



# ECOSF NEWSLETTER



## Corona Virus - COVID 19: Situation in Numbers in the ECO Member Countries

Country	Total confirmed cases due to COVID-19	Total confirmed deaths due to COVID-19
Afghanistan	51,350	2,179
Azerbaijan	216,584	2,575
Iran	1,210,000	54,946
Kazakhstan	199,555	2,760
Kyrgyzstan	80,654	1,353
Pakistan	477,240	10,047
Tajikistan	13,265	90
Turkey	2,180,000	20,388
Turkmenistan	-	-
Uzbekistan	76,907	613
<b>ECO region Total</b>	<b>4,505,555</b>	<b>92,772</b>



**Date Stamp:** December 29, 2020 **Source:** <https://ourworldindata.org>

**Note:** So far, no case has been reported in Turkmenistan.

## Training Program on Development and Management of Economic Zones under the Belt and Road Initiatives held Successfully

Training Program on Development and Management of Economic Zones under the Belt and Road Initiative was held in a hybrid mode (face-to-face and virtually) on December 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 which was jointly organized and hosted by Beijing Technology and Business University (BTBU) and ECO Science Foundation.



This 2-day Training Program, the first multilateral and international training organized by the "BTBU-ECOSF Joint Training Center on Scientific, Technological and Economic Cooperation" under Belt and Road Initiative, was attended by a total of more than 100 domestic and foreign trainees, both online and on-site. The training was co-chaired by Dr. Di Yuna, Director of the Joint Training Centre at BTBU and Engr. Khalil Raza, Scientific Officer of ECOSF.

China has achieved phenomenal economic growth, an unprecedented development over the last three decades. The fundamental attribute to this rapid socio-economic growth has been linked to the emergence of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and industrial clusters, which have been termed as important engines of China's remarkable development. The training focused on SEZs and lessons from China for the other Belt and Road countries, including ECO Member States. Thus, the objective of holding this first workshop was to deepen the understanding of the evolving nature of SEZs and enhance human resource capacities to formulate and implement strategies for SEZs, as well as build the human resource capacity for development and expansion of regional value chains of economic corridors.

Prof. Jia Yingmin, Vice President of BTBU, attended its opening ceremony and delivered a speech. First thanking all the lecturers and participants both at home and overseas for attending the opening ceremony, Prof. Jia gave a brief introduction to the development of BTBU and of the BTBU-ECOSF Joint Training Center. Prof. Jia underlined that this training would prove to be very beneficial for the participants in understanding of development and management economic zones. He further said that this training program would serve as a platform for S&T, and economic exchanges among the BRI countries, and promote cooperation among countries in the field of the technology, economy, education and culture.

Following resource persons/experts conducted the training.

- **Wang Yalin**, Policy Analyst, Head of the Sustainable Investment and Business Group, UNDP China Representative Office;
- **Feng He**, Researcher, CNPC Economics & Technology Research Institute Overseas— A high-end think tank for BRI countries;
- **Guo Yi**, Professor, School of International Economics and Management Beijing Technology and Business University (BTBU);
- **Syed Zakria Ali Shah**, Chief Executive Officer of CPEC Authority (Pakistan);
- **Zhao Fushou**, Project Director, Silk Road Promotion Centre for International Production Capacity Cooperation;
- **Zhang Yixiang**, Deputy Dean, TEDA Overseas Research Institute, Assistant General Manager, China-Africa TEDA Investment Co.;
- **Wang Xiaoguang**, Director, CSR Promotion Centre, China Federation of Industrial Economics. Lecturers introduced the development, layout, management experience and future trends of BRI industrial parks.



### Key takeaways of the training workshop

Experts demonstrated various policy and structural framework for development and management of economic zones in the context of Belt and Road Initiative. The resource persons presented a number of case studies of successful as well as not so successful models of SEZs. Based on the experiences of successful SEZ programs globally, the following are important:

- Strong government support is a key for any economic zones as part of the long-term national development strategy;
- Having a long-term vision is particularly important because economic transformation can take decades;
- A transparent legal and regulatory framework is critical to ensure the clarity of roles and responsibilities of various parties, and to provide protection and certainty to the developers and investors;
- An integrated and strategic coordination among various stakeholders is extremely important. For instance, an **effective one-stop-shop services for customs, taxation, commodity inspection and quality inspection are important characteristics for any SEZ;**

- In almost all the successful zones in the world, basic infrastructure is of high quality, and one-stop-shop services and aftercare are pre-requisite, which make them very attractive to investors;
- One of the highest priorities of any zone is to provide the customized and specialized education and training that generate, upgrade and deepen knowledge and skills appropriate to the localized needs;
- A strategic location with sound infrastructure, strong commercial viability, significant economic returns and strong link to regional and global markets are the fundamental attributes for any high performing economic zones.

With interactive discussion with participants, experts explored and identified the typical barriers and challenges to successful operations and management of SEZs. The training concluded that right policy and regularity framework, financial incentives and solid political support and adequately skilled labor are potentially some of the key ingredients for high performing SEZs in the region.

In the end, Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro, President ECOSF, in his concluding remarks appreciated the collaborating partner; BTBU and the trainers for their resourceful analysis and lectures and the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST) for their strong support to the Joint Training Centre. Prof. Soomro emphasized that that participating countries need to establish and engage in an alliance for promotion of cross-border cooperation in the technology, engineering and infrastructure development sectors, to maximize the benefits of Belt and Road Initiative. Prof. Soomro further underlined that through this Training Program, the exchange and cooperation would be further strengthened between countries in many critical areas of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI). On behalf of BTBU-ECOSF Joint Training Center, he assured full cooperation for organizing similar quality training programs for socio-economic growth to promote the sustainable development of the ECO Region and BRI at large.



It is important to mention that **BTBU-ECOSF Joint Training Center on Scientific, Technological and Economic Cooperation under Belt and Road Initiative** is an international cooperation platform which was launched earlier on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, under the funding of China Association for Science and Technology (CAST) Program of International Collaboration Platform for Science and Technology Organizations in Belt and Road Countries. The Joint Training Centre aims to promote sustainable economic and social development in the BRI countries through training in technology application, industrial economy, S&T standards and science communication.

### **“CPEC Science Communication Network” launched during 5<sup>th</sup> Academic Forum on China-Pakistan Scientific, Technological and Economic Cooperation under “Belt and Road” Initiative**

During 5th Academic Forum on China-Pakistan Scientific, Technological and Economic Cooperation under “Belt and Road” Initiative, “CPEC Science Communication Network” was launched on December 3, 2020 by Beijing Technology and Business University (BTBU), Beijing Association for Science and Technology (BAST), Beijing Academy of Science and Technology (BJAST), Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF), and Pakistan Scientific & Technological Information Centre (PASTIC). Partners of “CPEC Science Communication Network” include: BTBU Pakistan Study Center of Science & Technology and Economy, Beijing Science & Technology Center for International Cooperation, Beijing Science Center, Beijing Youth Science and Technology Center, Beijing Development Center of Popular Science, Beijing Association for Science Education Museums, China Science and Technology Museum, Dragon Design Foundation, ECO Science Foundation, Namal Education Foundation, China Overseas Chinese Association of Pakistan, Pakistan Museum of Natural History, Technology Times, Zhejiang Research Center of Modern Science Popularization and Propaganda, etc.



The establishment of the Network is in line with the Goal of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which will meet a wide range of livelihood needs. Under CPEC programmes, a number of schools in Pakistan have set up Chinese language courses and Chinese research centers, and conducted exchanges with China. Meanwhile more young students are looking forward to learning about China's S&T education and development. The main objective of this CPEC Science Communication Network is to build a platform for information sharing, public welfare mutual assistance, academic exchanges and people-to-people exchanges in science communication between China and Pakistan. Bilateral joint efforts will create brand activities for China-Pakistan S&T cooperation and promote the high-quality development of CPEC.

Earlier, 5th Academic Forum on China-Pakistan Scientific, Technological and Economic Cooperation under “Belt and Road” Initiative was held online and offline. It was jointly organized by Beijing Technology and Business University (BTBU) and Pakistan Scientific and Technological Centre (PASTIC). The theme of the Forum was “China-Pakistan Cooperation on Science Communication”. It was attended by the officials from BTBU Pakistan Study Center of Science & Technology and Economy, Beijing Science Center, Beijing Youth Science and Technology Center, Beijing Association for Science Education Museums, China Science and Technology Museum, Pakistan Museum of Natural History, Technology Times and the ECO Science Foundation.

The Forum was opened by Prof. Huang Xiankai, Secretary of CPC BTBU Committee. He welcomed the distinguished guests and the participants attending online and offline. He also shared that various MoUs and Agreements have been signed between China and Pakistan for the collaboration in various fields and under that collaboration, this Forum is being organized. He hoped that joining together will bring mutual support for the both the countries.

Prof. Wang Qinglin Deputy DG, Department of International Affairs of CAST and Member of Joint Working Group on S&T under CPEC, Mr. Ahmed Farooq, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Pakistan at Beijing, Dr. Ahsen Feroze, Director International Linkages and Member of Joint Working Group, Dr. Akram Shaikh DG of PASTIC and others also addressed the Forum. From ECOSF, it was attended by Assistant Director (Admin and Programmes).

#### **ECOSF Participated in the “Global Al-Farabi Forum” hosted by COMSTECH**

The Global Al-Farabi forum was jointly organized by COMSTECH (OIC Ministerial Standing Committee on Science and Technology) and the Government of Kazakhstan on December 21, 2020 on the occasion of the 1150th birth Anniversary Celebrations of the renowned philosopher and scientist Abu Nasr Al-Farabi.

The event focused on the multidimensional contributions of Al-Farabi, the impact of his work on later intellectual environment of world culture, and his relevance for contemporary times. Leading international experts presented their papers on different aspects of his life and works. The event was attended by over 150 people from 17 countries, including recognized scientists and Farabi scholars from leading universities in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Qatar, Pakistan, Kazakhstan and other countries, representatives of a number of international organizations, including the international Turkic Academy, as well as

members of the diplomatic corps accredited in Pakistan and others. The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan H.E. Mr. Arif Alvi was the Chief Guest during the event. On behalf of ECOSF, President Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro participated in the event.



Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Global forum, President of Pakistan H.E. Mr. Arif Alvi emphasized the continuing relevance of the Al-Farabi teachings for humanity and, particularly, for the Islamic world. In this regard, he urged upon the Islamic world to mobilize its efforts to make a breakthrough in science and technology that is so necessary for it now, relying primarily on the moral component of al-Farabi's scientific heritage. During the opening of the Forum, OIC Assistant Secretary General for Science and Technology, H.E. Mr. Askar Mussinov, shared that the special resolution has been unanimously adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the OIC on the regular holding of international events to promote the scientific heritage of al-Farabi not only among the OIC member countries, and beyond the region.

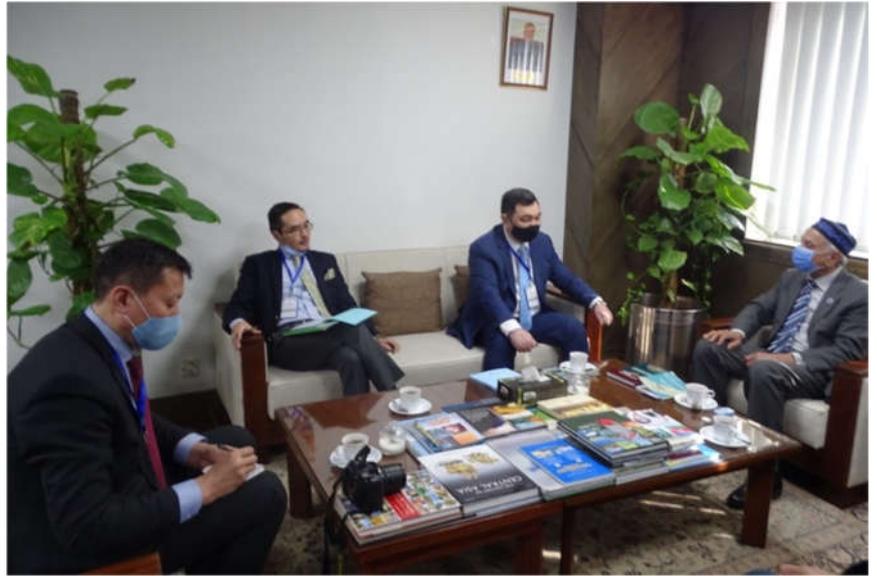
In his speech, Permanent representative of Kazakhstan to the OIC, an Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr. Berik Aryn, deliberated on scientific events that were held this year under the auspices of UNESCO in Kazakhstan and abroad to promote the heritage of Abu Nasr al-Farabi.

Dr. Darkhan Kydyrali, the President of International Turkic Academy (TWESCO) also participated in the forum and underscored that the TWESCO highly values the importance of popularizing and widely disseminating the rich scientific and encyclopedic heritage of Al-Farabi, not only among the youth, but also to the rest of the world to stimulate research on his scientific works. Mr. Darkhan also highlighted that the philosophical heritage of Al-Farabi is a revelation of a new humanitarian, ethical, dialogical and rational ideology of the XXI century, the heritage of all humankind and the pride of the Kazakh people.



**TWESCO and ECOSF reinforce their conviction on working together towards achieving their common goals in the ECO region**

President of Turkic World Educational and Scientific Cooperation Organization (TWESCO) Dr. Darkhan Kydyrali visited ECOSF Secretariat in Islamabad on 21-12-2020. He was accompanied by Dr. Askhat Kessikbayev, Permanent Secretary of TWESCO and Mr. Aman Tynebek, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Pakistan. The delegation was warmly received by President ECOSF Prof. Manzoor H. Soomro along with his team.



Prof. Soomro welcomed and briefed the delegation about ECOSF and its programmes. President ECOSF shared that besides MoU with TWESCO, the Foundation has developed strong collaboration with numerous international and regional organizations such as; UNESCO, La main a la pate Foundation of France, China

Association for Science and Technology (CAST), Children and Youth Science Center of CAST, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing Technology and Business University (BTBU) , International Science, Technology and Innovation Center under the Auspices of UNESCO (ISTIC), Malaysia, Inter Academy Partnership Science Education Programme (IAP-SEP), Islamic Development Bank, Isfahan Science and Technology Town (ISTT) and many others for promotion and development of science, technology and innovation (STI) in ECO region leading towards the economic development and cultural integration.

President ECOSF also underlined that Foundation launched the Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) as one of the flagship programmes of the Foundation from Nur-Sultan (Astana) Kazakhstan in 2015, which is being successfully run in Pakistan and Iran. The Foundation considers Kazakhstan as one of the important Member States of ECO with tremendous potential for growth in Science, Technology and Innovation sectors, Prof. Soomro said. President ECOSF also shared that ECOSF in collaboration with Beijing Technology and Business University under the Belt and Road Initiative of China, has launched a Joint Training Center at BTBU Beijing to build the capacity of BRI countries with especial focus on the ECO Member Countries in the engineering and technological development.

Dr. Kydyrali highly appreciated the programmes and contribution of ECOSF towards STI in the region. He also briefed about the activities of TWESCO which is actively promoting cultural integration among the Member Countries with an objective of the coordinating research on language, literature, culture, history of Turkic people from ancient times to the present-day. He further said that the TWESCO organizes “Al-Farabi Forum” annually where leading experts are invited to share their thoughts on renowned philosopher Abu Nasr Al-Farabi. Dr. Kydyrali assured of their full cooperation and support towards partnership for pursuing common goals of promoting research and scientific culture in the region.

During the meeting, it was agreed by both sides that the collaboration between the two organizations should be enhanced and strengthened, and more joint activities be organized in future. It is pertinent to mention that MoU was signed between the two regional organizations in 2016 for promoting joint activities in the ECO region and ECOSF has been supporting the annual social sciences and humanities forums of TWESCO ever since..



At the end, President ECOSF presented Insignia and Five-Year Report of the Foundation to Dr. Kydyrali. A report and two books (on Al-Farabi and Allama Iqbal respectively) were also reciprocated by Dr. Kydyrali.

**Chairman PSF meets the President ECOSF**

Chairman of Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) Prof. Dr. Shahid Mehmood Baig, who has recently joined the premier position, made a maiden visit to Economic Cooperation Organization Science Foundation (ECOSF) on 31 Dec 2020 and met the President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro. The objective of the visit was to make a courtesy call and discuss joint collaborative programmes by the two organizations.



The Chairman PSF was warmly received by the President ECOSF Prof. Soomro. The two exchanged views on the on-going programmes of the two organizations and how to work together in cooperation and collaboration. President ECOSF shared with the Chairman PSF that ECOSF

being an intergovernmental organization of 10 countries in Central and South-West Asia can extend its cooperation to PSF and that two organizations had already signed MoU some years ago, which should be reactivated and updated if so required.

Prof. Soomro also briefed the Chairman PSF on the collaborations of ECOSF developed with numerous international and regional organizations including; UNESCO, La main a la pate Foundation of France, China Association for Science and Technology (CAST), Children and Youth Science Center of CAST, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing Technology and Business University (BTBU) , International Science, Technology and Innovation Center under the Auspices of UNESCO (ISTIC), Malaysia, Inter Academy Partnership Science Education Programme (IAP-SEP), Islamic Development Bank, Isfahan Science and Technology Town (ISTT) and many others for promotion and development of science, technology and innovation (STI) in ECO region leading towards the economic development and cultural integration. He further said that ECOSF is keen to work together in collaboration with PSF in Pakistan, thereby bringing greater access to PSF to benefit from international opportunities in Science, Technology and Innovation.

The two leaders agreed to further explore the options to work together in Pakistan and beyond in the ECO Region. Finally, the President ECOSF presented a book; Communicating Science- A Global Perspective published by ANU Press Australia recently which carries a chapter on Pakistan by Dr. Soomro and Khalil Raza from ECOSF. ECOSF Insignia was also presented to the Chairman PSF.

**ECOSF collaborated with partners to co-organize the 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Sustainable Development and Urban Construction**

Daneshpajooan Pishro Higher Education Institute (DHEI) in collaboration with ECO Science Foundation, TU Dortmund University and University of Isfahan organized 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Sustainable Development and Urban Construction on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020 virtually. The objective of holding this conference was to provide an interdisciplinary platform for policy makers, experts, researchers, practitioners and educators to present and discuss the most recent innovations, trends, and challenges and solutions adopted towards the Sustainable Development and urban management. Leading academic scientists, researchers and scholars participated in this virtual event and exchanged their experiences and research outcomes on various aspects of Sustainable Development and urban management.

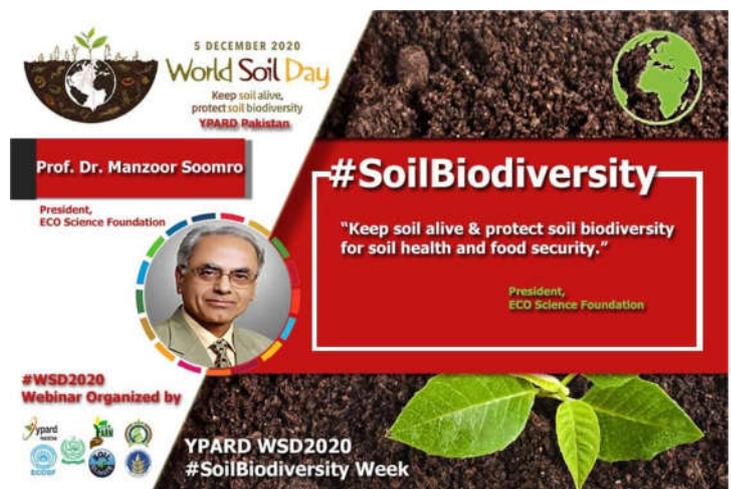
On behalf of ECOSF, Engr. Khalil Raza, Scientific Officer participated in the conference and presented his talk on Prospects and Challenges of Electric Mobility in Pakistan. Mr. Raza underlined that worldwide, the electric mobility is still at a nascent stage but it is rapidly evolving. Thus, it is an important decision for Pakistan to ride the initial wave in its early stages to gain maximum economic and technological advantage. He further deliberated that emergence of EVs would be economically beneficial for Pakistan, especially in reducing the import bill, bring down emissions and noise, create a new market for automakers, thereby creating employment and promoting clean mobility.

Prof. Syed Komail Tayebi Director, Center of Excellence for International Economics (CEIE) University of Isfahan also participated in the event and delivered his presentation on Effects of Science and Technology (S&T) on Sustainable Development in the ECO Region. Prof. Tayebi highlighted that Science and Technological development is the key to attract foreign direct investment for the ECO Member Countries. Thus, he suggested that there is a tremendous potential for investment on Science and Technology for the socio-economic development of the region.

**ECOSF and YPARD, and other partners jointly organized the World Soil Day 2020**

Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD) Pakistan and ECO Science Foundation in joint collaboration with Pakistan Agricultural Research Council – (PARC) Soil4Climate USA, Why Farm Caribbean, Agriculture University Peshawar, Sindh Agriculture University Tando Jam organized a webinar on World Soil Day (Soil Biodiversity) on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2020, highlighting the key role played by soil biodiversity in the functioning of the Earth’s ecosystem

The purpose of organizing this event was to mobilize new resources and partnerships to ensure adequate investments and territorially based solutions for Soil Conservation and restoration, which is critical for sustaining life on this planet. Experts during their deliberation underscored that the partnerships between Agricultural Stakeholders and Young Professionals can play a vital role in restoring soil health.



This event was hosted and moderated by Shahla Salah Khan, YPARD Country Representative. Dr. Muhammad Azeem Khan, Chairman - Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) was Guest of Honour of the event and Prof. Dr. Ratan Lal, a renowned soil scientist was the special guest and keynote speaker. Prof. Dr. Manzoor Soomro, President ECOSF also participated in the webinar as a guest speaker.

The webinar centered around three thematic areas, as listed below:

- Partnership: Engagement of agricultural stakeholders and young experts (YPs) as key partners to assess the regional vulnerability of arable land to soil erosion and restoration measures in farmland.
- Food Security: Soil biodiversity a nature-based solution – for sustainable agriculture production, human health, and food security.
- Climate Change SDG13: Soil destructing activities are not climate-neutral. Soil Biodiversity, as a major source of positive impact on global climate change, environmental protection, adaptation, and agricultural vulnerability.

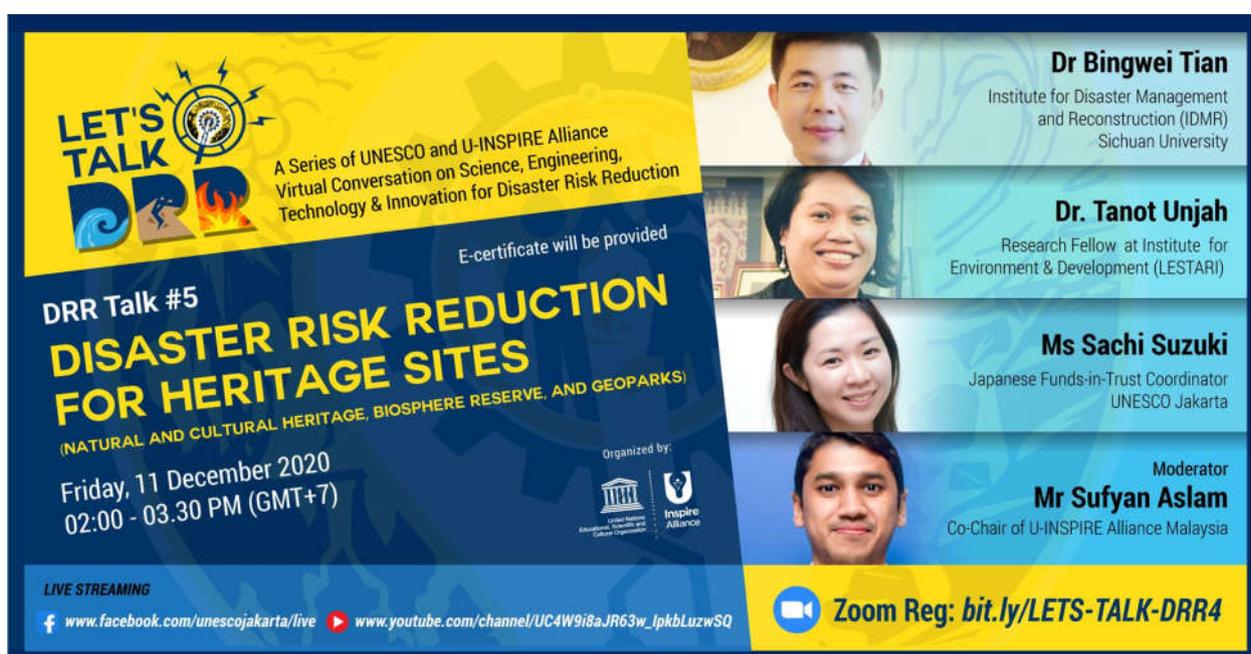
Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro, President ECOSF highlighted critical role of soil biodiversity in maintaining the ecosystem of the earth planet. He further shared that ECOSF as a



stakeholder of Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) has been contributing towards on a number of key initiatives on biodiversity conservation. He underlined that industrial waste and pesticide use has been devastating the soil fauna and flora. Soil biodiversity not only plays a major role in food security and nutrition but it also plays a key role for developing vaccines and medicines from the soil micro-organisms.

**ECOSF Participated Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Talk on Heritage Sites (Natural and Cultural Heritage, Biosphere Reserve, and Geoparks)**

UNESCO and U-INSPIRE Alliance held a Virtual Conversation on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) for Heritage Sites (Natural and Cultural Heritage, Biosphere Reserve, and Geoparks) on 11 December 2020. This virtual conversation generated a meaningful dialogue with prominent expert from UNESCO and Youth and Young Professionals of U-INSPIRE Alliance members with the objectives to introduce UNESCO’s action in Disaster Risk Reduction, U-INSPIRE’s member activities on Science, Engineering, Technology and Innovation (SETI) for DRR, as well as to bring the voice of youth and young professionals initiatives in line with UNESCO’s Action in DRR, and to communicate science on DRR to public.



The event was moderated by Mr. Sufyan Aslam - Co-Chair of U-INSPIRE Alliance Malaysia and the other speakers of the event were Dr. Bingwei Tian Institute for Disaster Management and Reconstruction (IDMR) Sichuan University, Dr. Tanot Unjah Research Fellow at Institute for Environment and Development (LESTARI), Ms. Sachi Suzuki Japanese Funds-in-Trust Coordinator, UNESCO Jakarta. On behalf of the ECOSF, President Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro participated in the event.

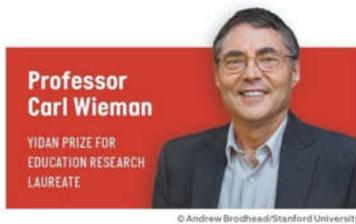
Experts underlined that existing national and local disaster preparedness and response mechanisms usually do not include heritage expertise in their operations. As a result, hundreds of sites are critically exposed to potential hazards, while communities worldwide are not harnessing the full potential of their heritage, both tangible and intangible, for reducing disaster risk.

Experts further stressed that heritage plays a crucial role in providing precious assets for the sustainable social and economic development of an affected region during its recovery phase, by attracting investment, creating employment, or providing renewable natural resources. Thus, strategic need for protection of heritage in the event of disaster is of paramount importance.

**ECOSF Participated in the Yidan Prize Awards Presentation Ceremony and Summit 2020**

The Yidan Prize for Education Award Ceremony and Summit 2020 were held virtually on December 7, 2020. During the ceremony, Yidan Prize Foundation announced laureates of the Yidan Prize 2020, which the largest international award in the field of education and worth millions of dollars to its winners. President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro and Engr. Khalil Raza, Scientific Officer participated in the virtual summit on behalf of the ECOSF.

## The 2020 Yidan Prize Laureates: **Fast Facts**



- Winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2001.
- Served with the Office of Science and Technology Policy under President Obama.
- Creator of widely used simulation tools for students to learn science in a novel way.



- Ms Lake was an OBE recipient in the 2019 Queen's Honours List.
- Founding chair of the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative.



- Ms Murimirwa was named one of the "100 most influential women" by the BBC.
- CAMFED has supported 4.1 million students to attend school across Africa.

Established in 2016 by Dr Charles Chen Yidan, a core founder of Chinese tech giant Tencent, the Hong Kong-based Yidan Prize Foundation has a mission to create a better world through education.

Every year, Yidan Prize laureates are each presented with a gold medal. In addition, a total of HK\$30 million (around US\$3.9 million) of prize funds is awarded to the individual or team (shared equally) from each category – half as a cash prize and half in the form of a project fund managed by the Foundation.

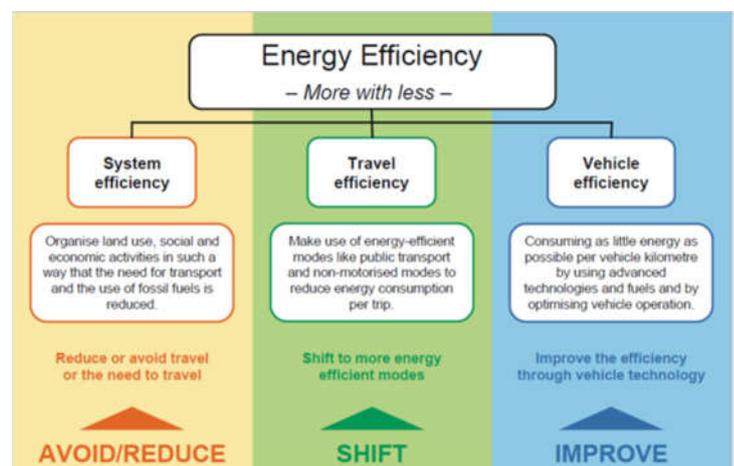
The Yidan Prize 2020 for Education Research was awarded to Prof. Carl Wieman, professor of physics and a professor at the Graduate School of Education and DRC chair at Stanford University in the United States. Prof. Wieman is considered the world's foremost scholar on college science teaching, with his research on active learning preparing the next generation of students to be more scientifically literate. His education tool, Physics Education Technology Interactive Simulations, provides free STEM-related simulations to support the learning of secondary and undergraduate college students around the world.

The Yidan Prize for Education Development was won by Lucy Lake, Chief Executive Officer, CAMFED (Campaign for Female Education), and Angeline Murimirwa, Executive Director – Africa, for their work to support marginalised girls' education. The organisation has already supported 4.1 million students to attend primary and secondary school across Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and helped six million students to benefit from an improved education environment.

### ECOSF participated in the webinar on Energy Efficiency and Conservation in Pakistan hosted by PIDE

Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) organized a webinar on "Energy Efficiency and Conservation" on December 2, 2020. The webinar was moderated by Dr. Naadeem ul Haque– the Vice Chancellor of PIDE. Renowned energy and policy experts participated in the event. On behalf of ECOSF, President Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro and Engr. Khalil Raza Scientific Officer participated in the webinar.

The objective of this webinar was to open up the platform for discussion for policy makers, implementers, energy experts and concerned stakeholders, for generating the debate on energy efficiency and conservation in the country. Energy Efficiency and Conservation is generally a less prioritized area of focus under the energy sector in Pakistan. Thus, the discussion during the webinar centered around as to what policy interventions would be required to promote energy efficiency in the country, how the implementation of energy efficiency could be made feasible for an economy like Pakistan, and how the targeted beneficiaries can be enabled to incorporate efficient energy use practices.



**How to Address the Issue of Skill Gap: The Case of Pakistan**

*Courtesy of Eurasian Research Institute*

According to the International Labour Organization (2020), global young unemployment (15-24 years) rate is 13.6% globally. The number of youth that are unemployed and do not have an education or professional training, continues to increase. It means that the young generation requires an access to education and development of relevant skills to find a job and be productive to the economy of the country. Despite the willingness and desire of young people to start their careers, employers experience difficulties in filling the jobs due to the talent shortage of potential workers.

The Manpower Group (2020) conducts an annual "Talent Shortage Report" working with half a million companies in over 80 countries across the globe. As stated in this report, human resource managers do not observe talent shortage that is growing around the world in only 18% of reported countries. Having a significant number of unemployed young people, which negatively impacts economic growth, the recruitment of skilled candidates has become a threatening issue in the long-term perspective of economic development. The phenomenon when employers face issues when hiring appropriate workers is called the skill gap and requires more attention since the young generation has significant barriers to enter the labour market. As stated by Deloitte (2018), only in the manufacturing industry of the US, the number of unfilled positions reached 2.4 million in 2018. Consequently, it is important to address the issue of the skill gap by adopting new policies and supporting both employers and employees.

Like other emerging economies, Pakistan urgently needs to prepare its young people for a rising issue of skill gap. Being the fifth most populous country in the world, Pakistan has 64% of people younger than 30 years and 29% between 15 and 29 years.

Read more: <https://eurasian-research.org/publication/how-to-address-the-issue-of-skill-gap-the-case-of-pakistan/>