

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme

Volume I January 1984

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*Message from Dr. Mostafa K. Tolba
UNEP Executive Director*

SACEP's motto - 'before you look outside for what you need, look inside for what you have' - is one UNEP wholeheartedly endorses. That motto encapsulates a fundamental UNEP conviction, notably that by working together developing nations can overcome their environmental problems. For its part, UNEP was proud to have played a role in promoting an agreement which for the first time brought all the nations of South Asia together to launch a common programme. We were inspired by the willingness of this region's governments to put concern for the environment beyond the kinds of regional disagreements which impede progress in other spheres.

The Colombo Declaration of 1981 and the constructive outcome to the first inaugural meeting earlier this year testify to a deep-rooted environmental commitment among the nations of South Asia. The SACEP nations' desire "to work out the harmonious balance between the process of development and the resources of nature" could not be more timely. Nations of this wide and diverse region share a common peril from resource exhaustion. In UNEP we are confident that South Asian countries - through SACEP - will show a new resolve and vigour in tackling shared forms of environmental degradation such as desertification, soil erosion, pollution and the spread of environmentally-linked diseases.

Before the governments and peoples of this region lies the largely untrodden path to sustainable development. The funds provided by UNEP and UNDP together with the pledged country contributions provide SACEP with a good start. But it is a beginning only - there is not the smallest excuse for complacency. The wide-ranging nature of SACEP's strategy and initiatives covering such areas as environmental legislation, education and energy will require the young organisation in the critical years ahead to secure a broad-based involvement. Regional organisations such as the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Asian Development Bank, and their many associated institutions can play a vital role.

Additionally there are in this region other sub-regional groups which have come together to cope with many of the same problems on your agenda; the ASEAN environment programme (ASEP) involving Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand; the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) with more than 20 widespread countries and islands; the Kuwait Action Plan in which one of your members is playing a leading role; and others such as those states working in the Lower Mekong Basin, and your neighbours to the West who recently met in the Seychelles to draw up a regional environment plan for East African Coastal States.

Every endeavour too should be made to involve non-governmental organisations, especially those whose main brief is not environmental.

UNEP's ability to assist depends on the SACEP government's success in building on its admirable start. Specifically on their willingness to use and to direct the many international organisations which exist to serve governments. More critically it depends on what SACEP members do at the national level, for it is the priorities decided at this level which determine where resources are applied. And in UNEP we will pay close attention to the success of SACEP projects which are successful in mobilising citizens in their countries. For example, it is our experience that tree planting drives are next to useless unless they are successful in getting local people to care and tend the young seedlings to maturity. Every effort too should be made to combine the new technologies of development with peoples' traditional practices and systems such as the age-old agreco-systems of Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

Finally I welcome the advent of this newsletter, UNEP attaches great weight to such means of communication in spreading information to decision-makers and the general public.

I am confident it will ably serve the collective interests of SACEP members. We also see it as a vehicle for the involvement of UNEP in SACEP's collective effort. I pledge on UNEP's behalf that within our capabilities and restricted resources we will continue to offer full support to SACEP as it strives to put the principles of the Colombo Declaration to work.

*Message from Mr. S.A.M.S. Kibria,
Executive Secretary of ESCAP*

The establishment of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme in 1981 was an important step taken by the Governments of the countries of the South Asian subregion "to work together in co-operation to meet the challenge of environmental management for development in our part of the world."

It is my conviction that promotion of regional and subregional co-operation is one of the most effective ways of achieving economic growth and stability.

SACEP is a relatively new subregional institution aiming at the development and protection of environment. Therefore, concerned governments and agencies should provide technical financial and moral support and should participate in its activities so that it may continue to play an increasingly dynamic and effective role in the region. I am pleased to observe that the Environmental Co-ordinating Unit of ESCAP has been collaborating closely with the SACEP Secretariat in specific environmental fields, such as marine environment protection, desertification, environmental legislation and environmental awareness.

SACEP is anxious to strengthen its links with other concerned agencies and with the public. The launching of a newsletter will no doubt be of great assistance in this regard, and I take great pleasure in wishing this new publication every success in reaching a wide readership and creating sound environmental awareness among the people of the region.

EDITORIAL

The establishment of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) in 1981 was hailed as a historical event in that it marked for the first time in the history of the South Asian Region where countries have come together to launch a Common Programme. With the issue of this first newsletter, SACEP takes another significant step in this co-operative action launched two years ago.

The ten South Asian Countries, which came under the banner of SACEP share many environmental problems. All of them belong to the developing world, and several have been classified as least developed. Most of their environmental problems stem from poverty, and its effects. Their efforts at development and increased production have put increasing pressure on natural resources and the environment. However, in most of the countries, much work has been undertaken for the protection and management of the environment in the face of the need for accelerated development. But unfortunately the progress and achievements in the field of environment in these countries - although covering almost the same ground - were not much known to each other. Therefore SACEP fulfilled a long felt need for a regional arrangement for the sharing of information and knowledge as well as for a common effort on environmental problems.

In the coming years, SACEP would have several tasks - in the first place SACEP would help to present a coherent framework of ideas and prescriptions, that would enable member Governments to discuss and analyse meaningfully, the integration of environmental concern with eco-

conomic goals and policies. The Governments, with their shared experience would be able to identify to what extent such integration may require changes in the life-style and patterns of development that they aspire to. SACEP also hopes to stimulate a continuing effort in individual member countries, to adopt environmentally sound projects, programmes and policies by placing emphasis on carefully selected fields of action at national and the sub-regional levels.

In addition, SACEP would initiate an exchange of ideas and experiences among member countries, not only in the manner of formulating long-term perspectives and strategies, but also on the practical examples which testify to the validity of such perspectives. In this way the launching of SACEP would reflect the great concern of the member countries for environmentally sound development and the commitment of their national leadership towards that concern.

Hon. R. Premadasa, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka inaugurating the Ministerial Level meeting to launch SACEP in February 1981 stated - " Your presence in Colombo today reflects the interest that the Governments and people of the South Asian Region have shown in the protection and management of the environment in which we live. It is also a recognition of the need to work together in co-operation to meet the challenge of environmental management for development in our part of the world ". With this first issue of the SACEP newsletter another step has been taken to meet this challenge.

Extract from the Statement made by Hon. Dr. R.A. Ghani, Minister of State for Science and Technology, Bangladesh.

..... The existence of life on this planet is dependent on clean environment. Sooner we realise this truth, the better it is. We must save the environment from all forms of degeneration at any cost to ensure our existence and sustained growth of civilization on this planet.

STORY OF SACEP

The South Asian Co-operative Environment Programme became a legal entity on the 7th of January 1982 when the minimum required number of countries approved the Articles of Association by their respective Governments. Today seven of the ten countries have ratified the articles of association. They are : Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Iran and Nepal are due to ratify the articles in the very near future.

The emergence of South Asia Co-operative Programme, 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 the South Asian countries was held in Bangalore, India in March 1980, and this meeting recommended that a high-level meeting of Ministerial rank, be held to further examine various aspects of this issue. In accordance with this recommendation, a high-level meeting of Ministerial rank was held from 18th to 25th February 1981, in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and this meeting approved the Declaration and the Articles of Association for the initiation of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. To date, nine out of the ten South Asian countries, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have sought membership in this new inter-governmental body. Burma has indicated their very favourable disposition towards this grouping but wishes little more time before a final decision is made.

The 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 a total population of over 1000 million people is indeed a very significant event in whatever way one wishes to view this cohesion. Some of the salient fea-

tures of this South Asia Co-operative effort are worthy of note. They are:-

1. This is the first time that the countries of South Asia have ever decided to take co-operative action in any field. It is indeed most encouraging that the decision for this co-operative effort, taken at the highest political level, has the environment and environmental related development activities as its primary concern. This South Asian community over time could well be the nursery for further co-operation in other relevant areas.
2. Among the great diversity displayed by the member countries in landforms, climate, soils, natural vegetation, human settlement even of political systems - an element of strong unity has emerged, viz., the deep concern of the South Asian countries on the status of the environment, especially in view of the environmental hazards caused by the "need of the poor and the greed of the rich" in our countries.
3. The total programme now planned is intrinsically conceived as a self-reliant effort where the South Asian Countries having realised the vital importance of environmental parameters in development activities have decided to take concrete steps. These countries having realised the desirability of co-operative action have consented to make contributions for the running of this institution. Although the contributions themselves may not be significant considering the ambitious programme drawn up by SACEP, it nonetheless underscores the concern of the member countries in this vital field.

4. The SACEP programme is so formulated in order that the vast resources available in this sub-region be managed in a sustained manner, so that they would serve as a fundamental basis for development.

SACEP had its First Governing Council Meeting in January 1983 after one year of its existence as a legal entity. It was attended by High Level Ministerial Delegations to re-

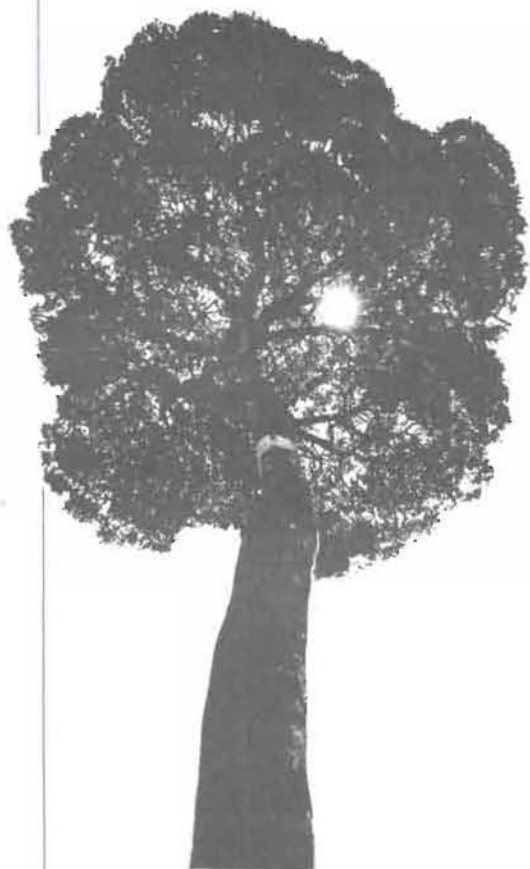
iterate their interests in this organisation. At this meeting a number of important decisions were taken. Some of which are :

- i. Initiation of a Trust Fund for SACEP
- ii. Approval of the projects formulated by SACEP
- iii. Designating of the year 1988 as the Year of the Trees for South Asia.

SACEP PROGRAMME

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme was initiated after two official High Level Meetings that were held in Bangalore in 1980 and Sri Lanka in 1981, which was later approved by the Ministerial Meeting held in late February 1981. Each subject matter area was assigned to a country on a mutually agreed basis. The subject matter areas and the countries responsible for its implementation are given below:

- i) Environmental Impact Assessment and Cost/Benefit Analysis; Environment and Development - Focal Point : Sri Lanka
- ii) Environmental Quality Standards - Focal Point : Iran
- iii) Technology for Development of Renewable and Reusable Resources
Focal Point : ESCAP/RCTT (UN/ESCAP/ Regional Centre for Technology Transfer, Bangalore, India)
- iv) Environmental Legislation - Focal Point : India
- v) Conservation of Montane Ecosystems and Watersheds - Focal Point : Pakistan
- vi) Social Forestry - Focal Point : Afghanistan
- vii) Regional Co-operation in Wildlife and Genetic Resources Conservation - Focal Point : Iran
- viii) Conservation of Corals, Mangroves, Deltas, Coastal Areas - Focal Point : Bangladesh
- ix) Island Ecosystems - Focal Point : Bangladesh (in co-operation with Maldives)
- x) Tourism and Environment - Focal Point : not decided
- xi) Desertification and Regional Seas Programme - Focal Point : UNEP
- xii) Energy and Environment - Focal Point : Iran (in co-operation with Pakistan and India)
- xiii) Environmental Education and Training - Focal Point : India
- xiv) Training in Wildlife Management - Focal Point : India



THE MAN WHO PLANTED TREES

The article is adapted from a UNDF feature by the late Jean Giono

About 40 years ago, I was trekking across the mountain heights in that ancient land where the Alps thrust down into Provence. In the deserted region, everything was barren and colourless. Nothing grew there but wild lavender.

After three days of walking I found myself amidst unparalleled desolation. I had no water. I camped near the vestiges of an abandoned village. The clustered houses suggested there must once have been a well or a spring. Indeed, there was a spring, but it was dry.

It was a fine June day brilliant with sunshine. But over the unsheltered land, the wind blew with unendurable ferocity. It growled over the carcasses of houses like an enraged dragon. I moved camp.

After five hours of walking, I glimpsed in the distance, a small black silhouette and took it for a solitary tree. I started towards it. It was a shepherd. Thirty sheep were lying about him, on the baking earth.

He gave me a drink from his water-gourd and, a little later, took me to his cottage. He drew his water - excellent water - from a very deep natural well.

He spoke little. It is the way of those who live alone. He lived not in a cabin but in a real house of stone. It bore plain evidence of how his own efforts had reclaimed the ruins. The sound of the wind against its tiles was the sound of sea waves hitting the shores.

He was cleanly shaved. All his buttons were firmly sewed on. His clothes had been mended with meticulous care. He did not smoke. His dog, as silent as he was friendly, without being servile.

It was understood from the first that I should stay for the night. The nearest village was a day away. The shepherd shared his food with me.

Then he fetched a small sack and poured out a heap of acorns on the table. He began to inspect them, one by one, with great concentration. Separating the good from the bad. I offered to help him. He told me it was his job. After he had set aside a large enough pile, he counted them out by tens. When he had thus selected one hundred perfect acorns, he went to bed.

The next day I asked if I might be there for another day. He agreed. In the morning he opened his pen and led out his flock. Before leaving he plunged his carefully selected sack of acorns into a pail of water.

Instead of a stick, he carried an iron rod, thick as a thumb and five feet long. His pasture was in a valley. He left his flock in the care of his dog and climbed a ridge. I followed. I was afraid he would rebuke me for my indiscretion. Instead he invited me to go along. We climbed to the top of the ridge.

There he began thrusting his iron rod into the earth, making a hole in which he planted an acorn. He refilled the hole. He was planting an oak. I asked him if the land belonged to him. He answered, no. Did he know whose it was? He did not. Nor was he interested in finding out. He planted his hundred acorns with the greatest care.

I must have been fairly insistent in my questioning, for he answered. For three years he had been planting trees in this wilderness. He had planted 1,00,000. Of them 20,000 had sprouted. Of the 20,000 he still expected to lose about half to rodents and to the unpredictable designs of Mother Earth. There remained 10,000 oak trees to grow, where nothing grew before.

I began to wonder about the age of this man. Fifty-five, he told me. His name was Elzeard Bouffier. He had a farm in the lowlands once. There he had lived his life. He had lost his only son, and then his wife. Then he had withdrawn into this solitude. He felt that this land was dying for want of trees. Having no pressing business of his own, he had resolved to remedy this state of affairs.

I told him that in 30 years his 10,000 oaks would be magnificent. He answered simply that given life, he would have planted so many trees that those 10,000 would be a drop in the ocean.

Presently he was studying the reproduction of beech trees and had a beech-nut nursery near his house. The seedlings, which he protected from his sheep with a wire fence, were beautiful. He was also considering birches for valleys where there could be moisture below the surface.

We parted the next day. The war started in 1914 and I became a soldier. As soldiers do, I forgot everything but the war. I forgot about the old man and his trees too.

Five years later the war was over. I took to the road again, to the

barren lands, following my wanderlust.

Elzeard Bouffier had not died. On the other hand, he was extremely spry. He had changed jobs. Now, he had only four sheep. He had got rid of his sheep because they threatened his young trees. He had imperceptibly continued to plant.

The oaks of 1910 were then 10 years old and higher than either of us. His forest measured 11 kilometres by three. It had all sprung up from the hands and soul of this one man - a man who could be as effectual as God in realms other than that of destruction. Creation seemed to come about in a sort of chain reaction. I saw water flowing in the brooks that had been dry since the memory of man. As the water reappeared, so there reappeared willows, rushes, meadows, gardens, flowers and a certain purpose in being alive.

Hunters and forest officials came to see this wonderful 'Natural' forest. When they saw that it was all the work of one man, they did not meddle. They left him to himself. He worked in total solitude that towards the end of his life he lost the habit of speech. Or perhaps he saw no need for it.

The only serious danger to his work occurred during the Second World War. Cars were being run on wood-burning generators.

There was never enough wood. Cutting was started among his oaks. But railway lines were so far away that the effort flopped. The shepherd saw nothing of it. He was 30 kilometres away planting his trees, in peace. He ignored the war of 1939 as he did that of 1914.

I saw Elzeard Bouffier for the last time in the June of 1945. He was then 87.

I had started back along the route through the wasteland. But now there was a bus. I no longer recognised the scenes of my earlier journeys. Only when I heard the name of the village could I actually

believe being in the region that had been all ruins and desolation once.

The bus put me down at the village which in 1913 had a few houses and fewer inhabitants. The living was bad. Living in excessively harsh climate in winter and in summer, there was no escape from unceasing conflict of personalities. Irrational ambition reached inordinate proportions in the continual desire for escape. The soundest characters broke under the perpetual grind. They had been savage creatures. Malice, mistrust and hatred had composed the spirit of the land. They were little removed, physically and morally, from the conditions of prehistoric man. There were epidemics of suicides and frequent cases of insanity. All around them, nettles were feeding upon the remains of abandoned houses, left beached in time. And over all there was the wind, the ceaseless rattling wind, to rasp upon the nerves.

Their condition had been beyond hope. They had to wait for nothing but death, a condition which rarely predisposes to virtue.

But everything had changed. Even the wind. Instead of the harsh

dry wind, a gentle wind was blowing, laden with scents. A sound like water came from the mountains; it was the forest wind. Most amazing of all, I heard the sound of water falling into a pool. A fountain had been built and it was flowing freely. What touched me most was that someone had planted a linden by its side. It must have been four years old and already in full leaf, the incontestable sign of resurrection.

The village bore signs of labour for which hope is required. Ruins had been cleared away, dilapidated walls torn down and houses restored. The new houses were surrounded by little gardens where vegetables and flowers grew in orderly confusion. The war just finished had not allowed full blooming of life, but Lazarus was out of the tomb. I saw little fields of barley and rye. Deep in the narrow valley, the meadows were turning green.

One man, armed only with physical and moral resources, was able to raise this land from wasteland. The old and unlearned shepherd who fathered this miracle died in peace at the hospice in Banon in 1947.



Ministerial meeting to initiate the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in February, 1981.

From Left to Right Pakistan: Air Marshal Hon. Inamul Haque Khan (Minister for Housing, Works, Water and Power) Maldives: Hon. Mohamed Mustafa Hussain (Minister for Health) Afghanistan: Mr. Esmathulla Wali (Director Country & Town Planning) India: Hon. C P N Singh (Minister of State for Science and Technology) Bangladesh: Hon. (Dr.) R A Ghani (Minister of State for Science and Technology). Sri Lanka Hon. R Premadasa (Prime Minister) Hon. Lalith Athulathmudali (Minister of Trade & Shipping) Mr. C. Suriyakumaran, (Director ROAP/UNEP.)

1988 - YEAR OF THE TREES FOR SOUTH ASIA

A resolution was unanimously adopted at the First Governing Council of SACEP to designate the Year of 1988 as the Year of the Trees for South Asia. The restriction of the geographical area to South Asia was mainly due to the fact that this was a resolution accepted at the first Governing Council of SACEP. However, in proposing the Resolution it was hoped that many other countries would join this scheme and it would hopefully become a global event.

The objective of this strategy was not only to plant more trees to increase the tree cover but also to examine the current wasteful utilization of wood and wood products and design projects and programmes for their efficient use. The current wasteful use of firewood which incidentally amounts to 94% of the energy used for cooking by countries in South Asia has an efficiency ratio of only 10%. It is claimed that the current efficiency of fuel wood utilization could easily be increased to 20 or 30% which in effect would mean reduction of the exploitation of forest for fuel by that amount.

The Hon. Minister of Lands & Land Development of the Government of Sri Lanka eloquently introduced the resolution to declare the Year of the Trees for South Asia at the First Governing Council of SACEP when he said:

"Indeed, trees have a bearing on a number of our economic needs and growth capacities. This is so precisely because of the wide ranging purposes served by trees and forests to all living beings. They are capital assets always and have contributed from time immemorial to economic and social activities of the community in various ways. An individual tree is a family asset and trees in a local community are a source of food, fuel, fodder, fertilizer and building material. Our great natural and exotic forests play a fundamental role in our agrarian economy by

protecting water-shed, lessening the run-off rate of rivers ensuring soil fertility and providing the habitat for both wild life and the fast depleting genetic plant resources"

"While trees form a basic life support system in the developing countries, developed countries have depleted their forests already and they are extremely keen supporters of global efforts in the maintenance and consolidation of forest cover. There is concern as to maintaining the levels of carbon dioxide for which trees play a vital balancing role. This interest of the developed countries is one of these rare symbiotic relationships in which giver and taker are both beneficiaries".

"Examples of rehabilitation of forests are many in South Asia and elsewhere. Outside South Asia, perhaps I may point to a remarkable exercise that China has completed under a family programme of planting 2000 million trees last year. Even allowing for lapses in maintaining them it does constitute a phenomenal achievement. This apart, during the 70's, China completed under state and official auspices, what must have been one of the most spectacular tree and forest planting programmes undertaken. The village and social forestry programmes in some states in India are in a different way a spectacular example of what can be achieved. At the same time, in many places in our region the ravages of mountain slopes, as in Nepal and erosion from the coastal areas, and the denuding of the forest go on".

"We need in South Asia the launching of a great redemptive programme, as an urgent and vital initiative to save the depleting forest asset and to launch out on rapid reafforestation programmes".

"The programme for us in SACEP will involve national level thinking and planning".



Presentation of the report of the first Governing Council Meeting of SACEP to the Hon. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, January, 1983.

Left to right - Hon. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka R. Premadasa, Hon. Abdul Ghafar Lakanwal - Minister of Agriculture and Land Reform, Afghanistan, Dr. Leslie Herath - Director SACEP, Hon. Obai-dullah Khan, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry - Bangladesh.

Excerpts from an Address made by the Hon. R. Premadasa, Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

..... May I add here, that SACEP should therefore associate itself, in whatever way possible, to strengthen the economic co-operation that is now being contemplated by some of these countries.

..... It is for this pioneering effort that I would like to express my sincere congratulations to the political leadership of our South Asian Nations. They provided the inspiration, the practical wisdom and guidance for the successful launching of SACEP. The Government of Sri Lanka is grateful to the member countries for allowing us the opportunity to make a humble contribution towards this effort. We had the opportunity to provide host facilities to the Secretariat of the SACEP, as well as for the inaugural Ministerial Meeting, and for this first Governing Council Meeting. I am happy to announce today, that the Government of Sri Lanka will be gifting a building site to SACEP for the establishment of its Head Office. I hope this office will stand as a symbol of successful South Asian Co-operative action.

Statement made by Hon. Shri C.P.N. Singh Minister of State for Science & Technology and Electronics, India.

All nations, developed or developing, are concerned in today's world about environment. Emphasis in this regard might differ depending on the particular situation in a country, but the fact is what Delhi's wailing Urdu poet, Mir Taqui Mir, early in the last century bemoaned, albeit, in a different context, saying "be it me, you, or the poet; all are captives of the same lock of hair".

SACEP PROJECTS

SACEP Secretariat could officially engage in activities connected with project formulation only after she became a legal entity on the 7th of January, 1982 when the minimum required number of countries ratified the articles of association. Discussions were then held with UNEP and UNDP to solicit funds for project formulation. The Secretariat had also discussions with number of donor agencies who indicated their willingness to support well formulated projects and programmes in the areas of felt needs of the member countries of SACEP. All agencies without exception were unwilling to lend any institutional support. This factor has caused hardships and at times have caused severe constraints to the efficient working of the organisation.

UNDP and UNEP volunteered to support project identification and formulation missions by selected teams visiting the member countries of SACEP. The UN office in Sri Lanka has always been sympathetic towards the activities of SACEP from its very inception. The UN officials in the Resident Representative's office in Colombo along with the SACEP Secretariat was hard put to find suitable consultants for the proposed missions. However, three separate missions were mounted in mid May 1982 to formulate projects in the following areas:

MISSION 1 Environmental
SACEP/UNDP Legislation, Environmental Education and Training.
Energy and Environment.

MISSION 2 Technology for
SACEP/UNDP Development of Renewable and Re-usable.

MISSION 3 Environmental
SACEP/UNEP Impact Assessment and Cost/Benefits Analysis, Environment and Development.

These missions after visiting the member countries of SACEP formulated a number of projects and the following projects were approved at the First Governing Council Meeting held in January 1983:

1. Integrated energy saving domestic stoves and fuel-wood systems UNDP/SACEP.
2. Environmental Education and Information (was revised and submitted for observation) - UNDP/SACEP
3. Environmental Legislation - UNDP/SACEP.
4. Environmental Clearing House Services - UNDP/SACEP.
5. Demonstration Plant for the manufacture of "SURKHI" a building material from broken bricks in Nepal - RCTT/SACEP.
6. Demonstration Plant for the production of Rice - Husk - Ash - Cement in Sri Lanka - RCTT/SACEP.
7. Demonstration Plant for the manufacture of Feed Blocks from Agricultural Residues - in Pakistan RCTT/SACEP.
8. Environmental Assessment of Investment Promotion Zones at Katunayake and Biyagama - SACEP/UNDP.
9. Environmental Assessment of Proposed Bombay High Gas - Based Fertilizer Plants at Hazira and Thal-Vaishat, Gujerat and Maharashtra - SACEP/UNDP.
10. Environmental Assessment of Javedan Cement Ltd., Karachi SACEP /UNEP.
11. Environmental Assessment of Sanitation Development in Male-SACEP/UNEP.
12. Manpower development programme for environmental assessment in the Region - SACEP/UNEP.

PROJECTS UNDER IMPLEMENTATION

NON TOXIC MOSQUITO CONTROL PROJECT.

Mosquitoes in the SACEP countries are a recurring menace and the concomitant ill-effects of eradication by chemical methods has now become notorious. In this context SACEP had discussions with the University of Southampton regarding the need to evaluate methods available currently for the control of mosquitoes by non-toxic methods. The Government of Great Britain is now funding such a project and the European Economic Commission has recently shown interests to expand the activities of this project by covering a larger spectrum of methodologies for the eradication of the mosquito by non-toxic methods as well as increasing the geographical extent of the pilot areas.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT.

SACEP had discussion with the Academy of Energy and Environment of the Government of Austria regarding the possibility of assistance for selected projects in the SACEP countries. They have now responded favourably and a mission would visit the member countries in 1984 to identify projects and programmes in the area of energy and environment.

REGIONAL SEAS PROGRAMME FOR SOUTH ASIAN SEAS.

At the eleventh Governing Council Meeting of UNEP held in May 1983, a Resolution was adopted to initiate a Regional Seas Programme for South Asia and recommended that SACEP Secretariat to co-operate with UNEP in co-ordinating the activities of this programme. Incidentally, there are ten regional seas programmes around the world and for a variety of historical reasons the South Asian Seas did not have this most useful programme to monitor and maintain the health of this very important tropical sea. It is generally accepted that the existence of SACEP had helped in the early initiation of this project.

YEAR OF THE TREES FOR SOUTH ASIA.

The First Governing Council Meeting of SACEP held in January 1983, unanimously adopted a Resolution declaring the Year 1988 as the Year of Trees for South Asia. The 11th UNEP Governing Council Meeting however, enlarged the scope of this resolution to cover all Asian countries. In moving this resolution for the year of the trees at the 1st SACEP Governing Council the Hon. Minister of Land and Land Development and Mahaweli Development while advocating a very strong case for such an activity made a very salient point when he said, "that this is one of this rare symbiotic relationships where the giver and the taker are both beneficiaries". The reference in this context was to the bilateral donor agencies and the recipients in the developing countries who will both benefit in different ways if the tree cover could be increased in the third world countries.

INTEGRATED ENERGY SAVING DOMESTIC STOVES AND FUEL-WOOD SYSTEM.

At the First Governing Council Meeting of SACEP five of the member countries were very keen in implementing at an early date the "Integrated Energy Saving Domestic Stoves and Fuel-wood System" project formulated by the SACEP/UNDP Project Formulatory Mission. The UNDP is now in the process of fielding a consultant to examine feasibility of examining this project at an early date. The consultant is expected to visit some of the selected member countries and the SACEP Secretariat during early 1984.

ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION

This Programme which was unanimously approved by the Governing Council of SACEP has now been adopted by the UNDP for immediate implementation. Each member country desirous of joining this pro-

gramme is expected to nominate a suitable consultant who would draw up a status report on the Environmental Legislation in their respective countries under a given terms of reference. These reports will later be studied in depth by a Panel of consultants after which a workshop will be conducted to discuss the reports and to map out the future course of activities in this area.

CONSERVATION OF CORALS, MANGROVES AND ISLAND ECO-SYSTEMS.

This important area came up for discussion at the first Governing

Council Meeting of SACEP. It was the unanimous view that immediate steps be taken to formulate projects and programmes in association with the designated focal points. A symposium dealing with Corals, Mangroves and Island Eco-systems was organised with the assistance of ESCAP. This symposium was held in Dhaka during the third week of August 1983. The outcome of this symposium would be the basis for future projects and programmes in this very vital area.

NON TOXIC METHODS OF MOSQUITO CONTROL

COMMUNITY BASED INTEGRATED MOSQUITO CONTROL PROGRAMME.

The promotion of health defined by the declaration of Alma Ata, 1978, implies that there should be health for all, by the year 2000, however there has been a startling increase in the incidence of vector borne diseases over the last decade, the most wide spread of these diseases being malaria. Malaria eradication programmes launched in the 1950's and backed by major international agencies showed a considerable degree of success in about 37 countries. However, there is evidence of recent resurgence in some countries in the South Asian region. The number of new malaria cases in the world increased by over 23% between 1972 and 1976, as stated in the World Bank Sector Policy paper on Health, published in February 1980.

One new factor associated with the resurgence of malaria, is that the development process itself produces environmental changes which create new sources of insect borne diseases. The two obvious hazards are the growth of cities which contain many insect breeding sites and

the development of water resources projects which create new insect breeding sites in rural areas. The mosquito is a versatile insect and therefore cannot be controlled merely by interrupting one stage of its life cycle. The life cycle should be interrupted at many stages by various methods if any sustained reduction is to be effected. Such a multifaceted approach will require vast inputs of human and financial resources, which vector control organisation in member countries of SACEP will not be able to afford. It is therefore in the interest of the region that the masses, voluntarily assist these organisations, by actively participating in mosquito control. SACEP vector control programmes will therefore have the involvement of the community in the planning, decision making implementing monitoring and evaluation of the project, to ensure it could be sustained even after the project life has ended.

In the past, chemicals used to control mosquitoes have been in the main, toxic to humans and other mammals, thus inhibiting active community participation. Therefore, the British Government allocated a limited

sum of money to conduct field trials on non toxic methods in selected member states of South Asia. There are now strong indications that considerable funds may be available from the EEC to implement pilot projects in five member countries. A mission to assess the felt needs in this sector was undertaken in July - August this year, and a project dossier formulated.

The community based mosquito control methods fall into four categories.

a) Environmental Control.

A "participatory" environmental health education programme will be conducted, to create an increase in awareness amongst the community, with regards to the dangers and the benefits that will accrue to them if the environment is well managed.

The programme will also create awareness amongst the community on various environment modifications and manipulation techniques.

b) Larval Control using Non-toxic material.

The Non-toxic material can be applied on polluted waters as a

foam preparation or on unpolluted water as a monolayer. The material acts as a surfactant and reduced the surface tension of the water which enter the hydrophobic breathing system of the larvae and pupae to ultimately drown them. As this is a physical effect, it is thought that the possibility of resistance to this material is very remote.

c) Chemical Control.

At peak adult densities it would be necessary to attack the adult stage of its life cycle, also with a material which is relatively harmless to humans and other mammals e.g. Synthetic pyrethroids.

d) Biological Control.

The community will be encouraged to introduce larvivorous fish indigenous to the locality, into water ways. Bacterial toxins of *Bacillus thurengiensis* and *Bacillus sphericus* will be also used as a non toxic larvicide.

A project has been formulated on these lines and it is now under consideration by the member governments of SACEP.

Statement made by Hon. Lalith Athulathmudali, Minister of Trade and Shipping, Sri Lanka.

Policies aimed at the harmonization of socio-economic goals with an ecologically sound management of resources and the environment must take into account the diversity of ecological, cultural and socio-political situations leading to a wide range of required measures and instruments. Given the recent awareness of environmental problems many of these measures and instruments are yet to be identified and explored, presenting a wide field for exchange of experience and regional co-ordination.

Statement by Hon. Abdul Ghafar Lakanwal, Minister of Agriculture and Land Reforms, Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

..... With about 85% of our population deriving its livelihood from agriculture, animal husbandry and connected trades, we have to pay attention to the improvement of living conditions of this large section of the population affected by environmental matters.

REGIONAL SEAS PROGRAMME & THE SOUTH ASIAN SEAS

In 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm) outlined a "master plan" for the world's environment which linked environmental assessment, environmental management and supporting measures as basic and inseparable elements of a global strategy. In the decade since the Stockholm Conference, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has served as a focal point for environmental action and co-ordination within the United Nations System for the implementation of the Action Plan adopted at Stockholm.

The early meetings of the UNEP Governing Council endorsed a regional approach to the control of Marine Pollution and Management of Marine and Coastal resources. Consequently, in 1974 the Regional Seas Programme of UNEP was initiated.

UNEP decided at first to concentrate on four regions, the Mediterranean, the Kuwait (Gulf) region, the Caribbean and West Africa. The next five years saw the addition of four more regions: The East Asian Seas, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, the South East Pacific and the South Pacific. In 1980 the East Africa and the South West Atlantic region were included in the Regional Seas Programme. For variety of historical reasons a regional programme for South Asian Seas was not initiated. However, with the emergence of SACEP the member countries revived interests in requesting for a Regional Seas Programme for South Asian Seas.

At present there are 10 Regional Seas involving 120 states, 14 United Nations Agencies and 12 other international organisations in UNEP's efforts to protect the marine environment in these Regions. A Regional Seas Programme Activity Centre was set up in Geneva in 1977 and it co-ordinates the work carried out under this programme.

The Expert Working Group on Regional Seas which was convened by the Executive Director of UNEP recommended the expansion of the Regional Seas Programme to cover the South Asian Seas.

On an initiative taken by the member countries of SACEP, the Tenth Governing Council of UNEP resolved to "request the Executive Director to enter into consultation with the concerned states of SACEP to ascertain their views regarding the conduct of a Regional Seas Programme in the South Asian Seas"

A mission conducted by a Senior Consultant to the five concerned states concluded that five states were "favourably disposed to the establishment of a Regional Seas Programme making use of SACEP as the co-ordinating centre for the preparatory stages."

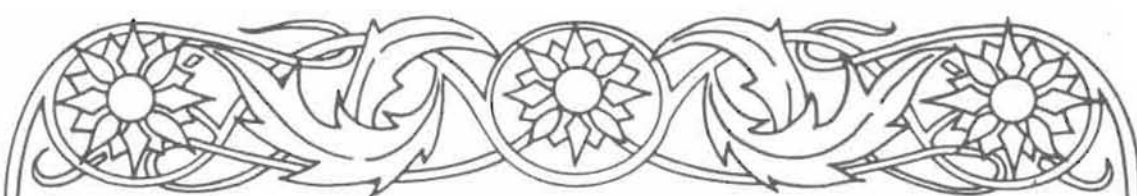
The 11th Governing Council of UNEP requested the Executive Director to designate the South Asian Seas as a region to be included in Regional Seas Programme, in close collaboration with SACEP and other Governments of the Region.

In discharging its functions under this resolution, SACEP has reviewed the Marine environmental interests and activities of its five maritime member states, as a basis for consideration of ways of proceeding towards the formulation of an Action Plan for a Regional Seas Programme in the South Asian Seas which will thus become the 11th Regional Sea in this programme.

In the preparatory phase, a meeting of National Focal Points is scheduled for early 1984 to determine the procedures which will be followed and the activities undertaken in the preparation of the Action Plan and its eventual presentation to an Intergovernmental Conference of Plenipotentiaries.

ADDRESSES OF THE FOCAL POINTS SACEP

AFGHANISTAN	Resident Representative UNDP, P O Box 5 Sardar Shah Mahmoud Ghazi Wat, Kabul AFGHANISTAN
BANGLADESH	Ministry of Local Government Rural Development of Co-operatives Lalmatia Housing Estate Satmasjid Road Dhaka-7 BANGLADESH
BHUTAN	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Royal Government of Bhutan Thimphu BHUTAN
INDIA	Secretary Department of Environment Bikaner House Shahjahan Road New Delhi-110003 INDIA
IRAN	His Excellency R H Mirza Taheri Assistant Prime Minister & Director Department of the Environment P O Box 1430, Tehran IRAN
MALDIVES	Director of National Health Services Ministry of Health, MALE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES
NEPAL	Chairman Nepal National Committee for the Man & The Biosphere C/o Ministry of Education & Culture Kaisher Mahal, GPO Box 1071 Kathmandu NEPAL
PAKISTAN	Secretary Ministry of Housing & Works 263 Street 17, F 7/2 Islamabad P O Box 1282 PAKISTAN
SRI LANKA	Chairman Central Environmental Authority Maligawatte New Town Colombo 10 SRI LANKA



**“We have only
borrowed
this World
from our
Children.
One day
we will have
to return it
to them intact.”**

- Old Kashmiri Proverb.



