



Forest for Water and Wetlands

WORD WETLANDS DAY 2011

Mangrove Plantation at – Sandspit, Karachi

February 13, 2011

Pak-US Alumni Association Network-PUAN- Sindh

The Pak – US Alumni Network – Karachi Chapter celebrated the World Wetland Day 2011 on February 13 at Karachi Coast. The PUAN Alumni participated in Mangrove Plantation activity with great enthusiasm along their family and friends at backwaters area of Karachi coast. This activity also commemorates the 40th Anniversary of Ramsar Convention which works exclusively for conservation of wetlands globally. The PUAN get briefed about the Ramsar Convention and its functions by the Ex- Ramsar Convention's Coordinator of Asia (2000-2002) Dr. Najam Khurshid who belongs to Pakistan.

The field activity was facilitated by Ms. Rahat Najam, she discussed the various aspects of the mangrove forest with the participants. Some of the major information which was highlighted during the field visit about mangrove forest are "the Mangrove are *salt tolerant plants* (trees) they can only grow in coastal belt where the mixing of freshwater and seawater takes place. Karachi mangroves are urban mangroves and they called as the *Backwaters mangroves* which covering the area of 400 ha at Sandspit. Lyari River is the main source of freshwater for western backwaters mangrove forest. The main species is *Avicennia marina* harvesting by residents and other villagers has resulted in changes in the characteristics of the front trees which look like shrubs. The sea water comes through high and low tide daily. The creek

system is one of the most important areas for wintering, passage and summering shorebirds in Pakistan, and also supports significant numbers of cormorants, flamingoes, ducks, gulls, and terns. About 125 species of shorebirds have been recorded.

Barrister Shahida Jamil, Ex-Federal Minister Law and Environment also briefed the participants about the mangrove ecosystem functioning. The PUAN members showed great interest in the hands on information provided by various environmental experts. They participated in the Q & A followed by healthy discussions on various actions which can be taken to conserve our fragile environment. Ms. Fawzia Siddiqui president of PUAN Sindh thanked to everyone for making the event successful and promised in future the PUAN will organize field events to create awareness about the emerging environmental issues with the collaboration of the environment focus group.

At the end of day a home made (one dish) feast has been served. PUAN family members spent some time and enjoyed the pristine coast of Karachi with good cloudy weather.

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Some of the Pictures of Mangrove Plantation Activity on WWD 2011 by PUAN Sindh



Mangrove Plantation by PUAN Sindh members Ms. Fawzia Siddiqui President PUAN Sindh
Planting Mangrove tree



Br. Shahida Jamil and Dr. Najam Khurshid explaining the Mangrove ecosystem to the participants



PUAN members's kids planting Mangroves



Junaid Ahsan & Rahat Najam Planting mangroves



Group Photo of PUAN Sindh at Sandspit on WWD2011 Hafeez ur Rehman, Junaid Ahsan & Rahat Najam.

