



REPORT

THE THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

**6 NOVEMBER 2003
COLOMBO, SRI LANKA**

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
No. 10, Anderson Road, Colombo 5, Sri Lanka

CERTIFICATE

The Report of the Third Special Session of the Governing Council of SACEP held on 6 November 2003 at the World Trade Center, Colombo, Sri Lanka is herewith submitted to the members of the Governing Council and the Consultative Committee, in fulfilment of the financial and administrative procedures of SACEP.



Mahboob Elahi
Director General

30 November 2003

**Report of the Third Special Session of
the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
(SACEP)**

**6 November 2003
Colombo, Sri Lanka**

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REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

The 3rd Special Session of the Governing Council (SS3/GC/SACEP) of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) was held at the World Trade Centre, Colombo, Sri Lanka on 6 November 2003.

The primary item for consideration of the SS3/GC/SACEP was to approve the SACEP Strategy and Work Programme, prepared by the Consultant for the biennium 2004-2005 and the quennium 2004-2008.

2. ATTENDANCE

The SS3/GC/SACEP was attended by the Environment Ministers from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the senior officers from the seven member countries of SACEP, viz: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Representatives of the High Commissions/Embassies of the member countries of SACEP, based in Colombo were also in attendance.

The List of Participants is in Annex I.

3. INAUGURATION

Hon. Mr. Rukman Senanayake, Minister for Environment and Natural Resources, Government of Sri Lanka inaugurated the SS3/GC/SACEP. He welcomed the Environment Ministers and high-level officials of the member countries and stated that by looking at the world trend, it is absolute that the regional approach is imperative to find solutions to global environmental problems in accordance with each country perspective. Therefore, the role of SACEP with its 20 years experience in co-ordinating regional activities is now becoming more and more important for this region.

The Hon. Minister stated that there is tremendous potential for SACEP to achieve further success and development in the field of environment, specially facilitating wide range of activities that are implemented by member countries. SACEP should proactively develop projects and programmes and work closely with international organisations such as UNEP and should give the priority to capacity building and technology transfer among the countries in the region.

The Honourable Minister requested the delegates to have a meaningful dialogue to develop a proactive work programme to strengthen SACEP in order to achieve sustainable development goals in accordance with individual country priorities. He recommended that a resolution to ensure political commitment for the proposed programme for SACEP to function effectively has to be adopted as an outcome of this meeting.

The statement made by Hon. Mr. Rukman Senanayake, Minister for Environment and Natural Resources, GOSL is in Annex II.

The Welcoming Address was delivered by Mr. Mahboob Elahi, Director General, SACEP. Mr. Elahi pointed out that SACEP needs a revival strategy rather than a survival strategy. The consultant's report has shown all the ways and means to realise these objectives. The fact that the Ministers have been coming to the meetings of GC/SACEP is a testimony of their interest in our work and their commitment. This tempo should not be allowed to fade.

Mr. Elahi was confident that there would be no objection by the member countries to increase their support to SACEP, provided that they see tangible benefits occurring from their investments. He thanked the Minister, Hon. Mr. Rukman Senanayake for his continued support to SACEP ever since he assumed the office of Chairman, GC/SACEP.

The Statement made by Mr. Mahboob Elahi is in Annex III.

Mr. Surendra Shrestha, Director, UNEP-ROAP in his statement drew the attention to the discussions taking place at sub-regional, regional and global level which has relevance to SACEP such as the Millennium Development Goals, the commitment by all the countries to complete the strategies for sustainable development by 2005, the goal to reverse the negative trends on environment by 2015 and development of indicators for land, air, water and bio-diversity.

Mr. Shrestha further mentioned that even though the reports of the World Bank, IMF, ADB projects a good economic growth rate for South Asia, the picture is not so bright on socio and environmental front and therefore, stressed the importance of developing long-term plans to overcome them. He emphasized the importance of having a strong, vibrant, and revitalised SACEP with full ownership by South Asia, with full political support by all the member governments.

The Statement made by Mr. Shrestha is in Annex IV.

4. MEETING OF THE HEADS OF DELEGATIONS AND UNEP-ROAP

Hon. Mr. Rukman Senanayake, Chairman, GC/SACEP convened a meeting for the Head of Delegations to SS3.GC/SACEP and UNEP-ROAP, where the Draft Report of the Meeting of National Focal Points held on 4-5 November 2003 at Trans Asia Hotel was further discussed and finalised.

The list of participants and the Draft Report of the NFP is in Annex V & VI.

5. STATEMENTS OF THE HEADS OF DELEGATIONS

The Environment Ministers from Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal presented their country statements to the SS3.GC/SACEP. The Heads of the Delegations from India and Pakistan also tabled their country statements.

The statements covered various environmental issues in their respective countries and the initiatives for environmental protection, management and for achieving the goal of sustainable development. The member governments endorsed the importance of strengthening SACEP both institutionally as well as financially and also its governance.

The Country Statements are in Annex VII-XI.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 3RD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF SACEP

Mr. Thosapala Hewage, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of Sri Lanka presented to the SS3.GC/SACEP, the Report of the Meeting of NFP finalised at the Meeting of Heads of the Delegations and UNEP.

The Report of the Meeting of NFP Finalised at Meeting of Heads of Delegations and UNEP is at Annex XII.

The recommendations of the Report of the NFP presented under different categories were approved by the SS3.GC/SACEP as follows:

A. Background and the General Elements of the Strategy

- The SACEP Strategy and Work Programme as well as the proposed governance and financial commitments should be taken as a package in order to revitalise SACEP. The general elements of the report were also agreed.

- The following mission statements for SACEP was adopted:

The Mission of SACEP is to promote regional co-operation in South Asia in the field of environment, both natural and human in the context of sustainable development and on issues of economic and social development which also impinge on the environment and vice versa; to support conservation and management of natural resources of the region and to work closely with all national, regional, and international institutions, governmental and non governmental, as well as experts and groups engaged in such co-operation and conservation efforts.

- SACEP should concentrate on issues of regional significance with expressed focus on the following areas:
 - 1) Assessment and Strategy Development,
 - 2) Experience Sharing and Networking and
 - 3) Capacity Building.
- Establishing closer co-operation with SAARC in the field of environment was recommended.
- It was agreed to organise the Work Programme of SACEP under distinct blocks, covering SAS and SENRIC and other functional sub-headings as may be required. Provision for horizontal and vertical co-ordination to avoid duplication and overlaps and also overall work programme to be integrated for administration and financial purposes.

B. Work Programme

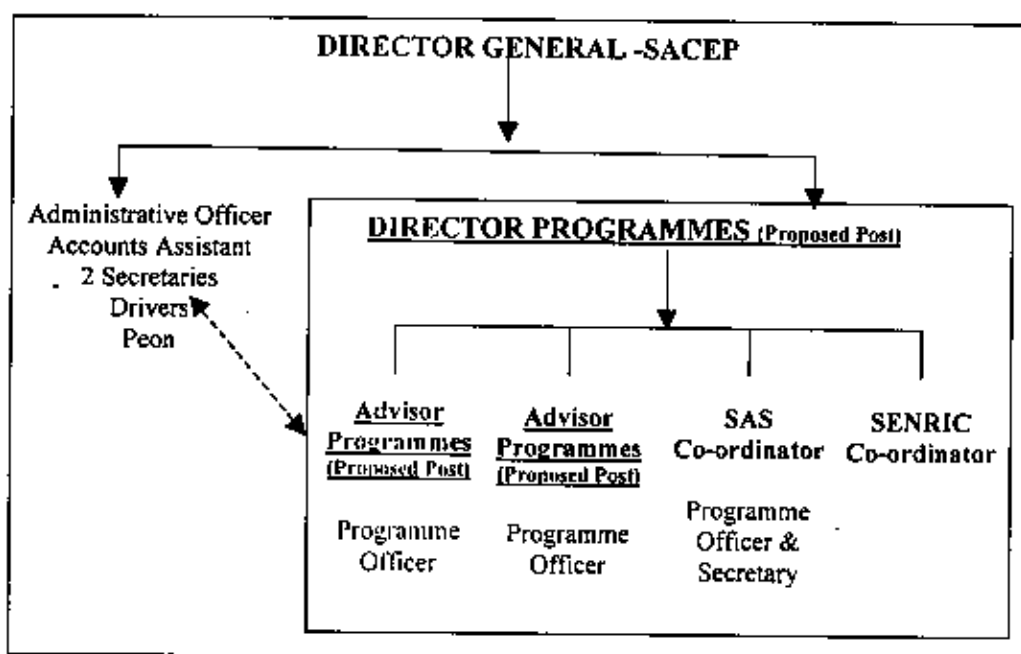
- Work Programme for the period 2004-2005 was approved, subject to availability of funds.
- It was agreed that the programme should be indicative of general priorities of WSSD/MDG/SoE etc. and additional topics and programme elements developed, should be consistent with the broad strategy matrix proposed in the report.

- The need for packaging/re-packaging of the programmes to cluster some of the elements of the Strategy Matrix under thematic areas to suit donor priorities has to be recognised.
- It was agreed that regional priorities for South Asia cannot always conform to the priorities determined at the global and/or national level. The Work Programme would reflect the genuine regional needs and priorities.
- It was recommended to incorporate issues relating to gender, equity and poverty as crosscutting issues in all of SACEP's programmes.
- The following additional areas of work for SACEP and the thematic clusters were recommended:
 - Achieving MDG goals - water and sanitation issues and energy, particularly renewable energy etc.
 - Coastal area management inclusive of mangrove, forests
 - Waste management issues as relevant to the GPA/LBA priorities
 - Adaptation to Climate Change
- It was agreed that the Work Programme and other priorities to be addressed by SACEP should complement and supplement (and not duplicate) the work being carried out by the member countries.
- The recommendation of the NFP to include two additional subject areas namely Climate Change and Bio-safety was accepted and the respective Subject Area Focal Points were designated as follows:
 - Climate Change - India and Bangladesh
 - Bio-safety – India (to be included within the Bio-diversity Subject Area Focal point)
- It was recommended to the countries concerned to nominate the institutions to function as the Subject Area Focal Points for Climate Change and communicate the same to SACEP secretariat.

C. Governance

- It was agreed to the institutional strengthening of SACEP in order to deliver its service effectively.
- The proposed optimum organisational structure was accepted subject to the availability of financial resources (refer section on Financial Resources).
- Recruitment of additional staff to carry out functions and responsibilities envisaged under the strategy was approved. The actual staffing to be done in a phased manner as the resource position improves.
- In view of the time lag in funding and other limitations, it was approved to recruit the Director Programmes initially. The remaining positions to be filled during the second phase as the project portfolio develops and additional funds are mobilised.

- It was recommended that the proposed organisational chart should be combined with the existing organisational structure. A distinction to be made between the existing regular staff, projects posts and the additional posts to be created and the method of their financing. The adopted organisation structure is given below:



- DG, SACEP was authorised to determine the reporting channels of the different officers within the structure.
- The establishment of an Advisory Committee as proposed by the Consultant was approved. The Advisory Committee would comprise of 2 members of the Consultative Committee of SACEP, appointed for a period of 3 years on rotation.
- It was agreed that the member governments without a diplomatic representation in Sri Lanka also to be included in the above rotation for the Advisory Committee.
- Greater transparency, accountability and clear memory systems for better governance were recommended.
- It was recommended to submit progress reports by Subject Area Focal Points to the SACEP Secretariat on regular basis to be reviewed by the CC.

D. Financial Resources

- It was agreed that additional financial resources are required to strengthen SACEP Secretariat. It was recommended to explore all avenues in this regard and put into effect as soon as possible.
- The establishment of the Corpus Fund was accepted in concept. The DG, SACEP was requested to explore modalities including other options in close consultation with member governments/donors by next GC.

E. Capacity Development in SACEP

- Subject to availability of concurrence in writing within one month, by the member government that expressed its reservation, the Chairman, GC/SACEP was authorised to take necessary steps for the recruitment of DG, SACEP on merit basis from the South Asia Region for a non-renewable term of five years, following internationally accepted norms and practices and in close consultation with the members of the Governing Council.
- In the event the reservation is expressed in writing to the Chair of GC, the recruitment will be made on the existing procedure.
- The capacity building measures for secretariat staff (Para 6.7 of the Report of SACEP Strategy and Work Programme-*Annex XIII*) was endorsed.

F. Implementation Plan

- It was recommended that SACEP Secretariat should revise the implementation plan based on decisions and guidance of the NFP and GC Meetings.

6. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

The SS3.GC/SACEP approved the SACEP Strategy and Work Programme with the above recommendations.

7. CONCLUDING SESSION

The Chairman, Hon Mr. Rokman Senanayake, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of Sri Lanka in his concluding remarks thanked all the Environment Ministers, the country delegations and the Director General and the SACEP Secretariat for their wholehearted co-operation in ensuring the success of this meeting.

Special Session of the Governing Council of SACEP-6 November 2003
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GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA

*Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Let me at the very outset welcome all of you to the Ministerial meeting of the 3rd Special Session of the SACEP Governing Council. It is indeed a great honour and a privilege for the Government of Sri Lanka to host this important meeting here in Colombo. I hope you will have an enjoyable and a memorable stay during your short stay in our country.

Distinguished Delegates,

The 1992 Earth Summit held in Rio Janeiro clearly established the objectives of sustainable development that entails the balancing of economic, social and environmental dimensions of the society. Ten years later, that objective still remains the goal of the world community. The Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals adopted in the year 2000 have clearly indicated its importance. The Political Declaration and the Plan of Implementation that were adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) have renewed the global commitment for the sustainable development and to the Agenda 21.

Sri Lanka always believed that global and regional approach is the only solution to the present day problems. In light of this I am pleased to state that Sri Lanka is honoured to have been afforded the privilege of hosting the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme during the last 20 years by providing the necessary facilities. Looking at the world trend, it has become clear to us that the regional approach is imperative to find solutions to global environmental problems in accordance with each country perspective. The role of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme that has 20 years experience in co-ordinating regional activities is now becoming more and more important for this region.

While recognising the progress so far made by the SACEP, I wish to express that there is tremendous potential for achieving further success and development in the field of environment, specially facilitating wide range of activities that are implemented by member countries. I believe that we should proactively develop projects and programmes and work closely with international agencies such as UNEP in order to achieve our goals.

SACEP being a recognised international organisation not only has 20 years of history in respect of regional co-operation towards the environmental issues, but also has a commendable record of achievements since inception. We, the members of SACEP were able to build partnerships with various donors and international organisations such as NORAD, IMO, SIDA and UNEP. The Male' Declaration is a great achievement of the UNEP-SACEP collaboration to reduce air pollution and its transboundary effects.

Your Excellencies are also aware that SACEP has been very successful in arriving at a working relationship with UNEP. We have signed a MOU with UNEP and will continue to receive proper guidance and other facilities from this apex body in charge of protecting the environment.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have developed a programme for strengthening SACEP to discharge its functions efficiently and effectively as a regional organisation for achievement of the sustainable development goals of the new Millennium. This programme strengthens the SACEP Secretariat, the Governing Council and the Consultative Committee.

It is also necessary for the countries in the region to actively pursue the access of environmentally sound technologies and knowledge under favourable terms in order to move forward. SACEP should give further attention in the area of capacity building and technology transfer among the countries in the region.

Sustainability of financing for the operation of SACEP was highlighted as the most important factor. As clearly indicated in the strategy paper, a mechanism for proactive interaction with SACEP focal points, donor institutions and other regional institutions needs to be strengthened.

Distinguished delegates therefore I humbly request you to have a meaningful dialogue today and develop a proactive work programme to strengthen the South Asian Environment Programme in order to achieve our sustainable development goals in accordance with our individual country priorities. I am sure that by the end of the session, we would be able to adopt a resolution to ensure the political commitment for the proposed programme for SACEP to function efficiently and effectively in its future endeavour.

I hope for a fruitful outcome from this meeting and I wish this important meeting every success. Once again, I welcome all of you to my country and wish you wonderful stay in Sri Lanka.

**ADDRESS OF WELCOME BY
MR. MAHBOOB ELAHI, DIRECTOR GENERAL
SOUTH ASIA COOPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

*Hon. Mr. Rukman Senanayake, Minister for Environment and Natural Resources and the Present
Chairman, GC/SACEP,
Honorable Ministers,
Leaders and Member of the Delegations of the SACEP Member Countries
Your Excellencies, High Commissioners/Ambassadors and Representatives of the Embassies in Colombo
Mr. Surendra Shrestha, Director UNEP-ROAP
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen:*

It is my honour to welcome you to the SS3/GC/SACEP being held in collaboration with the Government of Sri Lanka. We are indeed overwhelmed by your response to our invitation and decided to come to Colombo, Sri Lanka and to be with us for this meeting.

You are aware that we have been planning to organise this meeting for the last few months at some other venues, but as the will and determination dictates, it had been Colombo, again.

Mr. Chairman,

It may also be of interest to all of us to note that with this event taking place here, this city will have the honour of hosting 6 out of 11 meetings of GC/SACEP, which were held in different Capitals of the member countries of SACEP in last 20 years of the existence of this organisation. Further, considering the frequency of GC/SACEP Meetings as one of the positive indicators of the performance of Intergovernmental Organisations like ours, I am happy to report that this period has been reduced from 1 meeting in 3 years during 1983 to 2000 to 1 meeting every 6 months in the last 24 months. This increased frequency has many positive manifestations of work and activities of the organisation but minimally principle it is helping us to bring us closer to the statutory target of ordinarily 1 meeting of GC/SACEP every year. Your guidance and support of SACEP friends have helped us to make this happen.

*Mr. Chairman,
Honorable Ministers,*

Today we have assembled for yet another important and specific task to approve SACEP Strategy and its Work Programme for the period 2004-2005 and for the period 2004-2008. It is an important milestone in our efforts to move this organization on a long-term sustainable basis.

About 2 years ago, in my first statement before GC/SACEP, I had submitted that SACEP had been in existence for about 2 decades. But somehow, it had not been able to realise its full potential due to various internal and external factors. It had not yet created demand for its work and outputs, market its services in the fast expanding environmental business after Rio Conference (1992) and earned standing that it deserved both at the regional and global levels. It has been trailing far behind many similar sub-regional environmental organisations that were created much after SACEP. It even did not have critical manpower strength required for even a basic outfit and its financial resources position very uncertain. For instance, balance in the SACEP country contributions at that time was barely sufficient to meet about 6 months salary of an expatriate officer and consequently the related uncertainties. This position subsequently improvement on account of remittances of country contributions and thus we were not rendered unemployed.

We, therefore, sat together with some of the old colleagues and sympathiser of SACEP and decided that unless a long term vision and programme was available, no meaningful case could be made for any enhanced support for SACEP by the member governments, UN organisations, Banks and the potential donors.

*Mr. Chairman,
Hon. Ministers/Leaders of Delegations,*

Admittedly, it has taken longer than anticipated, but we are ready with a basic programme for SACEP, which will be presented to you for approval. I am sure that both you and I would have like a much larger programme, but we believe that there is no harm to make a humble beginning and build on it rather than embark on it an ambitious programme, which we are not able to deliver. But we also know that 'good things' generally come in small packages.

Likewise, we have also to overcome various weaknesses and other predicaments facing the organisation through increased efficiency, responsiveness, with organisational objectives ahead of all other interests. What we need is a revival strategy rather than a survival strategy. The consultant's report has shown us all the ways and means to realise these objectives. We have to perform and deliver to remain in the business. It is indeed now or never situation and there will not be many other opportunities of this nature forthcoming soon.

We have to earn confidence and support of the country governments as the performing organisation. The member countries of SACEP are allocating substantial resources for environmental improvement in these countries, despite many other competing priorities. I am sure that they will have no objection to increasing their support for SACEP provided they see the tangible benefits occurring from the investments. South Asia sells well as the potential market from investments by the international financial institutions, commercial banks and the private sector. Likewise would be the case for donor support in the expressed priority needs of the region. I am, therefore, sure that our member countries will promote us at all appropriate levels once they see promise in us. It is a challenge to be responded by SACEP on a continuing basis.

The mere fact that the Ministers have been coming to meetings of SACEP GCs is a testimony of their interest and commitment in our work. We must not allow to fading this tempo. Due credit in this regard is due to Hon. Mr. Rukman Senanayake who has supported us ever since he assumed the office of the Chairman, GC/SACEP.

On my part, I have tried to do whatever I thought was right and in the interest of SACEP. I, therefore, sincerely hope that my successor would have all time and resources to complete all remaining tasks in a revitalised SACEP.

To conclude, let me thank the Minister once again and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources in helping us to organise this meeting. I specially would like to mention the names of Mr. Thosapala Hewage, Secretary, Mr. W. M. R. S. Wickramasinghe, Additional Secretary and Dr. B. M. S. Batagoda, Director, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, GOSL who have extended help to us in organising this meeting. My thanks are also due to the officers and staff of SACEP who worked hard for this event. These include Mr. Prasantha Dias Abeyegunawardene, Mr. Pradyumnar Kumar Kotta, Ms. Jacintha S. Tissera and the young offices who have recently joined SACEP. We also hope that the deliberations of the meeting will be fruitful and its outcomes beneficial to the region.

Thank You.

**STATEMENT BY MR. SURENDRA SHRESTHA, DIRECTOR
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME-REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

Hon. Chairman,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates
Director General and Senior Staff of SACEP
Ladies and Gentleman,

On behalf of UNEP, with your permission, I would like to make a few remarks relevant to the discussions today; discussions at global, regional and then at the SACEP level.

Your Excellencies, at the global level, the last 2 years has been full of summits and meetings. As the Hon. Chairman mentioned, we had the Millennium Summit and at regional levels, preparatory meetings for the WSSD. South Asia position paper was quoted at the global level as the best sub-regional paper. We had the WSSD in Johannesburg, GEF Council in Belgium, the World Water Forum in Kyoto, the Global Ministerial Forum on Environment, and recently the Policy Dialogue on Environment in Belgium. If we distil all these for the environment sector, there are couple of things that stand out and is of relevance to SACEP. Firstly, the Millennium Development Goals; the commitment by all the countries to complete the strategies for sustainable development by 2005, secondly the goal to reverse the negative trends on environment by 2015 and development of indicators for land, air, water and bio-diversity.

In Johannesburg, through the WSSD process, there are 3 items that we need to focus on; implementation, go beyond, rhetoric and the meetings only. Implementation at the regional, sub-regional levels and implementation through partnerships, not only with the governments but also with the civil society. At the regional level; the Asia Pacific level, if we look at the main pillars of sustainable development, economically we are doing extremely well as indicated by all the reports coming from institutions such as World Bank, IMF and ADB. The region is 40 percent of the global economy and growing and within this China, India and the ASEAN countries stand out leading the fact. Asia is the Engine of growth for the global economy and the projections for the year 2015 shows that while global average is 2 percent, Asia is 6 percent and within that South Asia is projected at 5.4 percent.

On the socio and environmental front, however, the picture is not so bright. On the social side, we have 70 percent of the global poor and if we break that down, South Asia has 40 percent. Social Indicators such as trust amongst the countries, transparency and conflict show that we are not putting much emphasise on the social side as on the economic growth. On environmental side, South Asia approximately half of our land has been degraded. According to the statistics, all our cities are polluted and exceed the WHO standards, the major rivers exceed the BOD standards of that of globally accepted levels and the same is true with regard to the situation of bio-diversity.

As mentioned by the Director General, we had many discussions on SACEP. We recognise that when establishing SACEP in early 1980s our forefathers had a vision, but its development in the following period leaves much to be desired. In 2001, the Governing Council of SACEP commissioned a report to review, revitalise, reshape and rejuvenate SACEP. A three-member Review Panel comprising of Mr. R. Rajamani, Dr. Atiq Rahman, and Dr. Nesaiah carried out a review mission and in January 2003 the Governing Council approved the recommendations of the Review Panel in principle. As the Hon. Chairman referred to, in February 2003 in Nairobi, an MOU was signed with UNEP to elaborate these recommendations in principle and then Mr. Rajamani kindly took up the task to develop the implementation strategy. As the Director General, SACEP stated, this report is now ready and has been discussed.

In this report, there are issues relating to governance; relations with SAARC, Governing Council, Consultative Committee and Advisory Committee. Secondly, the programme and priorities; again we have to build on the State of Environment reports, South Asia report for WSSD (the revised report was presented yesterday). Thirdly, the SACEP Secretariat in Colombo; the Director General, staffing, funding issues and the need to accept the intentional norms of an institution.

We feel that SACEP as an institution is at its crossroads, we can remain as we are or change to make SACEP as an institution that can serve the member governments in the region. This Governing Council today will be a milestone in the history of SACEP.

In conclusion, Hon. Chairman, if we reflect back again, we have some lessons to look at which has relevance to SACEP. After 1972 Stockholm Conference the trend was on environment and in the next 2 decades at the global level environment ministries and environment agencies were established. Another milestone was in 1992, the Rio Conference, where Agenda 21 and the Rio principle were adopted. Today after Johannesburg, we have Sustainable Development as the key objective.

Sustainable Development is about enhancing human beings over time; to have opportunities to shift our life with better health, education and material as well as spiritual comforts. Our focus on the western style of material growth leaves much to be desired in the areas of environment and social issues. We need a long term planning period of 20 to 50 years to see the impacts of our activities on the socio and environmental front. In the institutional front, institutions grown after 1972, especially in ASEAN countries, we see that the environment ministries are now being transformed, integrated with the planning with the finance towards sustainable development agencies.

In SACEP, as I mentioned earlier, Hon. Mr. Chairman, we are at the crossroads and it is human nature that we have resistance to change. Experience elsewhere shows that we have to go beyond what we called our own; my house, my backyard, my nation to the collective good for South Asia. We should not fall pray to the tragedy of the common. Ownership for SACEP is needed; a collective voice, collective ownership and a collective vision. We need to build on the existing institutional base for SACEP. The cost of inaction is not an option as the opportunity costs are too high. We need a strong, vibrant, revitalised SACEP with full ownership by South Asia with full political support by all the member governments. Your Excellencies, we look forward to this transformation of SACEP, especially under the able guidance of the Chair of Governing Council.

Thank you.

**Meeting of the Head of the Delegations to SS3.GC/SACEP & UNEP
6 November 2003**

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**SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (SACEP)
REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS OF SACEP
4-5 NOVEMBER 2003, COLOMBO, SRI LANKA**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Meeting of the National Focal Points of SACEP was held on 4-5 November 2003.
2. It was convened to consider the draft SACEP Strategy and Work Programme for the biennium 2004-2005 and the quennium 2004-2008, prepared by the Consultant, Mr. R. Rajamani. It was also agreed that the Report of the Meeting of the National Focal Points of SACEP would be the basis of discussion of the 3rd Special Session of the Governing Council of SACEP.

II. ATTENDANCE

3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives from SACEP member countries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Mr. R. Rajamani, Consultant, SACEP Strategy and Work Programme was also present.
4. Mr. Surendra Shethra, Director and Dr. Subrato Sinha from UNEP-ROAP, Dr. George C. Varughese from Development Alternatives, India were also present at the meeting.
5. The List of Participants of the Meeting of NFP is at Annex NFP/annex I.

III. WELCOME BY MR. MAHBOOB ELAHI, DIRECTOR GENERAL, SACEP

6. Mr. Elahi in his welcoming remarks stated that SACEP has now completes 21 years of commitment to the environment and support of the governments in the region and has reached an important juncture in time where it is pertinent to take a step back and to objectively assess as to where we were able to perform and where not and why? How SACEP can overcome the institutional and related weakness and determine the next phase of its activities will based on the recommendations achieved at the end of this 2-day meeting. In conclusion, he thanked the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Sri Lanka for their assistance to organise this meeting (NFP/Annex II).

IV. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND ORGANISATION OF WORK

7. The draft Agenda prepared by the SACEP Secretariat for this meeting was adopted with rescheduling the presentation by Development Alternatives to 5 November 2003. The adopted Agenda is at Annex NFP/annex III.
8. Delegate from the Royal Government of Bhutan was appointed the Rapporteur.

V. REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING

9. Mr. Thosapala Hewage, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources in his remarks as the Chairman of the Meeting, commended Mr. R. Rajamani for preparation of the SACEP Strategy and Work Programme. He requested all the delegates for their active participation and free and frank discussion on all agenda items so that concrete recommendations could be submitted to the Ministers in the high-level segment of the meeting on 6 November 2003.

VI. PRESENTATION OF THE SACEP STRATEGY AND WORK PROGRAMME, BY MR. R. RAJAMANI, CONSULTANT

10. The consultant, Mr. R. Rajamani presenting the Strategy and Work Programme for SACEP, gave a brief background to the report and stressed the importance of adopting the full strategy package by the member governments for SACEP to move forward (Annex 4).

VII. DISCUSSION ON SACEP STRATEGY AND WORK PROGRAMME

11. The country representatives congratulated the consultant for the elaborate report he has prepared.

A. Background and the General Elements of the Strategy

- The meeting was more or less in agreement with the general elements of the report. The Consultant reminded that it was very important to consider the strategy and work programme as well as the recommended governance and financial changes as a package in order to revitalise SACEP.
- The previous vision statements were accepted as they were and as no comments were expressed on the drafted mission statement, it was adopted.

The proposed mission statement is as follows:

"The Mission of SACEP is to promote regional co-operation in South Asia in the field of environment, both natural and human and on issues of economic and social development which also impinge on the environment and vice versa to support conservation and management of natural resources of the region and to work closely with all national, regional, and international institutions, governmental and non governmental, as well as experts and groups engaged in such co-operation and conservation efforts."

- SACEP is to concentrate on issues of regional significance with expressed focus in the following work areas:
 - 1) Assessment and Strategy Development,
 - 2) Experience Sharing and Networking and
 - 3) Capacity Building
- The MOU between SAARC-SACEP in the field of environment should be expedited.
- The Work Programme of SACEP maybe organised under distinct blocks, covering SAS and SENRIC and other functional sub-headings maybe required. There should be provision for horizontal and vertical co-ordination to avoid duplication and overlaps. The overall work programme maybe integrated for administration and financial purposes

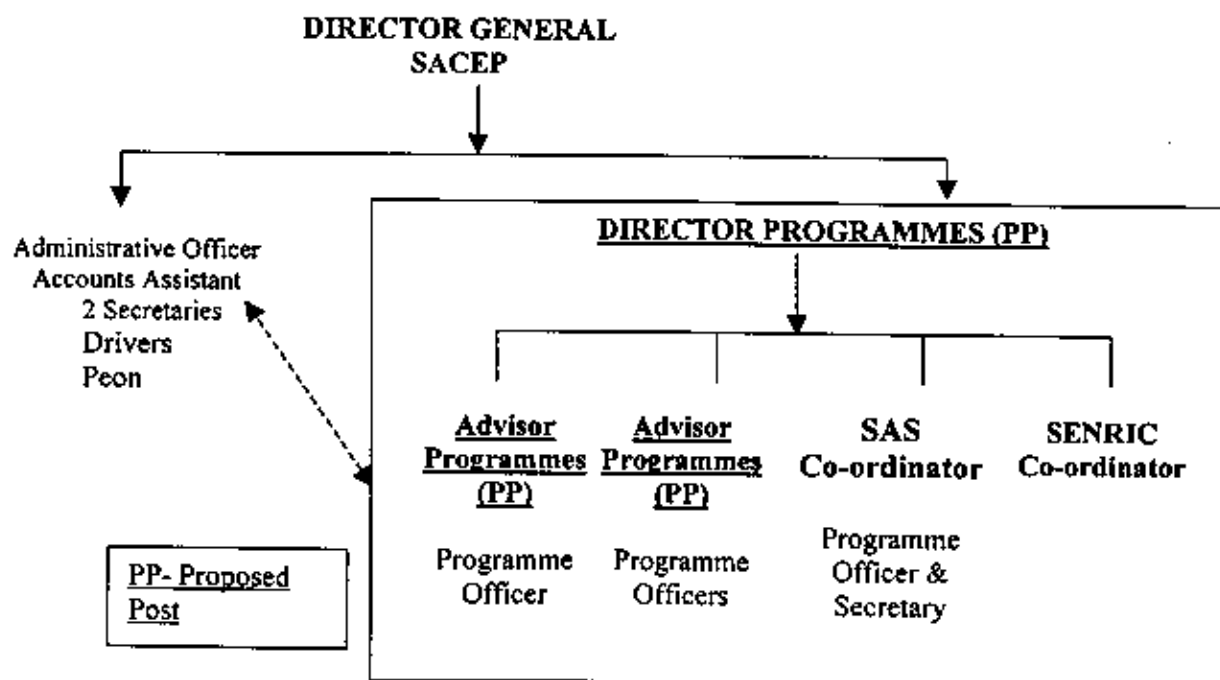
B. Work Programme

- The Work Programme for the period 2004-2005 was approved subject to availability of funds.
- It was however observed that the programme was indicative of general priorities by WSSD/MDG/SoE etc. but the list is not exhaustive to provide for additional topics and programme elements consistent with the broad strategy matrix proposed in the report.
- The need for packaging/re-packaging of the programmes to cluster some of the elements of the Strategy Matrix under thematic areas to suit donor priorities was recognised.
- It was also noted that regional priorities for South Asia cannot always conform to the priorities determined at the global and/or national level. It has to reflect the genuine regional needs and priorities.

- Issues like gender, equity and poverty have been incorporated as crosscutting issues in all its programs.
- Some of the additional areas of work for SACEP and the thematic clusters recommended include:
 - Achieving MDG goals - Water and Sanitation issues, energy etc
 - Coastal area management inclusive of mangroves/forests
 - Waste management issues as relevant to the GPA/LBA priorities
 - Adaptation to Climate Change
- The Work Programme and other priorities to be addressed by SACEP should complement and supplement (and not duplicate) the work being carried out by the member country governments.

C. Governance

- The meeting acknowledged that SACEP Secretariat is small and needs strengthening in order to deliver effectively.
- It was noted that the optimum organisational structure is acceptable subject to the availability of the financial resources (refer section on finances).
- All country governments supported the need for additional staff to carry out additional functions and responsibilities envisaged under the strategy. The actual staffing maybe done in a planned manner as the resource position improves.
- In view of the time lag in funding, and other limitations only the position of Director Programmes to be filled initially. The remaining positions maybe filled during the second phase as the project portfolio develops and additional funds are mobilised.
- It was also recommended that the proposed organisation chart should be combined with the existing organisational chart of SACEP to clearly appreciate the additional post recommended. Further a distinction should be made between the existing regular and projects posts and the status of additional posts recommended for creation and the method of their financing:



- The reporting channels of the different officers within the structure are to be determined by DG SACEP.
- The need for the establishment of an Advisory Committee was considered. The meeting accepted the structure proposed by the Consultant. The Advisory Committee should include 2 members from amongst CC members for a period of 3 years on rotation.
- Modalities for selection of members to the Advisory Committee to be formulated.
- GC shall accord its approval to the composition of the committee and its TOR.
- A Technical panel to support the Director Programmes in place of the Advisory posts interim arrangements was approved.
- It was suggested the co-ordination cells be removed from the structure, and the function integrated into the organisational roles and reporting structure as determined by DG, SACEP.
- The need for greater transparency, accountability and clear memory systems for better governance was recommended.
- There was a general agreement that CC meet regularly and also review quarterly reports, progress reports and reports of SACEP as routine agenda items of the meeting. The progress reports should also cover the inputs from the NFP about their work and the performance of subject area focal points.
- On the recommendation by the governments two additional subject areas namely Climate Change and Bio-safety. The following countries accepted to be subject area focal points as follows:
- The countries concerned to communicate to the SACEP Secretariat the national institution nominated as the subject area focal point for Climate Change.

D. Financial Resources

- There is a consensus that the secretariat needs to be strengthened for which additional financial resources will be necessary. All avenues in this regard may be explored and put into effect as soon as possible.
- While recognising the need for the corpus fund, it was felt that in the short term, it is unlikely that it will generate sufficient income to support the additional three positions. However, given the importance of strengthening the Secretariat, it was proposed that funding be secured at least for the recruitment of the Director Programmes position.
- India indicated its willingness to consider alternative mechanism to the corpus fund for supporting the position of the Director Programmes.
- It was agreed that the Secretariat in consultation with the CC should explore ways and means towards mobilising the resources for such a fund.

E. Capacity Development in SACEP

- It was agreed that the Director General, SACEP position would continue to be filled using the existing recruitment procedure with the following amendments:

Qualifications:

- a) preference should be given to candidates with the qualification of PhD
- b) fluency in English
- c) Fluency in at least one language spoken in the region

- d) Knowledge of another non-regional language should be an advantage
- e) Work experience should include projects, programmes, technical environmental fields or policy making and implementing bodies in the country, region or international field. Good knowledge of South Asia and donor funding requirements.

- For recruitment of new staff other than the DG, the procedures recommended by the consultant should be followed.
- The capacity building measures for secretariat staff (para 6.7) was agreed to by the meeting.

F. Implementation Plan

- The time line of the implementation plan shall be revised by the SACEP secretariat based on decisions and guidance of the NFP and GC Meetings.

VIII. PRIORITY PAPER ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH ASIA

- 12. Dr. George C. Varughese, Development Alternatives on behalf of UNEP, did the presentation.

IX. PRESENTATION ON DEVELOPMENT OF ACTION PROGRAMME ON UNCCD IMPLEMENTATION IN SOUTH ASIA

- 13. The concept in this regard was presented by Mr. I.H.K Mahanama, Director, Natural Resources Management, Ministry of Environment of Sri Lanka, on behalf of Dr. U Wai Lin of UNCCD. He requested the delegates to take this up with their governments and send the comments within three weeks.

X. PRESENTATION OF CONCEPT PAPER FOR GEF PROJECT FOR REDUCING PESTICIDE RUNOFF AND POPS INTO SOUTH ASIAN SEAS REGION

- 13. The concept paper and draft resolution in this regard was presented by Mr. Prasantha Dias Abeyegunawardene, Interim Coordinator, South Asian Seas Programme. It was decided that once the UNEP-Regional Seas develop the proposal in association with South Asian Seas, this would be circulated among the member countries for formal endorsement for submission to UNEP-GEF for funding.

XI. ADOPTION OF A STATEMENT OF THE MEETING/POLITICAL DECLARATION

- 14. The delegates were of the opinion, that such declaration was not a necessity of this forum.

Meeting of the National Focal Points
4-5 November 2003

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**WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR. MAHBOOB ELAHI, DIRECTOR GENERAL, SACEP
AT THE MEETING OF SACEP NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS
COLOMBO, SRI LANKA ON NOVEMBER 4, 2003**

*MR. THOSALPALA HEWAGE, SECRETARY, MENR, GOSL
AND CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING
MEMBERS OF THE COUNTRY DELEGATIONS
GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN
GOOD AFTERNOON*

On behalf of SACEP, I welcome you to this first ever session of National Focal Points of SACEP in Colombo, Sri Lanka. As you are aware the purpose of this meeting is to recommend the strategy and work programme for approval of the SACEP/Governing Council.

SACEP now completes about 21 years of commitment to the environment and support of the governments in the region. The Programme has reached this important juncture in time where it is pertinent to take a step back and to objectively assess as to where we were able to perform and where not and why? How can we overcome the institutional and related weakness and determine the next phase of its activities. Nonetheless it is also the fact that SACEP is by far the only regional intergovernmental organisation dealing with environmental issues in the region. It is therefore uniquely placed to build better links and co-operation aimed at enhancing better management of natural resources and sustainable development. We need to build on the mandate of SACEP to play a supporting role for the governments and facilitate work under the three main categories related to awareness raising and capacity building, assessment and reporting and networking.

Efforts will continue in this direction in collaboration with the steady partners, such as UNEP, NORAD, ESCAP, GCRMN, ICRI, CORDIO and other stakeholders. In this endeavour, however, the role of the NFP has been and will remain paramount as the primary drivers and owners of this process. The activities of SACEP are required to be endorsed and governed by the member governments as the evidence of the priority of the region. We therefore understand that the SACEP Strategy and the Work Programme that you will recommend at the end of this 2-day meeting will be the basic framework for future project development to subsequently approach donors for possible technical and financial support.

On our part, we have provided all necessary support and input to Mr. R. Rajamani during different stages of preparation of this document. We will be happy to offer our perspective to any point or issue of the report under consideration. To facilitate the systematic proceedings of this meeting, we have prepared three working documents each covering (a) responses of the country governments to the questionnaire prepared by the Consultant (b) views/comments of the country governments on the draft SACEP Strategy and Work Programme and (c) views/comments of SACEP on the SACEP Strategy and the Work Programme. SACEP staff and I will be available for any elaboration required.

SACEP staff will be available to assist you with any logistical and related support. Kindly contact them for any support that may be needed.

To conclude, let me thank the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources in helping us to organize this meeting. We hope that the deliberations of the meeting will be fruitful and its outcomes beneficial to the region.

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

MEETING OF THE NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS

4-5 NOVEMBER 2003

KING'S COURT, TRANS ASIA HOTEL
COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

3 November 2003
(morning/evening)

Delegates Arrive in Colombo, Sri Lanka

4 November 2003

12.00-13.15 hrs.

Lunch

13.15-15.30 hrs.

Inauguration of the Meeting

- Welcome by Mr. Mahbbob Elahi, Director General, SACEP
- Election of the Office Bearers
- Introductory Remarks by the Chair
- Organization of the Work and Conduct of the Meeting
- Update on the SACEP Strategy and Work Programme by Mr. R. Rajamani, Consultant

15.30-15.45 hrs.

Tea/Coffee Break

15.45-18.00 hrs.

Discussion on SACEP Strategy and Work Programme

(The discussion will be organized under the following topics)

- Background and the General Elements of the Strategy
- Work Programme

5 November 2003

09.00-10.40 hrs.

Discussion on SACEP Strategy and Work Programme Contd...

- Governance
- Financial Resources
- Capacity Development in SACEP
- Implementation Plan

[Each above topic will be discussed under three headings; (a) a summary of views/comments received (b) discussion and (c) synthesis and conclusion]

10.40-11.00 hrs.

Coffee/Tea Break

11.00-12.15 hrs.

- Sustainable Development Priority Issues for South Asia: Presentation by Development Alternatives
- Presentation of Concept Paper for GEF Project for Reducing Pesticide Runoff and POPs into South Asia by Dr. Walter Jarman, GEF Coordination Unit, UNEP, Nairobi
- Presentation on Development of Action Programme on UNCCD Implementation in South Asia

12.15-13.30 hrs.

Lunch

13.30-14.30 hrs.

Adoption of a Statement of the Meeting/Political Declaration etc.

14.30-15.30 hrs.

Finalisation of the Report and Recommendations of NFP Meeting

15.30-16.00 hrs.

Tea/Coffee Break

16.00-18.00 hrs.

Adoption of the Report of the Meeting

ANNEX VII

**STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF BANGLADESH DELEGATION
HON. MR SHAJAHAN SIRAJ, MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**

*Mr. Rukman Senanayake, MP
CHAIRMAN OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL, SACEP
Minister of Environment & Natural Resources
Government of Sri Lanka
Excellencies
DG, SACEP
Director, UNEP ROAP
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen*

I am privileged to be here in this beautiful city of Colombo where leaders and high officials from the South Asian sub-region have assembled on the occasion of SACEP's Governing Council meeting and Focal points meeting to express their commitment to the spirit of SACEP to attain sustainable development in the region.

At the outset, let me, on behalf of myself and my delegation from Bangladesh, thank the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, for the warm and generous hospitality extended to us during this occasions and also for shouldering the responsibility to host this meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

This special session is being held after the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg last year where the world community adopted the Plan of Implementation covering the areas like water supply and sanitation, agriculture, health, energy and biodiversity etc. and above all poverty reduction programmes. The SACEP countries should have similar programmes with specific collective targets as well as individual targets.

I like to draw your kind attention to the facts that the social and economic problems of the countries of the South Asian sub-region bear similar characteristics. Over population, poverty, development without appropriate safeguard to environment leading to environmental degradation and depletion of natural resources. Under this background SACEP aims to promote and support the protection, management and enhancement of the environment of the countries of South Asia individually, collectively and co-operatively- removal of poverty, reduction of socio-economic disparity and to improve quality of life continuously. Bangladesh as a member country, is committed to the spirit of SACEP. In this age of ICT the world has become smaller and closer, but most of the environmental problems are either transboundary in nature or common in most of the countries. So, co-operation and collective actions are really desired to achieve the common goal - Sustainable Development. Our problems are to be solved mainly by ourselves. Because, the industrialised countries failed to reach the UN target of 0.7% of their GNP for ODA to developing countries despite the commitment in Rio. So, we should exchange among ourselves knowledge, technology and resources we have in South Asian countries for our mutual benefit. Side by side, our efforts to realise our due share from the industrialised world should also be continued.

Mr. Chairman,

Bangladesh with more than about 150 million people living in an area of 147,000 sq. km is the most densely populated low-lying coastal country, which experiences natural disasters on a regular basis. Because of global warming, the frequency of floods and cyclones have increased in Bangladesh. We apprehend that a one-meter rise in sea level will inundate about 17.5 per cent of our territory, displacing over 25 million people from our coastal areas. We urge upon the world community to come forward with adequate resources to tackle such a calamity.

The national vision of Bangladesh is aimed at achieving national and community capacity to reproduce and enhance the existing wealth and resources. Bangladesh has signed and ratified almost all the important environmental conventions and protocols. Back in 1992, our Government headed by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Khaleda Zia established the National Environment Council, headed by the Prime Minister herself.

We have adopted the Environment Policy for the country in 1992. Subsequently, the Environment Conservation Act 1995, Environmental Conservation Rules 1997 (subsequently amended in 2000 & 2001), National Forestry Policy 1994, Forestry Sector Master Plan, Bangladesh Environment Court, Bangladesh Water and Flood Management Strategies etc. have been adopted. After coming to power again in October 2001 the coalition Government headed by Begum Khaleda Zia has already adopted some important steps for environmental protection.

The ban on production, use and marketing of polythene shopping bags and on leaded petrol, phasing out of two-stroke engines, mandatory provision of Catalytic Converters, Oxidation catalyst and Diesel Particulate Filters in motor vehicles, phase-wise withdrawal of age old transport vehicles from the roads of Dhaka City and establishing a continuous Air Quality Monitoring Station are some of our success stories. The ambient air quality of Dhaka City is improving now. Improved stoves are being introduced for control of indoor air pollution. Steps have been taken to stop destruction of hills by earth cutting, its denudation and felling of trees in natural forest areas. All these have been achieved through sensitising and mobilising people of all strata, including NGOs, civil society and the media. The list of successes of the present government under leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia is a long one, although this government is only two years old.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to mention that our Sundarbans Forest, a unique eco-system, is the world's largest mangrove forest and UNESCO has declared it as a World Heritage Site. But due to low flow of fresh water as consequences of withdrawal of water at Farakkah across our international borders during the lean season from the common rivers flowing from our upper riparian neighbour, the salinity is increasing in the Sunderbans and the unique ecosystem is under severe threat. We are also confronted with drought and desertification in the northern part of the country, mainly due to upstream withdrawal of water at Farakkah. The recent initiative of the river-linking project to interconnect all the rivers, in our upper riparian country will be a total disaster for us environmentally, economically and socially. These sorts of initiatives which affect other neighbouring countries should be undertaken only through mutual understanding and consensus.

A project has been undertaken to conserve Coastal and Wetland Bio-diversity at Cox's Bazar and Hakaluki Haor. The Cox's Bazar, the finest and longest natural beach in the world, has tremendous potential for its development as one of the premier tourist attractions of the World. A project has also been undertaken with our own resources to conserve the biodiversity, develop ecotourism and the marine park in Saint Martin - the only coral island in Bangladesh.

Mr. Chairman,

In June this year, we undertook a year long tree plantation movement throughout the country in order to bring at least 20% of the total landmass of the country under forest cover by the year 2015 which will help in restoring the ecological balance. This year, we put emphasis on massive plantation of medicinal plants, which we believe, will help restore our indigenous knowledge and practices in traditional herbal treatment and to earn foreign currency through export.

Various tannery industries, since decades, have been posing serious threats to our environment. The Government has taken initiatives toward relocating such industries outside the city area with effluent treatment plant facilities. Measures are underway to clean the rivers of Buriganga, Sitalakhyia, Balu and Karnaphuli from pollution by enforcing many legal measures.

We are aware of harmful emission of kilns of brickfields spread over throughout the country. Measures are underway to produce environment-friendly concrete blocks considering the harmful effects of brickfields. We have been able to successfully stop indiscriminate razing of hills and undertook programmes to clear our coastal areas from toxic and harmful waste from ship and regulate ship-breaking activities. We have been exploring possibilities of generating electricity and also to produce organic fertiliser from municipal, industrial and medical wastes.

Mr. Chairman,

In spite of a long list of success and initiatives taken up we have many more to be done in the areas like poverty, malnutrition, lack of sanitation facilities, water pollution including arsenic contamination and

resultant deadly disease, over population, low literacy rate, high rate of unemployment, natural disaster like cyclone, flood, drought etc. land degradation, loss of biodiversity, non availability of clean development technology, lack of institutional capability, lack of infrastructure, trans-boundary pollution of air, water and soil and above all the lack of resources to meet the challenges. Although the domestic resource mobilisation is increasing every year, the demand for resources necessary to attain expected development are increasing more rapidly. To overcome this gap appropriate policy, strategies and actions are urgently needed at the local national, regional and international level for the common but everlasting benefit of all.

Mr. Chairman,

Bangladesh reiterates that a sound and unthreatened ecosystem is among the necessities of a healthy environment. Equally of vital necessity has been enhancing the adaptive capacity of the poor and marginalized. The new millennium has thrown out numerous challenges, solutions to which are far from being easy. Bangladesh, hence, likes to see determined, decisive and sincere efforts made as an outcome of this meeting toward achieving a sustainable resource management both at national and regional levels.

Thank you all for your patient hearing.

Allah Hafez.

**STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF BHUTANESE DELEGATION
HON. MR. DASHO NADO RINCHHEN, DEPUTY MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION, ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN**

Honourable Rukman Senanayake, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of Sri Lanka and Chairman, Governing Council of SACEP, Distinguished Ministers, Dr. Surendra Shrestha, Regional Director, UNEP-ROAP, Mr. Mahboob Ellahi, Director General of SACEP, Country Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

At the onset I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation to Honourable Rukman Senanayake for holding this Special Session of the SACEP Governing Council. This meeting, as you all may be aware was initially planned to be held in Bhutan. However, due to some unavoidable circumstances, the Royal Government of Bhutan was not in a position to host the meeting. I would like to convey the regrets of the Royal Government to the Governing Council for its inability to host the meeting in Bhutan. We hope that we will have the opportunity to host this meeting in the near future. This meeting, I must say is very timely, as the Consultant has just completed the review of the Strategy and Work Programme of SACEP and the report is being submitted before the Governing Council for its consideration.

Let me also express my delegation's appreciation to Mr. Rajamani for the excellent work on the SACEP Strategy and Work Program. Needless to say, the assessment of SACEP Strategy and Work Program was long overdue and I commend the initiative of SACEP Secretariat. The review of the SACEP Strategy and Work Programme is in the interest of both SACEP and its Member States, as this will define clear roles and responsibilities for the organisation.

I am very pleased to be a part of this process. The proposal to re-vitalise SACEP is not a new idea. This issue has been discussed endlessly in several Governing Council Meetings – most notably the last two Special Sessions of the Governing Council. This position has also been reiterated by member countries when we met at the UNEP Governing Council Meeting held earlier this year in Nairobi. I have been a part of SACEP for many years now and I strongly feel that, given the will of the member states, SACEP can be re-vitalised and transformed into a more useful and dynamic organisation, the benefits of which can be reaped by all the member countries.

Mr. Chairman, we all know that SACEP has been in existence for over two decades now. It is one of the first institutions created to foster regional co-operation in the environmental field. The creators of SACEP, those days - had a long-term vision for this organisation – a vision to transform SACEP into a dynamic, effective and credible regional body in the field of environment. However, after two decades of existence, we must all be honest in saying that SACEP has not delivered well and has not been very effective in bringing about the much-needed co-operation in the field of environment, for obvious reasons.

Today, in the light of developments such as the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, it seems increasingly important for SACEP to carve out an identity of its own so that the credibility of the organisation is enhanced. Even as we are meeting here today to discuss the Strategy and Work Programme of SACEP, donors may be listening to us and keeping an eye on what will evolve out of this meeting. As a case in point, let me recall the strategy that was presented by Development Alternatives to the National Focal Points yesterday. As mentioned in the report, this region is endowed with tremendous resources, both in terms of natural resources as well as human resources and expertise in any field that you can possibly think of. The only thing that this region is lacking is the inability to harness and make use of these resources. This, I must say is only possible through regional co-operation and SACEP, in my opinion, is one such forum through which we can tap such resources in a meaningful and effective manner. It is through such mechanisms that the so-called dream of sustainable development can be realised.

I am happy to note that the meeting of the National Focal Points has endorsed the importance of strengthening SACEP both institutionally as well as financially. I may also add that the idea of a corpus fund is very good. However, considering the limitations of the member states, contributions to the fund may not be easily forthcoming. Therefore, SACEP may wish to promote this idea further and mobilise resources in collaboration with its partners such as UNEP. While I fully recognise the difficulties in making such ideas operational, I urge this august gathering to keep this idea alive while at the same time exploring other alternatives.

The Royal Government of Bhutan is in agreement with the proposed Strategy of SACEP. However, considering the limitations of the member countries, as well as the Secretariat, it may be important to focus the work programme on fewer and key priority issues – issues that are common to all the Member States and those that can be implemented in a realistic manner.

Finally, I am very pleased to note that the initiative to collaborate with SAARC, UNEP and IUCN is a positive sign towards promoting donor interest in SACEP's activities and efforts. I would like to urge SACEP Secretariat to facilitate the process of collaboration and accordingly report back to the member states. In addition, I would highly recommend similar collaboration with other international and regional bodies.

In conclusion, let me take this opportunity to inform that Bhutan has participated actively and benefited from several of SACEP's initiatives. One such activity is the Male Declaration on the control and prevention of trans-boundary air pollution. We realise that there is so much potential and expertise in the region itself to help us confront the challenges and we look towards SACEP as the avenue through which such exchanges can be channelled.

Bhutan is committed to the principles of sustainable development and we do realise that regional co-operation is essential to ensure the success of our endeavours. I would like to reaffirm that we are willing to embrace SACEP's initiatives in the spirit of co-operation and good neighbourly relations. I am hopeful that we will be able to agree on some of the major elements of the strategy and work programme.

Mr. Chairman, the Royal Government of Bhutan has always supported the spirit and mission of SACEP. I would once again like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our support to the SACEP Program.

Finally, I take this opportunity to thank UNEP, particularly Dr. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director, Mr. Kakakhel, Deputy Executive Director and Dr. Surendra Shrestha for supporting and being a part of this process.

Once again I wish to thank the Government of Sri Lanka for the warm hospitality and for organising this important meeting. I look forward to a revitalised SACEP in the coming years.

Thank you and Tashi Delek!!!

**STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF INDIAN DELEGATION
MS. MEENA GUPTA, ADDITIONAL SECRETARY
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

Mr. Chairman

Hon'ble Environment Ministers of SACEP Countries

Distinguished Delegates and Friends

It is a privilege for me to be present in Colombo today and on behalf of the Minister of Environment and Forests attend the Special Session of the Governing Council of SACEP. I thank you for the warm welcome and hospitality as well as the excellent arrangements made.

India, since independence, has followed a planned approach to economic development and believes in conservation and sustainability of natural resources. From the very beginning, we have been committed to the goal of providing a better quality of life to our citizens including health care, clean drinking water, housing, education and a cleaner environment, etc. Despite a plethora of problems, we have been able to take very impressive strides in improving the socio-economic conditions of our people. I would like to briefly outline the various initiatives taken by the Government of India towards realising the goals of sustainable development.

The Indian Parliament has passed the Biological Diversity Act in 2002 and a National Bio-diversity Authority has been set up at Chennai for implementation of the Act. The convention on Bio-diversity (CBD) is the key instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from use of genetic resource. India is a party to the International Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation calls for a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity, which will require the provision of new and additional financial and technical resources to developing countries. It also invited all states which have not already done so to ratify the CBD, the Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety and other bio diversity related agreements and invited those that have done so, to promote their effective implementation at the national, regional and international levels. India has ratified the Cartagena Protocol on Bio-safety on 17 January 2003.

The Government of India has been pursuing a diverse set of activities aiming to enhance our knowledge and improve India's forests and environmental quality. In-depth surveys of flora, fauna and the forest resource base were conducted in the recent years. Efforts towards conservation of natural resources, including forests and wild life have continued with emphasis on biosphere reserves, wetlands, mangroves and coral reefs, bio-diversity conservation, combating desertification, forest conservation, wildlife conservation, and animal welfare.

Regeneration and development efforts have been pursued through the National River Conservation Directorate and the National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board. Various research activities on environment, forestry and wildlife under the National River Conservation Plan have been launched. Research, education, training and extension efforts are being continued through the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy and the Wild Life Institute of India, as also through the state authorities.

On the issue of water pollution and air pollution, I would first touch on the National River Conservation Programme (NRCP), which we have set in motion to tackle the most polluted stretches of all our rivers. The objective of this programme is to improve the water quality of rivers by treating the domestic sewage and industrial effluents before they are discharged in the river. We are now also taking up conservation of polluted lakes.

Due to various developmental activities and increased in vehicle population, the maintenance of air quality is a challenging task. To reverse the increasing trend of population, the Ministry of Environment and Forests has initiated various steps. At present, there are 295 Air Quality Monitoring Stations covering 98 cities/towns in 29 States and 3 Union Territories. Further to regulate and control air pollution, source specific standards are notified from time to time certain polluted cities have been identified for preparation

and implementation of air quality improvement plans. Adoption of cleaner production technologies and use of improved fuel quality in vehicles are encouraged for control of pollution.

The South Asian Seas Regional Programme is one of 13 such programmes around the world and it is a matter of satisfaction that the South Asian Seas Programme has identified 4 priority areas that address the most pressing issues of the region, viz., preparation and implementation of integrated Coastal Zone Management Plans, development and implementation of National and Regional Oil Spill Contingency Plans, human resources development through strengthening regional centres of excellence, and protection of the marine environment from land based activities.

Protection and management of marine environment and coastal eco-systems has emerged as an important area for regional co-operation. For the purpose of protecting the marine and coastal environment of India, the Government of India has issued a Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 1991 which regulates developmental activities within 500 mts from the High Tide Line and the integrated region of the country. Taking note of the experiences of other developed countries, the strategies suggested in Agenda 21, Global Programme of Action for Prevention of Pollution of Marine Areas from Land based Activities (GPA) and other international programmes for sustainable management of coastal areas and also keeping in view the socio-economic issues and developmental needs of the country, the Ministry of Environment & Forests has embarked upon preparation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plans. We will be extremely happy to collaborate with other countries and carry out activities in the area of coastal and marine area management. The in-house expertise available with our scientific institutions in the area of Integrated Coastal Zone Management can be shared with other countries in the region. India will be happy to receive support in the area of capacity building by way of strengthening of existing scientific institutions and information networking for effective management of coastal and marine areas in the region.

The Basel Convention on the control of trans-boundary movement of hazardous waste and their disposal under the aegis of UNEP seeks to regulate trans-boundary movements of hazardous wastes. India is a party to this Convention and the provisions of this Convention relating to the trans-boundary movements of hazardous wastes are suitably incorporated in the national laws of the country, especially in the Hazardous Waste (Management & Handling) Rules notified in 1989 and amended from time to time. However, in recognition of the fact that recycling of certain wastes, especially zinc, lead and oil wastes, is environmentally and economically beneficial, India has put in place a mechanism to regulate the recycling of certain identified hazardous wastes. Import of selected items of hazardous wastes are allowed only for units registered with MOEF or CPCB as actual users having environmentally sound management facilities to reprocess such wastes. India has also signed the Stockholm Convention on POPs which seeks to eliminate the production and use of twelve identified toxic chemicals.

Our countries share a common past. The challenges of the future require that we co-operate with each other. This is particularly relevant for environmental protection, since we share substantially our ocean fronts, rives and eco-systems. It is in this context that we attach high priority to SACEP. It has provided us a platform not only to share our concerns and experiences and forge a regional stand on global environmental issues but also it has led to several programmes and activities involving members of South Asia. The experience so far has been encouraging though it is clear that much more needs to be done to realise the full potential of this regional initiative. Th external review of SACEP is therefore timely. The success of any work plan and programme will however, depend on the support received from the Members. Conversely, the objective and activities under the Programme will need to be tailored to meet the resource commitments available. It should be our endeavour to reach a consensus on various issues.

Thank you.

**STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF NEPALESE DELEGATION
HON. MR. BUDDHI MAN TAMANG
MINISTER FOR POPULATION AND ENVIRONMENT, HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL**

*Honourable Chairperson,
Honourable Ministers,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is a matter of great honour and privilege for me to be addressing you at this Special Session of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP).

As you are aware, SACEP, an inter-governmental organisation, was established by the governments of South Asia to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment of the region individually, collectively and co-operatively. Since the member countries of SACEP belong to the developing world, most of them share many similar environmental problems stemming from poverty and its consequences on natural resources, ultimately leading to the degradation of the environment. The ecological and developmental problems of the South Asian Region transcend the national and administrative boundaries, which require concerted co-operative action in dealing with them effectively. In this context, SACEP has fulfilled the need for a regional arrangement for sharing knowledge and information together with forging a common effort to tackle the existing environmental problems.

Honourable Chairperson,

Let me take this opportunity to shed some light on the sincere efforts made by Nepal towards undertaking sustainable development, in regional, and environmental management, in particular. Nepal has started the integration of environmental aspects in the socio-economic development process through her policy initiatives, law enforcement, institutional strengthening and public awareness programmes. The Environmental Protection Act and other necessary regulations are also in place since 1996. It has been made mandatory for the developmental projects to consider the environmental aspects even while planning and designing such projects, let alone implementing them.

Some of the other recent initiatives undertaken by his Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG/N) are the phasing out from Kathmandu Valley two-stroke three-wheeler vehicles and commercial vehicles, which are more than twenty years old. In addition, HMG/N has already banned the movement of diesel-run three wheelers in the Kathmandu Valley and a few other parts of the Kingdom. Similarly, the Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE) has fixed the generic-effluent standards for the inland-surface-water including some industry-specific standards. MOPE has also brought into effect the Nepal Vehicular Mass Emission Standards, 1999, which is equivalent to Euro-1, to regulate the import of vehicles. Likewise, emission standards for the in-use vehicles has also been fixed and a green sticker system introduced. Apart from this, MOPE has set the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and the Action Plan to achieve such standards is at its preparatory stage.

In addition, Nepal is a party to most of the UN environmental conventions and has been fulfilled her obligations, to the extent possible, within her limited resources and capability.

Honourable Chairperson,

This meeting which is going to basically focus on the strategy and work programme of SACEP would, I believe, success in playing a crucial role in guiding it to its brighter future. In other words, I am confident that this meeting will prove to be a milestone in finalising the strategy and work programme of SACEP.

Finally, on behalf of my delegation and on my own, let me take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the government of Sri Lanka and the SACEP Secretariat for the warm hospitality extended to us and also for the excellent made for this 3rd Special Session of the Governing Council of SACEP.

Thank you.

**STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF PAKISTAN DELEGATION
MR. MR. ZAHIR SHAH MOHMAND, ADDITIONAL SECRETARY
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN**

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the Government of Pakistan I would like to state that it is indeed a matter of pleasure that an Organisation like SACEP is working under your able command and leadership. The vision and guidance given in your inaugural address will help the governing council in its deliberations during the course of the day.

Mr. Chairman, The Government of Pakistan supports the SACEP strategy and Work Programme and appreciates the good work done by its Secretariat. Pakistan also fully supports strong relations between SACEP and SAARC for greater and effective co-ordination among these two sister organisations. We feel that SACEP, being a regional organisation can play a supportive and complimentary role for initiatives under relevant SAARC core Programme areas.

Mr. Chairman, SACEP must develop programmes to support member country's specific needs and priorities of national importance that require immediate attention. In addition the regional issues in general should also be kept in mind and addressed, in consultation with the member countries.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to inform this august gathering that Pakistan has a number of Training Institutes in the Fields of Environment, Agriculture, Rural Development, Water Management and other related areas, where training facilities can be offered to the member states, for training and research purpose. SACEP may use these facilities for training of professionals from the region.

Mr. Chairman, Pakistan has actively participated in the WSSD and presented a Country Assessment Report, which comprised the current state of the environment and status of implementation of Agenda-21. Pakistan has also signed the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Convention in December 2001 and to meet the obligations under the Stockholm Convention on POPs including initial preparation of POPs National Implementation Plan (NIP), an enabling activity project has been approved for GEF funding to create sustainable capacity and ownership in Pakistan and to develop the POPs.

Mr. Chairman, Pakistan is already enforcing the Chemical Control Law and Regulations such as the Agricultural Pesticides Ordinance 1971, and the Agricultural Pesticides Rules 1973, which regulate the production and use of pesticides in the country. The current institutional and technical capacity of relevant organisations are extremely limited and needs analysis to identify short falls and gaps and their capacity requirements ought to be strengthened. This would involve substantial support from relevant International Organisations. Lack of research facilities, institutions and trained manpower for enforcement of the provisions of this convention is the biggest problem faced by the national enforcing agencies.

Mr. Chairman, The Government of Pakistan has not only initiated regional and sub regional dialogues (Thematic Programme Network) but also prepared NAP to combat desertification in Pakistan with broad-based consultations involving the relevant government institutions, agencies, professionals, NGOs, and other civil society organisations. The NAP has been recently updated to meet the major provisions of the UNCCD and address the pressing land degradation issues on priority basis.

Mr. Chairman,

In the end I would like to thank the organisers, people and the Government of Sri Lanka for hosting this meeting and for their hospitality.

Thank you.

**SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (SACEP)
REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS OF SACEP
4-5 NOVEMBER 2003, COLOMBO, SRI LANKA**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Meeting of the National Focal Points of SACEP was held on 4-5 November 2003.
2. It was convened to consider the draft SACEP Strategy and Work Programme for the biennium 2004-2005 and the quennium 2004-2008, prepared by the Consultant, Mr. R. Rajamani. It was also agreed that the Report of the Meeting of the National Focal Points of SACEP would be the basis of discussion of the 3rd Special Session of the Governing Council of SACEP.

II. ATTENDANCE

3. The Meeting was attended by the representatives from SACEP member countries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Mr. R. Rajamani, Consultant, SACEP Strategy and Work Programme was also present.
4. Mr. Surendra Shesthra, Director and Dr. Subrato Sinha from UNEP-ROAP, Dr. George C. Varughese from Development Alternatives, India were also present at the meeting.
5. The List of Participants of the Meeting of NFP is at Annex NFP/annex I.

III. WELCOME BY MR. MAHBOOB ELAHI, DIRECTOR GENERAL, SACEP

6. Mr. Elahi in his welcoming remarks stated that SACEP has now completes 21 years of commitment to the environment and support of the governments in the region and has reached an important juncture in time where it is pertinent to take a step back and to objectively assess as to where we were able to perform and where not and why? How SACEP can overcome the institutional and related weakness and determine the next phase of its activities will based on the recommendations achieved at the end of this 2-day meeting. In conclusion, he thanked the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Sri Lanka for their assistance to organize this meeting (NFP/Annex II).

IV. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND ORGANISATION OF WORK

7. The draft Agenda prepared by the SACEP Secretariat for this meeting was adopted with rescheduling the presentation by Development Alternatives to 5 November 2003. The adopted Agenda is at Annex NFP/annex III.
8. Delegate from the Royal Government of Bhutan was appointed the Rapporteur.

V. REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING

9. Mr. Thosapala Hewage, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources in his remarks as the Chairman of the Meeting, commended Mr. R. Rajamani for preparation of the SACEP Strategy and Work Programme. He requested all the delegates for their active participation and free and frank discussion on all agenda items so that concrete recommendations could be submitted to the Ministers in the high-level segment of the meeting on 6 November 2003.

VI. PRESENTATION OF THE SACEP STRATEGY AND WORK PROGRAMME, BY MR. R. RAJAMANI, CONSULTANT

10. The consultant, Mr. R. Rajamani presenting the Strategy and Work Programme for SACEP, gave a brief background to the report and stressed the importance of adopting the full strategy package by the member governments for SACEP to move forward.

VII. DISCUSSION ON SACEP STRATEGY AND WORK PROGRAMME

11. The country representatives congratulated the consultant for the elaborate report he has prepared.

A. Background and the General Elements of the Strategy

- The meeting was in agreement with the general elements of the report. The Consultant reminded that it was very important to consider the strategy and work programme as well as the recommended governance and financial changes as a package in order to revitalise SACEP.
- The previous vision statements were accepted as they were and as no comments were expressed on the drafted mission statement, it was adopted.

The proposed mission statement is as follows:

"The Mission of SACEP is to promote regional co-operation in South Asia in the field of environment, both natural and human in the context of sustainable development and on issues of economic and social development which also impinge on the environment and vice versa; to support conservation and management of natural resources of the region and to work closely with all national, regional, and international institutions, governmental and non governmental, as well as experts and groups engaged in such co-operation and conservation efforts."

- SACEP is to concentrate on issues of regional significance with expressed focus in the following work areas:
 - 1) Assessment and Strategy Development,
 - 2) Experience Sharing and Networking and
 - 3) Capacity Building
- It is recommended to the GC to take necessary steps to establish closer cooperation with SAARC in the environment sector.
- The Work Programme of SACEP maybe organized under distinct blocks, covering SAS and SENRIC and other functional sub-headings maybe required. There should be provision for horizontal and vertical co-ordination to avoid duplication and overlaps. The overall work programme maybe integrated for administration and financial purposes

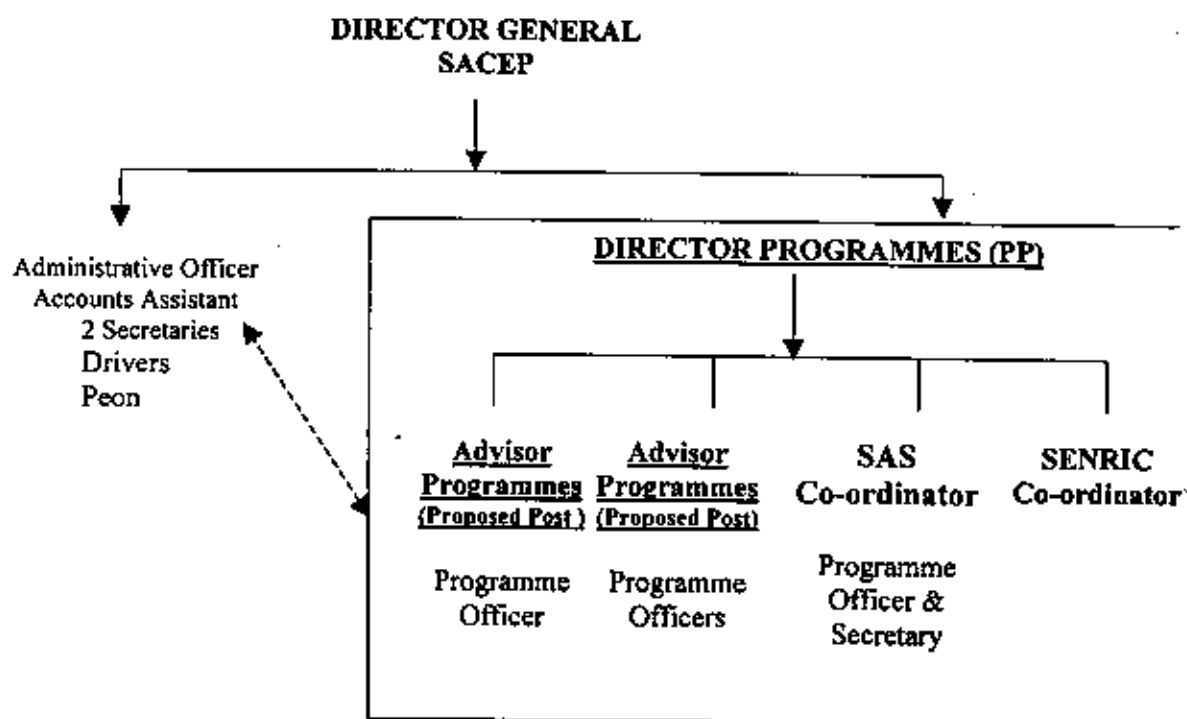
B. Work Programme

- The Work Programme for the period 2004-2005 was approved subject to availability of funds.
- It was however observed that the programme was indicative of general priorities by WSSD/MDG/SoE etc. but the list is not exhaustive to provide for additional topics and programme elements consistent with the broad strategy matrix proposed in the report.

- The need for packaging/re-packaging of the programmes to cluster some of the elements of the Strategy Matrix under thematic areas to suit donor priorities was recognized.
- It was also noted that regional priorities for South Asia cannot always conform to the priorities determined at the global and/or National level. It has to reflect the genuine regional needs and priorities.
- Issues like gender, equity and poverty have been incorporated as cross-cutting issues in all its programs.
- Some of the additional areas of work for SACEP and the thematic clusters recommended include:
 - Achieving MDG goals - Water and Sanitation issues, energy – particularly renewable energy etc
 - Coastal area management inclusive of mangroves/forests
 - Waste management issues as relevant to the GPA/LBA priorities
 - Adaptation to Climate Change
- The Work Programme and other priorities to be addressed by SACEP should complement and supplement (and not duplicate) the work being carried out by the member country governments
- On the recommendation by the governments two additional subject areas namely Climate Change and Bio-safety were included. The following countries accepted to be subject area focal points as follows:
 - a) Climate Change - India and Bangladesh
 - b) Bio-safety – India (to be included within the Biodiversity Subject Area Focal point)
- The countries concerned to communicate to the SACEP secretariat the national institution nominated as the subject area focal points for Climate Change.

C. Governance

- The meeting acknowledged that SACEP Secretariat is small and needs strengthening in order to deliver effectively.
- It was noted that the optimum organizational structure is acceptable subject to the availability of the financial resources (refer section on finances).
- All country governments supported the need for additional staff to carry out additional functions and responsibilities envisaged under the strategy. The actual staffing maybe done in a planned manner as the resource position improves.
- In view of the time lag in funding, and other limitations only the position of Director Programmes to be filled initially. The remaining positions maybe filled during the second phase as the project portfolio develops and additional funds are mobilized.
- It was also recommended that the proposed organization chart should be combined with the existing organizational chart of SACEP to clearly appreciate the additional post recommended. Further a distinction should be made between the existing regular and projects posts and the status of additional posts recommended for creation and the method of their financing as indicated in the proposed organisation chart below.



- The reporting channels of the different officers within the structure are to be determined by DG SACEP.
- The need for the establishment of an Advisory Committee as proposed by the Consultant was approved. The Advisory Committee should include 2 members from amongst CC members to be appointed for the period of 3 years on rotation.
- The need for greater transparency, accountability and clear memory systems for better governance was recommended.
- Subject area focal points should submit progress reports to the SACEP secretariat on regular basis for review by the CC

D. Financial Resources

- There is a consensus that the secretariat needs to be strengthened for which additional financial resources will be necessary. All avenues in this regard may be explored and put into effect as soon as possible.
- GC is requested to approve the establishment of the Corpus Fund. The DG is requested to explore the modalities including other options in close consultation with member governments/donors by next GC.

E. Capacity Development in SACEP

- The Governing Council is requested to consider recruiting the Director General on merit basis following internationally accepted norms and practices. The Governing Council approved a non-renewable term of five years. The Governing Council authorized the Chair to take necessary steps for the recruitment in close consultation with GC Members.

- One member country expressed its reservation to this decision and will respond in writing within one month to the Chair of GC.
- In the event the reservation is expressed in writing to the Chair of GC, the recruitment will be made on the existing procedure.
- The capacity building measures for secretariat staff (Para 6.7) was endorsed.

F. Implementation Plan

- The time line of the implementation plan shall be revised by the SACEP secretariat based on decisions and guidance of the NFP and GC Meetings.

VIII. PRIORITY PAPER ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH ASIA

12. Dr. George C. Varughese, Development Alternatives on behalf of UNEP, did the presentation

IX. PRESENTATION ON DEVELOPMENT OF ACTION PROGRAMME ON UNCCD IMPLEMENTATION IN SOUTH ASIA

13. The concept in this regard was presented by Mr. I.H.K Mahanama, Director, Natural Resources Management, Ministry of Environment of Sri Lanka, on behalf of Dr. U Wai Lin of UNCCD. He requested the delegates to take this up with their governments and send the comments within three weeks.

X. PRESENTATION OF CONCEPT PAPER FOR GEF PROJECT FOR REDUCING PESTICIDE RUNOFF AND POPS INTO SOUTH ASIA

14. The concept paper and draft resolution in this regard was presented by Mr. Prasantha Dias Abeyegunawardene, Interim Coordinator, South Asian Seas Programme. It was decided that once the UNEP-Regional Seas develop the proposal in association with South Asian Seas, this would be circulated among the member countries for formal endorsement for submission to UNEP-GEF for funding.

SACEP

STRATEGY AND WORK PROGRAMME

R. Rajamani
Consultant

*September 2003
Colombo, Sri Lanka*

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STRATEGY AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR SACEP

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) is a 21 year old organization, the first of its kind ever in the world for promoting regional environmental co-operation. It was established in 1982 by the governments of South Asia to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region. Its Secretariat is located in Colombo where host facilities are provided by the Government of Sri Lanka. The Governing Council of SACEP (GC) consists of Ministers of Environment of the member countries from South Asia. GC is assisted by a consultative Committee (CC) drawing from representatives from the host government and the Embassies/High Commissions of the countries of the region stationed at Colombo and its Secretariat. The Secretariat is headed by the Director General (DG) who is nominated for a term of 3 years at a time on a rotational basis by the member countries. There have been seven Directors General so far, drawn from the countries of Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Nepal. The current Director General was nominated by Pakistan in 2001 and his term is to end in July 2004. Thus all the countries have had one rotation except Bhutan which had declined to nominate when its turn came. An organizational chart showing the current composition of the Secretariat is at Annex 1 (a). The salary of DG and statutory expenses of DG are met from member country contributions which are pledged in the Governing Council. The local staff salaries and Secretariat maintenance expenses are met by the host country. Project staff expenses are met by the project.
- 1.2 In the last 2 decades, SACEP has had a certain number of programmes in the field of environmental law, biodiversity, air pollution, coastal and marine environment etc. Up to 1991, the work programmes determined by the Governing Council were guided by National Focal Points and Subject Focal Points. From 1991 the work programme was given a formal shape. SACEP has had 2 rounds of SACEP's Strategy Programmes 1 (SSP1) and SACEP's Strategy Programmes 2 (SSP2). The National Focal Points are continuing to assist and the Subject Focal Points have had some changes from time to time. Annex 2 gives the list of Focal Point and Subject Points. In 1997, NORAD, which has assisted some programs of SSP1 and SSP2 commissioned a review of its projects and made certain recommendations in August 1998 which included suggestions for strengthening the organization and avoidance of over lap between the work of SACEP and the sub group on environment of SAARC. (SAARC was constituted in 1985 as a regional South Asian Co-operation for Political Economic and other forms of co-operation in the region.)
- 1.3 SACEP has been assisted by several agencies including the Regional Office for Asia Pacific of UNEP and its Regional Centre at AIT, Bangkok. In fact, the origins of SACEP lay in the suggestions of an intergovernmental expert meeting held in Bangalore, India in March 1980 on the initiative of the then Regional Director of

UNEP-Regional Office for the Asia Pacific. UNEP has continued its support by setting up the South Asia Environment Natural Resources Information Centre (SENRIC) in 1994, promoting SACEP as the partner organization for the Male Declaration on transboundary air pollution in 1997 and associating SACEP with programmes for Global Environment Outlook(GEO) and State of Environment(SoE) reporting. As part of its Regional Seas Programme UNEP has also promoted through SACEP the South Asian Seas Action Plan which was approved in 1995. SACEP has also been associated with donors like NORAD, SIDA etc.

- 1.4 In its 8th meeting held on 29th September 2001, the Governing Council of SACEP felt the need for an evaluation of the past performance of SACEP over 2 decades and for identification of bottle necks in its funding, possible future work programmes and implementation mechanisms to achieve its objectives. Such an exercise was assisted by UNEP which commissioned the review by an External Review Panel comprising 3 members from the region who had experience in this field. The review was carried out during June July 2002 and the recommendations were presented on 6th August 2002. The composition and the recommendations of the external review are at Annex 3.
- 1.5 The report of the external review was considered at the Special Session of the Governing Council of SACEP held on 21st January 2003 and the recommendations were generally endorsed. In the 22nd Session of the Governing Council of UNEP held on 7th February 2003 in Nairobi, UNEP and SACEP signed a MoU on mutual co-operation within the framework of their respective mandates. As a follow up of this MoU and on the request of CC SACEP, UNEP extended its assistance and financial support for the preparation of SACEP's strategy programme. This was considered essentially an activity in continuation of the external review, focusing on the immediate and long term administrative and financial and strategic needs and the work programme. In the 85th meeting of the CC of SACEP held on 26th May 2003, I was commissioned for this consultancy task. The scope and specific outputs mentioned in the Terms of Reference as well as activities and schedules are at Annex 4.
- 1.6 A questionnaire was drafted for getting responses of the National Focal Points and sent on 13 June to all of them requesting replies by 28 June 2003. Only three replies from India, Maldives Sri Lanka and Nepal were received, before compiling the present report. Copy of the questionnaire and the replies received are in Annex 1 (b).
- 1.7 The task leading to this report began early in June 2003 and a series of meetings and discussions were held in pursuance and a gist of the activities and points which came up is at Annex 5. It may be added that many of the points made were essentially personal views expressed by the persons interviewed, I am beholden to all those who helped out in the fulfilment of this task, specially the members of the GC,CC of SACEP and DG SACEP and his colleagues.

2. SACEP STRATEGY

2.1 The vision of SACEP when it was founded was based on

- a) Recognition of environmental degradation caused by factors like poverty, over population, over consumption and wasteful production threatening economic development and human survival,
- b) Integration of environment and development as essential prerequisites to Sustainable Development, and
- c) Importance of co-operative action in the South Asian region where many ecological and development problems transcend national and administrative boundaries.

2.2 In the background of this Vision which committed SACEP to join the member countries in efforts to work individually and mutually for Sustainable Development in the region, ensuring equitable approaches both in environmental conservation and in socio economic development, the Mission of SACEP followed.

2.3 The External Review Committee reformulated the mission Statement of SACEP in terms of this Vision as follows:

“Mission of SACEP is to promote regional co-operation in South Asia in the field of environment, both natural and human and on issues of economic and social development which also impinge on the environment and vice versa; to support conservation and management of natural resources of the region and to work closely with all regional, national and international institutions, governmental and non governmental, as well as experts and groups engaged in such co-operation and conservation efforts.”

2.4 This had been reformulated in the backdrop of several developments before and after the Rio Conference on Environment and Development in 1992. Thus international conventions like those on global climate change, biodiversity, transboundary movement of hazardous wastes, Ozone layer and desertification and AGENDA 21 came into being. The Law of the Seas was agreed upon as a framework for co-operation in regional seas programmes. The World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg took note of the Millennium Declaration in the UN Summit in September 2000 when there was global understanding and commitment by the countries to strengthen efforts to uphold human dignity, equality and equity through principles of peace, democracy, human rights, strong governance, environmental sustainability, poverty reduction and partnerships. The goals were;

- a) Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger,
- b) Universal primary education,
- c) Gender equality and empowerment of women,

- d) Reduction of child mortality, improving maternal health and combating, HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases,
- e) Ensure environmental sustainability, and
- f) Developing global partnerships for development.

2.5 The Johannesburg Summit recognized these challenges, the meeting of which will promote sustainable development by reorienting policies and strengthening institutions at local, national, regional and international levels.

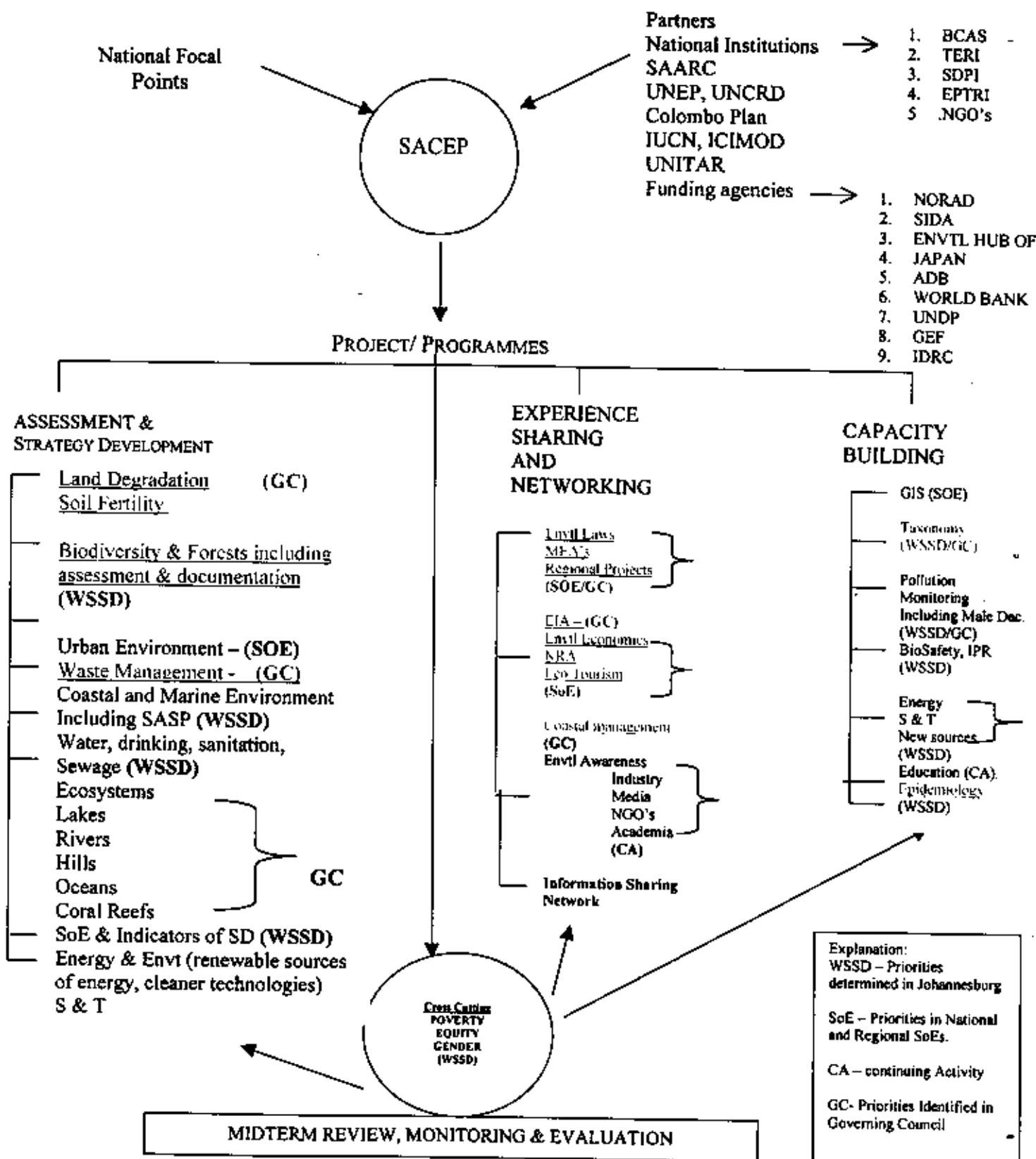
2.6 In addition to these developments, SoE reports have been prepared by all countries of South Asia bringing out priorities to be addressed (Annex 6). In 1985, SAARC has come into being as an organization developed for regional co-operation for South Asia to take further socio economic integration and programmes in various spheres where the joint strength of the region are demonstrable and effective. SAARC and SACEP have the same ownership and can play complementary roles in environmental conservation by SACEP playing the technical role, feeding into policies which are within the purview of SAARC. The strategy of SACEP in the next phase of its growth should comprehend these issues and increase the effectiveness of this regional organization and the national focal points in matters where regional co-operation will supplement national actions and make a difference at the margin which is noticeable, appreciable and will add value. In matters where transboundary efforts for the environmental moderation are called for as in South Asian Seas and Air Pollution (Male Declaration), SACEP can play a proactive role. Another field where it can play this is in transboundary biodiversity problems and solutions. In the case of freshwater sources which are in the forefront of global environmental problems, SACEP can partner institutions of the region to proffer good and harmonious technical solutions through select projects including conservation, management, water and sanitation and sewage treatment. SACEP should also carry forward programmes approved in the SACEP GC in January 2003. There is some similarity between priorities determined by SoE and those by GC. But distinct suggestions are considered below along with SoE priorities.

2.7 The strategy of SACEP should also be to promote regional co-operation in greater understanding of environmental degradation whether by way of land degradation, loss of soil fertility, natural disasters, loss of forests and biodiversity, sea level rise or ecosystem vulnerability of lakes, rivers, hills, islands, etc. It should engage in projects to look at waste management practices in South Asia, more specifically on hazardous waste management. Delivery mechanisms and legislative framework for coastal zone management, ELA, and assessment and documentation of biodiversity have been stressed by GC and can complement programmes already proposed. Thus Regional Activity Centre of South Asian Seas can be considered as an ongoing SAS Programme. Dismantling of ships in an environment friendly way can also be considered in SAS. In all these matters, SACEP should bring the expertise in the countries together and promote exchange of experience. A certain level of capacity building should also be there. Its role using the same strategy in raising environmental awareness, environmental legislation, environmental economics and natural resource

accounting and issues of common concern like sharing of genetic resources , IPR etc. may be valuable for the countries. All these initiatives must recognize poverty alleviation, equity, gender justice as cross cutting issues. Some of these projects should be taken up jointly with national as well as regional, international and other institutions. SACEP should also commission studies of the effects of and participation in multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and also keep in mind the need to evolve regional legal or quasi legal arrangements in certain areas which will be conducive to sustainable development in all the countries.

- 2.8 The strategy should also include a mid term review of projects and monitoring and evaluation at the end of each project to enhance the accountability of SACEP Secretariat and of the Governing Council itself.
- 2.9 A chart showing this strategy matrix is below. It is in this matrix of possible regional co-operation that the work programme for the quinquennium 2004 – 2005 as well as biennium 2004 – 2005 can be planned.

STRATEGY MATRIX FOR SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM



Note: Projects underlined could be taken in the longer term 2004-2008 while others can start in 2003/04. The institutions and subjects mentioned above are indicative and could be expanded to meet current and future needs. The list above is not to be considered exhaustive nor exclusive under any suggested group.

3. WORK PROGRAMME

- 3.1 In chapters 1 & 2 the explicit needs and priorities of South Asia as expressed in SoE Reports of the countries of the region and South Asia as well as by the Governing Council from time to time and the backdrop of the WSSD decisions and the Millennium development goals have been brought out. Based on these, a 5 year work programme for 2004-2008 and biennium work programme (2004-2005) for SACEP has to be suggested. As noted earlier priorities as well as projects will have to adapted to changing conditions. A regional co-operation programme has also to be tailored to the operational capacity of not only SACEP but also the national focal point and partner institutions. Much depends also on the processes of recruitment of programme staff for project formulation and preparation in identified areas and express donor commitments. Availability of resource persons and networking with stakeholders like industry, NGOs, Academia, Women's Group and others working on poverty alleviation and connected socio economic goals would also be matters which have to be considered when finalising the work programme each year. Therefore, at this stage only the framework for the work programme could be given, giving the time frame, broad project title and subject area
- 3.2 The replies to the questionnaire sent out to NFPs by the consultant contain a lot of material giving details of institutions, NGOs, industry association etc. in the country. These should be added to SACEP's database and used for associating some of them in the programmes of SACEP.
- 3.3 By the time this Report was prepared the work programme for 2003 was in an advanced stage and so no changes are suggested in it except to say that the possibility of starting two more projects on ocean assessment and air pollution with US aid may perhaps start if the loose ends are tied up immediately. Statements are given below for both the biennium programmes and the five year programme i. e. for 2004-2005 and 2004-2008. As this is subject to discussions in the CC, GC, Focal Points, Partner Organisations as well as funding agencies, the statements give only the indication of the partner organizations and funding agencies. It is difficult to give the fund value of the project at this stage without detailed project preparation. The nodal person or team from the Secretariat is also indicative as this should be decided by the DG SACEP and his team, and in respect of future programme will depend on whether the other programme staff are in place. An attempt has also been made in line with the strategy mix suggested earlier to show projects in 3 baskets of
1. Study & assessment
 2. Exchange of experience
 3. Training and capacity building
- 3.4 Once the required strengthening of the Secretariat is done, the long term aspects have to be added up for the 2004-2008 period. These will include providing services to Regional Programmes, support to Convention Secretariat's and regional database developments through project collaboration.

SACEP WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2003

Time Frame	Project Title	Subject Area	Officer in Charge	Total funding Value in US \$	Partner Organisation	
					Technical	Financial
April 2003	Workshop on Integrated Coastal Area and River Basin Management (ICARM) in the South Asian Seas Region	ICZM - SAS	PA	24,000	UNEP Division of Environmental Conventions, Nairobi & UNEP - GPA	
April 2003	South Asia Regional Consultation Workshop to Prepare 2003-2006 Regional plan of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities	GPA	PA	Not Known	UNEP - GPA & International Water Management Institute (IWMI)	
June 2003	GIWA Sub-region 53 Bay of Bengal Assessment Final Workshop	GIWA	PA	Not Known	UNEP / GEF / Kalmar University, Sweden	
30 June - 4 July	MARPOL 73/78 implementation and enforcement workshop	SAS	PA	61,633	International Maritime Organisation (IMO)	
Sept 2003	Asian Regional Workshop on Implementation of the UNEP Guidelines on Compliance with and Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements	SACEP	PA / PK	102,000	SACEP & MOEF, SL	UNEP Division of Policy Implementation, Nairobi
September	South Asian Regional Workshop on the Expansion of Integrated Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN)	SAS	PA / NP	25,000	ICRAN, GCRMN, CORDIO, ICRJ	UNEP Division of Environmental Conventions
22 to 26 September	Regional OPRC Level 2 Training Course	SAS	PA	45,291	International Maritime Organisation (IMO)	
29 Sept to 1 October	National OPRC Level 3 (Contingency Planning Workshop) Maldives	SAS	PA	30,947	International Maritime Organisation (IMO)	
Oct - Nov 2003	SACEP - GLOBE Parliamentarians Conference for South Asia	SAS	PA / PK	To be determined	GLOBE & SACEP	
27 to 31 October	National OPRC Level 3 Contingency Planning Workshop Bangladesh	SAS	PA	34,386	International Maritime Organisation (IMO)	

25 to 28 November	National OPRC Level 3 (Contingency Planning Workshop) – Pakistan	SAS	PA	29,281	International Maritime Organisation (IMO)
5 days in December	National MARPOL/Ship Recycling Workshop – Bangladesh	SAS	PA	39,272	International Maritime Organisation (IMO)
End Dec 2003	Finalisation, Printing and Launch of Handbook on National Environmental Legislation and Institutions in South Asia	SACEP	PA	15,000	UNEP - ROAP
2003	2 Selected Projects on the Follow up on Environmental Education and Training Action Plan-South Asia 2002-2007	SACEP	PA / PKK	20,000	UNEP-ROAP
2003-2005	Project on Coastal Resources Management				US - NSF
2003	Project on local air quality Management				US - EPA
2003-2005	Establishment of NCSD & Development of NSDS for South Asia region	SENJIC	PK	1,500,000	NORAD
2003	Implementation of Male' Declaration –Phase 2 All member countries and Iran 8 Training Courses 2 Network Meetings 1 Stakeholder Meeting Installation of Monitoring Equipment	SENJIC	PK	500,000	SEI, UNEP

SACEP WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2004-2005 BIENNIAL

Time frame	Tentative Project title	Programme Area	Subject Area	SACEP Officer/Team	Financial Requirements	Possible Partners	Possible Funding Agencies
2003-2005	Establishment of NCSD & Development of NSDS for South Asia region	1	Sustainable Development	PK	1,500,000	NFP, UNEP-RRCAAP-	NORAD
2004 - 2005	Assessment of Sea Water Quality in the South Asian Seas Region	1	Sea Water Quality	PA	2,000,000	NFP, NIWA	NORAD
2004 - 2005	Partnership with UNEP in giving effect to UNEP GC Decision on Implementation of Outcome of the Global Judges Symposium	2	Law	PA	To be determined	NFP, UNEP Environmental Law Branch Division of Policy Development & Law	
2004 -2005	Experience sharing on land degradation and soil fertility and ameliorative measures	2	Land	SACEP team	To be determined	NFP, SPWD, ICAR, ICIMOD	FAO, UNEP
2004 -2005	Livelihood security and environment Gender and environment.	2	Livelihoods & Crosscutting	SACEP team	To be determined	NFP, SAARC, BCAS	NORAD
2004-2005	The role of traditional practices and participatory forestry in sustainable forest management in South Asia (Workshop + Report)	2	Forestry	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP, IFP Nepal	FAO, SIDA, ICIMOD
2004-2005	Regional and National Workshop on MARPOL/OPRC Globalast	2, 3	Coastal and marine	SACEP-SAS Team		NFP, IMO	IMO
2004 - 2005	Experience sharing in Sustainable Urban Settlements	2	Urban	SACEP team	To be determined	NFP, SAARC	NORAD
2004 - 2005	Exchange of Experiences in Wetland	2	Wetlands	SACEP team	To be determined	NFP, IUCN,	Netherlands, World

	Management (RAMSAR)					determined	SACON (Coimbatore, India)	Bank
2004 - 2005	Capacity development of SACEP Secretariat Staff	3	General	SACEP team	To be determined		Colombo-Plan, UNEP	Colombo-Plan, UNEP
2004 - 2005	<p>REPLICATION OF THE UNDERMENTONED GEF PROJECTS FOR THE SAS REGION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing Pesticide Runoff to the Caribbean Sea -- Secretariat for the Cartagena Convention (UNEP-CAR/RCU) with the National Executing Agencies Reducing Reliance on Agricultural Pesticide Use in the Senegal and Niger River Basins through Integrated Production and Pest Management, and a Community-based Pollution Prevention System - FAO (Rome) 	1	Non Point Water Pollution	SACEP SAS Team	To be determined		UNEP- POP's Unit and UNEP's Regional Seas in Nairobi	GEF
2004 - 2005	<p>CORAL REEF ACTIVITIES</p> <p>A. Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) - South Asia Node</p> <p>SASP has also expressed their willingness to host GCRMN - South Asia node and assist in updating the coral reef database prepared by them.</p> <p>B. International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN UNEP) Regional Seas Programme is</p>	1, 2, 3	Coral Reefs	SACEP SAS Team	To be determined		NFP, GCRMN, ICRAN, ICRI, CORDIO, NIO - India	GEF, DFID

	now supporting SASP to develop proposals for extension of ICRAN activities to the SAS Region.							
2004 -2005	Harmonising Water quality Monitoring Standards	1	Fresh Water	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP, BCAS	Netherlands	
2004 -2005	Development of waste water emission targets to reduce the coastal water pollution in SA	1	Coastal Water	SACEP SAS Team	To be determined	NFP, UN- Habitat, UNEP-GPA	Netherlands	
2004 - 2005	Development of a South Asia Renewable Energy Network	2	Energy	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP, TERI	ADB	
2004 -2005	Regional Workshop on multilateral environmental agreements	3	MEA	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP, Colombo Plan, SAARC, UNEP-Dec	Colombo Plan	
2004 -2005	Assess the status of migratory marine animal species and development of a regional strategy for their conservation	1	Biodiversity	SACEP SAS Team	To be determined	NFP, IUCN	GEF	
2004 - 2005	Study of Nature Tourism in various heritage cites (heritage, nature, recreational)	1,2	Tourism	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP, IUCN, WTO	World Bank	
2004 - 2005	Regional cooperation on utilization of species endemic to the region especially targeting on bio-piracy Regional expert meeting on endemic medicinal plants	1,2	Biodiversity	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP, IUCN	GEF	
2004 -2005	Regional workshop on environmental economics and natural resources accounting system	3	Environmental Economics	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP, EPTRI MSE- India	NORAD	
2004 - 2005	Development of economic instruments to use in managing protected areas	1	Environmental Economics	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP, EPTRI MSE- India	NORAD	

2004 -2005	Cleaner Production and Technology and CDM: Capacity Building / Exchange of Experiences	2,3	Cleaner Technology	SACEP Team	To be determined	WII NFP, UNIDO, SDPL, EPTRI	SIDA, UNEP, US- Hub
2004 -2005	EIA : Regional Capacity Building / Exchange of Experiences	2,3	EIA	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP, UNEP, SAARC, Colombo-Plan	NORAD
2004 -2005	Capacity Building for the control of coastal erosion in the context of ICZM in the South Asian Seas	3	Coastal and Marine	SACEP SAS Team	To be determined	NFP, UNEP-RS, NIOT	Netherlands
2004 -2005	Identification of Capacity Building Requirements in Coastal and Marine Environmental Protection and Management	1	Coastal and Marine	SACEP SAS Team	To be determined	NFP, Colombo Plan	UNEP
2004 -2005	Formation of A South Asia Environmental Information Network for Environmental Law	2	Environmental Law	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP	UNDP, UNEP
2004 - 2005	Rehabilitation of Eroded Mini Watersheds Using an Integrated Approach in South Asia	2	Land Management	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP, ICIMOD	

SACEP WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2004-2008 QUENNUM

Time frame	Tentative Project title	Programme Area	Subject Area	SACEP Officer/Team	Financial Requirements	Possible Partners	Possible Funding Agencies
2004-2008	Male' Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its Likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia : Phase III : Implementation Phase (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Iran)	1	Transboundary air pollution	SACEP, SENRIC	1,200,000	UNEP RRC.AP	SIDA
2004 -2008	<p>WORK PROGRAMME WITH UNEP'S WORLD CONSERVATION AND MONITORING CENTRE (WCMC), UK</p> <p>A. Regionalisation of global datasets: UNEP-WCMC maintains global datasets on marine ecosystems, threatened marine species and threats to marine biodiversity.</p> <p>B. Evaluation under World Heritage Convention of tropical coastal ecosystems in World Heritage Sites</p> <p>C. Use of internet technology to foster horizontal linkages and facilitate data sharing and information exchange between different SACEP and other Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans;</p> <p>D. Capacity building with UNEP-WCMC in training in the areas of</p>	2	Coastal Biodiversity	SACEP SAS, SENRIC Team	To be determined	NFP, UNEP-WCMC	ADB, GEF, NORAD

	its core competencies						
2004 –2008	Establishment Of Regional Activity Centres (RAC) in the priority areas of the South Asian Seas Action Plan Setting up of Regional Activity Centres for specific priority areas. A. Oil Spill Contingency B. Land Based activities C. Integrated Coastal Zone Management D. Biodiversity & Conservation & Monitoring	2, 3	Coastal and Marine	SACEP SAS Team	To be determined	NFP UNEP-RS IMO	
2004 - 2008	OTHER SAS PROJECTS A. Participation in GIWA Work Programme – Bay of Bengal Sub Regional Assessment B. Activities connected with the Indian GOOS Programme	1	Coastal and Marine	SACEP SAS Team	To be determined	NFP, GIWA, GOOS	SIDA
2004 - 2008	GPA ACTIVITIES The GPA Secretariat in its strategic plan upto 2005 has identified certain Activity Clusters. The SAS Programme will be concentrating on the following Activity Clusters 1. Promote & Facilitate non binding Regional Agreements 2. Contribute to Regional Assessment & Analysis for Action	1	Coastal and Marine	SACEP SAS Team	To be determined	NFP, UNEP-GPA	UNEP

2004 - 2008	<p>3. Capacity Building</p> <p>4. Development of a Clearing House Mechanism for SAS</p> <p>5. Strengthening capabilities of local, national & regional authorities for implementation of GPA</p> <p>6. Development & Implementation National Programmes of Action on LBA</p> <p>7. Support Governments to initiate and implement National Regional Actions to address GPA Source categories</p> <p>8. Integrated Coastal Zone Management</p> <p>9. Awareness Building</p> <p>SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES UNDER GPA</p> <p>1. Finalisation of National Action Plans in SAS Member Countries</p> <p>2. Follow up recommendations of the ICARM Workshop in Chennai</p> <p>3. Implementation of National Activities and Regional Activities as recommended at the GPA South Asian Seas Workshop</p>	1	Environmental Health	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP, WHO	US- NIH, WB, SIDA
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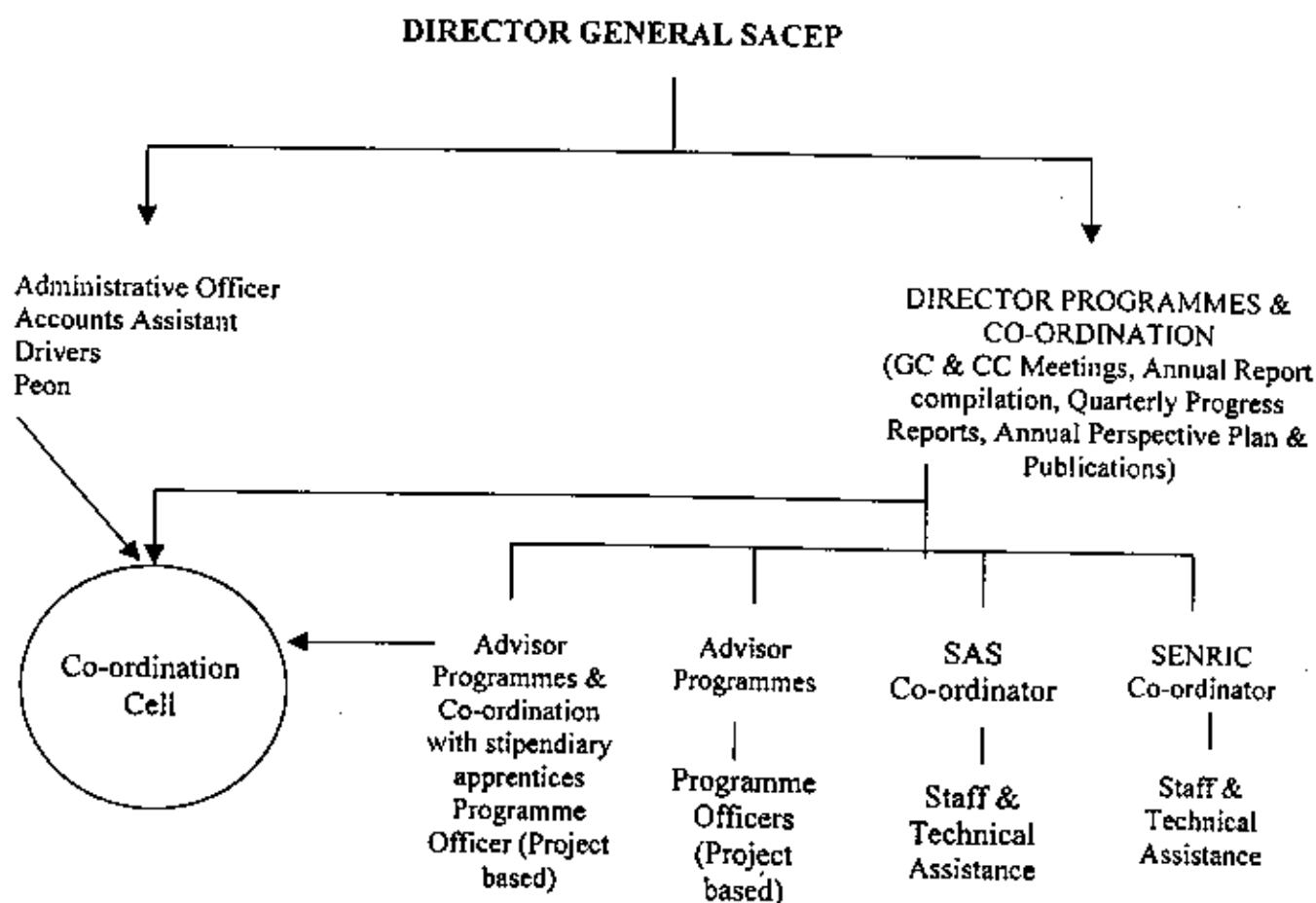
	environmental sound management of toxic chemicals and other hazardous waste		management		determined	Convention Secretariat, EPTRI	
2004-2008	<p>Environment Education and Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional Workshop for decision makers to facilitate the formulation of EET strategies and planning - Participatory process in SD- a programme for master trainers - An Environmental Education website for decision makers - Green citizenships- Distance learning programmes in Environment and Development for students at tertiary level - Greening schools – A south Asian workshop - Education for water conservation – A south Asian specific focus meeting 	1,2,3	Environment Education	SACEP Team	To be determined	NFP, CEE- India	NORAD

4. GOVERNANCE ISSUES

4.1 Secretariat

The External Review Committee has gone into the question of an optimum administrative structure of SACEP and suggested strengthening of the Secretariat with a Director Programmes and 2 Programme Advisors, one with environmental sciences background and the other in life sciences. This should be implemented as early as possible as it would release the dynamism latent in the organization by allowing leeway to the DG to engage in taking forward the organisation with better contacts with focal points, donors and other partner institutions and institutions of South Asia outside the Governmental System also. This can also give the DG the extra room to look at organizational and related policy problems without excessive preoccupation with programme formulation, implementation and monitoring. At the same time it will give a greater continuity in management in the eyes of those who would like to support SACEP and its programmes from outside.

4.2 The revised organizational structure can be as in the following chart:



Note: The functions can be reallocated by DG as and when jobs are created or vacancies arise. As long as programmes even with some independent context like SAS are housed in SACEP because of the linkages with other activities the personnel have to be part of the SACEP team and reporting to DG, CC and GC. The advisor should help raise the profile of the Secretariat to mobilise financial and other resources

It may be noted that the revised structure provides for a co-ordination slot to be serviced both by the administration and the programme wings under the direction of Director Programmes and Coordination. In this organizational structure, there should be transparency, accountability and a clear memory system. Internal and frequent staff meetings, LAN System where there is open access to information, reporting on all activities including visits and tours undertaken, maintaining papers in orderly fashion so that the memory of past transactions is retained-all these are essential for better governance. It is also clear that much of this will depend on the examples set by senior functionaries like DG and Director Programmes.

4.3 GC, CC & Focal Points

Strengthening the Secretariat without taking a few parallel steps in the other governance structures like focal points, CC, and GC would be like applauding with one hand. While strengthening these structures may be beyond the purview of SACEP Secretariat, the initiatives may have to come from the Governing Council which could resolve to,

- i.) Meet twice every year, ensure attendance at the highest level and also take up a review of not only the annual report of SACEP which should be mandated but also the outputs from the Focal Points.
- ii.) Appropriately strengthen the focal points to discharge their functions effectively and to enable them to give priority to SACEP related work. The subject focal points which are not active could be substituted and subjects like bio safety and climate change adaptability added.
- iii.) Charge CC with responsibilities to build bridges for SACEP with focal points through functionaries both in focal point ministry and Ministry of External Affairs designated as SACEP in charge. Clearly define the functions of CC within and in review of work of SACEP. Quarterly Reports of progress placed by SACEP should be reviewed by CC and course corrections suggested.
- iv.) Proactively interact with partner and donor institutions and other regional institutions once in 2 years to determine any organizational changes required both in SACEP and focal points.
- v.) Ensure financial contributions are made in time and solve the problems that come in the way in national focal points.
- vi.) Promote projects directly funded by member countries in addition to projects funded by external donors.
- vii.) Start with a small Advisory Committee to begin with. This could be headed by the Deputy Executive Director UNEP and comprise two eminent experts from

the region and 2 members of CC. SACEP Secretariat should service this Committee which should meet once a year and review all SACEP Programmes and suggest mid course changes if required.

viii.) Constitute the selection panel of 3 persons (drawing in the two expert in the Advisory Committee) for recruitment of personnel.

ix.) Review the progress in MOU's , particularly those with SAARC and UNEP.

The DG SACEP should ensure that these subjects are included in the Agenda with appropriate inputs

4.4 Partnerships

SACEP Secretariat should with reference to the projects identified in the strategy matrix and work programme build the specific contacts required not only with donors but also regional and partner institutions as well as experts and NGOs in the field who have specialized in the subject area, depending on the arrangements of funds. As separately suggested, SACEP could have a meeting calling all such organisations to invoke their help and co-operation in carrying its work forward. Failing that SACEP could correspond with all of them for this purpose. All focal points should be involved in this exercise. SACEP has successfully negotiated MoU with UNEP and MoU with SAARC is also in the offing. Some discussions on MoU with IUCN have taken place. All this should be carried forward and possibility of MoU's with ADB, Colombo Plan, National and non-governmental Institutions like TERI, EPTRI, SDPI, Development Alternatives (DA-India), Centre for Science and Environment (CSE-India), BCAS explored.

4.5 In addition, DG SACEP should meet with all focal points once a year and all donors and partner and regional institutions, once in 2 years at least to carry forward project ideas and keep regional co-operation alive.

4.6 The revised Organisation Chart incorporating these changes is at Annex-1(aa)

5. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- 5.1 Money alone cannot make an organization go but if all other ingredients are there without money, the organization cannot go, then too. Thus it was that the External Review Committee went carefully into many factors contributing to the realisation of the latent potential of SACEP and recommended payment by member countries of all voluntarily committed contributions without any cuts but also of a one-time contribution of US \$ 3 million to help strengthen the Secretariat. It was clearly recognized that this was the bare minimum required to strengthen SACEP Secretariat with a high functionary as Director Programmes and two Programme advisors and also leave a margin for essential travel to meet focal points, donors etc. A top functionary like the Director General or his Senior Staff cannot be expected to deliver a wide range of programmes in priority areas identified in the SoE reports and by the GC if they are desk-bound. Yet there has to be continuity in programme management when the DG is away. Also, there is need for constant follow up of the execution of programmes even if entrusted to partner agencies. The augmentation for staffing and expenditure outside projects is a vital necessity and a very important ingredient of the total package of measures to be taken to revitalize SACEP as proposed by the External Review and endorsed by the GC. Also to be reckoned are the incentive payments to the Staff of SACEP including local staff paid by the host country. They deserve a thirteenth month salary every year. In the organization where some programme staff are paid more, incentive payments to project staff in the less well paid programmes should also be kept in view and got approved by CC. Some money should also be set apart to take with SACEP on temporary basis stipendiary apprentices from the university system in the region who can be paid stipends up to US \$ 300 per month to help in co-ordination and programme wings and also gain work experience.
- 5.2 Yet there are signals that all the member countries are somewhat unwilling to deliver this part of the package. In fairness, one must say that in the interactions that preceded this report some hopeful remarks have been made. If these are translated into action there is hope for SACEP.
- 5.3 The uncertainty arises from the submissions that SACEP should strive to get corpus fund contributions from donors and that the matter is to be discussed further. All the interviews with donors clearly establish they are in no mood to oblige in this. But they will consider projects and programmatic assistance if SACEP Secretariat is strengthened and outreach of project preparation and execution widens. But this will not yield resources for urgent strengthening of the Secretariat which is necessary if all the programmes visualised by a GC are to be taken up. The railroad has to come first if the rail traffic has to increase.
- 5.4 The recommendation of the External Review for the corpus fund contributions by member countries is therefore reiterated. The member countries will gain more by way of the expanded activities of SACEP which will be for their and regional benefit.

The package suggested by the Review Committee will lose its basis and meaning if it is sought to be dismantled expecting that implementation of some recommendations to the exclusion of others will achieve the intended objectives. Dispassionate consideration by member countries will show this one time contribution is no hardship at all, but a boon for revitalization of SACEP in a fulsome spirit of regional co-operation.

- 5.5 A statement is enclosed showing forecasted cash flow based on corpus grants and payment of the annual contribution for 2003.

FORECASTED CASH FLOW

	US \$	US \$	US \$	US \$
Proposed Corpus Fund				3,000,000.00
Expected Interest of Corpus Fund	2%		60,000.00	
Agreed Country Contribution		127,400.00		
Average Expenditure per Annum		(65,000.00)		
Expected Expenses for SACEP GC		(30,000.00)		
Additional Reserve		(10,000.00)		
Expected Balance Country Contribution			22,400.00	
Expected Balance Income			82,400.00	
PROPOSED ADDITIONAL STAFF				
Estimated Remuneration Package				
Director @ 2500/= per month	30,000.00			
2 Programme Advisors @ 2000/= per month	48,000.00			
Additional Expenses				
Communication/Stationary/Misc.	}	10,000.00		
Furniture & Equipment				
Air Travel & Perdiem				
Director Programmes	}	10,000.00		
2 Programme Officers				
Estimated Expenditure		113,000.00		
Deficit pf Proposed Plan			30,600.00	

Deficit can be partly made up by arrears contribution of US \$ 400,393.57 being paid. As the arrears will be credited to the corpus fund, the interest earned every year will be US \$ 8007/- This will leave a deficit of US \$ 22593/- (when the figure of US \$ 3 million was computed, interest rate at about 4% was assumed, which has unfortunately proved incorrect as the interest rates have dropped further).

**ACTUAL FINANCIAL
STATUS**

	US \$	US \$	US \$
SACEP Trust Fund			25,000.00
SACEP Country Contribution Brought Forward Balance		45,000.00	
Average Receipts of Country Contribution		65,000.00	
Average Expenditure per Annum	65,000.00		
Expenditure for GC Meeting (Partly Funded)	10,000.00		
Balance Brought Forward			
SACEP Trust Fund			25,000.00
SACEP Country Contribution Balance			32,000.00

If the recruitment of the Director and 1 Programme Advisors is made partially in 2003 and partly in 2004, there will be no deficit. If the member countries agree to pay 1 million dollars more to the corpus fund there will be no deficit, as this amount will fetch more interest to cover the deficit. The other alternative is to have the Programme Advisor at a lower salary, which may not be the best way to meet the situation. Perhaps one Programme Advisor may be taken in at the salary of US \$ 2,000/- per month and the other Programme Advisor may be taken in through one of the projects on contract, expecting that at the end of the project period the revenue surpluses and the recoveries from projects will meet the salary of this functionary on a regular basis. Starting from now, the corpus fund should have contributions from other sources as follows in the coming years:

- i. recovery of 5% from overheads of projects
- ii. surpluses from project execution due to currency evaluation or indexing of salary payments to regional levels

It must become a regular part of the financial accounting in SACEP to ensure such recoveries.

It may be noted that the above tables relate only to Corpus Fund and Annual Contribution usage. Depending on these flows and the project recoveries (which will depend on actual project sanctions), the full financial status of SACEP will have to be prepared by the Secretariat. While doing so the fund flows on account of special projects like SASP and SENRIC may also be added.

- 5.6 As regards Corpus Fund, the accretions should be credited to a Trust Fund, which should be managed in accordance with guidelines to be laid down by GC. It is recommended that the Trust be registered under Sri Lanka laws and Trustees have the Chairman of the CC as Chairman with the DG SACEP and a nominee of the GC as

- Fellow Trustees. The corpus Fund itself should not be run down for any direct payments except if there is a remote contingency of it having to be wound up. The investments should be made in a mix of securities that are not liable to market fluctuations or depreciation and 90% of the annual income should be used to fund Secretariat expenses leaving the balance as a contingency Reserve. Until the Trust is registered the Corpus Fund contribution may be kept in a General Reserve and in bank deposits and the interest receipts brought to revenue accounts for Secretariat expenses. The auditors should be informed explicitly about this so that this can be correctly regulated along with the future in flows by way of overhead recoveries etc.
- 5.6 Resource mobilisation for Projects and Programmes should follow the same practices as in the past with SSP1 and SSP2. These should be separately accounted for in the books to enable donors to have the correct picture. When making estimates of expenses for longer duration Projects SACEP should provide for contingencies like currency fluctuations, unexpected developments etc.
- 5.7 Resources should be mobilised for specific projects from regional member countries, especially when the field of studies, exchanges in capacity building takes place in any country. Apart from providing infrastructure, the country should be persuaded to accept commitments for lodging and daily expenses leaving only travel expenses to be borne by SACEP from other sources. This has not been tried in the past but can be tried now, especially taking a cue from the experience of Colombo Plan.
- 5.8 Similarly, resources can be raised from the private sector of the countries either from industrial companies practising sustainable ways of manufacture or business or from industrial groups and federations which have a track record of engaging in 'green' business.

6. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN SACEP

6.1 Director General

The External Review Committee has already suggested following a merit-based recruitment of DG while continuing the rotation system. However, during the discussion with various organisations including UNEP, ICIMOD, Colombo Plan etc., it transpired that there could be an even greater value for the organization if the recruitment of DG is based on selection from a wider catchment within the region every time and a longer term of 5 years, ensuring however that at the end of each term, the next recruitment considers candidates only from countries other than the one from which the earlier DG was selected. There is a great deal of objectivity, fairness and value for SACEP if this procedure is adopted.

- 6.2 The Governing Council may choose one of these methods and initiate the selection process immediately for the next DG as the incumbency of the current DG finishes in July 2004. If the rotation method suggested by external Review is adopted, nominations of 3 persons of excellence in the field may be called for from the country and minimum qualification of a masters degree with preferred qualification of a PhD. In addition the candidates must be fluent in English and at least one language of the region. Knowledge of the other non-regional languages will be a plus factor. The work experience should include work on projects, programmes or on technical environmental fields or policy making and implementing bodies in the country, region or international sphere with a good record of a knowledge of South Asian and donor of funding or funding organisational requirements.
- 6.3 In parallel the Governing Council should appoint a panel of 3 experts from the region to screen the nominations as suggested by the External Review, interview short listed candidates and recommend the most suitable candidate to the GC. If none of the candidates are suitable a fresh panel should be called for and it should be open for the experts Panel to recommend to GC to skip the rotation and to ask for nominations from all the countries.
- 6.4 If the GC decides to take a fresh step in recruitment of DG on a region cum merit basis, now that one round of nominations is over, and this is the preferred path, the CC can authorise advertising in the region in the papers mentioned by focal points in replies to the questionnaire sent to these in them in the present exercise. The qualifications in para 6.2 must be followed. In addition, national focal points may also send a nomination. The GC should have the panel of 3 experts examining these to screen and shortlist the most suitable person.
- 6.5 In either process, the selection procedure must be completed before March 2004 (and so also whenever a vacancy is likely to arise starting the process eight months earlier) and the terms and conditions of appointment cleared with the candidate who should join the organisation at least 15 days before the incumbent DG retires to familiarise himself with working of SACEP.

6.6 Director Programme and co-ordination as well as 2 Programme Advisors

Their recruitment as suggested by the External Review should start as soon as the Corpus fund is in place. In fact, if the arrears contribution in 2003 cross US \$ 100,000, the recruitment of a programme officer with environmental science background can start straight away. The advertisements should be region wide in the newspapers suggested by focal points. It should be open to focal points to suggest names to the Expert panel, but they should be screened on par with other candidates.

6.7 Upgrading Capacity

The capacities in SACEP will be upgraded not only by these steps but also by taking steps to expose all other staff to project formulation and writing techniques, methodology of review, monitoring and evaluation, sensitisation for team work, knowledge of regional priorities as expressed not only on SoEs but also tested by field visits to all member countries at least once for all staff members and exposure to regional and international organisations like UNEP, ICIMOD, ASEAN, etc. to the extent feasible. Training programmes for this may be arranged in partnership with Ministries in Colombo as well as member countries. For capacity building programmes resource persons, NGOs, experts etc. from a wide catchment should be linked by SACEP taking the help of focal points and partner institutions like SAARC, ICIMOD, IUCN, Colombo Plan etc.

7. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation plan suggested below is predicated on the assumption that the suggestions made in this report on the strengthening of the SACEP Secretariat, on the assumption of extra roles of governance by GC, CC, national Focal Points, the systematic preparation of projects based on quick and effective interaction with National Focal Points, partner institutions and donors and scheduling the responsibilities in house as well as ex house of SACEP Staff and resource persons/institutions engaged from outside or participating as partners. The modalities of implementations would have to be fine tuned by DG and CC to emerging situations and directions of GC from time to time.

7.1 The plan is presented as a series of bench marked time frames and activities as follows:

Month	Task
August/September 2003	Sounding out NFP's, Partners and donors on project proposal preparation in accordance with the suggested work programme.
October 2003	Acceptance/modifications of the SACEP strategy & Implementation Plan in a Special Session by GC may be requested to authorise DG & CC members to finalise appointment of programme staff based on recommendations of Panel. Discuss MoUs with Colombo Plan, ADB etc. Request member countries to pay arrears of contribution and corpus contribution as decided by GC
November 2003	Starting the process for recruitment of DG and extra Programme Staff. Appointment of panel and calling for nominations giving time up to January 2004 Pursue contribution by member countries Recasting the work programme based on inputs from GC meeting (it is being assumed that there will be no major changes as the work programme takes note of earlier directions of GC). Preparation of projects proposal. Conclusions of MoUs with SAARC and IUCN for 2004 and sending them to NFPs, Partners and Donors to get further commitments and support.
December 2003	Preparation of quarterly progress report for CC. Pursue contribution by member countries Mid year review and monitoring of programme implementation of 2003 projects (in future years this review and monitoring should be done in <u>September</u> so that it can be incorporated in the quarterly report for quarter ending September). The review and monitoring

	<p>should be in house by a co-ordination team.</p> <p>Taking forward MoUs with other institutions.</p>
January 2004	<p>Preparation of annual report. Also terminal reports for 2003 project starting of 2004 projects as per work programme.</p> <p>Pursue contribution by member countries</p>
February 2004	<p>Screening of nominations for DG and Programme Officers by Panel short listing. Candidates for interview. Continuation of projects as per work programme.</p> <p>Pursue contribution by member countries</p>
March 2004	<p>Interviews of short listed nominees by Panel and finalisation of recommendations. Project implementation continues. Preparation of projects for 2005 starts. Meeting of CC to approve appointment of programme staff and annual reports and accounts.</p> <p>Pursue contribution by member countries</p>
April/May 2004	<p>Programme staff in place. Quarterly progress report for CC followed by GC meeting to finalise appointments of DG. Continue project preparation for 2005 and pose to NFPs, Donors and Partners for approval. Continue implementation of work programme for 2004. start up of publications for 2004 and web site.</p> <p>Report to CC and GC about payment of contributions and the financial position bringing out whether strengthening of the Secretariat etc. as suggested by the external review and the consultant have gone through or not. If not guidance may be sought on where SACEP should cut back on work programmes.</p>
June 2004	<p>DG takes charge and decide on project leader, teams and resource persons for projects of 2005 and beyond.</p> <p>Mid Year – Mid year review and monitoring of work in house. Continue implementation of work programme for 2004.</p>
July 2004	<p>Presentation of review and monitoring and quarterly reports to CC and through them to NFPs. Prepare projects for 2005.</p> <p>Implementation of work programme for 2004</p>
August 2004	<p>Work programme for 2004 and tours by DG to meet NFPs, Partners, NGOs, institutions and donors in the region.</p>
September 2004	<p>Work Programme for 2004. DG concludes tours and prepares a report for CC and GC. Publications and up grading web site continues. Finalise projects for 2005 for approval of CC with a perspective for 2006</p>

October/November 2004	Quarterly Review and Monitoring Progress Report followed by meeting of CC & GC. GC meeting in October/November 2004 also for interaction with stakeholders taking into account DG's report. Work programme for 2004.
December 2004	Prepare terminal reports for 2004 projects. Put in place teams for 2005 Work Programme. Preparation of Annual Reports for 2004.
December 2004/January 2005	Quarterly review and monitoring and advance preparation of projects for 2006. Audit of accounts
February/March 2005	Start meeting of CC and GC to approve annual report and accounts. Evaluation of projects for 2004 in consultation with funding agencies. Results to be places before CC & GC by October/November 2005.

- 7.2 The cycle of implementation may continue on this pattern with the Plan for 2006 being prepared by April 2005 and continuing this process.