

Water bodies in Sindh under severe threat

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KARACHI: The environmental resources of the province are declining at an alarming rate and particularly the condition of Indus Delta needs immediate attention, which is fast degrading due to lack of freshwater in Indus river.

This was stated by Sindh Minister for Environment and Alternate Energy, Askari Taqvi. He was talking to a delegation of WWF-Pakistan who delivered a presentation on Indus for All Programme, which is implemented by WWF-Pakistan, said a statement on Friday.

It said that showing concern over the deteriorating condition of water resources of the Province, Taqvi further said the shortage of fresh water has further deteriorated the quality of ground water, which has created health issues such as hepatitis, gastroenteritis diarrhoea.

While showing concern on the release of untreated waste into the delta by sugar mills in Badin, the Minister for Environment assured the WWF-Pakistan delegation that the Environment and Alternate Energy Department will initiate action against such mills.

On this occasion, the Regional Director, WWF-Pakistan Dr Ghulam Akbar in his detailed presentation on the Indus Ecoregion and the existing environmental problems, highlighted the concept of eco-region.

He noted that the ecoregion conservation programme is a global initiative developed by WWF-Pakistan and other global partners such as UNEP and National Geographic to prioritise around the globe the environmentally significant regions. He said out of the 238 global ecoregions identified in this regard, Indus Ecoregion is one of the 40 most prioritised ecoregions. In order to save the Indus Ecoregion, a 50-year long vision has been formulated and a 6-year Indus for All Programme is implemented by WWF-Pakistan in collaboration with other partners and stakeholders.

Dr Ghulam Akbar underlined the most significant achievements of the Programme so far. He noted that during the detailed ecological surveys conducted under the Programme, three species have been discovered which are new to the floral world.