations or governments were the best that could have been made at the time. Thus it is imperative to deliver essential and reliable information on priority environmental issues to decision-makers, and ability to harmonize with international standards and classifications.



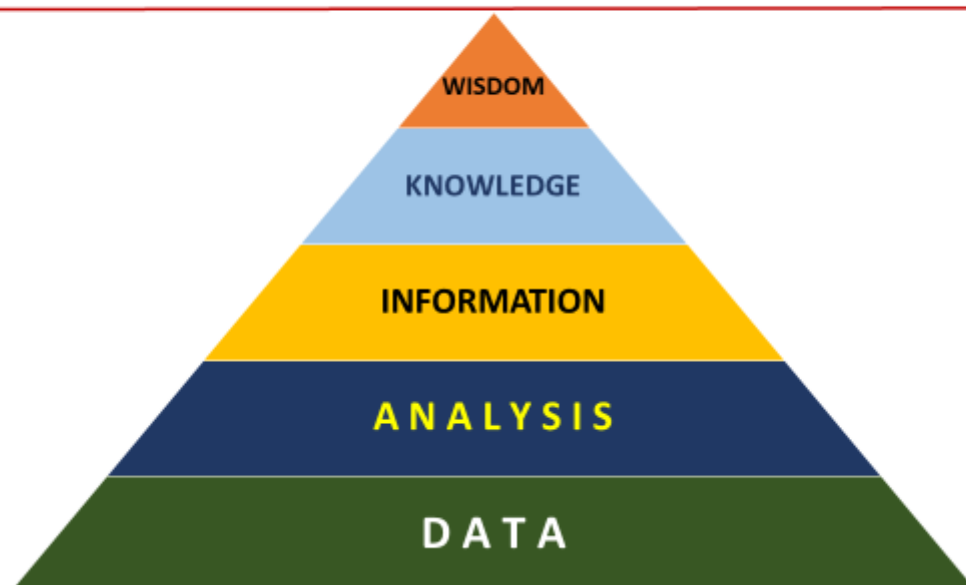
He appraised the stakeholders that the Government of Pakistan is obliged to develop and update three documents regularly:

1. National Compendium of Environmental Statistics
2. Provincial/regional Environmental Profiles
3. State of the Environment Reports-Pakistan prepares one every 24 months as required by the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21.

Production of these documents will need the development of a system, where data may be collected, compiled, processed and analyzed for appropriate interpretation in the relevant document.

He said that Pakistan Environmental Protection Act, 1997 also required under clause (f) of subsection 1 of Section 4 *the functions of Environmental Protection Council*: The council shall consider the National Environment Report and give appropriate directions thereon, and clause (d) of subsection 1 of section 6 *the functions of Federal EPA*: The EPA shall prepare and publish an annual National Environment Report on the state of the environment.

Informed Environmental Governance



Nexus of Technology-Business-Culture



While discussing the challenges, he explained that transforming research into policy and decision making is a big challenge, where we find a gap between research findings and policymaking. Therefore, integrating research findings into the policy-making process and to communicate research findings to

policymakers is a key challenge for developing knowledge economy in Pakistan. For the way forward, he said that removing barriers to environmental information management and mainstreaming the global environmental concerns into economic decision making is needed.

- Manage environmental information and employ this information for improved decision-making.
- Establishing a robust environmental information management system.
- Geomatic Centers were established at Pak-EPA and SUPARCO for assisting Environmental Monitoring and mapping services should be active.

Interactive Session

Dr Saleem Janjua, Prof. Dr Muhammad Irfan Khan and Mr. Azhar Ali Khan started the interactive session. Dr Saleem Janjua said that this is the opportunity to discuss the gaps, bottle-necks and identify the variables and finalize the indicators with the help of departments, organizations and academia. He mentioned that every department is bound to play a prime role in the data generation, the SOP's about data generation, and explaining what level of data is shared with concerned department and how central data system will form. With this, we need to develop such mechanism that all departments should contribute their evidence-based reliable data to the national level centralized data system.

Ms. Fatima Abbas suggested to include Environmental Information Management System in syllabus. Mr. Muhammad Shuaib Conservator of Forests Upper Hazara Forest Circle Mansehra raised a question that lifestyle of life is changing swiftly/ frequently. Can this model help?

Prof. Dr Muhammad Irfan answered that no doubt the life is changing and Environmental Information Management System (EIMS) will bring changes/information, also the changes in lifestyles/swift change will affect, but the Environmental Information Management System (EIMS) will make life comfortable and easier. There is no coordinated data in Pakistan, and the information is very less to improve the lifestyle.

One of the participants from the group Mr. Syed Sadiq Hussain Shah, Deputy Director Agriculture Extension department raised a question that is there any baseline data? If yes then is it on international standard? Dr Irfan answered that data is scattered and the complete baseline data is unavailable.

Dr Saleem Janjua appreciated participants and said that it is necessary to establish such a system that



includes all the aspects of reliable data. Moreover, capacity building of relevant departments is also important. The most important thing is to handle the data and information in capacity building and work in pressure, like PSIR (Pressure, Situation, Impact, and Response) i.e. what pressures we are facing in which particular situations, and their impact in potential and significant response. Finally, he thanked all the participants for the participation and appreciated GEB Project team for their immense efforts to make the lecture successful.

Souvenir Distribution

Dr Saleem Janjua, National Project Coordinator, GEB Project distributed souvenirs among the esteemed guests. These included Mr. Azhar Ali Khan Chief Conservator of Forest, Northern Region II, Abbottabad, Prof. Dr Muhammad Irfan Khan, Mr. Sagheer Ahmad Conservator of Forest Watershed Management Circle Abbottabad, Mr. Muhammad Shuaib Conservator of Forest Upper Hazara.

The Chief Conservator of Forest, Northern Region II presented souvenir to Dr Saleem Janjua as a memory of ceremony.

Mr. Lutfullah Khalid, APO (GEB Project) the Master of Ceremony thanked all the participants for sparing their time to attend the lecture.



Impact Assessment Results

To evaluate the impact of the lecture, a pre and post questionnaire was designed and shared with participants. Key results are as follows

- In response to the statement that “Environmental Information and Management System (EIMS) is a software application that facilitates environmental data acquisition and management” before the lecture, 72% of participants had an understanding about the Information Management System (EIMS); whereas after the lecture, 90% of total participants reported an understanding of EIMS.
- In response to the statement that the “Current practicing system for the information management meets the overall needs of the KPK province” Before lecture, 40% of total participants considered that the current system for environmental data collection, generation and analysis does not meet the overall needs of KP province but after the lecture, 77% of total participants were able to realize that the current system for environmental data collection, generation and analysis does not meet the overall needs of KP province. The increase in the number of response indicates the fact that the audience understood the fact that the current system of data collection, generation, and analysis in KPK needs improvement.

- In response to the statement that “The current system for environmental data collection, generation and analysis in KP province is according to global standards.” Before the lecture, 45% of total participants disagreed with the statement that current system for environmental data collection, generation and analysis in KP province is according to global needs but after the lecture, 86% participants that current system for environmental data collection, generation and analysis should be according to global needs. The increase in the number of responses indicates the fact that the audience understood the fact that the current system of data collection, generation, and analysis in KPK is not according to global standards.
- In response to the statement that “Federal support is needed at provincial level for the development of the EIMS for Pakistan”. Before the lecture, 63% of total participants supported the need of federal support at provincial level for the development of the EIMS for Pakistan and after the lecture, 95% participants supported the need of federal support at provincial level for the development of the EIMS for Pakistan. The increase in the number of responses indicates the fact that audience understood that development of EIMS is a national level task and requires effective coordination between federal and provinces.
- Before the lecture, only 63% of total participants understood biodiversity and climate change. The lecture increased the understanding of the audience to 95%.

Press Release

The following are the links of the various National newspapers both Urdu and English:

<http://ummat.net/ummatindex09082019.html>

Roznama Akhbar Abbottabad



بقیہ نمبر 42
 حکومت پاکستان کے اہم مسائل اور خطرات کا جائزہ لے کر
 جی ای ٹی
 سب سے بڑی
 کے حکام اور
 لی۔ کنفری
 چنے خطاب
 چنے خطاب
 جگہ پر ملے
 دوران سے
 رین کو سرج
 سے حدوں
 یو این ڈی
 کو ماحولیاتی
 رد پا ہے۔
 نام وونٹی
 اسے شیں
 نا اور ان کی
 سے منسوب
 نا ایک وسیع
 گی ہیبت سا
 ترتیب دی
 ریں جس
 الو اور صف
 واقعات
 سب سے
 کو اپنی
 ماحولیاتی
 نان کو عالمی
 طرح کی
 وں مختلف
 ہیں اور کم



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Daily Mashriq Peshawar newspaper



<https://www.thenews.com.pk/amp/511388-speakers-urge-efforts-for-safe-environment>



Speakers urge efforts for safe environment

Peshawar | Syed Kosar Naqvi | August 11, 2019

ABBOTTABAD: Speakers at a one-day seminar have stressed the need for efforts towards safe environment and better economic decision-making. The seminar titled "Environmental Information Management System for Pakistan: Challenges and Way Forward" was organised by Generating Global Environmental Benefits (GEB), Ministry of Climate Change (MoCC), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in collaboration with Office of the Chief Conservator of Forests, Northern Region-II, Abbottabad.

Dr Saleem Janjua, country coordinator GEB, Ministry of Climate Change, and UNDP-Pakistan attended the event. Dr Janjua discussed a brief overview of the GEB initiative of the government of Pakistan.

He highlighted the importance of environmental information management system that is required for better economic decision-making, and also appreciated the efforts of the United Nations in this regard.

Azhar Ali Khan, chief conservator Northern Forest Region-II, welcomed the guests and appreciated the efforts of GEB and UNDP for organising the activity.

The remarks session proceeded with an interactive lecture on the subject topic. Stakeholders and participants from different government departments, NGOs, and academia agreed to the need of robust environmental information management system. Key issues and way forward were discussed in detail. It was agreed that all departments/stakeholders would play their role in addressing key issues and safe environment of Pakistan.

Gallery





Group Photo



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Government of Pakistan



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National Project Coordinator - GEB

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