UNESCO PRESS RELEASE

Launch ‘From Tsiam to the Hindu Kush’ a coffee table book by THAAP and UNESCO

Islamabad, 24 September 2019 - On Tuesday evening, a coffee table book on Kalasha people and their culture, co-published by THAAP and UNESCO, was launched at an event in Islamabad. Entitled “From Tsiam to the Hindu Kush”, the book is a collection of essays and photographs aimed to offer a holistic account of the last remaining indigenous community of the country.

The event, hosted by Aga Khan Foundation, was attended by members of the Kalasha community, representatives of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and federal governments, and development partners.

In her welcoming remarks, the UNESCO Representative to Pakistan, Vibeke Jensen, spoke about the background for the book, and congratulated those involved in the publishing process. She also highlighted the inscription of the Kalasha astronomical practice of Suri Jagek on UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in December 2018. Pakistan’s first exclusive inscription on the List, Suri Jagek is a source of great pride for both the Kalasha community and the country at large.

The Swiss Ambassador His Excellency Thomas Kolly emphasized the commitment of Swiss Embassy towards religious and cultural minorities, including the Kalasha people. He noted “It is very encouraging to see that many of our interventions have been successful in not only raising a particular issue but also building partnerships with the government and international agencies.”

Chief guest Shafqat Mahmood, Federal Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, and Heritage, delivered the keynote address at the
conference. Mr. Mahmood spoke about the importance of all development partners to work together with the Kalasha community for sustainable development in the region.

CEO of THAAP, the co-publisher of the book, Professor Sajida Vandal lauded the tenacity of the Kalash, 'The fact that they have found ways and means to survive in such a hostile and physically challenging environment is a remarkable tribute to the resilience of the human spirit.’

The book will be available for sale at the Institute for Art and Culture, Lahore.

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FAO
PRESS RELEASE

Controlling Desert Locus Outbreak in Pakistan

Karachi, 19 September 2019 – The fourth Indo-Pak Desert Locust Border Meeting of the year 2019 was held between the locust officers of Pakistan and India with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to contain locust outbreak. This meeting followed the recommendations of the FAO Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in South-West Asia (SWAC). The current Desert Locust situation that developed from exceptional breeding during the past spring in Iran and Pakistan is serious and requires careful monitoring and control.

The objective of the meeting was to exchange locust-related data and information and to provide recommendations on procedures to control the outbreak in both countries, through a better coordinated approach. Technical issues relating to ongoing locust survey and control operations were also discussed. Both countries said they faced the same difficulties such as
insufficient trained personnel, equipment shortages, rough terrain, public awareness, farmer’s pressure.

Each year, six meetings are held from October to December to discuss climate change driven locust infestation. This is a vital contribution to FAO’s global Desert Locust early warning system.

Director (Technical) Department of Plant Protection (DPP) Mr. Tariq Khan said that a total of 62,490 hectares area in Balochistan, Tharparkar, Nara and Cholistan deserts had been effectively controlled through ground and aerial operations by applying ULV Pesticides. He further stated that the DPP has a buffer stock of ULV Pesticides which is moved to all Locust outposts as per the need of control operations. The funding to control the outbreak is being provided by the Government of Pakistan keeping in view the importance of agriculture in the affected areas.

The meeting was also attended by Plant Protection Advisor and Director General Dr. Falak Naz, Assistant Entomologist (Locust) Muhammad Hussain Dar and Assistant Entomologist (Locust) Muhammad Shahbaz from Pakistan while Plant Protection Advisor and Director General Rajesh Malik, Joint Director (E) Dr JP Singh.

Executive Secretary (SWAC) FAO, Mr. Keith Cressman said that the border area of both the countries is a single natural habitat of locust and is a summer breeding area. The cooperation of both the countries is needed to help contain the locust threat.

Desert locust surveys point towards presence of immature/mature solitarious and gregarious locust groups/ swarms and solitarious/gregarious hoppers in south of Bahawalpur, Rahimyar Khan in Cholistan Desert, Thari Mirwah in Nara Desert, east of Khipro and Nangarparkar in Tharparkar Desert. The situation should start to improve next month as breeding declines and second-generation adult groups and small swarms move to spring areas in Balochistan province in Pakistan and in Iran where they should remain immature and be good control targets until early spring; the scale of the migration depends on the success of current surveys and planned control operations; the heaviest migration is likely to be during November.
“The Joint Border Meetings have continued uninterrupted every month since 2005. FAO plays a very unique and critical role in facilitating this interaction through the SWAC for the control of Desert Locust,” says FAO Representative of Pakistan, Ms. Mina Dowlatchahi.

For media inquiries, please contact Mehr Hassan, Communications Specialist, FAO Pakistan at mehr.hassan@fao.org

United Nations
SECRETARY-GENERAL’S MESSAGE

VIDEO MESSAGE FOR CIRCLE OF LEADERSHIP ON SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE SOCIAL MEDIA TWITTER CAMPAIGN 2019

24 September 2019

“Preventing and ending sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel is a top priority.

It requires the active partnership of UN senior officials, civil society and governments.

That is why I established the Circle of Leadership, which reflects our resolve at the highest political level to prevent these acts and respond quickly and effectively if they occur.

The rights and dignity of victims are at the heart of our efforts.

We have strengthened our response.

But much more needs to be done.
Let me be clear: the United Nations has zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse, with no exceptions.

We will continue working with determination to deliver justice for victims and ultimately to achieve our shared goal of eliminating sexual exploitation and abuse.

Thank you.”

Urdu translation of SG's message:
Video link of SG’s message:

United Nations
PRESS RELEASE

UN Summit on Sustainable Development Goals kickstarts ambitious action to deliver for people and the planet

*States, businesses and civil society gear up for decisive decade for Agenda 2030*

New York, 24 September 2019 – Four years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and with efforts off track for meeting its objectives, world leaders today called for a decade of ambitious action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and announced actions they are taking to advance the agenda.

In the political declaration, “Gearing up for a decade of action and delivery for sustainable development,” unanimously adopted at the opening of the UN Summit on the Sustainable Development Goals, UN Member States pledged to mobilize financing, enhance national implementation and strengthen institutions to achieve the sustainable development objectives by the target date and leave no one behind.
“The 2030 Agenda was a feat of multilateralism, and multilateralism is the only way for us to address complex global challenges faced by present and future generations,” said the President of the UN General Assembly, Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, who convened the summit. “A decade of action and delivery is our opportunity to fulfill the historic promise of the 2030 Agenda and ensure collective, global action and shared responsibility. We must take action – striving together, delivering for all.”

UN Secretary-General António Guterres, in his remarks, urged Member States to live up to their commitments and called on all sectors of society to mobilize for the 2030 Agenda. “We must step up our efforts,” he said. “Now is the time for bold leadership, both individual and collective,” he emphasized, calling for ambitious action by Member States, local authorities, and the private sector, and asking the media, academia and young people to mobilize partnerships and hold leaders to account. “We need to move together, leaving no one behind,” Guterres said.

Leaders from government, business, and civil society are gathering at UN Headquarters for a week of summits and high-level meetings focused on accelerating action on the Sustainable Development Goals. Yesterday leaders announced potentially far-reaching steps to confront climate change, including initiatives to finance and build a new generation of sustainable cities, increase energy efficiency and support sustainable climate-friendly cooling, conserve and restore marine and terrestrial ecosystems, promote regenerative agriculture and the greening of supply chains, help people secure employment, improve health, and promote gender equality.

Actions announced specifically in support of today’s SDG Summit include, among others, Brazil committing to reduce premature mortality caused by non-communicable diseases by one-third by 2030; Finland pledging to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035; the Maldives partnering with Parley for the Oceans, American Express, ABinBev and Adidas to create a nationwide framework to deliver on many of the Goals; Mexico pledging to provide access to the internet for everyone including vulnerable communities; Greece committing to green growth through circular economy; the Netherlands doubling the target number of people who gain access to justice through Dutch support in parts of Africa and the Middle East; companies from 25 countries committing to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 as part of the UN Global Compact’s ‘Business Ambition for 1.5 °C: Our Only
Future' initiative; and Project Everyone's 'World's Largest Lesson’ engaging more than 500,000 students in Nigeria in learning about the Sustainable Development Goals. The full list of more than 100 acceleration actions is available here: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgactions

Countries in 2015 unanimously adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – the most ambitious undertaking to transform our world to boost prosperity and ensure well-being for all while protecting the environment.

The Secretary-General’s annual progress report as well as the Global Sustainable Development Report by a group of independent scientists issued in advance of the Summit found that progress made so far is in danger of being reversed through worsening social inequalities and potentially irreversible impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss.

With hunger on the rise, greenhouse gas emissions rising, and the world’s most vulnerable bearing the brunt of conflict and inequalities, the two-day SDG Summit is bringing together leaders from governments, the private sector, civil society and international organizations to help generate the ambition and impetus needed to put the world on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

For further information:
- SDG Summit: www.un.org/sdgsummit
- Political declaration of the SDG Summit: https://undocs.org/en/A/HLPF/2019/l.1
- Acceleration Actions registered for the SDG Summit: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgactions
- UN GA high-level week: www.un.org/en/summits2019
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