

Practical environment projects for South Asia Ministers go down to earth

Eleven environmental projects, will be put forward for approval when Ministers from nine South Asian countries meet in Colombo tomorrow for the first meeting of the Governing Council of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP).

The projects termed as "down to earth" will include the identification and promotion of fuel efficient stoves, recycling of agricultural wastes, establishment of an environmental education programme for the region, strengthening of environmental legislation and the establishment of a

clearing house for environmental services.

Ministerial representatives from Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Maldives, India, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka will be present at the meeting.

The project on fuelwood will study the various research and development activities underway in the region to identify and promote stoves that have high efficiency and could be manufactured at a low cost.

Three projects on re-cycling wastes will be submitted for approval. These include establishment of demonstration

plants to produce cement from rice husk in Sri Lanka, manufacture of animal feed from agricultural residues in Pakistan and wall bricks from building waste materials in Nepal.

To ensure public participation in environmental activities a well organised environmental education, training and public awareness programme is to be launched.

The project on legislation will formulate a new set of environmental laws for the region to replace the multitude of obsolete laws in force at present.