

SACEP NEWS

Newsletter of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme



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Environment Ministers of South Asia Meet in Colombo to discuss the agenda for Environmental protection and Sustainable development

A two-day meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) is to be held from 20-21st January in Colombo, under the patronage of the Sri Lankan Minister for Environment Hon. Rukman Seananayake who is its present chairman.

The most important agenda item of the meeting is to finalize a work programme to follow up recommendations of the recently held World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) at the South Asian Sub-regional level. Here special attention will be given to the Millennium Declaration and the WEHAB initiative, which provide the blue prints for future sustainable development agenda. The WEHAB initiative provides a framework for action on the following five thematic areas: Water and Sanitation, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity

The WSSD Plan of Implementation recognises the importance of regional, sub-regional and trans-regional action to promote sustainable development and calls for support for the development, enhancement and implementation of agreed regional development strategies, reflecting national and regional priorities. Therefore, SACEP plans to work in cooperation and collaboration with various other regional and sub regional entities in their future actions. Under this, the cooperation between SAARC and SACEP on environmental issues will be a priority item for discussion.

The Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation on the response to marine oil spills, which has been under consideration for adoption by the five maritime countries of the region will be taken up for discussion.

Adoption of the South Asian Environmental Education and Training Action Plan and the status of the implementation of the Malé Declaration on control and prevention of air pollution and its likely transboundary effects for South Asia will also be discussed during this event. The International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) has recently established a partnership with SACEP for promoting coral reef conservation within the region and therefore, this occasion will also be used for further development of this initiative.

On the 20th January, the senior level officials of respective environment ministries will meet to consider and finalise the work programme of SACEP for the next biennium, and here attention will be given to develop activities in areas of Multilateral Environment Agreements, energy and pollution issues and protection of biological resources of South Asia.

Hon. Tyrone Fernando, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka will officially inaugurate the opening ceremony on the 21st.

This event will be attended by the Environmental Ministers of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka while India will be represented by a high level delegation. Secretary General of SAARC and observers from UN Agencies and donor Organizations will also be present at the meeting.

The South Asian State of Environment Report and the Youth Environment report of South Asia will also be launched at this occasion.

The 1st issue of the SACEP Newsletter for the year 2003 is dedicated to discuss various issues and activities under different Multilateral Environment Agreements.

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The Status of Multilateral Environment Agreements in South Asia

Environmental degradation is a global issue and can affect the political, economic and social interests of both the developed as well as developing countries. Therefore it is now playing an important role in international relations with in regions as well as between regions and the rest of the world. The main method available under international law for countries to work together on global environmental issues is the Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA).

The status of participation by South Asia's member states in major environmental conventions is given in pages 3 and 4. The ratification, acceptance, and implementation of a MEA can be affected by the particular environmental problems and priorities of each country. For example, all the countries have ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the UNFCCC. In 1998, Maldives became signatory to the Kyoto Protocol, while 04 other countries have acceded the convention in 2002. CITES came in to force in many countries of the subregion in the late 1970's while for Bhutan it came in to force only in late 2002. Maldives is yet to ratify CITES.

Although the establishment of national and regional institutional and policy arrangements to implement global MEAs is still at infancy stage in the region, MEAs have played a useful role in promoting the application of cleaner technologies and increasing consciousness about sustainable development. Following the Rio conference in Sustainable Development in 1992, individual countries developed national conservation strategies or national environmental action plans, but yet a regional strategy or an action plan is not in place. Under the Ramsar Convention, South Asian countries have designated 40 internationally important wetland sites, (see page 6 of this Newsletter).

In general the developing countries are somewhat reluctant to adhere to agreements that likely to affect their economy negatively. To compensate that the developed countries have come up with various partnership programmes to assist the developing countries to acquire the technical know-how needed under certain MEAs. For example, the Indo-Swiss-German collaboration in ecological domestic and commercial refrigeration, ECOFRIG, has emerged as a relevant technology cooperation in the context of two Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) - the Montreal and the Kyoto Protocol.

The main objectives of ECOFRIG were the transfer of safety-related and technical know-how and information to the Indian refrigerator industry and research partners, and to make hydrocarbon technology a viable option for CFC phase-out under Indian conditions. By the mid of 2001 13,000 environment-friendly, hydrocarbon based refrigerators have been manufactured in three dual-use refrigerator charging facilities under pilot production arrangements and were successfully introduced to the market. In 2002 the Indian market leader in domestic refrigeration has fully switched to hydrocarbon technology.

On a regional level MEAs have led to the establishment of new groupings based on shared natural resources such as large ecosystems, migratory species or transboundary air and water issues etc.

South Asia Sub-regional Workshop Towards the Effective Implementation of the Chemicals and Hazardous Wastes Related Conventions

South Asia Sub-Regional Workshop Towards the Effective Implementation of the Chemicals and Hazardous Wastes Related Conventions was held at Kathmandu on 18 – 20 December 2002 under the joint auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

The principal objective of the Workshop was to develop the capacity of the South Asian Countries towards the effective implementation of MEAs and to bring about a greater familiarity with the synergies and interlinkages between the chemicals related Conventions, such as the Basel Convention, Stockholm Convention and the Rotterdam Procedure. Further, the Workshop will help develop linkages among national institutions for implementation of the chemicals related MEAs.

Following are few of the workshop recommendations:

- Development of a Regional Centre to deal with all three Conventions and to look after Chemicals and Hazardous Wastes.
- Formation of a Regional Technical Expert Group to offer their expertise for implementation of the Conventions.



Status of participation in major Environmental Conventions within SACEP member states

Convention/No. Of States Party to the Convention	MAJOR OBJECTIVE	Country Status						
		Bangladesh	Bhutan	India	Maldives	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Convention on International Trade in Endangered species, 1973 (160)	Protect certain endangered species from over exploitation by means of a system of import/ export permits.	20/11/81 (2) 18/02/82 (6)	15/08/02 (3) 13/11/02 (6)	20/07/76(2) 18/10/76(6)		18/06/75(3) 16/09/75(6)	20/04/76(3) 19/07/76(6)	04/05/79(3) 07/08/79(6)
Bonn Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals, 1979 (80) MoU on Siberian Cranes MoU on Marine Turtles of IOSEA	To protect those species of wild animals that migrates across or outside national boundaries.			01/11/83(6) X			01/12/87(6) X	01/09/90(6) X
Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992 (186) Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, 2000 (39)	Aimed at conserving Biodiversity and requires countries to develop and implement strategies for sustainable use and protection of biodiversity Seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms	05/06/92(1) 03/05/94(2)	11/06/92(1) 25/08/95(2)	05/06/92(1) 18/02/94(2)	12/06/92(1) 09/11/92(2)	12/06/92(1) 23/11/93(2)	25/06/92(1) 26/07/94(2)	10/06/92(1) 23/03/94(2)
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, 1971 (133)	Provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.	21/09/92(6)		01/02/82(6)		17/04/88(6)	23/11/76(6)	15/10/90(6)
Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage	conserve sites whose outstanding values should be preserved for all humanity and to ensure their protection through closer cooperation among nations	03/08/83(3)	22/10/01(2)	14/11/77(2)	22/05/86(3)	20/06/78(3)	23/07/76(2)	06/06/80(2)
Convention to Combat Desertification, 1994 (184)	Aims to promote effective action through innovative local programmes and supportive international partnerships	14/10/94(1) 26/10/96(2) 26/12/96(6)		14/10/94(1) 17/12/96(2) 17/03/97(6)	03/09/02(3) 02/12/02(6)	12/10/95(1) 15/10/96(2) 13/01/97(6)	15/10/94(1) 24/02/97(2) 25/05/97(6)	09/12/98(3) 09/03/99(6)
Basal Convention, 1989 (152) Ban Amendment (39)	Aimed at controlling the transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal.	01/04/93(3)	26.08.02 (3)	24/06/92(2)	28/04/92(3)	15/10/96(3)	26/07/94(3)	28/08/92(3) 29/01/99(2)
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992 (187) Kyoto Protocol, 1997(95)	Aimed at stabilizing changes in the climate to prevent global warming and a rise in sea level	09/06/92(1) 15/04/94(2) 14/07/94(6)	11/06/92(1) 25/09/95(2) 23/11/95(6)	10/06/92(1) 01/11/93(2) 21/03/94(6)	12/06/92(1) 09/11/92(2) 21/03/94(6)	12/06/92(1) 02/05/94(2) 31/07/94(6)	13/06/92(1) 01/06/94(2) 30/08/94(6)	10/06/92(1) 23/11/93(2) 21/03/94(6)
Vienna Convention, 1985 (184) Montreal Protocol, 1987 London Amendment, 1990 Copenhagen Amen, 1992 Montreal Amen, 1997 Beijing Amendment, 1999	introducing measures to prevent depletion of the ozone layer Phasing out ozone-depleting substances	02/08/90(3) 02/08/90(3) 08/03/94(2) 27/11/00(At) 27/07/01(At)		19/03/91(3) 19/06/92(3) 19/06/92(3)	26/04/88(3) 16/05/89(2) 31/07/91(2) 27/9/01(2) 27/09/01(2) 03/09/02(3)	06/07/94(3) 06/07/94(3) 06/07/94(3)	18/12/92(3) 18/12/92(3) 18/12/92(3) 17/02/95(2)	15/02/89(3) 15/02/89(3) 16/06/93(3) 07/07/97(3) 02/08/99(3) 27/11/02(3)
*The Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC), 1998 (33)	Required exporters trading in a list of hazardous substances to obtain the prior informed consent of importers before proceeding with the trade.						09/09/99(1)	
* Stockholm convention on persistent organic pollutants (POPs), 2001 (22)	To protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants	23/05/01(1)		14/05/02(1)		05/04/02(1)	06/12/01(1)	05/09/01(1)
Convention on the law of the sea, 1982 (138)	Obligates parties to protect and preserve the marine environment by cooperating regionally and globally and to adopt laws and regulation to deal with land-based sources of marine pollution	10/12/82(1)		10/12/82(1) 26/06/96(2)	10/12/82(1)		10/12/82(1) 26/02/97(2)	10/12/82(1) 19/07/94(2)

1) = Date of Signature
4) = Date of Acceptance

2) = Date of Ratification
5) = Date of Approval

3) = Date of Accession
6) = Date of Entry in to Force



Status of Ratification of Major IMO Conventions by the Maritime Countries of South Asia

Convention	Major objective	Entry in to force date	No. of States	South Asian Seas Region				
				B	In	M	P	SL
IMO Convention 48	Formal establishment of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to provide a mechanism for the co-operation among Governments in the field of regulations and practices in ships involved in international trade.	17-Mar-58	162	X	X	X	X	X
1991 amendments		-	62		X		X	
1993 amendments		-	93	X	X		X	X
SOLAS Convention 1974	Regulations for safety of Merchant Ships at sea by specify minimum standards for the construction, equipment and operation of ships, compatible with their safety.	25-May-80	145	X	X	X	X	X
SOLAS Protocol 1978		01-May-81	99		X		X	
SOLAS Protocol 1988		03-Feb-00	58		X		X	
Load lines Convention 1966	Limitations on the draught to which a ship may be loaded to make a significant contribution to her safety	21-Jul-68	149	X	X	X	X	X
LL Protocol 1988		03-Feb-00	56		X		X	
TONNAGE Convention 1969	Introduction of a universal tonnage measurement system	18-Jul-82	132	X	X	X	X	X
COLREG Convention 1972	International Regulations for preventing Collisions at Sea	15-Jul-77	140	X	X	X	X	X
CSC Convention 1972	Safety of containers in marine transport	06-Sep-77	72		X		X	
1993 amendments		-	6					
SFV Protocol 1993	Provision of guidelines for safety of fishing vessels	-	8					
STCW Convention 1978	Standards of Training, Certification and Watch keeping for Seafarers	28-Apr-84	139	X	X	X	X	X
STCW-F Convention 1995	Standards of safety for crews of fishing vessels	-	2					
SAR Convention 1979	Provision of maritime Search and Rescue especially to assist vessels in distress	22-Jun-85	72		X		X	
STP Agreement 1971	Safety requirements for special trade passenger ships in relation to SOLAS Convention.	02-Jan-74	17	X	X			X
STP Protocol 1973		02-Jun-77	16	X	X			X
INMARSAT Convention 1976	Satellite communication to assist in distress situations at sea	16-Jul-79	88	X	X		X	X
INMARSAT OA 1976		16-Jul-79	86	X	X		X	X
1994 amendments		-	39		X			
1998 amendments		-	39		X		X	X
FACILITATION Convention 1965	Prevention of unnecessary delays in maritime traffic, aid co-operation between governments and to secure the highest practicable degree of uniformity in formalities.	05-Mar-67	90	X	X			X
MARPOL 73/78 (Annex I/II)	Regulations aimed at preventing and minimizing pollution from ships - both accidental pollution and that from routine operations - and currently includes six technical Annexes: AI=Oil, AII= Noxious Liquid substances in bulk AIII= Harmful Substances carried by sea in packaged form AIV = Sewage, AV= Garbage, AVI= Air pollution from ships	02-Oct-83	120		X		X	X
MARPOL 73/78 (Annex III)		01-Jul-92	101				X	X
MARPOL 73/78 (Annex IV)		-	85				X	X
MARPOL 73/78 (Annex V)		31-Dec-88	106				X	X
MARPOL Protocol 1997 (Annex VI)		-	5					
London Convention 1972	Regulations to prevent Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter	30-Aug-75	78				X	
London Convention Protocol 1996		-	16					
INTERVENTION Convention 1969	Establish the right of coastal states to intervene in incidents on the high seas, which are likely to result in oil pollution.	06-May-75	77	X	X		X	X
INTERVENTION Protocol 1973		30-Mar-83	44				X	
CLC Convention 1969	Deals with the civil liability of the owner of ship or cargo for damage suffered as a result of an oil pollution incident.	19-Jun-75	51		d	X		d
CLC Protocol 1976		08-Apr-81	55		X	X		
CLC Protocol 1992		30-May-96	82		X			X
FUND Convention 1971		16-Oct-78	26		d	X		d
FUND Protocol 1976	Establishment of a fund for providing compensation for oil pollution incidents beyond that provided for by the CLC convention	22-Nov-94	33		X			
FUND Protocol 1992		30-May-96	77		X			X
NUCLEAR Convention 1971	Regulate civil liability in respect of damage arising from the maritime carriage of nuclear substances.	15-Jul-75	16					
PAL Convention 1974	Deals with passengers and luggage	28-Apr-87	28					
PAL Protocol 1976		30-Apr-89	22					
PAL Protocol 1990		-	3					
LLMC Convention 1976	Replacement of the International Convention relating to the limitation of the liability of owners of Seagoing ships	01-Dec-86	37					
LLMC Protocol 1996		-	7					
SUA Convention 1988	Ensure that appropriate action is taken against persons committing unlawful acts against ships (terrorist attacks on commercial ships)	01-Mar-92	68		X		X	X
SUA Protocol 1988		01-Mar-92	61		X		X	
SALVAGE 1989	Replacement of the 'no cure, no pay' principle under which a salvor is only rewarded for services if the operation is successful.	14-Jul-96	40		X			
OPRC Convention 1990	Facilitation of International co-operation & mutual assistance in preparing for & responding to a major oil spill incident & encourage states to develop & maintain an adequate capability to deal with oil pollution emergencies	13-May-95	65		X		X	
HNS Convention, 1996	Possibility of payments up to 250 million SDR as compensation to victims of accidents involving carriage of Hazardous and noxious substances such as chemicals	-	2					
Bunkers Convention, 2001	Ensure that adequate, prompt and effective compensation is available to persons who suffer damages caused by oil spills carried as fuel in ships bunkers.	-	1					



The Millennium Development Project

At the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000 world leaders placed development at the heart of the global agenda by adopting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which set clear targets for reducing poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women by 2015 (see the table below)

Goal	Target
Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day
	Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger
Achieve universal primary education	Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling
Promote gender equality and empower women	Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015
Reduce child mortality	Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate
Improve maternal health	Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio
Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
	Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases
Ensure environmental sustainability	Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources
	Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water
	By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers
Develop a Global Partnership for Development	Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system [Includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally]
	Address the Special Needs of the Least Developed Countries [Includes: tariff and quota free access for LDC exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for HIPC and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction]
	Address the Special Needs of landlocked countries and small island developing States (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the 22nd special session of the General Assembly)
	Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term
	In co-operation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth
	In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries
	In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

In support of these Goals, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and the Administrator of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), Mark Malloch Brown, have launched the Millennium Project to recommend the best strategies for achieving the MDGs. Over a period of three years the Millennium Project will work to devise a recommended plan of implementation that will allow all developing countries to meet the MDGs and thereby substantially improve the human condition by 2015. While this is a bold ambition, it is both necessary and achievable.

For more information visit <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/html/>



India names eleven new Ramsar sites making the South Asian total to 40



Photo by Dr. Madhu Verma

The Government of India has designated 11 new Wetlands of International Importance, bringing the country's total up to 19 Ramsar sites covering an area of 648,507 hectares. The designated new sites have been selected from different geographical areas of the country and accounts for three sites in Kerala in the southwest, one in Tamil Nadu in the southeast and one at 4,595m (15,075 feet) altitude in the Himalaya region. They include habitats such as coastal estuaries, mangroves and dammed reservoirs. The sites qualify as important wetlands on the basis of hydrological grounds and for supporting birds, sea turtles, or fisheries.

As indicated in Page 3 of this Newsletter, Maldives and Bhutan are yet to ratify the Ramsar Convention. With the addition of new wetland sites of India, the region now have 40 designated sites as internationally important wetlands, covering an area of 1,563,066 ha.

	Bangladesh	India	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	Total
No. of Wetlands	02	19	01	16	02	40
Surface Area (ha)	605,500	648,507	17,500	283,952	7,607	1,563,066

When joining the Convention, Contracting Parties agree to fulfill four obligations: (i) designate at least one wetland for inclusion in the List of Wetlands of International Importance (the "Ramsar List") and to promote its conservation, including, where appropriate, its wise use, (ii) to formulate and implement planning to promote, as far as possible, "the wise use of wetlands in their territory," (iii) to establish nature reserves in wetlands, whether or not they are included in the Ramsar List, and to promote training in the fields of wetland research, management and wardening, and (iv) to consult with other Contracting Parties about implementation of the Convention, especially in regard to trans-frontier wetlands, shared water systems, and shared species.

The Conventions effectiveness is demonstrated by the growing number of Contracting Parties (currently 133), the number of listed sites (1180), the cumulative area covered by these sites (103 million ha), and the growing awareness about the importance of wetlands for environments and societies all over the world.

Article 5 of the Convention gives the guidelines for regional cooperation and states that "the Contracting Parties shall consult each other about implementing obligations arising from the Convention especially in the case of wetlands extending over the territories of more than one Contracting Party or where the water system is shared by Contracting Parties. They shall at the same time endeavor to coordinate and support present and future policies and regulations concerning the conservation of wetlands and their flora and fauna."

For shared coastal wetlands Contracting Parties are urged to develop frameworks of cooperation within existing Regional Seas Programs and embodying Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) concepts. Regional Seas Programs provide a legal framework for cooperation, including a convention and appropriate protocols. Contracting Parties are also encouraged to manage major coastal wetlands systems such as coral reefs, mangroves, sea grasses within the context of LMEs.

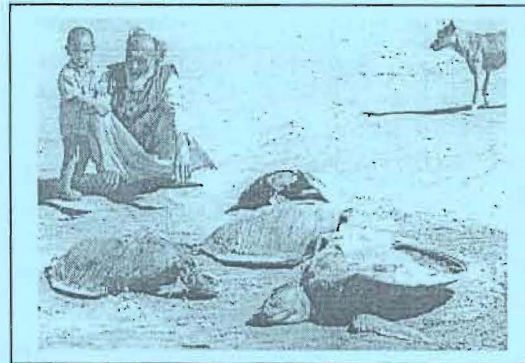
WWF Flagship species for South Asia

In order to maximize its impact and inspire people to support conservation, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has chosen to focus its efforts on a small number of well-known, charismatic species, other wise known as WWF's flagship species. While the giant panda, the tiger, rhinos, elephants, marine turtles, and great apes are the designated flagship species for the whole world. For South Asia the WWF has designated the black bear, the musk deer, the river dolphin and the snow leopard as flagship species.



IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU and the Status of Marine Turtles in South Asia

A lifeline has been thrown to endangered turtles in the Indian Ocean and the waters of South East Asia (IOSEA). Under the auspicious of the Convention for Migratory Species (CMS) Secretariat, countries in the region have for the first time agreed to a wide-ranging plan to conserve six key turtle species at risk from over harvesting for meat and their eggs, destruction of nests and feeding areas and accidental by catch during fishing operations.



A Memorandum of Understanding on the conservation and management of Marine turtles and their habitats of the IOSEA region was adopted in July 2000 at an Intergovernmental meeting in Malaysia. A comprehensive framework through which States can work together to conserve and replenish depleted marine turtle populations came into effect on 1st September 2002. The Memorandum envisages the development of sub-regional plans and has a potential membership of at least 40 countries covering the entire Indian Ocean and South-East Asia. Up to now the MoU has been signed by the following 13 countries: Australia, Cambodia, Comoros, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, Mauritius, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka, United Republic of Tanzania, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Vietnam. A secretariat to help co-ordinate activities under the MoU is co-located with the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and Pacific, based in Bangkok and an advisory committee is to be established to assist it in its activities.

The very first meeting of the signatory states for the MoU is going to take place in Thailand, from 22-24 January 2003, where issues related to advisory committee, review of progress of the implementation, and prioritization of future activities in collaboration with other intergovernmental/subregional bodies will be discussed.

Within the South Asian coastline five species of marine turtles are recorded while Orissa, the eastern state of India is the largest nesting site of the Olive Ridley turtles in the world.

Species	Recorded Important Nesting sites
Green turtle (<i>Chelonia mydas</i>)	St. Martin's Island of Bangladesh Gulf of Kutch and Saurashtra Peninsula and uninhabited islands in Lakshadweep in India; Uninhabited islands in Maldives Hawkes Bay and Sandspit in Karachi, Pakistan
Hawksbill (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>)	St. Martin's Island of Bangladesh Andamans (particularly South Reef and North Brother in Andaman) and Nicobar of India Uninhabited islands in the Maldives.
Olive Ridley (<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>)	St. Martin's Island of Bangladesh Orissa (two important nesting beaches), Sundarbans, Andaman and Nicobar Islands Lakshadweep in India The beaches of Hawkes Bay and Sandspit in Karachi, Pakistan Several sites at southwest Sri Lanka.
Leatherback	Andamans and Nicobars of India Sri Lanka
Loggerhead	East coast and Andaman and Nicobar islands of India., a few places in Sri Lanka

Please refer to page 6.....



South and Central Asia MAB Network

On 15 - 18 October 2002, Man and Biosphere (MAB) Sri Lanka hosted the "South and Central Asian MAB Meeting of Experts on Environmental Conservation, Management and Research" in Hikkaduwa, which was attended by representatives from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. One important outcome of the meeting was the creation of a new sub-regional MAB network entitled "South and Central Asia MAB Network (SACAM)". Dr Mahin Gazani (UNESCO National Commission of the Islamic Republic of Iran) was elected Chairperson of the SACAM Network, and Dr Anusha Amarasinghe (MAB-Sri Lanka) was elected Vice-Chairperson. The next SACAM meeting will be held in the Islamic Republic of Iran in early 2004.

Dr Ashok Kosala of India wins the UNEP's Sasakawa Environmental Prize for 2002



The UNEP Sasakawa Environment Prize, one of the most prestigious environmental awards in the world was awarded to Dr Ashok Kosala of India, who has worked tirelessly to demonstrate both the theory and practice of "sustainable development"

through his teaching and fostering of environment-friendly and commercially viable technologies. His work range from village power plants which use agricultural wastes as fuel to mini factories that recycle paper and local enterprises that make low cost roofing tiles. Much of his recent work has been achieved through Development Alternatives, a group of organizations headquartered in New Delhi, which he founded in 1983, to help bring people and nature directly into the design and implementation of his nation's development strategies.

SACEP congratulates Dr. Kosala on his achievement.

Continued from page 5.....

Major threats identified to the turtles and their nesting grounds within the region are poaching of eggs and animal for meat, loss of nesting beaches, obstruction by fishing trawlers and nets. In Maldives, turtle eggs are used to make one of the counties favorite dishes, (velaa folhi) and it is difficult to stop poaching as most of identified nesting beaches are in uninhabited islands.

Despite existing protective legislation banning the import, export and trade in marine turtle products, traders continue to operate. For example, stuffed, sub-adult specimens of hawksbill turtles were on sale at curio shops in the Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh. The entangling of adults in fishing nets and shrimp trawls has brought the Olive Ridley turtle right to the brink of extinction in the region.

As sea turtles migrate thousands of kilometres and across international waters, it is necessary to trace their migratory routes to ensure their protection in all their habitats and for government and international agencies to collaborate for effective conservation of the species. For example, green turtles tagged at Hawkes Bay and Sandspit in Pakistan have been recaptured in India (Bhaidar Island, Gulf of Kutchch Gujarat), Africa (Beraisole, Eritrea, NE Africa) and more recently in Iran in the Persian Gulf.

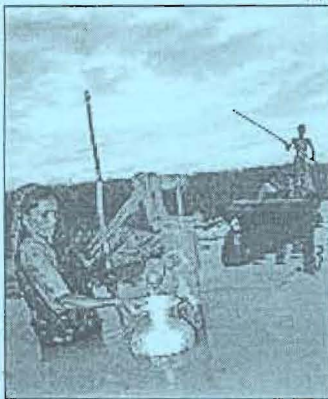
A number of major conservation projects for marine turtles are now already underway or are in the pipeline

- UNDP-Govt. of India sea turtle project - based on strengthening agencies working on turtle conservation like, Marine Turtle Preservation Group -India, Operation Kachhapa (which is sanskrit for turtles), Student Sea Turtle Conservation Network etc.
- The Sindh Wildlife Department of Pakistan has been keeping a record of all turtle nesting at beaches, tagging them, shifting the eggs to safe places and releasing the hatchlings into the sea

The marine turtle populations of the Indian Ocean are a shared resource and their continued existence can only be assured if all Indian Ocean range states contribute to their conservation. Therefore it is important that the Governments of South Asia to ratify the MoU and work towards the implementation of the action plan.



2003 is the International Year of Freshwater



The International Year of Freshwater, 2003, was officially launched at a ceremony at the United Nations in New York on December 12. The aim of the Year is to raise awareness of the importance of protecting and managing freshwater. The UN General Assembly resolution proclaiming the Year was initiated by the Government of Tajikistan and supported by 148 other countries.

As the coordinator for the Year, together with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), UNESCO has set up a special website (<http://www.unesco.org/water/iyfww2/>) providing a platform for countries and individuals all over the world to share their ideas, initiatives and events for the Year 2003.

One of the aims of the Year is to reassert the UN's Millennium Declaration Goal on Water, which pledged "to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the world's people unable to reach, or to afford, safe drinking water" and "to stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources." The goal, endorsed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002, also set a new target of halving the proportion of people who do not have access to basic sanitation by 2015. It also recognized the key role of water in agriculture, energy, health, biodiversity and ecosystems as well as in combating poverty.

COP-6 Adopts a Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the Basel Convention

The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-6) to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal was held from 9-14 December 2002, in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting was attended by 400 officials representing more than 90 Parties, seven observer States, four UN bodies and agencies, and over 30 intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations.

COP-6 adopted a strategic plan that sets priorities for international action on hazardous and other wastes up to the year 2010. The plan stresses the need to tackle priority waste streams such as obsolete pesticides, lead-acid batteries, used oil, PCBs, electronic and other wastes. It also urges governments to minimize and where possible prevent the generation of wastes in the first place.

Convention implementation was also fostered at COP-6 through the decisions on capacity building. Developing countries have played, and continue to play, an instrumental role in the development and implementation of the Basel Convention. One key aspect of implementing the Convention is building the capacity of developing countries to manage and dispose of hazardous waste. To this end, COP-6 legally established Basel Convention Regional Centers, a step that has been loudly applauded by both developing and developed countries alike. Recognition of the critical role of these Centers in implementation of the Convention was further reflected in the donors' agreement to fund activities under the Strategic Plan through the Basel Convention Trust Fund, and finance the core functions of the Regional Centers through contributions from the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund.

COP-6 also adopted technical guidelines on biomedical, plastic and lead-acid battery wastes, and ship dismantling. In particular, a number of delegates stressed the importance of the decision on ship dismantling, highlighting that it calls for the ship's decontamination prior to sending it for dismantling. This upholds the Convention's principle that hazardous wastes should not be dumped on developing countries.

Online Trainers Guide on Cleaner Production

Within the framework of a global project implemented in 1999-2002 UNEP DTIE has developed and presented a series of awareness raising and skills training courses on Cleaner Production financing in five developing countries. In these five countries (Guatemala, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Vietnam and Zimbabwe), communication and relational skills courses were also held for persons selected to present these courses. In addition, workshops for senior programme and bankers have been held at central locations.

Based on the experience gained in adapting and delivering the courses in the five countries, short presentations for senior executives, checklists and four generic training courses have been designed for use in other countries. In the following, the material for the four courses can be accessed. A hard copy of a Trainers' Guide is available from www.uneptie.org/pc/cp to support this material.

**Up Coming Evens : January –April 2003**

Event	Date	Venue
Special Session of the Governing Council of SACEP	21-22 nd January	Colombo, Sri Lanka
1 st meeting of the signatory states for the MoU on Marine Turtles of Indian Ocean and the waters of South East Asia (IOSEA)	22-24 January	Bangkok, Thailand,
Regional Technical Assistance for Coastal and Marine Resources Management and Poverty Reduction in South Asia (ADB/RETA 5974): Focal Group Meeting	29-30 January	IUCN – Sri Lanka
22 nd Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of UNEP	3-7 February	Nairobi, Kenya
Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2003	6 - 9 February	New Delhi, India
1 st Asian Workshop on Env. Law & Policy for Environmentally Sound Sustainable Development	12 –15 February	Agra, India
GPA South Asia Regional Workshop	25-28 February	Colombo, Sri Lanka
2 nd UNU-RIVM Workshop on Environmental Dimensions of Poverty	3-5 March	Katmandu, Nepal
UNU-UNESCO International Course in Biodiversity in Mangrove Ecosystem	10-24 March	Centre of Advanced Studies in Marine Biology, Annamalai University, India
2 nd International Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management Symposium	24-27 March	Manila, Philippines
Integrated Coastal Zone & River Basin Management in South Asia - ICRAM	Yet to be determined	Chennai, India
59 th Session of Economic & Social Commission for Asia & the Pacific	24-30 April	Bangkok, Thailand,

Good Management assist in Coral Reef Recovery

The 378-page global report, entitled *Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2002*, states that some of coral reef areas which were adversely affected by the massive bleaching event in 1997-98 have begun to recover, and the greatest progress has been in reefs safeguarded as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). According to the publication, new corals are settling on reefs along the coasts of East Africa and the Comoros, and "stronger recovery" has been recorded in the Maldives, the Lakshadweeps (off the south coast of India) and Palau, where there is little direct human impact. Recovery in the Seychelles, Sri Lanka, the Indian mainland and some parts of Southeast Asia is "slow or barely evident." High levels of sediment transport, nutrient pollution, over-fishing and destructive fishing practices all put a stress on corals that slows their recovery.

The most serious threat to coral reef ecosystems is now the combined impact of stress from human activities and climate change. This year's developing El Nino could create a new set-back for the reefs. And while El Nino previously has occurred in natural cycles of 7 to 11 years, it has become more frequent in the past few decades, possibly as a result of global warming. At a briefing in UNESCO Headquarters last week, Clive Wilkinson, Global Co-ordinator of GCRMN and editor of the latest survey, warned, "even the best management will not stop global warming killing reefs. But if you have good management, especially fish management, the recovery will be much better."

The report was prepared by the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN), a network of, governments, institutes and NGOs from over 80 countries. GCRMN has been updating its survey every two years since the first report was published in 1998, with contributions from some 150 authors from more than 100 countries.