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Working together for poor communities

By our correspondent

Karachi, November 04: As part of their commitment to environmental conservation, WWF-Pakistan and an international bank have joined hands to work together on reducing the climatic change impacts and provide alternate energy options to poorer communities in the rural areas.

The bank has pledged to provide funding for “WWF-HSBC Biogas Plants Project Pakistan”. In this connection, an agreement between the bank and WWF-Pakistan has been signed in Karachi.

WWF-Pakistan Regional Director, Dr Ghulam Akbar represented his organisation while Mohammad Tahir Sadiq, the Chief Executive Officer (HSBC) Middle East Bank, signed the document on behalf of the bank.

Ghulam Qadir Shah, Nasir Ali Panhnwar, Rab Nawaz, Ali Dehlavi and Zafar Khan of WWF-Pakistan were also present on the occasion.

The project will be implemented by WWF-Pakistan under the Indus for All Programme in three districts, Thatta, Benazir Bhutto Shaheed (Nawabshah) and Sanghar in Sindh while in Punjab the units will be installed in the Murree district.

Under the project, 15 biogas plants will be installed in selected villages of these districts. Speaking on the occasion, the representative of WWF-Pakistan highlighted that biogas is a reliable, cheap and sustainable alternative source of energy (fuel and electricity). It can be generated out of animal dung through a fermentation process.

Biogas is generally 60 to 70 per cent Methane gas and the remainder consisting of CO₂, sulphide and other trace gases. It is smoke-free and reduces release of Methane and CO₂ emissions to the atmosphere. Methane and CO₂ are the two of the potent Green House Gases (GHGs). Owing to the simplicity in its implementation and use of cheap raw materials in the villages, it is one of the most environmentally sound sources of energy. Again, the dung waste generated after production of energy can be used as manure in the agriculture, he added.

In view of the phenomena of climatic change and global warming, bio-gas energy production units help reduce Green House Gases which are the major causes of climatic change impacts. Moreover, its economical face energy production process can be easily applied in the rural areas.

The project will help a great deal in reducing the pressure on natural resources such as forests in rural areas where there is no electricity or gas. WWF-Pakistan is currently implementing a five-year Indus for All Programme which is the first phase of a 50-year long Indus Ecoregion Conservation Programme, developed in collaboration with the Government of Sindh and other stakeholders for a long-term biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation in the Indus Ecoregion.

Four priority areas, keeping in view the potential habitat types, have been initially identified and selected for programme interventions that include the Chotiari Reservoir in Sanghar, Keti Bunder and Keenjhar Lake in Thatta and Pai Forest in Benazir Bhutto Shaheed (Nawabshah) districts.