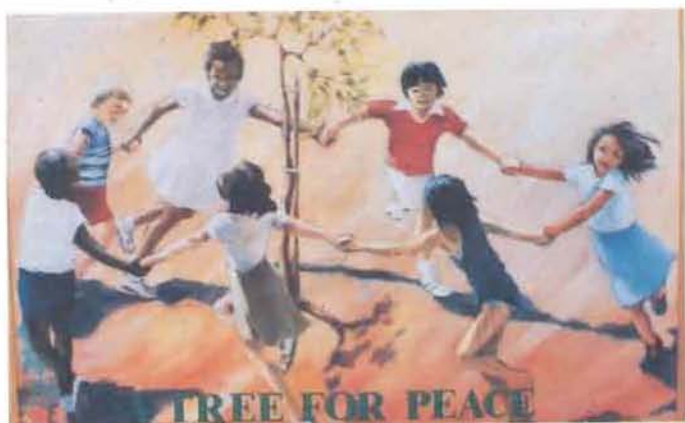




SACEP

**South Asia Co-operative  
Environment Programme  
(SACEP)**



**OVERVIEW**

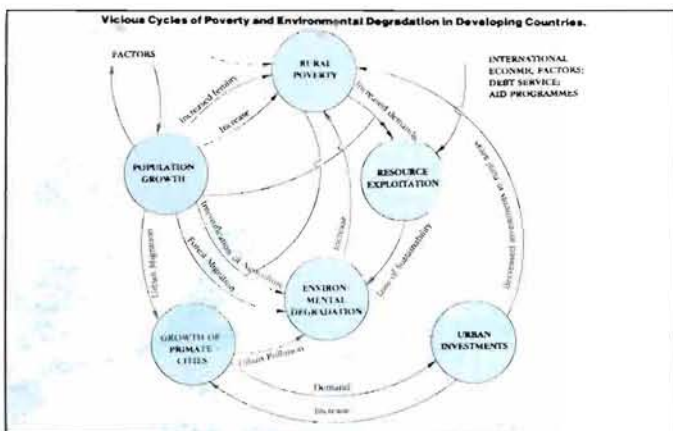
*SACEP's Mandate and Operations*

**August, 1993**

# Background

The emergence of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) was in fact the culmination of two years of deep deliberations by the ten countries concerned, on the feasibility of regional co-operation on environmental oriented development activities.

An Officials Meeting of these South Asian Countries was held in Bangalore, India in March 1980 and this Meeting recommended that a High Level Meeting of Ministerial Rank be convened to further examine various aspects of this issue. Accordingly, a High Level Meeting of Ministerial Rank was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 18th to 25th February 1981 which approved what is now known as the 'COLOMBO DECLARATION' and the Articles of Association for the initiation of the SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME.



This decision to initiate joint action by these ten South Asian Countries, of which five are classified as least developed by the United Nations System, having over a total population of over 1000 Million people, was indeed a very significant event in whatever way one wished to view this cohesion.

The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme became a Legal Entity on 7th January 1982, when the minimum required number of countries approved the Articles of Association by their respective Governments. To date, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have ratified the Articles of Association of SACEP. The Governments of Iran and Nepal are expected to do so in the near future.

---

# THE COLOMBO DECLARATION ON THE SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (SACEP)

---

*The Meeting of Ministers to Initiate the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)*

At Colombo on 25th February, 1981.

*Having considered* the report of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting convened at Bangalore, March, 1980,

*Having further considered* the report and recommendations of the Meeting of Officials to Initiate the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) held at Colombo, 18-21 February 1981,

*Noting* the possibilities of the occurrence of severe ecological disequilibrium and the threat of environmental degradation in the Region,

Noting also the warm support of their countries in the aims and aspirations of the proposed Programme, as expressed at the foregoing meetings, in contacts among themselves and with UNEP, and the wealth of capability and expertise available within the Region,

Noting in addition the offer of the Government of Sri Lanka to provide the facilities for the Secretariat of SACEP, the offers of the Governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to serve as Focal Points for Programme development and implementation in selected subject areas, and the interest shown by the Governments of Bhutan, Burma, Maldives and Nepal,

Conscious of the readiness of their countries to co-operate and extend mutual assistance to each other in matters of environmental concern, to contribute through the application of their resources, to the work of the Focal Points and, in the case of Sri Lanka, to the Secretariat of SACEP,

*Taking note* of the active interest and possibilities of support from various donor countries, international financing institutions, agencies and bodies,

*Recognizing* the pioneering nature of the proposed co-operative programme and the organizational arrangements thereto,

*Commending* the significant contribution and imaginative initiative of the Director of the Regional Office of UNEP as noted by the Bangalore Meeting and the Meeting of Officials at Colombo,

*Appreciating* the firm support and encouragement extended by the Executive Director of UNEP in this regard,

DECLARES:

1. Its *decision* to establish a co-operative programme to be known as the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme ;
2. Its *endorsement* of the agreed institutional arrangements, the overall programme content, and technical co-operation and the financing arrangements ;
3. Its *resolve* to sustain, strengthen, and utilize to the fullest, for the benefit of the peoples of their countries, the agreed programme and the arrangements for its implementation ;
4. Its *intention* to foster the Programme as essential for the promotion of human welfare, development and amelioration of poverty in the region ;
5. Its *commitment* to work out a harmonious balance between the process of development and resources of nature ;
6. Its *conviction* that this Programme and the co-operative arrangements thereto, could provide a valuable basis for mutual co-operation, in the fields of social and economic development ;

*Calls upon :*

1. The interested donor states, International financing institutions, agencies and other bodies to extend their support readily and in imaginative and concrete terms, keeping in mind the importance of maintaining the momentum in implementing a Programme of such far-ranging significance
2. The United Nations system, UNDP in particular and UNEP, to assist SACEP, as required, with financial support, technical assistance, information, and guidance in the implementation of the Programme :
3. The member states of the SACEP region to see in these a worthy cause with goals and objectives fully capable of attainment through their common perceptions, friendly co-operation and mutual assistance.

*DONE AT COLOMBO THIS THE TWENTY-FIFTH  
DAY OF FEBRUARY ONE THOUSAND NINE  
HUNDRED AND EIGHTY ONE.*

*AFGHANISTAN  
BANGLADESH  
INDIA  
IRAN  
MALDIVES  
PAKISTAN  
SRI LANKA*



---

## AIMS AND FUNCTIONS

---

The aims of SACEP are :

- (a) To promote and support the protection, management and enhancement of the environment, both natural and human, of the countries of South Asia, individually, collectively and co-operatively ;
- (b) To make judicious use of the resources of the environment towards removal of poverty, reduction of socio-economic disparity, improve the quality of life, and prosperity on a containing basis ;
- (c) For these purposes, to make the fullest use of the organizational arrangements and facilities for co-operation under SACEP.

The functions of SACEP are :

- (d) To promote co-operative activities in priority areas of environment of mutual interest ;
- (e) To ensure that these activities result in benefit individually or collectively to the Member States of the Region ;
- (f) To extend support as needed through exchange of knowledge and expertise available among the member countries ;
- (g) To provide local resources towards implementation of projects and activities ; and
- (h) To encourage maximum constructive and complementary support from interested donor countries and other sources.



---

# PRIORITY SUBJECT MATTER AREAS OF SACEP

---

1. Environmental Impact Assessment and Cost / Benefit Analysis ; Environment and Development.
2. Environment Quality Standards.
3. Technology for the Development of Renewable and Reusable Resources.
4. Environment Legislation.
5. Conservation of Montane Eco-Systems and Watersheds.
6. Social Forestry.
7. Regional Co-operation in Wild Life and Genetic Resources Conservation.
8. Conservation of Corals, Mangroves, Deltas, Coastal Areas and
9. Island Eco-Systems.
10. Tourism & Environment.
11. Desertification.
12. Regional Seas Programme.
13. Energy & Environment.
14. Education and Training.
15. Training in Wild Life Management.



---

# SUMMARY OF MAJOR PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

---

The Programme Activities of SACEP since its formation has been based on the Fifteen Priority Subject Matter Areas which had been approved at its First Governing Council Meeting held in Colombo in January, 1983. A few of its major achievements are listed below.

## **SOUTH ASIAN REGIONAL SEAS PROGRAMME**

One of the major achievements of SACEP has been its ability to introduce to the South Asian Region, what is considered as "UNEP's Crowning Jewel", The Regional Seas Programme. Though the Regional Seas Programme of UNEP was initiated in 1974, for a variety of historical reasons, A REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE SOUTH ASIAN SEAS was not initiated. However with the formation of SACEP, the concerned Marine Member Countries of SACEP revived interests in requesting UNEP for a Regional Seas Programme for the South Asian Seas Region. The finalisation of the Action Plan for this programme was delayed due to unavoidable reasons but it is expected to be finalised shortly. Even prior to the adoption of the Action Plan many activities have been finalised whilst some are ongoing. The completed activities include the "Development of a Regional Contingency Plan for Responding to Marine Pollution Emergencies in the South Asian Region", Preparation of Coastal Environmental Management Plan for Pakistan, Preparation of Country Reports and a Regional Overview on the State of the Marine Environment and the Study & Publication of the Report Titled "Maldives & Impact of Climate Change".

## **REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTRE**

Another major achievement of SACEP has been the setting up of an Information Centre for the dissemination of Environmental Information in the South Asian Region. The REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTRE (RENIC) was established in the SACEP Secretariat with assistance from the Asian Development Bank. Phase 1 of this activity has been completed and a more ambitious programme in Phase 2 of this Project has already been approved for implementation by the Governing Council of SACEP.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION**

SACEP has been instrumental in undertaking pioneering work in the field ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION. With assistance from the United Nations Development Programme almost all member countries of SACEP prepared a Present Status Report of its Environmental Legislation and based on these reports, A Regional Overview was also prepared. A Workshop was held to discuss, not only these reports, but also to recommend follow up activities. The Work Programme envisaged include the Training of National Lawyers, Creation of Awareness, Importance of an up-to-date Environmental Legislation and Guidance on the enforcement of the provisions of Environmental Legislation.

## YEAR OF TREES FOR SOUTH ASIA

A Resolution was unanimously adopted at the First Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP declaring '1988 as THE YEAR OF TREES FOR SOUTH ASIA'. UNEP Governing Council Meeting of 1983 commended the South Asian Countries for their initiative and a Resolution was adopted requesting the Executive Director of UNEP to Support within available resources, the formulation of Projects and Programmes in connection with this activity. All countries actively participated in this programme, the most significant of which was "100 Million Trees Project" undertaken by the Government of Sri Lanka. 8th of March, 1988 was Declared as the "Day of Trees for South Asia".

## SACEP NEWSLETTER

The First Issue of the SACEP NEWSLETTER was released in January 1984 and upto date 12 issues have been published. The main objective of the Newsletter has been to keep the Member states of SACEP and the UN & International Community informed of SACEP's Activities. In the future, SACEP proposes to broad base its Newsletter by including articles from eminent personalities in the field of Environment and also to feature success stories on environment achieved by its Member Countries.





---

# FUTURE PROSPECTS

---

SACEP being fully aware of the fact that the Environmental concerns of the Eighties will not be that of the Nineties, conducted a Review of its Programme Activities since its formation in 1981, in order to plan out the future. This exercise was undertaken with assistance of UNEP's Regional Office for Asia & the Pacific and the Fifth Governing Council of SACEP approved, what is now referred to as SACEP's Strategy and Programme I 1992 - 1996 (SSP-1).

SSP-1 is based on the co-operative activities within the framework of the existing Fifteen Priority Subject Matter Areas of SACEP in order to achieve its medium and long term goals.

The Proposed Fourteen Priority Projects drawn up under SSP-1 essentially fall within the five broad groups.

## **A. CAPACITY BUILDING AND AWARENESS RAISING**

- (i) Environment and Sustainable Development within the Context of AGENDA 21 : Capacity Building and Enhancement of the Awareness and Practical; Implementation Options for High Level Government Policy and Decision-makers in the Member Countries of SACEP ;
- (ii) Enhancement of the Public Environmental Awareness in connection with existing as well as Emerging Environmental Issues of Concern in the Countries of the Region.

## **B. SYSTEMATIC INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND INTRA-REGIONAL TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS**

- (i) Preparation of Guidelines for the Assessment of Highly Polluting Industries, for Import of Potentially Harmful Chemicals and Hazardous Wastes, and for Dealing with Chemical Disasters ;
- (ii) Regional Environmental and Natural Resources Information Centre (RENRIC) - Phase 2 ;
- (iii) Sharing of Pollution Abatement Technology through Exchange of information and Training;
- (iv) Regional Air Quality Monitoring and Management Systems.

## **C. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT FOR TRAINING AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TRAINING**

- (i) Strengthening of Environmental Management in SACEP Countries - Phase I (Training) ;
- (ii) Establishment of a Regional Training and Information Centre for Environmental Management.

**D. REGIONAL CO-OPERATION IN MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR MONTANE ECOSYSTEMS / WATERSHEDS AND COASTAL RESOURCES**

- (i) Regional Co-operation in Conservation of Montane Ecosystems and Watersheds ;
- (ii) Assessment of Land-Based Sources of Coastal and Marine Pollution in the Countries of the Region.

**E. WILDLIFE AND WILDLIFE HABITAT CONSERVATION IN THE REGION**

- (i) Regional Co-operation in Conservation of Marine Species (Marine Mammals and Sea Turtles) ;
- (ii) Regional Co-operation for Strengthening the Management of Terrestrial (Wildlife) and Marine Parks ;
- (iii) Regional Co-operation in the Protection of Shared (Transboundary) Wildlife Habitats (Conservation of Mountain and Wetland Ecosystems) ;
- (iv) Regional Co-operation in Conservation of the Habitat of the Terrestrial Migratory Species.

The activities connected with the 14 Priority Projects would also involve the conducting of Training Courses, Workshops and Seminars in the following areas which have been identified as in need of Capacity Building within the Region.

1. Industrial & Domestic Waste Water Treatment Technologies
2. Wildlife Management
3. Solid Waste Management
4. Assessment of Industrial Pollution
5. Water Quality Monitoring / Modelling
6. Hazardous Waste Management
7. Low Waste Technologies
8. Integrated Approach to Sanitation & Hygiene
9. Development of Non-Conventional Sources of Energy
10. Community Participation in Sustainable Development
11. Soil & Forest Conservation
12. Environmental Education & Exchange of Information
13. Environmental Laws and their Implementation
14. Management of Emergency Situations arising out of Accidental Leaks
15. Marine Pollution Control
16. Sustainable Irrigation Projects
17. Sustainable Rural Development
18. Resources Recovery & Recycling of Wastes

It has been recommended that towards the end of Phase I of SSP I, the Fifteen Priority Subject Matter Areas of SACEP be reviewed and amended in the light of Agenda 21 and the emerging Global and Regional Environmental Problems.

# SACEP ORGANISATIONAL CHART



PRINCIPAL REVIEW  
AND  
DELIBERATIVE BODY

CONSULTATIVE  
COMMITTEE

REPRE  
OF MEM  
OF SAC  
HEADG  
IN COL

RESPONSIBLE TO  
FACILITATE  
IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE PROGRAMMES  
AND POLICIES  
DETERMINED  
BY THE  
GOVERNING COUNCIL

PRIORITY  
SUBJECT AREA  
FOCAL POINTS

SECRETARIAT

DIRECTOR PLUS  
SUPPORT STAFF HOSTED  
BY GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA  
ASSISTS THE COUNCIL,  
AND THE COMMITTEE AND  
FOCAL POINTS IN THE  
DISCHARGE OF THEIR  
RESPONSIBILITIES

# IP NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS

- TAN - Secretary,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,  
Kabul  
Republic of Afghanistan.  
Tlx : 232 KHAREJA AF
- SH - Mr Abdullah Haroon Rasha,  
Secretary,  
Ministry of Environment & Forests  
Room 1309  
Building No. 6,  
Bangladesh Secretariat,  
Dhaka,  
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH  
Tel : 880-2-404349  
Telex : 672908 MOEST BJ
- Joint Secretary,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Tashichhodzong,  
Thimphu,  
Royal Government of Bhutan.  
Tel : 975 - 22771  
Telex : 214 MFA TPU / 220 PCO TPU  
Fax : 975 - 22459
- Mr. Keshav Desiraju,  
Director (IC-II)  
Ministry of Environment & Forests,  
Paryavaran Bhavan,  
C.G.O. Complex,  
Lodhi Road,  
New Delhi 110003,  
India.  
Tel : 91 - 11 - 4360769  
Telex : 3163015 WILD IN  
Fax : 91 - 11 - 4360678
- H. E. Dr. H. Manafi,  
Deputy to the President & Director,  
Department of Environment,  
P. O. Box 4335,  
Teheran,  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
Tel : 98 - 21 - 891261-9  
Telex : 215064 DOEC IR  
Fax : 98 - 21 - 898236
- Mr. Mohamed Ali,  
Deputy Director Environment Research  
Ministry of Planning & Environment,  
Male,  
Republic of Maldives  
Tel : 960 - 323919  
Telex : 66110 MPD MF  
Fax : 960 - 327351

**NEPAL**

Secretariat of National Planning Commission,  
Singh Durbar  
Kathmandu  
ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL

Tel : 977-1-228000/228200  
Telex : 2635 YUJANA NP  
Fax : 977-1-226500

**PAKISTAN**

Mr S.I. Ahmed,  
Secretary,  
Environment & Urban Affairs Division,  
Ministry of Housing & Works,  
Shaheed-e-Millat Secretariat,  
Blue Area,  
Islamabad,  
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

Tel : 92-51-813373  
Telex : 54434 EJA PK  
Fax : 92-51-824122

**SRI LANKA**

Dr. D. Nesiah,  
Secretary,  
Ministry of Environment &  
Parliamentary Affairs  
Unity Plaza Building,  
Colombo 4,  
Sri Lanka.

Tel : 94 - 1 - 502566 / 588274  
Fax : 94 - 1 - 502566

---

## SACEP Member Countries

---



AFGHANISTAN



BANGLADESH



BHUTAN



INDIA



IRAN



MALDIVES



NEPAL



PAKISTAN



SRI LANKA

### South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme

- Mail - 84 Lorenz Road, Colombo 4, Sri Lanka.
- Telephone - 94 - 1 - 582553 (Office)  
94 - 1 - 589376 (Director)
- Fax - 94 - 1 - 589369
- Telex - 21494 Global CE
- Cable - SACEP, Colombo.
- 
- Director - Mr. V. P. Jauhari
- Consultant - Mr. P. N. Dias Abeyegunawardene
- Administrative Manager - Ms Marlene Pereira

August 1993