

DECISION NO. 12

**DECLARATION**  
**by the Environment Ministers of the South Asia Region**  
**at the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Governing Council of**  
**South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)**

We, the Environment Ministers and Heads of delegation of the eight countries in the South Asia region viz. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka met at Islamabad, Pakistan on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013 at the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

*Recalling* the Colombo Declaration of 25<sup>th</sup> February 1981, on initiation of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme which enabled the establishment of SACEP

*Underlining* the importance of the Regional Co-operation as a tool to promote environmental protection and sustainable development in the region

*Reaffirming* our commitment to SACEP and highlighting our common dedication to co-operate in achieving high standards of environmental protection in the region

*Taking* into account the principles and the decisions that were agreed in previous meetings of the Governing Council

*Taking note* of the rapid political, economic and social changes that have taken place in the region since the establishment of the SACEP in 1982 we emphasize our view that these changes call for efforts to strengthen co-operation within the region

Recognizing that

- A) The region is endowed with rich base of natural resources where the livelihood of majority of the population directly and indirectly depend on
- B) The region's single most burning issue is that a large number of people are living in poverty and the eradication of poverty is the paramount goal in the development agendas of governments of South Asia
- C) South Asia is one of the fastest-growing regions in the world and demand for food, energy, water and natural resources is continuing to grow rapidly by putting ever increasing pressure on the environment
- D) Climate change already has an impact on ecosystems and exacerbates pressures on the marine and coastal environment

Concerned that environmental degradation and the unsustainable use of natural resources may have significant social and economic consequences.

Reaffirmed our commitment to the implementation of;

- A) Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the provisions of Agenda 21
- B) Outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), in particular the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
- C) The Millennium Development Goals

**Annex XVII**  
**GC 13.SACEP**

- D) Outcome of the Rio+20, United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, 'The future we want'
- E) Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets contained therein

Agreeing to the recommendations and decisions of this 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP

SACEP member states to take prompt action to strengthen their efforts to implement recommendations and decisions taken at the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of Governing Council

Express our sincere appreciation to the people and the Government of Pakistan for the warm hospitality and excellent organization of the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP