



ECOSF NEWSLETTER



Prof. Soomro appointed as President ECOSF for a term of three years

Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro has been appointed as the 2nd President of ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) for a term of three years. The appointment was recommended by the Board of Trustees of ECOSF and approved by the ECO Council of Ministers (COM).

CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR MASTER TRAINERS ON INQUIRY BASED SCIENCE EDUCATION ORGANIZED

A capacity building workshop of Master Trainers on Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) was jointly organized by ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) and Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) in collaboration with *La main a la pate Foundation* (LAMAP) and French Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan from 5-9 September 2016. A good number of 42 participants hailing from all over Pakistan, i.e., Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) School System, Sukkur Institute of Business Administration (Sukkur IBA) School System, Cantt/Garrison School System, Educational Training Institutes of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Gilgit Baltistan, and the coordinators of ECOSF, PSF and Pakistan Science Club (Karachi) participated in the workshop.

The purpose of this national workshop was to build the capacity of participants to recognize the philosophy of IBSE pedagogy for teaching of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and mathematics) subjects; experience the process of inquiry-based science teaching and learning, problem solving skills through hands-on, minds-on activities; gain insights into activities that not only can encourage and motivate students in science through the hands-on, minds-on activities but also convince decision makers to pursue Inquiry based approach for education; and decide on strategic steps for implementation of IBSE – based STEM in Pakistan.

The workshop was opened by the Federal Secretary of Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training of Pakistan H.E. Mr. Muhammad Humayun. In his remarks, the Federal Secretary appreciated the organizers for organizing very important workshop in wake of the science education of the country. The Federal Secretary liked



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IBSE programme and emphasized that more workshops of this kind be organized frequently so that the roots of science education may grow stronger and stronger. He also offered the facilities of his Ministry to be used for any IBSE capacity building activity in future.



Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro, President ECOSF, in his key note presentation, highlighted the importance of the workshop and explained the IBSE approach of LAMAP initiated by the trio of LAMAP founders; Prof. George Charpak (Nobel Laureate), Prof. Yves Querre and Prof. Pierre Lena in 1996. After the success in France, the programme was expanded to other parts of the world. Prof. Soomro said that in Pakistan, the Programme was initiated by PSF under his Chairmanship in 2010. Prof. Soomro further elaborated that critical thinking that comes with science education is vital in training the mind, understanding the world, making choices and solving problems. The concept of "inquiry" fosters the understanding of technological innovations, which need to be inculcated among children at primary & secondary school levels. Thus, IBSE approach is used for teaching of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects at schools with the objective to instill the willingness of children to explore new ideas through evidence and logic, he said. He further said that IBSE develops understanding of different science concepts through children's own physical and mental activity making use of their own skills of observation, questions, planning and conducting investigations, reviewing evidence, drawing conclusions, communicating and discussing results. Therefore, IBSE approach is a critical and essential step to ensure sustainable supply of young talent for linking advance research with sustainable industrial and economic development, concluded Dr. Soomro. He hoped that in the five day workshop, the participants will learn new things related to critical thinking & inquiry through presentations and hands-on activities and same techniques will be imparted among other teachers for ultimate audience i.e., the students/children.

Earlier, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ashraf, Chairman PSF welcomed all the distinguished guests including resource persons from LAMAP and participants from throughout Pakistan. He wished that the resource persons will engage the participants in various activities in five day workshop.



During the opening session, Mr. OLIVIER from the Embassy of France also spoke about the LAMAP and their cooperation with ECOSF and PSF in Pakistan. In the subsequent 1st technical session, Dr. Bulent CAVAS, Professor of Science Education Turkey, the Assistant Country Director of United Nations Development Programme Mr. Shakeel Ahmed, Director of an Education Campaign- Alif Ailan, Mr. Mosharraf Zaidi and Representative of British Council Pakistan in Pakistan also made their remarks. The Resource Persons of LAMAP Mr. Gilles CAPPE gave the over view of LAMAP Foundation and its programmes.

After the formal opening of the workshop, the technical sessions were conducted by two Resource Persons from



LAMAP viz., Mr. Gilles CAPPE and Philippe Delforge at the Auditorium of PSF where the resource persons deliberated on various topics related to the critical thinking and inquiry. It is pertinent to mention that the workshop was meant for the trainers of teachers of primary level students and accordingly, the participants were invited as Master Trainers who will train the primary teachers in their school systems and ultimately, the trained teachers will impart IBSE techniques among the primary school students.



The intensive technical sessions were based on the presentations, hands-on training, experiments/practicals. Following topics were covered during the five day workshop:

1. Scientific approach and the role of the teacher in the process of learning.
2. How to put young students in situation.
3. Activities to discover the ecosystem + cleaning dirty water.
4. Hands on Activities on:
 - Biodiversity situation.
 - Climate changes and Water rising.
5. Modeling in science: Day and Night.
6. Day length during the year and during given date.
7. Multidisciplinary and sciences :LAMAP tools.
8. Technological approach, scientific approach.
9. Preparation of a training sequence by the participants.
10. Make the others live the training sequence.
11. Analyzing a training sequence, Speak, read, write in sciences, the science notebook.
12. Evaluation in sciences.
13. Workshop about the future of the project: role of local trainers/Lamap, common work

The activities on the above topics were performed individually and in groups. Different groups were formulated on daily basis to better understand the topics and share their ideas with more and more participants. The Resource Persons beautifully conducted all the sessions and involvement of the participants was very obvious from their behavior and feedback.

On the last day of the workshop, a closing ceremony was arranged to formally end the workshop. The Chief Guest of the Closing Ceremony was Federal Secretary, Ministry of Science and Technology H.E. Mr. Fazal



Abbas Makan. The Federal Secretary in his speech highlighted the history of "inquiry" and its place in Islam. He also appreciated President ECOSF for developing the collaboration with French experts and assured of his consistent cooperation and support. In his remarks, the Federal Secretary appreciated ECOSF and PSF for organizing such a result-oriented workshop on IBSE and assured the maximum possible support of his ministry for this noble cause. He further said that the concept of IBSE itself is very heart-touching and future of children if followed properly. He shown his personal attraction towards IBSE. He also mentioned that the IBSE programme of LAMAP was initiated by Prof. Dr. Manzoor Soomro in Pakistan in the capacity of Chairman PSF in 2010, hence, he must be appreciated. President Academy of Sciences Dr. Anwar Nasim also graced the occasion with his presence.



The Cultural Counselor of French Embassy in Islamabad Mr. Andre de BUSSY was also present in the ceremony. Mr. Andre also made remarks on behalf of his Embassy and said that this kind of workshops may be continued to be organized in future also. He also shared that a proposal is under way to establish French-Pakistan Science Centre in Pakistan.

During the closing ceremony, the participants also shared their experiences about the whole activities of workshop and expressed it as an amazing workshop with totally based on new strategies and techniques which will definitely benefit the science teachers and pupils if properly implemented.

At the end, President ECOSF thanked Resource Persons and Participants for creating such a pragmatic environment during the whole workshop. He said that organizing such kind of workshop is not possible without the dedication of all persons involved in it especially the administrative/ management support which include formulation of programmes, hall management, provision of food, transport, etc. Dr. Soomro hoped that all the participating educational institutions will implement the IBSE activity in their areas under the patronage of ECOSF and PSF and share the updates with ECOSF in future.



8TH MEETING OF THE SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA MAB NETWORK (SACAM) ON BIOSPHERE RESERVES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT HELD AT ALMATY

The 8th SACAM Meeting was jointly organized by Kazakhstan National Commission for UNESCO and ISESCO, Kazakhstan National MAB Committee, SACAM Secretariat, ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) and Al-Farabi Kazakh National University from 24-25 October 2016 at Almaty, Kazakhstan. The objectives of the meeting were to indicate priority directions of the Lima Action Plan (LAP) with a prime focus on SACAM strategy for its implementation considering the regional concerns and realities; identify challenges, common for the region; discuss methods to overcome those challenges; find and discuss success stories. The meeting was attended by more than sixty national and international participants and ECOSF was represented by two member delegation i.e., Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro, President and Ghulam Abbas, Assistant Director (Programmes).

Secretary-General of the National Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan for UNESCO and ISESCO Mrs. Assel UTEGENOVA from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan gave the introductory remarks and thanked the participants for attending the meeting.

The meeting was opened by Mr. Galymkair MUTANOV, Rector of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. He welcomed all the national and international participants and appreciated the organizers for organizing the meeting and addressing the very important topic of Biosphere Reserves and Sustainable Development. He hoped that there will be a tangible outcome after the meeting with reference to its subject. Afterwards, the Chairman of Kazakh MAB Committee Dr. Roman Jashenko, President ECOSF, Secretary SACAM Dr. Raam Boojh and Ms. Marie PRCHALOVA from the MAB Secretariat in UNESCO Headquarters read the message of the Secretary MAB Dr. Qunli HAN.



President ECOSF Prof. Dr. Manzoor H. Soomro in his remarks thanked the National Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan for UNESCO and ISESCO, Kazakhstan MAB Committee and Al-Farabi University for hosting subject meeting in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Prof. Soomro said that the main purpose of this meeting was to discuss the Lima Action Plan 2016 which is the successor of the Madrid Action Plan for implementation of UNESCO MAB Programme, other goal was to bring on board other countries which are members of ECO to benefit from the experience of SACAM Member States colleagues. President Soomro further said that ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) is a specialized agency of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) having the status of intergovernmental organization promoting the Science, Technology & Innovation (STI) and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education in the Region following Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) approach together with our international cooperation/partners viz. LAMAP of France and ISTIC as well as IAP SEP. He also mentioned that IBSE was launched from Kazakhstan with capacity building of Policy Makers and Trainers in Astana from 22-25 June 2015. President ECOSF apprised the meeting that ECOSF is very much active and alive to UN SDGs and it is matter of happiness that the Al-Farabi University Kazakhstan (KazNU) is also active in promoting SDGs. Keeping in view the importance of SDGs, ECOSF is going to launch a competition on SDGs with the title "Appldea2R" among University students of ECO Member Countries and hoped that KazNU would also join ECOSF in promoting the competition. He also mentioned that ECOSF is collaborating/supporting with Islamic Development Bank in a reverse linkages project "Developing the Capacities of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Kazakhstan in Phytochemical Development by

the International Center for Chemical and Biological Science (ICCBS), under the University of Karachi, Pakistan". He hoped that SACAM Network meeting would be a great occasion for strengthening the networking among participating nations and that participants will benefit from each others experiences for developing future collaboration/cooperation around the MAB programme..

Ms. Marie PRCHALOVA, Science Programme Specialist of MAB Research and Policy, Ecology and Biodiversity, UNESCO HQ, read the message on behalf of UNESCO Director Mr. Qun Li HAN.

Assistant Director (Programmes) ECOSF made a presentation on "STI Research and Education Programmes of ECOSF for Sustainable Development" in the meeting. In his presentation, he introduced ECOSF and highlighted the STI and IBSE activities and future programmes of the Foundation including Appldea2R contest which is being launched in November in 2016.



In the meeting, Mr. Roman JASHENKO of MAB Committee Kazakhstan, Dr. (Ms.) Amita PRASAD of India and Mr. Ram Prasad CHAUDHARY of Nepal were elected as Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Rapporteur respectively for SACAM for next biennium period.

Every member country present including ECO member countries namely, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan (host), Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan made the presentations and shared the statistics about Biosphere Reserves of respective countries in detail. The work done by the member countries in the field of Biosphere Reserves and climate change was very encouraging.



The participants also visited different labs of Al-Farabi University of Kazakhstan on 25 October 2016 and some presentations were also made to them by the university.

The Diploma Certificate was awarded to Kazakhstan by UNESCO for declaring new Biosphere Reserves "Barsakelmes Biosphere Reserves" located at Aral Sea region. The new Biosphere Reserve was recommend during the 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves held in Lima from 14-17 March 2016 and approved by UNESCO's International Coordination Committee (ICC) in its meeting held on 18-19 March 2016.

A field trip to Ile-Alatau National Nature Park – Potential BR, was also organized in the morning of 26 October 2016 for those participants who had the delayed flights. The visitors were briefed about the history of the Park, its species of plants, animals, lakes, etc through pictures and models. The visitors shown keen interest in the Park and enjoyed the field trip.

THREE MORE ECO COUNTRIES GRANTED THE MEMBERSHIP OF SACAM

During the 8th Meeting of South and Central Asia Man and Biosphere Reserves (SACAM) Network, three more ECO Countries namely; Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were awarded full membership of SACAM Network; whereas, Azerbaijan was given status of Observer during the meeting.

After inclusion of new members, the meeting also amended the Statutes of SACAM Network and prepared recommendations for endorsement by the member countries later on.



2ND INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON X-RAYS CRYSTALLOGRAPHY IN STRUCTURAL BIOLOGY 15-19 OCTOBER 2016, HELD AT LAHORE-PAKISTAN

The 2nd International Workshop on X-Ray Crystallography in Structural Biology was held in Forman Christian College (FCC), Lahore Pakistan, during 15-19 October 2016. ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) and Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) Lahore supported by Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) and International Union of Crystallography (IUCr) organized this International workshop. The main objective of the workshop was to provide a platform to the participants coming from various countries including ECO countries to share their scientific knowledge/wisdom and to develop a networking for future cooperation/collaboration between their institutes/organizations and application of the techniques.

The workshop was opened by the Executive Director of Higher Education Commission of Pakistan Professor Arshad Ali, who appreciated the collective efforts of the partner organizations in holding the workshop. He ensured the participants for continuous support of HEC for such endeavors.

In all 32 participants including three from ECO countries (Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) attended the workshop. ECOSF fully supported the participation from ECO countries. The International Resource Persons/Trainers included Professor Samar Hassnain from the University of Liverpool, UK, Dr. Usman Mirza from Denmark, Dr. Saleem (UK), Dr. Richard (Brazil) and four other Pakistani Scientists.

The workshop was closed on 19th Oct 2016. President ECOSF Professor Manzoor Hussain Soomro was the Chief Guest in the closing ceremony. Dr. Joseph James, the Pro-Rector of FCC and Dr. Kausar Abdulla Malik thanked Dr. Soomro for his presence and congratulated the participants on completion of the course.



It is pertinent to mention that this workshop is part of the series of workshops at FCC triggered by an International conference on, "Emerging Trends in Life Sciences" organized by ECOSF and FCC with support of European Union in October 2014. There it was resolved that Capacity Building Workshops in the emerging sciences and use of technology would be conducted.

ECOSF AND IDB SIGNED MOU FOR LONG TERM COLLABORATION

ECOSF and Islamic Development Bank (IDB) signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in September 2016 for supporting the collaborative activities for exchange of scientific knowledge and technology to address the development challenges in Common Member Countries (CMCs).

The purpose of MoU is to facilitate joint efforts by the Parties to use S&T as a means for addressing the development challenges in the CMCs as well as enhancing the cooperation among them. The collaboration in joint scientific projects, combination of limited resources particularly the grant resources, in order to process impactful Reverse Linkage projects pertaining to building the scientific and technological capacities in the member countries is also the purpose of the MoU. One more significant objective of this MoU is the promotion of collaborations among the R&D organizations/universities and support the exchange of researchers, scientists, engineers and technologists in different S&T activities and partnership and collaboration on relevant Programme.

The collaboration between two organizations begin in 2015 with organization of a Capacity Building Workshop on Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) in ECO region held in Astana, Kazakhstan.

The collaboration is the result of ECOSF quest for new partnerships with regional and international organizations for promotion of synergies and development of STI activities in ECO region.

THE RECTOR OF AL-FARABI KAZAKH NATIONAL UNIVERSITY WELCOMES THE PRESIDENT ECOSF AT HIS OFFICE IN ALMATY- KAZAKHSTAN

A meeting was held between the Rector Al-Farabi Kazakh National University Professor Galymkair MUTANOV and President ECOSF Prof. Manzoor H. Soomro at the office of the Rector in Almaty Kazakhstan on 26 October 2016. Prof. Mutanov warmly welcomed the President ECOSF at the University. Prof. Soomro was in Almaty for participating in the 8th Meeting of South and Central Asia Man and Biosphere (SACAM) Network (24-26 Oct 2016). The ECOSF was one of the co-organizers of SACAM Network Meeting.

Prof. Soomro thanked the Rector for a warm gesture and introduced him about the background and status of ECOSF. He also shared the objectives, programmes and activities of the Foundation. President ECOSF mentioned that the ratification of ECOSF Charter and its Additional Protocol would open new avenues for Kazakhstan and ECOSF in the field of science, technology and innovation based activities, thus, emphasized on an early ratification of ECOSF Charter and its Additional Protocol by Republic of Kazakhstan, though the country signed the Charter in 1995.

President ECOSF also briefed the Rector that ECOSF and IDB are jointly supporting a reverse linkages project titled "Developing the Capacities of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Kazakhstan in Phytochemical Development" between Al-Farabi University and the International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences (ICCBS) of the University of Karachi, Pakistan. The Rector thanked ECOSF for providing support in an important project which will definitely improve the capacities of its Phytochemical Labs and thanked ECOSF for supporting it. The Rector also thanked ECOSF for joining hands in organizing the 8th SACAM Network meeting, jointly with KazNU and other Kazakh organizations.

Prof. Soomro appreciated the KazNU for supporting the 8th Meeting of SACAM Network and establishment of the UNESCO Chair on Man and Biosphere" (MAB) in the University, which shows the strong commitment of leadership of



the University towards the Biosphere Reserves, Climate Change and its aligned matters.

President ECOSF further mentioned that ECOSF and Mehran University of Engineering and Technology (MUET) Jamshoro, Pakistan are organizing a 1st International Conference on Science, Technology and Innovation Policy and Management - (STIP&M 2016) on 16 – 17 November 2016 in Karachi, Pakistan and invited the University participation in the conference and to speak on SDGs and role of STI, with particular reference to the KazNU being Global Hub on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Rector appreciated the invitation by ECOSF and assured of joining the conference by a suitable expert in the conference.

NATIONAL SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (NSTI) STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN OF PAKISTAN STAKEHOLDERS' CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP HELD ON 20TH OCTOBER 2016

20th October 2016: Stakeholders' Consultative workshop on National Science Technology and Innovation Strategy and Action Plan organized by Pakistan Council for Science and Technology (PCST) under the patronage of Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) Government of Pakistan was held in Islamabad. The objective of consultative workshop was to review the final draft of the National STI Strategy and Action Plan in consultation with the implementing agencies identified for different actions. The event was opened by the Minister for MoST H.E Mr. Rana Tanveer Hussain and the consultative session was chaired by Federal Secretary to the Government of Pakistan H.E Mr. Fazal Abbas Maken. Along with the other stakeholders of NSTI, President ECO Science Foundation Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro was also invited and participated in the event. He contributed in finalizing the National STI Strategy and Action plan. Dr. Soomro contributed on various Action plans for improvement of the Strategy for implementation of the STI policies of Government of Pakistan.

It is worth mentioning that the finalized STI Strategy and Action Plan will be presented in the meeting of National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) of Pakistan; which is chaired by the Prime Minister of Pakistan for approval. The revised National STI and Action Plan, with the ownership and support of stakeholders, will help to support the achievement of goals set in the document of Pakistan Vision 2025.

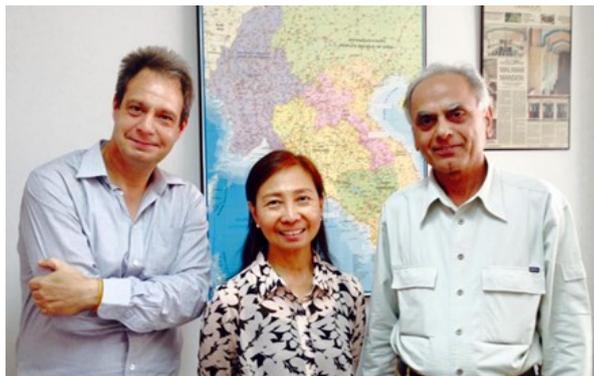


PRESIDENT ECO SCIENCE FOUNDATION VISITED FAO-UN REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA-PACIFIC IN BANGKOK

07 Oct 2016: While being in Bangkok during the first Meeting of the UN ESCAP Committee on ICT/STI, President ECO Science Foundation Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro took the opportunity to visit FAO- UN Regional Office for Asia-Pacific in Bangkok. The Chief of Asia Pacific Vegetable IPM Programme Jan-Willem Kettelar, Professor Piao Youngfan the Senior FAO Plant Protection Officer and Alma Linda Abubakar warmly welcomed Prof. Soomro being their former colleague in FAO IPM Programme for Cotton in Asia 2000-2004.



While discussing the possibilities of collaboration in ECO Region with FAO, Prof. Youngfan shared with Dr. Soomro that only the Pakistan and Afghanistan from the ECO region comes under the umbrella of FAO Asia Pacific. Rest of the ECO region is covered by FAO near East region, Cairo-Egypt office and the FAO office for Eurasia based in Hungary Budapest. However Prof. Youngfan promised to share the details of FAO Budapest office which subsequently he did with Prof. Soomro.



ECO SCIENCE FOUNDATION STRENGTHENING TIES WITH AZERBAIJAN NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

President ECO Science Foundation Professor Manzoor Hussain Soomro called upon the President of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences-ANAS Professor Akif Alizadeh and the Vice President ANAS Prof. Ibrahim Quliyev in ANAS-Baku on 11th October 2016 to follow on the joint activities of ECOSF in Azerbaijan and regional programmes.

Various matters on collaboration and joint activities were discussed including the initiation of the process for ratification of ECO Science Foundation charter and its additional protocol, co-organization of an Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) capacity building workshop with ECOSF, nomination of an eminent scientist preferably a head of institution for the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees of ECOSF.



ANAS agreed to co-organize with ECOSF possibly in collaboration with Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan, IBSE Capacity Building workshop for Teacher Trainers from across Azerbaijan tentatively during mid 2017. The workshop will be conducted by French Trainers in collaboration with ECOSF's international partners, viz., IAP Science Education Programme and *La main a la pate* Foundation of the Academy of Sciences of France. Professor Alizadeh assured ECOSF of their cooperation and suggested for fresh communication.

The meeting ended with the vote of thanks from both the Presidents with the assurance of cooperation in ECO region to build a greater Regional Economic force based on Science, Technology & Innovation and science education (IBSE).

INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP FORUM HELD IN DUSHANBE TAJIKISTAN FROM 14-15 OCTOBER 2016

The annual International Entrepreneurship Forum was held in Dushanbe-Tajikistan during 14-15 October 2016, organized under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan H.E Mr. Emomali Rahmon. Objective of the Forum was to introduce and explore new investment opportunities present in the Republic of Tajikistan. National production was the central theme of the Forum and represented the most important platform for dialogue between the government and the private sector and is the largest business and investment event in the country. Senior government officials and foreign official dignitaries, experts and company managers, representatives of the international financial institutions, global and regional enterprises were present there.

The Forum was opened by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan, H.E Mr. Qohir Rasulzoda, who welcomed the participants and noted that Tajikistan is open for cooperation on the basis of respect and neighborly relations with

all states of the region and the world. He highlighted the Government plans for Agenda 2030 and economic development with a particular focus on industrialization mining and tourism.

CEO of Glencore International Mr. Ivan Glasenberg, President of the China-Tajikistan Mining Company Mr. Jiang Rong Huang, Senior Vice President of Qatar Airways Mr. Ali Al Rais, and Vice-President of Airbus Mr. Allen Keith were among prominent dignitaries who spoke at the Forum. The prince of Saudi Arabia, His Royal Highness Faisal bin Abdulaziz bin Abdulmajid bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Deputy Regional Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in Central Asia Mr. McCain Neil and Regional Leader for Telecommunications at the World Bank Mr. Rajendra Singh were also among the speakers. President ECO Science Foundation Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro was also invited and participated in Forum.



THE 10TH IEEE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON APPLICATION OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (AICT2016) HELD AT BAKU- AZERBAIJAN

The 10th IEEE International Conference on Application of Information and Communication Technologies (AICT2016) was held in Qafqaz University Baku- Azerbaijan during 12-14 October 2016. Objective of the AICT2016 was to bring together business people, researchers, scientists, software architects, and industry professionals to discuss innovative ideas and diverse topics on next generation of information technologies and services. The conference aimed at attracting researchers from academic and industrial institutions and practitioners from industry, addressing business and technical issues, challenges, solutions, and technologies in building applications, complete solutions and ICT-based services.



Co-organizers of the conference were; Ministry of Communication and High Technologies of Azerbaijan, Ministry of Education of Azerbaijan, Qafqaz University, Baku State University, Lomonosov Moscow State University Baku branch, Baku Higher Oil School, Azerbaijan Technical University, University Malaysia Sabah, Institute of Information Technology of ANAS, Institute of Control Systems of ANAS, ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) and UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE), under the sponsorship of Nar Mobile and DELL EMC, with support of IEEE Azerbaijan Joint Chapter and technically sponsored by Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

More than 80 experts from 23 countries including ECO member states and Russia participated in the conference. President ECO Science Foundation Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro spoke in the Inaugural Session and was also one of the plenary speakers in the conference. The conference provided an excellent opportunity for participants to network among themselves.



UNESCAP ORGANIZED THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF ITS COMMITTEE ON IT AND STI TO ACHIEVE UN 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN BANGKOK-THAILAND

President ECO Science Foundation as Invited Speaker shared ECOSF's STI Initiatives and Plans

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) Committee on Information and Communications Technology (ICT), and Science, Technology & Innovation (STI) was held at the UN Convention Centre (UNCC) in Bangkok, Thailand during October 5-7 2016, with a focus on how best to use these powerful tools to achieve the transformative UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

United Nations under Secretary General and Executive Secretary of ESCAP Dr. Shamshad Akhtar opened the session on 5th October 2016. In her opening remarks she said, "As the world embarks on its journey towards the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals, scientific breakthroughs, technological advances and innovative ideas continue at a rapid pace – many of these breakthroughs occurring in this region. Although the Asia-Pacific region has some of the most innovative and technologically advanced economies in the world, it is also home to some of the most technologically deprived. The role of ICT and STI as an engine of economic growth and a valuable source of innovation is irrefutable but contingent on how South-South collaboration can harness ICT and STI advances for the poor," she added.



H.E. Air Chief Marshal (R) Prajin Juntong, Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Minister of Digital Economy and Society, Thailand inaugurated the session and highlighted the importance of a progressive ICT and STI agenda. ICT and STI serves as an engine of economic growth and sustainable development," he mentioned.

The panelists in panel discussion on STI moderated by Dr. Shamshad Akhtar included high level dignitaries including Dr. Zakri Abdul Hamid, Adviser Science to PM of Malaysia, Minister of Science, Technology and Research of Thailand H. E. Dr. Pichet Durongkaveroj, Ms. Lisa Rauter from Australia, Prof. Srimali Farnando Chair of National Science Foundation of Sri Lanka and Prof. Apiwat from Chulung University of Thailand.

President ECO Science Foundation (ECOSF) Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro was invited speaker in 1st Meeting of the UN ESCAP Committee on ICT/STI. During the panel discussion, Dr. Soomro stressed upon the importance of investing in Children via Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) and Capacity Building of Teachers as well as investing in STI research in the developing world. This requires political will and harmonization of STI-ICT policies of member countries of ESCAP as well as ECO.

"Through this Committee we have built a solid foundation from which we as a region can harness science, technology and innovation to together meet the ambitions of the SDGs," said United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of ESCAP Dr. Shamshad Akhtar in her closing remarks at the Committee.

GLOBAL EDUCATION MONITORING (GEM) REPORT, 2016 LAUNCHED IN PAKISTAN

The Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM Report), formerly known as the Education for All Global Monitoring Report (GMR), is an editorially independent, authoritative, and evidence-based annual report by UNESCO. Its core mandate is to monitor progress towards the education targets in the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework. With its renewed mandate in 2015 the GEM Report team launches a new series of internationally focused education monitoring reports starting in 2016. The 2016 GEM Report is titled: *'Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable futures for all'*. UNESCO Islamabad Office organized a launching ceremony of 2016 GEM Report on September 28th 2016 in which distinguished experts from government, international organizations, civil society and academia participated. The Report has clubbed the SDGs in six 'P's, Planet, Prosperity, People, Peace, Places and Partnerships.

President ECO Science Foundation Prof. Manzoor Soomro was invited as a panellist to share his views about **Planet: Environmental Sustainability**. Prof. Soomro opened the panel discussion moderated by Ms. Mahreen Khan. He after congratulating the organizers said that, Sustainability is a three-legged table consisting of the environment, the economy, and society. Without a sustainable productive environment to provide a resource foundation, it would be difficult or impossible to imagine having a sustainable society. Similarly, a sustainable economy depends upon a sustainable flow of material, energy, and environmental resources.



REGIONAL ISTC/BACAC CCHFV/EBOLA CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING SEMINAR FOR LEADING AND YOUTH SCIENTISTS ORGANIZED IN DUSHANBE-TAJIKISTAN

President ECO Science Foundation also made a Presentation



“Regional ISTC/BACAC CCHFV/Ebola Capacity Building Training Seminar for Leading and Youth Scientists” was held at Dushanbe -Tajikistan during September 19-23, 2016, under the Auspices of Ministry of Health and Academy of Sciences Tajikistan. Objective of the workshop was to promote the scientific development of research using modern bio-safety and bio-security methods to counter Ebola and Zika Virus. Welcome and introductory remarks were given by ISTC representative Dr. Zuaresh Diskhanbayeva; Director TRIPM Dr. Samardin Aliev and Dr. Lela Bakanidze who is a Vice President BACAC. Experts including a number of young Scientists participated from all ECO member state except Turkey, and presented the situation of Ebola, Congo, Zika viruses etc. in their states, respectively.

Prof. Dr. Manzoor Hussain Soomro was invited to attend the capacity building workshop with the request to help enhance the capacity of the region in tackling the emerging threats of viruses

transmitting from animals and insects to humans. He appreciated the organizers for arranging this workshop for sustainable development of the environment; these issues are a potential threat and must be encountered by arranging such capacity building workshops. Moreover, the communities must also play their role in countering the bio-risks through formal or informal learning about the viruses and their receptors. Dr. Soomro also made a PowerPoint presentation introducing ECOSF and its programmes in the region.



STRONGER COLLABORATION OF ECOSF WITH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN UNDERWAY

President ECOSF called upon the President Academy of Sciences Tajikistan on 19th September 2016, during his recent visit to Dushanbe. H.E.Mr. Farhod Rahimi warmly welcomed Dr. Soomro. Mutual collaborative activities were highlighted during the meeting with a particular reference to Engineering Qualification Standardization Meeting that will be held in Dushanbe in collaboration of PEC, UNESCO and ECOSF. President of ASRT, enthusiastically agreed



and arranged meeting of Prof. Soomro with Rector National Technical University (NTU) which is a mother university of all engineering institutions in the country.

Following decisions were mutually made during the meeting:

- The academy and NTU agreed to mutually co-host the activity. They will manage the venue, all arrangements for Tajik participants including accommodation and meals, etc as well local transportation for all the participants (National and International).
- The travel and accommodation expenditure of international experts/organizations (ECOSF, UNESCO, FEIAP, PEC, ISTIC) will be managed/taken care of by ECOSF.
- The academy will constitute a local organizing committee comprising of the officials from the Academy and NTU to manage all the local arrangements in coordination with ECOSF.
- It was mutually agreed that a national workshop on Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) will be organized in Tajikistan tentatively in the month of April 2017 whereby local arrangements of Tajikistan participants will be managed by the Academy and expenditure of foreign trainers (LAMAP) will be managed by ECOSF. In this regard, Prof. Parvonakhon Jamshedov was declared Focal Point for (IBSE).
- Professor Parvonakhon Jamshedov was appointed as responsible person coordinator for providing correspondence with IAP Science Education Programme.

H.E Mr. Rahimi assured President ECOSF of his full cooperation and consideration. He also shared that ASRT is planning to organize a meeting of all science academies of Central Asia and Russian Federation. Dr. Soomro supported the idea and suggested that the academies of all ECO Region should also be invited for network of academies of sciences of ECO and CIS countries under the patronage of ECOSF.

PRESIDENT ECO SCIENCE FOUNDATION VISITED INSTITUTES OF ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF TAJIKISTAN IN DUSHANBE

Prof. Manzoor Hussain Soomro during his stay in Dushanbe was taken to visit the Institute of Geophysics, the Institute of Botany & Medicine, the Institute of Biology & Genetics, the Institute of Chemistry, Institute of Physics and the Institute of Geology and seismology of Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan at Dushanbe, on 20-21st Sept 2016. Academicians, Professors, the Directors of the Institutes welcomed Dr Soomro and showed him the laboratory facilities and discussed various projects.

Professor Soomro encouraged the Tajik scientists from various institutions of the Academy of Sciences to benefit from ECOSF programme publicized through ECOSF website and interact with their counterparts in other ECO member countries. He assured them of support from the Foundation. He was also very appreciative of the strong leadership and wisdom of the Director, Geophysical Survey of the Academy of Sciences Professor Sobit Negmatoullaev. Prof. Soomro proposed that the Institute of Geophysics should lead in partnership with the Institute of Geology of Azerbaijan and relevant institutions in other countries to jointly organize in collaboration with ECO Science Foundation, an "International Conference and Exhibition on Earthquake monitoring, Seismology and Preparedness in ECO Region" in the context of UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This will bring specialists and disaster management experts from ECO Region and some from the developed world together to review the present status and prepare a roadmap for the future.



ACADEMICIAN DATO' LEE YEE CHEONG APPOINTED AS THE STEM ADVISOR OF THE MOSTI MALAYASIA

ECOSF is very pleased to share that the Senior Fellow of Academy of Sciences of Malaysia and the Chair of Inter-Academy Partnership Science Education Programme (IAP-SEP) Academician Dato' Lee Yee Cheong has been appointed as the STEM Advisor of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) Malaysia w.e.f 1st October 2016.

It is pertinent to mention that Dato' Lee Cheong has been a staunch proponent of STEM Education through Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE) around the globe and is a great collaborator of ECO Science Foundation. ECOSF felicitates Professor Lee Cheong on this honour and opportunity to contribute.

**UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL EVENTS POSTED ON ECOSF WEBSITE AND FB PAGE****APPLICATIONS FOR LIYSF 2017**

The 59th London International Youth Science Forum (LIYSF) - 26th July to 9th August 2017 – invites students to apply now to join 500 other likeminded students gathered from 70 countries across the world at two-week residential course, held at Imperial College London. The LIYSF programme includes lectures, demonstrations from leading scientists and visits to industrial sites, research centres, scientific institutions, world-class laboratories and universities, along with an active social calendar and a focus on cultural education and forming lasting friendships.

Web Link: <http://eco4science.org/LIYSF-2017>

2017 STEPI Fellowship

STEPI (Science and Technology Policy Institute) invites graduate students, scholars and researchers to apply for 2017 STEPI Fellowship. This program aims to encourage research on the issues pertaining to Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) policy, and to build a research network among STI policy researchers and students around the world. The fellowship supports up to 5,000 USD for research on various topics of STI policies, preferably issues pertinent to East Asian countries.

Web Link: <http://eco4science.org/STEPI-3>