

March, 15, 2013 (Friday)

Climate change

Pakistan, Italy join hands to identify adaptive measures

Sign MoU on water availability, impact on Karakoram glaciers

OUR CORRESPONDENT
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's only dedicated climate change research centre is going to partner with Italian experts to identify climate change adaptation measures.

The Global Change Impact Studies Centre (GCISC), which recently became an autonomous body by act of parliament, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Ev-K2-CNR, an Italian research organisation that has worked in Pakistan's northern areas for many years.

The signing ceremony took place at the Ministry of Climate Change in Islamabad on Thursday.

GCISC Executive Director

Arshad Muhammad Khan said, Pakistan is one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change in the world.

"In fact, in 2010, the damages associated with climate change vulnerabilities experienced by Pakistan were the highest in the world," Khan said. "Almost 2,000 people died in the floods, around 20 million were left homeless and a loss of \$10 billion was incurred."

He said the GCISC expects to benefit from the expertise of Ev-K2-CNR in high altitude studies on impact of climate change on glaciers and water resources. The collaboration would help the centre come up with measures to improve water and food security in Pakistan, Khan said.

"In fact, in 2010, the damages associated with climate change vulnerabilities experienced by Pakistan were the highest in the world

GCISC Executive Director
Arshad Muhammad Khan

Ev-K2-CNR, founded in 1987, is associated with Italy's National Research Council (CNR), a world-renowned research body which employs around 1,100 researchers.

Agostino Da Polenza, founding president of Ev-K2-CNR, said the organisation is excited to bring its experience to the table and to cooperate

with Pakistan for the realisation of several projects under the MoU.

According to the MoU, the Ev-K2-CNR is expected to start two research projects on water availability and impact of climate change on Karakoram glaciers in collaboration with GCISC and other Pakistani stakeholders.

The Ev-K2-CNR is already engaged in several projects, most notably the Sustainable Economic Environment Development (SEED) in the Central Karakoram National Park (CKNP), said Raffaele Del Cima, country operation manager for Ev-K2-CNR and SEED project director.

The 10,000-square-kilometre park in Gilgit-Baltistan (G-B) is the largest source of

DAMAGES

10b

dollars was the loss incurred by the country in the aftermath of the 2010 floods

fresh water in the country. It is home to eight mountain peaks above 8,000-metre-high and 60 peaks above 7,000 metres, beside several species of plants and animals.

Cima said the five-year project, funded by the Pakistani government and the Italian embassy, started at the end of 2009.

He added Ev-K2-CNR, in collaboration with the several other organisations, is providing support to the park's central directorate with management, supervision and monitoring of the park's resources. This includes making risk assessment maps to identify potential landslide and Glacial Lake Outburst Flood sites among other things.

The SEED project is also helping the 221 village communities on the park's outskirts build resilience to climate change effects, Cima said.

On Wednesday, the Ev-K2-CNR handed over the first draft of the park's integrated management plan to the government of G-B, Cima said.