

SOUTH ASIAN SEAS PROGRAMME

Agenda Item 5 (k)

PROGRAMME AREA: Collaboration with SAARC Disaster Management Centre for Developing Coastal and Marine Risk Mitigation Plan for South Asia

CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

In pursuit of implementation of the decisions of various SAARC forums especially with regard to the coastal regions of South Asia, the SAARC Coastal Zone Management Centre (SCZMC) Maldives organised an Expert Group Meeting in April 2007 to draft SAARC Coastal Zone Management Action Plan. One of the identified issues was that of coastal and marine hazards and the Expert Group recommended that SAARC Disaster Management Centre (SDMC) be requested to prepare a Coastal and Marine Mitigation Plan and the Governing Boards of SCZMC & SDMC endorsed this recommendation

Subsequently, the Programme Committee of SAARC, while approving the recommendation of the Governing Board, outlined the following approach and methodology for the development of a SAARC Coastal and Marine Risk Mitigation Plan

- a) Convening of a workshop of experts to discuss issues and suggest the methodology for the development of a template for the preparation of a Coastal and Marine Hazard Mitigation Plan for South Asia
- b) Based on the agreed methodology of SDMC shall develop the template which shall be divided in to two parts:
 - i) Coastal and Marine Risk Mitigation Plan for each Coastal country

This will focus on the issues that each country has to address within the country and would serve as input for the regional plan
 - ii) Coastal and Marine Risk Mitigation Plan for the region

The inputs from the member countries would form the basis the detailed Regional Coastal and Marine Risk Mitigation Plan

Present Status

A workshop was held in March 2008 conducted by the SAARC Disaster Management Centre New Delhi in collaboration with National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) Goa for the development of a comprehensive SAARC Coastal and Marine Risk Mitigation Plan integrating the resources and expertise available with operational as well as R&D Agencies in the region taking into account the five priorities of Hyogo Framework of Action such as

- ❖ Ensure the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation;
- ❖ Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning;

- ❖ Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels
- ❖ Reduce the underlying risk factors;
- ❖ Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels

The workshop to which SACEP was invited, took into account the following

- ❖ Expert deliberations on the outstanding issues and challenges facing the region with regards to coastal and Marine disasters;
- ❖ Sharing the respective national initiatives in operational as well as research domains towards addressing these issues;
- ❖ Discussing the regional approach strategy and plan taking into account all the ongoing planned efforts at international, regional and national levels

The full-fledged Regional Mitigation Plan would be developed by November – December 2008 and the countries have been requested to develop their respective national plans.

SACEP / SAS will play an important role in the implementation of the Regional Mitigation Plan