

**JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE JUDICIAL ACADEMY
HIGH COURT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR AT SRINAGAR**

**One Day Sensitisation Programme
On
“Forest and Wildlife Conservation, including Laws
dealing with Birds and Wetland Conservation”**

**“Wetlands and Birds are critical for our Survival”
“Jammu & Kashmir is paradise on earth, don’t make it hell”**



PRESS RELEASE

Srinagar, March, 04, 2018: Jammu & Kashmir State Judicial Academy organised One Day Sensitisation Programme on “Forest and Wildlife Conservation, including Laws dealing with Birds and Wetland Conservation” on 4th of March, 2018 in the J&K State Judicial Academy, at Mominabad Srinagar.

The Sensitisation programme was inaugurated by Hon’ble Mr Justice, Badar Durrez Ahmed, Chief Justice, High Court of J&K alongwith Hon’ble Mr Justice Mohammad Yaqoob Mir, Judge High Court of J&K, Hon’ble Mr Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey, Judge, High Court of J&K, Hon’ble Mr Justice, M.K. Hanjura, Member, J&K State Judicial Academy today on 4th of March, 2018. All the Chief Judicial Magistrates and Munsiffs of Kashmir Province participated in the programme.

Proceedings were conducted by Dr. Pankaj Chandan, Team Leader, Western Himalayas, WWF. Ms. Moulika Arabhi, Advisor, Centre for Environmental Law, gave an overview of the programme.

Mr. Abdul Rashid Malik, Director, J&K State Judicial Academy in his introductory remarks extended warm welcome to Hon’ble Mr Justice , Badar Durrez Ahmed, Chief Justice, High Court of J&K, Hon’ble Mr Justice Mohammad Yaqoob Mir, Judge High Court of J&K, Hon’ble Mr Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey, Judge, High Court of J&K, Hon’ble Mr Justice, M.K. Hanjura, Member, J&K State Judicial Academy for gracing the occasion. While introducing the subject of the Sensitisation

Programme, Mr. Malik emphasised that floods of 2014 have taught us many lessons and we have no option but to preserve our forests, wildlife, birds and wetlands.

Hon'ble Mr Justice Badar Durrez Ahmed while inaugurating the programme complemented the Judicial Academy for roping in WWF and organising the programme on a very critical subject of Wildlife and Forest Conservation with the special reference to Birds and Wetlands. He highlighted that Jammu & Kashmir is paradise on earth and don't make it hell. Judges must be sensitized that cases relating to Wildlife, Wetlands, Animals and Birds are equally important and whenever cases of encroachment of wetlands and river systems come before the courts Judges should be vigilant and pass prompt orders in accordance with law. "We are living in paradise" and it is our duty to preserve this diversity not only in Kashmir but also in Jammu & Ladakh as well. Forests are very essential. The flood of 2014 is inter-connected to what is happening around us. Wetlands are also important. Dal Lake is not shrinking but the volume of its water has definitely reduced because of sewage and silt coming into the Lake. This has resulted in complete change in biodiversity. Snowtrout population has been reduced 10-15% and overtaken by the Carp which was not native to Dal Lake but has been introduced and that changes the entire ecosystem of the Lake. Whatever has been done has been done and whatever is left has to be preserved. In so far wetlands are concerned "I find that J&K is blessed with great diversity". Wullar Lake has its own importance, "it is like International Airport of Migratory Birds. If the lakes disappear birds will not come, and we cannot live on this planet".

Hon'ble Mr Justice Mohammad Yaqoob Mir, Judge, High Court of J&K in his special address said that In developing countries like India, there has been environmental degradation due to over exploitation of resources, depletion of traditional resources, industrialization, urbanization and population explosion. Since, man is the creator and moulder of his environment, his conduct can be regulated through the instrument of law. In fact, Judiciary has always been in the fore-front of taking all possible steps for the protection and improvement of the environment and aiming at sustainable development. However, neither the law nor the environment static. The changing pace of the environment is so fast that in order to keep the law on the same wave-length either laws have to be amended quite frequently to meet the new challenges or it has to be given new direction by the judicial interpretation.

Hon'ble Mr Justice, Ali Mohammad Magrey, Judge, High Court of J&K, in his special address said that new innovations like, thermal power, atomic plant and so on without any sufficient natural assurance pose another danger to the situations, the after effect of which results in issues like global warming, climate change, acid rain, etc. There arises a requirement for a comprehensive analysis of the protection of the environment. In recent years, there has been a sustained focus on the role played by the judiciary in devising and monitoring the implementation of measures for pollution control, conservation of forests and wildlife protection. Many of these judicial interventions have been triggered by the persistent incoherence in policy-

making as well as the lack of capacity-building amongst the executive agencies. Devices such as Public Interest Litigation (PIL) have been prominently relied upon to tackle environmental problems, and this approach has its supporters as well as critics.

Hon'ble Mr Justice, M.K. Hanjura, Member, J&K State Judicial Academy, in his special address said Wildlife Conservation is the practice of protecting wild plant and animal species and their habitat. Wildlife plays an important role in balancing the environment and provides stability to different natural processes of nature. The goal of wildlife conservation is to ensure that nature will be around for future generations to enjoy and also to recognize the importance of wildlife and wilderness for humans and other species alike. Many nations have government agencies and NGO's dedicated to wildlife conservation, which help to implement policies designed to protect wildlife. Numerous independent non-profit organizations also promote various wildlife conservation causes. Wildlife conservation has become an increasingly important practice due to the negative effects of human activity on wildlife. An endangered species is defined as a population of a living species that is in the danger of becoming extinct because the species has a very low or falling population, or because they are threatened by the varying environmental or prepositional parameters.

The inaugural function was followed by technical sessions in which the Resource Persons deliberated upon Review of laws and policies applicable to Birds and Wetlands in the first technical session which was conducted by Mr. Ritwick Dutta, Environmental Lawyer & Founding Director, LIFE. He also deliberated upon Current Status of Wetlands & Water birds in Kashmir. The second technical session was moderated by Dr. Pankaj Chandan, Team Leader, Western Himalayas, WWF – India. He elaborately discussed WWF India's work on conservation of Birds and Wetlands. In the third and final session Mr. Merwyn Fernandes, Coordinator, Traffic India gave an overview on illegal Bird trade Scenarios in India: Concerns and solutions. The Judicial Officers interacted with the Resource Persons on different aspects of Laws relating to Forest and Wildlife Conservation and also shared their rich experience during the deliberations.

The function concluded with the vote of thanks by Mr. Abdul Rashid Malik, Director, J&K State Judicial Academy. Who appreciated WWF for their cooperation and collaboration with the State Judicial Academy. He also thanked all the Judicial Officers for their active participation in the programme.