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Serena Corporate

**Serena hotels sign mou with wwf, akrsp for climate mitigation**

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels have linked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Worldwide Fund for Nature–Pakistan (WWF-Pakistan), and the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) with the aim to further the common objectives of climate mitigation, climate adaptation, land degradation, food security, biodiversity conservation and enhancing community resilience in view of Pakistan’s needs, and to support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The MoU signing ceremony was held at the Islamabad Serena Hotel which was graced by the Federal Minister and Advisor to the Prime Minister of Pakistan for Climate Change Mr. Malik Amin Aslam, heads of NGOs, media representatives and other stakeholders.

As a responsible corporate citizen, Serena Hotels has been carrying out several green initiatives like tracking and offsetting carbon emissions of our hotels, investing in renewables, and making our buildings and operations green-friendly. Our aim is not only to mitigate the carbon emissions for our hotels but to become carbon negative. Hence, we have partnered with WWF-Pakistan and AKRSP for the effective implementation and widening of scope for our mission, and to link it with the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Pakistan (TBTTP) and Clean and Green Environment Movement (CGP) of Prime Minister Imran Khan,” said Mr. Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels South and Central Asia.

The aim of the MoU is to develop a collaborative framework of Serena Hotels with the implementing parties in the broad areas of habitat restoration through tree plantation and improving Pakistan’s forest cover across the country. The initiative will also support the protection of existing forests through implementation of a sustainable forest management plan, co-created with the local forest-dependent communities. It further aims to enhance community resilience, and improve food security by creating alternative livelihood opportunities, strengthening market linkages and establishing value chains for non-timber forest products.

Mr. Boolani said they are in discussions with the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) for developing a system for the monitoring and reporting of the afforestation program using aerial and satellite imagery. “The monitoring system will link the project with the Government’s web portal, the National Forest Management System (NFMS) and REDD+ to bring transparency to our initiatives and bring it into the fold of the national efforts,” he said.

CEO of WWF-Pakistan Mr. Hammad Ali Naqi and CEO AKRSP Mr. Jamiluddin also spoke on the occasion and highlighted their respective organisations unique contributions to the mitigation of climate change. They remarked that the recent Covid-19 pandemic has further highlighted the need for protecting vulnerable ecosystems. They underlined the importance of the private sector stepping forward and going beyond typical CSR activities to become leadership champions and provide stewardship by addressing the environmental footprint within their boundaries.

Speaking on the occasion, the Federal Minister for Climate Change, Mr. Malik Amin Aslam said that climate change is a reality that cannot be ignored anymore, as Pakistan was one of the most climate vulnerable countries in the world. The Minister appreciated the step taken by Serena Hotels and its implementing partners for cementing the alliance towards a green and clean future, and assured the parties full support of the Government in its implementation. While acknowledged the efforts of AKRSP in Gilgit Baltistan and Chitral, and urged the WWF-Pakistan to come up with green certifications for the industry, so they may regulate their environmental imprint and set a positive example for others.