

## SDPI and HBS ink accord on climate change

### Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and Heinrich Boll Stiftung (HBS) Pakistan inked a cooperation agreement on climate change in Pakistan called Institutional Arrangements and Alternative Sources of Energy.

SDPI Executive Director Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri and HBS Resident Director Gregor Enste inked the accord. The agreement is aimed at developing institutional framework for implementation of national climate change related policies and building and strengthening capacity of government officials for better implementation of climate change related policies.

Views of civil society in national climate change related policies and institutional arrangements would also be incorporated and mapping of current use of different sources of energy would be carried out. The agreement asked for analysing the expected policy on climate change, review of institutional arrangements of few selected countries and implementation of climate change policy in Pakistan.

Dr Suleri would be responsible for looking after the project. Impacts of climate change were evident in Pakistan, which was facing multiple threats from climate change. Agriculture sector was one example where low productivity, water shortage, mismanagement etc are further worsening the situation. Studies show that wheat and rice production would decline due to the climate change.

Monsoon rains and glaciers were two sources of water availability in Pakistan but now monsoon patterns and quantity were changing. Pakistan also observed two long spells of droughts in the last two decades especially in 1998-2002.

Sea level was also rising in Pakistan. Coastal areas of Pakistan were observing impacts of sea level rise. Oxfam, 2009 conducted a study, which showed that almost 50-kilometre area of Badin was affected due to sea intrusion. This was bound to increase in the future if climate change was not addressed seriously. Diseases, climate refugees, widespread of disease and pests, loss of biodiversity etc would be other areas of major concern for Pakistan.

Despite the pertinent need for responding to climate change, the current policy framework to address climate change in Pakistan failed to comprehensively tackle the issue. However, it was encouraging that the government of Pakistan took some steps to address climate change.

Pakistan is currently working on a series of policy responses to climate change including adaptation policies, NAMA, energy policies etc.

Moreover, it established the National Task Force on climate change, which had been delegated the role of developing a National Climate Change Policy. It must be recognised, however, that the desired operation of any climate change policy would only follow if there were certain institutional arrangements already in place. The forthcoming National Climate Change Policy of Pakistan overlooked this dimension and failed to give an adequate provision for implementation of the policy.

Believing that it was essential to provide a strategic framework for the institutional arrangements for implementation of the climate change policies in Pakistan, the creation of a framework would depend on an initial analysis and evaluation of the existing systems as well as incorporating the demands placed by an ambitious climate change policy.

The SDPI had proposed to map out the current usage of different sources of energy in the country while also documenting different interventions undertaken by the government in the alternative energy sector. Based on this information, an analysis of the potential of renewable sources in the energy mix would be concluded. The SDPI also suggested to discuss gender issue, which could be included in the institutional framework.

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