

'Pakistan paying price for environmental degradation'

By Our Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD, July 18: Pakistan is paying a very high price for environmental degradation and Rs365 billion per annum or Rs1 billion per day is the figure, estimated by the World Bank, which is an excessive environmental damage in monetary terms for an underdeveloped country like Pakistan.

This was stated by Dr Aurangzeb Khan, the chief environment section of Planning Commission of Pakistan, at a workshop titled "Mapping of EIA Processes in Gilgit-Baltistan", organised by the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) of Gilgit-Baltistan in collaboration with IUCN

Pakistan, says a press release here on Sunday.

"Keeping in view the compliance and monitoring aspects that are becoming more and more stringent internationally, we need to improve our planning, monitoring and implementation tools", stressed Dr Khan.

He said one way of conforming to them was to introduce strategic environmental assessment (SEA) at policy level and proper enforcement of environmental impact assessment (SIA) at project levels.

Representatives of governmental institutions both from the federal as well as provincial governments, civil

society organisations, private sector, international organisations, academia and environmental experts and consultants participated in the workshop.

The workshop was aimed to map the EIA processes in Gilgit-Baltistan in consultation with the other stakeholders.

The EIA map is an instrument that gauges the strength and weaknesses of an EIA system with respect to how it is organised formally as well as its implementation in practice.

In addition, the EIA map provides a useful reference for monitoring

and evaluation purposes.

The secretary, Forest, Tourism and Environment, Gilgit-Baltistan, Imran Sikandar Baloch, said the renewable natural resources were the main identity of Gilgit-Baltistan.

He said there was established potential of 45,000 MW of hydro-power in the area.

He warned that if the projects of widening of Karakoram Highway and construction of Diamer Bhasha Dam were undertaken without the EIA, they would lose natural resources.

He emphasized on the capacity enhancement of the young and tal-

ented staff of Gilgit-Baltistan EPA.

Chief Secretary Gilgit-Baltistan Babar Yaqoob Fateh Mohammad appreciated project proponents for including Gilgit-Baltistan as one of the project partners.

He said the local population's high level of dependence on their natural resources made it one of the most ecological sensitive areas of Pakistan.

"We want development but not at the cost of irrecoverable loss to our environment," he added.

He felt that the project was very timely and would help achieve sustainable development in the region.

Environmental degradation costs Rs1b per day to Pakistan

Islamabad

Pakistan is paying Rs365 billion per annum or Rs1 billion per day for environmental degradation, Dr. Aurangzeb Khan, Chief Environment Section, Planning Commission of Pakistan said quoting the World Bank's estimates.

This is a great environmental damage for an underdeveloped country like Pakistan, he said inaugurating a workshop on 'Mapping of EIA Processes in Gilgit-Baltistan', organised by Environment Protection Agency (EPA) of Gilgit-Baltistan in collaboration with IUCN Pakistan.

Dr. Aurangzeb Khan said, "Keeping in view the compliance and monitoring aspects that are becoming more and more stringent internationally, we need to improve our planning, monitoring and implementation tools."

He said one way of conforming to them is to introduce Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) at policy level and proper enforcement of Environmental Impact Assessment at project levels.

The workshop brought together relevant stakeholders including governmental institutions both from the federal as well as provincial government, civil society organizations, private sector, international organizations, academia and environmental experts/consultants to map Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) practices in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The purpose of the workshop was to map the EIA processes in Gilgit-Baltistan in consultation with the other stakeholders. The EIA map is an instrument that gauges the strength and weakness of an EIA system with respect to how it is organized formally as well as its implementation in practice. The EIA map can contribute to the formulation of priorities for EIA strengthening. In addition, the EIA map provides a useful reference for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Imran Sikandar Baloch, Secretary Forest, Tourism & Environment, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan in his speech said that the renewable natural resources are the main identity of Gilgit-Baltistan. He further said that there is established potential of 45,000 MW of Hydro Power in the area. Widening of Karako-

Mir Bhasha and Buynji Dam projects have been approved. However, he warned that if all these project started without the EIA we might lose our fragile, natural resources and to save these natural resources we need to take drastic preventive measures. He emphasized on the capacity enhancement of the young and talented staff of Gilgit-Baltistan EPA. He appreciated the efforts of IUCN Pakistan for organizing this event and hoped that the recommendations made will help the government to take them forward.

Asad-ullah-Faiz, Director Pak-EPA praised the project for its efforts in promoting EIA in Gilgit-Baltistan. He said that in the previous years due attention was not paid to Gilgit-Baltistan.

However when IUCN conceived this project they made Gilgit-Baltistan an integral part of it. It was due to the reason that IUCN wanted to bring all the EPA's operational in Pakistan on board to make this project successful.

Babar Yaqoob Fateh Mohammad, Chief Secretary Gilgit Baltistan was the chief guest at EIA mapping workshop's closing ceremony. He appreciated project proponents to include Gilgit Baltistan as one of the project partners. He said that the local population's high-level dependence on their natural resources made it one of the most ecological sensitive areas of Pakistan. "We want development but not at the cost of irrecoverable loss to our environment," he added. He felt that project is very timely and will help achieving sustainable development in the region. He also assured his full support for the project.

Participants at the workshop were of the view that Pakistan has achieved an impressive level of economic growth. However, this growth has a very high price tag. It is estimated that environmental degradation costs the country at least 6 per cent of the GDP. To keep the current level of growth to be sustainable, it will be necessary to protect the environment and adequately preserve the country's natural resources. It was unanimously agreed at the workshop that two very effective tools that can help achieve sustainable development are: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) — APP

'Pakistan faces environmental degradation of Rs 365bn yearly'

- Planning Commission official says country suffering excessive environmental damage
- G-B forest secretary says renewable natural resources main identity of area

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is facing a yearly environmental degradation of Rs 365 billion or Rs 1 billion daily, which is excessive environmental damage in monetary terms for an underdeveloped country, Planning Commission Section chief Dr Aurangzeb Khan said on Sunday.

He made these remarks while addressing a workshop titled 'Mapping of EIA processes in Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B)' organised by the G-B Environment Protection Agency (EPA) in collaboration with IUCN Pakistan. The Planning Commission official said that the figure of environmental degradation was estimated by the World Bank. "Keeping in view the compliance and monitoring aspects that are becoming more and more stringent internationally, we need to improve our

planning, monitoring and implementation tools," stressed Aurangzeb. He said that one of the ways to solve the problem was the introduction of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) at every policy level and the proper enforcement of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) at project levels. The workshop brought together all the relevant stakeholders including federal and provincial government departments, civil society organisations, international organisations, educational institutions and environmental experts to chalk out a strategy for EIA practices in G-B.

The purpose for conducting the workshop was to finalise the implementation of an EIA process in G-B in consultation with all the stakeholders. The EIA map was an instrument to gauge the strength and weaknesses of an EIA system with respect to its formal organisation

and implementation. It also contributes to the formulation of the priorities for strengthening the EIA. In addition, the EIA map provides a useful reference for monitoring and evaluating purposes. G-B Secretary Forest, Tourism and Environment Imran Sikandar Baloch said that renewable natural resources were the main identity of G-B. He told the audience that 45,000MW of hydropower could be utilised from the area. Baloch said that the widening of the Karakoram Highway was underway and the Diamir-Bhasha and Bunji dam projects had been approved. He warned that if all these projects were started without an EIA, G-B would lose its natural resources.

EPA Director Asadullah Faiz said the organisation of the workshop was praiseworthy and it would promote the EIA in G-B. He said that the environmental situation of G-B was neglected by previous governments but

IUCN Pakistan was paying due attention to the area.

Faiz said that the IUCN was consulting the EPA to make this project successful. The chief guest G-B Chief Secretary Babar Yaqoob Fateh Muhammad appreciated the decision to include G-B in the EIA map project. He said that the local population largely depended on the natural resources of G-B, which made it the most sensitive ecological area of Pakistan.

The participants of the workshop were of the view that Pakistan had achieved an impressive level of economic growth. But this growth had a very high price tag. It was estimated that environmental degradation costs the country at least 6 percent of the GDP. It was unanimously agreed, at the workshop, that the two very effective tools that could help achieve sustainable development were EIA and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Environmental degradation Pakistan paying high price

ISLAMABAD (APP) - Dr Aurangzeb Khan, Chief Environment Section of Planning Commission on Sunday said that Pakistan was paying high price for environmental degradation and Rs 1 billion per day is the figure estimated by the World Bank.

Addressing the inaugural session at a workshop titled: "Mapping of EIA Processes in Gilgit-Baltistan" organised by Environment Protection Agency (EPA) of Gilgit-Baltistan in collaboration with IUCN Pakistan, Aurangzeb said it is an excessive environmental damage in monetary terms for an underdeveloped country like Pakistan.

"Keeping in view the compliance and monitoring aspects that are becoming more and more stringent internationally, we need to improve our planning, monitoring and implementation tools," he said.

He said one way of conforming with them is to introduce Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) at policy level and proper enforcement of Environmental Impact Assessment at project levels, says a press release.

The workshop brought together relevant stakeholders including governmental institutions both from the federal as well as provincial government, civil society organizations, private sector, international organizations,

academia and environmental experts/consultants to map Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) practices in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The purpose of the workshop was to map the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Processes in Gilgit-Baltistan in consultation with the other stakeholders.

The EIA map is an instrument that gauges the strength and weaknesses of an EIA system with respect to how it is organised formally as well as its implementation in practice. The EIA map can contribute to the formulation of priorities for EIA strengthening. In addition, the EIA map provides a useful reference for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Imran Sikandar Baloch, Secretary Forest, Tourism & Environment, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan in his speech said that the renewable natural resources are the main identity of Gilgit-Baltistan. He further said that there is established potential of 45,000 MW of Hydro Power in the area. Widening of Karakoram Highway is underway; Dia-Mir Bhasha & Bunji Dam projects have been approved.

However, he warned that if all these projects start without the EIA we will lose our fragile, natural resources and to save these natural resources we need to take drastic preventive measures.

Environmental degradation costs Rs1b per day

ISLAMABAD—Pakistan is paying Rs. 365 billion per annum or Rs. 1 billion per day for environmental degradation, Dr. Aurangzeb Khan, Chief Environment Section, Planning Commission of Pakistan said quoting the World Bank's estimates.

This is a great environmental damage for an underdeveloped country like Pakistan, he said inaugurating a workshop on "Mapping of EIA Processes in Gilgit-Baltistan, organized by Environment Protection Agency (EPA) of Gilgit-Baltistan in collaboration with IUCN Pakistan.

Dr. Aurengzeb Khan said, "Keeping in view the compliance and monitoring aspects that are becoming more and more stringent internationally, we need to improve our planning, monitoring and implementation tools."

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these project started without the EIA we might lose our fragile, natural resources and to save these natural resources we need to take drastic preventive measures.—APP

ماحولیاتی تبدیلیوں سے پاکستان کو یومیہ ایک ارب روپے کا نقصان

حکومتی اسٹریٹجک انوائرنمنٹل اسسمنٹ کی پالیسی وضع کرے، ڈاکٹر اورنگزیب خان

گلگت، بلتستان میں وسیع پیمانے پر قدرتی وسائل موجود ہیں، عمران سکندر، ورکشاپ سے خطاب

عمران سکندر بلوچ نے کہا ہے کہ ہمیں متبادل قدرتی وسائل کی تلاش کرنی چاہیے اور یہ وسائل گلگت و بلتستان میں بڑے پیمانے پر موجود ہیں۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ اس علاقے میں 45 ہزار میگا واٹ ہائیڈرو پاور کی استعداد کار موجود ہے جو ہماری توانائی کی ضرورت کو بہتر طور پر پورا کر سکتی ہے، اس طرح دیامر بحاشا ڈیم اور شی ڈیم بھی منظور ہو چکے ہیں اور شاہراہ قراقرم کو بھی وسعت دی جا رہی ہے لیکن یہ سارے منصوبے ای سی اے انوائرنمنٹل امپیکٹ اسسمنٹ کے بغیر مرتب کیے گئے جس سے بڑے پیمانے پر ماحولیاتی تبدیلیوں کے خطرات کا سامنا کرنا پڑ سکتا ہے۔ اگر یہ منصوبے ماحول دوست بنائے جائیں تو ہمیں اپنے قدرتی وسائل کو بہتر طور پر محفوظ کر سکتے ہیں۔ ورکشاپ میں سرکاری و نجی تنظیموں کے مندوبین نے بڑی تعداد میں شرکت کی۔

اسلام آباد (آن لائن) عالمی بینک کے تخمینے کے مطابق پاکستان کو ماحولیاتی تغیر و تبدل اور تنزیل کے باعث ایک ارب روپے روزانہ نقصان کا سامنا کرنا پڑ رہا ہے۔ ان خیالات کا اظہار پلاننگ کمیشن آف پاکستان کے ماحولیاتی سیکشن کے چیف ڈاکٹر اورنگزیب خان نے آئی سی یو این پاکستان کے زیر اہتمام ورکشاپ سے خطاب کرتے ہوئے کیا۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ ماحولیاتی تغیر و تبدل کے حوالے سے حکومتی اقدامات ناکافی ہیں، ان تبدیلیوں سے نبرد آزما ہونے کے لیے ہمیں بہتر حکمت عملی کی ضرورت ہے جو جدید تقاضوں اور عالمی معیار سے ہم آہنگ ہو، ہمیں بنیادی سطح پر اسٹریٹجک انوائرنمنٹل اسسمنٹ کی پالیسی متعارف کرانی چاہیے۔ ورکشاپ سے خطاب کرتے ہوئے گلگت بلتستان کے محکمہ جنگلات و سیاحت محکمہ جنگلات و سیاحت کے سیکرٹری