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## **‘Integrated conservation approach needed’**

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By our correspondent

Karachi

An integrated approach is needed to address environmental and poverty-related issues in the province, said Sindh Planning and Development Additional Chief Secretary Nazar Hussain Mahar at a meeting of the Indus Eco Region Steering Committee, said a press release issued here on Thursday.

Highlighting the role of community, Mahar said that better results could be achieved by engaging civil society organisations, while coordination needed to be enhanced among different projects supported by Asian Development Bank and World Bank.

The meeting reviewed the progress achieved by the Indus for All Programme of WWF in the last six months. Indus for All Programme Programme Coordinator Nasir Ali Panhwar informed the session that the findings of the periodic wildlife and habitat survey has revealed significant reduction of bird species in Keenjhar Lake, Keti Bunder, Chotiari and Pai Forest. He said that plans to ensure livelihoods of the locals have been developed through extensive consultative process, and the implementation of these suggestions would begin in the current quarter.

He said that under the alternative energy scheme, twelve biogas plants have been installed, while nine solar units have been provided to the communities. Capacity building of district government officials in environmental impact assessment and environmental indicators were also undertaken. He said that a range of awareness-raising material have been published, including a book titled ‘Conservation and Islam’ as well as posters on Indus delta and mammals, while conservation messages were disseminated through local festivals.

Natural Resource Management Coordinator Rab Nawaz said that the names of four species of trees have been forwarded to the authorities, one of which will be declared as provincial tree of Sindh.

The meeting also discussed the provision of sanctioned water for Pai Forest and ban on illegal fishing nets. Mohammad Ali Shah of Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum offered full support to government’s drive against illegal nets.

Forest and Wildlife Secretary Mushtaque Memon, Fisheries and Livestock Secretary Meer Mohammad Perhiar, Agriculture Secretary Agha Jan Akhar, P&DD Secretary

Capt (retd) Javed Ishrat, Finance Additional Secretary Abdul Wahab Soomro, Thatta DCO Manzoor Ahmed Shaikh, Sanghar DCO Rasool Bux Samejo, Shaheed Benazirabad DCO Khursheed Naeem Malik, Coastal Development Authority DG Qabool Ahmed Shaikh, EPA Director Naeem Mughal, representative of Irrigation Department, Ghulam Qadir Shah of IUCN, Umar Memon Project Director Coastal Community Development Project Chairman Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum Mohammad Ali Shah, Dr Bakshal Lashari, Zubeda Birwani of Shirkat Gah , Dr Mumtaz Suhag of SIDA, AB Kalhoro, Dr Altaf Abro, Khadija Zaheer and others attended the meeting.