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World Wetlands Day 2011 observed in Kannur

World Wetlands Day 2011 with the theme 'Forests for Water and Wetlands' was observed with a series of events at Govt. City HSS, Kannur from 31st January to 2nd February 2011 by WWF-India with the support of Directorate of Environment and Climate Change, Government of Kerala. The event included wetland visit on 31st January to Munderikkadavu of Kattampally wetlands. Sixty students from different schools took part in the field visit in 6 groups and observed the birds, and other aspects of the wetland ecosystem. They particularly noted the dumping of poultry waste and slaughter wastes and the resultant ecosystem degradation. Sri.Vasu, local resident and PTA Member of Cheleri UP School briefed the students on the history and degradation of Kattampally River over the years. Poster, painting and quiz competitions for school and college students were held at Govt. City HSS on 1st February and about 50 students from various educational institutions participated.

The awareness workshop on 2nd February 2011 was inaugurated by Smt.M.C.Sreeja, Chairperson of Kannur Municipality in a function presided over by Sri. Renjan Mathew Varghese, State Director of WWF-India. In his presidential address, Sri. Renjan highlighted the utmost need for wetland conservation and protection now and in the days ahead especially when such wetland ecosystems are threatened by our various development projects like the proposed International Cricket Stadium in Edakochi, Hitech City in Valanthakad in Ernakulam and Resort and Golf course in Methrankayal, part of Vembanad lake in Alappuzha. During the inaugural address, Smt. Sreeja encouraged the student community to be the guardians of the remaining wetlands of the district as these ecosystems have a significant role in the society and in our day to day lives by providing water for our various sources and also food resources. She distributed the awards to the winners of the various competitions. Sri.Roy P. Thomas, Divisional Forest Officer of Kannur delivered the key note address and released the poster set. Smt.V.V.Sobhana, Headmistress of the school felicitated the function. Sri.S.P.Madhusoodanan and Sri.A.K.Sivakumar also spoke on the occasion.

The technical session on 'Wetlands – Values, Functions and Services' was led by Sri.V.C.Balakrishnan, environmentalist working with SEEK and 'Wetlands – issues and concerns at global, national and local level' by Sri.A.K.Sivakumar, Education Officer of WWF-India. During the post lunch session, the students presented their experience and observations during the field visit to Munderikkadavu wetlands and discussed the same in groups. This session was highly interactive and became a real learning and knowledge sharing process.

Renjan Mathew Varghese
(State Director)



