

# INTERNATIONAL THE NEWS

## **Pakistan facing severe climate change effects: Afridi**

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Despite the fact that Pakistan contributes only 0.43 per cent of the world's total Greenhouse Gases and is 135th in world's ranking, yet it is faced with severe climate changes.

The climate change impacts include sea level rise, variability of monsoon, increased frequency, intensity of extreme weather events, melting of glaciers and snow, droughts and floods and stress and agriculture and livestock.

This was revealed by Federal Minister for Environment Hameed ullah Jan Afridi while addressing a ceremony to mark World Environment Day at the National Library on Friday. The World Environment day is celebrated all over the world on June 5 while the theme for 2009 is 'Your planet needs you-Unite to combat climate change.'

The minister said that Pakistan formulated the National Operational Strategy for clean development mechanism in February 2006, which offers tremendous incentives to investors to generate carbon credits for reducing carbon emission from potential sector.

"On the adaptation side we are in the process of preparing National Adaptation Action Plan in collaboration with all stakeholders and the Global change Impact Studies centre engaged in conducting research on impacts and adaptation to climate change in the country and at the regional level," he said.

The minister said that the harmful impacts of global warming are already showing around the world in the form of extreme weather disasters like storms, tornadoes, floods and droughts, all of which have been mounting in frequency and intensity.

"11 of the last 12 years were the warmest since 1850 with 1998 being on the top, which recorded 0.6C increase in the average global temperature during the last century," he said while adding that the world today suffers around 400-500 natural disasters on average in a year, which has increased from 125 recorded in 1980s.

Afridi said that the climate change was the biggest environmental threat in the modern times and was likely to have profound consequences for the socio-economic sectors such as health, food production, energy consumption and security and natural resource management.

Speaking on the occasion Ministry of Environment Secretary Kamran Lashari said that climate change was causing widespread damage globally with an extensive impact on the environment.

"Increase in the average global temperature of the earth and constant climatic variation are affecting human settlements and economies, large population live in low lying coastal areas, rising global temperatures are causing significant changes in crop yields affecting low-income rural populations that depends on traditional agriculture system," he said.

Lashari said that climate change was irreversibly harming Pakistan with its tremendous social, environmental and economic impacts. "The main challenges are reduced agricultural productivity, human morbidity, and stressed use of natural resources," he said.

He said that Ministry of Environment has formulated National Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) strategy and established CDM cell under the Kyoto Protocol of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in order to explore cost effective options to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

"Under the Medium Term Development Framework (MTDF) Ministry of Environment initiated mega afforestation projects for carbon sequestration," he said while adding that there was a need to conserve energy by adoption of energy efficient production and consumption pattern.

On the occasion National Sustainable Development Strategy for Pakistan was also launched, which aims at maintaining a balance between three pillars of sustainable development including economic, social and environmental and would lead the country towards a vibrant and equitable economic growth without unbridled exploitation of resources and with due cognisance of distribution of development dividends to all in particular to the poor and vulnerable in the society and future generation.

