



World Wetlands Day 2010 was celebrated at a remote fisherman village of Chilika Lake on 2nd February 2010 by Chilika Development Authority

World Wetlands Day is observed on 2 February every year worldwide. It marks the date of signing of the convention on wetlands on 2nd February 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar. This day presents us with a welcome opportunity to join together in acknowledging the benefits that we all receive from wetlands, as well as to raise the awareness of the local communities who derive their livelihood about the importance of these vital ecosystems for our common future. The Ramsar Bureau (Secretariat) took a decision to observe the World wetland day on 2nd February from 1997. Chilika Development Authority has been observing World Wetlands Day way back from 1997 i.e. from the first year of observation of WWD globally. CDA have been observing WWD in and around Chilika Lake with the active participation of local communities. For optimizing the objectives of the WWD celebration instead of observing it at Bhubaneswar it is invariably observed in and around Chilika by CDA.

This year's theme, *Wetlands, Biodiversity and Climate Change*, with the slogan "Caring for wetlands: an answer to climate change", captured the sense of urgency about the need to address the potentially disastrous consequences of global climate change, it emphasizes our belief that the role of wetlands in mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change must be central in all future debates.

Moreover, 2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity. We are all aware that the wetlands provide livelihood to the local communities and more importantly the ecosystem services may provide is of great significance to the local communities. Through the celebration of WWD -2010 it is emphasized that, wetlands must not only be a key part of any progress in global climate change context, but also that the problems of climate change must be addressed in a holistic, multi-sectoral, ecosystem-based manner .

It was a festive day for Jyantipur a remote fisherman village located in the central sector along the shore line of Chilika where the WWD-2010 was celebrated by CDA in collaboration with Pallishree a leading NGO from Chilika. India became signatory to Ramsar Convention in 1981. Chilika became a Ramsar site in 1971. Very interestingly Jayantipur an ideal fisherman village which was the venue for the observation of WWD-2010 was also born in the year 2010. The function began with a wetland day rally from the village to the lake shore where the WWD was observed. More than 1000 women, school children, fisherman, NGO, representatives from media participated in the rally. All were wearing the customized WWD-2010 cap. The entire atmosphere was charged with high spirit. The local artist were performing the traditional dance, the children were amused by the clowns who were making the rally quite interesting for them. The village corridor leading to the venue was decorated with WWD-2010 flags and the WWD-2010 posters were displayed on all 150 household. Entire Jayantipur village was decorated with the WWD-2010 stuff and was looking gorgeous. This was followed by a colorful boat rally by the fishermen being flagged off by the chief guest.

Considering the importance of the theme of the WWD 2010 the school children were involved in a big way. To create awareness about the WWD 2010 among the school children and to sensitize them about the conservation and wise use of wetland resources, essay and debate competitions on the WWD-2010 theme were conducted in all the sectors of Chilika Lake. It took more than one month to complete the process.



Traditional folk dance during WWD2010



Inauguration of WWD2010 by Chief Guest



School children participating in the World Wetland Day - 2010

The competition was held in outer channel, northern, central and southern sector of Chilika to involve more number of students. The local NGOs and CBOs facilitated the programme. The preparatory work began three month ahead of the and 15 NGO partners worked seriously to sensitize the students on the theme of the WWD-2010 and facilitated conduction of the essay and the sit and draw competitions. 2,866 School Children from more than 78 schools participated in the competition. To make the process fair and transparent the answer sheets and the drawing sheets totalling 2866 numbers were evaluated centrally. After the zonal level competition was over in the first phase the winners of zonal level competitions (14 in drawing competition and 15 in essay competition) were chosen for the second level competition on 29.1.2010 at



Winner of Drawing Competition receiving award from Chief Guest

WRTC, Chandraput under the direct supervision of CDA officials. Out of the 29 students who excelled from different sectors, three students from each category were selected from the above competition who would be receiving the prize from the chief guest on 2nd February 2010. Miss Archana Baliyarasingh, of Kaduaghat Academy Kaudikhani, Bhatapada a discrete village stood first in essay competition and Miss



Winner of Debate Competition receiving award from Chief Guest

Bijayini Sahoo, Class- VIII, Brundaban High school, village Rahadamala stood first in sit and draw competition. The star attraction were the winner of the essay and drawing competition. They were the speakers. The students spoke so well that the events are became spell bound. They covered the key issues like i)valuable ecosystem services



provided by the wetlands ii) how climate change can adversely impact the wetlands there by would affect the livelihood of the local communities iii) stakeholders should not only reckon the tangible benefits like fish and earning from ecotourism which the lake provide but also equally consider the invaluable ecosystem service which they

are deriving iv) for effective management of the lake the gender issue should be addressed v) the importance of maintaining biological diversity of wetlands. They welcomed the initiative of CDA by involving the school children in observation of WWD-2010.

The statements by the school children were an eye opener for all who attended celebration of WWD 2010 at Jayantipur. All the NGO partners who represented different sectors of the lake also encouraged these budding wetland scientists. All the winners were felicitated by the Chief Guest.

This was followed by the release of a customized poster on the WWD-2010. The customized poster developed by the Ramsar Secretariat is translated to Oriya, it was released by the chief guest. The poster was distributed to all schools in and around Chilika. The Primary Fishermen Cooperative Society of Jayanitipur also received a trophy for organizing the boat rally.

Shri Bhagirathi Behera, Director Environment and Special Secretary, Department of Forest and Environment, Government of Orissa was the Chief Guest who spoke on the occasion and gave away the prizes. Dr A.K. Pattnaik, Chief Executive CDA, congratulated the students who own the prizes and mentioned about CDAs future plan to involve the school children in a big way. He also made a mention about the CEAEs which have become a hub of wetland education established in the schools being facilitated by the NGOs. Shri C.R.Mishra Additional Chief Executive, CDA coordinated the programme. Mr. D.P.Dash Secretary Pallishree, a grass root level leading NGO gave away the vote of thanks. It was attended by more than 1000.



Poster of World Wetland Day- 2010 in local language



Flagging off the boat rally by Chief Guest



Felicitation of Primary Fishermen Cooperative Society (PFCS)
