

'THE JAIPUR DECLARATION'

Decision 9.2.6

**11th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP
Jaipur, India
22 May 2008**

**Declaration on
South Asia Initiative for Combating Illegal Trade in Wildlife**

Aware that the countries in the South Asia region are very rich in terrestrial and marine natural resources which are storehouse of unique biodiversity as well as many endangered species and that there is rapid growing demand both locally and globally for wildlife products.

Acknowledging that while legal trade can be monitored and managed, illegal trade in wild animals and plants poses a major challenge to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in South Asia.

Recalling that all the countries in the region are presently having various laws and regulations to prevent illegal trade but still are subject to large scale illegal trade in wildlife and its derivatives by a well organized local and international illegal trade network.

Realizing that despite concerns of overexploitation of wildlife by the civil society and efforts of the enforcement agencies it is unlikely that the on going trend of increased illegal trade by the strong international illegal wildlife crime nexus can be tackled without new enforcement strategies and through regional cooperation and networking.

Recognizing that countries in the region have committed for wildlife conservation and to regulate illegal trade under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) through its various resolutions, or implement related National Laws and Policies.

Recalling the South Asia Wildlife Trade Diagnostic Workshop held in Kathmandu in April 2004, and the priorities identified for improved regional co-operation to address Illegal wildlife trade challenges in South Asia.

Recalling the decision taken in the Tenth Governing Council Meeting of SACEP on 25th January 2007 to incorporate a Work Programme (2007-2008) for Combating Illegal Trade in Wildlife products and to help strengthening of enforcement of CITES in the region.

Aware of CITES Resolution 11.3 'Compliance and Enforcement' revised at the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES in July 2007 urging parties to consider formulating regional action plans, incorporating timetables, targets and provisions for funding, designed to enhance enforcement of CITES, achieve compliance with its provisions, and support wildlife-law enforcement agencies;

Acknowledging the Memorandum of Understanding signed by SACEP and TRAFFIC International on 20/07/07 to jointly take forward the initiative of regional co-operation for Combating Illegal Trade and the joint efforts initiated by them.

Recalling the endorsement of the South Asia Regional Strategic Plan on Illegal Wildlife Trade (2008-2013) by the Senior Officers of the Member Countries at the First Regional Workshop on the South Asia Wildlife Trade Initiative in Kathmandu from 31st January and 1st February 2008.

Stressing the importance of mutual networking and technical support as well as financial and technical support from the international community for building expertise, resources, and capacity to address the needs of the region for combating the illegal wildlife trade; and

Believing that regional cooperation can provide the best solution for regional problems;

We the Environment Ministers constituting the 11th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP,

Support the South Asia Initiative for Combating Illegal Trade in Wildlife and Regional Action Plan and the Formation of South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN)

Urge to establish the South Asia Experts Group on Illegal Wildlife Trade, consisting of relevant technical representatives from the eight member countries, which would meet periodically to provide a forum for the development of regional programmes through networking, sharing and effective dissemination of knowledge and information;

Mandate the expert group to develop a detailed work programme for implementing the South Asia Regional Strategic Plan on Illegal Wildlife Trade with the assistance of SACEP and other relevant partners; and

Request Countries, donors and other organizations to provide financial and technical support to assist in the implementation of the approved Work Programme.