



Pak-U.S. Alumni Association Karachi Chapter

World Wetland Day 2009

Upstream – Downstream: Wetlands connect us all,

The Pak –US Alumni Association – Karachi Chapter celebrates the World Wetland Day 2009 on 8th of February. More than 30 participants from the Pak-US alumni from Karachi and Hyderabad cities have joined the occasion at the Haleji Lake (Ramsar Site facing degradation to its habitat and habitants).

The Alumni comprises of the IVLP's (International Visitor Leadership Programme by US State Department) from various disciplines, for example the, ex-minister environment, educationist, philanthropist, environment, lawyer, print media, electronic media, NGO sector and people from the American Consulate.

Since it was the first field activity from the Karachi Chapter and the main purpose behind this was to create the importance of the wetlands among the civil society.

At beginning of the day the participants was briefed about the World Wetland Day and importance of the wetlands by Ms. Rahat Najam (IVLP) (Environmentalist).

Guest speaker Dr. Najam Khurshid (Wetland Expert) spoke about the past and present situation of the Haleji Lake and he also elaborates various issues and threats to the lake. During the presentation the participants have actively participated in the discussion and shown interest to understand the importance of the Haleji especially from the Waterbirds point of view the lake was once recognized as the Birds' Paradise.

After one hour presentation at the Information Centre of the lake the group got the chance to complete the circuit of the lake starting from the information centre and end at the same point. During the trip the participants had noticed that the lake facing many serious issues like the water level down and the excessive growth of the vegetation in the bank of the lake and in the middle as well. The lake has facing many challenges like the original water supply, water quality deteriorating, population of the birds declining particularly the migratory birds and eutrophication. The event was concluded with the following recommendations made by experts i.e. 1) that priority should be given to supply water to the lake from the original inlet, 2) an integrated management plan should be developed and implement by the concern departments.

The electronic media like Samaa channel, ARYone world broadcast the occasion on the national news and they highlighted the issues of the lake. Voice of America also covered the occasion for their website and Radio programme.

Photos below.

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Briefing at the Information Centre of the Lake



Different views of the Lake



The Ex-Minister of Environment Barrister Shahida Jamil (IVLP) discussing the water issue during the field trip.



Participants at the trip around the lake with the Dr. Najam Khurshid.

