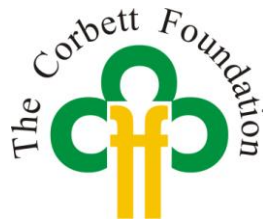


World Wetlands Day, 2010



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World Wetlands Day Event Team

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Introduction



Wetlands provide fundamental ecological services and are regulators of water regimes and sources of biodiversity at all levels - species, genetic and ecosystem. Wetlands constitute a resource of great economic, scientific, cultural, and recreational value for the community. Wetlands play a vital role in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Progressive encroachment on, and loss of, wetlands cause serious and sometimes irreparable environmental damage to the provision of ecosystem services. Thus, wetlands should be restored and rehabilitated, whenever possible.

World Wetlands Day

Each year since 1997, February 2nd is celebrated as the World Wetland Day by various government agencies, non governmental organizations, and various other social groups to raise public awareness about importance and benefits of wetlands. .On this day, the Convention on Wetland of International Importance (the Ramsar Convention) was adopted in the Iranian City of Ramsar in 1971.It is the only global environment treaty that deals with a particular ecosystem and provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

At the centre of the Ramsar philosophy is the “wise use” concept. The wise use of wetlands is defined as "the maintenance of their ecological character, achieved through the implementation of ecosystem approaches, within the context of sustainable development". "Wise use" therefore has at its heart the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands and their resources, for the benefit of humankind

About The Corbett Foundation

The Corbett Foundation (TCF) is a registered public charitable trust set up by Mr. Dilip D. Khatau on April 22, 1994. TCF began with an initial mandate of supporting the conservation of the area in Kumaon and Garhwal famous as the ‘Corbett Country’. Since then, it runs various medical, awareness and wildlife conservation programmes in and around the Corbett Tiger Reserve. In 1999, TCF established a division called Kutch Ecological Research Centre (KERC) in Kutch, Gujarat for watershed management, human health awareness, medical & veterinary services, wildlife conservation programmes and eco-tourism programmes. TCF also operates in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve since 2009.

World Wetlands Day Events at TCF offices

Corbett Office

The Corbett Foundation (TCF) organized an event on 2nd February, 2010 to create awareness among the students about the wetland and water cycle. TCF believes that the students are the future of the nation and act as ambassadors for the society. Five students each from three different schools located in different villages accompanied by one teacher attended the event. The idea behind selecting these students was that they would propagate the message of wetland conservation among peer students, family members and the villagers.

The overall objective of the event was to develop awareness among the students for wetlands, their importance, recent threats on the wetland and their status in India. It would also sensitize the students about the importance of water and water cycle in the life and to provide them an opportunity to express their views so as to built confidence in them.

The whole event was organized at Tumaria Reservoir, situated near Ramnagar (Nainital) in Uttarakhand state of India. The teachers and students from Shri B.D.J. Memorial Public School, Dhikuli, Public Junior High School, Sunderkhal and Government High School, Kunkhet participated in the event .

The groups of students, teachers and TCF team reached Tumaria Reservoir in the morning. Then the students were informed about various aspects of bird watching at the spot and were shown many waterfowls at the reservoir .The students were very enthusiastic to glimpse numerous birds that visited the area during winters.



Later they were divided into four groups .Each group has students from different schools and a teacher. A small exercise of 30 minutes was given to each group which they have to solve with the help of teacher .It has following questions:

- Importance of water in life.
- Why is there need of water more in summers?
- What do you observe when you visit near a river or pond. Explain
- Where do the river / pond get water?
- Why and how lakes/ rivers and ponds dry in summers? Where the water goes?
- From where the clouds get water?

This exercise was followed by a presentation on the views of each group to the above questions. The idea behind this is to encourage and develop confidence among students to express their views and also about the practical understanding and importance of water cycle in their daily life.



Later TCF team members gave a presentation on importance of wetland, its present status in India and threats on wetland in present scenario. The idea to organize the whole event at Tumaria Reservoir was to connect the students with the problem and impart knowledge related to wetland in a practical manner.



Finally, the teacher informed the students about the Impact of Climate change on wetlands. This was done to link it with the World Wetland Day theme of Ramsars of the year 2010 i.e. **“Wetlands, Biodiversity and Climate Change”**

Bandhavgarh Office



TCF organized a program in the primary school of Bijheria, situated at the outskirts of Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, for the students to connect them with the entire concept of Ramsar Convention and also explicate them with the theory of wise use of wetlands. We created awareness about the issue of climate change and biodiversity related to the wetland sites. We explained them about the synergetic effect of dwindling biodiversity and anthropogenic pressures on the world Ramsar sites and its possible effects on the sustainable development of mankind. The response of children's was very exciting and many of them also explained a little bit about their surrounding wetland sites around the village.

The program was done in such a way so that students could connect themselves with the whole process and also participate enthusiastically in it. Special care was taken that we could interacted with the students from all age group and gave them an understanding of

importance of the wetlands and the global and local conservation issues related to the wetlands.

A short excursion was arranged to a natural lake situated in the premises of Infinity Bandhavgarh Wilderness resort just outside the Bandhavgarh tiger Reserve for the students of higher classes to encourage them to observe wetlands with a scientific perspective and also to explain them about wetland biodiversity. The students were made to realise about how their day-to-day to lifestyle was slowly abusing and polluting the wetlands. Emphasis was given on how to preserve the wetlands and to use the wetland resources sustainably.