



EDITORIAL

From time immemorial, trees have contributed to the economic and social activities of the human community in a variety of ways. They have been a family asset, a source of food, fuel and fodder for the community and play a fundamental role in protecting watersheds, ensuring soil fertility, deterring desertification and most importantly providing habitats for wild life and genetic plant resources. The trees are also the vital constituents of the environmental ecosystems.

The South Asian Region from the very origin was well endowed with tropical rain forests, one of the richest and most delicately balanced ecological systems in the world. However, through the ages, both forests and trees have been grossly exploited by man without any consideration to the ill effects that such exploitation can cause to the environment and the resource base.

Shifting cultivation, forest encroachment, deforestation by development projects, forest degradation caused by logging, livestock grazing, fuelwood collection, forest fires and the inevitable outcome of high population growth have resulted in the severe destruction of this invaluable biological resource.

These were probably the main reasons that prompted SACEP to adopt a resolution at its First Governing Council Meeting calling all countries of South Asia to declare the year 1988 as THE YEAR OF TREES FOR SOUTH ASIA and to set out its targets and the incumbent responsibilities for SACEP member countries.

In response to the call of SACEP, the member countries immediately launched various programmes of tree plantation. The activities undertaken by the member countries under this resolution, however small or large they may be, have been a step towards the planting of more trees and most importantly educating the people and creating awareness in them for the need to protect and conserve the existing tree cover in their surroundings.

This SACEP resolution has also been the base to launch a more ambitious follow-up programme in the declaration of the DECADE OF TREES commencing in the year 1990. The experiences of member countries in working for THE YEAR OF TREES FOR SOUTH ASIA would act as a guideline and it is hoped that by the co-operative efforts of the member countries of SACEP they would be able to resurrect, restore and establish tree and forest cover in the South Asian Region to the required extent.

ONE SINGLE WORLD

Soaring structures and industries,
Are not development alone,
Environment and development must go
hand in hand,
What happens tomorrow,
If vales and hills are shorn?
Make up your minds so there won't be
Another cause to mourn!!
— Nepal.

MESSAGE

Today environment is a common concern of all human beings of the globe irrespective of race and nationality. It is not a sphere separate from human activity, rather degradation of environment is mostly by-products of human activities for their survival, comfortable living and fulfilment of aspirations. The environment can be adversely polluted by a nation or a group of nations, but abating of that environmental pollution is not a job possible to be tackled by a single country; its handling invariably calls for Sub-regional, Regional and Global co-operation. In this respect, the creation of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme has been a timely bold step of farsightedness, and its programmes and activities undertaken and accomplished thus far since its inception is really praiseworthy.

SACEP in its Environmental Management endeavours, have all along received the support of its Member States and United Nations Agencies and International Organisations. The role of SACEP as the Central Agency for Environmental Management Activities in the South Asia Region has been further enhanced by the fact that the Marine Member States of South Asia have designated SACEP to be the Secretariat for the implementation of the South Asian Seas Action Plan.

As such, the importance of SACEP's achievements will be of global significance, as it links up with UNEP's Regional Seas Programme, considered by many as the "Crowning Jewel of UNEP."

Further, the programme of Year of Trees for South Asia as declared by SACEP along with symbolic observation of 8th March 1988 as the Day of Trees is a unique step and the launching of the Decade of Trees from 1990 also bears a great importance and significance towards enhancement of the tree cover of different countries of South Asia.

In this context, I appeal to the Member States and the UN and other International Agencies for their renewed and enhanced support for SACEP's activities so that its role in environmental matters in this region is further strengthened.

AMS HOQUE DIRECTOR

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WELCOME TO SACEP

Mr. Amir Mohammed Shamsul Hoque, born in Daudkandi Upazila in the district of Comilla, Bangladesh on 26th August 1938, first graduated in Basic Sciences and then in Civil Engineering from the University of Dhaka. He then proceeded to the USA, where he obtained a Masters Degree in Civil Engineering from the New Mexico State University, Las Cruces with Pollution Control, Water Supply and Sanitary Engineering as special subjects. He also underwent higher practical training through fellowships obtained from several International and UN Agencies.

Mr Hoque served the Government of Bangladesh since 1966 in various capacities and also undertook a Special Assignment for the Government of Abu Dhabi, U.A.E. He assumed duties as the 3rd Director of SACEP on 1st August 1988.

As a representative of the Government of Bangladesh, Mr Hoque participated in many National and International Seminars, Workshops and Study Tours. He was also the Chairman of the Editorial Board of the Department of Public Health Engineering Annual Technical Journal and has contributed many articles on environmental concerns to various news papers and journals in Bangladesh.

Mr Hoque is married and has three daughters and one son.

SACEP AND SAARC

From time immemorial the South Asian Region has been a melting pot of many races, many cultures and many civilisations. During the vast span of time through mutual interaction and co-operation a new order and civilisation has developed.

Man intrinsically is a social being and the sense of co-operation is inborn in him. The urge of sharing life led to the evolution of the concept of living through co-operation.

The emergence of SACEP in 1981, was in fact the culmination of two years of deep deliberations by the South Asian countries on the feasibility of regional co-operation on environmentally sustainable development activities. The decision to initiate joint action by these South Asian Countries having a total population, 1000 million, is indeed a very significant event in whatever way one wishes to view this cohesion.

It was hoped at that time that this South Asian co-operative programme over time could well be the nursery for further co-operation in other relevant areas. It would not be over-told to say that the formation of SACEP was probably the stepping stone to the SACEP Member States in the formation of another Regional Co-operative Body in the name and style of South Asian Association of Regional Co-operation (SAARC), whose disciplines mainly cover political, economic, social and cultural aspects.

At this juncture of time, it is the general expectation that both SACEP and SAARC should make efforts to utilise scarce resources and valuable time in such a way that it will not create competition, rather follow the path of co-operation in order to avoid duplication. Thus establishment of a direct linkage between SACEP and SAARC would be a prudent and progressive idea for sustainable development of South Asia.



YEAR OF TREES

Trees are main constituents,
Of man's earthly abode;
Man should utilise trees,
In a sustainable mode.

Vegetations are essential things,
All living beings to feed;
Man should conserve these,
For his ecological need.

Forest trees are cleared,
For fuelwood and cultivation;
Trees' decay is alarming,
By acid rain and consumption.

SACEP noting disappearing forests,
Declared '88, Year of Trees;
Members followed the programme,
And planted millions of trees.

Observance of Decade of Trees,
Is SACEP's next foresight;
Planting and preserving strategy,
Shall keep environment bright.



The President General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq is watering the sapling planted by him at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad, on 7.8.1988 to celebrate 1988 as the Year of Trees.

1988 - YEAR OF TREES FOR SOUTH ASIA

At the First Governing Council Meeting of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) held in January 1983 in Colombo, Honourable Minister of Lands and Land Development and Mahaweli Development, Government of Sri Lanka, Mr Gamini Dissanayake, recognising the serious state of deforestation and degradation of forest resources leading to ultimate desertification in the SACEP region, made a proposal for taking up an urgent co-operative action to increase the tree cover of the South Asian Region. This farsighted proposal was cordially accepted by the Governing Council and after a detailed discussion, it was unanimously resolved to declare the year 1988 as "The Year of Trees for South Asia." The Governing Council also directed the SACEP Secretariat to draw up a Regional Action Plan and to initiate a suitable programme in this respect.

The geographical boundary of South Asia was mentioned mainly due to the fact that this was a resolution adopted at a Governing Council Meeting of SACEP. However, in proposing this resolution, it was hoped that other countries the world over would also join us in parallel and the programme hopefully, would become a global event.

The object of this strategy was not only to plant more trees for enhancement of environment but also to examine the current wasteful utilization of wood and wood products and to formulate projects and programmes for their efficient use as well.

It will not be out of place to mention that the 11th Meeting of the Governing Council of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) commended the initiatives taken by SACEP and its Member States and drew the attention of other countries of Asia and Pacific Region to consider and designate 1988 as "The Year of Trees for Asia and Pacific Region."

The meeting also requested the UNEP's Executive Director to support within available resources the formulation of projects and programmes by SACEP in connection with the Year of Trees and also to assist in soliciting funds from the Aid Giving Agencies for the implementation of the "Year of Trees" programme.

Accordingly, the SACEP Secretariat requested all Member Countries to chalk out programme activities in connection with the Year of Trees Programme and also to inform if they would require any assistance. Meanwhile UNEP Regional Office for Asia and Pacific provided assistance by way of fielding a consultant to visit Member Countries to survey the requirement, and based on the requirements of the member countries, a Regional Action Plan was drawn up.

The Action Plan as prepared by SACEP was submitted to UNEP's ROAP for assistance and they specifically assisted SACEP in the following areas of activities:

- a) Preparation of a Video Cassette;
- b) Preparation of a Radio Jingle;
- c) Publishing of a Special Issue of the SACEP Newsletter; and
- d) Assistance to Member Countries to celebrate a day in 1988 as "The Day of Trees for South Asia."

One of the specific recommendations of the Regional Action Plan was the designating of a specific day in the year 1988 to celebrate as "The Day of Trees for South Asia." Taking all these factors into consideration, the 8TH OF MARCH, 1988 was selected as "The Day of Trees for South Asia." In accordance with this decision, all SACEP Member Countries celebrated this occasion by conducting symbolic activities of tree plantation in a befitting manner.

It is a memorable achievement for SACEP that through the collective action of its Member Countries in connection with Year of Trees Programme, a significant step has been taken to combat the loss of tree cover in this region. In this connection, the programme of the Sri Lankan Government in planting of One Hundred Million Trees which they have completed successfully, deserves a special mention. A greater deal of awareness for the need for sufficient tree cover has also been created by this programme among the people of the member countries.

The Regional Action Plan of SACEP also envisaged a follow-up programme with the following main areas of activity:

- a) Inter-Governmental Meeting to evaluate the success of the various activities of "The Year of the Trees"
- b) Launching a Programme of "The Decade of Trees" from 1990; and
- c) Celebration of a Tree Planting Week every year during the proposed Decade.

It is hoped by SACEP that the follow-up activities enumerated above would be supported by some funding agencies.

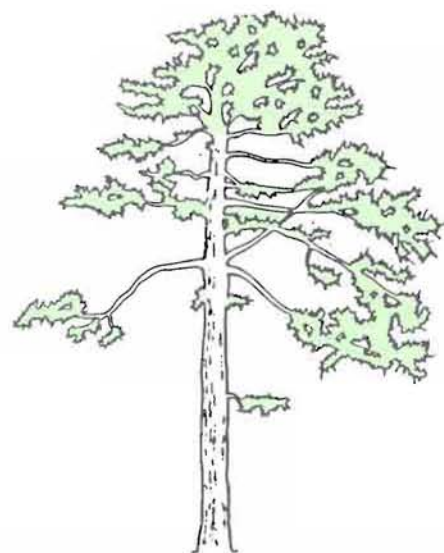
SACEP SNIPPET

The SACEP Secretariat wishes to acknowledge with thanks the special contribution made by the Government of Sri Lanka as Focal Point for the Subject Matter Area of Environmental Impact Assessment and Cost/Benefit Analysis, by making available two Publications namely — Towards Sustainable Growth The Evolution of Environmental Strategies and Policies in Sri Lanka — 1978 - 1986 by Mr. K.H.J. Wijayadasa and Hand-Book on Environmental Impact Assessment for distribution among the Member Countries of SACEP.

Forests and herbaceous vegetation are the foremost life supporting resources of this earth. In that celebrated speech indigenous American Tribal Chief Seattle spoke of a concept in which those ancient people considered nature as a resource to be protected, loved, and preserved for posterity. He said :

"The rivers are our brothers, for they carry the loads of our canoes... Flowers are our sisters. This earth is our mother and if we spit on it, we are spitting on our mother. This land we inhabit was the sacred ground on which our ancestors' bones were laid to rest...If you take this land from us you must also teach your children to protect it like their own mother..."

Seattle
American Red Indian Chief
(1854)



"Mechanical Engineers have supplied all the peoples of the earth with marvelous inventions, but we must admit that many of those inventions are imperfect. We poison rivers with the effluents, charge that atmosphere with noxious fumes, jar the nerves with vibrations, deafen our ears with noises and offend our eyes with ugly factories and a country side destroyed by our activities. I can imagine no more beneficent work for the engineer and the scientist than the removal of all those things which still mark the great and wonderful work they have done. May all of you who are coming on to the field that we are leaving, carry our work step further towards a larger and greater efficiency than we have ever known, and remove the defects of applied science without diminishing the great benefits which it has conferred upon mankind."

— Loughman St. Pendred
Presidential Address before
the Institution of Mechanical
Engineering,

London, October 17, 1930.

PROJECT NEWS

REGIONAL SEAS PROGRAMME

The progress of South Asian Seas Programme in the adoption of an Action Plan has reached impasse due to a stand alone taken by a Member Country on the institutional, financial and legal arrangements for the Action Plan. This has created a serious doubt in the mind of UNEP who have so far spent over half a million US Dollars on various preparatory activities connected with the development of this Action Plan. However, the concerned five Member Countries of SACEP have been requested by UNEP to reiterate their long term political and financial commitment to the development and implementation of this co-operative programme before UNEP could continue to commit further funds and manpower resources to the programme.

Despite of this temporary set back, activities in 2 approved priority projects have already commenced:

Firstly, the Project on the Development of an Operational Regional Contingency Plan for responding to Marine Pollution Emergencies for South Asian Region under execution by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) got underway in September 1988. Mr Roy Nichols, the Consultant appointed by IMO visited the 5-Marine Member States on an advisory and data collection mission in order to:

- Prepare an updated review of National Contingency Plans;
- Prepare an outline of a draft regional contingency plan and technical background information documents based on data available; and
- Identify further technical assistance requirements in the field combating Marine Pollution for individual countries.

Based on Mr Nichols' report a workshop will be held sometime in mid 1989, in which the reports will be reviewed and hopefully an agreed operational arrangement could be reached whereby South Asian Countries will co-operate in reporting and responding to future major Marine Pollution Incidents.

Secondly, the first of 3 proposed workshops in connection with the Priority project "Development of a System of Protected Areas in the South Asian Seas Region" is scheduled to take place in January 1989 in Colombo. This workshop will concentrate on identifying critical Marine habitats and ecosystems of the South Asian Region. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) who is the executing agency for the project is presently identifying the participants and making the logistics arrangements with SACEP and the Government of Sri Lanka who would be assisting them in this workshop.

ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION

Following the successful completion of Phase I of the SACEP/UNDP Environmental Legislation Project, the SACEP Secretariat has been approaching several collaborating agencies to assist in the implementation of Phase II of the Project which includes:

- Providing in-service training to national personnel in environmental laws and thereby become competent to update environment laws;
- Giving advice on the content of the curricula of law colleges for the integration of environmental law at all levels of legal education;
- Creating awareness among the legal profession and other interested groups on the importance of up-to-date environmental legislation; and
- Giving advice on the enforcement of the provisions of environmental laws.

Some agencies have shown interest in this area of activity and the SACEP Secretariat is confident that this project could be made operational shortly.

CONSERVATION OF CORALS, MANGROVES AND ISLAND ECOSYSTEM

Since the activities of this Subject Area are complementary to the work programme of the South Asian Seas Regional Programme, the SACEP Secretariat is at present in communication with ESCAP in order to ascertain the feasibility of conducting a Training Course on Coastal Resource Management Planning for participants from the 5 Marine Member States of SACEP.

The broad objectives of the course will be to provide the participants with a conceptual understanding of the Coastal Environment, Coastal Management and Planning Techniques and through workshop participation a practical experience in Assessing and Planning of the Coastal Zone Protected Areas. The course will also provide a basic understanding and experience in the preparation of Coastal Resource Management Plans and also possibly a comparison of Coastal Zone Management Plans now in operation.

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARING HOUSE SERVICES PROJECT

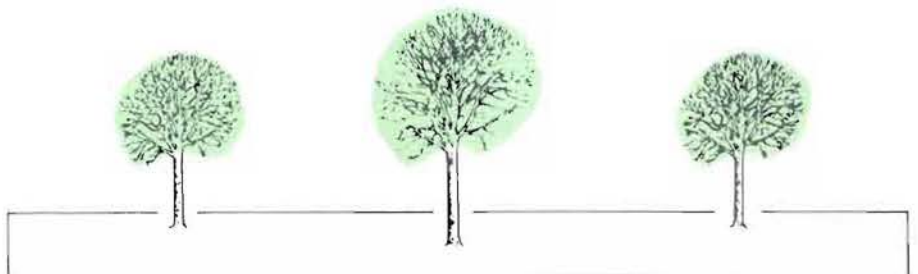
The SACEP Secretariat had discussions with an Asian Development Bank Mission which visited Sri Lanka in November 1988, and there is a strong possibility that the above project would be financed by ADB and implementation be started by July 1989. The Mission informed that the ADB would be sending a formal Technical Assistance Proposal in February 1989, for consideration and approval by SACEP.

The Project involves the initial setting up of an Information Dissemination Centre at the SACEP Secretariat. The project also envisages the setting up of mini-centres in some Members States of SACEP. The scope of the project would initially deal with a few subject areas with provision of expansion. The project would initially be for one year and should the project be satisfactory, efforts could be made to extend the project through Country Contributions and donations from International Agencies.

CO-ORDINATED ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION PROGRAMME

This project which was approved at the First Governing Council of SACEP has undergone many modifications and following the discussions the SACEP Secretariat had with a UNESCO Representative who visited the SACEP Secretariat in February 1988, the 4th Governing Council of SACEP unanimously agreed to request UNESCO to prepare an Inter Country Environmental Education Project for South Asia and submit to an interested UN or other International Organisation for funding and for them to execute the project, in collaboration with SACEP.

UNESCO has actively taken up this resolution and since UNDP had shown considerable interest in this project, a 3-page project summary has been forwarded to them for their study and consideration. An early response is expected from UNDP on this matter.



COUNTRY NEWS ON YEAR OF TREES ACTIVITIES

AFGHANISTAN



The Government of Afghanistan in support of the SACEP Declaration of 1988 as the Year of Trees of South Asia, undertook a vast programme of activity, the special features of which were the following.

- : Launching of a programme of afforestation and re-afforestation in areas located largely in watersheds in order to protect the agricultural land against erosion;
- : Reviewing and improvement in the management of forest nurseries and the raising of various forestry species seedlings to meet the demand of the public;
- : Organisation and Implementation of voluntary programmes of planting trees for greenery purposes all over the country;
- : Introduction and improvement of the supply and distribution of seedlings to the people;
- : Establishment of audio-visual facilities in order to create awareness, enthusiasm and co-operation between the people and the forestry department by providing fast growing species of trees; and
- : Launching of programmes for the improvement of indigenous poplars through rejuvenation of the stock.

The specific activities which have already been undertaken are:

- a) The reservation of 260 hectares of forest land every year for planting of trees;
- b) Allocation of 91 hectares for nurseries; and
- c) Demarcation of 10 hectares in the watersheds areas of the Scimangan Province as nurseries.

BANGLADESH

The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh undertook a comprehensive programme for protecting the environment from rapid degradation and during the last few years, they took many remarkable steps to combat various forms of pollution of the environment including desertification.

The highlights of the activities in Bangladesh during the SACEP Year of Trees activities are as follows:

- a) About 48 million seedlings of timber and fuelwood species have been planted by forest departments through afforestation and reforestation programmes in over 40,000 acres of public land;
- b) Nearly 7.2 million seedlings of timber, fuelwood and fruit species were raised by forest departments and distributed to the public for planting in homesteads and other private land;
- c) Many seminars, symposia on Year of Trees were organised by various Government Departments and N.G.O's; and
- d) A special seminar to observe 8th of March as SACEP's Day of Trees was organised.



The Honourable President Mr. Hussain Mohammad Ershad has put a great emphasis on tree plantation to stop desertification and protection of marine ecosystem. In his inaugural address, in a two-day workshop on Coastal Development and Management, the President said, 'The coastal ecosystem should be preserved through appropriate and integrated development of natural resources to utilise them to achieve our objectives of economic development and prosperity.'

He said, "National Park, Marine Park, Bird Sanctuary and Wildlife Sanctuary should be developed in the coastal areas to maintain the ecological balance. In addition to tree plantation in these parks, emphasis also should be given on afforestations in those areas where plants have become extinct. Such efforts would help us build a beautiful and well-planned coastal garden whose fruits, leaves, juices and roots would ensure us a healthy living."

The President also stated, "The coastal areas are ravaged by frequent cyclones, tidal bore, floods, erosion, landslides and different other natural calamities. The coastal forests reservoirs and wetlands are our assets which should be preserved for our own need.

BHUTAN

The Royal Kingdom of Bhutan is one of the few countries in the World where the ravages of deforestation have not still threatened the ecosystem. However, their comprehensive activities in response to the SACEP Declaration of the Year of Trees Resolution signify their deep commitment to ensure that there should be adequate tree cover in their country.

The activities they undertook at the call of SACEP were concerned mainly with the establishment of a network of nurseries in different parts of the country by importation of suitable varieties of planting material from the member countries of SACEP. These nurseries would provide the planting material to Satellite Stations from where planting material will be re-distributed at cost to the general populace. Encouragement through suitable incentive schemes were also arranged for the establishment of private nurseries in the different parts of the country by the importation of suitable varieties of planting material.

Action was also taken to plant trees on the main avenues of the principal towns by the local governments of the respective townships and with a view to encouraging and promoting tree planting, a poster competition was also organised in the schools of Bhutan.

INDIA

In response to the call of SACEP in the declaration of 1988 as The Year of Trees for South Asia, the Government of India dovetailed its current on-going activities as its contribution to this resolution.

Some of the important activities in this connection are enumerated below and indicate the magnitude of activities carried out by the Government of India.

The Government of India established an autonomous board known as the National Wastelands Development Board (NWDB) in 1985, to formulate, co-ordinate and concretise programme for the management and development of wastelands in the country. The NWDB is at present implementing various schemes for increasing biomass throughout the country in collaboration with various implementing agencies. One of these schemes is the planting of fast growing fodder and fuelwood species.

A scheme known as Operation Soil Water is in operation in selected microwatershed areas in the country for effecting all round improvement of these areas.

MALDIVES

A scheme of providing grants-in-aid to voluntary agencies has been initiated with a view to involving NGOs in the process of development of wastelands with people's participation. Under this scheme, establishment of de-centralised nurseries, school nurseries, block plantation on community land and lands belonging to the weaker sections of the society, pasture development are undertaken. During the operation of this scheme for the last two years, 177 projects involving 131 agencies have been finalised all over the country involving financial commitment of Rs. 11.21 lakhs and 250 lakhs seedlings have been raised in 1986 - 87

The scheme of decentralised nurseries was introduced in 1986-87 with a view to promoting people's participation in afforestation. The scheme aims at setting up village nurseries through the help of small farmers, schools, women groups, voluntary agencies and co-operatives. In 1987-88, 26.7 crores seedlings were to be raised under this scheme.

Under Silvi Pasture Scheme, nutritious grass and fodder are to be provided at reasonable prices to the rural population so as to encourage them to stall feed their cattle. The scheme envisages raising of fodder trees, shrubs, legumes and grass on degraded marginal/sub-marginal lands of farmers. The total allocation for the Scheme in the Seventh Plan is Rs. 13 crores.

There is a scheme of providing, margin money assistance to autonomous bodies/corporations. The scheme is being taken up with the objective of raising fuelwood, fodder, small timber and commercial timber plantations with the help of institutional finance.

There are some schemes which will be taken up by the government for increasing the tempo of afforestation in the country in the near future. Under this area, oriented fuelwood/fodder scheme, seed developing projects, aerial seeding in degraded and unapproachable land areas are important.

Due to sincere efforts on the part of the Government of India in 1987-88, around 1.9 million ha. of land was afforested. In 1988-89, the government has made a provision for afforesting 2.28 million ha. of wastelands in the country. Apart from the Government's efforts, spontaneous participation of people in afforestation activities is a welcome sign. This has come about because of intense spread of environmental awareness among general population. There is a system of holding 'Van Mahotsav' (creation of forests) functions every year at the start of the Monsoon season. This function heralds the starting of the plantation season. The observance of this ritual is rooted deeply in the traditions of the Indian society.

The Government of Maldives recognising the need for planting and conserving tree cover in their Country planned and executed many activities in connection with SACEP's Declaration of the Year of Trees. The activities undertaken are listed below:

- : A workshop on the need for Conservation of Indigenous Island Flora was undertaken where the participants were decision makers at the grass root level, the Atoll Chiefs and the Senior Government Officials.
- : A survey was conducted in Male where the conditions impeding healthy growth of flora was assessed by a consultant firm. However, the Government of Maldives feels that these findings need to be checked by another survey as they have some doubts on the findings.
- : A special tree planting programme in the capital Male was organised where the Mayor and the Ward Members mobilised the people of Male to collect seedlings and cuttings of trees for planting.

: Pilot Tree Planting was conducted in suitable areas where recommended plants such as Jak, Mango, Casurine, Pomegranate, Tamarind, Neem, Bamboo and Lime were grown. Also planting of trees in resort islands were undertaken. All salt tolerant timber trees and grass were recommended to be grown in addition to growing ornamental and other flowering plants.

: A well formulated comprehensive awareness programme was undertaken to educate the public. All media including Radio and T.V. were used to emphasise the benefits that trees render to the individuals.

: 'YEAR OF TREES' pamphlets were printed and distributed. Arrangements have also been made to issue YEAR OF TREE Stamps. Stamps of different denominations were designed so as to carry the message of Year Of Trees such as conservation of endangered trees.

: Competitions and awards to school children for essays, paintings, poster designs and slogans on environmental conservation topics were organised.



President Gayoom inaugurating the Tree Planting Campaign on World Environment Day 1986.

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in response to SACEP's Declaration of 1988 as The Year of Trees, organised a big celebration of the Year of Trees Programme on March 8, 1988, during which more than 7000 trees were planted in Teheran the Capital City of Iran.

There was a spontaneous participation from all concerned Governmental Organisations and people from all walks of life,

and 1,000 students from primary and secondary schools also participated in the plantation. Guest speakers were invited on the occasion and speeches were delivered on the role and importance of trees in environmental conservation and protection. A brochure was also published in this connection and distributed among the participants. The Plantation Day benefitted from Mass Media representatives who played an active role by giving the celebration a vast media coverage.

NEPAL

His Majesty's Government in Nepal has long been aware of the problems associated with deforestation and the necessity of involving local communities in all forestry, soil conservation and watershed management. Thus the call of SACEP in declaring 1988 as the Year of Trees for South Asia gave its national programme an added impetus to achieve their objectives.

The concentration of Nepal's activities are centred around community forestry. The World Forest Rules of 1978 provide the legal basis for community forestry in Nepal. This act provides for the gradual transfer of control of the forest back to the local people.

The Seventh Five year Plan for the Department of Forests, lays great emphasis on community participation in carrying out afforestation activities "on a war footing."

The National Planning Commission Vice Chairman Dr. Mohanman Sainja, initiated SACEP's Day and Year of Trees Activities, by planting a "Kalki" Tree at Nateshwar Chaur of Lokanthali village Panchayat in Bhaktapur.

The tree plantation programme was organised at the call of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) to observe 1988 as the Year of the Trees and March 8, 1988 as the Day of Trees in all member countries.

On the occasion, five hundred and sixty trees of Utis, Kalki, Salla and Kangiyo were planted in five ropanis of land.

The afforestation programme held under the auspices of Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation was participated in by the officials of the National Planning Commission, Ministry of Forest and Soil conservation and the departments under it and the Pradhan Panch and other local people of Lokanthali Village Panchayat.



PAKISTAN

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan responding to the SACEP Declaration of 1988 as the Year of Trees for South Asia conducted many useful activities. As suggested by the SACEP Secretariat a suitable avenue in the Capital city having trees on both sides was selected to be cleaned, thinned, cleared and manicured in a manner to give the impression of fond-care taken by the people towards the trees. This activity was undertaken on the 8th of March 1988, which was declared as SACEP Day Of Trees for South Asia.

In addition to this activity, an essay competition was organised for Students of 9th and 10th classes of the Federal Government High Schools of Islamabad. The topic of the essay was the "Role of Forestry in Development of Pakistan."

The second part of the programme was distribution of the prizes. This function was chaired by H.E. the late General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, the Honourable President of Pakistan. This was attended by the Chairman, Senate, Federal Ministers, Secretaries, other Government dignitaries, heads of various educational institutions of the country, students and representatives of many international agencies. On this occasion the President along with other dignitaries planted trees at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad to inaugurate the Monsoon Tree Planting Week, 1988.

General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is addressing the Award giving ceremony organised in connection with celebration of 1988 as the year of Trees for South Asia on the request of SACEP. Ceremony was attended by Chairman Senate, Federal Ministers, Minister of States, Secretaries, Additional Secretaries and Heads of the Educational Institutions all over the country and students from Educational Institutions, Islamabad.

The Federal Minister for Food and Agriculture, Government of Pakistan in his welcome address recalled the sagacious observations made by H.E. the President when he cautioned the nation that if Pakistan continues denudation of its forests at the present rate, it would not be long before the country would become a dust bowl. He also highlighted the development programme so far implemented in the forestry sub-sector.

The President in his address stated that "Whenever an opportunity crops up enabling me to participate in any function connected with the forestry sector, I feel a special delight which stems from the consciousness that this vital resource constitutes the blood stream for maintaining the complex ecological system. It is therefore, a matter of deep gratification as well as a privilege to be personally involved in observing "DAY OF TREES" for South Asia on the call of the SACEP"

The Government of Pakistan in addition to observing the SACEP Day of Trees for South Asia have taken meaningful steps to develop the forestry sector. In 1947, they inherited 2% area under forests and this has been increased to 5% by raising bela and irrigated plantations in Sind and Punjab.

Another important feature has been the shift in emphasis from the conventional forestry to social forestry, motivating farmers and owners to plant trees on their lands is the main objective of this programme. By this, planting stock of multipurpose is made available all the year round. As a result of successful motivational efforts and reasonable incentives, the farmers have started their own nurseries not only for their own use, but also for sale.

The impact of the new policy is obviously treating the environment as a whole. However, there is still a great scope for further expansion of social forestry which demands allocation of greater resources for this purpose.



Participants waiting for plantation with the Chief Guest Hon'ble Vice Chairman of the National Planning Commission Dr. M.M. Sainju.

SRI LANKA

At the call of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, the Democratic and Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka launched a gigantic tree planting programme in the name and style "The 100 Million Trees Programme" and it was implemented over the last 5 year period, commencing in 1984. This programme was initiated by His Excellency R. Premadasa, the Honourable Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, as Sri Lanka's contribution to the Year of Trees for South Asia 1988.

The forest cover of Sri Lanka has been subjected to many pressures over several decades. The main agents of deforestation have been agriculture, dry zone colonisation, human settlements and logging.

Hence, serious concern for the dwindling tree cover has been voiced by people from many walks of life. Programmes and action plan for the replacement of at least part of the deforested lands have been considered of utmost importance. The 100 Million Trees Programme is one such and perhaps for the first time, appealed to the common man in a manner aimed at rekindling inherent love for trees and nature.

The implementation of the Hundred Million Trees Programme is co-ordinated by an Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee, represented by about 20 institutions and chaired by the Secretary to the Prime Minister who is also the Chairman of the Central Environmental Authority. It gives direction and co-ordinates the programme islandwide.

The programme is basically one of motivation, education and participation and has been a distinct departure from the practice of State-Sponsored large scale reforestation and afforestation programmes hitherto practised. Its implementation was discussed firstly at two public workshops held in Kandy and Anuradhapura in 1984. This was followed by a well attended workshop in early 1985, at which participants were mainly from the media. The workshop identified three basic areas requiring communication support. These were

- i) creating mass awareness to motivate and encourage the public;
- ii) ensuring the availability of the required planting material; and
- iii) inculcating national attitudes conducive to the project.

The programme objectives have been categorised as short-term and long-term. In the short-term, the programme attempts to increase the land area under trees by the end of 1988, through motivation and making available facilities and know-how. In the long-term, the programme seeks to improve the quality of life of the people of Sri Lanka through an enrichment of the environment by increasing tree cover and maximising

efficiency of its use. The workshop proposed a number of elements in the communication strategy and the following activities have been undertaken as a means towards achieving the above ends:

i) An All-Island Plant Nursery Competition.

This competition was initiated to promote the concept of commercial nursery men in rural and urban areas, who would be able to provide the varied needs for seedlings. The competition was restricted to the propagation of species not normally associated with the established concepts of tree planting e.g. Plantation Crops.

Emphasis was on the propagation of species that are rare, endangered or threatened, and on those that are useful for medicinal, food, timber, fodder and aesthetic purposes.

The competition was conducted at 3-levels: viz. Divisional, District and National and cash prizes were awarded to the first three places at each level.

ii) National Tree and Flower.

A competition was conducted to select the National Tree and the Flower. The competitors were required to name a tree and/or a flower suitable to be the national tree and the flower by giving reasons for each choice. By this means much information about trees have been collected and more than 1500 people, diverted their attention towards trees and would hopefully pursue this interest. The Na Tree (Ironwood) and the Manel Flower (Blue Water Lily) have been declared as the National Tree and National Flower respectively.

iii) Slogan Competition

A competition was held to select suitable slogans that promote the cause of tree planting. Cash awards and token book awards were made to the winners. Institutions have been requested to use these slogans on envelopes and on writing paper.

iv) Festivals and Events

The concept of planting trees to mark festivals and to commemorate family events has been highlighted through the publicity campaigns and radio programmes.

The programme formally got under way on the Sinhala and Tamil New Year Day in 1985 by planting at an auspicious time. Appropriate radio programmes were broadcast on this day.

v) National Tree Planting Day.

In 1985 the Cabinet of Ministers approved the declaration of September 17 as National Tree Planting Day and the week following as National Tree Planting Week. This event now takes place each year and the lead is given by Government Institutions, whose programmes are directed towards specific objectives. e.g. planting of degraded areas, reservations and urban planting.

vi) Arboreta

The value of arboreta, as a tool in conservation, attained significance with the first one being established in 1984, in the Maligawatta Housing Scheme by the children of the Environmental Pioneer Brigade.

A wider schools programme is envisaged. The Prime Minister himself participated by planting a sapling of the national tree along with the children who planted other species.



National Tree Planting day ceremony held in Sri Lanka His Excellency J.R. Jayawardene President of Sri Lanka planting a tree



vii) Cartoon Strips

This concept concerning three characters - two tree enthusiasts and one destroyer of trees - was carried in one of the dailies.

viii) Rukshadana and Vana Mahotsava

These are two noble concepts aimed at distributing plants and seeds at places of religious worship during festival time or on the poya (full moon) days (Rukshadana) and the planting of special areas to provide parks, gardens and places of recreation (Vana Mahotsava). A number of such have been held.

ix) Million Houses Programme

Under this programme, each beneficiary to a house is provided with 10 valuable saplings to be planted in the home garden at the time the house is handed over.

x) Audio and Video Programmes

Radio and Television have been utilised at different times on a regular basis. Weekly radio programmes have been conducted. These were titled "Gasaka Mahima" (benefits of a tree) in Sinhala and "Tree Time" in English.

xi) Propagation and Distribution of Selected Species

Seeds of the solid bamboo Dendrocalamus strictus were obtained from India, propagated and seedlings made available at a nominal price. Seeds of Grevillea robusta (Silver Oak) were obtained through the courtesy of the High Commissioner for India in Sri Lanka and distributed among the Plantations Corporations and others interested in planting this species.

The cost of printing this Newsletter was from funds allocated by UNEP, Regional Office, Bangkok. The SACEP Secretariat expresses its appreciation for this kind gesture, especially to the Regional Director, Dr. Nay Htun.

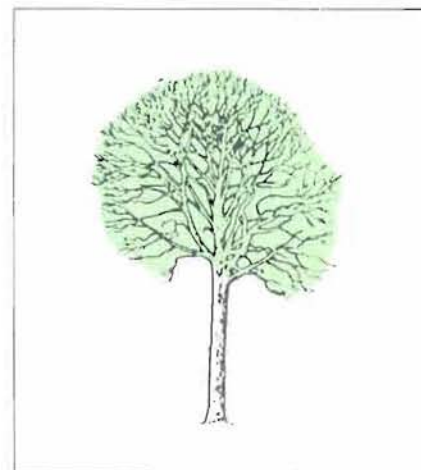


The Hon. R. Premadasa Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, planting a tree at the National Tree Planting day ceremony held in Sri Lanka.

xii) Year of Trees for South Asia 1988 and the Day of Trees for South Asia.

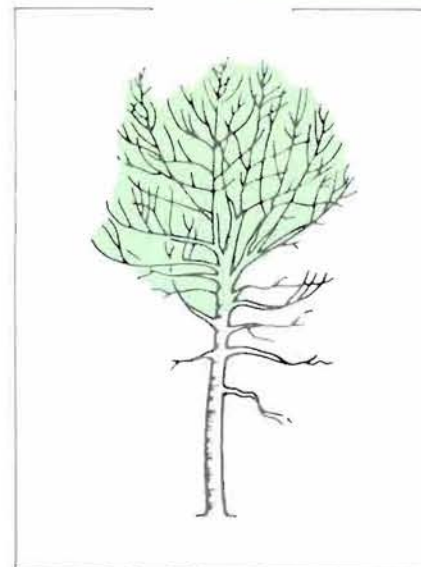
March 08, 1988 was declared the Day of Trees for South Asia by SACEP. At a meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee, the following events were considered as suitable for its commemoration :

- a) Avenue planting of 40 Tabebuia rosea seedlings among Guildford Crescent, Colombo, with the participation of SACEP, Forest Department and the Colombo Municipal Council. The event was coordinated by the Central Environmental Authority.
- b) Planting of saplings in the premises of governmental institutions, including schools, at a simple ceremony as symbolic of the inauguration of the Year of Trees and the implementation of planned activities subsequently.
- c) Planting of an avenue of trees of a single variety along a kilometre or two of a highway.
- d) Establishment of little tree groves at appropriate urban and rural areas, religious places, schools and office premises.
- e) Selection of species considered rare, endangered or threatened as an impetus to conservation.
- f) Planting of degraded lands, stream reservations, steep slopes and watersheds.
- g) Special assemblies in schools to put across the message of tree planting and conservation.
- h) Radio and television panel discussions, slides on television.
- i) Banners and posters.



SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT

*Did life on earth begin
From a tiny protoplasm?
Or are the men
The descendants of "Adam"?
Which is true theory
Is not our consideration,
Billions of years elapsed
After first living creation.
Then men struggled much
For gradual slow development,
Their needed activities polluted
Our entire world environment.
The earth is roaming place
For various innumerable animals,
It is also man's only abode
For environmental survivals.
Men did search and research
For gaining earthly comforts,
Thus they polluted environment
By their development efforts.
Man has pondered much
On the extent of pollution,
In order to save environment
For future human generation.
Extent of pollution has reached
The alarming high proportions,
Regional co-operative handling is
The best of all solutions.
Culturing of true friendship
Not only formal consultation,
Is what environment needs
Against its inevitable destruction.*



UNEP HONOURS A SACEP HEAD OF STATE

His Excellency Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of the Republic of Maldives was recently honoured by the United Nations Environment Programme when he was elected to the GLOBAL 500 HONOUR ROLL OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME. He received this honour at a Special Ceremony held at the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and Pacific, Bangkok, in connection with the World Environment Day which was celebrated on 5th June, 1988.

Since assuming office as the President of the Republic of Maldives, President Gayoom has been instrumental in initiating many activities concerning the protection and preservation of the environment in the Maldives.

Amongst his domestic endeavours has been the formation of a Council for the Protection of the Maldives Environment under the auspices of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Social Services, increased reforestation and the framing of New Environmental Legislations.

He was also instrumental in obtaining an expert to carry out a study of the environmental trends in the Country and to recommend environmental conservation guidelines.

The Country's recurrent experience of usually tidal surges in the recent years and their disastrous effects motivated President Gayoom to focus world attention on the issue of "Rise of Sea Level" as a result of environmental change and its adverse effects on low-lying island nations such as the Maldives. His addresses at the Meeting of the Heads of Government of Commonwealth States in Vancouver, the UNGA Special Debate on issues of Environment and Development in New York and at the 3rd SAARC Summit Meeting in Kathmandu, all highlighted this problem.

UNEP in recognition of his outstanding achievements in the protection and improvement of the environment elected H.E. President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom to the Global 500 Honours Roll of the United Nations Environment Programme.

The SACEP Secretariat is indeed proud that a leader of our region has won worldwide recognition in his endeavours towards creating a better tomorrow and wish him and the people of Maldives all the very best in combating the threats of environmental pollution and degradation.



Special Ceremony held by the Citizens' Majlis to commemorate the occasion of the presentation of the GLOBAL 500 AWARDS of PRESIDENT GAYOOM.

ENVIRONMENT IS CALLING YOU

Ye men of boundless desire and greed
Let's not forget
The world depends on water, air and soil
In mountains, forests and streams
In the Land you cultivate
In villages, towns and settlements
It is your bounden duty
To protect the environment
The environment calls for
Praying for protection
You will be protected
By the environment you protect.

— Sri Lanka.



ENVIRONMENTAL SONG

To build town, village, society or state
We need a beautiful and healthy environment.
Good environment increase the span of life.
Green vegetation and living beings,
All are needed for balancing ecology.
This should be known to everybody.

— Bangladesh

'Never in the history of Sri Lanka did we witness development projects of the magnitude and environmental sensitivity that have been embarked upon in the last decade. Never in our history have we witnessed such rapid deterioration and degradation of the environment, resulting in the depletion of our natural resources as in the last couple of decades.'

- Key Note Address, FEISCA
October 22, Colombo.
- by Mr K H J Wijayadasa,
Chairman, Central Environmental
Authority (CEA) and
Secretary to the Hon. Prime
Minister,
Sri Lanka.

