

ECOSF Delegation Participates in 25th RPC of ECO in Tehran-Iran, 1-5 March 2015

25th Regional Planning Council (RPC) of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was held in ECO Secretariat Tehran- Iran from 1-5 March 2015. ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) was represented by a two member delegation comprising of the President ECOSF, Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro and Mr. Adnan Ali Abbasi, the Accounts Officer.



The Meeting was attended by the delegations from the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Tajikistan, Republic of Turkey and Republic of Uzbekistan. The delegations from the Turkish Cypriot State and the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States also attended the Meeting as Observers. The presidents and representatives of ECO Specialized Agencies, Regional Institutions and Affiliated Bodies, namely ECO Cultural Institute, ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF), ECO Trade & Development Bank, ECO College of Insurance, ECO Regional Center for Risk Management for Natural Disasters (ECO-RCRM), ECO Research Centre and ECO Institute of Environment and Science Technology also participated in the Meeting.

The Meeting was opened with the introductory remarks by the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Dr. Shamil Aleskerov and inaugural statement by Dr. Mohammad Khazaei, Deputy Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Secretary General in his report to the

opening plenary session highlighted the main activities of the Organization during the year 2014. Referring to the current reform process, he requested the Member States to develop reform-supportive work programme for the Organization.

The Iranian dignitary, in his inaugural statement, expressed the hope that the Meeting will help in initiating result-oriented activities, compatible with the available resources and the priorities of Member States which would also increase the overall efficiency and performance of the Organization. Afterwards, inaugural statements were made by the Heads of Delegations of all participating Member States and the presidents and representatives of ECO Specialized Agencies, Regional Institutions and Affiliated Bodies.

President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro in his statement highlighted the achievements of 2014, challenges faced by the Foundation and plans for 2015-16. He expressed gratitude to all Member States especially the Host Country I.R. of Pakistan and ECO Secretariat for their continuous support to the Foundation. He acknowledged with appreciation the good news of ratification of ECOSF charter by Afghanistan in 2014. He also acknowledged the initial payment of mandatory budget contribution by I.R. of Iran during 2014. Dr. Soomro emphasized on the development of good interaction with numerous international S&T organizations and donors for supporting programs of the Foundation; included UNESCO, ISTIC Malaysia, *La main a la pate* Foundation of France, European Union, COMSATS, EvK2-CNR of Italy and Science Education Program of Inter Academy Panel (SEP IAP). He specially shared a brief report on successfully organizing 3- days International Conference on "Emerging Trends in Life Sciences for Sustainable Development" held in Lahore Pakistan from 9-11 October 2014 and its sponsorship by EU. He proposed to the ECO forum for participation in the next session of UNESCO General Assembly for the betterment of ECO Region.

President ECOSF also participated as an observer in a separate meeting of ECO Secretary General and heads of delegations of Member States for exchanging views on the progress of the ECO Vision 2015 and the possible directions for the new ECO Vision 2016-2025 in the context of structural reforms in the light of recommendations by the Eminent Persons Group (EPG).

Conference on Water and Sustainable Development – Role of Youth

To mark the World Water Day (WWD) 2015, the Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform the Government of Pakistan, ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) and many other multi-stakeholders jointly organized a conference on March 27 focusing on this year's global theme, 'Water and Sustainable Development - Role of Youth for Sustainable Water Resource Management'. Other partner organizations included World Youth Parliament of Water (WYPW), UNESCO, Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR), Pakistan Water Partnership (PWP), International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Asian Development Bank (ADB), UNICEF, FAO-UN, UN-HABITAT, Plan International, Muslim Aid, Helping Hand for Relief and Development, GLOF Pakistan, UNDP, RSPN, ICARDA, Riphah University and WaterAid.

The conference aimed at sensitization of key stakeholders on critical water issues and challenges; engaging stakeholders especially youth; advocating with the Government of Pakistan for approval of

National Water Policy and building consensus for the adoption of Islamabad Water Day Declaration 2015’.



Sardar Tariq, Chief Executive of Pakistan Water Partnership while delivering a message on behalf of President Islamic Republic of Pakistan said that investments in water and sanitation services results in substantial economic gains. He emphasized that water is crucially important for the socio-economic sustenance and development of any country especially for Pakistan that has agriculture based economy. He mentioned that water resources of the country are subject to all kinds of quantitative and qualitative issues, which need to be addressed on priority basis.

Speaking at the inaugural session as Chief Guest, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of Planning Development and Reforms said that water is the key element for the socio-economic development of any country.

He said that we must not only view sustainability as a problem of science, engineering, or economics; it is also founded on values, ethics, and the equal contributions of different cultures. He also emphasized that our country is blessed with human capital in the form of youth which comprises about 50 percent of the population and engaging Youth for



Integrated Water Resource Management must be a foremost part of our water resources strategy. While quoting quotation of Dr. Mahbub ul Haq, he said “Sustainable development is a question of quality of life for the rich countries but is question of life for the poor countries”.



Earlier, Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro, President ECOSF, in his remarks, said that the water is a primary source of life for every living being which denotes the importance of water. If no water, no life. He further said that it is the duty of today's generations to save the water for today as well as for future generations. President ECOSF appreciated the engagement of the youth for this noble cause and said that engaging youth in this noble cause will definitely bring positive results. Prof. Soomro further said that the water is not only issue of Pakistan but it is issue of ECO region and whole the world and emphasized to take onboard to ECO region as well. He appreciated the presence of

Ambassadors of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan which showed their interest in the conference.

Mr. Bart Devos, President of World Youth Parliament for Water said “Access to clean water and sanitation as well as water scarcity, are among the most pressing challenges for my generation.. The creation of Pakistan Youth Parliament for Water will contribute to unlocking the potential of Pakistani young people as solution provider for the water problems”



The Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Sher Ali S. Jananov congratulated the organizers for organizing such a remarkable water conference and informed the participants that for realization of this important cause, Tajikistan has planned a water conference in June 2015.

The conference was also addressed by Cooperation Attache of French Embassy, Mr Olivier Huynh-Van, Ms. Mukta Akter Representative of GWP Bangladesh.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Vibeke Jensen, Representative/ Director, UNESCO Islamabad highlighted that a total of 748 million people worldwide still do not have access to improved drinking water sources and quality water.

While highlighting the critical role that Youth can play in participating in developing their countries in a sustainable manner she also stressed the academia to pay more attention to water research and its sustainable management. She mentioned that UNESCO Supports research and concrete projects on water related issues through its International Hydrological Programme (IHP), which is the only intergovernmental programme of the UN system devoted to water research, water resource' management, and education and capacity building.

After the inaugural session, a technical session was conducted and presentations regarding importance of water and issues/challenges were made. After the presentations, the participants were divided into 5 groups and given following themes for interactive deliberations:

- i. Water as a driver for growth and sustainability
- ii. Sustainable groundwater management
- iii. Climate change impacts on water towers – HKH Region
- iv. Cross-cutting role of youth and other stakeholders
- v. Water policies and stewardships – stakeholders participation

Each group discussed the respective topics in detail and findings after the deliberations were shared with the participants.



After the groups' presentations, an MoU was signed between World Youth Parliament for Water and Pakistan Youth Parliament for Water (PYPW). At the end of the conference, the certificates and shield were distributed among the youth participants.

International Meeting on “Developing the Roadmap on Engineering Qualification Standardization: Preparing Future Engineers for Sustainable Development”

International Meeting on “Developing the Roadmap on Engineering Qualification Standardization: Preparing Future Engineers for Sustainable Development” was successfully organized jointly by UNESCO Regional Office for Asia & Pacific-Jakarta, ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF), Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) and the International Science, Technology and Innovation Centre (ISTIC)



Malaysia and the Federation of Engineering Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (FEIAP).

The main objective of the international meeting was to provide an opportunity to the stakeholders/engineers to discuss and identify the gaps in engineering qualification standardization and develop a roadmap towards qualified and internationally recognized engineers. Pakistan has been selected as pilot case study for UNESCO-FEIAP collaboration which is working to improve the standards of engineering qualification in universities and institutes of higher education, in association with the engineering bodies. ECOSF is pleased that Ambassadors of ECO member countries viz., Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan also joined the inauguration of the meeting, while one Engineer each from Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan also joined the meeting along with over 50 Engineers from Pakistan. The meeting was inaugurated by the Ambassador of Malaysia in Pakistan and also addressed by Chairman PEC, President ECOSF, Representative of FEIAP, Directors UNESCO (Pakistan and Jakarta offices), Chairman ISTIC Governing Board and President ECOSF. Two days deliberations resulted in a draft road map and six working groups were formulated for follow up activities to address various aspects of Engineering Qualification Standardization.

Turkmenistan's Permanent Neutrality- 20th Anniversary and International Conference held in Islamabad

The 20th Anniversary of Turkmenistan's announcement of Permanent Neutrality was celebrated by the Embassy of Turkmenistan in Islamabad on 15 March 2015; wherein a day-long conference on the Foreign Policy of the country was held. The event was organized in collaboration with numerous Pakistani institutions.

H.E Mr. Sartaj Aziz Advisor to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on National Security and Foreign Affairs was the Chief Guest. In his remarks, he appreciated the adoption of 'Permanent Neutrality' by Turkmenistan some 20 years ago and said it had played an important role in enhancing and promoting the peaceful image of Turkmenistan in the region and global level. He further said promoting trade and economic activities would play an important role in strengthening people-to-people contact and enhancing peace, development and prosperity in the region.



He emphasized the need to explore new avenues for promoting people-to-people contacts between Pakistan and Turkmenistan especially with introduction of liberal visa regime, creating more opportunities for promoting trade and economic activities.

Turkmenistan's Ambassador at Large Sapar Berdiniyazov in his keynote address on this occasion said it was March 15, 1995 when the former President of Turkmenistan announced the policy of "Permanent Neutrality" while addressing a special function here in Islamabad during 3rd Summit of Heads of States of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) held at the same very hall of the hotel

(Marriott) 20 years ago. On 12 December 2015, United Nations in New York had unanimously adopted a special resolution "On the Permanent Neutrality of Turkmenistan" in its 50th General Assembly Session and it was for the first time in the history of UN that status of Permanent Neutrality was granted to any state in the World.



Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Atadjan Movlamov speaking on the occasion said the policy of "Permanent Neutrality" of Turkmenistan is being used for the progress, prosperity, peace and tranquility in the region without interfering in the affairs of any other country. He said Pakistan and Turkmenistan are linked in very close and strong bonds of brotherhood and it is being strengthened day by day. Ambassador Movlamov said that efforts are being made to promote people to people contacts, besides improving trade and economic ties between the two countries.



After the inaugural session, two technical sessions also took place wherein, papers were presented by academicians from the University of Peshawar, Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad and others on various aspects of Turkmenistan's foreign policy, culture and trade etc.

Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro also participated in the event and congratulated Ambassador at Large H.E. Sapar Berdiniyazov and Ambassador Atadjan

Movlamov for a long sustainable journey of Turkmenistan towards peace and neutrality.

It is pertinent to mention that it was the same historic day of 15 March 1995 during the 3rd ECO Summit in 1995 at Islamabad that the Charter of ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) was signed by all the 10 Member States. Turkmenistan is also a ratifying member of ECOSF Charter. Dr. Soomro reminded this fact to the Turkmen Ambassador in Islamabad and other diplomats with the request to support ECOSF. The Turkmen Diplomats assured Dr. Soomro of their support and cooperation.

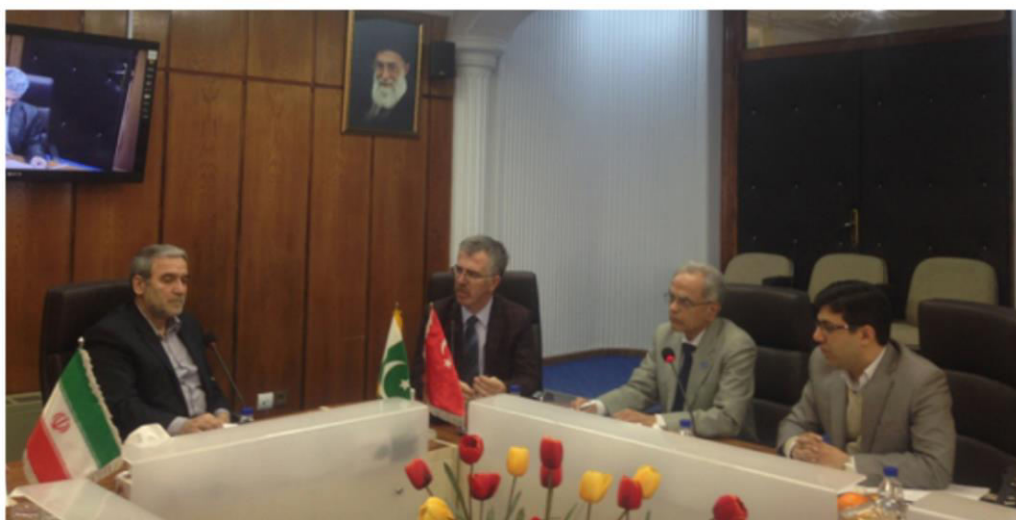
Iranian Vice-Minister of Education and Presidents of ECOSF & ECOEI agree to Pursue Science Education at School Level

President ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro and the President of ECO Educational Institute (ECOEI) Ankara-Turkey Prof. Selahattin Turan visited the Ministry of Education in Iran on 3 March 2015 and met with Mr. Khalilollah Babaloo, Vice Minister of Education for International Affairs. The visit was organized by the ECO Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs-Iran and Mr. Hossein Darvishi accompanied the visiting delegation.

The Vice Minister welcomed Presidents and briefed about the Iranian educational system, specially their more than 100 international schools in around 75 countries. He also pointed out that they have exclusive Directorate General for school curriculum development and teachers training. He desired to

have cooperation with both ECO institutes for the benefit of ECO region. Prof. Turan briefed the Vice Minister about ECO Educational Institute and stressed on importance of harnessing the educational system among ECO Member Countries on modern lines.

President ECOSF briefed the Vice-Minister about ECOSF and its objectives. He also highlighted achievements of the Foundation so far and presented a copy of ECOSF's Annual Report 2014 to the Vice Minister. He particularly emphasized on initiation of Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) program in



schools in collaboration with international partners of the Foundation and invited Iran for stronger participation in the program. Dr. Soomro invited him to nominate 1-2 most relevant persons to participate in the International Science Education Seminar at Paris on 1-6 June 2015 being organized by ECOSF collaborators *La main a la pte* Foundation of France. He also extended invitation for nomination for ECOSF's planned IBSE Capacity Building Workshop scheduled on 23-25 June 2015 at Astana Kazakhstan.

Mr. Khalilollah Babaloo in response assured his Ministry's full support for the activities and programs of both the institutions; ECO Educational Institute and ECO Science Foundation. He also offered to share the experiences and specialization of Iran in the area of education to other ECO region countries through the ECO specialized agencies, viz., ECOSF and ECOEI.

ECOSF Participates in the 3rd IPBES Plenary Session at Bonn- Germany 12-17 Jan 2015

ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) is an accredited Stakeholder/Observer member of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) since 2013. The third session of IPBES was held in Bonn, Germany, from 12 to 17 January 2015. On behalf of ECOSF, the session was participated by the President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro. He attended the Plenary including opening session, the meetings of Regional Experts Group for Asia & Pacific and Stakeholders Engagement Forum. ECOSF during 2014 nominated 14 experts from ECO member states for various deliverables; and in the first call for experts in 2015, seven experts from Pakistan, Iran and Turkey have been nominated for different IPBES deliverables.

The session was attended by representatives of 145 countries and an equal number of Stakeholder/Observer Organizations including ECOSF.

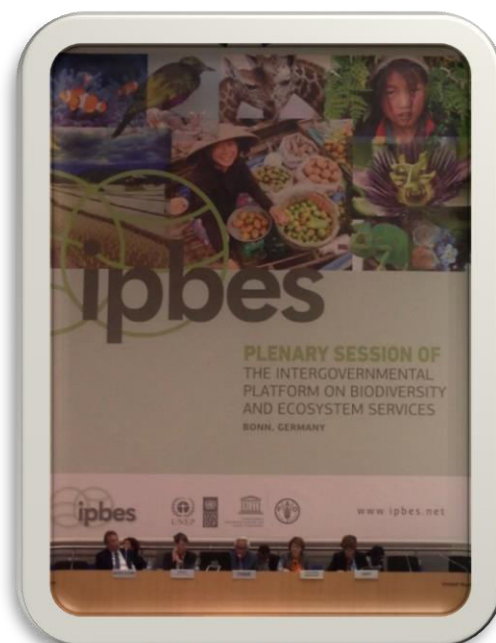
The session was opened by the Chair of the Plenary, Dato Dr. Zakri Abdul Hamid, calling the event a landmark in the history of the Platform to date.

Earlier, welcoming remarks were made by Ms. Anne Larigauderie, Executive Secretary of the Platform. Ms. Hendricks, the German Minister for Environment as Chief Guest said in her speech that the German Government was honoured to host the current session and greatly valued the trust placed in it as the host of the Platform and appreciated the activity of the Forum. Ms. Hendricks assured the Plenary that Germany would give particular consideration to the needs of partners. In closing, she called on all to maintain the momentum and to adopt decisions allowing the Platform to reach its full potential. Ms. McGlade also spoke on behalf of FAO, UNDP, UNEP and UNESCO.

Mr. Nimptsch the Mayor of Bonn, welcomed the participants to Bonn and to what he said was an auspicious venue for the current session. As was the Federal Government, Bonn was committed to biodiversity and to its role as the Platform's host.

In the ensuing discussion participants broadly welcomed the documents, saying that their consideration should be completed urgently. There was a difference of opinion, however, concerning oversight of the stakeholder engagement strategy. For detailed report, following link can be visited:

[“http://www.eco4science.org/ECOSF-Participates-in-the-3rd-IPBES-Plenary-Session-at-Bonn-Germany”](http://www.eco4science.org/ECOSF-Participates-in-the-3rd-IPBES-Plenary-Session-at-Bonn-Germany)



Some glimpses of the Meeting

ECOSF interacted with British Council and Royal Society of London for promotion of IBSE in January 2015

On the invitation of The Royal Society London, the ECOSF President Professor Manzoor Hussain Soomro participated in sideline two days event entitled, "Teacher Training and Development to inspire STEM Education: The Global Challenge" organized jointly by the British Council and the Royal Society at London on 20-21 January 2015. The seminar was organized as a side event of the International Science and Technology Forum organized by The Royal Society in London. Professor Soomro was invited on the basis of his association with the inquiry based science education (IBSE). Other participants included Mr. David Jasmin, the Director of *La main a la pate* Foundation France, who are also strong collaborators of ECOSF.



On the occasion, Dr. Soomro held a meeting with the Secretary Foreign Affairs of The Royal Society Prof. Sir Martyn Poliakoff and proposed him to expand the IBSE/STEM education portfolio of The Royal Society London beyond the United Kingdom. He emphasized on The Royal Society senior official that, the Society had a great strength due to its Commonwealth legacy and can play an important role in spreading the concept of IBSE at global level for following the example of *La main a la pate* Foundation of France, which has spread it to over 50 countries of world. The Royal Society Secretary Foreign Affairs appreciated the suggestion of Prof. Soomro and said that the Society is currently debating on whether to go global?



On the occasion, Dr. Soomro also had a formal meeting with the Director International Affairs and Deputy Director for Science Education Ms. Rapela Zaman and Dr. Ms. Rosalind Mist, respectively of The Royal Society for discussion on mutual cooperation. The Director Ms. Zaman warmly welcomed Dr. Soomro to The Royal Society and thanked him for the interaction and appreciated the efforts of ECOSF for promotion of science education. Dr. Soomro briefed The Royal Society team on ECOSF aims & objectives

and the programmes; and sought cooperation and support of the Society for the ECO Region. He also shared some ideas on linking the Royal Society with Global IBSE/STEM Programmes for mutual

benefit. Ms. Zaman in response appreciated the ideas and proposals of Dr. Soomro and agreed to keep in touch with ECOSF and shared some of the ongoing and future programmes of the Society.

ECOSF President also took the opportunity and met Dr. Tim Slingsby Adviser for Public Engagements in Science the British Council London and requested for their support to academics in the ECO member countries. Dr. Tim said that British Council did not have any regional programme for ECO Region, however he said that ECO member states should look into the Country Programmes and interact with national officials in Ministries of Education and local British Council managers for cooperation and support.

The Ambassador of Turkmenistan assures full support to ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) for pursuance of its Objectives

President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro called upon the Ambassador of Turkmenistan H.E. Mr. Atadjan Movlamov at the Embassy of Turkmenistan in Islamabad on 27 January 2015. The Turkmen Ambassador received the President ECOSF with warm welcome.

During the discussion, the Ambassador briefed about the modern history of Turkmenistan and mentioned that in 1995, Turkmenistan adopted new resolution with constitutional changes for its naturalization, therefore, the Turkmenistan is celebrating this year, the completion of 20 years of its landmark event as a "Neutral State". He further briefed that Turkmenistan accepted international obligations vide its new constitution and believed firmly the strong relations with international community. He also said that his country always tries to promote economic development and peace in ECO region and the world. The Ambassador gave some economic glimpses of Turkmenistan and said that a energy project is under way between Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India famously known as TAPI. The President of Turkmenistan has emphasized on transit corridor from North-South and East-West.

The President ECOSF gave a brief on the activities done so far and future programmes of ECOSF. Prof. Soomro mentioned that he plans to visit Turkmenistan to hold meetings with the officials and experts/scientists in the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Education and Agriculture as well as the National Academy of Sciences and other relevant organizations/departments. The President ECOSF appreciated that a national scientific conference is organized by Turkmenistan once or twice every year and that he would like to participate in the next conference. It will provide great opportunities to mingle with the scientific community of ECO region and the world.



Prof. Soomro also apprised the Ambassador about S&T Fund of the Foundation including its objectives which was approved by the BoT. He further said that this year, ECOSF has planned a major international workshops on inquiry based science education (IBSE) entitled, "Capacity Building Workshop on Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE)" planned on June 22-25, 2015 in Astana-Kazakhstan.

He also apprised the Turkmen Ambassador about the 6th International Seminar on Science and Technology Education in School organized by La main a la pate (LAMAP) Foundation-France to be held in Paris from 1-6 June 2015. In this context, the nominations of two persons from each ECO country have been invited.

The Turkmen Ambassador appreciated the efforts being made by ECOSF and assured his full support for the above mentioned tasks to be completed by the Turkmenistan as soon as possible and will facilitate the visit of the President ECOSF to Turkmenistan as and when requested.

EU's New Deputy Head of Delegation in Pakistan calls upon President ECOSF

The New Deputy Head of Delegation of European Union (EU) in Pakistan H.E. Mr. Stefano GATTO paid his maiden visit to ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) on 11 February 2015 as a courtesy call upon the President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro. Mr. GATTO has recently replaced Mr. Pierre MAYAUDON; with whom ECOSF enjoyed good and productive interaction. The President ECOSF warmly welcomed the new Deputy Head of EU Mission in Pakistan and briefed him about the programmes and activities of the Foundation. He also mentioned that ECO Science Foundation has got



numerous scientists and organizations on board with particular reference to awareness and research on Biosafety- Biosecurity at various levels especially scientists and policy makers. Dr. Soomro further informed Mr. GATTO that ECOSF plans to initiate a programme of strengthening the laboratory facilities and capabilities of the experts in the special area. He also thanked European Union for their cooperation through European Commission's Directorate General of DEVCO in Brussels with ECOSF for various programmes especially the conference with the title "International Conference on Emerging Trends in Life Sciences for Sustainable Development" held last year (9-11 Oct 2014) at FC College Lahore- Pakistan. Dr. Soomro further informed EU high official that he (Mr. Soomro) along with a colleague will be joining the Round Table meeting of Focal Points of CBRN for Central Asian countries scheduled on 24-25 March 2015 in Brussels, Belgium. He also offered to EU Deputy Head for all the possible cooperation of ECO Science Foundation.

Mr. Stefano appreciated the programmes of ECOSF for the whole ECO region and the cooperation extended to EU for the last over three years and assured of all possible support of European Union to ECOSF in future as well. Both the leaders agreed to collaborate on various scientific programmes.

Capacity Building Workshop on Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) - *La main a la pate* for ECO Region at Astana-Kazakhstan from 22-25 June 2015

ECOSF in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) Kazakhstan; the *La main a la pate* (LAMAP) Foundation, France; International Science, Technology and Innovation Centre (ISTIC) Kuala Lumpur-Malaysia; ECO Educational Institute, Ankara-Turkey and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) is organizing a three days "Capacity Building Workshop on Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) for ECO Region" from 22-25 June 2015 in Astana - Kazakhstan. It is pertinent to mention that the workshop was planned in August 2014 at Islamabad-Pakistan but was postponed due to unavoidable reasons.

Purpose of the workshop is to build capacity of at least two most suitable persons from each ECO member state (one each belonging to Science and Education sectors), who can subsequently lead the programme as National Programme Coordinators. The workshop is expected to be opened by the Minister for Education and Science, Republic of Kazakhstan on 22nd June 2015.

ECOSF and FC College Leadership's Follow-up Meeting

The President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro called upon the Rector Foreman Christian College (a chartered university) Dr. James A. Tebbe at his office in Lahore on 18 Feb 2015. He thanked the Rector and his team for hosting a very successful international conference on "Emerging Trends in Life Sciences for Sustainable Development" held at Lahore from 09-11 October 2014. The conference was a big success with over 30 foreign delegates from 14 different countries including ECO region and Europe and more than 100 local delegates comprising experts/scientists attended the conference.



The meeting with the Rector was a follow up of above mentioned conference. During the meeting, the course of actions on recommendations by the conference experts were discussed and it was agreed that the follow up meetings / communication with other participants / scientists of ECO region will be continued so that the recommendations can be materialized and a comprehensive future course of action chalked out for tangible results especially in biosafety and security.

The new Pro Rector of FCC Dr. Joseph Jones, Dean Post Graduate Studies FCC Prof. Dr. Kauser A Malik and Prof. Dr. Ikram ul Haq were also present and participated in the discussion.

President ECOSF also presented the Report of the conference in DVD form to the Rector, on the occasion which was highly appreciated by the Rector.

Prof. Manzoor Soomro announces two scholarships for talented poor students of Sindh Agriculture University. Stresses on Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) for Sustainable S&T based Economic Development at the 2nd International Conference on Food, Agriculture and Livestock at Sindh Agriculture University Tandojam- Pakistan

The 2nd International Conference on Food, Agriculture and Livestock was organized by Sindh Agriculture University in collaboration with Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan from 25-26 February at Tandojam, Sindh Pakistan. The President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro was a Guest of Honour and Invited Speaker at the opening session of the conference. Over 800 agricultural experts, livestock scientists, engineers and students from across Pakistan attended the conference. Experts from Germany and Australia also participated as Invited Speakers in the conference. The conference was opened by the Vice Chancellor of Mehran University of Engineering



and Technology Jamshoro Dr. Muhammad Aslam Uqaili.

Vice Chancellor of Sindh Agriculture University Tandojam Dr. Mujibuddin Memon Sahrai welcomed the guests and delegates and shared his vision for promotion of scientific research and services to the farming communities.

Dr. Aslam Uqaili in his opening remarks said that the world has been awakened on the matters of poverty, hunger, food insecurity and climate change, and the fast increasing population in the world. The condition of developing countries was especially dismal and the developed world must support the resource poor nations for a sustainable and prosperous world.

The President ECOSF in his remarks appreciated the efforts of the organizers for reviving the tradition of the conference and suggested to the host Vice Chancellor to make it an annual event. He further expressed the dire need for researchers to work with international and UN organizations as well as the industry for problem oriented and end user targeted research projects. He further said that the international organizations are willing to cooperate with developing countries for addressing the issues



pertaining to the poverty, food insecurity and climate change. After these remarks, Dr. Soomro made a presentation entitled, "Inquiry Based Science Education- Key to S&T Innovation for Economic Development and International Cooperation". In the presentation, he shared the vision of ECO Science Foundation for S&T and Education based economic development and the initiatives of the Foundation. He emphasized on university to patronize schools in the surroundings of the university particularly for science education. He suggested that the University teachers and graduate students can visit schools on regular basis and develop together with school teachers some inquiry based science education activities so that the pupils learn by doing and setting up some experiments- a method that makes the students learn scientific concepts in depth.



Dr. Soomro also suggested that since the University being an agricultural education institution, attracts students from rural area, it would be good if it inducts a certain number of students on the basis of Secondary School Certificate (SSC) to secure rural talent, as was done during the times when this university was a college!

At the end Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro being an alumnus of Sindh Agriculture University, having studied on scholarships throughout his academic career, announced two scholarships from his pocket for poor but talented students of the university.

IDB Representative Calls Upon the President ECOSF

Mr. Sameh Hussein from Capacity Building Department of the Islamic Development Bank Jeddah called upon the President ECOSF Dr. Manzoor H Soomro on March 10, 2015 in his office at Islamabad to discuss the IDB Reverse Linkages Program and to seek support of ECOSF. The President ECOSF welcomed the distinguished guest for his maiden visit to ECOSF and briefly introduced the Foundation to Mr. Hussein. He also upraised Mr. Sameh about the linkages of ECOSF with International Organizations; such as. European Union, UNESCO, ISTIC Malaysia, Ev-K2-CNR Foundation Italy and other organizations of ECO region.



During the meeting Mr. Sameh Hussein presented a deep insight in to IDB Reverse Linkages program meant to promote mutually beneficial partnerships among member countries such as transfer of technology, cross-border investments, trade exchanges and sharing of country experiences, etc. The Reverse Linkages is a specific cooperation activity whereby member countries themselves are primary, forefront, and direct agents in the provision of specific expertise, knowledge, know-how and other specialist services to address specific development constraints or exploit unique



opportunities in other member countries in a mutually beneficial arrangement (win-win situation), facilitated through a strategic alignment enabled by the IDB Group.

The methodology of RL Program, particularly for Technology Transfer, the IDB Rep explained that it involves at least three parties: the provider (pivotal member country), the recipient (beneficiary

country) and the enabler or intermediary (IDB Group).

Currently IDB has a RL technology transfer project titled "Breeding of Genetic Base of Improved Cotton Varieties for Drought, Pest Resistance and high yielding." The technology is available in Pakistan with Ministry of Textile and others. The identified recipient country for the project is Uzbekistan. Since both the countries are ECO member states; he requested ECOSF for collaboration and funding (Pivotal Member Country) for the project.

In a subsequent meeting, the Cotton Commissioner from the Ministry of Textile Dr. Khalid Abdullah and Chairman of Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) Dr. Muhammad Ashraf were also invited to join the discussion. After a lengthy discussion, President ECOSF in principle agreed to collaborate with IDB for the implementation of the said project. However the funding part of project would be dependent on availability of funds with ECOSF; which would be discussed later on. It was mutually decided that the Cotton Commissioner from the Govt. of Pakistan will provide an estimated cost of the project. The PSF will then see as to what extent can they fund the local component of the project and write to IDB. Subsequently, the ECOSF would write a letter to IDB indicating willingness of Foundation for collaboration in the said project.

It is worth mentioning that IDB is supporting ECOSF for organizing "Capacity Building Workshop on Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE)" being organized from 23-25 June 2015 in Astana, Kazakhstan.

ECOSF President visits ABRIL and ECO Agro Biotechnology Network in Karaj- Iran

President ECOSF on the request of Dr. Behzad Ghareyazie, Director General of ABRIL, visited the Institute and held a meeting with the ABRIL Team during 25th RPC Meeting in Tehran. Considering the challenge of Food Security & Sustainability faced by the globe, the purpose of meeting was to discuss the possibility of developing cooperation and networking amongst Iran and other ECO Member countries in the field of agriculture biotechnology and synergize the strengths / expertise of member states.



DG ABRIL Dr. Behzad Ghareyazie warmly welcomed the ECOSF President Professor Manzoor Soomro and his colleague. Afterwards, Dr. Babak Nakhoda- the head of Department of Molecular

Physiology, ABRIL made a power point presentation about the ABRIL research areas, projects and achievements so far.

DG of ABRIL requested President ECOSF to support ABRIL for cooperation & collaboration with Pakistan's biotechnology institutions and with the labs in other ECO Member states. He also requested for ECOSF support in activating the ECO Agro Biotechnology Network (ECOABN) in ECO Member States.

President ECOSF accepting the request of DG ABRIL suggested that a delegation of experts from ABRIL/ECOABN may visit Pakistani

institutions for strengthening interaction with Agro Biotechnology Institutes; such as, NIBGE & NIAB Faisalabad, Punjab Seed Corporation and International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS) at the University of Karachi and some private sector enterprises in Pakistan. President ECOSF also assured ABRIL leadership of all possible assistance and support for the visit of ABRIL delegation.



President ECOSF visits PARDIS Technology Park, Pardis – Iran

President ECOSF Prof. Soomro accompanied by the President ECO Educational Institute Prof. Selahattin Turan, visited PARDIS Technology Park in the outskirts of Tehran-Iran on 2nd March 2015. Mr. Mehdi Safarinia, President Pardis Technology Park received the visiting delegates and briefed about the park, its infrastructure and facilities. He also shared the parks achievements so far and future aspirations.



Mr. Mahdi Safarinia while highlighting the importance of ECOSF in the ECO Region requested for ECOSF support for mobilizing its network resources in ECO Region for participations in 4th International Exhibition "INOTEX 2015" from 9 - 12 June 2015. He said that participation by the

Companies from ECO region, will open the avenues of technology transfer and cooperation among the ECO Member Countries. The park team also requested ECOSF for nominating top researchers and scientist from ECO Region for "The Mustafa Prize" granted to nominees from OIC member states biannually.

President ECOSF assured full support to the Technology Park Team and hoped that the visit will be a good start for future cooperation amongst ECO Member countries in the field of Science & Technology.

Pardis Technology Park is a platform for development of Iran's hi-tech industries and the centre for development and transfer of technology. The park has a Technology Incubator Building for startup companies, university graduates and entrepreneurs. Multi Tenant Building (MTB) for companies having limited financial resources and Land Plots for already established companies. The incubator house a number of startup companies and has capacity to reside more. [www.techpark.ir]

President ECOSF Visit to Institute for Cognitive Science Studies (ICSS), Pardis New City, Iran

President ECOSF Prof Dr Manzoor Hussain Soomro visited ICSS on 3 March 2015 during his visit to Iran for 25th RPC 2015. The President was received by Mr. M. Hossein Nosrat, who also gave a briefing about ICSS and highlighted its achievements so far and aspirations for the future in the field of cognitive sciences. ICSS is a non-governmental, non-profit institute whose main objective is to promote research and education in the field of cognitive science and technologies. Mr. Hossein Nosrat also presented details about educational programs, scientific conferences, publications by the institute and its researchers, research facilities and cognitive clinics / assessment centers. He also shared the information of their next International Conference on Cognitive Sciences. [www.ircss.org]. After the briefing President ECOSF visited the research labs of the institute and observed various activities like operation of mice brain, cognitive assessment of an individual and behavioral study of mouse in a chamber.

President ECOSF thanked the ICSS colleagues for arranging the visit and briefing. He acknowledged the level of work done so far and said that the institute has potential to play an important role in the field of cognitive sciences not only for Iran but also for whole ECO region.

President ECOSF proposed to ICSS team to be partner in Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) Program and activities of ECOSF for the region. He pointed out that cognitive science researchers can play a vital role in assessing the mental development of children, while exposed to various levels of understanding of the S&T developments & education and the consequent influence on their career selection and decision making in life.

ECOSF and CITC agree to Collaborate for Innovation and Technology Cooperation in the ECO Region

President ECOSF visited Center for Innovation and Technology Cooperation (CITC) on 5 March 2015 and had a meeting with Dr. Syed Ali Akramifar, Head of CITC and his team. The purpose of meeting was to discuss the possibilities of collaboration / cooperation among the ECO Countries in the area of Innovation & Technology Cooperation and commercialization of research leading to economic development.

Head of CITC Dr. Akramifar warmly welcomed President ECOSF Professor Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro and briefed him about CITC. CITC is under the Presidency of Islamic Republic of Iran a center for policy making and implementation of programs in the area of technology cooperation / transfer. CITC is responsible for formulation of rules & regulations and a catalyst for technology transfer.

Head

of CITC stressed on the importance of technology for self dependence of ECO Region. He stressed that since Islamic Republic of Iran is moving from oil based economy to knowledge based economy, it requires innovation and technology transfers to and from Iran. Head of CITC also talked about "PARDIS" a technology park near capital city of Tehran and its programs like INOTEX & Mustafa

Awards. Head of

technology cooperation stakeholders in the ECO Region for promoting CITC. [www.citc.ir]

President ECOSF appreciated Iran's resolve to shift from oil based economy to knowledge based economy and assured of full support and cooperation to engage stakeholders in ECO Region. The President also suggested the Center to designate a Focal Point for future communication with ECOSF. To which, the CITC Head responded positively and declared Ms. Maryam Shaeri of International Affairs Division of CITC to liaise with ECOSF in future.



President ECOSF talks to Millennium Igniters- the School Children on the Importance of Scientific Research for High School Students & their Choice of Careers

The "Millennium Igniters" is a small scale school based enterprise planned, organized, managed and controlled by a group of highly motivated, creative and hardworking students of the Roots School, Millennium Campus in I-9/3, Islamabad.

To benefit the students academically, and to enhance their motivation level, the Millennium Igniters organized an event- "Let's make a difference" on 17 March 2015; wherein, Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro, President of ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) was invited to speak to the students and share his struggle and accomplishments of life.

The event opened with recitation from the Holy Quran, then the Director Roots Millennium School (RMS) Mrs. Safia Farooqi

presented a welcome note. Afterwards, Professor Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro was invited to speak to the students. He gave an inspiring and thought provoking talk by sharing his early age experiences and difficulties and the way he tackled them and pursued his studies.



President ECOSF in his talk emphasized on the significance of science by saying that the importance of scientific research or inquiry is very much in our life, as science and technology have had impact on human life over the centuries. Some scientific phenomena have been understood, but many are yet to be explored and studied. As our mind is utilised and develops, it tends to understand more things. The most brilliant guideline for exploring science and the universe beyond our galaxy is a great book of Quran, which gives a large number of hints and guideline; but so it happens, that

we especially the Muslim world, do not find out and research to discover more!

Professor Soomro also said that, although the golden age of Islam from 9th to 13th centuries marked the renaissance in the scientific endeavour, the benefit of that period and of Muslim scholars, reached far beyond the Islamic world. The discoveries and contributions of that period were further developed in the western- non-muslim world.

While addressing the children and teachers, President ECOSF said that the role of science education in modern societies is growing with the increasing impact of science and technology on our everyday life. He narrated that the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) had declared in 1985 that, "without science literate population, the outlook for a better world is not promising" He

further highlighted a word by an American author Bill Bryson published in the "Express Tribune" Newspaper of 16th March, 2015, which read, "if we are to have a world worth living in a 100 years from now, it will be science that gets us there".

He also emphasized on the obvious need for a new practical approach to science education and learning for the recipients of knowledge (i.e., students), rather than the classical way of imparting knowledge; and that is best achieved through the Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE).

While talking about the struggle of his life, Professor Soomro said that he worked with his farmer father in the fields and observed nature a bit closely though didn't understand at that time. But later when he studied science of agriculture, he could easily understand the processes and mechanisms. Subsequently, the recording of a TV interview of Professor Manzoor Soomro was played, which explained the his early life struggle and achievements. Afterwards, the children asked questions to Dr. Soomro, which he answered nicely.

Finally, while closing his speech, President ECOSF mentioned about a book, "INQUIRY BASED SCIENCE EDUCATION- 10 GOOD PRACTICES", put together by some scientist and educationists of Egypt in 2014 and published in 2015 by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB).

The event closed with a vote of thanks by Mr. Faisal Mushtaq, the CEO of RMS; who considered the talk by Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro as inspirational and a boost for the high school students. He hoped that the talk and the life story of Prof. Soomro would broaden the visions of students towards their studying science and choice of careers.

Acting Ambassador of Kyrgyz Republic Visits ECOSF and Assures possible support to ECOSF for their objectives

H.E. Mr. Kubanychbek Toktrobaev the Charge'd Affairs (Acting Ambassador) of the Kyrgyz Republic in Pakistan called upon the President of ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro on 30 March 2015 and held a detailed meeting with him. Purpose of the visit by the Kyrgyz senior diplomat was to understand in-depth about the activities of the Foundation and as to how the Kyrgyz Republic can benefit from.



The President ECOSF received the Kyrgyz Envoy to Pakistan with warm welcome and briefed the visiting Diplomat on the activities done so far and future programmes of ECOSF. He briefed about ECOSF's collaboration with international organizations like UNESCO, ISTIC, *La main a la pate*, IDB and others. Prof. Soomro also shared with Mr. Toktrobaev the latest event of World Water Day-2015 organized jointly with the Government of Pakistan and numerous UN Agencies and other organizations in the Planning Commission of Pakistan on 27 March 2015.

Prof. Manzoor Soomro highlighted the importance of ECO Science Foundation for S&T based economic development in the ECO Region. He also shared the details of a planned capacity building workshop for National Coordinators in Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) at Astana- Kazakhstan on 23-25 June.2015. President ECOSF also apprised the Ambassador about S&T Fund of the Foundation and its objectives and invited his country to make voluntary financial contributions to the Fund. He then presented a copy of ECOSF Annual Report 2015 to the Kyrgyz Envoy as well.

Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro emphasized on the need for Kyrgyzstan to expedite the process of ratification of ECOSF Charter to be more actively involved in the Foundation's activities for a greater interaction and benefit to the Kyrgyz scientific community.

The Kyrgyz Ambassador appreciated the efforts being made by ECOSF and assured his full support for pursuing various matters on behalf of his country. He thus requested ECOSF to send papers for the process of ratification of ECOSF Charter and assured to follow up in their Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He also extended invitation to President ECOSF to visit Kyrgyz Republic for meetings with Kyrgyz stakeholders including the senior officials and experts/scientists in the ministries of Education & Science and Foreign Affairs, as well as the National Academy of Sciences and other relevant organizations/departments and assured of full facilitation of the proposed visit.

The Acting Ambassador also offered that the Kyrgyz Embassy can become partner in various ECOSF activities in Pakistan. The gesture was welcomed and highly appreciated by the President ECOSF who thanked Ambassador Toktrobaev for bringing so many persons together for a good cause!



ECOSF Website and Social Media Aspects

The dynamic website of ECOSF shares a lot of science, technology and innovation related information with its visitors round the year which includes various posting about conferences, training workshops and scientific developments. Many visitors take benefits by visiting ECOSF website and facebook page and apply for different programs. Recently, a scientist of Pakistan Council for Science and Technology (PCST) won US\$3000/- by submitting his research work for a scientific competition, which was posted on ECOSF website.

Some of the website activities are highlighted below; the full listing is available on the ECOSF website- www.eco4science.org

2015 International Convention on Contribution of Engineering Profession to the Society and Civilization

Third Convention & 23rd GA Meeting of 2015 Federation of Engineering Institutions of Asia & Pacific (FEIAP)
5-7, 2015, Taipei, Taiwan

Call for Papers of the 7th Museum-School Collaboration symposium

The 7th Museum-School Collaboration Symposium(MSCS) will be held in Changsha, Hunan Province, China, in September 24- September 25, 2015.

The 7th MSCS which is held by the China Research Institute for Science Popularization (CRISP), a non-profit organization, subordinate to the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST). CRISP now stands as a unique national institution dealing specially with studies on science and technology communication in China.

Theme: Collaboration of Museum-School in the context of global science education reform Strands:

- Strand1: The trends and characteristics of the global science education reform
- Strand 2. Approach and means of STEM education in science museums
- Strand 3. How to design Science activities in science museums?
- Strand 4. Impact of science museums on knowledge construction
- Strand 5. Partnerships with primary and secondary school with science museums
- Strand 6. Evaluation of science activities in the science museums
- Strand 7. Science education function of the Industrial Heritage

Paper submission

Accepted and presented papers will be published in the symposium proceeding. As a fruit of the Symposium, a book will be compiled based on the papers with necessary editing.

The deadline of the manuscript submission is May.31, 2015

The manuscript through E-mail to: mscs_crisp@126.com

Call for comments on IPBES Documents- Deadline- March 2015

IPBES is looking for reviewers for the guide for assessments (Deliverable 2a), the documents on diverse conceptualizations of values (Deliverable 3d) and on policy support tools and methodologies (Deliverable 4c). Comments were to be sent to IPBES Secretariat until 31 March 2015.

4th International Innovation and Technology Exhibition (INOTEX) 8-11 June 2015, at Tehran-Iran

The 4th International Innovation and Technology Exhibition (INOTEX) which is hosted by Pardis Technology Park and Iran National Techmart Network and co-organized by the Vice presidency for Science and Technology (ISTI) and the Presidential Center for Innovation and Technology Cooperation (CITC) will be taking place on 8-11 June 2015, at Tehran International Fairground.

The 4th INOTEX includes specialized sectors in Information and Communication technology, Oil, Gas and petrochemical industries, Industrial automation and Intelligent System, Biotechnology, Electronics and Medical Equipment, Nanotechnology, Renewable and New Energies and Aerospace. In addition, several high-level forums and events will be held on the sidelines of the exhibition.

The INOTEX committee will provide all the convenience and excellent service for the participants to form a platform where they can demonstrate their image, release new products, exchange information and find their trade partners. Participants would, not only experience the most advanced technologies and applications, the trade development tendency, but also find the sustainable products, technologies and businesses.

Joint NAM S&T Centre - ZMT Bremen (Germany) Fellowship in Tropical Coastal Marine Ecology and Biogeochemistry**Call for Applications for 2015**

The Centre for Science and Technology of the Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries (NAM S&T Centre; www.namstct.org) is pleased to invite applications from suitable candidates for the Joint NAM S&T Centre - ZMT Bremen (Germany) Fellowship in Tropical Coastal Marine Ecology and Biogeochemistry for the year 2015.

Applications recommended by the parent institution of the applicant and endorsed by the Focal Point of the NAM S&T Centre in the country may be submitted to the Centre by email in the relevant format. The contact details of the Focal Points of the NAM S&T centre in various countries may be seen in its website www.namstct.org.

The last date for submitting application for the Fellowship is **20th May 2015**.
