



REPORT
THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE
GOVERNING COUNCIL

South Asia Co-operative Environment
Programme
(SACEP)

03 – 06 NOVEMBER 2019
DHAKA, BANGLADESH



South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
No. 146/24A, Havelock Road
Colombo 05
Sri Lanka

CERTIFICATE

The Report of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme held on 3 – 6 November 2019 in Dhaka, Bangladesh is herewith submitted to the members of the Governing Council and the Consultative Committee, in fulfilment of the financial and administrative procedures of SACEP.

Dr. Abas Basir
Director General
30th January 2020

**Report of the Fifteenth Meeting of the
Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
(SACEP)**

**3 – 6 November 2019
Dhaka, Bangladesh**

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

REPORT OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

<i>Para No.</i>	CONTENTS	<i>Page No.</i>
1	Introduction	1
2	Attendance	1
3	Inauguration	1
4	Election of Office Bearers	2
5	Adoption of Agenda and organization of work	2
6	Country Statements / Brief Opening Remarks by the Member States	2
7	Statements by the Observers	3
8	Presentation of the Report of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points by the Rapporteur	3
9	Discussions and Endorsement of Recommendations agreed upon at the Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points	3
	9.1 Institutional Matters	3
	9.2 Programme Matters	5
	Work Programme (2019 - 2020)	10
	9.3 Funding and Financial Matters	10
10	Approval of the Annual Audited Reports of Accounts for the Financial Years Ending 31 st December, 2016 and 31 st December 2017	11
11	Venue and Date for the Sixteenth Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP	11
12	Any Other Business	12
13	Adoption of Report	12
14	Closure of Meeting	12

List of Annexes

		<i>Page No.</i>
1	List of Participants	13
2	Welcome address by Dr. Abas Basir, Director General, SACEP	19
3	Welcome Address of the Host Country, Mr. Mahmud Hasan, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of Bangladesh	23
4	Address by Head of Delegation, Mr. Idrees Malyar, Deputy Director General of the National Environmental Protection Agency, Government of Afghanistan and Out-going Chairman of GC-SACEP	27
5	Address by the Out-going Chairman of IMM-SASP and the Head of Delegation, H.E Mr. Shah Faisal Kakar, Acting High Commissioner of Pakistan in Bangladesh	31
6	Speech of the Special Guest, H.E Ms. Habibun Nahar, MP. Hon' Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Bangladesh	35
7	Speech of the Special Guest, Hon' Mr. Ahmed Mujthaba, Minister of State for Environment, Republic of Maldives	39
8	Speech of the Special Guest, Hon' Mr. Prakash Keshav Javadekar, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India	43
9	Speech of the Special Guest, H.E Mr. Md. Shahab Uddin, MP. Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Bangladesh	49
10	Speech of the Chief Guest, H. E. Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, MP. Hon' Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh	53

11	Address by the Chairperson, Mr. Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Bangladesh	59
12	Vote of thanks by Dr. A. K. M. Rafique Ahammed, Director General, Department of Environment, Government of Bangladesh	63
13	Agenda and Annotated Agenda	67
14	Country Statement by Mr. Idrees Malyar, Deputy Director General, National Environment Protection Agency, Head of Delegation, Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	73
15	Country Statement by Hon' Mr. Md. Shahab Uddin, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Head of Delegation, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	77
16	Country Statement by Mr. Karma C. Nedrup, Environment Specialist / Director General, Head of Delegation, National Environment Commission, Royal Government of Bhutan	81
17	Country Statement by Hon' Mr. Prakash Keshav Javadekar Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Head of Delegation, Republic of India	85
18	Country Statement by Hon' Mr. Ahmed Mujthaba, Minister of State for Environment, Head of Delegation, Republic of Maldives	89
19	Country Statement by Mr. Dhirendra Kumar Pradhan, Joint Secretary (Technical), Ministry of Forests and Environment, Head of Delegation, Government of Nepal	91
20	Country Statement by H. E. Mr. Shah Faisal Kakar, Acting High Commissioner, High Commission of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Dhaka, Head of Delegation, Government of Pakistan	95
21	Country Statement by Mr. Udaya Ranjith Seneviratne, Secretary to President of Sri Lanka, Head of Delegation, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka	99
22	Statement by Dr. Isabelle Louis, Deputy Regional Director, United Nations Environment Programme for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP-ROAP)	103

23	Statement by Mr. David Milton Ogden, Chief, Governance Branch Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions	107
24	Statement by Ms. L. Ivonne Higuero Flores, Secretary-General Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Secretariat	111
25	Statement by Mr. Kazunobu Onogawa, Director of CCET, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) Centre Collaborating with UNEP on Environmental Technologies (CCET)	115
26	SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030	119
27	Resolution on Sustainable Public Procurement	133
28	South Asia Forum on the Environment (SAFE)	135
29	Roadmap for Sustainable Waste Management and Resources Circulation in South Asia, 2019-2030	139
30	Concept Note on Establishment of an Air Quality Platform for South Asia	165
31	Roadmap towards South Asia Nitrogen Framework Policy	169
32	Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia: A proposed World Bank Supported Project for SACEP	177
33	Approved Work Programme for Year 2020 – 2021	183
34	Approved Secretariat Budget for 2020 - 2021 subject to the concurrence of the relevant national authorities of each member country for the increase of the Country Contributions of SACEP	187
35	Report of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points for the 15 th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP	189
	GC 15.NFP / Annex I List of Participants	199
	GC 15.NFP / Annex II Welcome address by Dr. Abas Basir, Director General, SACEP	203
	GC 15.NFP / Annex III Speech by Dr. Md. Billal Hossain Secretary (In-charge), Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Bangladesh (xi)	207

GC 15.NFP / Annex IV	Speech by Mr. Idrees Malyar, Deputy Director General, National Environmental Protection Agency, Afghanistan and Out-going Chairman of GC-SACEP	211
GC 15.NFP / Annex V	Speech by Mr. Mahmud Hassan, Additional Secretary (Environment), Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Bangladesh	213
GC 15.NFP / Annex VI	Agenda	215
GC 15.NFP / Annex VII	Appointment of Director General of SACEP	221
GC 15.NFP / Annex VIII	Draft SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030	237
GC 15.NFP / Annex IX	Progress Report	255
GC 15.NFP / Annex X	Review of Country Contributions	275
GC 15.NFP / Annex XI	External Funding	277
GC 15.NFP / Annex XII	Proposed Secretariat Budget 2020 - 2021 with the present agreed annual contributions	281

**SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL (15GC-SACEP)
03 – 06 NOVEMBER 2019
DHAKA, BANGLADESH**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Fifteenth Meeting of the Governing Council of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (15GC-SACEP) was held on 6th November 2019 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

2. ATTENDANCE

The Meeting was attended by representatives from the following Member Countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

It was also attended by representatives from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (BRS) and IGES Centre Collaborating with UNEP on Environmental Technologies (CCET) as observers. List of Participants is at **Annex 1**.

3. INAUGURATION

The welcome Address was delivered by Dr. Abas Basir, Director General, SACEP. (**Annex 2**)

The welcome Address of the host country was delivered by Mr. Mahmud Hasan, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. (**Annex 3**)

The out-going Chairman of GC-SACEP, the Head of Delegation, Mr. Idrees Malyar, Deputy Director General of the National Environmental Protection Agency, Government of Afghanistan then addressed the august gathering. (**Annex 4**)

The out-going Chairman of IMM-SASP, the Head of Delegation, H.E Mr. Shah Faisal Kakar, Acting High Commissioner of Pakistan in Bangladesh, then addressed the gathering. (**Annex 5**)

This was followed by the speech of the Special Guest, H.E Ms. Habibun Nahar, MP. Hon' Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Bangladesh. (**Annex 6**)

The Special Guest, Hon' Mr. Ahmed Mujthaba, Minister of State for Environment, Republic of Maldives then delivered his speech. **(Annex 7)**

The august gathering was then address by the Special Guest, Hon' Mr. Prakash Keshav Javadekar, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India. **(Annex 8)**

H.E Mr. Md. Shahab Uddin, MP. Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Bangladesh then delivered his speech at the Inaugural Session of the 15GC-SACEP and IMM.6-SASP. **(Annex 9)**

The Chief Guest for the Inaugural Session of the 15GC-SACEP and IMM.6-SASP, H. E. Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, MP. Hon' Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh, then delivered his inaugural address. **(Annex 10)**

This was followed by the address of the Chairperson, Mr. Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Bangladesh. **(Annex 11)**

The vote of thanks was given by Dr. A. K. M. Rafique Ahammed, Director General, Department of Environment, Government of Bangladesh. **(Annex 12)**

4. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

In accordance with the provisions of the Articles of Association of SACEP, H.E Mr. Md. Shahab Uddin, MP. Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of Bangladesh was elected as Chairman of the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP. Hon' Mr. Prakash Keshav Javadekar, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India was elected as the Vice Chairman and Mr. Udaya Ranjith Seneviratne, Secretary to President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the Minister of Environment and Mahaweli Development was elected as Rapporteur.

5. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND ORGANISATION OF WORK

The Agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted by the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP. **(Annex 13)**

6. COUNTRY STATEMENTS / BRIEF OPENING REMARKS BY THE MEMBER STATES

The Heads of Delegations from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka presented statements.

(The Country Statements are in **Annexes 14 – 21**)

7. STATEMENTS BY THE OBSERVERS

United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP-ROAP), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and the IGES Centre Collaborating with UNEP on Environmental Technologies (CCET) presented their statements.

(Annex 22 - 25)

8. PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE PREPARATORY MEETING OF NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS BY THE RAPPORTEUR

Mr. Ahmed Wisam, Environment Analyst, Ministry of Environment, Republic of Maldives, in his capacity as the Rapporteur, presented the Report of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points held on 03 – 04 November 2019 along with the recommendations of the meeting to the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council for its endorsement. **(Annex 35)**

9. DISCUSSIONS AND ENDORSEMENT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AGREED UPON AT THE PREPARATORY MEETING OF NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS

Based on the Presentation of the Progress Report made by the Director General under the following categories;

- 1 Institutional Matters
- 2 Programme Matters
- 3 Financial Matters

and the recommendations of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points, the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP adopted the Report of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points. The decisions of the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council, SACEP under various clauses are as below :

9.1 INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

9.1.1 APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SACEP

SACEP secretariat informed the 15GC-SACEP, the appointment of the current Director General, Dr. Abas Basir, nominee of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan who assumed duties on 8th August 2018 as per the approved criteria and Term of Reference for a fixed term of three years.

As per the rules and procedure, SACEP Secretariat will notify Government of Bangladesh by 7th August 2020, at the end of the second year tenure of the present Director General, to nominate a suitable candidate for the position in accordance with the approved Criteria for the post of the Director General to assume duties by 25th July 2021 with an overlap of 2 weeks with the current Director General.

9.1.2 SEPARATE AND DISTINCTIVE OFFICE FOR THE SACEP SECRETARIAT AND OFFICIAL RESIDENCE FOR THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

The Secretariat informed the 15GC-SACEP the awarding of the land by Government of Sri Lanka, as the host of the organization for construction of the Secretariat building and the official residence of the Director General of SACEP during the 14GC-SACEP on 28 March 2019 and the process made in this regard since then.

The meeting was informed that the Urban Development Authority of Sri Lanka has granted the Preliminary Planning Clearance for the proposed building and the secondary stage is in progress at present which approves the detailed Floor Plan.

The Secretariat is expecting to commence the construction as soon as the required clearances are received subject to availability of funds.

SACEP Secretariat thanked Government of Pakistan and Government of Afghanistan for contributing US \$ 100,000/- and US \$ 50,000/- respectively and requested the other Member States to consider contributing for the construction of the Secretariat and the official residence for the Director General which official requests had already been submitted by SACEP.

Government of Sri Lanka reaffirmed the commitment of the host country of SACEP and pledged financial contribution for the proposed building and offered to facilitate coordination within institutions concerned during the process of clearance and construction.

Government of India announced the commitment of US \$ 150,000/- for building a floor of the proposed SACEP

Secretariat and official residence building, to strengthen institutional arrangements.

9.1.3 SACEP STRATEGY 2020 – 2030

A document titled 'Initial thoughts towards SACEP's Strategy 2016 – 2030' was circulated as a non-paper during the 14GC-SACEP held from 26 – 28 March 2018. As directed by 14GC-SACEP the secretariat updated the draft document and circulated among the Member States for comments and consent prior to 15GC-SACEP. Based on the comments received, the Secretariat reviewed and updated the 'Draft SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030'.

The 15GC-SACEP reviewed the document and adopted the 'SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030' for implementation. **(Annex 26)**

9.2 PROGRAMME MATTERS

9.2.1 Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition (BFN) project in South Asia beyond 2018.

The 15GC-SACEP requested to carry forward the activities under the Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition (BFN) project in South Asia beyond 2018 and recommended the Secretariat to circulate the initial Project Proposal among Member States of SACEP for consent.

9.2.2 Strengthening Sustainable Consumption and Production in South Asia

15GC-SACEP was informed the progress of implementation under the subject areas of SCP as directed by 14GC-SACEP.

As an outcome of the South Asia Training and Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) held on 17 - 21 September 2018 a draft resolution was developed on the reflections of recommendations of the workshop.

The 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP adopted the Resolution on Sustainable Public Procurement. **(Annex 27)**

9.2.3 South Asia Forum on Environment

14GC-SACEP adopted a decision on SCP by recommending SACEP Secretariat to take necessary steps to 'Convene the

South Asia Forum on SCP on regular intervals and also, adopted another decision on Air Pollution, in which the Secretariat was requested to convene a Regional Forum.

The 15GC-SACEP was informed that the matter had been discussed within the Secretariat and with the partner at length considering all aspects concerned including financial, and developed a Concept Note to have a High-Level Environment Forum for South Asia which will have a wider scope instead of having separate forums on different subjects.

The Concept Note on South Asia Forum on the Environment (SAFE) was approved by the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP (**Annex 28**).

9.2.4 The North East Indian Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (NEIOBI)

The 15GC-SACEP was informed that SACEP will be an implementing partner for the proposed North East Indian Ocean Biodiversity Initiative project developed by the Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (GOBI). The initial project concept has already been submitted to donor for consideration. If succeeded, a detailed project proposal needs to be developed.

15GC-SACEP commended the efforts taken by the Secretariat and recommended to carry forward the activity.

9.2.5 Healthy Landscapes: Managing Agricultural Landscapes in Socio-ecologically Sensitive Areas to Promote Food Security, Well-being and Ecosystem Health in Sri Lanka

SACEP is a key implementing partner focusing on two main objectives:

- 1) To gain experience in implementing Global Environment Facility (GEF) project so that SACEP would be able to manage its own GEF funded projects in future,
- 2) To make use of the huge potential for replication of the findings of this project in rest of our member countries.

The 15GC-SACEP noted the activity in progress under the Agenda item and encouraged the Secretariat to assist the other member countries in implementation of such activities.

9.2.6 Waste Management

Preparation of Status Report and Sub-regional Roadmap for Implementing the Global Waste Management Goals toward addressing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in South Asia was developed as an outcome of three Regional Workshops held from March – September 2019.

The 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP reviewed and adopted the Sub-regional Roadmap developed for implementing the Global Waste Management Goals towards addressing SDGs in South Asia which will be implemented nationally. **(Annex 29)**

9.2.7 Environmental Data and Information Management System for South Asia

The Secretariat reported the progress under this Agenda Item. The meeting was informed on the revitalized SACEP website, enrichment of Data and Information System of SACEP with regular updates in the database, Youtube channel and to Social Media.

9.2.8 Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its likely Trans-boundary Effects for South Asia.

To enable SACEP to deliver an effective co-ordination role in the implementation of the Malé Declaration, the 14GC-SACEP decided to further review at the national level regarding the role of SACEP in the implementation of the Male' Declaration. In this regard the secretariat has not received communication from the Member States and also the Intergovernmental Meeting of Malé Declaration had not been held since year 2016 to address the matter.

Taking the facts presented by the Secretariat, the 15GC-SACEP agreed with the proposal made by SACEP for removal of the Agenda Item on Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its likely Trans-boundary Effects for South Asia from its Work Programme and to address activities related to Air Quality under Agenda Item 9.2.9.

9.2.9 Air Quality

The 14GC-SACEP requested SACEP to facilitate a common platform for all member countries to get together to

discuss, share experiences and develop a common strategy to overcome the prevailing air pollution in the South Asian region.

As recommended SACEP developed a Concept Note for 'Establishment of an Air quality programme for South Asia' and circulated it among the member States and other International donor organizations such as UNESCAP, UN Environment, ADB for possible funding support.

The 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP approved the Concept Note on 'Establishment of Air Quality Programme for South Asia' for development of a detailed Project Proposal. **(Annex 30)**

9.2.10 Sustainable Nitrogen Management for South Asia

SACEP established 'the South Asian Nitrogen Hub', in collaboration with the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and many other organizations across the UK and South Asia. The Hub is funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under its Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF).

Over the next five years, South Asian Nitrogen Hub (SANH) will study the impacts of the different forms of pollution to form a coherent picture of the nitrogen cycle.

Regional Framework Policy on Nitrogen Management will be developed and adopted which will support cleaner and more profitable farming, as well as industrial recycling of nitrogen, fostering development of a cleaner circular economy for nitrogen. The activities are proposed to be carried forward according to the roadmap developed. **(Annex 31)**

15th Meeting of the Governing Council (GC) of SACEP requested the Member States to :

- a) Forward relevant data and information to the review as well as prepare the status report.
- b) Co-ordinate and support SACEP for necessary policy development and implementation by the national legislations

9.2.11 Capacity building of public sector, private sector and civil society stakeholders in SACEP member countries for Sustainable Energy and Road Transport policy, planning and implementation.

The Meeting was informed that the Secretariat has developed a Concept Note and will be circulated among the

Members States of SACEP and stated that mobilization of funds is also required.

9.2.12 Post Rio +20 challenges related to environment sustainability with focus on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

The progress was reported of the on-going activity to the 15GC-SACEP.

9.2.13 Adaptation to Climate Change

15GC-SACEP was informed on the Regional Workshop held on Advancing Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in South Asia in September 2019 in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and as a follow up activity Regional Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing workshops are to be convened.

9.2.14 Explore possibilities of Accreditation to Global Funding Mechanisms

The 15GC-SACEP noted the recommendation of the 14GC-SACEP and requested the Secretariat to explore possibilities of accreditation to global funding mechanisms.

9.2.15 Regional Cooperation for the Conservation and Wise-use of Internationally Important Wetlands in South Asia

The 13GC-SACEP adopted a decision that SACEP Secretariat may sign an MOU with Ramsar Convention for capacity building. The Secretariat in its progress report to the 14GC.SACEP stated that the negotiations were underway to finalize the proposed MoU.

Ramsar is in the process of reviewing all its existing MoUs with other partners, and the Draft MoU of SACEP will also be included into that process.

9.2.16 Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia Project

The Secretariat tabled a Concept Paper received from World Bank on a Project Proposal titled 'Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia Project' an International Development Association (IDA) Regional Grant.

The 15GC-SACEP was informed that a preliminary assessment was in progress and that, SACEP has received the 'Introduction and Context' of the proposed World Bank supported Project. **(Annex 32)**

15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP endorsed SACEP's interest to move forward with the World Bank and their development partners to prepare a regional project on Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia involving SACEP as an implementing agency for the benefit of the South Asian Region.

9.2.17 South Asian Seas Programme (SASP)

The activities will be reported at the 6th Inter-governmental Meeting of the Ministers of the South Asian Seas Programme which will be held back to back with 15GC-SACEP.

9.2.18 WORK PROGRAMME (2020-2021) Annex 33

The Meeting recommended to continue the on-going activities of SACEP and approved the Work Programme proposed for 2020 – 2021.

9.3 FUNDING AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

9.3.1 Country Contributions

SACEP Secretariat thanked the Member States for clearing the arrears of the Country Contribution to a commendable rate. SACEP Secretariat further noted it is important to clear the balance arrears for smooth and effective functioning of the Secretariat.

9.3.2 External Funding

The Meeting greatly appreciated the efforts of SACEP in generating external funds from several donor agencies. 15GC-SACEP recommended that SACEP should continue to play its role in securing external financing for the benefit of the member countries and that the member countries will support such initiatives in accessing the funding sources.

The Statement of External Funding may reflect a line item on the Institutional Support Service Fee received by SACEP from external funding sources in future.

9.3.3 Increase of Country Contribution of SACEP

13GC-SACEP agreed in principle, a 10% increase of the Country Contributions as the present rate of Country Contributions had been agreed at the 7GC-SACEP held in April 1998.

Government of Bangladesh and the Government of Sri Lanka agreed to the 10% increase and have been contributing accordingly since 2014 and 2015 respectively.

Government of Afghanistan agreed to the proposed 10% increase and the other Member States were requested to consider increasing the agreed Country Contribution for smooth functioning of the Secretariat.

9.3.4 Secretariat Budget (2020-2021)

The 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP, as recommended by the Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points approved the Secretariat Budget for the Years 2020 – 2021 with the present agreed annual contributions until such concurrence is obtained. **(Annex 34)**

10. APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL AUDITED REPORTS OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEARS ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 2016 AND 31ST DECEMBER, 2017

The meeting approved the Audited Reports of Accounts for the years 2016 and 2017.

11. VENUE AND DATE FOR THE 16TH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF SACEP

As per the Articles of Association, the 16th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP will be hosted by Government of Bhutan. The dates of the meeting will be finalized by the Secretariat in consultation with the Government of Bhutan.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No matter was discussed under the Agenda Item.

13. ADOPTION OF REPORT

The 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP considered the Report on 6th day, of November 2019 and adopted.

14. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The Chairman thanked the Hon' Ministers and delegates for their valuable support and co-operation, in making the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP a success.

He then declared the meeting close.

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
15TH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF

06 November 2019
held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

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Welcome Address by

Dr. Abas Basir
Director General, SACEP
at the Inaugural Session of the

15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
&
6th Intergovernmental Meeting of Ministers of
South Asian Seas Programme
held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Hon' Ministers
Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates
Invitees
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Very good morning!

On behalf of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, it is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the joint opening of the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme and the 6th Inter-governmental Meeting of the Ministers of the South Asian Seas Programme.

At the outset, I express my sincere gratitude to the Government and the people of Bangladesh for hosting this Governing Council Meeting in the beautiful city of Dhaka and also for the great hospitality extended to us. This is the second time that the Government of Bangladesh is hosting the Governing Council of SACEP. Previously, Government of Bangladesh hosted the 2nd Meeting of the Governing Council way back in April 1985.

Hon' Ministers, distinguished delegates,

Being established in 1982, SACEP in its four decades of existence as a key regional intergovernmental organization of South Asia, played a vital role in safeguarding the prestigious environment of the region. I am happy and proud to say that during the four decades of its existence, SACEP initiated a number of activities which were beneficial to the region as well as global community. One of such recent landmarks was the UN Resolution on Sustainable Nitrogen Management which was initiated by SACEP and adopted successfully at the 4th Meeting of the UN Environment Assembly in Nairobi, March this year. I take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to Government of India for leading the Nitrogen Management Resolution on request of SACEP as per the decision of the 14th Governing Council Meeting and all other seven Member States for their support extended at the UNEA-4 for its successful adoption.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Our environment is constantly changing. There is no one denying this fact. However, as our environment changes, so does the need to become increasingly aware of the problems

that surround us. In this 21st century, the whole world is facing a number of environmental challenges which are very common to our region as well. The frequency and the intensity of natural phenomena like typhoons, flash floods, droughts, etc. have been increased as never before. Climate change presents the single biggest threat to sustainable development everywhere and its widespread, unprecedented impacts burden the people. On the other hand, our natural resources including rich biological diversity is under tremendous pressure due to over utilization for meeting the ever-increasing demand of food and other essential needs of the increasing population.

Waste management is another major issue faced across the region. The over consumption of resources and un-precedential utilization of plastics are creating a crisis of waste disposal. So, it is time for all of us to consider how we can make changes in our daily lives to reduce the heavy burden of wastes particularly of plastic pollution on our communities, on our wildlife, and on our health. It is estimated that nearly one third of the plastic packaging we use escapes collection systems, ending up to oceans, clogging our city streets and polluting our natural environment. Every year, up to 13 million tons of plastic leak into our oceans, where it smothers coral reefs and threatens vulnerable marine wildlife. I am delighted to recognize here that a number of our Member States have been brave enough to implement stringent measures on plastic waste like banning the single use plastics. I invite the other Member States also to consider following the similar path to become a region which is free of plastic waste.

Implementation of effective and coherent policies is a key to achieve Sustainable Development Goals. In this connection, science-based policy making is crucial, but still a challenge as there is not enough scientific studies or research work undertaken to support the required decision making. In order to facilitate the science-based policy making, SACEP in partnership with UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and also with around 50 other organizations across the UK and South Asia Region, established the South Asia Nitrogen Hub. Over the next five years, the hub will be funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under its Global Challenges Research Fund. Under this platform, for the first time SACEP was able to connect more than 50 high profile research institutions from the region and beyond, to work on Sustainable Nitrogen Management in South Asia.

Hon' Ministers, Excellencies,

SACEP pays special attention to protect coastal and marine environment in its programme of actions. As five Member States of SACEP are maritime countries, we host and implement a separate programme under SACEP called South Asian Seas Programme (SASP) which is

also one of the 18 Regional Seas Programmes of UNEP. One of the major achievements gained under this programme is the signing of the MoU for Co-operation on Response to Oil and Chemical Pollution in South Asian Seas Region and the associated Action Plan by all 5 Member States.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

SACEP's all programme activities are implemented in collaboration and support of our Member Countries and in partnership with bilateral and international partners. Over the years, SACEP developed close partnerships with many UN Agencies, Convention Secretariats, Donors and other international agencies and it is witnessed by the participation of those agencies at their highest level in this meeting.

Hon' Ministers, Excellencies,

This is my first experience of Governing Council as the Director General of SACEP after assuming duties in August, last year. But I have participated in previous Governing Councils as part of the delegation of my Country, Afghanistan. I take this platform to thank my government and all Member States of SACEP for giving me an opportunity to lead this esteemed organization. During past one year of assuming duties as the Director General, I visited almost all the Member Countries to understand their priorities and expectations which was very much helpful in developing SACEP Strategy and planning our future activities. I am confident that we shall be successful in addressing the environmental challenges of this region collectively. I always believe that collective and co-operative approach would simplify the efforts in addressing current environmental challenges we are facing.

At the end, I would like to thank all delegates who attended the preparatory meetings of the National Focal Points of the Governing Council of SACEP and the Inter-governmental Meeting of the Ministers of SASP for their hard work and fruitful contributions.

Once, again on behalf of SACEP, I welcome all of you and wish your stay in Bangladesh a memorable.

Thank you.

Welcome Address by

Mr. Mahmud Hasan
Additional Secretary
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

at the Inaugural Session of the
15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
&
6th Intergovernmental Meeting of Ministers of
South Asian Seas Programme
held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Bi-smi llāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥīm

Hon' Chairperson of today's inauguration, Mr. Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury, Secretary Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change of the Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Today's Chief Guest, Hon' Foreign Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen.

Hon' Special Guest Mr. Md. Shahab Uddin, MP. Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Hon' Minister Mr. Prakash Keshav Javadekar, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India.

Hon' State Minister for Environment, Republic of Maldives, Mr. Ahmed Mujthaba.

Hon' Ms. Habibun Nahar, MP. Honorable Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bangladesh

Distinguished Guests, Delegates,
Members of Print Media, Print and Electronic Media,
Assalamu alaikum and a very good morning!

I welcome all of you to the Inaugural Session of the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme and the 6th Inter-governmental Meeting of Ministers of the South Asian Seas Programme. I'm pleased to be associated with this gathering here, which has the focus on the protection and the management of environment in South Asia Region.

Distinguished Delegates,

The Government of Bangladesh has taken various important steps towards the protection of environment. Among them, we developed the national environmental policy and its biological diversity act. Under the able leadership of H.E Hon' Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh is on a rapid development path. Here we'll be able to quote our strength for sustainable development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As 2020 is nearer, we have 10 years to 2030 which is important to achieve the sustainable development goals. In today's context, local and global environmental issues are interlinked and regional cooperation is the key to sustainable development. SACEP can facilitate member countries to address the challenges by the knowledge management, transfer technology and many other key areas common to the region to ensure sustainable development of the countries in the region. Also, the South Asian Seas Programme can play a vital role in sustainable marine ecosystem and conservation of seas.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I extend my sincere thanks to all senior officials and all other delegates specially the present Chief Guest and other dignitaries present here. I wish all of you, all the best and hope we will be able to reach an effective result in this meeting through our discussions and mutual cooperation.

Once again, I thank you all.

Khuda Hafiz

Address by

Mr. Idrees Malyar
Deputy Director General
National Environmental Protection Agency
Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and
Out-going Chairman of GC-SACEP

at the Inaugural Session of the
15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
&
6th Intergovernmental Meeting of Ministers of
South Asian Seas Programme
held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

In the Name of God, The Merciful, The Compassionate

Your Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to once again extend the sincere gratitude of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for hosting this 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP. To the Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, His Excellency Mr. Md. Shahab Uddin, I would like to say thank you for the hospitality of the country and people of Bangladesh during these past few days. In addition, as the outgoing chair of SACEP, I would like to thank all Member States for their commitment and participation during the past term, and would like to encourage them to provide the same level of support and dedication in the coming term under the chairpersonship of Bangladesh.

As we reflect on the discussions of the last few days, I don't think it is necessary to remind any of us here, how important our efforts are. One only needs to pick up a newspaper or switch on a television in any of our countries – indeed, anywhere in the world – to see how widespread and profound the impacts of global environmental degradation and changes are on our countries and our people. Whether we look at the rural communities or urban population, subsistence agriculture or digital economies, industrial production or tourism sector, human health or economic stability, one thing is very clear: the integrity and wellbeing of our natural environment is of central importance to all of them.

Honourable Delegates,

As we move towards the election of our office bearers and adoption of the programme of work during the rest of today's proceedings, let us bear these issues in mind. Let us resolve to taking action, specific to each of our particular national contexts, but in recognition that this is a global cause for which we all need to fight together. Just because Afghanistan is a land-locked country, this doesn't mean that we are unaware of or uncaring about marine plastic pollution or the state of coral reefs around the world. We recognise that the interconnectedness of natural ecosystems means that these issues are as much ours to address as the melting of glaciers or winter air pollution in Kabul.

And it is through a forum such as this one in which we can join hands with our brothers and sisters across the region and say that we are ready for action, together and unified.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to conclude by thanking all Member States once more for the privilege that Afghanistan had of chairing this organisation. I would like to wish Bangladesh well as the chair for the next period and express my appreciation to Bangladesh in advance for the good leadership that I know we will see during the coming term. And not least, I would like to thank all fellow delegates for the demonstration of will to resolve our regional and global environmental crisis that we have seen in the past few days, concluding in today's 15th Governing Council Meeting. I am grateful for our joint commitment towards collaborative action, and am proud to be able to say that Afghanistan is a member of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. May we continue to go from strength to strength as we work together for the good of our environment, our peoples and our planet.

I thank you for your kind attention.

Address by

H. E. Mr. Shah Faisal Kakar
Acting High Commissioner
High Commission of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Dhaka
and
Out-going Chairman of IMM-SASP

at the Inaugural Session of the

15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
&
6th Intergovernmental Meeting of Ministers of
South Asian Seas Programme

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Heads of delegations of SACEP member countries

Excellences

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning

First of all, I would like to thank the Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh for inviting Government of Pakistan to participate in the 15th Meeting of the SACEP Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) and the 6th Inter-governmental Meeting of Ministers of the South Asian Seas Programme.

Pakistan being a pioneer member of this esteemed organization and the out-going chair of the Inter-Governmental Meeting of the Ministers of the South Asian Seas Programme is very much glad to see the South Asian Seas Programme growing under the umbrella of as a visible Regional organization.

I am delighted to welcome Government of Bangladesh for taking over the chairmanship of the Inter-Governmental Meeting of the South Asian Seas Programme and would like to wish them all the best in providing dynamic leadership to the programme.

Excellencies

Presently, climate change is one of the most important issues faced by the all of us. I believe that SASP together with SACEP could take the lead role in the South Asian Region in order to effectively deal with the issue of climate change. Pakistan believes that the all member states have a role to play in addressing this critically important issue individually and collectively. In this regard Pakistan will give the fullest support in enhancement of cooperation and knowledge sharing in the South Asian region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is alarming to hear that the waste is getting accumulated in the world's oceans as marine litter day by day. 80 per cent of the waste generated ends up in the ocean due to land-based activities.

We all are aware that the coastal region of South Asia is rich in biological wealth, but also it is known as an area of multiple vulnerabilities.

The constantly expanding coastal population and increasing developmental activities in our region has exacerbated pressure on coastal and marine resources, with growing evidences of degradation of the coastal and marine environment due to continued exploitation.

The Ministry of Climate Change of Government of Pakistan in this regard has taken some efforts to address and reduce marine litter and micro plastic under SACEP and UNEP sponsorship, had conducted a study and developed the marine litter action plan. The report served as a building block for the SACEP regional marine litter action plan. The action plan was a culmination of efforts put in place by 5 member countries of SACEP.

Effective execution of SACEP's regional marine litter action plan will be a milestone to address marine litter in the Arabian Sea. Government of Pakistan therefore looks forward to an effective International facilitation for execution of SACEP's marine litter action plan to curbed the manners of marine litter and micro plastic at the regional level.

Furthermore, Government of Pakistan has notified Astola Island and its territory and territorial waters was first marine protected area of Pakistan on 15th June 2017. Pakistan has also initiated a process for declaration of further two marine protected areas Miani Hor and Churna Island.

South Asian Seas Programme (SASP) is the appropriate regional platform to work on the need-based actions for protection and sustainable management of marine environment and the fullest support is extended by Government of Pakistan.

At the end Pakistan is thankful to the SACEP member countries, Government of Bangladesh and the SACEP secretariat for their support during the period of Pakistan's chairmanship of South Asian Seas Programme and is pleased to handover to Bangladesh being the Host Country.

I Thank you all.

Address by Special Guest

**H.E Ms. Habibun Nahar, MP.
Honorable Deputy Minister
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

**at the Inaugural Session of the
15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
&
6th Intergovernmental Meeting of Ministers of
South Asian Seas Programme
held in Dhaka, Bangladesh**

6th November 2019

Mr. Chairperson

DG SACEP

Honourable Ministers of SACEP Member States

Invited Guests

Distinguished Participants

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamu alaikum and good morning to you all.

First of all, I warmly welcome you all in this Meeting. I feel honoured to be present here and to say a few words before you.

Ladies Gentlemen,

I would like to pay my profound tribute and deepest gratitude to the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the greatest Bengalee of all times and the architect of independent Bangladesh.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We know that South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) was established by the South Asian countries to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the South Asian region. SACEP is committed to support the member countries to overcome the issues related to environment, air pollution, waste management, biodiversity protection and other important issues. SACEP has established “the South Asian Nitrogen Hub”, which will contribute to protection from marine pollution, air pollution and climate change from land-based sources in South Asia. SACEP/SASP is promoting the London Protocol (LP) in the South Asian Seas Region and working on Sustainable Blue Economy Initiatives in South Asian Seas Region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bangladesh is one of the largest deltas in the world with a network of 230 rivers and rivulets and a coastline of 710 km's hosting a unique diversity of ecosystems.

The South Asian region is highly vulnerable to the impact of marine pollution. Oil and chemical pollution, marine litters, ballast water, nutrient pollution from industries, chemical loading from agricultural activities, sewage and solid waste are the main source

of marine pollution in South Asian Seas Region. According to the Economic Forum world's ocean may have more plastic debris than fish by the year 2050.

Bangladesh is trying to keep pace with the international legal regime on marine pollution through enacting appropriate legislation with a view to addressing the issue. A wide range of policies and strategies related to marine pollution are adopted and enacted by Government of Bangladesh.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I do believe SACEP's activities in the area of environment in South Asian countries will definitely contribute to strengthen the friendship and co-operation between the countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The excellent support and cooperation provided by SACEP in the sphere of environment in South Asian countries is really appreciable. It is time to work together with a view, ensuring a better and peaceful region.

I wish you a good health, success and happiness.

Thank you so much.

Address by Special Guest

Hon' Mr. Ahmed Mujthaba
Minister of State for Environment
Republic of Maldives.

at the Inaugural Session of the
15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
&
6th Intergovernmental Meeting of Ministers of
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6th November 2019

Bi-smi llāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥīm

Chairperson of the Governing Council

Hon' Ministers

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamu alaikum

Very good morning!

Let me first take the opportunity to thank the Government of Bangladesh for the generously hosting this important meeting. On behalf of the Government of Maldives and on my own behalf I would like to thank you once again for the excellent hospitality.

Mr. Chair,

South Asia is a home to globally significant ecosystem and biodiversity. It is also home to more than a billion people. Our growing population and development trajectories have put immense pressure on the environment. From pollution to habitat loss we today face many challenges and addressing these require collective concerted efforts by all of us. SACEP can play an important role in this regard hosteling regional cooperation and addressing environmental challenges that we faced today.

At the Governing Council meeting the Maldives noted the need for SACEP to develop a forward looking strategy strategic approach to better position the organization to respond these emerging needs and challenges.

I am very happy to see the Secretariat at work and presented us with the draft long term strategy for SACEP. I urge all member states to engage with this process and contribute with a view to further improve the strategy before the adoption. I take the opportunity to iterate the support of the Maldives in advancing the work of SACEP.

Mr. Chair,

It will be a remiss of me not to take the opportunity to congratulate SACEP and thank the member states, particularly Sri Lanka for their efforts to successfully see through the endorsement of the Nitrogen Resolution at UNEA early this year. This was the first UNEA resolution that we had developed through SACEP and its member states.

I thank the SACEP Secretariat in taking initiative to bring us together to bring the important issues to the Global platform. I look forward to more such resolutions being developed through SACEP.

Mr. Chair,

I do not intend to take much of your time. Before I conclude let me take the opportunity to thank the common efforts of the Director General and his team. I have confidence on SACEP to continue as a nodal Organization for environmental cooperation in the region and help to further prompt regional collective action.

I would like to thank once again the Government of Bangladesh for hosting us here. I look forward fruitful discussion over the course of today's meetings and I thank once again.

Address by Special Guest

Hon' Mr. Prakash Keshav Javadekar
Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Republic of India

at the Inaugural Session of the
15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
&
6th Intergovernmental Meeting of Ministers of
South Asian Seas Programme
held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Very good morning to everybody

His Excellency Dr A K Abdul Memon

Honorable Minister for Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of Bangladesh

Hon. Shri Md. Shahab Uddin, Minister for Environment , Forests and Climate Change, People's Republic of Bangladesh,

Honorable Shri Ahmed Mujthaba, Minister of State for Environment, Republic of Maldives,

Honorable Ms. Habibun Nahar, Deputy Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change, People's Republic of Bangladesh

Delegates to the 15th Governing Council Meeting of SACEP

Ladies and gentlemen.

His Excellency Dr A K Abdul Memon, Honorable Minister for Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of Bangladesh ; Hon. Shri Md. Shahab Uddin, Minister for Environment , Forests and Climate Change, People's Republic of Bangladesh; Honorable Shri Ahmed Mujthaba, Minister of State for Environment , Republic of Maldives ; Honorable Ms. Habibun Nahar, Deputy Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change, People's Republic of Bangladesh, delegates to the 15th Governing Council meeting of SACEP , ladies and gentlemen. It gives me great pleasure to address this august gathering.

India attaches great importance to its engagement with SACEP in furthering cooperation and coordinated response to environmental issues in the region. Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji has already raised the bar on global cooperation, highlighting 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas', that refers to the values of cooperation and collaboration for development of all. SACEP is a perfect platform to voice the concerns of this large and important part of the globe and find collaborative solutions to pressing environmental challenges.

India is one of the founding members of SACEP, and I am happy to announce that it has committed funds of 1,50,000 USD for building a floor of the proposed SACEP Secretariat and official residence building, to strengthen institutional arrangements. SACEP has an important mandate to foster regional environmental cooperation , and it is equally important that its institutional capacity be strengthened to help deliver its mandate.

With rising prosperity of millions of people around the globe, there is increase in the pressures on natural resources and that's why there is global consensus that sustainable prosperity on the planet is impossible without taking care of environment and ecosystems. Cities are engines of growth worldwide and this is the case for South Asia too. Cities contribute significantly to GDP, tax revenues and job opportunities. Rapid urbanization has led to an urban population boom. However, this unprecedented growth has led to certain environmental challenges, making our cities vulnerable towards increased water stress, heat island effect, growing carbon emissions of urban origins, severity of extreme weather events such as urban floods and droughts , that are being experienced in all the mega cities in this region.

Considering these facts, it is obvious that decisions made by South Asia will be significant in global sustainability equation during this century.

In this part of South Asia – Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Maldives and Sri Lanka share Indian Ocean and constitute South Asian Seas (SAS) region, which in recent past has become highly vulnerable to the impact of marine pollution. I am glad that we are discussing such common challenges towards economic and social development and are trying to work for environmental protection not only at country but at regional levels too.

India, has set a target to become a 5 trillion Dollar economy by 2024 . This goal is aligned with meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), achieving commitments under Paris Agreement and addressing other environmental issues like air and water pollution. Government of India's intention to invest Rs. 100 lakh crore (US\$ 1.4 trillion) in infrastructure in next 5 years includes target of significant investments in clean energy, better waste management, afforestation, smart cities, urban green spaces, electric mobility, public transport, sanitation, air and water pollution control . I understand SACEP has been working on some of these pressing challenges and India would continue to support SACEP workplans technically and financially.

I would now like to highlight some key policies and programs initiated by GOI in these priority areas. Plastics has become a part of everyone's life and India is no exception. Indian plastics industry's growth rate is one of the highest in the world and due to rapidly expanding incomes, consumption of plastic is likely to increase. To address this challenge, many steps have already been taken with strong public engagement. We amended the Plastic Waste Management Rules in 2016 to make source segregation of waste mandatory and introduced Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) whereby brand owners and

companies producing or using plastics are held responsible for management of plastic waste. During World Environment Day 2018 Hon'ble Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi pledged that India will ban all single use plastic by 2022. Further, India has also imposed a complete ban on plastic waste imports.

The Swachh Bharat Mission (Clean India Mission) is our flagship program with funding of US\$ 7.3 billion focusing not just on cleanliness and sanitation but also on scientific processing of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) through reuse, recycling, composting etc. We have also put in place a regulatory regime for management of hazardous wastes like e-wastes, biomedical wastes along with plastic waste, as already mentioned.

I am happy to note that the South Asian Seas Program, an important component of SACEP, has done work towards protection of the marine environment by developing a regional marine litter action plan and strategy for implementation. I have been informed that this has paved the way for getting in principle approval from the World Bank with a grant of USD 40 million for a project on 'Plastic Free Rivers and Seas in South Asia'. I hope the proposed project is developed in consultation with SACEP member countries, in keeping with their priorities and is implemented successfully in the region.

As a signatory to the Paris Agreement, India is committed to achieve its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) of reducing its emission intensity of its GDP by 33-35% by 2030 from 2005 levels and to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent. Further, we will also ensure that 40 % of cumulative installed electric capacity comes from non-fossil fuel based sources. India and France have together launched the International Solar Alliance of nations to tap the energy of the Sun, the perennial and cleanest source of energy. As a responsible member of the Global Community, India is committed to undertake mitigation and adaptation actions to combat climate change, in keeping with its National circumstances and development imperatives. In the coming years, several new initiatives with substantial climate benefits have been planned such as (i) encouraging sustainable mobility with more than 30 per cent of vehicles as e-vehicles by 2030 (ii) pursue a goal of 20 per cent blending of ethanol in petrol and 5 per cent blending of bio-diesel in diesel by 2030 (iii) Promote the use of Compressed Bio Gas (CBG) from various waste / biomass sources like agricultural residue, cattle dung, sugarcane press mud, municipal solid waste etc., through scheme on Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation (SATAT) (iv) expand and widen Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) aimed at reducing deforestation and safeguarding the health of women & children by providing them with LPG as clean cooking fuel (v) Increase

the share of non-fossil fuel sources in the energy mix with plan to install a cumulative 175 GW of renewable power by 2022 and further enhance it to 450 GW and (vi) Launch of Water Conservation Campaign ('Jal Shakti Abhiyan') with five important interventions including water conservation and rainwater harvesting; renovation of traditional and other water bodies/tanks, reuse; bore well recharge structures; watershed development; and intensive afforestation. Further, with a view to provide holistic solutions through resource efficiency, we are formulating a national policy for resource efficiency to reduce burden on the environment and to strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of our economy.

I am glad to note that the Regional Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Plan has been endorsed by all member states of South Asian Seas Program along with the Ballast water management strategies for the region. This will play an important role in preserving marine and coastal biodiversity. India is happy to support further research and the SASP work plan in this area.

We are committed to equitable, inclusive and sustainable development model of growth. SACEP countries have strong understanding of our common challenges, and the cooperation can collectively provide affordable and practical solutions to many problems faced by our people. I request this forum to discuss on ways and means to take this cooperation forward.

On behalf of India I wish the DG and staff of SACEP the very best for their work and hope that the significant steps taken by SACEP in the recent past would help in environmental protection and sustainable development of the region as a whole.

Thank you

Address by Special Guest

**H.E Mr. Md. Shahab Uddin, MP.
Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

**at the Inaugural Session of the
15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
&
6th Intergovernmental Meeting of Ministers of
South Asian Seas Programme
held in Dhaka, Bangladesh**

6th November 2019

Good Morning

Honourable Chief Guest, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Distinguished Ministers and Representative from the Member Countries of SACEP

Director General of SACEP

Distinguished Delegates

Guests and Observers from Bangladesh and abroad,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the Minister of the Environment, Forest and Climate Change of the host country, for the 15th meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP and 6th Inter-governmental meeting of Ministers of SASP, I am greatly honoured to have His Excellency Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, MP to inaugurate this meeting as Chief Guest. On behalf of the Government of Bangladesh, I would like to welcome distinguished Ministers, Representatives, Members and Delegates from the member countries of SACEP and SASP, delegates from the UN organizations and all those present here.

Distinguished Delegates,

First of all, I pay my profound -tribute and deepest gratitude to the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the architect of independent Bangladesh. I remember with profound respect, all the martyrs of the fateful night of August 1975. I also pay tribute to the foremost competent comrades of the Father of the Nation who was killed in jail, thirty lakh martyrs in the war of liberation, all the valiant freedom fighters and two lakh women who were brutally persecuted during the war. I pray to the Almighty Allah for the salvation of their souls.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We live in the region where the environment is fragile and still under great pressure. Hence, SACEP has a difficult but necessary task to save our environment.

South Asia is home to a lot of people whose basic human dignity has been denied. Population pressure and poverty have led to unsustainable exploitation of our natural resources. Most of our forests have been destroyed. Our rivers and what's left of it have been polluted. The flora and fauna are endangered. Cities are overcrowded and unhealthy.

Recurring natural calamities, the intensity of which is increasing year by year. Cold spells and heat wave kill more people. Land erosion and flooding are common phenomenon. Rainfall is becoming unpredictable and erratic. After all, South Asia has not been spared the effect of global climate change and its negative fallout.

Distinguished Delegates,

Protection of the environment, however, is indispensable for a future of our region. We have too much at stake. SACEP must take a leadership role and work closely with UNEP and other bodies to coordinate regional and international efforts. We must promote curative and preventive measures.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Article 18A of the Constitution of Bangladesh, proclaims that “the State shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to preserve and safeguard the natural resource, biodiversity, wetlands, forests and wild life for the present and future citizens.”

Inserting this article in the Supreme Law is a milestone in the history of Bangladesh.

Under the dynamic leadership of Her Excellency Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the present Awami League Government has attached highest priority to protection of the environment as well as wild life to attain Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) declared by the United Nations.

Excellences,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Countries alone cannot find solutions for certain problems that we face today. Regional approach is therefore imperative. Globalization is inevitable. Therefore, the role of SACEP that has a great experience since its inception in 1981.

I think the deliberations during the last three days of the senior officials of the National Focal Points have led to make necessary recommendations for the future SACEP. I am sure that by the end of this opening session, we would be able to adopt a resolution to ensure the commitment for the proposed programme for SACEP to function efficiently and effectively in its future endeavour.

I firmly believe that through the collaborative efforts of the governments and every individual in the society of SACEP member countries, we will be able to implement the initiatives which are going to be taken by today's GC Meeting of SACEP and IMM of SASP. I wish this important meeting success.

Thank you

Joy Bangla

Joy Bangabandhu

Long Live Bangladesh.

Address by Chief Guest

**H.E Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen MP.
Hon' Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

**at the Inaugural Session of the
15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
&
6th Intergovernmental Meeting of Ministers of
South Asian Seas Programme
held in Dhaka, Bangladesh**

6th November 2019

Hon' Minister Shahab Uddin, MP. Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bangladesh

Hon' Minister Prakash Keshav Javadekar, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India

Hon' Ahmed Mujthaba, Minister of State for environment, Maldives

Hon' Minister Madam Habibun Nahar MP. Deputy Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bangladesh

Dr. Abas Basir, Director General of SACEP

The Secretary General of CITES

Distinguished Delegates

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning!

I am delighted to be here at the inauguration of the 15th meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. I must commend Ministry of environment, Forest and Climate Change the SACEP Secretariat and all other who collaborated in organizing this event. Let me appreciate and congratulate the SACEP members for the continues efforts in promoting regional cooperation in environment and climate change issues in the context of sustainable development.

Excellencies,

You are aware that Bangladesh has offend been cited as a development miracle despite vulnerability to climate change impacts, Bangladesh continue to prosper over last 10 years. Bangladesh reputed the heights economic growth among the list of 26 countries the last 10 years with 188% expunction of our Gross GDP followed by Ethiopia, China and India. This year GDP growth has reached to 8.13% and aspire ADP highest amongst 45 Asia Pacific countries. This development miracle has a secret and let me call it the Bangladesh secret, Sheikh Hasina magic. It is the collective journey towards fulfilment of the dream of making Bangladesh a Sonar Bangla, the golden – by the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheik Mujibur Rahman. And thanks to the vision, pragmatism, leadership and statesmanship by his daughter, our Hon' Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the dynamic people of Bangladesh for achieving this miracle. Bangladesh is well and truly in its journey to a developing country by 2021 and hopefully will attain the SDGs by 2030

becoming a developed country by 2041 and the prosperous delta by 2100. Towards this end we continue to embark the pragmatic programme for the rapid economic and social development. Poverty eradication, sustainable growth, protection of environment, human resources development and digitization are some of the features of the development strategy. Over the past 10 years we have been adopting progressive and timely policies and actions that have resulted in impressive inclusive development. Poverty and inequality are two major obstacles for development besides climate change.

Bangladesh is one of the firstest poverty reduction race in the world with poverty dropping from around 42% in 2006 to around 21.3% in 2018. And extreme poverty from 28% to 11.3%. Our externship goal development initiatives like my village, my town etc, etc have contributed to inclusive development. Bangladesh has been ranked 34 in the World Economic Forums inclusive development index living are the South Asian countries way behind. In our development approach we want inclusive development no one is left behind. Ladies and Gentlemen,

Although we are doing well, we have faced with a big challenge and it is erratic climatic change. Our vulnerability to climate change impacts is well evidenced and well documented. I must not bore you with fact and figures to illustrate Bangladesh is one of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change rather I would reiterate how Bangladesh will become one of the most resilient countries in the world. Have a just for your information one meteorize in the sea level is likely to uproot nearly 30 million people of Bangladesh and climate vulnerability is costing nearly 1-3% to be annual GDP growth rate. Nevertheless, with our limited resources we addressing the consequences of climate change despite being a developing country we spent more than 1% of GDP in combating climate change. We are pushing a low carbon amusing a low carbon development path with increasing emphasis on renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy conservation.

Over the last few years we have been stalled more than 5 million solar home systems in off grid areas and more than 3.5 million improved crook stocks. We have built over 14,000 cycloid shelters and we mobilized nearly 42,000 volunteers for cyclone disaster warning at ours notice. We have taken initiatives to increase tree coverage from 22% to 24% in the next 5 years. So far Bangladesh has created 200,000 hectares of coastal forest as shelter belt to protect from tidal surges and waves. Bangladesh is also successfully managing 600,000 hectares of Sundarban mangrove forest a great carbon sink. We have been engaged in creating resilient forests in offshore areas to protect forest depending communities and habitats important in forest diversity.

Excellencies,

Bangladesh being one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change is also at the forefront for learning how to tackle the adverse impacts of climate change. This is a great opportunity for us to demonstrate our own strategy to adapt to climate change. Well resilience as well as share our knowledge and experience building climate, setting up climate adaptation center in Bangladesh to share our experience and expertise to other climate vulnerable countries. Tackling climate change is directly linked with sustainable development and resilience building. In line with this perspective under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Bangladesh is carrying forward its efforts for sustainable development with specific blends for carbon budgeting, decarbonization of manufacturing pathways and low carbon industrialization. Considering multi-dimensional vulnerabilities fall by climate change and disasters our government has recently adapted delta plan 2100 which will provide Bangladesh with the sustainable development pathway for the next 100 years.

Distinguished Delegates,

The halting of the global climate change and reduce disaster risk is largely depending on the implementation of the 2030 agenda.

The recently adapted global compact for migration has also exonerate that investing in escalating global cooperation for climate change mitigation adaptation would country bereade to the elimination of the adverse diverse and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin.

You all know we have given sheltered to 1.1 million forcibly displaced Rohingya from Myanmar in our 6800 acres of forestland in Kakes Bazar. It is an extreme vulnerable location and their presence is affecting our ecosystem. It is the responsibility of global leadership specially the South Asian Partners to do more to ensure the quick reparation back to Myanmar. It is an issue solved between Myanmar and its people. Myanmar created this problem and solution also lies with them. Bangladesh wants their safe secure and dignified return of the Myanmar displaced people known as Rohingya.

Excellencies,

Protected understood ecosystems and wild diversity can help mitigate climate change and provide increased resilience in the facing mounting human pressures and natural disasters. Healthy ecosystems produce multiple benefits for communities that rely on

them. The SDGs focus on preserving and sustainably using the ancestral spices and ecosystems. Achieving SDGs critically depend on the availability of resources about the money and technology. To achieve sustainable development goals by 2030 we need to strengthen our commitment to work collectively in partnership, in collaboration, in mobilizing resources both financial and technology and utilizing available knowledge information for mutual betterment. I personally see a vast area of possible cooperation under the – of SACEP. Our active collaboration and cooperation will be crucial for successful implementation of the SDGs as well as the Paris climate agreement.

I hope this meeting of SACEP will identify the possible areas of cooperation and bring the SACEP member states closer to each other for the further cooperation and collaboration and conservation and management of natural resources of the region. I wish the meeting a great success.

Joy Bangla

Joy Bangabandhu

Address by Chairperson

Mr. Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury
Secretary
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

at the Inaugural Session of the

15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
&
6th Intergovernmental Meeting of Ministers of
South Asian Seas Programme

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Hon' Chief Guest, Dr. A.K. Abdul Momen, MP. Hon' Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh

Hon' Special Guest Mr. Md. Shahab Uddin, MP. Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change of Bangladesh

Hon' Special Guest Mr. Prakash Keshav Javadekar, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change for India

Hon' Mr. Ahamed Mujthaba, Minister of State for Environment, Republic of Maldives

Hon' Deputy Minister, Ms. Habibun Nahar, MP. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of Bangladesh.

Distinguished Delegates from Member Countries

Director General of SACEP

Distinguished participants from various ministries and divisions, International Organizations

Distinguished Diplomats from member countries

Ladies and Gentlemen

Assalamu alaikum and very good morning!

On behalf of the Government of Bangladesh and my behalf I warmly welcome you all in this historic meeting. I'm honored and delighted to be here and to utter a few words in front of you.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are happy to know that South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme is working on diverse issues like promoting, supporting, protection, management and assessment of the environment of the region. SACEP is committed to support the member countries to combat air pollution and marine pollution. SACEP is working on waste management, biodiversity protection and other important issues. SACEP and South Asian Seas Programme is also working on sustainable blue economy activities in this region. We already know that SACEP is established South Asia Nitrogen Hub which is contributing to protect from marine pollution, air pollution and climate change from land waste sources in this South Asia region. You already know from our Hon' Ministers' speech that the constitution of Bangladesh the Supreme Law of the country has been amended in 2011 to

include protection and improvement of environment and biodiversity under Article 18 this constitution. This is now our constitutional obligation to improve the environment of Bangladesh.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bangladesh is already enacted a number of legislations which addresses the issues like waste management, combating air pollution, marine pollution, protecting biodiversity and improving climate changes. Some of the related acts, rules, policies are Bangladesh Environmental Conservation Act, Bangladesh Environmental Conservation Rule, Medical Waste Management, National Environment Policy, Hazardous Material and Ship Breaking Waste Management Rule, National 3R Strategy for Waste Management etc.

We are also formulated Bangladesh climate change strategy and action plan in 2009 to combat with climate change. With direct initiative Hon' Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Bangladesh established Dedicated Trust Fund to combat the climate change issues in Bangladesh which is called Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund. And we are implementing immediate few emergency projects to make the peoples' resilience and adapted with the adverse impacts of climate change. Bangladesh is also now working to prepare a linear act and to formulate saluted management policy. We are also working to introduce extended procedural responsibility.

I highly appreciate the SACEP for preparing a draft regional marine litter action plan for South Asia Seas region. Presently South Asia Seas Programme is collaborating with UN Environmental Programme to access member states for developing national marine litter action plan. SACEP and SASP is working to facilitate and coordinate management of coral reef and associated ecosystems at the national level and to promote collaborate action at the regional level. SACEP and South Asia Seas Programme have prepared a draft regional marine and coastal biodiversity strategy for the South Asia Seas region to address the issue attending the marine biodiversity reflecting in this 2030 target in marine and coastal habitats. It is a matter of satisfaction that SACEP has prepared a draft SACEP strategy 2020 to 2030.

I appreciate the able leader of all the Environmental Ministers and Heads of Delegates in providing necessary guidance and thank you for being here today with your commitment.

We appreciate SACEP for providing the excellent support and cooperation in the arena of the environment in South Asia countries. We do believe this meeting will bring the SACEP

member states close to each other for finding new and promising magnitude to all the efforts and contributions.

We wish you a good health, peace and success.

Thank you

Vote of Thanks Delivered by

Dr. A. K. M. Rafique Ahammed
Director General
Department of Environment
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

at the Inaugural Session of the
15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
&
6th Intergovernmental Meeting of Ministers of
South Asian Seas Programme
held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Hon' Chief Guest H.E Mr. Abdul Momen, MP

Hon' Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Hon' Special Guest H.E Mr. Md. Shahab Uddin, MP.

Hon' Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change

H.E Mr. Prakash Keshav Javadekar Hon' Minister for Environment, Forestry and Climate Change, India

H.E Mr. Ahmed Mujthaba, Minister of States of Environment of Maldives

H.E Ms. Habibun Nahar, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change

Hon' Chair Mr. Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change.

Heads of Delegations of SACEP countries,

Hon Director General of SACEP Mr. Abas Basir,

Distinguished National Focal Points from member countries,

Delegations from UN and other International Organizations,

Senior Officials from Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change and other Organizations,

Representatives from various media,

My Colleagues, Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning to you all!

It is indeed my great pleasure to offer vote of thanks on the behalf of the Ministry Environment, Forestry and Climate Change, Bangladesh at the 15th meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme and 6th Inter Governmental Meeting of Ministers of South Asian Seas Programme.

We are honored by the gracious presence of you all at this inaugural session. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the speakers, guests and the participants of the session. Particularly, I'd like to offer our sincere thanks and gratitude to the Chief Guest and Special Guest of the inauguration for their gracious presence at the event despite their very busy schedule. We are highly inspired by your sightful and motivational words. We are thankful to the Chair of today's session for his able leadership, continues vision and guidance in organizing the event.

The inspiring remarks of you all have said will encourage the deliberations of the Ministerial Meeting. The vision for stronger SACEP will surely guide the discussions towards the successful outcome. We are truly intended to all of you for this. It is our obligation and responsibility to carry forward the message of environmentally sustainable South Asia for the benefit of our future generations. We believe that with the collaborative efforts of our Governments and development partners we will be able to tackle the environmental challenges we are facing in our region today.

We are exceedingly glad having Hon' Ministers and members of Delegation from SACEP member countries as well as our development partners in the meeting.

I would like to express my sincere thanks and the gratitude to the ministers and the delegates for the available contributions to the meeting. This is for the 2nd time the Government of Bangladesh is hosting the meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP. We hope that we will have the fruitful discussions during the meetings of national focal points of SACEP and the meeting of national focal points of SASP.

I would like to offer my thankful appreciations to the Director General of SACEP and his team for their tireless efforts and hard work while organizing this meeting.

I would also like to thank my colleagues for their excellent support and whole hearted cooperation to make this event a success.

Excellencies,

The Bangladesh is at its best at this moment. The winter festivities are able to begin. Dhaka will also meet you shopping and sightseeing dates. We would urge up you to take sometime off and enjoy our beautiful capital city.

Finally, we would once again extend our sincere gratitude and grateful thanks to all of you and wish our what its get very peace and enjoyable stay at Dhaka.

I thank you.

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEETING OF THE FIFTEENTH GOVERNING COUNCIL

Dhaka, Bangladesh
6th November 2019

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM		
Opening Ceremony		
9.00 - 9.40	1	Opening of the Meeting
	1.1	Statement by the current Chairman
	1.2	Welcome address by the Director General, SACEP
	1.3	Opening remarks by the host country
	1.4	Address by the Chief Guest
9.40 - 10.00		TEA BREAK
10.00 - 10.10	2	Election of Office Bearers
10.10 - 10.20	3	Adoption of Agenda and Organisation of Work
10.20 - 10.40	4	Country Statements / Brief Opening Remarks by the Member States (3-5 Minutes)
10.40 - 11.00	5	Statements by Observers
11.00 - 11.30	6	Presentation of Report of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points by the Rapporteur
11.30 - 12.00	7	Discussions & Endorsement of Recommendations Agreed Upon at the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points
	7.1	Institutional Matters
	7.2	Programme Matters
	7.3	Financial Matters

AGENDA ITEM		
12.00 - 12.15	8	Approval of the Annual Audited Reports of Accounts for the Financial Years Ending 31 st December 2016 and 2017
12.15 - 12.25	9	Any Other Business
12.25 - 12.35	10	Adoption of Report
12.35 - 12.45	11	Closure of Meeting

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

MEETING OF THE FIFTEENTH GOVERNING COUNCIL DHAKA, BANGLADESH 6TH NOVEMBER 2019

ANNOTATED AGENDA

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

The meeting will be called to order by the current Chairman of the Governing Council

- 1.1 Statement by the current Chairman
- 1.2 Welcome address by the Director General, SACEP
- 1.3 Opening remarks by the Host Country
- 1.4 Address by the Chief Guest

2. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council of SACEP, a new Chairman will be elected in a manner consistent with the Articles of Association of SACEP. One or more Vice Chairman, a Rapporteur and other officials may also be appointed by the Governing Council. The Director General shall function as the Secretary of the Council during its sessions.

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND ORGANISATION OF WORK

The Meeting will consider the Provisional Agenda for adoption. Any matter regarding the Organisation of Work and the Sessions may also be considered.

4. COUNTRY STATEMENTS / BRIEF OPENING REMARKS BY THE MEMBER STATES (3-5 MINUTES)

The Heads of Country Delegations will present their country statements.

5. STATEMENTS BY OBSERVERS

Under this Agenda Item, the representatives of United Nations Agencies, International / Regional Organisations and Aid Consortia may wish to make Statements on matters relating to the activities of their respective Organisations which may be of interest to the Governing Council regarding the Programme activities of the South Asia region.

6. PRESENTATION OF REPORT OF THE PREPARATORY MEETING OF NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS BY THE RAPPORTEUR

The Rapporteur would present to the meeting the report of the Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points

7. DISCUSSIONS & ENDORSEMENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS AGREED UPON AT THE PREPARATORY MEETING OF NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS

The meeting will be requested for endorsement of the recommendations from the Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points.

- 7.1 Institutional Matters
- 7.2 Programme Matters
- 7.3 Financial Matters

8. APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL AUDITED REPORTS OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEARS ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 2016 AND 2017

Under this agenda item, based on the recommendations of the Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points, the meeting is requested to approve the Annual Audited Reports of Accounts for the years 2016 and 2017.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Under this Agenda Item, the Fifteenth Meeting of the Governing Council may wish to discuss any other relevant matters that may be raised by the representatives participating at the Meeting or by the Secretariat.

10. ADOPTION OF REPORT

The Rapporteur will present the Draft Report of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP for its consideration and adoption.

11. CLOSURE OF MEETING

Any representative participating in the Meeting may wish to make concluding statements regarding the deliberations at the Meeting and its achievements. The Chairman will finally declare the Meeting closed.

Country Statement by

Mr. Idrees Malyar
Deputy Director General
National Environment Protection Agency
Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Head of Delegation

at the

**15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)**

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Thank you Chair

Your Excellencies

Distinguished delegates from SACEP Member countries

Ladies and Gentlemen

Once again on behalf of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, I would like to again extend our sincere thanks to the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for hosting this 15th meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP.

I think that all delegates present here will agree with me that we are living in a time of unprecedented environmental change. All of our countries possess rich and unique cultural and ecological heritages that are under threaten from a range of pressures including adverse socio-economic conditions and destructive environmental practices that undermine human lives, livelihoods and well-being. At the same time, the very fact that we are gathered here together is an expression of our commitment to ensuring that the development of our countries, economies and peoples progresses in such a way that the integrity of our cultures and natural environmental is maintained intact. To this end, we are all striving towards the common cause of achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, even if in a differentiated fashion specific to our varied national contexts.

If you will permit me, I would like to share some of Afghanistan's major achievements since the last such gathering of the SACEP Governing Council. At that occasion, we announced the initiation of our first Biennial Update Report to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. I am happy to relate to you today that this process is completed with the Report itself is submitted to the UNFCCC. In addition, Afghanistan is working with our partners UNEP and UNDP and other partners on the National Environmental Policy which is under development. Coupled with this, we have developed a number of climate change mitigation programmes that, when implemented, would enable Afghanistan to make major strides towards achievement of our Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement. In addition, we have completed our Technology Needs Assessment that clearly outlines what the next steps are for Afghanistan towards a carbon neutral development pathway.

In addition to this, we have begun a special project on chemicals that addresses various pollutants covered by the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. This builds on our significant and successful work under the Montreal Protocol, expanding Afghanistan's Ozone Unit to include additional harmful substances and provide the policy and regulatory means for which we will phase them out to achieve a more healthy and sustainable future. This is in line with the manner in which environmental and sustainable development issues are included in our major policies, legal frameworks and plans.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Equal to this work at the policy and regulatory level, we have expanded the scope of practical action on environmental issues. This has been done with the support of and in collaboration with various development partners, including the United Nations community, national and international NGOs, Afghan civil society as well as bilateral and other developing partners. In addition, the Government of Afghanistan has invested a significant proportion of its own development budget into projects, programmes and interventions for climate change resilience as well as environmental protection and sustainability.

Distinguished delegates,

As you will all be aware from your own specific national contexts, the achievement of environmental sustainability must be complexly and indivisibly tied to human welfare and well-being. In Afghanistan, we are faced with the additional issue of insecurity and conflict, meaning that we need to find a resolution for the environment-development-security nexus in which any intervention in one of those fields has positive co-benefits for both of the others. This has been successfully achieved in other SACEP Member States, and we therefore have no doubt that it is something to which we too should aspire. Resolution of one of these issues will not mean much for our people with considerable and significant progress towards the others as well.

Distinguished delegates,

Permit me to conclude. The Government and the people of Afghanistan, like the Governments and the peoples represented here by yourselves as member states of SACEP, have in the past years made considerable efforts towards achieving environmental sustainability, whilst at the same time struggling with a broad range of development, humanitarian and security challenges. We have achieved significant successes, this is true. However, we also know that the situation, both individually and collectively, will

remain challenging for at least the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, this is no reason for despondence, but in fact a strong motivation to even greater action. Whatever we can achieve alone, we can achieve even more with our neighbours and partners in the region. Such cooperation must continue through the sharing of knowledge, experiences and good practices on environmental protection. And for this reason, SACEP becomes even more relevant than it was at its inception.

At the end, I thank you for your kind attention.

Country Statement by

Hon' Mr. Md. Shahab Uddin
Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Head of Delegation

at the

**15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)**

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Hon. Chair
Excellences
Distinguished Delegates,

I'm presenting the country statement of Bangladesh.

As a SACEP member country, Bangladesh has a vision of an inclusive and rapidly developing South Asia, playing its role in an interdependent world's sustainable development and peaceful evolution.

Because of Bangladesh's geographical location, high population density limited resources it is facing various environmental challenges. Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable and disaster prone countries in the world for the impact of climate change and global warming risks like cyclones, tidal surges, salinity intrusion and irregular rainfall, floods, river erosion. The country's Sustainable Development Goals influencing both food security and water availability. However, under the leadership of our visionary leader Honorable Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, we are working continuously to conserve the environment and have inclusive development.

Management of air and water pollution is a huge challenge due to high population density and limited resources. To reduce the pollution density and limited resources. To reduce the pollution, online air quality monitoring system in different cities has been introduced, Stringent regulations as well as innovative approaches are taken to reduce the water pollution of the country. Voluntary adoption of rainwater harvesting and Zero Discharge Plan by the industries in addition to the mandatory ETP installation are some of the examples. In addition to regular waste management programme the government is focusing on innovative approaches of resource recovery from wastes. Reducing marine litter and monitoring marine pollution is another priority area of the government.

The Government has introduced Climate Change Trust fund from its own resources and submitted Intended Nationally Determined Contributions to UNFCCC prior to COP21. To implement activities identified in the INDC, Bangladesh prepared NDC implementation roadmap in 2018. The Government of Bangladesh is approaching for green budgeting. Innovative green financing mechanisms.

Bangladesh is strongly committed to implement the priority of SACEP and SAS programmes. I am aware that the meeting of the National Focal Points has discussed the institutional, financial and programmatic issues at great length in an extremely cordial and constrictive manner and a consensus reached on all issues. The priority areas for cooperation are climate change, air pollution, waste management, innovative approaches to address sustainable consumption and production, reducing marine litter in the coastal nearby high seas, ecosystem conservation and finally the governance issue. Environmental challenges and threats are increasing. We must give more priority for capacity building and human resource development. I feel that SACEP could harness resources and opportunities in the region in order to address this critical issue. Human resource development is one of the most urgent, rewarding investment for future. We must dedicate ourselves to more environmental education and awareness. It is essential for changing habits and behavior of people that are harmful to the environment. Information is a key to empowering people and strengthening our common partnership to protect the environment.

Resource allocation for implementing the priority programmes and implementation of the strategy for South Asian region is another important aspect that we should consider during our discussion. As a member of SACEP, Bangladesh is proposing to SACEP secretariat to design the projects on the priorities decided by the national focal points and communicate to the bilateral and multilateral development partners (DPs) for financial support. In this process the member countries can also negotiate with the DPs for the regional support. I hope, the meeting will address all these emerging environmental and financial issues relevant to the South Asian Seas and SACEP.

Lastly, I express my appreciation to the excellent efforts made by Dr. Abas Basir, DG SACEP in taking up various activities under the aegis of SACEP and expansion of its work portfolio.

I look forward to have productive deliberations at this meeting resulting in some concrete decisions to address various issues being faced by this region.

Thank you.

Country Statement by

Mr. Karma C. Nedrup
Environment Specialist / Director General
National Environment Commission
Royal Government of Bhutan
Head of Delegation

at the

**15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)**

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Your Excellencies

Distinguished delegates from SACEP Member countries

Ladies and Gentlemen

Mr. Chairperson

I, on behalf of my delegation, would like to convey my warm greetings from His Majesty the King, the Government and people of Bhutan.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt gratitude for warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to my delegation and also for the excellent arrangements of the meeting by the host country, People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Chairperson on your election as a Chair for the 15th Governing Council of SACEP. My delegation is confident that under your guidance and able leadership, the meeting will achieve the intended outcomes as stipulated under the mandates of SACEP. Please accept my delegation's support for successful deliberation of 15th Governing Council meeting.

Mr. Chairperson

It is known that South Asia has a total population of about 1.5 billion, occupying about 4.8 percent of the world's total land area. This figure is expected to grow to about 25 percent by 2050. As a result, this region has a high population density, a low level of economic development with most of the world poor and the wide range of geographical hazards that expose our people to increasing levels of environmental risks.

Having said this, the urgency of addressing environment challenges has never been this urgent. As a consequence, I feel that it is very important to firstly recognize by member countries the challenges of rapid urbanization, increased demand for resources and services, climate change, waste management (plastics, e-waste, medical wastes, industrial wastes), dwindling biodiversity, and worsening air quality. Secondly, it is crucial to verify them and thirdly to embrace them by devising workable solutions for effective implementation.

As a matter of fact, I am of the view that the proposed Strategy 2020 – 2030 for SACEP could not have been more appropriate. However, it is crucial to not lose sight of those thematic areas, with prioritized actions, based on magnitude of expected impacts aligned with available resources and tangible results. Taking into account of the scale of the risk to our health and the opportunities for sustainable economic growth, it is appropriate to consider the issue of sustainable consumption and production along the way.

I also believe that it is time for SACEP to strengthen its work on mobilization of a sustainable resources. There is a need to improve work with governments and scientists to provide evidence and lead the assessment on environment, in particular, on those thematic areas. There is a need to strengthen association with private sector to develop better controls, quicker responses and innovative alternatives. There is a further need to work with schools to educate young people, future leaders of our nations. And there is a need to broaden engagement with the general public to leverage support.

Mr. Chairperson, there is a need to strengthen alignment with the SDGs, SAARC, and other relevant international treaties, as appropriate. I would urge SACEP to continue work with member countries to strengthen their capacities in various thematic areas. I just need to remind ourselves of the burden that may have on some members related to setting up of various forums/committees or platforms under various programs.

I feel that it is long overdue to look at the road that we have travelled together as member countries. Take stock of the current, look back at the path that we have travelled in the past, note the progress, examine reasons and the challenges ahead. It is my belief that by understanding the past will enable us to better understand the future. Nevertheless, our past achievements should not distract us from the challenges ahead but provide clear future directions to travel together on the right path.

Before, I conclude, let me convey my appreciation for the excellent documentation by the SACEP Secretariat, in particular, the Director General and for organizing this important meeting. Lastly, I would once again like to thank the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of Bangladesh for the warm hospitality. Let us all hope for successful and fruitful deliberations.

Tashi Delek

Country Statement by

Hon' Mr. Prakash Keshav Javadekar
Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Republic of India
Head of Delegation

at the

**15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)**

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Thanks Chair and all participants here,

I have 3 points to make. Number 01, that in all our endeavour peoples' participation is the key. Unless people change understand it, clarity of it and also change their behaviour start collecting waste, start segregating waste, not littering anywhere and start participating in the whole process. This just cannot be solved by others. It has to be solved by people and therefore, our whole attention has to be capacity building in the society as well as creating more and more awareness and ensuring behavioural change. As an example, when we build toilets there was an issue, that people are accustomed to go in open lifetime. So to go to a closed toilet is an issue for them unless, we change the mind-set that does not happen. We had whistle gangs, means the young members of the local bodies, students they used to have a whistle and if somebody goes in the open, though he has a toilet at home they will blow the whistle and make him impossible too. This is shaming and this is important. It has to be public awareness plus public participation plus a public campaign. All put together will bring it more effectivity.

The second point is technology. Because there you need a technology more effective and more affordable to treat all these waste managements and everything. Today every company comes with new technologies and nobody tells us of the effectiveness and the successfulness of them. SACEP also can build an institutional mechanism with an expert group who can tell us about the efficacy of the technologies available.

The third point is linked with disasters. If we are dealing with disasters, the innovating countries should not profit from disasters and therefore, the technology must be made, available at an affordable rate. During a disaster the World promised 100 billion dollars, but 100 billion dollars is not the cost of climate change mitigation. The mitigation cost is trillions of dollars but 100 billion dollars was to be a gesture towards developing countries, and we are here in that category. 10 billion on table, 20 billion in promises and if half is traced also what clogged earlier it is not more than 40 billion dollars and therefore, we are now meeting in Madrid instead of Santiago. We all should in one wise talk about affordable technology and finance because, that will enable us to mobilize public and then our part, will build public opinion, make people more aware and lead public campaigns so that everybody behaves responsibly.

Before I conclude, let me once again thank the Government of Bangladesh and SACEP for organising this very important meeting.

Thank you !

Country Statement by

Hon' Mr. Ahmed Mujthaba
Minister of State for Environment
Republic of Maldives
Head of Delegation

at the

**15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)**

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Thank you very much.

First and foremost, let me congratulate you on taking the Chairmanship by Bangladesh and we wish every success during their tenure. Beside what we have delivered this morning I would like to make one important point from Maldives side.

That is, we call upon all the participants on the SACEP to give emphasis on one particular area of Ballast Water management which we have signed. We are the only country so far signed in this protocol in this arrangement. Why ballast discharge is important to Maldives is as you know Maldives is a country surrounded by huge sea and scatted islands. Today the fact is the Maldives is actually confronted by this inclusion of huge amount of undesirable oil scum from different sources.

We are ill-equipped when it's come to monitoring and the floating of these ballast tank discharging is actually landing on the islands. As you know Maldives has a huge very good tourism industry. Landing these undesirable elements on the beaches means threatening our very life line. Therefore, we call upon the management and the Governing Council also to take note of this and place importance of this particular area.

Other than these, we don't have any more at this moment.

Thank you once again for giving me this opportunity.

Country Statement by

***Mr. Dhirendra Kumar Pradhan
Joint Secretary (Technical)
Government of Nepal
Ministry of Forests and Environment
Head of Delegation***

at the

**15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)**

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Mr. Chairman
Hon' Ministers
Director General of SACEP
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

Very good morning and Namasthe!

I am honored to participate in the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP in this beautiful city of Dhaka.

On behalf of government of Nepal I would like to spread sincere thanks and deep appreciation to the Government of Bangladesh for hosting this meeting as well as facilitating warm hospitality. I appreciate the SACEP Secretariat for excellent arrangements of the meeting. I congratulate Mr. Chairman on the election for the chair for the 15th Governing Council of SACEP.

Nepal is an active member of several international and national organizations believes that cooperation mechanisms are important for harmonizing common understanding and collaboration among the member countries.

All you want is economic development, prosperous countries and happy people. This is aware the rest of our partners today.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Guests,

We all are aware that environmental degradation is one of the greatest challenges faced by entire globe these days. Management and extend of the challenges might vary in member states for their posing additional stress to our people and life support system.

Despite negligible contribution South Asian region has been impacted by adverse impacts of climate changes and the region is the most vulnerable in the world. Action to address the challenges must be implemented in accelerated and convictive manner. High population density, low economic growth, geographical location all has accelerated environment risk to us.

Despite the challenges I'm sure we can find a solution with our joined efforts and collaboration in the region. For the purpose we need to act towards understanding technical capacity, setting financial resources, creating public organized and reminding activities an effective manner.

The Government of Nepal is strongly committed to protect the environment and achieve sustainable development goals which are also the mission of SACEP. As country acts in to federal structure we are in a policy and institutional arrangements as for our constitutional provinces. We have recently abutted various policies related o environment like forest policy, environment policy and climate change policy with a vision of protecting environment and biodiversity.

Since last year Government of Nepal is also implementing clean environment campaign aiming to us clean and healthy environment. This is only we are planting only more than 50 million trees. I believe during this meeting we'll share a lot in each other discuss the relevant challenges and explore opportunities for stronger partnership in the future. Environment protection and management is not a national issue but also a global and regional. We need to work collectively in environment clean, healthy and **. In this front I assure a strong commitment in working together both regional and global level to meet our common goal.

To I conclude, that I once again thank the Government of Bangladesh and SACEP for organizing this very important meeting.

Thank you very much.

Country Statement by

H. E. Mr. Shah Faisal Kakar
Acting High Commissioner
High Commission of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Dhaka
Head of Delegation

at the

15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Thank you Chair.

Hon. Ministers

Head of delegations of the SACEP Member Countries

ladies and gentlemen

Assalamu alaikum and very good morning.

It gives me immense pleasure and honour to congratulate the Government of Bangladesh for hosting 15th meeting of the SACEP Governing Council. Pakistan is fully committed to the aims and objectives of SACEP and we believe in its key role in achieving progress towards protection of environment and climatic change issues in South Asia. Together we can work to ensure a better environment in the region for our future generations.

Pakistan being the pioneer member of SACEP is glad to see the organization growing and would like to welcome its member states for our joint resolve to strengthen SACEP. I am pleased to inform that Pakistan has committed \$ 100,000 for the construction of SACEP secretariat in Colombo.

Excellencies,

South Asia is facing challenges of a variety of trans-boundary environmental issues that SACEP can effectively address with the support and cooperation of the member countries. SACEP can be instrumental in the capacity building and development of synergies for improving the professional skills of the environmental and climate change policy and planners in south Asia. I am delighted to welcome the Government of Bangladesh for taking over the chairmanship of the SACEP Governing Council and would like to wish all the best in providing dynamic leadership to SACEP and would also like to assure all possible support from the Government and people of Pakistan during your chairmanship tenure.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The ever-growing population of the South Asia is mounting immense pressure on our environment for demand of space, food, water and energy. With such a demand for development by human beings, our region is facing environmental degradation today, as

never before. Pakistan is no exception to this, and is facing the brunt of environmental degradation.

Similarly, climate change and environmental degradation poses a serious risk to poverty reduction efforts and threatens to undo the decades of developmental efforts. While climate change is a global phenomenon, its negative impacts are more severely felt by poor people and vulnerable countries. They are more vulnerable because of their high dependence on natural resources, their limited technical capacity and insufficient financial resources to cope with climatic extremes. One of the objectives and goals of economic development planning in Pakistan is poverty alleviation. With the onset of climate change, the plight of the poor is becoming even more miserable. Therefore, it is imperative to incorporate the possible impact of climate change on communities living in deprivation and poverty, into the future developmental plans of SACEP for environmental degradation.

Let me share with you some good initiatives my country has initiated during the past one and half years.

In order to overcome the excessive degradation of forest and wildlife resource, Government of Pakistan has launched the 'Ten Billion Trees Tsunami Programme'. The main objective of the project is to facilitate transition towards environmentally resilient Pakistan by mainstreaming notions of adaptation and mitigation through ecologically targeted initiatives covering afforestation, biodiversity conservation and enabling policy environment. The outcome of BTAP have been duly acknowledged by United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Bonn Challenge and other international bodies and fora.

Prime Minister Imran Khan has launched the Clean Green Pakistan Movement in October, 2018. This national campaign reinforces behavioral change and institutional strengthening while addressing the five components relating to tree plantation, solid waste management, liquid waste management, total sanitation/hygiene, and safe drinking water. In this context a comprehensive clean green index has been developed by Ministry of Climate Change with the aim to monitor performance along key indicators and to initiative a green city competition amongst various cities of the country. We look forward to a greater collaboration with SACEP in a bid to address challenges related to urbanization through sustainable green solutions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the end, let me state that Government of Pakistan supports and looks forward to continue working with SACEP in the implementation of its ten-year environmental protection programme.

Thank you.

Country Statement by

Mr. Udaya Ranjith Seneviratne
Secretary to President of Sri Lanka
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Head of Delegation

at the

**15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)**

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Hon' Ministers

Director General of SACEP

Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

I am greatly honored and privileged to be here to participate in the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme and the 6th Intergovernmental Meeting of the Ministers of the South Asian Seas Programme in this beautiful city of Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the people and the Government of Bangladesh for hosting this meeting and also for the warm and generous hospitality extended to us.

I also take this opportunity in congratulating you, Mr. Chairman on your election as the Chairperson of this esteemed organization. I am confident that under your able leadership we will have a fruitful meeting here in Dhaka.

Mr. Chairman,

Existence of healthy and pleasant environment is one of the main factors that need to ensure continuity and the safety of the life on the earth. Today there are a number of environmental issues which are challenging the existence of the life on earth. The complexity of climate change, environment pollution, loss of earth's regenerative capacity affecting natural carbon, nitrogen and water cycles, and biodiversity loss are identified as most common environmental challenges of the 21st century.

Sri Lanka being an island nation, given priority in safeguarding the environment at its highest level. His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka is also being the Minister in charge of the portfolio of Environment provides necessary political leadership in this regard.

Consequent to signing of the Paris Agreement, Sri Lanka has commenced "Sri Lanka NEXT- A Blue Green Era" programme as an annual event in order to create a wider dialogue among government, private sector, academia and civil society on demanding need for environment conservation. Also, Sri Lanka has already taken several climate smart initiatives in policy formulation and implementation through mitigation and adaptation

strategies and actions. The country has implemented multipurpose water resource management projects to address the adverse impacts of climate change for the benefit of the communities in the dry zone.

Uma Oya Multipurpose Development Project can be highlighted as one of the massive recent investment in Sri Lanka which has been declared open last week, under the able leadership of H.E the president. This Multipurpose Development Project adds 120 MW to the national grid and provides water for agriculture in the dry zone of Sri Lanka.

In the journey of saving our mother planet, during the Fourteen Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 14) of Convention on Biological Diversity (CDB), Egypt Sri Lanka won the Silver award for Clearing House Mechanism (CHM) developed by the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment. This mechanism supports to Convention's thematic and cross-cutting programmes of work by promoting cooperation, exchanging information and developing a network of partners.

Mr. Chairman,

At the global level Sri Lanka has stepped up as a 'Champion' to lead mangrove restoration globally as we committed to champion Mangrove Ecosystems and Livelihoods Action Group (MELAG) of the Commonwealth Blue Charter. Sri Lanka has embarked on ambitious projects to increase the forest cover from 29% to 32% by 2030. As part of this, nearly 14000 ha of mangrove areas were declared as forest reserves.

Sri Lanka is one of 12 countries that stepped forward to lead nine 'Action Groups' under the Blue Charter a commitment made by the 53 Commonwealth Member States to work together to solve ocean-related problems.

Further, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) of Sri Lanka are being reviewed and updated including the more ambitious targets and will be submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention (UNFCCC) in 2020.

Sri Lanka co-sponsored a number of very important resolutions which were successfully adopted at the United Nations Environment Assembly at its 4th Meeting held in March this year. Following it further, Sri Lanka hosted the United Nations Global Campaign on Sustainable Nitrogen Management in Colombo on 23 -24 October 2019.

Mr. Chair,

I am delighted to state that being the Host Country of the SACEP Secretariat, the government of Sri Lanka has fulfilled its commitment by allocating a land to build a permanent office premises for SACEP while continuously contributing the Country Contribution and the Host Facility annually. We hope that construction of the new building will commence very soon and it will provide SACEP more facilities to deliver its mandates to the region effectively.

Finally, Mr. Chair,

I would like to take the opportunity to commend the efforts of Director General and his team for the excellent preparation made for this Governing Council Meeting. I conclude by thanking once again to the Government of Bangladesh and SACEP for organizing this meeting. I look forward to fruitful discussions.

Thank you.

Statement Delivered by

Dr. Isabelle Louis
Deputy Regional Director
United Nations Environment Programme for
Asia and the Pacific (UNEP-ROAP)

at the

15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Excellencies

Distinguished Senior Officials

ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted, on behalf of UNEP, to be able to participate at the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP in Dhaka, Bangladesh. I would like to thank the Government of Bangladesh and the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) for the kind invitation and hospitality.

UNEP is very privileged to continue to be a very strong supporter through the SACEP countries. Listening to all the reports and the achievements we are proud to say that we are very active in all SACEP countries now in many ways both in accessing financing to important issues and capacity building and also being the link to the important UNEA resolutions. It was very proud opportunity as mentioned by countries specially see the sponsorship of India and Sri Lanka's resolutions for the nitrogen contamination and also single use plastic to be adapted by the UNEA.

It is also very heartening to see the efforts that countries taking to address these issues and UNEP is ready to stand by continue to support the countries in taking this forward.

In March 2019 in Nairobi, at the UNEA-4, the world's Ministers of the Environment, including South Asian Member States, adopted a Ministerial Declaration as well as number of resolutions, to address environmental challenges through advancing innovative solutions. South Asian Member States have made valuable contributions to the outcome of UNEA-4, by leading important global resolutions, including sustainable nitrogen management (India), addressing single use plastic pollution (India), sustainable management of mangrove (Sri Lanka), and environmentally sound management of waste (Sri Lanka).

The world community expressed concerned about the findings of relevant global environmental assessments (including Global Environment Outlook-6) at UNEA-4, which indicate that, despite the availability of solutions to our common environmental challenges, our planet is increasingly polluted, affected by the adverse effects of climate

change, quickly losing its biodiversity, and experiencing widespread environmental degradation.

On 23 September 2019 in New York, at the United Nations Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit, Leaders from government, business, and civil society announced far-reaching steps to confront climate change. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres called on countries to strengthen global climate ambitions and declare concrete plans, with a key goal of raising national ambitions. On behalf of the Least Developed Countries, Bhutan Prime Minister Lotay Tshering pledged that all 47 countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal, would commit to net zero emissions by 2050 and strengthen Nationally Determined Contributions by 2020.

Back to back meeting, the Sustainable Development Goals Summit took place on 24-25 September in New York to engage in a High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Global leaders adopted the political declaration and committed to achieve a world in which humanity lives in harmony with nature, to conserving and sustainably using our planet's marine and terrestrial resources, including through sustainable consumption and production, to reversing the trends of environmental degradation, to promoting resilience, to reducing disaster risk, and to halting ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss.

Earlier in January 2019 in Singapore, at the Third Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific, Environment Ministers and Authorities from Asia and the Pacific emphasized on: National clean air plans with targets to reduce PM2.5 levels with early warning systems; National roadmaps to address plastics and marine litter; campaigns and awareness raising to change behaviors and lifestyles; strengthen environmental laws and regulations coupled with economic instruments for effective monitoring, compliance and enforcement; and promote green finance to raise funding for low carbon societies, and to influence the behavior of companies to produce sustainable goods and services.

SACEP is one of the foremost intergovernmental agencies committed to promoting environment and sustainable development in South Asia. UNEP has been collaborating with SACEP since its inception to jointly address priority environmental challenges through various projects and programme. These included: capacity building on data and information management, preparation of state of the environment reports, Male' Declaration on transboundary air pollution, environment education, and capacity building

on Multilateral Environment Agreements. More recently, UNEP collaborated with SACEP to develop a sustainable consumption and production roadmap and a regional marine and coastal biodiversity strategy for South Asia.

I would like to congratulate the Government of Sri Lanka for successfully hosting the launch of the United Nations Global Campaign on Sustainable Nitrogen Management, held on 23-24th October in Colombo. The meeting endorsed a roadmap for action on nitrogen challenges called the Colombo Declaration, with an ambition to halve nitrogen waste by 2030. This is a follow up action on the resolution adopted at the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-4) in March 2019 in Nairobi on Sustainable Nitrogen Management.

Next year, the 13th Conference of Parties (COP) of the Convention on the conservation of migratory species of wild animals (CMS) will be hosted by India in February 2020. Currently, CMS has 130 Parties, and 160 countries - 6 out of the 8 SACEP member countries are Parties to the CMS. Maldives is the newest member. We extend our invitation to Bhutan and Nepal to join CMS. Having all members of the SACEP as Parties to CMS can only make both the organization and its members stronger.

Also, the Fifteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) will be hosted by China in October 2020. These processes are important milestones for developing the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Also, Republic of Korea will host the 4th session of the UNEP's Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific in Sep 2020. Besides, UNEP's Asia Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Network and the Asia Pacific Clean Asia Partnership will be held in last quarter of 2020. We are hopeful that the SACEP and its Member States will actively participate and provide valuable inputs to these processes. UNEP will be happy to assist South Asian Member States with their preparations.

In conclusion, I would like to thank once again to Excellency Chair, South Asian Member States, and the SACEP Secretariat for the kind invitation and warm hospitality and look forward to the successful deliberations.

Statement Delivered by

Mr. David Milton Ogden
Chief, Governance Branch
Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions

at the

**15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)**

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

ladies and gentlemen

Plastic waste-A Global Problem

The pollution of our marine and terrestrial environment by plastic waste is one of the most pressing global environmental challenges faced today. Over the last ten years, global plastic production has increased steadily and reached 320 million tonnes a year. Very little of plastic produced have be recycled. An estimated 100 million tonnes of plastic is in our seas, 80-90% of which has come from land-based sources. Since land-based waste is due to a lack of efficient collection and management schemes, the problem is solvable.

The problem must be tackled by preventing and minimizing its generation in the first place and by encouraging its reuse, recycling, and where it cannot be avoided, safe disposal.

Developments at 2019 BRS COPs on plastic

- At the meeting of the Basel Convention's governing body in May 2019, the 187 Parties to the Convention adopted, by consensus, amendments to the Convention aimed at better controlling the trade in plastic waste. Many see this as a direct response to China's National Sword policy, which resulted in it closing its borders to the world's waste, and the subsequent pressure placed on other developing countries as this waste has inevitably found itself in new destinations, many of which do not have the capacity to manage it.
- The annexes to the Convention were amended to clarify and strengthen entries for plastic wastes, bringing many types of plastics into the PIC procedure and therefore ensuring a more transparent, traceable, and enforceable set of measures concerning imports/exports of waste between countries.
- At the same time, the COP established a Plastic Waste Partnership under the Basel Convention, providing a platform for exchanges and best practices, technical assistance and information sharing, public awareness and more, to assist parties from all over the world implement the new measures for controlling plastic waste.

- The Goal of Partnership is to improve and promote the ESM of plastic waste at the global, regional and national levels and prevent and minimize its generation, and, in the long-term eliminate the discharge of plastic waste and microplastics into the environment.
- Many governments and other stakeholders such as Regional Seas Programmes have joined as members, bringing the current membership to over 120 entities.

BRS cooperation with Regional Seas Programmes

- Rolph Payet attended the 21st Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans in Berlin, Germany, from 3 -5 October 2019, making an opening statement at the commencement of the meeting, highlighting the following issues of mutual interest:
- ✚ BRS attendance at the meeting is a step towards further strengthening the cooperation and collaboration between the chemicals and wastes conventions and the regional seas conventions and action plans, in particular on those areas where interlinkages in our work can be identified, such as land based sources of marine pollution or plastic pollution
- ✚ Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, released in May this year states that "Coastal waters hold the highest levels of metals and persistent organic pollutants from industrial discharge and agricultural run-off, poisoning coastal fish harvests. Severe effects from excess nutrient concentrations in certain locations include damage to fish and seabed biota. The dynamics of ocean and airborne transport of pollutants mean that the harm from inputs of plastics, persistent organic pollutants, heavy metals and ocean acidification is felt worldwide, including with consequences for human health".
- ✚ Sustainable management of chemicals and waste is now seen as a fundamental cornerstone of the objectives in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development where the Basel, Rotterdam and

Stockholm Convention are highlighted as the key legally binding instruments whose implementation contributes towards achieving by 2030 all the goals of the 2030 agenda

- There is considerable interest in National level projects to tackle plastic waste like Marine litter and microplastics: promoting the environmentally sound management of plastic wastes and achieving the prevention and minimization of the generation of plastic wastes in Ghana and possible with Bangladesh

Future collaboration with RSPs

The following areas were highlighted during the meeting as potential areas for collaboration between BRS and RSPs:

- Cooperation should be strengthened through our network of regional centres, through the signature of MOUs (like what we have with Barcelona Secretariat), and participating in respective capacity building activities
- BRS welcomes Regional Seas engagement in Plastic Waste Partnership (this is highlighted in the terms of reference for the Partnership also)
- Modes of engagement and opportunities for future collaboration require further discussion and exploration
- We need to encourage an integrated approach to addressing issues of concern to the BRS Conventions and Regional Seas Programmes

Thank you,

Statement Delivered by

Ms. L. Ivonne Higuero Flores
Secretary-General
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and
Flora (CITES) Secretariat

at the

15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Honourable Mohamed Shahab Uddin, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of Bangladesh

Honourable Habibun Nahar, Deputy Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change of Bangladesh

Dr. Abas Basir, Director General, South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme

Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, distinguished delegates from SACEP Member Countries, UN Agencies, IGOs and regional bodies

Ladies and gentlemen,

My warm thanks to the Government of Bangladesh for their generous hosting of this important meeting and to the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme for the invitation to participate on behalf of the CITES Secretariat.

SACEP member states cover an important region for CITES. The region hosts a wide range of animals and plants, from the markhor sheep and snow leopards in the high mountains, tigers in the jungles, crocodiles in the marshlands, peregrine falcons in the skies, and sharks in the sea. Flora includes precious timbers such as rosewoods, and plants such as orchids and cycads.

The 18th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES in August confirmed the increasing reliance on the Convention to help ensure the sustainability of marine species, including those that have high value in commercial fisheries. The CITES Secretariat will be soon exchanging information on marine species listings with the South Asian Seas Programme to seek synergies.

We also saw the continued listing of precious tropical timbers on Appendix II. These listings confirm that Parties are seeking greater support and assistance from CITES for managing and controlling trade in these valuable resources. COP18 also recognized the great value of medicinal and aromatic plants and the need for CITES to address them.

South Asian countries at CoP18 took the initiative by proposing to add 18 more marine species to Appendix II, including mako sharks, guitarfish and wedgefishes. The proponents were Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Smooth-coated and small-clawed otters were moved from Appendix II to Appendix I. The proponents for this move were Bangladesh, India and Nepal.

Many species of turtles, lizard and gecko, some highly endemic, for example, the star tortoise, were also moved from Appendix II to Appendix I. Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka were proponents for this move. Clearly there is leadership from this region on conservation and sustainable use of species.

There are also other decisions of the CITES Parties where we would encourage you to take a leadership role. For example, South Asian countries are range States to Appendix I Asian big cats such as tiger, leopard, snow leopard, clouded leopard and Asiatic lion. Subject to external resources, the Secretariat was asked to establish and convene a CITES Big Cats Task Force, focusing on big cat species from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Perhaps one of the SACEP countries would wish to host the first meeting of the Task Force.

Several countries in South Asia, especially India and Nepal, are affected by illegal trade in pangolin specimens. The Secretariat will be consulting you to prepare a report on the national conservation status of pangolins, trade, and enforcement issues.

The CITES Secretariat will also convene a Task Force on illegal trade in CITES-listed tree species, aiming to develop strategies to combat illegal trade, including measures to promote and further strengthen international cooperation. SACEP countries could play a major role in addressing illegal trade of precious timbers such as rosewood.

CITES Parties also reached out to better engage local and indigenous communities and to recognize their need for adequate incomes and livelihoods. Please do provide us with case studies that demonstrate how sustainable use of CITES-listed species contributes to the livelihoods of the indigenous peoples and local communities involved in such use.

Of course, I would be remiss to not mention that a major threat to the survival of some of the world's most charismatic species and, equally, to many lesser-known species, is wildlife crime, often with devastating economic, social and environmental consequences. It is today well recognized that wildlife crime is a serious crime, involving organized crime groups, and it is essential that we treat it as such. We must deploy the same tools and techniques against wildlife crime, as those used against other serious domestic and transnational organized crimes.

Many of the SACEP countries have made commendable efforts to combat illegal trade in wildlife. India, for example, was awarded the CITES Secretary-General's Certificate of Commendation in 2017 for participating in several international enforcement operations. Bangladesh and Nepal have undertaken a national assessment of the main issues relating to wildlife and forest offences. This was done using the Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit developed by the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime or ICCWC of which CITES is a partner. Bhutan is currently in the process of carrying out its national assessment with this ICWCC tool.

The region also has established the South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network, which is a platform for the South Asian countries to cooperate in the fight against wildlife crime. This is exactly what is needed to address wildlife crime, strong regional cooperation.

In closing, I hope you will confirm the need to support CITES in this region and firmly regulate international trade of endangered species of wild fauna and flora. This in turn will advance environmental, economic and social sustainability and the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Thank you.

Statement Delivered by

Mr. Kazunobu Onogawa
Director of CCET
Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) Centre Collaborating with
UNEP on Environmental Technologies (CCET)

at the

15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

6th November 2019

Dear Honorable Minister Mr. Md. Shahab Uddin, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

Dr. Abas Basir, Director General, SACEP

Honorable Ministers, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Representatives, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you very much for inviting CCET to this Governing Council of SACEP.

I am from CCET, which is IGES Centre Collaborating with UNEP on Environmental Technologies, established within IGES, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies.

Needless to say, waste management is one of the most important subjects for all of international community. Its importance is also well recognized in this sub region as is shown in adoption of Dhaka Declaration on Waste Management in 2004 and others.

Hence, the question we have now is the way of enforcement. CCET has been trying to cooperate with the countries in South Asia to work together since its establishment.

We have started bilateral collaborations with Maldives, India, Sri Lanka and Bhutan for their development of national or city level waste management strategies, action plans, or capacity development among the public in particular school children.

On the top of such country based activities, we are running region-wide activities. Development of “The Roadmap for implementing the Global Waste Management Goals toward SDGs in South Asia” is an example which was initiated with an interest to promote mutual understandings on waste management among the South Asian countries.

Starting from the initial discussion at the opportunity of Asia Pacific 3R Regional Forum, organized in India in 2018, we have had series of workshops to discuss this subject inviting all of 8 South Asian countries all the time. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, for their kind support by hosting these workshops.

The principle sitting in the center of this Roadmap is the concept of 3R, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

Less generation of waste is the key for better waste management. If generation is less, the follow up work for waste treatment can be less as well.

Asia is diverse. Socially, economically and environmentally, different conditions Asian countries have. If conditions are different, there should be different approaches available. Large scale, civil engineering based waste management may take time and budget. But there are other types of actions we can take from today, such as community based approach with focus on segregation of wastes at source or at home, and, consideration of the way how municipalities can cooperate with citizens.

Based on such understandings, we have prepared this roadmap with practical ideas on “what” we can do, and “how” we can do, to achieve circular economy based waste management. It suggests the change of our mindset, and the way we can materialize the better waste management while contributing to the concept of circular economy.

I have learnt from the SACEP secretariat that this draft Road Map was discussed at the preparatory meeting, and will be on the table today for your consideration.

I hope the Roadmap we prepared with participation of all of our countries would be welcomed by today’s discussion.

Thank you.

SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030**1. Background**

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) was established by the South Asian countries to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region at the High Level Meeting to Initiate SACEP held on February 1981 at Colombo, Sri Lanka. As of Article of Associations, SACEP became a legal entity on 9th February 1982 with the ratification of at least three member states. Eight South Asian countries; Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are members of SACEP. The Colombo Declaration on the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme and Articles of Association of SACEP constitute the legal basis for SACEP. The principle organs of the governance structure of SACEP are the Governing Council (GC) consists of Ministers of Environment of the member countries, Consultative Committee (CC) drawing from representatives of Embassies/High Commissions of the member countries stationed at Colombo, National Focal Points (NFP), Subject Area Focal Points and the SACEP Secretariat. The Secretariat is headed by a Director General, located in Colombo, Sri Lanka where host facilities are provided by the Government of Sri Lanka. SACEP also serves as secretariat for the South Asia Seas Programme (SASP) which is one of the eighteen Regional Seas Programmes of the UN Environment. SACEP registered with the UN Secretariat as a multilateral organization in accordance with article 102 of the charter of the United Nations.

SACEP has an impressive record in capacity building and policy dialogue with government officials of member countries and other environmental stakeholders, developing and promoting tools and good practices for sustainable development and for public/stakeholder involvement, implementing ministerial mandates and contributing to international processes. Much of these efforts have been in the thematic areas of Biodiversity Conservation, Sustainable Consumption and Production, Air, land and water pollution with trans-boundary implications, Coastal and Marine Environment, Climate Change, and Environmental Planning, Policy and Law. These activities implemented under number of Strategic Programmes since SACEP's inception. Up to 1991, the work programmes determined by the Governing Council were guided by National Focal Points and Subject Area Focal Points. The first five-year strategy, SACEP's Strategy Programmes 1 (SSP1) was implemented from 1992 to 1996. Then, SACEP's Strategy Programmes 2 (SSP2) implemented from 1996 to 2002. In 2003, SACEP went through an external review to evaluate the past performance of SACEP over 2 decades and for identification of bottle necks in its funding, new strategy and implementation mechanisms to achieve its objectives. According to that strategy, SACEP was required to develop two work programmes, biennium and quennium for implementation thereafter.

It has been more than a decade since the last strategy adopted by SACEP and there are many changes taken place in the areas of national, regional and global environment concerns and priorities which requires new policies and strategies to overcome the new challenges.

This long-term strategy (2020 – 2030) builds on the decisions made by SACEP Governing Council at its previous sittings, SACEP's own experiences of coordinating and assisting the region's environment protection efforts over the years as well as from its needs advancing forward, Post 2015 South Asia Development Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

2. Regional Context

South Asia is home to one of the oldest civilizations of the world. The sub-region comprises eight countries, namely - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. South Asia habitats a total population of around 1.5 billion, burgeoning at the annual rate of 1.8%, in spite of covering only 4.8 per cent of the world's total land area. This figure is expected to rise to about 25 per cent by 2050. India is the most populated country in the region, followed by Pakistan. Countries like Bhutan and Maldives are comparatively less populated than the other nations in the region *ibid*. The region remains one of the fastest growing sub-regions in the world. South Asia has yet to cross many hurdles to attain the lofty goal of sustainable development.

Rapid urbanization, affluent life-styles, and increased demand for resources and services associated with economic growth are exerting increasing pressure on ecosystem resources. South Asia shows the largest growth of the urban population, 2.66 percent per year among the sub-regions in Asia and the Pacific region². The urban population of South-Asia during 2011 was 32.6%. It has been estimated that by the middle of the twenty-first century, at least 50 percent South Asians will be residing in urban areas, which means that the urban population of this region will be over 1.2 billion¹.

Consumption and production of goods and services are vital components of economic development. This 'development' is directly proportional to the supply of natural resources. It leads to disruption of the environment, deteriorating the environmental quality. As in the rest of world, the region's economic development is coupled to unsustainable consumption patterns and waste production. Consumption behavior has changed and domestic consumption has started to increase alongside export industry growth. Intensive human activities and energy consumption in urban areas lead to the generation of increasing amounts of pollution and waste, with multiple adverse impacts on urban environments. Air pollution in the form of emissions of pollutants, like oxides of Sulphur and Nitrogen, Carbon dioxide, is also a by-product of economic development. Deterioration of air quality can be majorly observed in the mega cities of region¹.

Increasing resource use, with little improvement in the efficiency of such use, is causing widespread environmental degradation, loss of ecosystem services, generation of excessive waste and additional financial burdens. The region's material consumption has been increased sharply over the past four decades, but material productivity has not improved and is still very low. The main driver of accelerating domestic material consumption is the growth of consumption by the expanding middle class and, to a lesser extent, population growth². The material intensity of many countries in the region has increased significantly over the past four decades. In 2015, on average, 1.35 kilograms of materials were needed globally to produce USD1 of economic output but 3.75 kilograms were required in South Asia, almost three times the global average². Similarly, water intensity in South Asia region was almost double the world average in 2015.

Almost half the land area in South Asia has become degraded in one form or another and even the water resource base is seriously threatened due to overexploitation and pollution. With the biodiversity under severe threat, the resource base in the sub-region is largely degraded due to its low-lying geography, low per-capita income and high population density. South Asia shelters approximately 15 percent of the known global flora and fauna. Unfortunately, the rich natural endowments are constantly under threat including the precious gene pool. More recently, traditional knowledge and ownership rights of indigenous communities are also being threatened by global trade and patenting agreements.

Land-use and related pressures have caused severe damage to local species richness. Ecosystems have been altered for millennia in South Asia, with a net increase in provisioning ecosystem services from man-made systems like farmland, aquaculture and plantations, which lead to decline the regulating and cultural ecosystem services; for example, intact forests that reduce erosion, or associated declines in biodiversity. (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). Loss of biodiversity will impact the ecosystem services, which will affect the benefits people receive directly as well as indirectly. These include: Provisioning services (food, clean water, timber, fibre); Genetic resources regulating services (the regulation of climate, floods, disease, water quality, and pollination); Cultural services (recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits) and Supporting services (soil formation, and nutrient cycling). Despite the high deforestation rates and declining forest cover, South Asia reports a higher proportion of forest area covered by forest management plans than other areas, which may help to halt the decline in future (FAO 2015).

Solid waste disposal has emerged as a major environmental problem, particularly in the urban areas in recent times. Rapid urbanization, growing affluence, changing consumption patterns, low level of awareness and poor civic sense are the key factors causing increased waste generation.

Pollutants, originating from both land and sea, are responsible for significant lethal and sub-lethal effects on marine life. Pollution impacts all trophic levels, from primary producers to apex predators, and thus interferes with the structure of marine communities and consequently ecosystem functioning. From the available data it could be inferred that the major sources of marine pollution including debris/litter are domestic/industrial wastes, ports and harbours including fishing harbours and landing centres, ship breaking yards, fish/food processing industries, tourist resorts/beaches, solid waste dumping, urban runoff, oil rigs, coastal aquaculture, fishing industry including fishing gear, shipping including garbage from ships, recreational and leisure use, marine mining, construction activities, etc⁶.

The effect of climate change and disasters impose economic losses that could offset development gains, increase poverty and inequity, and threaten water and food security. As pointed out in the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2007, South Asia is likely to be one of the regions that will be a major casualty of all the negative impacts of climate change. Climate change will have wide-ranging impact on environment as well as on socio-economic and related sectors, including water resources, agriculture and water security, human health, terrestrial ecosystems, biodiversity and coastal zones. Its effects include changes in rainfall patterns leading to severe water shortages and/or flooding; melting of glaciers causing flooding and soil erosion; and rising temperatures affecting food security and increasing the rates of extinction for many habitats and species.

Increasing sea level means a greater risk of storm surge, inundation and wave damage to the coastline. Low-lying coastal cities will be at the forefront of receiving most of the impact, being most vulnerable to the risks of sea level rise and storms. Elevated seawater level would also increase the risk of flooding due to rainstorms by reducing the coastal drainage.

Drylands and mountain regions are likely to be more vulnerable than others and ecosystem degradation is the largest in this region. Climate change is likely to cause additional inequities, as its impact is unevenly distributed over space and time and disproportionately affects the poor³.

One of the manifestations of the impact of climate change has emerged in the form of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) hazard. This hazard has shown an increasing trend over the past decades, especially in the Himalayan region. In Nepal and Bhutan, melting glaciers are filling glacial lakes beyond their capacities, contributing to 'GLOFs'. Of the 2,323 glacial lakes in Nepal, 20 have been found to be potentially dangerous with respect to GLOFs³.

Another common aspect of the region is the need for strengthening the landscape of policies and legislation and their implementation. Environmental issues are more pressing than ever and there has been a corresponding increase in multilateral environmental agreements, factors that have expanded the demand for effective policy intervention in the region.

Many environmental policies in South Asian nations have yet to realize their full potential. Due to resource constraints and limitations in institutional coordination, these policies have not been fully implemented. Governments and policy experts advocate integrated and comprehensive approaches to policy creation as well as science-based policy as fragmentation of policy and non-scientific policy design often leads to ineffective implementation. Transformative change would require a strengthening of policies, policy coherence and a corresponding bolstering of their implementation.

Policy assessment and evaluation is a crucial step to determine the effect of a policy intervention. Policy formulation and its assessment requires comprehensive methods and trained personnel. Sound scientific and actionable solutions are needed not only for emerging environmental issues but also to address shortcomings in existing environmental policies.

3. Contemporary Development at Global Level

It is equally important to look at the global challenges and contemporary measures agreed upon at international level when strategically thinking of addressing the regional challenges. In this 21st century, countries are continuously facing the four extra-ordinary and interrelated challenges of pervasive poverty, environmental degradation, climate change, and global strife accentuating the wave of international migration already apace due to economic insecurity in an increasingly unsustainable and inequitable world. In an exceptional demonstration of a global effort and consensus, in 2015, the world community reached two land mark agreements, namely, The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and The Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Together these agreements sought to address the mentioned challenges.

The historic agreement reached in Paris in December 2015 outlines a global commitment to keep warming to 2°C and to strive to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C. Under the agreement, every country will implement its own climate action plan that will be reviewed periodically. Developed countries also committed to deliver significant flows of money and technical support to help developing countries cope with curbing their greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change⁴.

The United Nations Resolution A/RES/70/1 of 25 September 2015, adapting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development describes it as 'a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity' also seeking 'to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom'. The agenda contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. It provides that 'all countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership', are expected to implement⁵. The new Goals are unique in that they call for action by all countries, poor,

rich and middle-income to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and addresses a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection. All the SDGs reflect the concern for environment, some more than others, but SDGs 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 are often labelled as environmental SDGs.

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) addresses the critical environmental challenges facing the world today. The Environment Assembly meets biennially to set priorities for global environmental policies and develop international environmental law. Through its resolutions and calls to action, the Assembly provides leadership and catalyses intergovernmental action on the environment. The fourth session of the UNEA held in March 2019 adopted a number of resolutions including Sustainable Nitrogen Management, Sustainable coral reefs management, Sustainable Management for Global Health of Mangrove, Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities, Innovations on biodiversity and land degradation, Addressing Single-use Plastic Products Pollution, Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste, Environmentally Sound Management of Waste, Marine Plastic Litter and Microplastics, Innovative Pathways to Achieve Sustainable Consumption and Production and its ministerial outcome document highlighted three main priorities for enabling Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) to become a reality around the world: better global environmental data and partnerships; sustainable and efficient resource management; and robust engagement of civil society, citizens and academia in promoting innovative approaches.

Financial supports for environment protection, from various resources have been increasing since last decade but still insufficient. Different financial mechanisms are now available at the regional and global levels to support environment actions in developing countries. The Paris Agreement provides the latest guidance to countries and multilateral development banks on climate finance and the need for financial flows to developing countries to support climate action. Under this Agreement, developed countries are committed to mobilizing USD 100 billion/year by 2020 from public and private sources to support climate action in developing countries, with a new higher target to be agreed by 2025. Access to these financial resources, however, is still a challenge for the most of developing countries including South Asian countries.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' also recognized regional organizations as key actors in coordinating the implementation, follow-up, and review process of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This statement clearly highlights the importance of the roles that regional organizations like SACEP play in the achievement of the United Nations global goals by supporting its member states with the design of action plans for sustainable development, and monitoring the implementation of these commitments.

4. SACEP Strategy 2020 -2030

Based on the decisions made by SACEP Governing Council at its previous sittings, SACEP's own experiences of coordinating and assisting the region's environment protection efforts over the years as well as from its needs going forward, Post 2015 South Asia Development Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and Paris Agreement on Climate Change, SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030 is presented as follows. This is a long-term strategy spanning the period through 2020-2030. Thus, the vision, mission, goals, and objectives/outcomes have a long-term orientation.

4.1 Vision

A healthy environment, resilient society and regional prosperity for the present and future generations.

4.2 Mission

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.

4.3 Guiding Principles (Values)

This SACEP Strategy was developed based on the following guiding principles:

- (a) **Respect:** respect and value the SACEP member countries, governments and people; partners, service providers and all others;
- (b) **Equity and Equality:** foster gender equity without discrimination on the basis of race, creed, gender, faith and age or any other consideration. Merit should be the basis for all decisions.
- (c) **Enabling:** enable others including member countries, institutions and individuals in pursuing environmental responsibility and aspirations and, help and mentor SACEP's staff, interns, volunteers, trainees and colleagues in the quest for excellence in professional careers and personal lives;
- (d) **Partnerships:** pursue partnerships among SACEP and other international players, private sector, academia and Civil Society to overcome environmental challenges and embrace opportunities.
- (e) **Creativity and innovation:** encourage creativity and innovation to effectively achieve goals with limited resources and incentivize mobilization of additional resources for SACEP to grow its support for the member countries' work in environment;
- (f) **Service Orientation:** Service orientation is fundamental to success as a membership organization and seek, support synergy with members, and partners, remaining complementary and avoiding duplication of efforts;
- (g) **Lead by Example:** act as leaders by providing responsible and proactive service to member countries;
- (h) **Track the Progress:** monitor, evaluate and report on the Strategy implementation and follow-up actions;
- (i) **Transparency:** transparency is important both as a strategy and as a means of accountability. SACEP will ensure transparency in its financial management. All technical knowledge resources are open-source and accessible in public domain. Seek to always meet, and possibly exceed, the transparency and accountability, expected.

4.4 Goals

During the 2020–2030 period, SACEP will pursue the following strategic goals in the region. Together, these goals define the core priorities and focus of SACEP for the next ten years:

1. Enhance resilience to the impacts of climate change through mitigation and adaptation measures
2. Conservation of ecosystem and biodiversity
3. Ensure effective waste management at all levels
4. Ensure better air quality to safeguard health and well being
5. Strengthened low-emission development, improve resource efficiency for transition to an inclusive green economy and fostered sustainable and healthy lifestyles
6. Strengthen environmental governance for evidence based decision making

4.5 Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes for identified six Goals are listed below. Each goal specifies a number of objectives/key outcomes. While each goal is a key focus in its own right, all six are closely interrelated.

Goal 1: Enhance resilience to the impacts of climate change through mitigation and adaptation measures

Outcomes:

- 1.1 Countries more resilient to the adverse impacts of climate change.
- 1.2 Countries are assisted in preparation of national and regional adaptation strategies and the integration of adaptation aspects into sectoral policies, especially in the agriculture, water management, forestry, health, energy and transport sectors.
- 1.3 Capacity of SACEP member countries to implement national climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), obligations to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and disaster risk reduction are strengthened.
- 1.4 Multiple pressures on vulnerable ecosystems by implementing ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation to sustain biodiversity and the provision of ecosystem services that support livelihoods and sustainable development are minimised.
- 1.5 Countries are assisted to access climate finance to address the challenges of climate change
- 1.6 International process under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are supported.

Goal 2: Conservation of ecosystem and biodiversity

Outcomes:

- 2.1 Capacity at local, national and regional level is strengthened to enable them to implement legislation on the protection of biodiversity and its integration into planning and economic decision making.

- 2.2 Marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are managed in an integrated manner that enables them to maintain and restore biodiversity, ecosystems' long-term functioning and supply of ecosystem goods and services.
- 2.3 Support provided for the designation, protection and management of areas of natural value. Special attention given to initiatives and activities that promote sustainable use of ecosystem for the conservation of natural resources as part of a larger commitment to preserving and enhancing our natural capital as a necessary condition for smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive growth.
- 2.4 Socioeconomic and ecological impacts of invasive species are reduced significantly.
- 2.5 Governments and public at large in South Asia are aware of the state of the art as to the magnitude of these resources and the trends in their conservation or degradation;
- 2.6 Private Sector is encouraged to invest in conservation activities.
- 2.7 Decade of Ecosystem Restoration (2020 – 2030) as decided by the CoP 14 of the Convention on Biological Diversity will be given due consideration and ecosystem based approach is applied for conservation of all ecosystems including mountain ecosystems.

Goal 3: Ensure effective waste management at all levels

Outcomes:

- 3.1 Promoted integrated waste management across the region including cleaner production, the 3Rs – (reduce, reuse, recycle), zero waste, and the circular economy.
- 3.2 Strengthened capacity at national, and regional levels for waste management including for chemicals, hazardous wastes, plastics and waste water.
- 3.3 Emissions sources identified, policies, legal, regulatory, fiscal and institutional frameworks and mechanisms for the reduction of air pollution developed, institutional capacity built for improved air quality, and air quality assessments done by countries.
- 3.4 Exchange of ideas, experiences, research and information on air quality is facilitated and investment in national and regional air quality monitoring networks, assessment systems, institutional capacity and information disclosure to the wider public is strengthened in order to address gaps in capacity, data, information and awareness.
- 3.5 South Asia regional roadmap for implementing the Global Waste Management Goals towards addressing SDGs is developed and implemented.

Goal 4: Ensure better air quality to safeguard health and well being

- 4.1 A regional clean air Action Plan/Roadmap is developed and implemented
- 4.2 Reduced number of deaths due to human exposure to outdoor air pollution levels
- 4.3 Reduced levels of ambient particulate matter (PM 10 and PM 2.5);
- 4.4 Reduced ambient air levels of NOx and SOx;
- 4.5 Capacity building for managing and mitigating indoor air pollution and industrial waste water are addressed.

Goal 5: Strengthen low-emission development, improve resource efficiency for transition to an inclusive green economy and fostered sustainable and healthy lifestyles

Outcomes:

- 5.1 Regional and national Sustainable Consumption and Production policies and initiatives are developed and implemented.
- 5.2 Application of life-cycle approaches to resource efficiency, energy, chemicals and waste including hazardous waste management is promoted.
- 5.3 Sustainable Consumption and Production approaches are integrated into sectoral policies of SACEP member countries.
- 5.4 Best practices, technological advances and innovations are encouraged in sectors such as energy, transport, manufacturing, health, agriculture, biodiversity, forestry and waste management.
- 5.5 Multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms that contribute to transparent deliberative processes for generating and sharing knowledge on sustainable infrastructure, to ensure that accurate and relevant information is publicly available and reaches key stakeholders at all levels are established and supported.

Goal 6: Strengthen environmental governance for evidence based decision making

Outcomes:

- 6.1 Strengthened synergies between science, policy, and traditional and local knowledge to guide decision making.
- 6.2 Strengthened environmental data collection, monitoring, and analysis and reporting on results, nationally and regionally.
- 6.3 Dialogue between researchers and policy makers is facilitated and both parties are encouraged to work hand in hand for science-based decision making in the region.
- 6.4 South – south cooperation and north – south cooperation in technological transfer for better conservation practices are promoted.
- 6.5 SACEP may align with the centers of excellence in the region. A training center/venue can be established at SACEP complex to implement the capacity development activities.
- 6.6 Improved national capacity for good environmental governance supported by technical assistance for the development of policies and legislations.
- 6.7 Participatory governance put into practice in the field of environment and sustainable development by supporting public access to information, public participation in decision making and access to justice.
- 6.8 Best practices in participatory governance and public participation identified, exchanged and integrated into the water, waste, energy, transport, nature protection, climate change, agriculture, and sustainable consumption and production sectors.

4.6 Coastal and Marine Environment

Coastal and Marine Environment is a cross-cutting theme for SACEP. Coastal and marine environment is considered as one of the most important area for South Asian countries as major portion of its population are directly and indirectly depending for their livelihood on it. In addition to food production, tourism,

recreation, ports and harbours as well as coastal protection, comprise other important goods and services obtained from these ecosystems and they, therefore, have great economic, social and cultural importance to individual countries and to the region as a whole. Coastal ecosystems are highly productive and thus highly valuable to people. Out of eight, five member countries of SACEP are maritime countries and they are members of South Asian Seas Programme which is one of the 18 Regional Seas Programmes of UN Environment.

The South Asian Seas Region is comprised of the coastal and marine waters of Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and is physically divided by the Indian subcontinent into three distinctive areas: two large marine ecosystems – the Arabian Sea in the west and the Bay of Bengal in the east; and a large area of the open Indian Ocean to the south of India, Sri Lanka and Maldives. The region hosts an extensive system of river deltas and diverse marine and coastal habitats, encompassing mangroves, sea grass beds and coral reefs that support some of the richest concentrations of biodiversity in the world. Sustaining coastal systems in the face of a changing climate and increasing human demands is an ongoing challenge. Conservation and restoration efforts require sound science for effective design, implementation and assessment of success.

Considering its importance, SACEP has a major responsibility to support its members to protect and manage the coastal and marine environment and related ecosystems of the region in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner and therefore the issues related to coastal and marine environment is dealt under the South Asian Seas Programme.

The South Asian Seas Programme Action Plan was adopted on 24th March 1995 at the Meeting of Plenipotentiaries and today enjoys the unqualified support of the region's five countries (Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka). South Asian Seas Programme is under the umbrella of SACEP.

The South Asian Seas Action Plan identified the areas where priority activities need to be developed for implementation. These priority activities are in the following four specific areas:

- Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)
- Protection of Marine Environment from Land based activities
- Human Resources Development through Regional Centers of Excellences
- Development of national and regional oil and chemical spill contingency plans

SACEP, under the South Asian Seas programme assists member countries to address the multiple issues on coastal and marine environment which has direct and indirect impacts on the sustainability and biodiversity.

4.7 Implementation

Achieving our goals requires strengthening the approaches, in which we exercise our national and regional responsibilities. These include the following:

4.7.1 Resourcing SACEP's Work

The importance of access to more resources for SACEP, as alluded to before, can't be over emphasized. Other than the continued support of the member countries to maintain the Secretariat, nothing will determine the future success of SACEP more than its access to resources. Financial sustainability will be maintained through

diversified funding via multilateral and bilateral donor relationships, by further mobilising and increasing financial resources from the competitive market, by strengthening partnerships, as well as exploring possibilities for strengthening the trust fund. The idea is for SACEP to strive not only to secure more funds for its work but also enhance the member countries possibilities to better harness the opportunities of donor finance and investments.

The strategy in this regard is:

- (a) Seeking enhancement in member's contributions that has remained modest for a long time;
- (b) encourage member countries to contribute financially and technically on voluntary basis for project activities
- (c) Better intelligence and eventually greater ability to access donor aid;
- (d) identifying business opportunities and attracting private sector participation and support for SACEP's work;
- (e) capitalizing on the market for SACEP's unique and value-added services, and working to extend this market in the future;
- (f) taking the necessary steps to include SACEP in the list of international organisations eligible for Official Development Assistance;
- (g) conducting joint programming and fundraising within established partnerships; and
- (h) exploring the possibilities for strengthening the trust fund.

The greater challenge SACEP faces in expanding its project activities is the lack of adequate technical personnel working at the Secretariat due to the financial constraints. SACEP will request member states to consider secondment of officers to the Secretariat on voluntary basis in which all emoluments of the officer to be borne by the respective member state.

In order to optimise the use of the available financial resources, SACEP will monitor all expenses and, in particular, make every effort to reduce overhead costs. SACEP will also maintain the greatest possible transparency in its financial management and in the use of obtained funds in order to underline the consistency of results with donors' expectations.

4.7.2 Engaging Private Sector

Mobilizing private sector in support of environment is a whole discipline of its own but it suffices to mention here that businesses are likely to be more forthcoming when there is an opportunity to make business in an environment of mutual trust and where their contribution will additionally be rewarded by public recognition. It is therefore need for better coordination and coherence between efforts to support enabling environments and instruments to leverage private finance, the need for a robust and better communicated theory of change for engaging the private sector, and the importance of building on the comparative advantages of development co-operation agencies and development finance institutions especially considering the need for the right skills and competencies to engage the private sector.

Implicit here is also the notion of partnerships that are important for both harnessing mutual strengths and distribute risks, especially when undertaking innovative projects.

4.7.3 Partnerships

Partnership is in the organizational design (organizational DNA) of SACEP given it is a membership organization and its primary mandate is to coordinate, support and promote collaboration among its member countries. SACEP also can and be

more strategic in employing partnership as a tool beyond the notion of partnership with members or in the context of project activities it undertakes.

This would entail understanding and pursuing partnerships in a longer-term perspective. Sustained and result-orient engagement with donors can potentially lead to recurring core and project support as exemplified by the relationship between SACEP and UNEP. In addition, partnerships entail pooling resources, human, fiscal and institutional, that enables doing more than would be otherwise possible. Equally important, the notion of partnership is attractive to potential donors. The partners' contribution in a collaborative effort can be used as collateral to leverage additional support. With some investment already on the table, additional funding is easier to attract and more likely to be forth coming.

Establishing partnership with renowned Universities of member countries and other centers of excellence would strengthen the capability of SACEP in implementing its work programme. For SACEP, this means to think of partnerships in all it seeks to do. Partnerships are demanding to create and sustain in terms of time and effort but, when successful, they pay dividends.

4.8 Governance

The SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030 will be governed and monitored through Governing Council of SACEP and periodically through the Consultative Committee of SACEP.

The Governing Council consists of the Ministers for Environment from the SACEP's member countries and convenes every two years. Its extraordinary meeting would be invited when necessary. As the principal review and deliberative body of SACEP, the Governing Council determines the organizations policies and programme. The Governing Council endeavours, at all times, to reach agreement by consensus.

The Consultative Committee consists of representatives of diplomatic missions of member countries residing in Colombo and meets once in every three months. It is responsible for facilitating implementation of policies, strategies and programmes determined by the Governing Council.

SACEP Secretariat consists of Director General, professional and administrative staff will implement the strategy with the guidance of the Governing Council, Consultative Committee and National Focal Points.

4.9 Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring of SACEP's Strategy 2020 - 2030 implementation will be achieved through governance mechanism. This Strategy will be implemented through annual work plans approved by the Governing Council. The goals, objectives/outcomes and indicators approved in the work plans are translated into specific goals and targets for each programme areas of staff members. Progress achieved towards the results outlined above will be measured through a set of key performance indicators. These are based on expected project outputs. Reporting will be made to the Governing Council and the Consultative Committee periodically. Reporting period will vary throughout the ten-year cycle of the plan as Governing Council and Consultative Committee meetings schedules are alternating to accommodate the participation of all countries at Ministerial level.

4.10 Risk Analysis

Political support of member countries at its highest level is key to enabling the implementation of SACEP activities. Lack of continued common regional political will is a significant risk. SACEP will mitigate this risk through regular bilateral/multilateral discussions with members and as well as with donors and other partners.

Lack of necessary funding and delaying of funding also pose a significant risk. As stated under the 'Resourcing SACEP's Work', this risk will be mitigated by diversified funding via multilateral and bilateral donor relationships, by further mobilising and increasing financial resources from the competitive market, by strengthening partnerships, as well as exploring possibilities for strengthening the trust fund.

1. SACEP 2014. Post 2015 South Asia Development Agenda. South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
2. UNEP 2016. GEO-6 Regional Assessment for Asia and the Pacific. United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi, Kenya
3. Caulker U, Bhadwal S (2007) South Asian regional study on climate change impacts and adaptation: implications for human development. Human Development Report Office, Occasional Paper. United Nations Development Programme
4. World Economic Forum 2016. What are the 10 biggest global challenges?. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/what-are-the-10-biggest-global-challenges/>
5. United Nations, 2015. Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. United Nations
6. Draft report of Regional Marine Litter Action Plan for South Asian Seas Region

Resolution on Sustainable Public Procurement

We, the Environment Ministers and Heads of delegation of the eight countries in the South Asia region viz. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and members of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, met at Dhaka, Bangladesh on 6 November 2019 at the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP):

Recalling the decision 10.2.2 of 13th meeting and the decision 9.2.2 of 14th meetings of the Governing Council of SACEP on promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production in South Asia;

Acknowledging Sustainable Development Goal 12 on ‘ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns’ and its specific target 12.7 on the need to “Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable in accordance with national policies and priorities”;

Noting the outcome of the South Asia Training and Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Public Procurement held on 17 – 18 September 2018 at Bangkok, Thailand;

Underscoring the importance of public procurement, and the potential of Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) in transforming markets, fostering innovation and achieving the sustainable development goals;

Recognizing the role of the South Asia Forum on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SAF SCP), to encourage and support Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) in the region;

Emphasizing that technical and capacity building support will facilitate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals including Goal 12 in SACEP member countries;

Acknowledging the support provided by United Nations Environment Programme under the EU funded SWITCH-Asia Programme to support SPP related policies and action plans, working in partnership with SAF SCP;

Therefore, We

Reaffirm our commitment made at the previous meetings of the Governing Council of SACEP on promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production in South Asia;

Urge SACEP to play a role of regional coordinator in building national capacities on policies and action plans on SPP;

Emphasize the need to conduct national as well as regional awareness building and training programs and build training resources to promote SPP on a programmatic basis;

Encourage countries to identify and involve key relevant stakeholders, including governments, private sector and civil society in SPP through national and regional consultations/workshops;

Request to build a regional Community of Practice (CoP) of key stakeholders engaged in SPP for knowledge sharing;

Promote cooperation among member states to mentor each other by sharing of best practices and experiences on SPP through exchange of officials and professionals;

Urge United Nations agencies to continue to provide technical assistance, institutional support and assist SAF SCP in resource mobilization for SPP;

Invite bilateral and multilateral development partners to extend financial support for capacity-building activities, including demonstration and pilot projects, as well as for the development and implementation of policies, strategies, and action plans related to SPP in SACEP member countries.

South Asia Forum on the Environment (SAFE)

1. Background

Consisting of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, South Asia is the fastest growing region in the world. Combined (about 1.64 billion people), these countries provide home for over a quarter of the world's population and have an expected economic growth of 7.1 percent in 2020 (World Bank 2019). However, environmental degradation and climate vulnerability pose a significant threat to the success of the region.

Key environmental challenges in South Asia highlighted in the latest assessment reports included:

- Mass urbanization and population growth have led to changing lifestyles, and increased consumption has placed immense pressure on the environment and local ecosystems (UNEP 2016). As of 2018, only a third of the South Asian population were living in cities, however that figure is expected to rise to over half by 2050, further increasing pressure on the environment (UN-ESCAP 2018). As cities increase in population, there are often significant increases in polluting industries and unregulated use of natural resources without regard for climate impact (ADB 2019). Further, these unregulated industries and increased traffic in urban centers can contribute significantly to water and air pollution (ADB 2019).
- An assessment of climate risks including droughts, floods, extreme rainfall, extreme temperature and sea-level rise showed that approximately 750 million people are at risk of one or more of these climate hazards (IWMI 2017). Additionally, South Asia's share in CO₂ emissions doubled between 1990 and 2013 (UN-ESCAP 2018). However, there has been an increase in forest cover and protected areas in the region, and many countries have implemented policies encouraging sustainable growth and environmental protection (UN-ESCAP 2018).
- Water sources across South Asia are diverse: delayed monsoon seasons, increasing sea levels and melting Himalayan glaciers all pose pertinent challenges for the region. South Asia's household water security score is just 4.5 (on a 20-point scale), the lowest in Asia and the Pacific (ADB 2016). Much of the lack of security is due to changes to climate patterns and the mismanagement of waste and wastewater in much of the region. In 2015 it was estimated that 68-84% of water sources in South Asia are contaminated due to poor waste management practices (UNICEF 2016).
- The 2018 World Air Quality report found that of the countries and regions with data available on-air pollution, four of the five most polluted were in South Asia. 99% of the 84 cities monitored in the region failed to meet the World Health Organization limit, and on average across the region, South Asia is averaging six times the recommended limit (IQAir 2018).
- South Asia Environment Outlook 2014, Post 2015 South Asia Development Agenda report and, the last Governing Council of SACEP held in March 2018 identified the following key priorities: Biodiversity; Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation; Sustainable Consumption and Production; Waste Management; Air Pollution; and Coastal and marine ecosystem.

2. Need for a South Asia Forum on the Environment

South Asia is expected to reach its population peak by 2030. Continued population growth and unsustainable production and consumption will place pressure on the environment and natural resources. Countries of the region are facing daunting challenges in safeguarding the environment with the current space of economic development. Environmental challenges such as air pollution, hazardous waste and chemicals, climate change, and ecosystem degradation have impacts on human health and well-being. It is well understood that efforts of individual countries might not yield adequate results, and therefore, collective efforts to address common and transboundary issues are necessary for environmental safeguards and sustainability towards achieving the 2030 sustainable development goals. Countries need to make collective calls for actions for resource efficiency, low carbon and resilient developmental agenda. Establishment and convening of a regional forum for South Asia was envisioned at various past forums.

The Regional Forum is expected to provide a platform for networking, discuss data and assessment, sharing solutions regarding policy, technology, financing and capacity building tools, and discuss institutional mechanism to address environmental challenges in South Asia. The annual forum is expected to discuss the regional and global environmental priorities including those in the UN Environmental Assembly. Outcome of the meeting will feed into SACEP Governing Council, UNEP's Regional Ministerial Forum, UN Environment Assembly and other regional and global events.

3. Agenda and Venue for the South Asia Forum

The First South Asia Forum on the Environment was initially scheduled in the first week of November 2019 in Dhaka, Bangladesh back to back with the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP. But due to the request of many partners about the timing, postponed to the First Quarter of year 2020. The proposed regional forum will have number of multistakeholders' dialogues around priority issues. SACEP will serve as Secretariat for the Forum and it will be jointly organized by SACEP and UN Environment Programme.

The Regional Forum will aim:

- Review progress on relevant UNEA resolutions and discuss solutions including policy, finance, technology, capacity building needs on implementation of the resolutions;
- Discuss how Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) can serve as drivers of environment related SDG implementations. The 2030 Agenda encourages member States to review their national experiences in implementing the environment related goals and targets of SDGs, including successes, challenges and lessons learned;
- Country representatives and other stakeholders to share concrete case studies from their national experience, propose solutions and best practices;
- By convening back to back with SACEP Governing Council, the Forum will aim for the ministerial level participation as SACEP Governing Council is a ministerial forum.

The Regional Forum will have following tentative Agenda:

- Opening Session with the participation of High-level political dignitaries from the host country.
- High-level policy dialogue with Environment ministers of eight South Asian countries.
- Interactive dialogues on air pollution, plastic pollution and food waste and associated important UNEA resolutions led by South Asian Member States.
- Closing session.

4. List of Invitee

- i. Governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka (Environment Ministers and Senior Officials)
- ii. Major Groups and Stakeholders
- iii. Private Sectors
- iv. Religious Leaders
- v. Intergovernmental and International Organizations
- vi. Experts



A Roadmap for Sustainable Waste Management and Resources Circulation in South Asia, 2019–2030

Contents

1. Introduction.....	2
1.1. Rapid urbanization in South Asia	2
1.2. Status of waste and resource management in South Asia	2
1.3. Transition towards sustainable waste and resource management in South Asia.....	4
1.4. Aligned with regional and multilateral environmental agreements	7
1.5. The approach and methodology.....	8
2. Going Forward – A Roadmap for sustainable waste and resource management in South Asia	10
2.1. Overarching objectives.....	10
2.2. Strategic principles.....	10
2.3. Strategic targets	11
3. Key Strategic Measures	12
3.1. Measures for Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	12
3.2. Measures for Sustainable Production	17
3.3. Measures for Sustainable Consumption.....	19
3.4. Measuring Progress – Research, Data, Monitoring and Evaluation.....	21
4. Strategic Recommendations.....	24

1. Introduction

1.1. Rapid urbanization in South Asia

South Asia, which covers about 3.5% of World's land surface and 12% of the Asian continent includes eight countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It provides home to about 1.9 billion people or more than 23% of the world's population and predicts to have 2.4 billion population in 2050¹. South Asia's urban population also grew by 130 million people in the period of 2001 – 2011, and is poised to rise by almost 250 million by 2030². The growth benefits associated with urbanization also increased and the countries made some progress in achieving greater prosperity, with the increase in productivity linked to the growing number of people living in the region's towns and cities. It has six of the world's mega-cities—Bangalore, Delhi, Dhaka, Karachi, Kolkata, and Mumbai—with more on the way as populations grow in Ahmedabad, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Lahore³.

Average GDP per capita in the region also grew by almost 56% during 2010– 2018, with average annual growth of more than 6%⁴. At the same time, the human development indicators have also made substantial progress in the past two decades. South Asia was the fastest growing region of achieving the human development index (HDI) values over 1997–2017, at 45.3%, a headed of the East Asia and the Pacific at 41.8% and Sub Saharan Africa at 34.9%.⁵ The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, by contrast, grew 14% in the same period. The trends hold promise for reducing gaps in human development and absolute poverty declined from one in two people living on less than \$1.25, a day in 1999 to less than one in three in 2010. In addition, universal access to safely managed drinking water services has also improved and this figure is almost 90% in South Asian countries, except Afghanistan (78%). The proportion of urban population living in informal settlements or slum areas has also declined. India, Bangladesh, and Nepal have done extremely well in reducing the share of their urban population living in slums by 17%, 22% and 10% respectively during the period of 2000 and 2014⁶. Urbanization thus presents South Asian countries with an opportunity to transform their economies and join the ranks of richer countries in both prosperity and livability.

1.2. Status of waste and resource management in South Asia

Despite above benefits, economic growth and rapid urbanization have also triggered decline natural resources and led to unprecedented levels of air, water and land pollution threatening public health and placing future stress on natural capitals. Air quality is usually measured by the levels of particulate matter equal to 2.5 microns in diameter or less (PM 2.5). The maximum level set by the World Health Organization (WHO) is 10 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m³) as a standard for the average annual PM

¹ United Nations, 2019: World Population Prospects 2019, Online edition, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division

² <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/22549/9781464806629.pdf?sequence=17&isAllowed=y>

³ <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/22549/9781464806629.pdf?sequence=17&isAllowed=y>

⁴ World Bank, 2019: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/sar/overview>

⁵ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-indices-indicators-2018-statistical-update>

⁶ <https://www.adb.org/publications/key-indicators-asia-and-pacific-2017>

2.5. The concentration level in all countries in South Asia exceed the WHO's threshold and Bangladesh has the highest average annual mean concentration level of 88.8 µg/m³⁷.

In addition, consumption and production are fundamental to economic activities, but when unmanaged can contribute to depletion of natural capital. SDG 12 motivates achieving sustainable consumption and production through minimal extraction of natural resources, reduction in the use of toxic materials, and reliance on production processes that result in less waste and fewer pollutants. In South Asia, Maldives have the highest domestic material consumption per person at 11.6 tons of materials per capita. Other countries are also have witnessed the double of domestic material consumption per capita during the period of 2000 and 2015⁸.

However, the most visible implication of rapidly urbanizing South Asia is the increasing generation of municipal solid waste. South Asia generates approximately 334 million tons of waste in 2016 at an average of 0.52 kg per person. About 174 million tons (57%) of waste in South Asia is organic with high moisture content⁹. Due to a lack of effective policy and regulations, technical, financial and human resources, many countries in South Asia are facing tremendous challenges to provide adequate waste management services. Average waste collection coverage in South Asian countries is about 51%, although the service coverage varies considerably by county to country and city-to-city. Rural areas and small cities have lower waste collection coverage and low-income or squatter settlements are often lack waste collection services as these communities fall outside of the official service areas. Uncollected waste burned openly either in the streets or end up in rivers, creeks, marshy areas and empty lands thereby posing a serious threats to public health. Open dumping is the most common method for the final disposal of municipal solid waste in South Asia without proper pollution control methods such as leachate collection and treatment, landfill gas collection and even liners to prevent public health and environmental risks¹⁰. However, remediation of dumpsites and construction of sanitary landfills are taking place and well-functioning facilities are operating in some countries by either private sector or officials.

Most countries and cities in South Asia commonly practice composting and biogas to manage the organic waste, which is the largest portion in the waste composition. Small-scale composting and biogas plants have however shown some success than bigger-scale plants. A large-scale and centralized plants are faced some technical and operational challenges because of high investment and operating costs, poor quality of inputs as a result of lack of waste separation, and lack of effective marketing mechanisms. A potential of advanced treatment technologies such as waste to energy (WtE) incineration, mechanical biological treatment (MBT), Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) has gained interest among countries, but substantial results have yet to be proven.

In South Asia, there are some initiatives to establish 3Rs (reduce, reuse and recycle) and sustainable consumption and production (SCP) policies, rules and regulations at national and local levels. However,

⁷ <https://www.adb.org/publications/key-indicators-asia-and-pacific-2017>

⁸ <https://www.adb.org/publications/key-indicators-asia-and-pacific-2017>

⁹ World Bank, 2018: What a Waste 2.0 – A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050

¹⁰ World Bank, 2018: What a Waste 2.0 – A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050

the promotion of 3Rs in the domestic policies are given overemphasize on recycling and processing, less focus on waste prevention and reduction at the beginning. Most of these 3R policies are still needed to translate into practice and accountability structures are needed to set in place for proper monitoring and reporting. Strengthening legal enforcement, technical and institutional capacities to the regulators and operators are common priorities in all countries and cities. Lack of public awareness and participation are another challenges for effective implementation of the 3Rs policies. Thus, environmental education from schools to public become important.

Informal waste collection, material recovery and recycling activities are popular in South Asia. Collection of recyclable materials are happened at several stages such as households (during a door-to-door collection), transfer stations and disposal sites. Many material recovery facilities are functioned simply as temporary storage centers and manual handling. Recovered recyclable materials are entering into the chain of dealers or manufacturing enterprises. The cooperation and coordination among different stakeholders including national and local governments, service users, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), private sector (formal and informal), academic and research institutes, regional agencies and donor agencies is required to increase sustainability of the waste management system and sharing of financial responsibilities. In South Asia, woman play an important role in waste management and many CBOs and NGOs provide support to informal sector to organize themselves.

In addition to the increase in municipal solid waste, managing complex and emerging waste streams, including plastic and marine litter, food waste, e-waste, medical waste and construction and demolition waste (C&D) are also growing issues in need of attention. Across many countries in South Asia, about 80%-90% of plastic waste is inadequately disposed of, and therefore pose the risk of polluting land, rivers and oceans¹¹.

1.3. Transition towards sustainable waste and resource management in South Asia

The continuation of current one-way or linear model of society — mass production, mass consumption and mass disposal — is inevitably leading South Asia towards the depletion of its limited natural resources and increasing the volume of waste generation. The countries thus have to move towards sustainable waste and resource management policy and planning - move away from a focus on collection and disposal to focus on more waste reduction, reuse, recycling and recovery. The experience from developed countries, of countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), particularly EU member states and Japan shows that this transition requires a gradual development adopting new policy principles such as “Waste Hierarchy”, “Sound Material Cycle Society” and “Circular Economy”, where the society consumes fewer natural resources; products have a longer lifetime, limited waste generation, transform waste into new resources and causes less environmental impacts.

¹¹ Premakumara, D.G.J; Onogawa, K, 2019: Reducing Marine Plastics in Low and Middle Income Countries Adopting Land-based Plastic Waste Management Strategies and Policy Interventions, UNEP and IGES,

Waste Hierarchy:

The waste hierarchy indicates an order of preference for action to reduce and manage waste. The hierarchy captures the progression of a material or product through successive stages of waste management and represents the latter part of the life cycle for each products. The aim of the waste hierarchy is to extract the maximum practical benefits from products and to generate the minimum amount of waste. Different versions of the waste hierarchy have been adopted by different countries, although they are all broadly similar and the European waste hierarchy for example refers to the five steps, such as (i) Prevention (preventing and reducing waste generation), (ii) Reuse and preparation for reuse (giving the products a second life before they become waste), (iii) Recycle (any recovery operation by which waste materials are reprocessed into products, materials or substances whether for the original or other purposes. It includes composting and it does not include incineration), (iv) Recovery (some waste incineration based on a political non-scientific formula that upgrades the less inefficient incinerators, and (v) Disposal (processes to dispose of waste be it landfilling, incineration, pyrolysis, gasification and other finalist solutions). See the European Commission's Waste framework Directive 2008/98/EC, Article 4, Waste Hierarchy (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32008L0098:EN:NOT>).

Sound Material Cycle Society

A society in which the consumption of natural resources will be conserved and the environmental load will be reduced to the greatest extent possible, by preventing or reducing the generation of wastes, etc. and by promoting proper cyclical use and disposal of products, etc. It presents images such as the "slow lifestyle in which goods of quality are used with care," "environmental conservation-oriented manufacturing and services," and "establishing a system of appropriate cyclical use and disposal of waste." See the Basic Act for Establishing a Sound Material-Cycle Society (Act No.110 of 2000) (<https://www.env.go.jp/en/laws/recycle/12.pdf>)

Circular Economy

A circular economy aims to redefine growth, focusing on positive society-wide benefits. It entails gradually decoupling economic activity from the consumption of finite resources, and designing waste out of the system. Underpinned by a transition to renewable energy sources, the circular model builds economic, natural, and social capital. It is based on three principles, such as design out waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use, regenerate natural systems. Transitioning to a circular economy does not only amount to adjustments aimed at reducing the negative impacts of the linear economy. Rather, it represents a systemic shift that builds long-term resilience, generates business and economic opportunities, and provides environmental and societal benefits. The model distinguishes between technical and biological cycles. Consumption happens only in biological cycles, where food and biologically-based materials (such as cotton or wood) are designed to feed back into the system through processes like composting and anaerobic digestion. These cycles regenerate living systems, such as soil, which provide renewable resources for the economy. Technical cycles recover and restore products, components, and materials through strategies like reuse, repair, remanufacture or (in the last resort) recycling. (<https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy/concept>)

The application of above policy and planning principles into the sustainable waste and resource management in South Asia can also bring various social, economic and environmental benefits. The sustainable waste and resource management can contribute to achieving many of the targets of the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It has strong linkages to a range of global challenges such as health, climate change, poverty reduction, food and resource security and sustainable production and consumption. The political case for action is significantly strengthened when waste management is viewed as an entry point to address a range of such sustainable development issues, many of which are difficult to tackle alone. Thus, a strong argument can be made for the strategic importance of improving waste management, insofar as actions here will contribute to

progress towards a range of SDG targets. Setting and monitoring global targets for waste management will thus contribute significantly to attaining the SDGs¹².



¹² https://www.iswa.org/fileadmin/galleries/Publications/ISWA_Reports/GWM0_summary_web.pdf

The sustainable waste and resource management also contributes to reduce our environmental footprint and lead to significant reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Thus, it can be identified that more than 60% of initially proposed **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** by the signatory nations on climate include references to waste actions¹³.

The IPCC has estimated the direct contribution of the solid waste and wastewater sectors to GHG emissions at 3 to 5% based on 2010 data¹⁴. Of this total, 97% is due to methane emissions, split roughly equally between methane from landfills and from wastewater. The IPCC estimate however does not account for savings achieved through recycling. It has been estimated that about 10 to 15% reduction in global GHG emissions could be achieved through landfill mitigation and diversion, energy from waste, recycling, and other types of improved solid waste management. Including waste prevention based on the life cycle assessment could potentially increase this contribution to 15 to 20%¹⁵. Using secondary raw materials in industrial production to displace virgin materials significantly reduces GHG emissions, both by reducing direct energy consumption in the production process – e.g. in glass production by 35%, paper and steel over 50%, plastics over 70% and aluminium over 90% – and by the indirect upstream avoidance of mining, processing and transport of primary raw materials.

The short-lived climate pollutants (SLCP) such as black carbon is also currently receiving much global attention. Estimates of global black carbon emissions suggest that 40% comes from open burning of biomass, including open burning of both urban waste and agricultural waste, while 60% comes from energy sources, including power plants, industry, transport and residential fuel use. Thus, control of methane from landfill and of black carbon from open burning both require urgent attention in the waste management plans, considering the much higher global warming potential (GWP) of black carbon in terms of CO₂ equivalent, particularly over a 20-year time horizon.

1.4. Aligned with regional and multilateral environmental agreements

In addition to the above global agreements – Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Climate Agreement signed by the countries in South Asia in 2015 – a greater action on sustainable waste and resource management in South Asia is an important cross-cutting thematic area of most of multilateral environmental agreements. Some of them are:

- Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal
- Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade
- Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
- Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer
- Montreal Protocol of the Vienna Convention
- International Conference on Chemicals Management

¹³

¹⁴ IPCC (2013).

¹⁵ https://www.iswa.org/fileadmin/galleries/Publications/ISWA_Reports/GWM0_summary_web.pdf

- Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)
- Matamata Convention on Mercury

The urgency of addressing the sustainable waste and resource management in the South Asia is also discussed among the countries in its regional co-operation frameworks and in align with other pressing regional concerns such as environmental degradation, food safety, power generation, poverty alleviation and trans-boundary technology transfer. Some of key regional activities are:

- The Dhaka Declaration on Waste Management of 2004, which recognizes the environmental imperative to promote more effective waste management systems ‘with special attention to addressing the needs of the poor’.
- The SAARC action plan on Climate Change of 2008, which listed waste management as one of the priority areas for nationally appropriate mitigation actions where regional sharing of best practices could be useful.
- The 2010 convention on co-operation on the environment also included waste management among a list of 19 areas for the exchange of best practices and knowledge, and transfer of eco-friendly technology.
- The summary statement of the South Asia Sustainable Consumption and Production Forum in 2016 has also acknowledged the importance of achieving SCP in the region and recommended SACEP Governing Council to provide continues support and guidance.
- Since the lunch of the Regional 3R Forum in Asia and the Pacific in 2009, policy issues and priorities on sustainable waste and resource management have been widely discussed among member countries and agreed on some declarations such as Hanoi 3R Declaration – Sustainable 3R Goals in 2013 and Indore 3R Declaration of Asian Mayors in 2018.
- Regional Seas Programme of UNEP, which has been developing and implementing Regional Action Plans on Marine Litter, including capacity building for effective management, promoting public awareness and strengthening cooperation among governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

1.5. The approach and methodology

The development of this roadmap is a result of incentive consultation process that facilitated by the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) and IGES Center Collaborating with UNEP on Environmental Technologies (CCET) and the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) with the support of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/IETC and the Ministry of Environment, Japan (MOEJ) involving all member countries in the South Asia. The preparatory work began with an introductory meeting at the Eight-3R Forum in India, April 2018 where the Deputy Minister, Ministry of Environment, Maldives and the Minister, Ministry of Works and Human Settlements, Bhutan raised an urgent need of developing a sub-regional roadmap to improve the waste and resource management in South Asia. This idea was further discussed and brainstormed with the international community, including UNEP, UNESCAP, and SACEP, Government of Japan and member countries (representatives from Bangladesh) at the 5th session of CED, ESCAP in Bangkok, November 2018. These initial meetings were followed by data gathering and organization of series of consultative meetings

involving relevant representatives from SACEP member countries and other key stakeholders, including international agencies, research/academic institutions, private/ business sector and civil society groups. Some of key events are:

- First sub-regional workshop was organized in Kathmandu, Nepal, March 2019 to discuss the available data on waste management and priority areas to be considered in drafting a roadmap.
- Second consultative workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh, July 2019 where draft status report of waste management in South Asia and the outline of the roadmap were discussed in more details and get some consensus in writing the roadmap. Participants also discussed the issue of waste management under the thematic sessions including waste separation, bio-waste management, marine and plastic waste management, open disposal and burning of waste, and financial, institutional and technical matters. The discussions further identified the importance of moving from linear model of waste management to more sustainable model based on circular economy, sound material-cycle society and sufficiency economy.
- Third Sub-regional workshop in Colombo, Sri Lanka, September 2019. During the meeting, both reports are reviewed and finalized by the member countries to submit for the SACEP Governing Council in Dhaka, Bangladesh in November 2019.

2. Going Forward – A Roadmap for sustainable waste and resource management in South Asia

2.1. Overarching objectives

This roadmap aims to set the regional policy framework including clear targets and practical measures to achieve the sustainable waste and resource management in South Asia and put the incentives in place to motivate the change by national actions, networking, knowledge and technology sharing as well as mutual learning among member countries in the sub-region. Some of the specific goals are:

- To minimize negative impacts on the environment, economy and society,
- To minimize waste generation and maximize the resource efficiency across the product lifecycle.
- To synergize local, national, sub-regional efforts in implementing waste and resource management related goals and agendas including SDGs, NDCs, and others.
- To strengthen a bilateral and multilateral cooperation, research and mutual learning within the sub-region on sustainable waste and resource management

2.2. Strategic principles

The complexity of waste and resource management has led to the identification of a number of strategic principles of environmental policy and sustainable development. Key strategic principles that are discussed and accepted as guiding for developing the roadmap:

- Prevention and Precautionary - prevent waste from occurring in the first place, and manage it better when it does based on waste hierarchy
- Polluter Pays Principle - those who generate waste should bear the cost of managing it so that it does not pose risks to human health and the environment.
- Extended Producer Responsibility Principle - those who place products on the market will take greater responsibility of end-of-life products for environmentally sound disposal of the products
- Sustainability and affordability - self-sustained and full cost recovery
- Sustainable Partnership - partnership building among all key stakeholders, including public, local government, private and civil society. Integration of community-based and informal sector activities.
- Equity - ensure gender mainstreaming, elimination of child labor, and worker safety in waste management industries.
- Sustainable production and consumption - the production and consumption cycle should be re-worked to put it on a sustainable basis
- Life-cycle approaches - examine a product and its passage through distinct stages of a life-cycle from the very beginning: extraction of raw materials, manufacture, packaging, transport,

distribution, sale, use and end-of-life, when it enters into the waste management system and the later phases of the waste hierarchy.

- Resource efficiency - rethink the life-cycle of a product from the perspective of the resources that go into each stage, since losing resources as waste is inefficient.
- Cleaner production - the continuous application of an integrated environmental strategy to processes, products and services to increase efficiency and reduce risks to humans and the environment, aims at resource efficiency but also explicitly addresses and strives to reduce the use of hazardous substances in products and their production processes, and generation of emissions
- Eco-design and Eco-innovations - focusing on design features, which incorporate: extension of the product use period, design for disassembly, repair or upgrading (thus phasing out components that prevent reuse or recycling) and constructing a product from materials that can serve as inputs to another process.
- Collaboration and cooperation - networking among stakeholders and mutual learning within the sub-region and elimination of illegal traffic of waste in the sub-region.

2.3. Strategic targets

The roadmap also set a number of strategic targets to drive towards a sustainable waste and resource management in South Asia. Key targets are set to achieve by 2030:

- Ensure adequate, safe and affordable waste management service for all
- Achieve zero open dumping and open burning
- Achieve 100% segregated waste collection at source
- Achieve 10% waste reduction target by 2030 - based on 2019 per capita waste generation at national level
- Double resource productivity by 2030 - based on 2019 baseline data
- Achieve 50% reduction of food-losses and food-waste
- Phase-out the disposal of all organic or bio waste, recyclable, energy-recoverable, and waste which has alternative use in landfills
- Phase-out the use of single-use plastics
- All plastic packaging placed on the market being recyclable, reusable or compostable
- Reduce marine plastic pollution of all kinds
- Achieve environmentally sound management of domestic hazardous waste including domestic chemical waste, and domestic medical waste, e-waste etc.
- Reduce industrial waste generation/increase resource recovery and environmentally sound treatment/disposal
- Establish a baseline data on waste management, monitoring and reporting mechanisms at national and sub-regional levels
- Establish common facilities for management of special waste - industrial waste, E-waste, medical waste, C&D waste, hazardous waste.
- Enhance public procurement of products produced from secondary resource materials

3.Key Strategic Measures

3.1. Measures for Sustainable Waste and Resource Management

Sustainable waste and resource management requires a gradual or phase-based approach. At the early stage of improvement, waste management systems can focus more on providing affordable waste collection service for all along with environmentally sound disposal practices. However, to manage the waste in most resource efficient manner, applying waste hierarchy is important.

- Improve waste collection services for all
- Establish proper system to make the waste sorting mandatory and citizen friendly
- Increase resource recovery and recycling
- Take organic or bio waste out of landfills
- Accelerate the introduction of economic incentives for waste management.
- Encourage industries to apply cleaner production methods and technologies to reduce waste
- Establish effective enforcement and regulatory system to prevent waste littering, illegal dumping and illegal import and export (trans-boundary)
- Research and application of appropriate technologies for waste treatment, including MBT, RDF and Waste to Energy (WtE)
- Exploring new ways to ease the environmental impacts of landfill sites
- Encourage waste producers and managers to implement the waste management hierarchy in respect of hazardous waste
- Integrate Informal sector, community-based activities and small and medium enterprises (SMEs)
- Establishing national standards for resources recovered from waste

Key Measures

- 1) **Improve waste collection, transport and disposal services** – The improvement of waste management system can be started from securing affordable waste collection and transportation services for all, particularly urban low-income or informal settlements, peri-urban and rural neighborhoods that are often lack the service. The collected waste should dispose in final disposal sites that have at least minimum standards of measures to control environmental pollutions and public health conditions.
- 2) **Mandatory waste separation at source** – Introduce mandatory waste separation at source, promote householder and business participation for waste separation, and ensure that high levels of quality recyclable or compostable materials are available for reprocessing. The introduction of waste separation can be started from establishing a simple waste categories, such as dry, wet, domestic hazardous and residuals and gradually increased the number of categories based on the awareness of the citizens and availability of recyclable systems.

- 3) **Encouraging householders to minimize waste at source and recycle more** - Maximize the value of reforms by encouraging behavior change alongside them. Promote innovative measures such as providing rewards or recognizing national, local and individual (householders and businesses) efforts to minimize waste and increase recycle rates. Such incentives and nudges, when they accompany good services and communications, can make a real difference to people's engagement in recycling. Explore new ways to engage positively with the public about recycling, building on the work of charities and non-governmental organizations.
- 4) **Improving recycling rates by ensuring dry recyclable materials collection system from all households and businesses** -Introduce non-binding performance indicators for the quantity of materials collected for recycling and minimum service standards for recycling. Take new actions including, where necessary legislating, to ensure that businesses present recycling waste separately from residual waste for collection and publish or make available information on what is recycled. Investigate these service options alongside other measures to help cut costs, particularly for SMEs. As part of establishing a core set of materials for collection, a review the effectiveness of current arrangements for reporting of quality, and for determining when separate collection is necessary to achieve high quality. This will also take into account reforms to the packaging waste regulations and changes to provisions on technical, environmental and economic practicability in the new Circular Economy Package. Compared to recovering recycle materials from households, recovering recyclables from the commercial/ institutional/ industrial sectors is easier to operate and less costly. Thus, waste separation and recycling programmes can be started from commercial/ institutional and industrial sectors and gradually expand to other sectors.
- 5) **Improving recycling rates in urban areas by working with business and other stakeholders** - Work with relevant authorities, organizations and stakeholders to review collection models for densely populated commercial and residential area/ districts (high-rise buildings or urban housing-schemes) to improve recycling and reduce costs whilst maintaining frequency of collections needed to protect local amenity. This could include piloting shared domestic and business collection rounds or zoned collection services. Engage with property owners and estate managers to promote recycling in houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) and other properties where they have responsibility for waste management arrangements. Work to align with the National Planning Policy for Waste and planning practice guidance with the Resources and Waste Strategy and continue to maintain building regulations guidance to support its objectives; Work with transport hubs and other destinations such as hospitals and universities to promote effective and high quality recycling (including on-the-go).
- 6) **Facilitate organic-waste separation at source** - Whilst some national and local authorities in the region have already set policies and programmes to manage organic-waste collection and recycling schemes, the majority of organic-waste is still ends up at final disposal sites along with other residual waste. Extending separate organic-waste collections to more households should increase recycling and composting rates and divert organic-waste from incineration or landfill. This will result, in particular, for local authorities that so wish, in the adoption of a two-stage organic-waste source sorting implementation plan. A first step that aims to ensure the collection of

organic-waste from the places comparable to household organic-waste (markets, restaurants, community canteens, etc.). Then a second step to roll out this source sorting to household bio-waste.

- 7) **Recovery of all quality of organic-waste to drive the circular economy** – Work across governments on opportunities to promote synergies between organic-waste and renewable energy to support decarbonization of transport, heat and power. Carry out and publish a review of policies to support organic-waste recycling through biogas and composting to maximize the benefits of these treatment options whilst managing the risks. Ensure that where appropriate farms continue to use biogas as a treatment option for managing on-farm waste and recycling nutrients into energy and digestate that can be applied back to land. Strengthen the existing standards for recycling-based fertilizers and take care not to degrade the value created thanks to sorting by mixing uncontaminated organic matter (raw or sorted at source) with lower quality organic waste. Encourage the use of fertilizers from renewable resources in agricultural production, the development of the procedure to remove the waste status of fertilizers produced from high-quality recycling processes, and the revision of the display and labelling of fertilizers and crop boosters to better highlight agronomic qualities, origin and process of composts and digestates from the circular economy compared to other forms of fertilizers. Clear communications by local authorities and waste managers can play a key role in achieving this. It is also important that quality standards for compost and digestate are fully adopted and that they are regularly reviewed to see if they are fit for purpose or can be improved with evidence. Work with the Environment Agency and industry to ensure what put on the market adds value, meets required environmental and quality standards and is applied correctly to minimize environmental impacts.
- 8) **Accelerate the collection of recyclable packaging, plastic bottles and cans** – The system should significantly increase voluntary collection, particularly at the initiative of local authorities, as a priority in areas where collection rates are low. There are also plans to carry out experiments in using deposit schemes for plastic waste collection and recovery. For example, deploy "social waste deposit schemes" in communities that wish them as these create an incentive to return waste, as each new bottle which is collected contributes to the financing of a great environmental, health or charity cause. Voluntary organizations and communities will be allowed to issue calls for projects to select the collection management operators in order to choose the most appropriate solutions for their needs, especially in the densest urban areas. These solutions can also use digital technologies, social innovation, the collaborative economy or automatic bottle and can recovery machines. To finance these operations, local authorities will receive specific support per ton collected from approved producer responsibility organizations in the packaging sector.
- 9) **Adapt new tax systems to make waste recovery and recycling are cheaper than incineration and disposal** – To make waste prevention and recovery less costly within the public waste management service, reduce VAT for the prevention, separate collection, sorting and material recovery of waste. This reduction will also cover the acquisition of biodegradable and compostable bags in compliance with the standards in force for the separate collection of bio-waste and the acquisition of technical solutions for local composting. A consultation on the planned increase in tariffs of the "waste" component of the TGAP (General Tax on Polluting Activities). A multi-year implementation scheme

will be necessary in order to give operators the time to adapt. It will also involve refocusing the TGAP's objective in relation to the hierarchy of waste processing, by proposing a schedule for the elimination of the reduced TGAP tariffs, which either contradict the objectives for sorting at source and the recovery of bio-waste or contradict other elements of the TGAP, or otherwise have no direct link with the purpose of the tax, while maintaining a specific tariff for incineration which has high-energy performance. All local authorities that are taking a real step towards the circular economy will see their costs reduced. TGAP exemption for "incineration with energy recovery" for certain waste that must be eliminated by law and for which recycling is prohibited, such as, for example, waste from health care activities that present a risk of infection (DASRI), waste containing persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and creosote-treated woods.

- 10) **To encourage sorting and avoid waste, facilitate the deployment of other financial incentives for waste collection** – Set the pricing of the service based on the quantity of waste produced (price paid based on the number of days that a full bin was put out for collection, obligation to leave waste in pre-paid bags, weighing of bins during waste collection, etc.). Reduce the administrative burden on local authorities for the implementation of pricing incentives by allowing their proceeds from the pricing initiative. Introduce systematic invoicing between local authorities based on the quantities of waste collected or processed and prohibit flat-rate billing when the necessary information is available, so as not to negate the prevention and sorting efforts of citizens and local authorities. Organize the sharing of feedback and best practices for the deployment of pricing incentives, particularly in terms of implementation in urban areas, and strengthen support for councils in the deployment of pricing incentives. National authorities should prepare regulations for fee settings including a methodology and guidelines for cost calculation.
- 11) **Encourage waste producers and managers to implement the waste hierarchy in respect to industrial, chemical and hazardous waste** – Set the new requirements of the Waste Framework Directive that relate to the management of industrial, chemical and hazardous waste. Implement these new requirements in a way that strengthens record keeping mechanisms and furthers the application of the waste hierarchy whilst minimizing any additional burdens on businesses. The development of clear guidance on the Best Overall Environmental Option (BOEO) for these problematic wastes would promote the adoption of waste management practices that make sure hazardous chemicals in wastes do not pose a continuing risk to human health and the environment and do not end up contaminating secondary raw material streams. Work with producers and waste management companies and consider how can encourage producers to implement the waste hierarchy in respect to hazardous waste alongside actions to implement the Best Overall Environmental Option for these problematic wastes. This may include seeking views on requiring producers of industrial, chemical and hazardous waste to report annually on how much hazardous waste they produce, send for recycling or recovery, send for disposal and the steps they have taken to drive the management of hazardous waste up the waste hierarchy.
- 12) **Explore new ways to ease the environmental impacts of legacy landfill sites** – Landfilling has been a mainstay of waste management for over a century. Sites vary widely by age and waste composition. Waste already deposited in landfill will continue to pose a risk to the environment for many years.

Conduct a scoping study into ways that can deal with the issues legacy landfills create and will be undertaking research and analysis to support new approaches to landfill aftercare management. Working with industry, local authorities, and other partners, to provide clarity around surrender criteria, explore potential alternative sources of revenue, and optimize passive landfill management technologies.

- 13) **Research and development of appropriate technologies for waste treatment before landfill** – Waste to be managed in the most appropriate way to ensure that environmental impacts are minimized, and that the resource value extracted is maximized. Some of the key technologies are sending it for energy recovery, exporting it as a refuse-derived fuel (RDF), and landfilling it. Attempt to extract recyclables from this waste where the technology exists to do it, although the quality of this material tends to be poor. Landfill is the least preferred option given its environmental impact and long-lasting nature.
- 14) **Develop a national waste management strategy and/ or implementation plan to facilitate the transition from waste management to resource management** – A centrally led approach accompanied by public consultations and local endorsement are required to make this change happened. Respective authorities need to introduce national policies, legislation, standards and financial mechanisms. Local (regional and municipal) waste management plans should be prepared in line with these national strategies/ plans to guide local implementation. When building new infrastructure and facilities, local governments should be encouraged to follow the adopted plans to ensure cohesive development of the sector across the whole country. Inter-municipal cooperation in service provision should be promoted and could be supported by the central government through a variety of guidance tools and incentives, such as access to land and financial resources for capital investment.
- 15) **Strengthen institutional and human capacity** – At national level, a line ministry such as ministry of environment or ministry of urban and regional development is typically assigned with the responsibilities to develop policies, draft legislation and oversee waste management in the country. Typically, key functions of the line ministry are policy formulation, legislative drafting, preparation of national waste management strategies and plans, preparation of national standards and guidelines, including clear definition of municipal waste and its functions as well as stakeholders responsibilities, setting up of waste information and database, monitoring and enforcement especially EPR schemes, and coordination among key stakeholders. At local level, local governments prepare local waste management plans, issue municipal regulations in line with national regulations, and implement them in cooperation with service providers, waste generators and other stakeholders. Small municipalities with low capacity require a lot of guidance to advance their waste management systems and capacity building could be provided by an association of municipalities through networking and mutual learning among members.
- 16) **Establish a platform for dialogue with among key stakeholders** – Establish a consultative group as an ongoing platform to review and make recommendations for sector reforms. Such consultative groups should be broad-based and comprise representatives of essential stakeholders.

3.2. Measures for Sustainable Production

Addressing sustainable production at the upper stream is essential to make it possible in achieving sustainable waste and resource management. In a context of growing demand for raw materials and stress on natural resources, it is essential to be more efficient in the way of use the limited natural resources and to rethink the way design and make new products. Evidence suggests that it can be avoided about 80% of the damage happened to the environment from better production, such as application of eco-design, the choice of recycled materials vs virgin materials, less chemical used, and sustainable packaging, distribution and sold to consumers¹⁶. However, this requires those who produce products to the market, which later become waste to take greater responsibility for the costs of management and disposal for those products – introducing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).

- Set minimum requirements for eco-design to encourage resource efficient and economically viable product design
- Invoke the extend producer responsibility (EPR) principles for packaging and other products, ensuring that producers pay the full net costs of managing waste at end of life
- Eco innovation to produce better with less use of non-renewable resources, incorporating more recycled raw materials, in particular for plastics.
- Manage chemicals sustainably and address barriers to reuse and recycling posed by their use
- Create jobs and meet training needs for new occupations or new skills in the circular economy.

Key Measures

17) Introduce EPR to ensure producers pay the full net costs of managing waste at end of life – EPR incentivizes producers to design their products to make it easier to be reused, dismantled and/or recycled at end of life. The application of EPR schemes can start from popular waste streams, such as packaging waste, end-of-life vehicles (ELV), and waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) and gradually apply for other waste streams such as textiles, bulky waste, certain materials in the construction and demolition sector, batteries and vehicle tyres. This list is not fixed and does not exclude the potential to review and consult on EPR for other waste streams if these are identified as being of equal or higher priority.

18) Setting minimum requirements through eco-design to encourage resource efficient product design – Eco-design is a way of designing products which takes a preventative approach to protecting natural resources by considering whole lifecycle impacts. A minimum requirement for eco-design can be set to reduce energy consumption and include eco-design requirements in production regulation for resource efficiency, taking into account the potential to design for disassembly, repair and recyclability. Also look at eco-labelling and address the presence of harmful chemicals in products, to ensure they

¹⁶ Kumara

neither end up in secondary products, where they may pose a high risk due to increased exposure, nor prevent recycling altogether owing to their presence in the waste stream.

19) Incorporate eco-innovations including more recycled raw materials into products while ensuring their quality, traceability and genuine safety for citizens – Promote more practical and voluntary commitments including target volumes for the integration of recycled plastic material resulting from waste in the following sectors as a first step: packaging, building, automotive, and electronic and electrical equipment. Making new products from recycled materials (or secondary raw materials) can cause less harm, using less water and energy, and generating lower carbon emissions. When create new markets for recycled materials, it can make recycling more economically viable. Other ways to boost economically viable recycling include cutting the use of hazardous materials during production, such as the phase out of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). Setup sub-regional approach to strengthen the standardization of methods that assess chemical safety throughout the product lifecycle based on strong scientific evidence. This will support the mutual acceptance of data to identify and share information on emerging concerns and new approaches to risk assessments.

20) A support productive investment manage resources more sustainably – To improve the competitiveness of the business of incorporating raw materials from recycling and replacement by renewable resources, by means of mass mobilization of available public financial tools and private finance through green finance tools such as green fund type and green bonds. New tax system can also apply to encourage manufacturers to produce more sustainable packaging and in turn create greater demand for recycled material. For example, tax will apply to plastic products such as packaging containing less than 30% recycled plastic and the revenue collected from these measures can invest in further action to address the issues surrounding single-use plastics, waste and litter, to help improve the waste system.

21) Manage resources more sustainably – Commit to a programming plan for resources that are deemed to be the most strategic, accompanied by an ambitious industrial policy for the recovery of materials, especially critical metals, contained in waste. Establish “benchmark values” representing the cost of the use of these strategic resources to society as a whole (environmental damage, resource scarcity), in order to integrate them into the evaluation of public policies in the same way as has been done for carbon and air pollution. Develop tools to enable businesses who so wish to establish a “materials inventory” based on the model of the “greenhouse gases inventories”. Countries can produce « material flow inventories », in particular by disseminating available methodological tools more widely and encouraging regions to broaden the role of waste monitoring bodies accordingly.

22) Adapt professional skills for better production at the national and sub-regional levels – Identify the specific skills needed for certain occupations in the circular economy and take greater account of the needs of the circular economy in the vocational training programmes. Create certifications or “skill blocks” [units of a professional qualification] recognizing the skills that contribute to the circular economy to enhance the value of these jobs, particularly in the area of the repair and reuse of products. Support small and medium enterprises (SME) that are in the social and solidary economy, in the development of their professions. Support elected representatives and local authorities in the

development of local circular economy strategies by improving their knowledge of the issues related to the circular economy and, more particularly, the recycling of bio-waste and plastics. One way to support to innovate and achieve such capacity at sub-regional level is by establishing and supporting clusters of them to come together to share knowledge and good practices with other counterparts.

3.3. Measures for Sustainable Consumption

The transition to circular economy and sustainable society, consumers deserve to know more about how they can unlock hidden value for themselves, and for the good of the environment. Thus, it is required to setting up an enabling policy environment and instruments that will help consumers to identify and access more sustainable products, extend the lives of them and help for recycling when it's time to dispose. This requires access to information to enable consumers to inform their consumption choices by taking into account the environmental impacts at all stages of the product life cycle.

- Incentivize more sustainable purchasing
- Phase-out single-use plastics and products where there is a clear case for it and alternative exist
- Combat food waste.
- Provide consumers with better information on the sustainability of their purchases
- Lead by example through public procurement
- Create sustainable jobs in the repair sector, particularly from the social and solidary economy.

Key Measures

23) Incentivizing consumers to purchase sustainable products – Provide opportunities for consumers to take right decisions and incentivize them to do so, including using taxes and charges where appropriate. For example by consulting on extending and increasing the carrying bag charge. The success of the carrying bag charge demonstrates the difference even relatively small incentives can make. Therefore, look at the relative costs and benefits of different approaches, including taxes, charges and other policy instruments such as regulations or bans. In principle, incentive mechanisms help consumers to make the right choice, rather than banning items outright. However, there may be some cases when a ban is appropriate as part of a wider strategic approach, such as unnecessary single-use plastic items (carrying bags, problematic packaging materials, plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds)

24) Providing consumers with better information on the sustainability of their purchases – In certain circumstances, the most appropriate policy tool is to provide consumers with better information to enable them to make responsible and sustainable purchases. One way of doing this is through ecolabels, which is used around the world to show that a product or service meets a certain standard of environmental performance. Certification marks provide a level of trust for consumers and aim to reduce dubious 'green washing' by manufacturers and brands. Ecolabels exist for a range of products and cover a range of environmental impacts from production to design to disposal. Also, draw links between ecolabel schemes, EPR and other relevant fiscal measures. For example, under EPR for

packaging, it can be required producers to ensure that packaging items are clearly labelled as to whether or not they can be recycled. It will also explore whether consumer labels should identify the level of recycled content within the packaging.

25) Extending product lifetimes through guarantees and warranties – A guarantee is usually a free promise by the manufacturer or retailer to fix or replace the problem, whereas an extended warranty is offered on a voluntary basis, and usually at a premium, by manufacturers, covering consumers against the cost of repairs and replacements. Wider use of such systems can promote resource efficiency and circular society. They will encourage manufacturers to design and manufacture products that last longer and will support re-use and repair activities. Explore the role that guarantees and warranties that can play in ensuring products stay in use longer and maintain their value. It will also consider options including mandatory disclosure of expected product lifetimes, mandatory extended warranties, and incorporating warranties into labelling. In conjunction with industry and other stakeholders, explore reform to consumer rights law and eco-design legislation to make use of these systems where the market is not delivering the necessary outcomes.

26) Increase the number of actors and actions in reuse, repair and remanufacture sectors in the economy – Enable consumers whether individuals or businesses to use their services rather than throwing away a product and buying a new one, while boosting the life of products and role of the social and solidary economy within these activities. For this to happen, all consumers must be able to find affordable spare parts and technical advice, or access affordable repair services. Manufacturers should also be prepared to take products take-back and return them to their original state, if feasible – a process known as ‘remanufacturing’, which benefits both the economy and society. This requires a better organization of the repair sector to make it more competitive and easier for consumers to access. Include the mapping of repair, reuse and functional economy services into the specifications of producer responsibility organizations and make this information available to the public as open data so that start-ups can offer applications to promote, in particular, the development of digital platforms to facilitate networking of repairers and contact with consumers.

27) Prioritize waste reuse and repair in national and sub-regional waste and resource management planning policies – It is important that the national and sub-regional planning policies for waste and resource management continues to embrace thinking on circular economy, sound material-cycle society, sufficiency economy, and integrates resources and waste management to maximize reuse in accordance with the waste hierarchy. Set reuse, re-deployment and repair targets in the national and sub-national waste and resource management policies and actions. Set rates for the provision of collected products to social and solidary economy operators. Set rates or insertion jobs to waste collection and treatment operators that have a contract with or a financial investment from a producer responsibility organization. Another way of extending lifespans is to embrace retail models, which provide services or rent out products – thereby sharing resources, and facilitating repairs and upgrades.

28) Sustainable procurement and greening commitments by governments – Sustainable government procurement and green commitments can help to generate less waste, and also increase demand for

more resource-efficient goods and services and stimulate innovation. The Government is committed under the Greening Government Commitments to buy more sustainable and efficient products and services with the aim of achieving the best long term, overall value for money.

29) Cutting Down on Food loss and Food Waste – Food waste cause for damaging environment and costs money. UN Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 target thus seeks to halve global food waste at consumer and retail levels by 2030. Together, these commitments support the broader ambitions to eliminate avoidable waste by 2030 and to work towards eliminating food waste to landfill by 2030. A new approach is needed including a preparation of national and sub-regional roadmap for food waste management and which includes mandatory targets for food waste prevention, develop a new food surplus and waste hierarchy, promote awareness of the issue by appointing a new food surplus and waste champions, and support for cross sector collaboration through sub-regional agreement. The Agriculture Bill can also introduce sector-specific statutory codes of contractual conduct to protect producers from exposure to unfair practices which are often the cause of viable produce going to waste, food labeling,

30) Collaboration to solve global waste issues, beginning with a focus on marine plastics and waste plastic management in developing countries – Badly managed resources not only present a serious threat to the world's ecosystems and economies, but also to human health. This is particularly true in developing countries, in which there are an estimated two billion people living without waste collection and three billion people without controlled waste disposal. The impacts of this can be disastrous, for example by facilitating the spread of infectious diseases. Around nine million people per year die of diseases linked to mismanagement of waste and pollutants – twenty times more than die from malaria – 92% of which occur in low and middle income countries. With just twenty countries responsible for over 80% of the plastic debris discarded into the ocean, we need to work internationally to solve the problem. Increasing the extent and improving the quality of waste management is one of the most important immediate steps towards doing so. Supporting development of country action plans and investable solutions through the South Asia Marine and Plastic Waste Management Action Projects. Supporting member countries to tackle marine pollution and reduce plastic waste, including appropriate technologies. Research and innovation to tackle plastics and manufacturing pollution. Improving the quality of plastics exported for recycling through the Basel and Stockholm Conventions, launching a call for evidence in 2019. Better managing waste to reduce risks from chemicals without hampering the functioning of secondary materials.

3.4. Measuring Progress – Research, Data, Monitoring and Evaluation

A quality research, data, information, and insight are essential for evidence-based policymaking. However, in reality, data is currently patchy and unreliable in most of our countries. Although there are pockets of in-depth knowledge, there are few systems in place for systematizing, collating and converting this knowledge into data. Lack of data hampers the proper functioning of market incentives and stifles those trying to become more resource efficient. Without measure, without manage it – and this lack of basic data prevents us from reaping the benefits of resource efficiency. This data will not only support policy-making in central Government but will help businesses make better investment decisions and tell local planners where additional waste treatment capacity is really needed. Data on

waste collected by local authorities has radically improved through the creation of Waste Data Flow. It has also enabled comparisons to be made of performance in different parts of the country, helping local authorities to make improvements. The data management can be started from municipal waste and expand to commercial, industrial, construction and demolition, medical and other wastes.

- Develop shared vision and new approach to data collection
- Moving away from a focus on waste towards a focus on resources
- Integrate weight-based targets and reporting with impact-based targets and reporting
- Strengthen partnership with academic and local stakeholders to ensure data on regular basis
- Develop a suite of indicators to measure progress
- Set comprehensive but proportionate monitoring, evaluation, and reporting (local, national and regional)

Key Measures

31) Continuing to work with all partners and stakeholders to develop a shared vision and bold new approach to data on resources and waste – Government acknowledges the seriousness of this national deficiency in data, and that a bold new approach is needed. The governments cannot tackle this matter alone, however has a role to play in bringing stakeholders and key players together in pursuit of the greater vision. For this, central and local governments need to take a stronger leadership and coordination role where that is required to drive progress, work closely with the Office for National Statistics and others to improve national datasets, work with the Environment Agency to ensure information and knowledge supplied to them by resource users, waste-producing businesses and the resources and waste industry is collected and stored in ways which enable data to be created and shared whilst respecting confidentiality, work with local authorities so they continue to report high quality waste data on behalf of local communities, and work with other resources and waste sector to ensure data captured routinely in collecting, treating and disposing of waste can be safely shared without compromising confidentiality or market positioning.

32) Moving away from a focus on waste management towards a focus on resources management – South Asia should fundamentally shift the focus of monitoring away from waste and towards resources, including a refocusing on measuring waste higher up the waste hierarchy. This will help Government understand how to better support the shift towards a more circular economy in which products and materials are reused, repaired and remanufactured. Importantly, it will also help businesses make better decisions, for example by considering relative carbon emissions from reuse rather than disposal of a product, or from constructing a new, energy-efficient building versus upgrading and repairing an existing building.

33) Maintaining the coverage and quality of data – Waste Data Flow is the popular methodology that local authorities utilized to collect data on waste management. It helps us to understand of how much waste was produced, treated and disposed of. An online system can develop to use for statutory reporting of

targets and undertake periodic reviews. Make necessary improvements to Waste Data Flow so it continues to provide a user-friendly service and valuable data.

34) Working with tech firms to develop innovative digital solutions for tracking waste and consulting on options to mandate the digital recording and sharing of waste movement data – Currently there are very few data on business and industrial waste and available data also come from a patchwork of sources. Ensure the consultation takes account of national reporting requirements as well as a focus on tackling crime.

35) Integrate weight-based targets and reporting with impact-based targets and reporting, focusing initially on carbon and natural capital accounting – A practical and measurable indicators should be developed to measure progress, though it is hard to establish some of these indicators immediately because the data does not yet exist. In addition, given the long-term nature of the strategy, new indicators might become more relevant in future years, for example metrics based on natural capital or other environmental or social impacts. Thus, develop new indicators and metrics that help to understand and act more in line with our strategic aims, focusing particularly on greenhouse gas emissions and natural capital; a principle supported by a number of stakeholders.

36) Plan of evaluation and monitoring – Where policies are implemented through regulation, monitoring and post-implementation review (PIR) is required. PIR is a process to assess the effectiveness of a regulation after it has been implemented and operational for a period of time. A PIR provides the analysis required to establish whether, and to what extent, the regulation has achieved its original objectives, has objectives which are still valid, is still required and remains the best option for achieving those objectives; and can be improved to reduce the burden on business and its overall costs. We will learn from the findings of PIRs as we design new policies and amend existing ones.

4. Strategic Recommendations

To better accomplishment of the roadmap and successful transition from waste management to resource management in South Asia, the following strategic actions are proposed at the different levels.

South Asia sub regional Level

- Raise the priority among the 3Rs of waste reduction above reuse and recycling and incorporate concepts of circular economy/ sustainable production & consumption/ cleaner production/ pollution prevention into waste management strategy and programs.
- Change the perspective of waste management to be seen as an integral part of the manufacturing process and as an investment opportunity rather than a sunk cost.
- Include emerging waste (plastic waste, e-waste and medical waste etc) into the waste management strategy and programs
- Establish a new coordination mechanism/ knowledge hub/ knowledge center for information, best practice and knowledge exchange, training/ capacity building and technical support
- Build and strengthen networks among national governments, municipalities, industry, and NGOs for the exchange of relevant experiences with technology and institutional development within the region as well as voluntary evaluation, monitoring and reporting
- Link with existing regional networks and programs that are already working at some level of 3R— e.g., cleaner production, green productivity, eco-efficiency, etc.
- Ask international aid agencies to raise their priority for funding 3R programs and projects, including pilot and demonstration projects of proven technology, and not to sponsor polluting technologies.
- Ensure market for recycled materials – in countries where such utilization is not possible, there may be regional cooperation for off-take by industry

National Level

- Raise the priority of sustainable waste management and 3R-related policy within the national development policy.
- Establish stable and effective national enabling policy with fiscal enabling support.
- Establish a national strategy in each country with a holistic approach covering upstream and downstream issues.
- Implement new or improved legislation on the 3Rs that complements pollution control regulations.
- Develop and Implement specific policies and regulations for each waste stream.
- Develop national action plans for specific waste sectors jointly among key stakeholders.
- Establish clear targets for waste reduction and recycling for key waste areas.
- Establish clear guidelines for implementing 3R programs.
- Development capacity of national and local governments to implement 3R.
- Promote collaboration among municipalities, the business sector, and NGOs/CSOs.
- Promote the exchange of industrial waste from one industry as inputs for other industries through information sharing as a starting point for a more comprehensive program on industrial 3Rs.

- Establish environmental education and information services./Promote environmental education and public awareness
- Invest in research and development for technology adaptation.

Local Level

- Raise the priority of sustainable waste management and 3R-related policy within local policy.
- Establish a local strategy for each city with a holistic approach covering upstream and downstream issues.
- Implement new or improved local legislation on the 3Rs that complements pollution control regulations.
- Develop local action plans for specific waste sectors jointly among key stakeholders.
- Establish clear targets for waste reduction and recycling for key waste areas.
- Promote collaboration among all local stakeholders including business sector, academic, and NGOs/CSOs.
- Involve the informal sector as a stakeholder and integration into the formal waste management system
- Disseminate existing success stories on the 3Rs to local agencies.
- Build public awareness of the environmental and health risks from wastes and the options for mitigation of risks through the 3Rs.
- Waste management should be sustainable in operations by imposing user fees on polluter or household

Concept Note

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) **ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AIR QUALITY PLATFORM FOR SOUTH ASIA**

1. Introduction

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) is an Inter-governmental organization, established in 1982 by the governments of South Asia namely: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It is a multilateral organization registered with the UN Secretariat in accordance with article 102 of the charter of the United Nations. Its mission is to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region.

Since its creation, SACEP has implemented a number of regional projects and programmes in the areas of Environment Education, Environment Legislation, Biodiversity, Air Pollution, Sustainable Consumption and Production, Chemical Management, Waste Management, Climate Change and the protection and management of the coastal environment

2. Background

Over the past decades, South Asian countries have undergone rapid urbanization and industrialization which dramatically increase emissions of air pollutants. Increasing levels of air pollutant concentrations, in the urban atmosphere has created serious impacts on human health such as Asthma, chronic bronchitis, heart disease and cancer and it has become the second most important risk factor for ill health in South Asia, contributing to between 13% and 21.7% of all deaths and approximately 58 million disability adjusted life years (DALYs) through chronic and acute respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses. In addition to its health impacts, air pollution damages agriculture and sensitive vegetation and ecosystems, including forests, parks, wildlife refuges and wilderness areas.

Of the top 30 cities in the world with the poorest air quality in 2016, 17 are in South Asia. (WHO Global Urban Ambient Air Pollution Database (update 2016). Air pollution in some South Asian cities is so bad that at times, the cities are enveloped by a blanket of smog that impedes visibility. And this has become more intense and frequent in recent years. In the last decades the Indo-Gangetic Plains covering northern India, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh are subjected to dense haze/fog during winter months severely impacting on air, rail and vehicular traffic. This part has more than 500 million inhabitants and stretches from the north-west to the north-east. In Bangladesh, India and Nepal the temperatures has plummeted and clouds of fog and smoke hang in the sky blocking sunlight for several days. In some cities at the Nepal-India bordering areas, smog blankets can be seen from early evening. When such blankets of smog block sunlight, sending temperatures down, people make fire from wood, cow-dung cake and hay to warm themselves and that creates more air pollution which leads to denser smog. Once a city known for its clear air and spectacular

views of snowcapped mountain, Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan has also been adversely affected by vehicular emission (diesel and gasoline); poorly maintained engines; adulterated fuels; burning of vegetation and other biomass for heating, cooking, and bathing; burning of refuse; and operation of brick kilns fired by a variety of fuels, including wood and scrap tires.

Air pollution is explicitly mentioned in 3 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (3.9, 11.6, 12.4). It is also implicitly connected to almost all of the other SDGs.

The Third session of the United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA-3, 2017) also acknowledged that air pollution affects several aspects of society and addressing air pollution results in multiple benefits – to human health, the economy, ecosystems and to climate, and that efforts across sectors are needed to improve air quality and adopted a resolution on “Preventing and reducing air pollution to improve air quality globally” and it calls for member states to take action across sectors to reduce all form of air pollution.

Among its recommendations, the resolution urges member states to:

- (a) Establish relevant systems to monitor air pollution, in order to be well-informed on the state of air quality and sources of pollution in affected areas and to support improved air quality management;
- (b) Set ambitious ambient air quality standards taking into account guidelines from the World Health Organization;
- (c) Include, as appropriate, air pollutants that are also short-lived climate pollutants in national action programmes to prevent and reduce air pollution;
- (d) Put in place policies and measures to prevent and reduce air pollution from their significant sources;
- (e) Integrate and strengthen air pollution management aspects in the national development agenda, and to internalize pollution costs;
- (f) Create awareness at national, sub-national and local levels and within the private sector on the environmental, health and socio-economic negative impacts of pollution; as well as the economic benefits of taking action;
- (g) Strengthen capacities to develop national and subnational emissions inventories as an input to prioritize sectors and activities to further promote the emissions reduction measures;

3. Rationale

Air pollution leads to atmospheric transport of pollutants affecting countries of the region in more than one way, thus making pollution a regional issue. Being a regional problem, no one

country, especially in poor and diversified region like South Asia, can tackle this on its own. While countries have introduced promising initiatives in recent years, comprehensive health centered strategies are lacking due to lack of financial support, skilled and trained manpower, technology and technical know-how.

Therefore, to combat the air Pollution a collective regional focus and approach is essential in which all member countries of the region have a role to play, with equal and diversified responsibilities to implement evidence-based policies and interventions.

The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme is a possible forum for looking into ways & means of generating possible support for strengthening regional air pollution reduction in the region. This issue of air pollution especially smog which has become a major environmental health problem affecting people in the region was raised at the 14th Governing Council (GC) of SACEP and the GC in its Decision 9.2.6 desired SACEP to work closely with member countries in addressing this important issue.

4. Objectives of the proposed Regional Air Quality platform

4.1 Overall Objective

Improve air quality in the South Asia Region that reduce negative impacts on, and risks to human health, and the environment.

4.2 Short term objectives

- SACEP will convene a regional meeting for its member countries to engage with them in a discussion on exploring paths to
 1. Analyze the Current situation of air Pollution in the member countries
 2. Identify and prioritize key challenges related to Air Pollution
 3. Identify and prioritize the immediate measures needed to be taken by the member countries

4.3 Long term objectives of the proposed platform would be to:

- facilitate exchange of ideas, experience, research and information on air quality management and strengthen capacity of the member countries in the region to address the emerging challenge of air quality.
- Harmonize national air quality management legislation, standards, monitoring methods, and data management procedures;
- Assessing and proposing policy options for reducing air pollution;

- Development of research and provide technical assistance to identify and assess sources of air pollution and their impacts on human health and the environment,
- Promote and disseminate scientific, technological and good practices from other regions to enhance environmental sustainability.
- Support development and implementation of a regional action plan/road map on Air Pollution with the objective of reducing air pollution in the region as a contribution to the implementation of the UNEA3 declaration on Air Pollution.

Possible Partners

SACEP will facilitate the implementation of the programme in collaboration with

- The member states of SACEP
- UNESCAP, UN Environment
- Research institutions
- Academic institutions
- NGOs, CBOs and other affected stakeholder



Roadmap towards South Asia Nitrogen Framework Policy

South Asian Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

Introduction

Nitrogen, or N, using its scientific abbreviation, is a colorless, odorless element. Nitrogen is in the soil, in the water we drink, and in the air we breathe. Nitrogen is the most abundant element in Earth's atmosphere. Approximately 78% of the atmosphere is nitrogen. Nitrogen is important to all living things, including human being. It plays a key role in the plant growth: with too little nitrogen plants cannot thrive, leading to low crop yields; but too much nitrogen also can be toxic to plants. Nitrogen is necessary for our food supply, but excess nitrogen can harm the environment.

The delicate balance of substance that is important for maintaining life is an important area of research, and the balance of nitrogen in the environment is no exception. When plants lack nitrogen, they become yellowed, with stunted growth, and produce smaller fruits and flowers. Farmers may add fertilizers containing nitrogen to their crops, to increase crop growth. Without nitrogen fertilizers, scientists estimate that we would lose up to one third of the crops we rely on for food and other types of agriculture. But we need to know how much nitrogen is necessary for plant growth, because too much can pollute waterways, hurting aquatic life and contaminates the air.

Since the beginning of the 20th century the amount of nitrogen in chemically reactive forms has doubled. The comparison of the impact of nitrogen with that of carbon dioxide shows that the impacts of the carbon dioxide depends upon the global emission levels and that of nitrogen pollution significantly depends upon the local factors. Atmospheric emissions of nitrogen oxides reduce air quality by depleting the ozone layer and when combined with ammonia via particulate matter, increases human health risk like respiratory diseases and cancer.

The presence of nitrates in water bodies contributes to enriched nitrogen in the surface and sub-surface ground water disturbing the drinking water quality standards, causing eutrophication in lakes and coastal areas, impacting fisheries. Not only this, nitrogen also damage ecosystems through acidification of soils and seas. As nitrogen change its form and can be found in the air, water and soils like nitrogen dioxide from cars can create ground-level ozone and then changes it to nitric acid which enters the soil and leech into groundwater.

The UNEA 4 Resolution titled, ‘Sustainable Nitrogen Management’ (UNEP/EA.4/L.16), recognizes the multiple pollution threats resulting from anthropogenic reactive nitrogen, with adverse effects on the terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments and contributing to air pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and highlights ways to better manage nitrogen.

The Resolution supports exploring options for better management of the global nitrogen cycle to achieve the SDGs, including through the “sharing of assessment methodologies, relevant best practices and guidance documents and emerging technologies for recovery and recycling of nitrogen and other such nutrients.”

The Resolution acknowledges that current policies related to reactive nitrogen in many countries are fragmented and incoherent, resulting in unquantified trade-offs between different forms of nitrogen pollution and contributing to barriers to the adoption of policies for cleaner water, cleaner air, climate mitigation and adaptation and biodiversity protection. The Resolution therefore calls for a coherent approach towards sustainable nitrogen management.

To address nutrient pollution in South Asia, South Asian Nitrogen Hub (SANH) is established under the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) with the support from South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme and its member countries. SACEP secretariat is a partnering organization for South Asian Nitrogen Hub working with its member countries and other partners at SANH to develop a Framework Policy on Nitrogen Management for South Asia region in order to regulate nitrogen at the national level through intergovernmental coordination mechanisms (i.e GC and IMM bodies).

This roadmap is proposed to facilitate developing of the regional framework policy by SACEP member countries in collaboration with scientific institutions partnering with SANH. This would be a country driven approach and would be supported by scientific institutions under the SANH.

Objective:

To define and develop a science based Framework Policy on Nitrogen Management for the common benefit of South Asia Region.

Steps towards developing the South Asia Nitrogen Framework Policy

Developing a framework policy requires different steps to be followed:

1. Data call for analyzing the present environmental situation

To develop a policy, we need to first map the existing legislations, official policy statements and programmes and financial incentives that relate to N use and impacts. A questioner would be developed and then circulated to the member countries to be filed.

2. Evaluation of major gaps, challenges and way forward

The data collected from the member countries would be analyzed and validated by the sub-regional meetings with the participation of representatives from the member countries of SACEP along with the expert team of South Asian Nitrogen Hub. The sub-regional meetings suggest the priorities and recommend the way forward.

3. Building consciousness

The South Asian region consists of land locked and coastal rim countries and is categorized in to three regions based on geologically importance for bringing to a common platform.

- i Indian Ocean : India, Maldives and Sri Lanka
- ii. Indus Valley : Afghanistan, Pakistan and India
- iii. Ganges/Brahmaputra : Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal

Given the geological differences and diverse climate of South Asia region three separate workshops would be held in three regions.

4. Developing and finalizing draft framework policy on nitrogen

On the basis of status report and feedback from WP 1.2, 3, WP 2.2 and WP 4.4 and other relevant WPs a draft roadmap will be developed and finalized through a series of workshops in which policy makers and experts will come together and discuss on the draft.

5. Adoption by the SACEP Governing Council

The recommended/suggested outputs by the workshops will be submitted to SACEP Governing Council for necessary approval. The same will be circulated with a request to the National Focal Government of SACEP to adopt appropriately and formulate national level policy on the basis of the regional policy.

6. National Policies

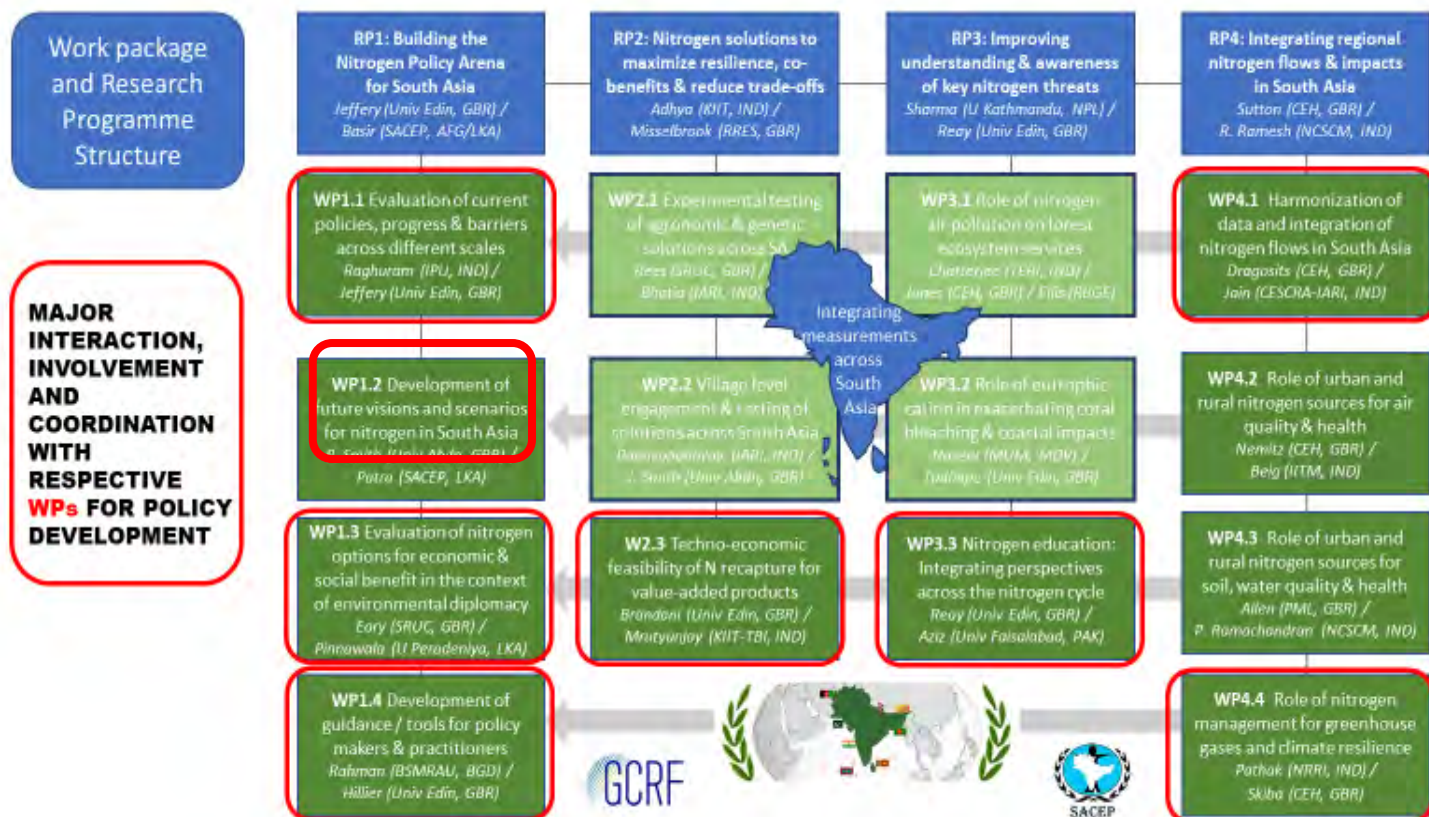
On the basis of Implementation indicators/guidelines and monitoring

A detailed roadmap towards South Asia Nitrogen Framework Policy

(RP1: Building the Nitrogen Policy Arena for South Asia)

(1) Development of data sheet for getting the relevant information for the status report from the respective governments (WP1.1 Evaluation of current policies, progress & barriers across different scales:	Roger and his team will prepare the datasheet	31 July 2019
(2) Sharing the data sheet with relevant focal points for gathering data from respective countries	SACEP with focal points in respective countries; research institutions also would be involved	15 August, 2019
(3) Data analysis and writing of draft report	WP1.1	December 2019
(4) Organise 1st sub-regional workshop, ➤ Aims to validate a data, comments to the status report and identify gaps/ priority areas to consider in the roadmap. ➤ This could be planned to organise in line with other SANH general meeting	SCAEP will invite its member countries, with the support from SANH Secretariat. All RP 1 members will be invited to ...	Mar, 2020
(5) Prepare a final Status Report and the outline of the roadmap involving WP1.1, WP1.2, WP1.3, and WP1.4	RP1 (WP1.1, 2, 3.)	Mar – May 2020
(6) Organize three separate regional workshops to discuss policy proposals: Indian Ocean (India, Maldives, Sri Lanka), Indus Valley (Afghanistan, Pakistan, India), Ganges/Brahmaputra (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal)	SACEP with the support from SANH Secretariat, Some experts also will be invited	Oct/Nov. 2020

<p>(7) Organise 2nd sub-regional workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Aims to review the draft priority actions, set targets and identify actions for implementation ➤ This could be planned in line with SANH general meeting 	<p>SCAEP will invite SACEP member countries with the support from SANH Secretariat. All RP 1 members will be invited, Other stakeholders ...</p>	<p>March/May 2021</p>
<p>(8) Organise a technical review meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Technical review meeting with focal points of relevant governments 	<p>RP1 will finalise the draft roadmap for the meeting SACEP will organise the workshop in cooperation with SANH Secretariat, Leaders of the WP 1-4 and some experts/technical members</p>	<p>March 2022</p>
<p>(9) Submit the roadmap for SACEP Governing Council approval</p>	<p>RP1 will finalise the report SACEP will submit and get the approval from the ministers</p>	<p>Oct/Nov 2022</p>
<p>(10) Working with SACEP member countries to develop national policies on the basis of agreed regional policy</p>	<p>8 separate workshops to be organized by SACEP with the support from SANH Secretariat</p>	<p>2023</p>



Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia

A Proposed World Bank Supported Project for SACEP Discussion

Dhaka

November 2019

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

A. Regional Context

While economic growth across the South Asia Region (SAR) accelerates, sustainable management of its environment and natural resource base is critical to maintain sustainable growth. South Asia is the fastest growing region in the world with an average GDP growth rate of 7.2percent over the past decade as compared to the world average of 2.8percent. At the same time, home to over 1.92 billion people (one fourth of the world's population) SAR is not only the most populous, but also the most densely populated geographical region in the world at 299 people per square kilometer. The population growth rate for South Asia is accelerating at 1.27percent per annum in 2016.

Strong economic growth, coupled with rapid population growth and increasing population density is putting severe pressure on the region's environment and natural resources (marine and coastal habitats, freshwater sources, forests, fisheries, and wildlife). These ecological systems backstop economic systems and are transboundary in nature; The region relies on such shared natural resources such as water (from rivers, lakes and streams) and marine ecosystems (from a vast ocean area) for a share of its prosperity. Threats to the region's natural resource base - natural assets - that provide valuable economic output and services and the poverty-environment nexus is well documented, and these threats negatively affect the well-being of millions of people, especially the poor, and jeopardizes hard-fought development gains.

Regional cooperation across SAR is needed to achieve sustainable growth, although attempts toward regional integration have generated limited results to date. The political economy of regional cooperation in South Asia is complex with a variety of influencers at the national and sub-national levels in each country. Regional Organizations (RO) exist in South Asia but those, especially in the public sector, generally lag in terms of their institutional capacity and development effectiveness compared to other parts of the world. This makes transboundary pollution issues such as the harm caused by plastic pollution that is washed down rivers and into the region's ocean particularly challenging to address at scale. Global awareness on the causes and consequences of plastic pollution are at an all-time high. In SAR, and a new and emerging political will by SAR nations to eliminate plastic waste is emerging. In the past year, India, Pakistan, Nepal have announced their intention to strengthen policies and all SAR nations have agreed to initiate plastic pollution action plans with support from The South Asia Cooperative Environment Program (SACEP), a regional organization based in Colombo, Sri Lanka. This is further evidenced by signed declarations by SAR nations at the G7, G20, APEC and UN to address marine plastic pollution.

B. Sectoral and Institutional Context

The menace of plastic waste that pollutes the land, flows into rivers and gets deposited into the sea where it remains threatens South Asian and global prosperity. The very qualities that make plastic useful – lightness, durability, strength, versatility and low production costs have resulted in a mounting global ocean pollution crisis. The global production of plastic is currently estimated to be around 300 million tons per year, while plastic pollution in the marine environment alone (including beaches) estimated at 9.5 million tons with 1.5 million tons ending up in the ocean annually. The impact of marine plastic pollution has far-reaching economic, ecological and health impacts. The annual global damage of plastics to marine ecosystems is estimated at US\$13 billion per year. As a result, marine plastic waste has been acknowledged as one of the main global environmental challenges in recent years and the movement to combat marine plastic litter has accelerated in 2019.

The South Asia Region is the second largest contributor to plastic waste globally with an estimated doubling by 2050 unless action is taken. The Maldives aside, all South Asia's coastal nations are among the top twenty most polluting nations ranked by mass of mismanaged plastic waste. Modelled estimates of floating micro-plastic (<4.75 mm) and macro-plastic (>4.75 mm) abundance (items per square kilometer) suggest that the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem, the ocean system that touches South Asian ocean-facing nations, is in a category of ocean regions with the highest plastic concentration. Plastic waste "leakage" from high mountain states in the upper river watersheds travel and contribute to the accumulation downstream. Following current trends, the amount of mismanaged waste (including plastic) across South Asia is projected to rise from 334 million tons per year in 2016 to 661 million tons by 2050. This will adversely impact the region's ocean ecosystems and sustainable development more broadly.

India dominates the region in plastic processing capacity estimated at over 20 million tons per year by 2020. The industry includes 15 large polymer suppliers, about 200 equipment manufacturers, and over 30,000 more specialized micro- small, and medium sized plastic packaging processing units employing 3 million people. India is becoming a key market worldwide for plastics processing and polymer conversion with exports to the United States, UAE, Germany, China, and Bangladesh, and is a net importer of plastics largely from China, South Korea, the United States, Thailand, and Japan. Other SAR countries have downstream plastics production primarily by micro-, small, and medium sized plastics processing units. Enterprises producing plastic bottles for water distribution are even found in small non-industrial countries like the Maldives.

Major convenings of world leaders, including South Asia representation within the G7, G20, APEC, IORA and UN have raised awareness of the need to reduce plastic waste and led to signed agreements supporting greater cooperation across nations. The 2018 G7 Summit in Canada concluded with a *G7 Ocean Plastic Charter*; The June 2019 G20 Osaka Summit in Japan concluded with an agreement to establish the *G20 Implementation Framework for Actions on Marine Plastic Litter* to facilitate, through voluntary national actions, the *G20 Action Plan on Marine Litter* launched at the 2017 G20 Hamburg Summit. G20 leaders also announced the *Osaka Blue Ocean Vision*, which aims to eliminate additional marine plastic pollution by 2050. The APEC Summit in June 2018 concluded with its 15 member-states endorsing the preparation of an APEC Marine Debris and Action Plan. The South Asia Cooperative Environment Program's (SACEP) ministerial level governing council has endorsed a regional marine litter action plan for the South Asia Seas, and all SAR countries will initiate preparation of country specific action plans with support from Japan.

Several South Asian nations have taken steps to address an important part of the plastic pollution problem, the scourge of single use plastics that is the most visible in the marine environment.

According to the UN, about 127 countries (of 192 reviewed) have adopted some form of legislation to regulate single use plastic bags, ranging from outright bans to progressive phase outs to laws that incentivize the use of reusable bags. Over 5 trillion plastic bags are produced per year and take an estimated 1,000 years to decompose. The South Asia region has many such examples. Sikkim introduced a ban on plastic bags as early as 1998, and Bangladesh in 2002 was the first country in the world to introduce a ban or national restriction on single use plastic bags, followed by India (initiated in 2002, starting with New Delhi), Bhutan (2005, renewed with greater enforcement in 2019), Afghanistan and Nepal (2011), Sri Lanka (2011), and Pakistan (2013 municipal level ban). The Maldives introduced a ban on single use plastic bags on Bodufolhudoo island in 2016 and established a national steering committee in 2019 mandated to advance the phase out of single use plastics by 2020. While such policy instruments have had initial positive response in many countries, due to a lack of enforcement, a failure to regulate plastic through its life cycle, too many exemptions, too few manufacturer limits, an absence of cost-effective alternatives, and growing but fragmented effort on public education and behavior change, these policy initiatives have not yet produced the desired results, that is a decrease in the use of plastic.

There are many good examples that regional cooperation could help better recognize, share, and replicate.

India leads the region on enactment of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws starting in 2016, a policy approach where producers must be responsible for the clean-up or recycling of their products. EPR encompasses management of the potential impacts of a product in all stages of production, use, collection, re-use, recycling, reprocessing, and disposal. In the small island state of Maldives, the public, private, and civil society such as youth have joined forces to collect plastics for corporations such as Adidas. Adidas in turn produces apparel branded “Parley for the Oceans” and formally kits out major professional sports teams such as FC Bayern Munich, Real Madrid and Manchester United FC, thereby creating a highly visible public awareness campaign in addition to helping solve the marine plastic pollution problem. There is further scope to extend such plastic clean-up programs linked to commercial value chains across SAR. EPR in India and the work of Parley in Maldives are two of many emerging examples of a circular economy approach, which looks to prevent depletion of finite natural resources out of the global economy, and instead better use the natural resources we’ve already extracted to extend their useful lives. The proposed regional project will support and promote a circular economy approach to plastics for South Asia.

Scientists have suggested that minimizing the use of plastics across company supply chains and better understanding the flow of plastic waste and the full extent of its externalities are key to reducing plastic waste.

While supply chain challenges for recycled plastics to meet processing volume requirements and international ESG standards remains a challenge, over 30 companies have joined hands to form the Alliance to End Plastic Waste (AEPW), pledging \$1 billion of investment over five years (with a focus on Asia) to help end plastic waste in the environment, particularly the world’s oceans. International NGOs such as National Geographic have assembled an independent coalition of scientists who are mapping plastic flows along the Ganges River Basin throughout 2019. At national level, as lead up to the G20, India announced a National Mission on Plastics to kick-start on October 2nd and in the Maldives, a historic youth-driven resolution to ban single use plastics was approved by parliament on July 4, 2019. At the grassroots level, entrepreneurs and new social enterprises are emerging with promising business models to: help raise living standards of plastic waste “rag picker” workers; deploy low cost waste sorting equipment to process high organic co-mingled waste containing all forms of plastics; transform solid plastic waste back to usable and reusable liquid oils.

C. The World Bank's Plans

An idea for a new regional project in South Asia, *Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia* is currently being discussed, aligned with South Asia Regional Commitments to support regional cooperation and integration. Through the World Bank's champions' dialogue, the region showcased successful cooperation in the advancement of energy trade between India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan. Following this model, in 2016, the champions met to shape a regional platform on safeguarding South Asia's ecological integrity and with the Bank's support, established the South Asia Regional Ecological Integrity Platform (REIP). REIP shapes and facilitates collaboration activities to protect and enhance shared ecological assets of the region, such as the marine environment. It has been meeting annually. The REIP Action Plan 2018-19 includes a key pillar on *Ocean Economy*, specifically covering the threats posed to it by waste plastics to the marine environment. In November 2019, a subset of REIP champions and plastic waste thought leaders will convene in Nepal for the first 'Friends of Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia' with the intention to draw greater attention to both challenges and solutions and include major industry plastic players that are critical to solutions of reducing plastic waste.

The proposed regional project with its unique funding source is envisaged to complement existing activities already supported by the WBG in three ways:

First, the regional project could serve as a platform to ensure global best practice and regional solutions are identified and shared widely across the South Asia region, including with Bank teams who could incorporate solutions into ongoing and planned analytic and project activities funded by the Bank and irrespective of sector. The Bank's lending portfolio (ongoing and planned) across South Asia currently support a range of investments covering solid waste management both at national and sub-national levels. However, these operations do not explicitly address plastic waste, but rather focus on the wider development challenges concerning waste management;

Second, the project, with its regional lens, will support a broad platform to share lessons through regional convenings, address regional gaps (i.e. transboundary plastic pollution) that no single country can address, and support up-scaling up solutions.

Third, the regional project would help strengthen coordination across sectors, while linking global and regional level action to the effort in each country. In this regard, the Bank could emerge as a catalyst in this sector in brokering cross sectoral knowledge and know-how with teams (within WBG) and organizations outside it, ready to collaborate to support client countries.

Internally, the Bank has started to get organized around minimizing plastic waste across the institution and as a corporate commitment. At headquarters, over the years, GSD replaced plastic water bottles with boxed water and more centralized water fill-up stations, significantly reducing plastic bottle use. The Bank's Islamabad office has gone one step further and banned all single use plastics from the premises. And, the World Bank's Vice President for South Asia, Mr. Hartwig Schafer hosted an event at the 2019 World Bank – IMF Annual Meetings: “**Reducing Ocean Plastics in South Asia**” which brought 300 public, private and civil society leaders together to engage on this topic.

D. Proposed Project Development Objective(s)

The proposed Project Development Objective is **to catalyze actions that reduce the flow of plastic pollution into South Asian Seas.**

E. High Level Project Summary

The project targets a long-term goal of eliminating leakage of plastics into the marine environment (that are transmitted through the region's rivers and originates from activities on the sea itself) across the South Asia Region, which can only be achieved beyond the life of the project.

The project seeks to catalyze transitions across the region toward a *circular economy* and push boundaries and organizing concepts even further. This means identifying and reducing negative externalities of select plastic waste streams through adoption of a 3R approach (*reuse, reduce, recycle*) and moving beyond to an A.I.R. approach by Avoiding (by reducing and replacing), Intercepting (by retrieving and recycling) and Redesigning (by co-creating new industry standards and new materials developed and adopted by the private sector).

To catalyze actions that reduce the flow of plastic pollution into rivers that empty into the marine environment, a range of investments may be considered, such as helping nations across the region to develop well specified and enabling policies and incentives for producers and consumers; stimulating bottom-up, community and citizen-led action in addition to more top-down regional level engagement; and supporting public and private sector investments to support circular economy transitions.

F. SACEP Meeting in Dhaka

The World Bank looks forward to receiving formal endorsement by SACEP of its interest to move forward with the Bank and development partners to prepare a regional project involving SACEP as one possible implementing agency. The regional project would have a maximum size of approximately US\$40 million in International Development Association (IDA) grant from IDA's Regional Grant Pilot window.

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WORK PROGRAMME OF SACEP

YEAR 2020 - 2021

GC 15.SACEP / NFP Agenda Item 5.2 Page 1 of 3		Annex 33 GC 15.SACEP	
		Funding Source	
5.2.1	Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition (BFN) project in South Asia beyond 2018 In progress. Concept Note ready to be circulated among Member States of SACEP for consent	GEF or other donors	
5.2.2	Strengthening Sustainable Consumption and Production in South Asia South Asia Forum on SCP Now linked to South Asia Forum on Environment Sustainable Public Procurement One Workshop conducted and further implementation will continue Sustainable buildings policy dialogue Sustainable Consumption Week in South Asia	On-going (UNEP and other partners) Funds expected from UNEP to carryout activities Funds expected from UNEP & other donors	
5.2.3	South Asia Forum on Environment	UNEP and other partners	
5.2.4	The North East Indian Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (NEIOBI)	International Climate Initiative (IKI) of Germany	
5.2.5	Healthy Landscapes: Managing Agricultural Landscapes in Socio-ecologically Sensitive Areas to Promote Food Security, Well-being and Ecosystem Health in Sri Lanka	GEF through UNEP and Bioversity International	
5.2.6	Waste Management Implementation of Sub-regional Roadmap for Sustainable Waste Management and Resource Circulation in South Asia subject to adoption by 15GC-SACEP and implementing pilot projects on sustainable waste management in the member countries	IGES Centre Collaborating with UNEP on Environmental Technologies (CCET), the UN Environmental International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC) and Ministry of Environment Japan	

WORK PROGRAMME OF SACEP

YEAR 2020 - 2021

		Funding Source
5.2.7	Environmental Data and Information Management System for South Asia Revitalized SACEP website, enrichment of Data and Information System of SACEP with regular updates in the database	Managed in-house
5.2.8	Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and Its Likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia To enable SACEP to deliver an effective co-ordination role in the implementation of the Malé Declaration, the 14GC-SACEP decided to further review at the national level regarding the role of SACEP in the implementation of the Malé Declaration. The programme has been in the dormant state for more than two years without any activity.	Intergovernmental Meeting of Malé Declaration had not been held since Year 2016
5.2.9	Air Quality Concept Note developed by SACEP and circulated among the Member States of SACEP and plans are made to convene the First Meeting on Establishing a Regional Platform on Air Quality Management in South Asia in 2020.	India/Pakistan/Other possible donors such as UN Environment
5.2.10	Sustainable Nitrogen Management for South Asia Functioning as a South Asia partner of the South Asian Nitrogen Hub (SANH)	UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under its Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) - Period of 5 Years
5.2.11	Capacity building of public sector, private sector and civil society stakeholders in SACEP member countries for Sustainable Energy and Road Transport policy, planning and implementation.	
	Concept Note developed by SACEP and will be circulated among the Members States of SACEP	Funding has to be secured from potential donors

WORK PROGRAMME OF SACEP

YEAR 2020 - 2021

GC 15.SACEP / NFP Agenda Item 5.2 Page 3 of 3		Annex 33 GC 15.SACEP	
		Funding Source	
5.2.11	Post Rio +20 challenges related to environment sustainability with focus on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.	In Progress	
	Activities reported as progress		
5.2.12	Adaptation to Climate Change	ADB/UNFCCC/NDCCP	
	Regional Capacity building and Knowledge sharing workshops to be convened		
5.2.13	Explore possibilities of Accreditation to Global Funding Mechanisms	In Progress	
	On-going effort		
5.2.13	Regional Cooperation for the Conservation and Wise-use of Internationally Important Wetlands in South Asia		
	At the stage of signing an MoU between SACEP and Ramsar Convention for general co-operation	In Progress	
5.2.14	South Asian Seas Programme (SASP)		
	Will be reported during 6IMM.SASP on 5 November 2019		

SECRETARIAT BUDGET FOR 2020 - 2021

	PRESENT AGREED INCOME	EXPENDITURE
	US \$	US \$
1 ANTICIPATED INCOME		
1.1 AFGHANISTAN	8,050.00	
BANGLADESH	23,430.00	
BHUTAN	3,555.00	
INDIA	31,850.00	
MALDIVES	14,575.00	
NEPAL	8,050.00	
PAKISTAN	31,850.00	
SRI LANKA	17,842.00	
TOTAL COUNTRY CONTRIBUTIONS	139,202.00	
1.2 Interest earned	38,000.00	
1.3 Secretariat Cost from Sri Lanka	45,750.00	
TOTAL INCOME	222,952.00	
2 ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE		
2.1 Salary Director General		60,000.00
2.2 Salaries of Local Staff		77,750.00
2.3 International Travel		20,000.00
2.4 Secretariat Cost		84,500.00
SUB TOTAL		242,250.00
3 Capital Costs		17,500.00
4 TOTAL EXPENDITURE		259,750.00
5 INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE		(36,798.00)

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Report of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points For the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP Dhaka, Bangladesh

3 – 4 November 2019

1. 1 INTRODUCTION

The Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points for the Fifteenth Meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) was held on 3 - 4 November 2019 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

It was agreed that the Report of the Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points on the various Agenda items would form the basis of discussion for the Fifteenth Meeting of the Governing Council.

1. 2 ATTENDANCE

The Meeting was attended by representatives from the following Member Countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

It was also attended by representatives from United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as observers.

List of Participants is at **Annex I**.

1. 3 INAUGURATION

The welcome address was delivered by Dr, Abas Basir, Director General, SACEP (**Annex II**)

Opening Remarks were delivered by Dr. Md. Billal Hossain, Secretary In-charge, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh, the host of the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP. (**Annex III**)

The gathering was then addressed by Mr. Idrees Malyaar, Deputy Director General, National Environment Protection Agency, Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Out-going Chairman. (**Annex IV**)

Closing Remarks was delivered by Mr. Mahmud Hasan, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh. **(Annex V)**

2. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

In conformity with the Rules of Procedures of the Governing Council of SACEP, the following Office Bearers were elected.

Chairman	Mr. Abdullah Al Mohsin Chowdhury, Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh
Vice Chairman	Mr. Udaya Ranjith Seneviratne, Secretary to President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Rapporteur	Mr. Karma C. Nedrup, Environment Specialist/Director General, National Environment Commission, Royal Government of Bhutan

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND ORGANISATION OF WORK

The Agenda of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points for the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP was discussed and adopted **(Annex VI)**.

4. INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

4.1 APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SACEP

The Secretariat informed the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points for the 15GC-SACEP, the appointment of the current Director General, Dr. Abas Basir, nominee of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan who assumed duties on 8th August 2018 as per the approved criteria and Terms of Reference for fixed term of three years.

As per the rules and procedure, SACEP Secretariat will notify Government of Bangladesh by 7th August 2020, at the end of the second year tenure of the present Director General, to nominate a suitable candidate for the position in accordance with the approved Criteria for the post of the Director General to assume duties by 25th July 2021 with an overlap of 2 weeks with the current Director General. **(Annex VII)**

4.2 SEPARATE AND DISTINCTIVE OFFICE FOR THE SACEP SECRETARIAT AND OFFICIAL RESIDENCE FOR THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

SACEP Secretariat informed the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points for the 15GC-SACEP the awarding of the land by Government of Sri Lanka, as the host of the organization for construction of the Secretariat building and the official residence of the Director General of SACEP during the 14GC-SACEP on 28 March 2019 and the process made in this regard since then.

The Secretariat informed the commitment made by Government of India to contribute for the construction of one floor with recognition to the Member State. The meeting was informed that Government of India had asked for cost estimate in this regard and the building design and layout has since been shared with them. The Secretariat had been in contact with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India in this regard to expedite the process.

The Secretariat informed that the Urban Development Authority of Sri Lanka has granted the Preliminary Planning Clearance for the proposed building and the secondary stage is in progress at present which approves the detailed Floor Plan.

The Secretariat is expecting to commence the construction as soon as the required clearances are received subject to availability of funds.

SACEP Secretariat thanked Government of Pakistan and Government of Afghanistan for contributing US \$ 100,000/- and US \$ 50,000/- respectively and requested the other Member States to consider contributing for the construction of the Secretariat and the official residence for the Director General for which the official requests had already been submitted by SACEP.

Government of Sri Lanka reaffirmed the commitment of the host country of SACEP, and pledged financial contribution for the proposed building and offered to facilitate coordination within institutions concerned during the process of clearance and construction.

4.3 SACEP STRATEGY 2020 – 2030

A document titled 'Initial thoughts towards SACEP's Strategy 2016 – 2030' was circulated as a non-paper during the 14GC-SACEP held from 26 – 28 March 2018. As directed by 14GC-SACEP the Secretariat updated the draft document and circulated among the Member States for comments and consent prior to 15GC-SACEP. Based on the comments received the Secretariat reviewed and updated the 'Draft SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030' (**Annex VIII**).

The Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points for the 15GC-SACEP reviewed the document and the Draft 'SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030' is recommended for adoption by 15GC-SACEP with the amendments.

5. PROGRAMME MATTERS

5.1 PRESENTATION OF PROJECT STATUS REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, SACEP

The Director General presented the status of programme activities of SACEP from March 2018 to October 2019 (**Annex IX**).

The Meeting commended the efforts taken by SACEP for implementation of activities entrusted by its mandate and recommended to focus on specific priority areas.

5.2. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME (2020-2021)

The Meeting decided to recommend the continuation of the on-going activities of SACEP and approve the Work Programme 2020-2021 as proposed by SACEP Secretariat.

5.2.1 Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition (BFN) project in South Asia beyond 2018.

The 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP is requested to agree to carry forward the activities under the Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition (BFN) project in South Asia beyond 2018 and recommend the Secretariat to circulate the initial Project Proposal among Member States of SACEP for consent.

5.2.2 Strengthening Sustainable Consumption and Production in South Asia

As directed by 14GC-SACEP the Secretariat implemented activities under the subject areas of SCP.

As an outcome of the South Asia Training and Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) attended by high-level officials from SACEP member countries, a draft resolution was developed on the reflections of recommendations of the workshop.

The Draft Resolution is recommended for adoption at the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP.

5.2.3 South Asia Forum on Environment

14GC-SACEP adopted a decision on SCP by recommending SACEP Secretariat to take necessary steps to 'Convene the South Asia Forum on SCP on regular intervals. Also, the 14GC-SACEP adopted another decision on Air Pollution, in

which the Secretariat was requested to convene a Regional Forum on it. The matter was discussed in length at the Secretariat level taking into account all aspects including financial, as well as with other partners and developed a Concept Note to have a High-Level Environment Forum for South Asia which will have a wider scope instead of having separate forums on different subjects.

The Concept Note on South Asia Forum on the Environment (SAFE) is recommended for approval at the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council (GC) of SACEP.

5.2.4 The North East Indian Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (NEIOBI)

The Meeting was informed that SACEP will be an implementing partner for the proposed NE Indian Ocean Biodiversity Initiative project developed by the Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (GOBI). The initial project concept has already been submitted to donor for consideration. If succeeded, detailed project proposal needs to be developed. The Meeting commended the efforts taken by the Secretariat and recommended to carry forward the activity.

5.2.5 Healthy Landscapes: Managing Agricultural Landscapes in Socio-ecologically Sensitive Areas to Promote Food Security, Well-being and Ecosystem Health in Sri Lanka

SACEP is a key implementing partner with two objectives:

- 1) To gain experience in implementing GEF project so that SACEP will be able to manage its own GEF funded projects in future,
- 2) To make use of the huge potential for replication of the findings of this project in rest of our member countries.

The members noted the activity in progress under the Agenda item and encouraged the Secretariat to assist the other member countries in implementation of such activities.

5.2.6 Waste Management

Preparation of Status Report and sub-regional Roadmap for Implementing the Global Waste Management Goals toward Addressing SDGs in South Asia was developed as an outcome of three Regional Workshops held from March – September 2019. The Draft ‘Roadmap’ was developed for implementing the Global Waste Management Goals towards addressing SDGs in South Asia.

The 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP requested for adoption of the Sub-regional Roadmap developed for implementing the Global Waste Management Goals towards addressing SDGs in South Asia which will be implemented nationally.

5.2.7 Environmental Data and Information Management System for South Asia

The Secretariat reported the progress under this Agenda Item. The meeting was informed on the revitalized SACEP website, enrichment of Data and Information System of SACEP with regular updates in the database, Youtube channel and to Social Media.

5.2.8 Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its likely Trans-boundary Effects for South Asia.

To enable SACEP to deliver an effective co-ordination role in the implementation of the Malé Declaration, the 14GC-SACEP decided to further review at the national level regarding the role of SACEP in the implementation of the Male' Declaration. In this regard the secretariat has not received communication from the Member States and also the Intergovernmental Meeting of Malé Declaration had not been held since year 2016 to address the matter.

Taking the facts presented by the Secretariat, the Meeting agreed with the proposal made by SACEP for removal of the Agenda Item on Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its likely Trans-boundary Effects for South Asia from its Work Programme and to address activities related to Air Quality under Agenda Item 6.2.8.

5.2.9 Air Quality

The 14GC-SACEP requested SACEP to facilitate a common platform for all member countries to get together to discuss, share experiences and develop a common strategy to overcome the prevailing air pollution in the South Asian region. As recommended SACEP developed a Concept Note for 'Establishment of an Air quality programme for South Asia' and circulated it among the member States and other International donor organizations such as UNESCAP, UN Environment, ADB for possible funding support.

The meeting recommended to 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP to approve the Concept Note on 'Establishment of Air Quality Programme for South Asia' for development of a detailed Project Proposal.

5.2.10 Sustainable Nitrogen Management for South Asia

SACEP established 'the South Asian Nitrogen Hub', in collaboration with the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and many other organizations across the UK and South Asia. The Hub is funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under its Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF).

Over the next five years, South Asian Nitrogen Hub (SANH) will study the impacts of the different forms of pollution to form a coherent picture of the nitrogen cycle.

Regional Framework Policy on Nitrogen Management will be developed and adopted which will support cleaner and more profitable farming, as well as industrial recycling of nitrogen, fostering development of a cleaner circular economy for nitrogen. The activities are proposed to be carried forward according to the roadmap developed.

15th Meeting of the Governing Council (GC) of SACEP is requested to :

- a) Forward relevant data and information to review as well as to prepare the status report.
- b) Co-ordinate and support SACEP for necessary policy development and implementation by the national legislations

5.2.11 Capacity building of public sector, private sector and civil society stakeholders in SACEP member countries for Sustainable Energy and Road Transport policy, planning and implementation.

The Meeting was informed that the Secretariat has developed a Concept Note and will be circulated among the Members States of SACEP and stated that mobilization of funds is also required.

5.2.12 Post Rio +20 challenges related to environment sustainability with focus on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

The progress was reported of the on-going activity.

5.2.13 Adaptation to Climate Change

The Meeting was informed on the Regional Workshop held on Advancing Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in South Asia in September 2019 in collaboration with ADB and as a follow up activity a Regional Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing workshops are to be convened.

5.2.14 Explore possibilities of Accreditation to Global Funding Mechanisms

The Meeting noted the recommendation of the 14GC-SACEP and requested SACEP to explore possibilities of accreditation to global funding mechanisms.

5.2.15 Regional Cooperation for the Conservation and Wise-use of Internationally Important Wetlands in South Asia

13GC-SACEP adopted a decision that SACEP Secretariat may sign an MOU with Ramsar Convention for capacity building. The Secretariat in its progress report to the 14GC.SACEP stated that the negotiations were underway to finalize the proposed MoU. Ramsar is in the process of reviewing all its existing MoUs with other partners, SACEP's Draft MoU will also be included into that process.

5.2.17. South Asian Seas Programme (SASP)

The activities will be reported at the 6th Inter-governmental Meeting of the Ministers of the South Asian Seas Programme which will be held back to back with 15GC-SACEP.

6. FINANCIAL MATTERS

6.1 COUNTRY CONTRIBUTIONS

SACEP Secretariat thanked the member states for clearing the arrears of the Country Contribution to a commendable rate. SACEP Secretariat further noted it is important to clear the balance arrears for smooth and effective functioning of the Secretariat. **(Annex X)**

6.2 EXTERNAL FUNDING

Annexed **(Annex XI)**

The account statements of SACEP may reflect a line item on the institutional service charges received by SACEP from external funding sources in future.

6.3 INCREASE OF COUNTRY CONTRIBUTION OF SACEP

The 13th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP agreed in principle, a 10% increase of the Country Contributions as the present rate of Country Contributions had been agreed at the 7GC-SACEP held in April 1998.

Government of Bangladesh and the Government of Sri Lanka agreed to the 10% increase and have been contributing accordingly since 2014 and 2015 respectively.

Government of Afghanistan agreed to the proposed 10% increase and the other Member States were requested to consider increasing the agreed Country Contribution for smooth functioning of the Secretariat.

6.4 DRAFT SECRETARIAT BUDGET (2020-2021)

Draft budget for year 2020-2021, proposed with the currently agreed annual contributions to be recommended to the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP for approval. **(Annex XII)**

6.5 PRESENTATION OF AUDITED REPORT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEARS 2016 - 2017

The meeting recommended the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP to approve the Audited Report of Accounts for the years 2016 to 2017.

7. VENUE AND DATE FOR THE 16TH GOVERNING COUNCIL

As per SACEP Articles of Association, the next meeting of the SACEP Governing Council will be hosted by Government of Bhutan. The dates of the meeting will be finalized by the Secretariat in consultation with the Government of Bhutan.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Secretariat tabled a Concept Paper received from World Bank on a Project Proposal titled 'Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia Project' an International Development Association (IDA) Regional Grant. The Meeting was informed that a preliminary assessment was in progress and on 3rd November 2019, that, SACEP received the 'Introduction and Context' of the proposed World Bank supported Project.

The meeting recommended to 15 GC-SACEP to endorse the SACEP's interest to move forward with the World Bank and their development partners to prepare a regional project on Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia involving SACEP as an implementing agency for the benefit of the South Asian Region.

The Meeting decided to uplift the Agenda Item to the Work Programme of SACEP under Agenda Item 5.2.16 of the giving importance to the proposed activity.

9. ADOPTION OF REPORT

Report of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points for the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP is submitted for adoption.

10. CLOSURE OF MEETING

The Meeting adopted the above recommendations for submission to the 15th Governing Council for its adoption.

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points for 15th Meeting of the Governing Council

03 - 04 November 2019
held in Dhaka, Bangladesh

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SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

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**Inaugural Session of
Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points for
15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
Dhaka, Bangladesh**

3rd November 2019

**Welcome Address by
Dr. Abas Basir
Director General of SACEP**

Distinguished Delegates from all the member countries of SACEP

Honoured delegates from UN and other International agencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

As the Director General of SACEP it is a great privilege and honour to welcome you all at the Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points for the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP.

At the very outset, let me thank Government of Bangladesh for offering host facilities for this very important meeting.

Distinguished delegates

Environment is a field where there is constant change and is always in a state of flux. Our natural environment provides us with the basics of survival – the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink, and the fuels we use. The natural environment plays an important role in climate, flood and disease regulation. It also contributes to the cultural, educational and recreational aspects of our lives. However, our region is under enormous environmental stress resulting from global warming, urbanization, deforestation, overutilizing of our resources, water scarcity and pollution. This means the future of the region lies in the hands of its people, but we cannot wait until tomorrow, we need to act

now to ensure better development and sustained progress for our peoples and societies, present and future generations.

The Environmental problems, however, recognize no political boundaries; transcend states and regions and thus need to be managed through intergovernmental mechanisms and interregional engagements among governments and institutions. They need to collaborate on initiatives, harmonize policies, and develop strategies to counter environmental threats and sustain livelihoods. Indeed, the transboundary nature of environmental problems necessitates collective action involving national, regional and international institutions.

As you are aware, we are in our 37th Year of existence and throughout the past years, SACEP has had many milestones. SACEP remains a robust, agile and responsive organization focused on efficient and effective service delivery with impact on the ground in our eight member states ensuring we deliver on our mandate, our purpose - 'To promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region'.

To achieve this - we must focus our efforts in strengthening SACEP capacities, to ensure it is able to mobilize, allocate and direct technical and financial resources to make a difference where it is relevant and has greatest impact.

Our mandate, our vision and our values as the premier regional organization for the environment - ensures that SACEP works in partnership with all of our members and development partners – to address the pressing challenges in our region. Our strategic priorities of Climate Change, Biodiversity Protection; Waste Management, Pollution Control; and Environmental Governance are all environmental challenges for the South Asia region which have a direct impact on our ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals for present and future generations.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The programme of work which we are proposing is solely based on the demands and the needs of our member countries which fit into the global scenario.

Our work programme is no doubt ambitious but we are confident that with support of the member countries and the UN and other related agencies we can achieve our targets.

I wish to place on record the support we have received from our Focal Points, UNEP and other International Agencies in taking this programme forward and I look forward to their continued support.

In conclusion I must say that “We cannot protect the environment unless we empower people, inform them, and help them understand that these resources are their own, and that they must protect them.”

Let us work together to bring South Asia to greater heights.

Thank you.

**Inaugural Session of
Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points for
15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
Dhaka, Bangladesh**

3rd November 2019

**Speech by
Dr. Md. Billal Hossain
Secretary (In-charge)**

**Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

Bi-smi llāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥīm

Excellences

Distinguished Delegates, My colleagues

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning

This is an excellent opportunity for me to welcome you all in this opening session of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points for the 15th Governing Council Meeting of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP). This NFP meeting will continue till 4th November and finally Governing Council meeting will be held in the same hotel, may be not in the same way now, same place on 6th November 2019. We are expecting the presence of honorable ministers in that meeting, the Governing council of SACEP.

I am pleased to be associated with this gathering here in Dhaka which has its focus on

the protection and the management of environment in the South Asian Region.

Distinguished Delegates,

The Government of Bangladesh has taken various important steps towards the protection of environment. Among them-developed a National Environment Policy, 2018, enacted Biological Diversity Act 2017, Bangladesh bio-safety rules 2012, prepared country invest plan on Environment and Forest, Climate Change Trust Fund. Since 2009 government has allocated funds to combat air pollution, The Brick Kilns Establishment (Control) Act 2013 (Amended 2018) has been enacted. The Government has been drafting Solid Waste Management Rules 2019, E-waste Management Rules 2019. The clean air act is expected to be placed in parliament very soon. To save the environment from the water pollution government has made mandatory to all liquid effluent discharging industries to set up ETP. Meantime about 79% industry has already set up ETP country wide.

You know Bangladesh is now a lower middle country and will soon become an upper middle income country, as the government has been implementing massive development projects in light of the vision 2021 and vision 2041 under the able leadership of our Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. In this rapid development path where we will be able to put our strength for sustainable development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the year 2020 is nearer, we have 10 years to 2030 which is important to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Climate Change Goals of mitigation. The issues of Adaptation to Climate Change is on SACEP's agenda. As you know that Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable country to climate change impacts. The Government of Bangladesh is doing her best in this field. Many opined that Bangladesh can become climate change resilient by 2030 by adopting transformational adaptation over the next decade.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In today's world context, both local and global environmental issues are very interlinked and regional co-operation is the key to sustainable environmental management as our countries in the region are vulnerable to the global environmental challenge. SACEP can facilitate member countries to address the challenge by knowledge management, transfer of technology and many other key areas common to the region to ensure sustainable development of the countries in the region.

Thank you

**Inaugural Session of
Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points for
15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
Dhaka, Bangladesh**

3rd November 2019

**Speech by
Mr. Idrees Malyar
Deputy Director General
National Environmental Protection Agency**

**Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and
Out-going Chairman of GC-SACEP**

In the Name of God, The Merciful, The Compassionate

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, I would like to begin by extending our sincere thanks to the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for hosting this 15th meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme. It is a pleasure to be here in Dhaka to hand over the chairpersonship of this important regional body to Bangladesh.

As we look back over the period in which Afghanistan was chairing this organisation, we can see that it was a time of tremendous attention on the issue of global environmental change. The images of the burning forests of the Amazon spoke as loudly as the voice of the teenage activist Greta Thunberg. Both Ms. Thunberg and the burning Amazon had the same message, namely that we have a responsibility to do whatever we can to address the existential environmental crisis in which we currently live.

At this stage, and in the light of this global media attention, it is a generally accepted fact that we need to move to action, and sooner rather than later. The question always remains of how to do this? We know that action to ensure the integrity of the environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Agenda is of critical importance. At the same time, it seems clear that this will require substantive, unprecedented and irreversible changes to the world's economy and the fabric of our various societies that will likely prove severely disruptive. While many people, both at home and on the international level, might ask whether the world and its people are ready for such fundamental changes, I would conversely like to ask whether we are ready for the consequences of not taking radical actions.

When we look at the impacts of global environmental change in terms of losses and damages caused by extreme weather events to both urban centres and rural communities alike; when we look at the negative effects of environmental degradation on the lives and livelihoods of people of every social class, ethnic group and religious belief; when we look at how various forms of air and water pollution are slowly but inevitably taking their toll on people as well as natural ecosystems, we must ask ourselves: are we ready for the consequences of not taking radical action?

Ladies and gentlemen,

I think we are all in agreement that the requisite shifts in terms of current trends of consumer behaviour and socio-economic development to achieve environmental sustainability will be monumental and far-reaching. While we have the technology and know-how to do this, it remains to be seen whether we have the political and social will to make the difficult decisions that this will necessitate. It is with a sense of pride that I can say, as Afghanistan hands over the position of chair for South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme to Bangladesh, that we have seen that there is such agreement in the wills of the governments and the people of all countries represented here. That leaves me with a feeling of optimism that, despite the challenges facing us as a region, we have the social and political means to achieve what needs to be done.

At the end, I thank you for your kind attention.

**Inaugural Session of
Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points for
15th Meeting of the Governing Council of
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Dhaka, Bangladesh**

3rd November 2019

**Speech by
Mr. Mahmud Hassan
Additional Secretary (Environment)**

**Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Honorable Chief Guest Dr. Md. Billal Hossain, Secretary (In charge) of Ministry of Environment,

Forest and Climate Change, Bangladesh, Dr. Abas Basir, Director General of SACEP

Mr. Idris Malyar, Deputy Director General, NEPA, Afghanistan

Your excellences, High Commissioners, Ambassadors

UNEP Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific

Distinguished Guests, Participants, Colleagues

Very good morning

I am honored to be here amongst this distinguished gathering to deliver the vote of thanks and closing remarks. It is our obligation and responsibility to carry forward this message of an environmentally sustainable South-Asia for the benefit of our future generations. Only with the collaborative and co-operative efforts of our member governments and other donor communities that we can implement the necessary measure to tackle environmental challenges we face in our region today.

This is the second time that the government of Bangladesh is hosting the meeting of the Governing council of SACEP. It is our government's firm determination and willingness to collaborate with our neighboring countries to safe guard our region's environment. I would also like to express word of appreciation to the DG, SACEP and his staff for their unwavering support and patience while organizing this meeting.

Lastly, I would like to thank my colleagues of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for their hard work and commitment for making this event a success.

I specially thank Hon' Acting Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Billal Hossain to delivered his remarks here. And I welcome all the participants for coming here. Have a nice stay here and I wish today's meeting a great success. I think it is a good beginning and we hope to end with it more success.

Thank You.

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points for 15th Governing Council Meeting of SACEP

Dhaka, Bangladesh
3 - 4 November 2019

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
9.00 – 9.30	1 Opening of the Meeting
09.30 – 10.00	TEA BREAK
10.00 – 10.10	2 Election of Office Bearers
10.10 – 10.30	3 Adoption of Agenda and Organisation of Work
10.30 – 12.00	4 Institutional Matters
12.00 – 13.30	LUNCH
13:30 – 15:30	<p>5.1 Programme Matters</p> <p>Presentation of Project Status Report by the Director General, SACEP</p> <p>5.1.1 Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition (BFN) project in South Asia beyond 2018</p> <p>5.1.2 Strengthening Sustainable Consumption and Production in South Asia</p> <p>5.1.3 Waste Management</p> <p>5.1.4 Environmental Data and Information Management System for South Asia</p> <p>5.1.5 Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and Its Likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia</p> <p>5.1.6 Air Quality</p>

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
	<p>5.1.7 Sustainable Nitrogen Management Project for South Asia</p> <p>5.1.8 Capacity building of public sector, private sector and civil society stakeholders in SACEP member countries for Sustainable Energy and Road Transport policy, planning and implementation.</p> <p>5.1.9 Post Rio +20 challenges related to environment sustainability with focus on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.</p> <p>5.1.10 Adaptation to Climate Change</p> <p>5.1.11 Explore possibilities of Accreditation to Global Funding Mechanisms</p> <p>5.1.12 Regional Cooperation for the Conservation and Wise-use of Internationally Important Wetlands in South Asia</p> <p>5.1.13 South Asian Seas Programme (SASP)</p>
15:30 – 16:00	TEA BREAK
16:00 – 16:30	5.2 Work Programme (2020 - 2021)
16:30 – 17:00	<p>6 Financial Matters</p> <p>6.1 Review of Country Contributions</p> <p>6.2 External Funding</p> <p>6.3 DRAFT Secretariat Budget (2020 - 2021)</p> <p>6.4 Presentation of Audited Reports of Accounts for the year 2016 & 2017</p>
17:00 – 17:15	7 Venue and Date for the 16 th Governing Council
17:15 – 17:30	8 Any Other Business
17:30 – 17:45	9 Adoption of Report
17:45	10 Closure of Meeting

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Preparatory Meeting of National Focal Points for 15th Governing Council Meeting of SACEP

Dhaka, Bangladesh

3 - 4 November 2019

ANNOTATED AGENDA

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
9:00 – 9:30	<p>1 OPENING OF THE MEETING</p> <p>It is expected that a Senior Dignitary from the Government of Bangladesh will inaugurate the Meeting.</p>
09:30 – 10:00	TEA BREAK
10:00 – 10:10	<p>2 ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS</p> <p>In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Governing Council of SACEP, a new Chairman will be elected in a manner consistent with the Articles of Association of SACEP. One or more Vice Chairman, a Rapporteur and other officials may also be appointed by the Meeting. The Director General shall function as the Secretary of the Governing Council during its sessions.</p>
10:10 – 10:30	<p>3 ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND ORGANISATION OF WORK</p> <p>The Meeting will consider the Provisional Agenda for adoption. Any matter regarding the Organisation of Work and the Sessions may also be considered.</p>
10:30 – 12:00	<p>4 INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS</p> <p>Under this Agenda Item, the meeting will consider and submit its recommendations to the Governing Council regarding the Institutional Matters</p>

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
12:00 –13:30	LUNCH
13:30 – 15:30	<p>5.1 PROGRAMME MATTERS</p> <p>Director General will present the project implementation status report under each of the projects listed below:</p> <p>5.1.1 Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition (BFN) project in South Asia beyond 2018</p> <p>5.1.2 Strengthening Sustainable Consumption and Production in South Asia</p> <p>5.1.3 Waste Management</p> <p>5.1.4 Environmental Data and Information Management System for South Asia</p> <p>5.1.5 Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and Its Likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia</p> <p>5.1.6 Air Quality</p> <p>5.1.7 Sustainable Nitrogen Management Project for South Asia</p> <p>5.1.8 Capacity building of public sector, private sector and civil society stakeholders in SACEP member countries for Sustainable Energy and Road Transport policy, planning and implementation.</p> <p>5.1.9 Post Rio +20 challenges related to environment sustainability with focus on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.</p> <p>5.1.10 Adaptation to Climate Change</p> <p>5.1.11 Explore possibilities of Accreditation to Global Funding Mechanisms</p> <p>5.1.12 Regional Cooperation for the Conservation and Wise-use of Internationally Important Wetlands in South Asia</p> <p>5.1.13 South Asian Seas Programme (SASP)</p>

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
15:30 – 16:00	TEA BREAK
16:00 – 16:30	<p>5.2 WORK PROGRAMME (2020-2021)</p> <p>Under this Agenda Item, the meeting will consider the approved work programme for 2018-2019 and make suggestions for its continuance through 2020-2021</p>
16:30 – 17:00	<p>6 FINANCIAL MATTERS</p> <p>Under this agenda item, the meeting will consider the review of the Country Contributions, External Funding, the Draft Secretariat Budget for 2020 -2021. It will also consider the Audited Reports of Accounts for the year 2016 - 2017 for endorsement.</p>
17:00 – 17:15	<p>7 VENUE AND DATE FOR THE 16th GOVERNING COUNCIL</p> <p>Under this Agenda Item, the meeting will decide on the venue and tentative dates for the 16th Governing Council meeting, which will be submitted to the Ministerial meeting for formal agreement.</p>
17:15 – 17:30	<p>8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>Under this Agenda Item, the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points may wish to discuss any other relevant matters that may be raised by the representatives participating at the Meeting or by the Secretariat.</p>
17:30 – 17:45	<p>9 ADOPTION OF REPORT</p> <p>Under this Agenda Item the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points will consider and Adopt the Report which will be submitted to the Ministerial meeting</p>

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
17:45	<p>10 CLOSURE OF MEETING</p> <p>Any representative participating in the Meeting may wish to make concluding statements regarding the deliberations at the Meeting and its achievements. The Chairman will finally declare the Meeting closed.</p>

Appointment of Director General of SACEP

Decision No. 9.1 of the 12th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP (12GC.SACEP) held on 3rd November 2010 revised the procedure for appointment of the Director General of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (DG-SACEP) to be on rotation among the member states according to the alphabetical order of the country.

..... Thereafter, principle of rotation to be followed starting from the alphabetical order beginning from Afghanistan for a period of three years as per the decision of the High-Level Meeting to Initiate the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, 18 – 25 February 1981 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. (Annex 1)

The Criteria for Selection and the Terms of Reference of the appointment of the Director General was approved by the Chairman of the Governing Council on 18th January 2011 as recommended by the 117th Meeting of the Consultative Committee of SACEP (117CC.SACEP) held on 23rd November 2010 incorporating the comments / clearances received from SACEP member states and subsequent revisions of Item No. 10, 11, 12 and 16, by the 125th, 126th and 128th Meetings of the Consultative Committee of SACEP held on 17th July 2015, 26th April 2016 and 14th July 2017 respectively. **(Annex 2 – Approved Criteria)**

As per the approved criteria, government of Afghanistan nominated Dr. Abas Basir for the post of Director General of SACEP and he assumed duties on 8th August 2018 with an overlap of two weeks with the previous Director General and will be completing the tenure on 7th August 2021.

SACEP Secretariat will notify Government of Bangladesh by 7th August 2020, at the end of the second year tenure of the present Director General, to nominate a suitable candidate for the position in accordance with the approved Criteria for the appointment of the Director General to assume duties by 25th July 2021 with an overlap of 2 weeks with the current Director General. **(Annex 3)**



REPORT
THE TWELFTH MEETING OF THE
GOVERNING COUNCIL

South Asia Co-operative Environment
Programme
(SACEP)

1 – 3 NOVEMBER 2010
COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

9. DISCUSSIONS AND ENDORSEMENT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AGREED UPON AT THE PREPARATORY MEETING OF NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS

Based on the recommendations of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points under the following categories;

- (1) Institutional Matters
- (2) Programme Matters
- (3) Financial Matters,

the 12th Meeting of the Governing Council, SACEP endorsed the decisions below.

9.1 INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR GENERAL OF SACEP

The Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points for the 12th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP appointed a three member committee comprising of Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to resolve the matter of the Appointment of the Director General of SACEP on merit basis. Bhutan was requested to facilitate the negotiations.

Based on the recommendation of the sub-committee, it was decided that first option to propose a candidate as the Director General, SACEP to be given to Sri Lanka for a period of three years followed by Pakistan.

Thereafter, principle of rotation will be followed starting from the alphabetical order beginning from Afghanistan for a period of three years as per the decision of the High Level Meeting to Initiate the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, 18 – 25 February 1981 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

It was decided that the criteria for the selection of Director General and the Terms of Reference to be drafted by the SACEP Secretariat and to be circulated to the member countries for comments within one month.

9.2 PROGRAMME MATTERS

9.2.1 Establishment of Basel Convention Regional Centre for South Asia

The meeting was informed by the SACEP Secretariat that an updated proposal on Establishment of Basel Convention Regional Centre for South Asia was submitted and was taken



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சுற்றுடல் அமைச்சு
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

Annex VII
GC 15.SACEP / NFP

"සම්පත්පාය" අංක 82, රාஜමල්වත්ත පාර, බත්තරමුල්ල, ශ්‍රී ලංකාව.
"சம்பத்தபாய" இல. 82, ராஜமல்வத்த வீதி, பத்தரமுல்லை, இலங்கை.
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எனது இல.
My No. 04/03//06/962

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உமது இல.
Your No.

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திகதி
Date 18th Jan. 2011

GC 15.SACEP /NFP
Agenda Item 4.1 - Annex 2
Page 1 of 10

Ms Jacintha S. Tissera
Officiating Director General
South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
#10, Anderson Road, Colombo 05



**Criteria and Terms of Reference for
Selection of Director General of SACEP on Rotation**

This has reference to your letter dated 12th January 2011, on the above subject.

As the Chairman of the Governing Council of the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP), I am pleased to endorse **the Criteria for Selection of the Director General of SACEP on Rotation, referred in Annex 1**, as decided at the 12th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP (12GC.SACEP) held on 3rd November 2010, the 117th Meeting of the Consultative Committee of SACEP (117CC.SACEP) held on 23rd November 2010 and based on the comments/clearances received from SACEP member countries.

Regards

Anura Priyadarshana Yapa
Minister of Environment

Anura Priyadarashana Yapa, M.P
Minister of Environment, Sri Lanka and
Chairman, Governing Council of SACEP

Encl: **Annex 1** - Criteria for Selection of the Director General of South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme on Rotation and Terms of Reference

Noted
[Signature]
20/01/11

"මේ මහලොව සහ ගහලොව මිනිසාට මෙන්ම අපගේ පියාසරන සියලුම දේවතාවන්, මිනිසා සරන සිව්පාවුන්වද, සියලු සතුන්වද එකම අයිතිය."
"நாம் வாழும் இந்த பூமி மற்றும் மரம் செடி கொடிகள் மனிதனுக்கு மட்டுமன்றி வான் வெளியில் பறந்து திரியும் பறவைகள் மற்றும் பூமியிலுள்ள விலங்குகளுக்கும், ஏனைய அனைத்து விலங்குகளுக்கும் சொந்தமானது"



ANNEX 1**CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF
DIRECTOR GENERAL, SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME ON
ROTATION****AND****TERMS OF REFERENCE**

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), based in Colombo, Sri Lanka is an Inter-governmental Organization established in 1982 to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of environment in the region (www.sacep.org). Its member countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. SACEP is also the Secretariat of South Asian Seas Programme (SASP) covering its five marine member states.

As decided at the 12th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP held on 3rd November 2010 in Colombo, Sri Lanka, the first option to propose a candidate as the Director General of SACEP will be given to Sri Lanka for a period of three years followed by Pakistan. Thereafter, principle of rotation will be followed starting from the alphabetical order beginning from Afghanistan for a period of three years as per the decision of the High Level Meeting to Initiate the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme from 18 – 25 February 1981 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

The Director General, SACEP will be the head of the organization and provide leadership in the efficient and effective functioning of the organization and fulfillment of its mandate as contained in the Declaration and Articles of Association of SACEP and the decisions of the Meetings of the Governing Councils and the Consultative Committee of SACEP / SASP.

In particular the incumbent will be responsible for:

- overall administrative and financial control of the organization,
- programme planning, budgeting and resource mobilization, including fund-raising and co-financing,
- building and developing close relationships with the stakeholder bodies, including alliance partners and other organizations,
- performing other functions and responsibilities entrusted by the Governing Council and its Committees.
- Meeting the reporting requirements laid down by the Governing Council and the Consultative Committee

ANNEX 1**QUALIFICATION:**

- He / She should have an Advanced University Degree (Ph.D. or Post Graduate qualification) in a relevant discipline (Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Planning, Engineering, Law, Business Management)
- 15 years of professional experience, of which, at least 10 years must be at a senior level with demonstrated planning, managerial and leadership capabilities and sound knowledge of environmental and sustainable development issues at the national, regional, and global levels
- Proven skill in identifying, formulating, planning, operating and monitoring environmental programmes, knowledge and experience of the procedures adopted by the UN Agencies and other technical or financial assistance agencies
- Excellent communication skills
- Good interpersonal skills and the ability to work in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity
- Age: 40-55 Years

It would also be desirable for the Director General to have an established and good working relationship with governments of SACEP member and non-member countries, international and regional bodies, aide agencies, relevant non-government organizations, senior management in private sector, corporations, companies and foundations, etc.

(Source : Approved Advertisement and Guidelines & Procedure for the Recruitment of the DG.SACEP by Chairman GC.SACEP dated 2nd August 2004 and Offer of Appointment to the Post of Director General dated 1st February 2005)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The post of Director General, SACEP is a statutory appointment, on Contract Basis for a non-renewable term of three years at the Programme's Headquarters at Colombo, Sri Lanka. The appointment as Director General, SACEP will be governed by the following Terms and Conditions:

1. Term of Service

- a) The Director General's appointment shall date from the day on which he / she leaves his / her last duty station to come to Colombo, and his / her salary (including overseas allowance, if any) is payable from that date, provided that salary is not payable for any periods of leave taken in the course of his / her journey to Colombo.
- b) The approved term of service as laid down in the Articles of Association and the Decision of the 12th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP, will be deemed to commence from the date of the Director General's departure from his / her last duty station or normal place of residence to come to Colombo and will exclude

travel time on transfer from Colombo and any accumulated leave taken at the end of his / her term of service.

(Source : GC 4; page 37; Rule 16 a - b)

c) Period of Overlap

The terms of office of the Director General and his / her successor may overlap for a period not exceeding two weeks plus travel time and accumulated leave: To provide for periods of overlap or to enable the change-over to take place at the most suitable time of year, the Governing Council, Consultative Committee may make small extensions to the terms of contract of the officers concerned subject to the provisions of Article 7 of the Articles of Association.

(Source : GC 4 / page 37, Rule 16 (c))

2. Resignation

In case, if the Director General is withdrawn by his / her government or the Director General resigns, three months written notice shall ordinarily be given to the Chairman of the Consultative Committee. However, the resignation may be accepted on shorter notice. If the Director General stays less than the term of his / her original contract and if he / she has taken advantage of the provision for Home Leave payment of the costs of return travel to the normal place of residence shall be at the discretion of the Consultative Committee.

(Source : Source : GC 4; page 37; Rule 17)

3. Transport of Officer and the Family

The selected candidate for appointment as Director General will obtain a Diplomatic Passport from the respective country government and other necessary travel documents including valid visa from the High Commission / Embassy of Sri Lanka of the concerning country, before the commencement of the journey.

(Source : Offer of Appointment to the Post of Director General; 6 dated 1st February 2005)

SACEP will pay the cost of economy class air travel or the equivalent by any other means of transport to Colombo from the normal place of residence or last duty station, and back to his / her normal place of residence for the Director General, spouse and dependent children (including step children and legally adopted children). The term "dependent children" covers those who are under age of 21 on first arrival in Sri Lanka and unmarried, and whom it is intended, will reside in Sri Lanka during the Director General's term of duty. A son or daughter of 21 years of age and above may also be considered a dependent for travel purpose, if physically disabled or mentally retarded.

In the case of a dependent child receiving full-time education outside Sri Lanka, the Secretariat will pay the cost of economy class return air fare between the Director General's normal place of residence and Colombo, once in every twelve months except in the twelve-month period in which the Director General has home leave.

(Source : GC 4; page 37; Rule 18)

ANNEX 1**4. Shipment of Car**

The Secretariat will pay the cost of shipment of a Director General's car from his / her normal place of residence or last duty station to Colombo and back to his / her normal place of residence.

(Source : GC 4; page 37; Rule 19)

5. Removal Allowance

On the first appointment of the Director General and on his / her return to his / her normal place of residence, the Secretariat will pay actual removal expenses for household and personal effects up to a maximum stated below by the most economical means of transportation:

Air baggage accompanied:	66 lbs/person
Air Freight :	100 lbs/person
Surface Freight:	3,500 lbs/family
(300 cu. ft. or 8.50 cu. m)	

(Source : GC 4; page 38; Rule 20)

6. Salary

- a) The Director General will be given a fixed remuneration of US \$ 5,000/- per month.

(Source : 14 GC.SACEP – 9.1.2 - page 4, held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, hosted by Afghanistan on 28 March 2018)

- b) Salary is inclusive of all allowances except Travel Allowance, Entertainment Allowance, Medical Expenses, Children's Education Allowance and Furnished Living Accommodation Allowance. The Director General may remit from Sri Lanka amounts up to the total of his / her salary as permitted by the Sri Lanka foreign exchange authorities.

(Source : GC 4; page 38; Rule 21. a)

- c) The salary and allowances of the Director General are determined on the assumption that he / she will not be subject to taxation, but the Secretariat has no responsibility on account of any taxation that may, in spite of this assumption, be levied on such officer by his / her national Government.

(Source : GC 4; page 38; Rule 21.b and Gazette Notification (Extraordinary) 1426/17 under Diplomatic Privileges Act No 9 of 1996; (a) dated 5th January 2006)

7. Travel Allowance

When absent from Colombo on official visits, the Director General will be entitled in addition to the salary, the Daily Subsistence Allowance applicable to staff members

ANNEX 1

in the Director and the Principal Officer category of the United Nations for each country visited, subject to the fulfillment of administrative and financial instructions. Travel by air will be by economic class.

In cases, where the per diem rate is not high enough to cover his / her reasonable expenses, he / she may claim actual expenses supported by vouchers. It is expected to travel in such a way as to economise time and expenses

(Source : GC 4; page 38; Rule 23)

Overseas travel of the Director General of SACEP should be approved by the Consultative Committee of SACEP and a report on the follow up actions should be submitted to CC-SACEP after attending the Meeting / Conference.

(Source : 110 CC SACEP held on 30th October 2008)

8. Personal Accident Insurance

Director General will be provided with insurance cover for capital sums of pounds sterling 10,000/- each, against personal accidents during their terms of office.

(Source : GC 4; page 38; Rule 24)

9. Entertainment Allowance

The Director General shall be entitled to be reimbursed in respect of expenditure incurred on entertainment in pursuance of the official representational functions. Such expenditure shall not in the total exceed the sum set aside for this purpose in the annual budget.

(Source : GC 4; page 38; Rule 25)

10. Furnished Living Accommodation

The Director General will be entitled to per diem allowance in lieu of house rent for the first 14 days in joining the Secretariat. In case of the spouse and maximum of 2 dependent children, the rate of per diem allowance will be 50% of the rate applicable for Colombo.

(Source : Detailed Terms of Appointment; iii; dated 7th March 2005)

The Director General will be provided a furnished living accommodation with a rental ceiling of Sri Lankan Rupees as given in the below table.

Actual Rental	Increase	Period
LKR 80,000.00		First Year
LKR 88,000.00	10%	Second Year
LKR 91,520.00	4%	Third Year

(Source : GC 4; page 38; Rule 26 revised by 96 CC SACEP held on 2nd August 2005 and 125 CC SACEP dated 17th July 2015)

ANNEX 1**11. Utility Expenses**

Utility Expenses payable by the Director General for his / her residence supported by vouchers will be borne by the Secretariat with the ceiling of the Utility Expenses of the Director General as per below given table in US Dollars or Sri Lanka Rupees enabling the higher value to be claimed supported by vouchers.

Utility Expense	Monthly Rate
Electricity	US \$ 150 or LKR 20,000/-
Water	US \$ 25 or LKR 3,500/-
Residence Telephone	US \$ 50 or LKR 7,000/-

(Source : Offer of Appointment to the Post of Director General; 5 dated 1st Feb 2005, revised by 117 CC SACEP held on 23rd November 2010 and 126 CC SACEP held on 26th April 2016)

12. Medical and Hospital Charges

Medical expenses payable by the Director General and the family supported by vouchers will be borne by the Secretariat up to a limit of Sri Lankan Rupees 100,000/- per year and pro rata for fractions of a year and if this allowance is not used in full, an entitlement not exceeding Sri Lankan Rupees 200,000/- may be carried over into any following year. The Director General is a member of the SACEP medical insurance scheme.

(Source : GC 4; page 38 & 39; Rule 27 revised by Special CC SACEP held on 11th Jan 1994 and 128th CC SACEP held on 14th July 2017)

13. Leave

The Director General will be entitled to an **Annual Leave** of 25 working days per annum during the term of appointment, and this may be taken either in or outside Sri Lanka. Leave shall be earned from the date of appointment. Leave for any period of service amounting to less than one complete year will be pro rata.

(Source : GC 4; page 39; Rule 28.a)

Casual leave will be fourteen working days per annum, unused casual leave lapses at the end of each calendar year.

(Source: GC 4; page 39; Rule 29)

There is no special provision for **Sick Leave**. The Secretariat may make an ad hoc decision in any case where the Director General is sick and has exhausted his / her leave entitlement.

(Source : GC 4; page 39; Rule 30)

ANNEX 1

Home Leave may be granted after completion of two years of service with the Secretariat to the Director General nominated by a country other than Sri Lanka, provided that he / she spends a substantial part of his / her leave in that country, and subject to his / her assurance in writing that he / she intends to serve the full term on his / her contract. The Secretariat will pay the cost of return passages (economy class for air travel or the equivalent by other means of transport) for the officer, the spouse, and dependent children, by the most direct route to the country by which he / she was nominated.

Except for travel time not exceeding five days each way, the leave involved shall be charged to annual leave. Daily Subsistence Allowance shall not be paid for journeys on home leave.

(Source : GC 4; page 39; Rule 31 & page 37; Rule 18 (a) and 104 CC.SACEP held on 7th Dec 2007)

14. Encashment of Accumulated Annual Leave

Encashment of Accumulated Annual Leave for the Director General with an upper ceiling of 70% of the Accumulated Annual Leave as a Terminal Benefit at the end of the tenure.

(Source : 105 CC.SACEP held on 19th December 2007)

15. Children's Education Allowance

Educational Allowance for 2 children upto the age of 21 years is payable.

In case, the children are studying in Sri Lanka / Third Country, 75% of the actual expenses will be reimbursed subject to a ceiling of US \$ 3,000/- per child per annum and where as the children are studying in their home country, a lump sum amount of US \$ 1,500/- per, child per annum.

(Source : Special CC held on 6th Feb 1995 and 100 CC SACEP held on 30th Aug 2006)

When the Director General is from Sri Lanka and his / her children are studying in Sri Lanka 75% of the actual expenses will be reimbursed subject to a ceiling of US \$ 1,500/- per child per annum and where as the children are studying in another country, a lump sum amount of US \$ 3,000/- per, child per annum.

(Source : 117 CC SACEP held on 23rd November 2010)

16. Official Car

The Director General will be provided with an official car for self and family use, which is maintained by SACEP. Official usage of the Director General should to be given priority.

(Source : Detailed Terms of Appointment; vii; dated 7th March 2005 revised by 128 CC SACEP held on 14th July 2017)

17. Customs Privileges

- (a) By arrangement with the Government of Sri Lanka, the Director General is entitled to privileges as contained in Sections 19, 20 and 21 of the Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations. "First Entry" is interpreted as including the first six months of their stay for the purpose of importing such durable goods as automobiles and refrigerators, on the understanding that only one of each such article is brought by the Director General.
- (b) Items brought to the country duty free should not be sold to private parties but handed over to the Government Supplies Department on Government valuation.

(Source : GC 4; page 39; Rule 32)

18. Standards of Conduct

The Director General will conduct him/herself at all times with fullest regard for the purpose and principles of SACEP and in a manner befitting his / her relationship with SACEP and shall not engage in any activity that is incompatible with those purposes and principles or the proper discharge of his / her duties with the Programme. He/she will avoid any action and in particular of any kind of public pronouncement, which may adversely reflect on that relationship, or on the integrity, independence and impartiality, which are required by the relationship.

(Source : Offer of Appointment to the Post of Director General; 8 dated 1st Feb 2005)

19. Termination of Service

SACEP reserves the right to terminate the appointment of the Director General, in the event of gross misconduct, default or in some other circumstances, which will render the contract unenforceable. Notice for termination would not be applicable in such cases.

(Source : Offer of Appointment to the Post of Director General; 12 dated 1st February 2005)

20. Sudden Demise

Considering the special circumstances, the family of the late Director General will be compensated with an ex-gratia payment of US \$ 8,000/- as a special gesture.

(Source : 50 CC.SACEP held on 25th May 1993)

21. Rights and Obligations of the Director General, SACEP

The rights and obligations of the Director General, SACEP are strictly limited to the Terms and Conditions of the Service Contract. Accordingly, he / she shall not be entitled to any benefit, payment, subsidy, compensation or pension from SACEP, except as expressly provided in the contract.

(Source : 117 CC.SACEP held on 23rd November 2010)

22. Use of Name, Emblem or Official Seal of SACEP or SASP

The Director General shall not use the name, emblem or the official seal of SACEP / SASP or any abbreviation of the name of SACEP and SASP for any purpose except for strict official use.

(Source : 117 CC.SACEP held on 23rd November 2010)

23. Title Rights

The title rights, copyrights and all other rights of whatsoever nature in any material product under the provisions of this contract shall be vested exclusively in SACEP.

(Source : 117 CC.SACEP held on 23rd November 2010)

General

24. All disputes arising shall be dealt with in accordance with the relevant laws of Sri Lanka.

(Source : Offer of Appointment to the Post of Director General; 13 dated 1st February 2005)

25. The Organization reserves the right at its discretion to effect changes in the job description and the duties and tasks to be performed as may be deemed necessary.

(Source : Offer of Appointment to the Post of Director General; 9 dated 1st February 2005)

26. The Director General will take reasonable steps to ensure that Programme's assets are adequately safeguarded and optimised.

(Source : Offer of Appointment to the Post of Director General; 10 dated 1st February 2005)

27. The Director General will be governed by the provisions relating to financial and administrative matters of the secretariat and other such rules as applicable during the period of his / her stay at SACEP.

(Source : Detailed Terms of Appointment – Last sentence dated 7th March 2005)



REPORT

**THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE
GOVERNING COUNCIL**

**South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
(SACEP)**

**22 MAY 2008
JAIPUR, INDIA**

9.1 INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

9.1.1 Declaration and Articles of Association of SACEP, adopted at the Ministerial Meeting of South Asian Countries held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 25th February 1981 and Decisions upto the Tenth Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP.

It was agreed that the countries should send in their comments, if any, within three months. If the country consents are not forwarded on or before end of December 2008, it will be considered as approved.

9.1.2 'Status of the implementation of Decision No 11.2 of 10-GC/SACEP on appointment of Director General on Merit Basis'.

The Governing Council reconsidered its decision of the Agenda Item 11.2 of 10-GC/SACEP and decided that the term of Director General of SACEP should be for a fixed period of three years without any provision for extension.

It also decided not to grant any extension to the present incumbent and that the process for selection of the new Director General should start immediately after the 11th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP. However, since this process is likely to take some time, the term of present Director General be extended, as an interim measure, only upto 31st December 2008, to enable completing selection process of the new Director General, or till such time as the new Director General is selected, whichever is earlier.

Also in future selection process of the new Director General should start at the end of two years of the term of the Director General so that selection is completed well before the completion of the stipulated / fixed three year term.

9.1.3 Compensation for fall in US \$ against other currencies for Salary of the Director General

The proposal on compensation for fall in US \$ against other currencies for Salary of the Director General was not agreed to.

SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030

A document titled ‘Initial thoughts towards SACEP’s Strategy 2016 – 2030’ was circulated as a non-paper during the 14th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP held from 26 – 28 March 2018 and requested to consider for adoption.

After careful consultations, the 14GC-SACEP was of the view that the ‘Initial thoughts toward SACEP’s Strategy 2016 – 2030’ would not be discussed at this meeting given the limited time for the National Focal Points to review the document. The 14GC-SACEP further directed the Secretariat to circulate an updated draft of the document as per the prevailing procedure followed, among all Member States for comments and consent prior to the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP for consideration of the proposal. **(Annex 1)**

Accordingly, SACEP Secretariat reviewed and updated the document and circulated among all member countries as ‘Draft SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030’ for comments and suggestions. All comments received upto 15th September 2019 are incorporated. **(Annex 2)**

As per the decision of 14th Meeting of the Governing Council, the Draft SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030 is submitted for consideration for adoption.



REPORT
THE FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE
GOVERNING COUNCIL

South Asia Co-operative Environment
Programme
(SACEP)

26 – 28 MARCH 2018
HELD IN COLOMBO, SRI LANKA
HOSTED BY THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

7. STATEMENTS BY THE OBSERVERS

Dr. Isabelle Louis, Deputy Regional Director of United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Thailand presented her statement. **(Annex XV)**

8. PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE PREPARATORY MEETING OF NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS BY THE RAPPORTEUR

Mr. Midhath Abdul Rasheed, Assistant Director, Ministry of Environment and Energy, Republic of Maldives, in his capacity as the Rapporteur, presented the Report of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points from on 26 – 27 March 2018 along with the recommendations of the meeting to the 14th Meeting of the Governing Council for its endorsement. **(Annex XVIII)**

9. DISCUSSIONS AND ENDORSEMENT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AGREED UPON AT THE PREPARATORY MEETING OF NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS

Based on the presentation of the Progress Report made by the Director General under the following categories;

- 1 Institutional Matters
- 2 Programme Matters
- 3 Financial Matters

and the recommendations of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points, the 14th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP adopted the Report of the Preparatory Meeting of the National Focal Points. The decisions of the 14th Meeting of the Governing Council, SACEP under various clauses are as below :

The meeting was of the view that the inclusion to the Progress Report referred to as Agenda Item No 6.1 with reference to sub heading 6.1.18 on the 'Initial thoughts toward SACEP's Strategy 2016 – 2030' would not be discussed at this meeting given the limited time for the National Focal Points to review the document. In response to a query raised by Government of Afghanistan, the Secretariat informed the 14GC-SACEP that, a review of SACEP was done by a panel of three eminent professionals of South Asia and that the 3rd Special Session of the Governing Council approved the recommendations of the Review Panel as SACEP's Strategy and Work Programme, in November 2003 with funding support of US\$ 100,000/- (approx) from UNEP. **The 14GC-SACEP informed the Secretariat to circulate the updated draft of the document as per the prevailing procedure followed, to all Member States for comments and consent prior to the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP for consideration of the proposal.**

DRAFT

SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030

1. Background

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) was established by the South Asian countries to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region at the High Level Meeting to Initiate SACEP held on February 1981 at Colombo, Sri Lanka. As of Article of Associations, SACEP became a legal entity on 9th February 1982 with the ratification of at least three member states. Eight South Asian countries; Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are members of SACEP. The Colombo Declaration on the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme and Articles of Association of SACEP constitute the legal basis for SACEP. The principle organs of the governance structure of SACEP are the Governing Council (GC) consists of Ministers of Environment of the member countries, Consultative Committee (CC) drawing from representatives of Embassies/High Commissions of the member countries stationed at Colombo, National Focal Points (NFP), Subject Area Focal Points and the SACEP Secretariat. The Secretariat is headed by a Director General, located in Colombo, Sri Lanka where host facilities are provided by the Government of Sri Lanka. SACEP also serves as secretariat for the South Asia Seas Programme (SASP) which is one of the eighteen Regional Seas Programmes of the UN Environment. SACEP registered with the UN Secretariat as a multilateral organization in accordance with article 102 of the charter of the United Nations.

SACEP has an impressive record in capacity building and policy dialogue with government officials of member countries and other environmental stakeholders, developing and promoting tools and good practices for sustainable development and for public/stakeholder involvement, implementing ministerial mandates and contributing to international processes. Much of these efforts have been in the thematic areas of Biodiversity Conservation, Sustainable Consumption and Production, Air, land and water pollution with trans-boundary implications, Coastal and Marine Environment, Climate Change, and Environmental Planning, Policy and Law. These activities implemented under number of Strategic Programmes since SACEP's inception. Up to 1991, the work programmes determined by the Governing Council were guided by National Focal Points and Subject Area Focal Points. The first five-year strategy, SACEP's Strategy Programmes 1 (SSP1) was implemented from 1992 to 1996. Then, SACEP's Strategy Programmes 2 (SSP2) implemented from 1996 to 2002. In 2003, SACEP went through an external review to evaluate the past performance of SACEP over 2 decades and for identification of bottle necks in its funding, new strategy and implementation mechanisms to achieve its objectives. According to that strategy, SACEP was required to develop two work programmes, biennium and quennium for implementation thereafter.

It has been more than a decade since the last strategy adopted by SACEP and there are many changes taken place in the areas of national, regional and global environment concerns and priorities which requires new policies and strategies to overcome the new challenges.

This long-term strategy (2020 – 2030) builds on the decisions made by SACEP Governing Council at its previous sittings, SACEP's own experiences of coordinating and assisting the region's environment protection efforts over the years as well as from its needs advancing

forward, Post 2015 South Asia Development Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

2. Regional Context

South Asia is home to one of the oldest civilizations of the world. The sub-region comprises eight countries, namely - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. South Asia habitats a total population of around 1.5 billion, burgeoning at the annual rate of 1.8%, in spite of covering only 4.8 per cent of the world's total land area. This figure is expected to rise to about 25 per cent by 2025¹. India is the most populated country in the region, followed by Pakistan. Countries like Bhutan and Maldives are comparatively less populated than the other nations in the region *ibid*. The region remains one of the fastest growing sub-regions in the world. South Asia has yet to cross many hurdles to attain the lofty goal of sustainable development.

Rapid urbanization, affluent life-styles, and increased demand for resources and services associated with economic growth are exerting increasing pressure on ecosystem resources.

South Asia shows the largest growth of the urban population, 2.66 percent per year among the sub-regions in Asia and the Pacific region². The urban population of South-Asia during 2011 was 32.6%. It has been estimated that by the middle of the twenty-first century, at least 50 percent South Asians will be residing in urban areas, which means that the urban population of this region will be over 1.2 billion¹.

Consumption and production of goods and services are vital components of economic development. This 'development' is directly proportional to the supply of natural resources. It leads to disruption of the environment, deteriorating the environmental quality. Region's economic development is coupled to unsustainable consumption patterns and waste production. Consumption behavior has changed and domestic consumption has started to increase alongside export industry growth. Intensive human activities and energy consumption in urban areas lead to the generation of increasing amounts of pollution and waste, with multiple adverse impacts on urban environments. Air pollution in the form of emissions of pollutants, like oxides of Sulphur and Nitrogen, Carbon dioxide, is also a by-product of economic development. Deterioration of air quality can be majorly observed in the cities like Karachi, Dhaka, New Delhi and many others¹.

Increasing resource use, with little improvement in the efficiency of such use, is causing widespread environmental degradation, loss of ecosystem services, generation of excessive waste and additional financial burdens. The region's material consumption has been increased sharply over the past four decades, but material productivity has not improved and is still very low. The main driver of accelerating domestic material consumption is the growth of consumption by the expanding middle class and, to a lesser extent, population growth². The material intensity of many countries in the region has increased significantly over the past four decades. In 2015, on average, 1.35 kilograms of materials were needed globally to produce USD1 of economic output but 3.75 kilograms were required in South Asia, almost three times the global average². Similarly, water intensity in South Asia region was almost double the world average in 2015.

Almost half the land area in South Asia has become degraded in one form or another and even the water resource base is seriously threatened due to overexploitation and pollution. With the biodiversity under severe threat, the resource base in the sub-region is largely degraded due to its low-lying geography, utter poverty and high population density. South Asia shelters approximately 15 percent of the known global flora and fauna. Unfortunately, the rich natural endowments are constantly under threat including the precious gene pool. More recently, traditional knowledge and ownership rights of indigenous communities are also being threatened by global trade and patenting agreements.

Land-use and related pressures have caused severe damage to local species richness. Ecosystems have been altered for millennia in South Asia, with a net increase in provisioning ecosystem services from man-made systems like farmland, aquaculture and plantations, which lead to decline the regulating and cultural ecosystem services; for example, intact forests that reduce erosion, or associated declines in biodiversity. (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). Loss of biodiversity will impact the ecosystem services, which will affect the benefits people receive directly as well as indirectly. These include: Provisioning services (food, clean water, timber, fibre); Genetic resources regulating services (the regulation of climate, floods, disease, water quality, and pollination); Cultural services (recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits) and Supporting services (soil formation, and nutrient cycling). Despite the high deforestation rates and declining forest cover, South Asia reports a higher proportion of forest area covered by forest management plans than other areas, which may help to halt the decline in future (FAO 2015).

Solid waste disposal has emerged as a major environmental problem, particularly in the urban areas in recent times. Rapid urbanization, growing affluence, changing consumption patterns, low level of awareness and poor civic sense are the key factors causing increased waste generation.

Pollutants, originating from both land and sea, are responsible for significant lethal and sub-lethal effects on marine life. Pollution impacts all trophic levels, from primary producers to apex predators, and thus interferes with the structure of marine communities and consequently ecosystem functioning. From the available data it could be inferred that the major sources of marine pollution including debris/litter are domestic/industrial wastes, ports and harbours including fishing harbours and landing centres, ship breaking yards, fish/food processing industries, tourist resorts/beaches, solid waste dumping, urban runoff, oil rigs, coastal aquaculture, fishing industry including fishing gear, shipping including garbage from ships, recreational and leisure use, marine mining, construction activities, etc⁶.

The effect of climate change and disasters impose economic losses that could offset development gains, increase poverty and inequity, and threaten water and food security. As pointed out in the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2007, South Asia is likely to be one of the regions that will be a major casualty of all the negative impacts of climate change. Climate change will have wide-ranging impact on environment as well as on socio-economic and related sectors, including water resources, agriculture and water security, human health, terrestrial ecosystems, biodiversity and coastal zones. Its effects include changes in rainfall patterns leading to severe water shortages and/or

flooding; melting of glaciers causing flooding and soil erosion; and rising temperatures affecting food security and increasing the rates of extinction for many habitats and species. Increasing sea level means a greater risk of storm surge, inundation and wave damage to the coastline. Low-lying coastal cities will be at the forefront of receiving most of the impact, being most vulnerable to the risks of sea level rise and storms. Elevated seawater level would also increase the risk of flooding due to rainstorms by reducing the coastal drainage.

Drylands and mountain regions are likely to be more vulnerable than others and ecosystem degradation is the largest in this region. Climate change is likely to cause additional inequities, as its impact is unevenly distributed over space and time and disproportionately affects the poor³.

One of the manifestations of the impact of climate change has emerged in the form of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) hazard. This hazard has shown an increasing trend over the past decades, especially in the Himalayan region. In Nepal and Bhutan, melting glaciers are filling glacial lakes beyond their capacities, contributing to 'GLOFs'. Of the 2,323 glacial lakes in Nepal, 20 have been found to be potentially dangerous with respect to GLOFs³.

Another common aspect of the region is widening gaps across the landscape of policies and legislation and their implementation. There has been increasing policy intervention to cope with existing issues but the policy gap is widening due to ineffective policy implementation, a poor scientific base for policy formulation, and rapidly emerging environmental issues. More and more policies have been drafted in recent years, yet the gap between the demand for policy and implementation is widening. Environmental issues are more pressing than ever and there has been a corresponding increase in multilateral environmental agreements, factors that have expanded the demand for effective policy intervention in the region.

Many environmental policies in South Asian nations have yet to realize their full potential. Due to resource constraints, a lack of institutional coordination, weak enforcement, entrenched attitudes, these policies have not been properly implemented. Governments and policy experts advocate integrated and comprehensive approaches to policy creation as well as science-based policy as fragmentation of policy and non-scientific policy design often leads to ineffective implementation. Balancing the complexity of environmental issues with political interests makes many environmental policies less effective than they should be². Some policies need to be made stronger, others are robust on paper but not effectively implemented, and still many others are contradictory. Transformative change would require a strengthening of policies, policy coherence and a corresponding bolstering of their implementation.

Policy assessment and evaluation is a crucial step to determine the effect of a policy intervention, but governments tend to pay more attention to policy formulation as assessment and evaluation are difficult and complex processes, which require comprehensive methods and experienced, trained personnel to perform properly. Sound scientific and actionable solutions are needed not only for emerging environmental issues but also to address shortcomings in existing environmental policies.

3. Contemporary Development at Global Level

It is equally important to look at the global challenges and contemporary measures agreed upon at international level when strategically thinking of addressing the regional challenges. In this 21st century, countries are continuously facing the four extra-ordinary and interrelated challenges of pervasive poverty, environmental degradation, climate change, and global strife accentuating the wave of international migration already apace due to economic insecurity in an increasingly unsustainable and inequitable world. In an exceptional demonstration of a global effort and consensus, in 2015, the world community reached two land mark agreements, namely, The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and The Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Together these agreements sought to address the mentioned challenges.

The historic agreement reached in Paris in December 2015 outlines a global commitment to keep warming to 2°C and to strive to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C. Under the agreement, every country will implement its own climate action plan that will be reviewed in every five years to ratchet up ambition levels. Wealthier countries also committed to deliver significant flows of money and technical support to help poor countries cope with curbing their greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change⁴.

The United Nations Resolution A/RES/70/1 of 25 September 2015, adapting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development describes it as ‘a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity’ also seeking ‘to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom’. The agenda contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. It provides that ‘all countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership’, are expected to implement⁵. The new Goals are unique in that they call for action by all countries, poor, rich and middle-income to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and addresses a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection. All the SDGs reflect the concern for environment, some more than others, but SDGs 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 are often labelled as environmental SDGs.

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) addresses the critical environmental challenges facing the world today. The Environment Assembly meets biennially to set priorities for global environmental policies and develop international environmental law. Through its resolutions and calls to action, the Assembly provides leadership and catalyses intergovernmental action on the environment. The fourth session of the UNEA held in March 2019 adopted a number of resolutions including Sustainable Nitrogen Management, Sustainable coral reefs management, Sustainable Management for Global Health of Mangrove, Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities, Innovations on biodiversity and land degradation, Addressing Single-use Plastic Products Pollution, Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste, Environmentally Sound Management of Waste, Marine Plastic Litter and Microplastics, Innovative Pathways to Achieve Sustainable Consumption and Production and its ministerial outcome document highlighted three main priorities for enabling Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) to become a reality around the world: better global environmental data and partnerships; sustainable and

efficient resource management; and robust engagement of civil society, citizens and academia in promoting innovative approaches.

Financial supports for environment protection, from various resources have been increasing since last decade. Different financial mechanisms are now available at the regional and global levels to support environment actions in developing countries. The Paris Agreement provides the latest guidance to countries and multilateral development banks on climate finance and the need for financial flows to developing countries to support climate action. Under this Agreement, developed countries are committed to mobilizing USD 100 billion/year by 2020 from public and private sources to support climate action in developing countries, with a new higher target to be agreed by 2025. Access to these financial resources, however, is still a challenge for the most of developing countries including South Asian countries. It requires more technical capacity.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁷ also recognized regional organizations as key actors in coordinating the implementation, follow-up, and review process of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This statement clearly highlights the importance of the roles that regional organizations like SACEP play in the achievement of the United Nations global goals by supporting its member states with the design of action plans for sustainable development, and monitoring the implementation of these commitments.

SACEP Strategy 2020 -2030

Based on the decisions made by SACEP Governing Council at its previous sittings, SACEP's own experiences of coordinating and assisting the region's environment protection efforts over the years as well as from its needs going forward, Post 2015 South Asia Development Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and Paris Agreement on Climate Change, SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030 is presented as follows. This is a long-term strategy spanning the period through 2020-2030. Thus, the vision, mission, goals, and objectives/outcomes have a long-term orientation.

4.1 Vision

Enhancement of prosperity and the quality of life of the people in the South Asia region and improvement in safeguarding the region's fauna and flora by reducing environmental risks and increasing the resilience of societies and the environment as a whole, while also responding to the challenges that are global.

4.2 Mission

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.

4.3 Guiding Principles (Values)

This SACEP Strategy was developed based on the following guiding principles:

- (a) Respect: We respect others. We value and respect the SACEP member countries, their governments and people; our partners, service providers and all those we meet in the course of our work, for all the good things they do and represent;
- (b) Equity and Equality: We treat all people equally. We strive for gender equity. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, gender, faith and age or any other consideration. Merit underlines all our decisions. We seek to be inclusive of any marginalized groups of the society we come across;
- (c) Enabling: We enable others including our member countries, institutions and individuals in pursuing their environmental responsibility and aspirations and, we help and mentor our staff, interns, volunteers, trainees and colleagues in their quest for excellence in their professional careers and personal lives;
- (d) Partnerships: We will pursue partnerships between SACEP and other international players, private sector, academia and Civil Society to work towards solutions to environmental challenges and opportunities.
- (e) Creativity: Creative is our need and feeds our spirits. We encourage creativity for effectively achieving our goals with limited resources and to incentivise mobilization of more resources for SACEP to grow its support for the member countries' work in environment;
- (f) Service Orientation: Service orientation remains fundamental to our success as a membership organization. We seek and support synergy with our members, and partners, remaining complementary and avoiding duplication of efforts;
- (g) Lead by Example: We will act as leaders by providing responsible and proactive service to our member countries;
- (h) Track Our Progress: We will monitor, evaluate and report on the Strategy implementation and follow-up actions;
- (i) Transparency: We believe in transparency both as a strategy and as a means of accountability. SACEP will also maintain the greatest possible transparency in its financial management. All our technical knowledge resources are open-source and accessible in public domain. We seek to always meet, and possibly exceed, the transparency and accountability, expected of us.

4.4 Goals

During the 2020–2030 period, SACEP will pursue the following strategic goals in the region. Together, these goals define the core priorities and focus of SACEP for the next ten years:

1. Enhanced resilience to the impacts of climate change and environmental shocks and disasters
2. Strengthened low-emission development, improve resource efficiency for transition to an inclusive green economy and fostered sustainable and healthy lifestyles
3. Ecosystem and biodiversity including coastal and marine are protected and natural resources management is improved
4. Improved waste management and air pollution control
5. Strengthened science-policy interface and access to knowledge and technology
6. Strengthened environmental governance for effective policy diffusion at multiple scales

4.5 Objectives and Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes for identified six Goals are listed below. Each goal specifies a number of objectives/key outcomes. While each goal is a key focus in its own right, all six are closely interrelated.

Goal 1: Enhanced resilience to the impacts of climate change and environmental shocks and disasters

Objectives/outcomes:

- 1.1 countries are more resilient to the adverse impacts of climate change.
- 1.2 Countries are assisted in preparation of national and regional adaptation strategies and the integration of adaptation aspects into sectoral policies, especially in the agriculture, water management, forestry, health, energy and transport sectors.
- 1.3 Capacity of SACEP member countries to implement national climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), obligations to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and disaster risk reduction are strengthened.
- 1.4 Multiple pressures on vulnerable ecosystems by implementing ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation to sustain biodiversity and the provision of ecosystem services that support livelihoods and sustainable development are minimised.
- 1.5 Countries are assisted to access climate finance to address the challenges of climate change
- 1.6 International process under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are supported by implementing the mandate of regional focal point for Article 6 of the UNFCCC and promoting climate awareness among decision makers.

Goal 2: Strengthened low-emission development, improve resource efficiency for transition to an inclusive green economy and fostered sustainable and healthy lifestyles

Objectives/outcomes:

- 2.1 Regional and national Sustainable Consumption and Production policies and initiatives are developed and implemented.
- 2.2 Application of life-cycle approaches to resource efficiency, energy, chemicals and waste including hazardous waste management is promoted.
- 2.3 Sustainable Consumption and Production approaches are integrated into sectoral policies of SACEP member countries.
- 2.4 Best practices, technological advances and innovations are encouraged in sectors such as energy, transport, manufacturing, health, agriculture, biodiversity, forestry and waste management.
- 2.5 Multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms that contribute to transparent deliberative processes for generating and sharing knowledge on sustainable infrastructure, to ensure that accurate and relevant information is publicly available and reaches key stakeholders at all levels are established and supported.

Goal 3: Ecosystem and biodiversity are protected and natural resources management is improved

Objectives/outcomes:

- 3.1 Capacity at local, national and regional level is strengthened to enable them to implement legislation on the protection of biodiversity and its integration into planning and economic decision making.
- 3.2 Marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are managed in an integrated manner that enables them to maintain and restore biodiversity, ecosystems' long-term functioning and supply of ecosystem goods and services.
- 3.3 Support provided for the designation, protection and management of areas of natural value. Special attention given to activities that support payments for ecosystem services for the conservation of natural resources as part of a larger commitment to preserving and enhancing our natural capital as a necessary condition for smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive growth.
- 3.4 Socioeconomic and ecological impacts of invasive species are reduced significantly.
- 3.5 Governments and public at large in South Asia are aware of the state of the art as to the magnitude of these resources and the trends in their conservation or degradation;
- 3.6 Private Sector is encouraged to invest in conservation activities.
- 3.7 Decade of Ecosystem Restoration (2020 – 2030) as decided by the CoP 14 of the Convention on Biological Diversity will be given due consideration and ecosystem based approach is applied for conservation of all ecosystems including mountain ecosystems.

Goal 4: Improved waste management and air pollution control

Objectives/outcomes:

- 4.1 Promoted integrated waste management across the region including cleaner production, the 3Rs – (reduce, reuse, recycle), zero waste, and the circular economy.
- 4.2 Strengthened capacity at national, and regional levels for waste management including for chemicals, hazardous wastes, plastics and waste water.
- 4.3 Emissions sources identified, policies, legal, regulatory, fiscal and institutional frameworks and mechanisms for the reduction of air pollution developed, institutional capacity built for improved air quality, and air quality assessments done by countries.
- 4.4 Exchange of ideas, experiences, research and information on air quality is facilitated and investment in national and regional air quality monitoring networks, assessment systems, institutional capacity and information disclosure to the wider public is strengthened in order to address gaps in capacity, data, information and awareness.
- 4.5 South Asia regional roadmap for implementing the Global Waste Management Goals towards addressing SDGs is developed and implemented.
- 4.6 A regional clean air Action Plan/Roadmap is developed and implemented
- 4.7 Reduced number of deaths due to human exposure to outdoor air pollution levels above the WHO Air Quality Guideline values;
- 4.8 Reduced levels of ambient particulate matter (PM 10 and PM 2.5);
- 4.9 Reduced ambient air levels of NOx and SOx;
- 4.10 Increased percentage of urban solid waste regularly collected and well managed (disaggregated by type of waste);
- 4.11 Increased national waste recycling rates in tonnes of material recycled.
- 4.12 High-quality data and assessments publicly made available
- 4.13 Capacity building for managing and mitigating indoor air pollution and industrial waste water are addressed.

Goal 5: Strengthened science-policy interface and access to knowledge and technology

Objectives/outcomes:

- 5.1 Strengthened synergies between science, policy, and traditional and local knowledge to guide decision making.
- 5.2 Strengthened environmental data collection, monitoring, and analysis and reporting on results, nationally and regionally.
- 5.3 Dialogue between researchers and policy makers is facilitated and both parties are encouraged to work hand in hand for science-based decision making in the region.
- 5.4 South – south cooperation and north – south cooperation in technological transfer for better conservation practices are promoted.
- 5.5 A training center is established at SACEP to envisage the capacity development activities.

Goal 6: Strengthened environmental governance for effective policy diffusion at multiple scales

Objectives/outcomes:

- 6.1 Environmental law reform and increased institutional capacities through targeted legal assistance, workshops and regional exchanges of experience.
- 6.2 Improved national capacity for good environmental governance supported by technical assistance for the development of policies and legislations.
- 6.3 Participatory governance put into practice in the field of environment and sustainable development by supporting public access to information, public participation in decision making and access to justice.
- 6.4 Best practices in participatory governance and public participation identified, exchanged and integrated into the water, waste, energy, transport, nature protection, climate change, agriculture, and sustainable consumption and production sectors.

4.6 Coastal and Marine Environment

Coastal and Marine Environment is a cross-cutting theme for SACEP. Coastal and marine environment is considered as one of the most important area for South Asian countries as major portion of its population are directly and indirectly depending for their livelihood on it. In addition to food production, tourism, recreation, ports and harbours as well as coastal protection, comprise other important goods and services obtained from these ecosystems and they, therefore, have great economic, social and cultural importance to individual countries and to the region as a whole. Coastal ecosystems are highly productive and thus highly valuable to people. Out of eight, five member countries of SACEP are maritime countries and they are members of South Asian Seas Programme which is one of the 18 Regional Seas Programmes of UN Environment.

The South Asian Seas Region is comprised of the coastal and marine waters of Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and is physically divided by the Indian subcontinent into three distinctive areas: two large marine ecosystems – the Arabian Sea in the west and the Bay of Bengal in the east; and a large area of the open Indian Ocean to the south of India, Sri Lanka and Maldives. The region hosts an extensive system of river deltas and diverse marine and coastal habitats, encompassing mangroves, sea grass beds and coral reefs that

support some of the richest concentrations of biodiversity in the world. Sustaining coastal systems in the face of a changing climate and increasing human demands is an ongoing challenge. Conservation and restoration efforts require sound science for effective design, implementation and assessment of success.

Considering its importance, SACEP has a major responsibility to support its members to protect and manage the coastal and marine environment and related ecosystems of the region in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner and therefore the issues related to coastal and marine environment is dealt under the South Asian Seas Programme.

The South Asian Seas Programme Action Plan was adopted on 24th March 1995 at the Meeting of Plenipotentiaries and today enjoys the unqualified support of the region's five countries (Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka). South Asian Seas Programme is under the umbrella of SACEP.

The South Asian Seas Action Plan identified the areas where priority activities need to be developed for implementation. These priority activities are in the following four specific areas:

- Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)
- Protection of Marine Environment from Land based activities
- Human Resources Development through Regional Centers of Excellences
- Development of national and regional oil and chemical spill contingency plans

SACEP, under the South Asian Seas programme assists member countries to address the multiple issues on coastal and marine environment which has direct and indirect impacts on the sustainability and biodiversity.

4.7 Implementation

Achieving our goals requires strengthening the approaches, in which we exercise our national and regional responsibilities. These include the following:

4.7.1 Resourcing SACEP's Work

The importance of access to more resources for SACEP, as alluded to before, can't be over emphasized. Other than the continued support of the member countries to maintain the Secretariat, nothing will determine the future success of SACEP more than its access to resources. Financial sustainability will be maintained through diversified funding via multilateral and bilateral donor relationships, by further mobilising and increasing financial resources from the competitive market, by strengthening partnerships, as well as exploring possibilities for strengthening the trust fund. The idea is for SACEP to strive not only to secure more funds for its work but also enhance the member countries possibilities to better harness the opportunities of donor finance and investments.

The strategy in this regard is:

- (a) Seeking enhancement in member's contributions that has remained modest for a long time;
- (b) encourage member countries to contribute financially and technically on voluntary basis for project activities
- (c) Better intelligence and eventually greater ability to access donor aid;

- (d) identifying business opportunities and attracting private sector participation and support for SACEP's work;
- (e) capitalizing on the market for SACEP's unique and value-added services, and working to extend this market in the future;
- (f) taking the necessary steps to include SACEP in the list of international organisations eligible for Official Development Assistance;
- (g) conducting joint programming and fundraising within established partnerships; and
- (h) exploring the possibilities for strengthening the trust fund.

The greater challenge SACEP faces in expanding its project activities is the lack of adequate technical personnel working at the Secretariat due to the financial constraints. SACEP will request member states to consider secondment of officers to the Secretariat on voluntary basis in which all emoluments of the officer to be borne by the respective member state.

In order to optimise the use of the available financial resources, SACEP will monitor all expenses and, in particular, make every effort to reduce overhead costs. SACEP will also maintain the greatest possible transparency in its financial management and in the use of obtained funds in order to underline the consistency of results with donors' expectations.

4.7.2 Engaging Private Sector

Mobilizing private sector in support of environment is a whole discipline of its own but it suffices to mention here that businesses are likely to be more forthcoming when there is an opportunity to make business in an environment of mutual trust and where their contribution will additionally be rewarded by public recognition. It is therefore need for better coordination and coherence between efforts to support enabling environments and instruments to leverage private finance, the need for a robust and better communicated theory of change for engaging the private sector, and the importance of building on the comparative advantages of development co-operation agencies and development finance institutions especially considering the need for the right skills and competencies to engage the private sector.

Implicit here is also the notion of partnerships that are important for both harnessing mutual strengths and distribute risks, especially when undertaking innovative projects.

4.7.3 Partnerships

Partnership is in the organizational design (organizational DNA) of SACEP given it is a membership organization and its primary mandate is to coordinate, support and promote collaboration among its member countries. SACEP also can and be more strategic in employing partnership as a tool beyond the notion of partnership with members or in the context of project activities it undertakes.

This would entail understanding and pursuing partnerships in a longer-term perspective. Sustained and result-orient engagement with donors can potentially lead to recurring core and project support as exemplified by the relationship between SACEP and UNEP. In addition, partnerships entail pooling resources, human, fiscal and institutional, that enables doing more than would be otherwise possible. Equally important, the notion of partnership is attractive to potential donors. The partners' contribution in a collaborative effort can be used

as collateral to leverage additional support. With some investment already on the table, additional funding is easier to attract and more likely to be forth coming.

Establishing partnership with renowned Universities of member countries and other centers of excellence would strengthen the capability of SACEP in implementing its work programme. For SACEP, this means to think of partnerships in all it seeks to do. Partnerships are demanding to create and sustain in terms of time and effort but, when successful, they pay dividends.

4.8 Governance

The SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030 will be governed and monitored through Governing Council of SACEP and periodically through the Consultative Committee of SACEP.

The Governing Council consists of the Ministers for Environment from the SACEP's member countries and convenes every two years. Its extraordinary meeting would be invited when necessary. As the principal review and deliberative body of SACEP, the Governing Council determines the organizations policies and programme. The Governing Council endeavours, at all times, to reach agreement by consensus.

The Consultative Committee consists of representatives of diplomatic missions of member countries residing in Colombo and meets once in every three months. It is responsible for facilitating implementation of policies, strategies and programmes determined by the Governing Council.

SACEP Secretariat consists of Director General, professional and administrative staff will implement the strategy with the guidance of the Governing Council, Consultative Committee and National Focal Points.

4.9 Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring of SACEP's Strategy 2020 - 2030 implementation will be achieved through governance mechanism. This Strategy will be implemented through annual work plans approved by the Governing Council. The goals, objectives/outcomes and indicators approved in the work plans are translated into specific goals and targets for each programme areas of staff members. Progress achieved towards the results outlined above will be measured through a set of key performance indicators. These are based on expected project outputs. Reporting will be made to the Governing Council and the Consultative Committee periodically. Reporting period will vary throughout the ten-year cycle of the plan as Governing Council and Consultative Committee meetings schedules are alternating to accommodate the participation of all countries at Ministerial level.

4.10 Risk Analysis

Political support of member countries at its highest level is key to enabling the implementation of SACEP activities. Lack of continued common regional political will is a

significant risk. SACEP will mitigate this risk through regular bilateral/ multilateral discussions with members and as well as with donors and other partners.

Lack of necessary funding and delaying of funding also pose a significant risk. As stated under the 'Resourcing SACEP's Work', this risk will be mitigated by diversified funding via multilateral and bilateral donor relationships, by further mobilising and increasing financial resources from the competitive market, by strengthening partnerships, as well as exploring possibilities for strengthening the trust fund.

1. SACEP 2014. Post 2015 South Asia Development Agenda. South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
2. UNEP 2016. GEO-6 Regional Assessment for Asia and the Pacific. United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi, Kenya
3. Caulker U, Bhadwal S (2007) South Asian regional study on climate change impacts and adaptation: implications for human development. Human Development Report Office, Occasional Paper. United Nations Development Programme
4. World Economic Forum 2016. What are the 10 biggest global challenges?. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/what-are-the-10-biggest-global-challenges/>
5. United Nations, 2015. Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. United Nations
6. Draft report of Regional Marine Litter Action Plan for South Asian Seas Region

**DECISIONS OF 14GC-SACEP HELD ON 26 - 28 MAR 2018
STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2019**

Decision No	Description	Action to be taken	Status as at 30 Sep 2019
9	The meeting was of the view that the inclusion to the Progress Report referred to as Agenda Item No 6.1 with reference to sub heading 6.1.18 on the 'Initial thoughts toward SACEP's Strategy 2016 – 2030' would not be discussed at this meeting given the limited time for the National Focal Points to review the document. In response to a query raised by Government of Afghanistan, the Secretariat informed the 14GC-SACEP that, a review of SACEP was done by a panel of three eminent professionals of South Asia and that the 3rd Special Session of the Governing Council approved the recommendations of the Review Panel as SACEP's Strategy and Work Programme, in November 2003 with funding support of US\$ 100,000/- (approx) from UNEP.	The 14GC-SACEP informed the Secretariat to circulate the updated draft of the document as per the prevailing procedure followed, to all Member States for comments and consent prior to the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP for consideration of the proposal.	SACEP Secretariat reviewed and updated the document and circulated among the member countries as 'Draft SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030' for comments and suggestions. All comments received upto 30 September 2019 were incorporated GC 15.SACEP / NFP Agenda Item 4.3
9.1.2	The 14GC-SACEP approved the increase of the Salary of the Director General, by US \$ 500/- amounting to a total monthly salary of US \$ 5,000/- with immediate effect.		Implemented
9.2.1	Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition (BFN) project in South Asia beyond 2018.	The 14GC-SACEP agreed in principle to participate in BFN project and recommend SACEP Secretariat to prepare a complete project proposal including possible funding mechanisms on promoting BFN approach in South Asian countries beyond 2018.	Initial discussions took place among SACEP, Bioversity International and UN Environment on ways and means to develop a regional project proposal. A delegation of UN Environment and Bioversity International visited SACEP on 10 Oct 2018 and had further discussions on same. Draft Concept Note is prepared and ready for circulation among Member States for comments

**DECISIONS OF 14GC-SACEP HELD ON 26 - 28 MAR 2018
STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2019**

Decision No	Description	Action to be taken	Status as at 30 Sep 2019
9.2.2	Strengthening Sustainable Consumption and Production in South Asia 1. Convene the South Asia Forum on SCP on regular intervals as stipulated in the approved modalities. 2. Sub-regional policy dialogue on Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) to exchange experiences to date, necessary training and industry roundtable. 3. Sustainable buildings policy dialogue, training and industry roundtable. 4. Sustainable Consumption Week in South Asia	Members of the 14GC-SACEP recommended to invite UNEP to be a partner with SACEP and assist in accessing financial and technical resources in implementing these activities and also to facilitate dialogues with other bilateral and multilateral donors to support these important activities.	<p>SCP Forum is now linked to South Asia Forum on Environment</p> <p>South Asia Training and Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Public Procurement was successfully concluded on 17 - 18 September 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand with the participation of all SACEP member countries.</p> <p>SACEP initiated discussions with UN Environment and SWITCH-Asia Facility to hold the Sustainable Consumption Week in South Asia this year.</p> <p>The proposed dates were not possible and discussions are ongoing to hold the Forum in First Quarter of 2020</p> <p>GC 15.SACEP / NFP Agenda Item 5.2.2</p>
9.2.3	Waste Management	The 14GC-SACEP approved the proposal made by the Secretariat to secure funds from UNCRD under the International Partnership for Expanding Waste Management Services of Local Authorities (IPLA) /3R initiative and other potential donors to support the capacity development for solid waste management in South Asian countries.	<p>Bilateral Meetings were held with UNEP ROAP, UNESCO & ADB in this regard.</p> <p>SACEP with IGES Centre collaborating with UNEP on Environmental Technologies (CCET) has developed a Status Report on Waste Management in South Asia and an agreeable roadmap to improve the waste management towards achieving SDG's and NDC's commitments made by SACEP member countries.</p> <p>In this regard 3 workshops were scheduled in year 2019.</p> <p>First Workshop was held in Nepal on 25 - 26 March 2019</p> <p>Second Workshop was held from 15 - 17 July 2019 in Bangladesh</p> <p>Third Workshop was held in Sri Lanka on 16 - 17 September 2019 and the Draft Road Map is submitted to 15GC-SACEP for approval.</p> <p>GC 15.SACEP / NFP Agenda Item 5.2.6</p>

**DECISIONS OF 14GC-SACEP HELD ON 26 - 28 MAR 2018
STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2019**

Decision No	Description	Action to be taken	Status as at 30 Sep 2019
9.2.4	Environmental Data and Information Management System for South Asia	The 14GC-SACEP approved that SACEP may work with the member countries in exploring the possibility of developing environment data and information management system for South Asia on the basis of latest developments and availability of such information.	Email server of SACEP was migrated to Google G-suite for uninterrupted performance. Redesigned the website using updated technology. SACEP now maintains active Social Media pages and News, Events and Articles are regularly updated
9.2.5	Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its likely Trans-boundary Effects for South Asia.	The members of the 14GC-SACEP decided to further review at the national level regarding the role of SACEP in the implementation of the Male' Declaration.	SACEP has sent Letters to the Member States in this regard. Intergovernmental Meeting of Malé Declaration had not been held since year 2016 GC 15.SACEP / NFP Agenda Item 5.2.8
9.2.6	Air Quality	14GC-SACEP emphasised the need to facilitate a common platform for all member countries to get together to discuss, share experiences and develop a common strategy to overcome the prevailing air pollution in the South Asian region and requested SACEP Secretariat to convene a meeting of the member countries, UNEP and other stakeholders soon in this regard.	SACEP has developed a Concept Note and sent to the Member States. Received positive comments from UNESCAP for technical support, SACEP also had initial discussions with ADB regarding funding opportunities. GC 15.SACEP / NFP Agenda Item 5.2.9
9.2.7	Workshop on Capacity building of public sector, private sector and civil society stakeholder in SACEP member countries for Sustainable Energy and Road Transport policy, planning and implementation.	SACEP Secretariat to implement the activity as soon as the funds are available.	SACEP has developed a Concept Note for consideration of the Member States and donor agencies
9.2.8	Post Rio +20 challenges related to environment sustainability	Members recommended that the work of SACEP should also focus on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.	At the UNFCCC-Cop24 held in Poland, SACEP successfully concluded a Side Event on 'Integrating adaptation and the SDGs - The potential of multi level governance'.

**DECISIONS OF 14GC-SACEP HELD ON 26 - 28 MAR 2018
STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2019**

Decision No	Description	Action to be taken	Status as at 30 Sep 2019
	9.2.8contd/-		This Side Event was attended by high level officials of the SACEP member states and provided fruitful discussions on the theme.
9.2.9	<p>Adaptation to Climate Change</p> <p>14GC-SACEP approved the implementation of the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop on Capacity Building, Awareness and Database Development on Adaptation to Climate Change in South Asia • Regional Knowledge Exchange Programme on Measurement Reporting and Verification of Nationally Determined Contributions to Adaptation • Regional training programme on Capacity Development for Adaptation to Climate Change through Climate-sensitive flood management in South Asia 		<p>In progress. SACEP had successful discussions with ADB to conduct joint activities in South Asia under Adaptation to Climate Change. In this regard SACEP and ADB jointly organized a Regional Workshop on 26 - 27 September 2019 to assess the current status of implementing NDC's in South Asia.</p> <p>GC 15.SACEP / NFP Agenda Item 5.2.12</p>
9.2.10 (i)	<p>Proposal for SACEP to be a GEF Project Agency</p> <p>Given the current status of the GEF Agencies accreditation process, the 14GC-SACEP agreed that the proposal under this agenda item should be discontinued.</p>		Action not required
9.2.10 (ii)	<p>Accreditation to other Global Funding Mechanisms</p> <p>14GC-SACEP noted that SACEP should explore other possibilities of accreditation to other global funding mechanisms such as Green Climate Fund (GCF) with the support of the member countries.</p>		<p>Requested for letters of support from Member States for SACEP's accreditation to GCF and received same from Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Also for Adaptation Fund accreditation, SACEP received a letter of support from Afghanistan.</p> <p>SACEP is in the process of becoming the delivery partner for Government of Sri Lanka GCF Readiness Support</p>

**DECISIONS OF 14GC-SACEP HELD ON 26 - 28 MAR 2018
STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2019**

Decision No	Description	Action to be taken	Status as at 30 Sep 2019
9.2.11	Regional Cooperation for the Conservation and Wise-use of Internationally Important Wetlands in South Asia	14GC-SACEP agreed as recommended by the 13GC-SACEP.	MoU with Ramsar Secretariat yet to be signed 53 rd Ramsar Standing Committee Meeting suggested revision of the Draft MoU as it contained legalistic language. As Ramsar is in the process of reviewing all its MoUs, SACEP's Draft MoU will also be included into that process
9.2.12	Assistance for Developing Bio-diversity Clearing House Mechanisms	Members appreciated the SACEP Secretariat's effort in assisting the development of the Bio-diversity Clearing House Mechanism in Sri Lanka and requested to extend the services to other member states when requested.	The technical assistance is available for any member country in need. Government of Sri Lanka received the Silver Award at the CoP14 of the CBD held in Egypt in Nov 2018 for the National CHM of Sri Lanka developed by SACEP.
9.2.13	South Asian Seas Programme (SASP)		Will be reported under 6IMM-SASP
9.3.3 (i)	increase of Country Contribution of SACEP 13GC-SACEP agreed in principle, a 10% increase of the Country Contributions. The SACEP Secretariat informed the 14GC-SACEP that accordingly, Government of Bangladesh and the Government of Sri Lanka agreed to the 10% increase and have been contributing since year 2014.	However, the Secretariat has not yet received the concurrence to the increase from the other Member States.	Bangladesh and Sri Lanka is contributing the increased contribution to SACEP & for SASP, India and Sri Lanka have increased the Annual Contributions.
9.3.3 (ii)	Separate and Distinctive office for the SACEP Secretariat and official residence for the Director General	14GC-SACEP noted with appreciation the awarding of the land of 57 perches situated at D. M. Colombage Mawatha, Colombo 06 to establish the SACEP Secretariat and the Residence of the Director General by Government of Sri Lanka, the host of the organization.	In Progress

**DECISIONS OF 14GC-SACEP HELD ON 26 - 28 MAR 2018
STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2019**

Decision No	Description	Action to be taken	Status as at 30 Sep 2019
	9.3.3 (ii) Contd/-	<p>The Member States of the 14GC-SACEP agreed in principle to a 'One-time voluntary contribution' for the construction of the building of the SACEP Secretariat to support the effort made by Government of Sri Lanka.</p> <p>Government of India informed the 14GC-SACEP the willingness to contribute for construction of one floor with recognition to the member state and for SACEP Secretariat to send a formal request in this regard. SACEP will use its savings for the initial cost for the architectural design in support to the contributions of the host country and its member states</p>	<p>Pakistan and Afghanistan has contributed for the voluntary contribution of the proposed building</p> <p>Preliminary Planning Clearance was received on 10 April 2019 with a restriction of utilization of the Ground.</p> <p>An appeal to relax the restriction was submitted on 15 May 2019 and the appeal of SACEP has been honoured and granted approval on 19 September 2019 by the Urban Development Authority.</p> <p>GC 15.SACEP / NFP Agenda Item 4.2</p>
11	Resolution on Sustainable Nitrogen Management for UNEA-4.	14GC-SACEP requested SACEP Secretariat to redraft the Resolution according to the theme of the UNEA-4 and with reference to other resolutions already adopted at previous UNEA. The Secretariat was informed to coordinate with the Member States in submitting the amended resolution to the UNEA-4.	<p>As requested by SACEP the Member States supported the Draft Resolution proposed by the Secretariat and Government of India took the lead role in submission of the resolution to UN Environment. The Resolution on Sustainable Nitrogen Management was adopted at UNEA-4 held in Kenya, Nairobi in March 2019</p> <p>SACEP is a partner of 'South Asian Nitrogen Hub'. The Hub is funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under its Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF).</p>

**DECISIONS OF 14GC-SACEP HELD ON 26 - 28 MAR 2018
STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2019**

Decision No	Description	Action to be taken	Status as at 30 Sep 2019
11	Contd/-		<p>The South Asian Nitrogen Hub Kick-off Meeting was held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 25-27 Feb 2019</p> <p>A series of Workshops have been held in the South Asian Region under the SANH</p> <p>GC 15.SACEP / NFP Agenda Item 5.2.10</p>
12.1	<p>Secondment of an officer from each SACEP Member Country to be based at SACEP on a Voluntary Basis</p> <p>SACEP requested Member States to consider secondment of officers to the Secretariat with emoluments of the officer to be borne by the respective Member State.</p>	<p>Members of the 14GC-SACEP noted the need to further consult their respective government on the matter.</p>	<p>Criteria and ToR developed by SACEP and sent to the member states for consideration</p>

PROGRESS REPORT

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) March 2018 – 30 September 2019

1 Bio-Diversity

1.1 Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition (BFN) project in South Asia beyond 2018.

Based on the working paper submitted by the Secretariat, the 14th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP adopted a decision and agreed in principle to participate in BFN project and recommended SACEP Secretariat to prepare a complete project proposal including possible funding mechanisms on promoting BFN approach in South Asian countries beyond 2018.

SACEP made an effort to consult various possible partners to develop a joint project proposal. An initial discussion in this regard had been taken place among SACEP, Bioversity International, Italy and UN Environment on ways and means to develop a regional project proposal. A delegation of UN Environment and Bioversity International visited SACEP on 10 Oct 2018 and had discussions on the subject matter. After a series of discussion, a Draft Project Concept Note has been developed and ready for circulation among the member countries of SACEP for comments.

1.2 The North East Indian Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (NEIOBI)

SACEP will be an implementing partner for the proposed NE Indian Ocean Biodiversity Initiative project. The project was developed by the Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (GOBI).

The NE Indian Ocean, as represented by the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) is one of the most unique and at-risk ecological systems in the world (Annex 4, CBD/EBSA/WS/2015/1/4). The ocean islands in this region are home to a wealth of marine biodiversity and ecosystems including coral reefs, mangroves, resident and migratory marine turtles, elasmobranchs, marine mammals, and seabirds. These islands are particularly vulnerable to climate change and are increasingly impacted by human activities such as overfishing, coastal development and tourism, and exacerbated by high population density, low income and low development indicators in communities that rely on ocean ecosystem services for sustainable livelihoods. Marine conservation and sustainable use efforts are hampered by lack of data and knowledge as well as limited local/regional capacity to address those gaps.

This project seeks to provide the technical support, capacity development and know-how to assist three NE Indian Ocean countries: Maldives, Sri Lanka and India (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) - all of which are island states or have significant ocean island territory - to strengthen stewardship of marine areas of biological or ecological significance, including addressing knowledge gaps, and taking the appropriate steps towards sustainable management of their marine resources. In doing so, it will assist those

countries to achieve their Aichi targets (and post-2020 actions) and NBSAP commitments, and make tangible contributions to the SDGs.

The initial project concept has already been submitted to donor for consideration. If succeeded, detailed project proposal needs to be developed.

1.3 Capacity Building on Indicators as a part of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) updating for South Asia and Development of Clearing House Mechanism (CHM)

As per reported to the GC14, South Asia regional biodiversity CHM was developed with the financial assistance from the BoBLME project and was launched in August 2014. Under this project, SACEP was able to establish its own web and mail servers which enabled SACEP to provide free hosting services for National CHMs of the member countries as per the decision adopted by the GC.

As per the Governing Council decision, on request of the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment, Government of Sri Lanka which is the National Focal Point of SACEP, assistance was offered to develop their National CHM. Government of Sri Lanka received a Silver Award at the CoP14 of the CBD held in Egypt in November 2018 for their National CHM developed by SACEP.

The 14th Meeting of the Governing Council appreciated the SACEP Secretariat's effort in assisting in developing the Bio-diversity Clearing House Mechanism for Sri Lanka and requested to extend the services to other Member States on request. The Secretariat can avail the technical assistance for any member country if requested in future.

1.4 Healthy Landscapes: Managing Agricultural Landscapes in Socio-ecologically Sensitive Areas to Promote Food Security, Well-being and Ecosystem Health in Sri Lanka.

SACEP is participating in this project as a key implementing partner with two objectives:

- 1) gain experience in implementing GEF project so that SACEP will be able to manage its own GEF funded projects in future,
- 2) To make use of the huge potential for replication of the findings of this project in rest of our member countries.

This Healthy Landscapes project will seek to showcase management strategies for strengthening the restoration and sustainable management of selected Village Tank Cascade Systems (VTCS) in cascade landscapes for the enhanced provision of ecosystem services and protection of biodiversity. The project plans to develop and validate a model VTCS management system that can be used for scaling up to other cascade landscapes. The project will deliver global environmental and socio-economic benefits through a package of measures – practices, knowledge management and awareness – that ensure future land use and production sector practices and decisions do not compromise biodiversity and ecosystem functions and recognize the importance of biodiversity, agriculture and health linkages. Measures will include scaling up methods and tools to mobilize agro-biodiversity at the cascade, farm and community level, knowledge management partnerships, capacity building, cross sectoral policies and planning and enhanced awareness and understanding of biodiversity, agriculture and health linkages so as to better manage future risks and safeguard ecosystem functioning while ensuring

that social costs, including health impacts, associated with new measures and strategies do not outweigh potential benefits.

1.5 Regional Cooperation for the Conservation and Wise-use of Internationally Important Wetlands in South Asia

The 13th Meeting of the Governing Council adopted a decision that SACEP Secretariat may sign an MOU with Ramsar Convention for capacity building. The Secretariat in its progress report to the 14GC.SACEP stated that the negotiations were underway to finalize the proposed MoU. The 14GC.SACEP took forward the decision of 13GC.SACEP and requested the Secretariat to finalize the MoU.

Following the GC decision, SACEP communicated with the Ramsar Secretariat and made arrangement for submission of the Draft MoU to the Ramsar Standing Committee. Fifty third Meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee suggested revision of the Draft MoU as it contained legalistic language. Also, it recommended, as Ramsar is in the process of reviewing all its existing MoUs with other partners, SACEP's Draft MoU will also be included into that process. Unfortunately, due to the sudden demise of the official of Ramsar who coordinated the subject matter with SACEP, the link of communication was broken and now SACEP has been able to establish a new line of communication with Ramsar Secretariat and the matter is under consideration.

2. Strengthening Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) in South Asia

The Governing Council at its 13th Meeting adopted a decision to promote SCP within policymaking mechanisms of South Asian countries.

Further, the 14GC-SACEP adopted the second decision on SCP by recommending SACEP Secretariat to take necessary steps to implement following activities apart from other ongoing and new SCP activities:

1. Convene the South Asia Forum on SCP on regular intervals as stipulated in the approved modalities.
2. Sub-regional policy dialogue on Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) to exchange experiences to date, necessary training and industry roundtable.
3. Sustainable buildings policy dialogue, training and industry roundtable.
4. Sustainable Consumption Week in South Asia.

Members of the 14GC-SACEP recommended to invite UNEP to be a partner with SACEP and assist in accessing financial and technical resources in implementing these activities and also to facilitate dialogues with other bilateral and multilateral donors to support these important activities.

2.1 South Asia Training and Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Public Procurement, 17 - 18 September 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand

As a follow-up to the above decision, South Asia Training and Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) was organized in Bangkok, Thailand, on 17-18

September 2018 to advance the Sustainable Public Procurement in the region. The training provided participants with expert knowledge and tools to initiate and progress on Sustainable Public Procurement policies in their countries. In particular, it aimed to create a pipeline for technical and financial support to countries to initiate or advance their progress on SPP, and agreed on additional sub-regional cooperation activities and work on declaration.

The workshop was attended by high-level officials from both Environment and Finance Ministries of South Asia who design and implement the Sustainable Public Procurement policies in their countries or having a strong interest to embark on the path to Sustainable Public Procurement.

Further attempts were made to organize a Sustainable Consumption Week in South Asia in partnership with SWITCH-Asia SCP Facility and the time frame proposed did not feasible to have it in 2019. The discussion continues to organize it in coming years.

2.2 South Asia Forum on Environment

South Asia Forum on SCP was established with the financial support of SWITCH-Asia I, SWITCH-Asia Regional Policy Support Component of UNEP. SACEP Secretariat is currently facing a challenge in mobilizing resources to convene the South Asia Forum on SCP due to the fact that the funding of SWITCH-Asia is not available. Also, 14GC.SACEP Decision No. 9.2.6 adopted on Air Pollution, in which the Secretariat was requested to convene a Regional Forum on it. The matter was discussed at length, at the Secretariat level and as well as with other partners and decided to have a High-Level Environment Forum for South Asia which will have a wider scope, instead of having separate forums on different subjects.

The objective of the South Asia Forum on the Environment is to assess the priority environment challenges and address solutions, including policy, technology, finance and capacity building, towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and other Global Environmental Agreements. The outcome of the Forum will contribute to SACEP's Governing Council, UNEP's Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific and United Nations Environment Assembly, and other regional and global processes.

The Secretariat is planning to organize the First Meeting of the South Asia Forum on Environment in the First Quarter of Year 2020 and the venue is yet to be decided.

3. Waste Management

Since 2005, as recommended by the 9th Meeting of the Governing Council (GC) of SACEP, Waste Management has been one of the priority areas of SACEP's work plan and the secretariat has been carrying out various activities during the period.

Since 2018, SACEP together with the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies Collaborating with UNEP on Environmental Technologies IGES - CCET is interacting with the governments of South Asian countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) towards the development of a Report on the current state of

waste management in the South Asian Region, as well as a Sub-Regional Roadmap which would communicate the regional voice, enhance regional cooperation and guide the implementation towards above goals, building on the preceding discussions and the priority action areas identified by UNEP's Global Waste Management Outlook (GWMO) and Hanoi 3R Declaration.

Programme activates under the above collaboration

3.1 First Sub-Regional workshop on Preparation of status Report and sub-regional Roadmap for Implementing the Global Waste Management Goals toward Addressing SDGs in South Asia, 25 – 26 March 2019 in Kathmandu, Nepal

As a part of sub-regional co-operation activities, SACEP in collaboration with CCET, Government of Nepal, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), the United Nations Environmental Programme (UN Environment) – International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC) and the Ministry of Environment, Japan (MOEJ) organized a policy dialogue on implementing the Global Waste Management Goals towards Addressing SDGs and Paris Agreement in South Asia.

The event aimed to:

- Share proposed plans and build consensus among member countries towards development of the Status Report on waste management in South Asia and a Sub-Regional Roadmap as an implementing and monitoring mechanism for delivering on global waste management goals and related SDGs as well as NDCs in the sub-region.
- Review of current status of SWM in the member countries and build consensus on baseline data as the basis for the Status Report. Secure support for acquiring additional data if necessary, for baseline analysis.
- Discuss the global waste management goals and 3R targets, identify priority areas, set measurable targets, and develop appropriate actions and interventions for the sub-regional roadmap.
- These discussions will further feed into the follow-up dialogues in future to elaborate potential financing options, technical innovations, partnership modalities and requisite monitoring and reporting mechanisms for its continued work in South Asia.

3.2 Second Sub-Regional workshop on Preparation of status Report and sub-regional Roadmap for Implementing the Global Waste Management Goals toward Addressing SDGs in South Asia, 15-17 July 2019, Dhaka, Bangladesh

As a follow-up of the first workshop, a draft Status Report and the outline of the sub-regional roadmap have been developed and SACEP in collaboration with CCET, Government of Bangladesh, the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) – International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC) and the Ministry of Environment, Japan (MOEJ) conducted the Second sub-regional workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh with an aims to discuss more details on selected thematic subject areas that are identified at the first workshop and identify some practical proposals to consider in improving the situation in the sub-region by 2030.

3.3 Third Sub regional Workshop on Preparation of Status Report and Sub-regional Roadmap for Implementing the Global Waste Management Goals towards addressing SDGs in South Asia in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 16-17 September 2019.

The objective of the Third workshop was to discuss and finalize the proposed 'Roadmap' and Status Report. SACEP in collaboration with CCET, Government of Sri Lanka, the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) – International Environmental Technology Centre (IETC) and the Ministry of Environment, Japan (MOEJ) conducted the Third Sub Regional workshop from 16 – 17 September 2019. The outcome of the Workshop were the Status of Waste Management in South Asia and the Draft Roadmap for Sustainable Waste Management and resource circulation in South Asia which will be implemented nationally subject to adoption at the 15GC.SACEP

4. Environmental Data and Information Management System for South Asia

The self-hosted email server of SACEP was migrated to Google G-suite for uninterrupted performance and to ensure accessibility at all times.

SACEP redesigned the website using updated technology with a trending layout. Parallely a new webserver was configured and consequently it has been able to have a secure hosting with improved performance.

SACEP maintains active Social Media pages and News, Events and Articles are being published to the official Facebook page and in the twitter account and also linked to upload created videos to the website, Youtube channel and to Social Media.

5. Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia

To cope with the issue of Transboundary Air Pollution in South Asia Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its likely Trans-boundary Effects for South Asia was adopted in 1998 by the Ministers of the Environment at the 7th Governing Council of SACEP held in Malé, Republic of Maldives. The main objective of the Malé Declaration programme was to promote the establishment of a scientific base for prevention and control of Transboundary air pollution in South Asia to encourage and facilitate coordinated interventions of all the stakeholders on Transboundary and shared air pollution problems at national and regional levels.

This initiative was initially funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) as part of the Regional Air Pollution in Developing countries (RAPIDC) programme. Phases 1 – 4 was funded by SIDA and since then it is dependent upon the financial contribution from the member countries for its budgetary requirements. However the financial contribution of member countries is not adequate to meet the financial implications for enhanced interaction amongst the member countries, for strengthening & monitoring activities and other technical/scientific activities such as impact assessment studies including health impact, modelling exercises, preparation of

emission inventory, leaving aside initiating new activities and this has resulted in the monitoring systems established in the previous phases now lying idle for more than ½ a decade due to non-performance of Malé Declaration.

14GC-SACEP held in March 2018 decided to further review, at the national level regarding the role of SACEP in the implementation of the Male' Declaration. As a follow-up to the decision, the secretariat sent letters to the member countries requesting them to further review the role of SACEP in the implementation of the Malé Declaration and to send recommendations, in order for SACEP to prepare a position paper for consideration of the next Intergovernmental Meeting of the Malé Declaration Programme which is the decision taking body. In this regard the secretariat has not received communication from the Member States and also the Intergovernmental Meeting of Malé Declaration had not been held since year 2016 to address the matter.

6. Air Quality

As an Intergovernmental organization, SACEP is committed to support the member countries to overcome the issue related to environment and air pollution which is treated as a prime issue. The 14GC-SACEP emphasized the need to facilitate a common platform for all member countries to get together to discuss, share experiences and develop a common strategy to overcome the prevailing air pollution in the South Asian region and requested SACEP Secretariat to convene a meeting of the member countries, UNEP and other stakeholders soon in this regard.

As a follow up to the decision, the secretariat developed a Concept Note for 'Establishment of an Air quality platform for South Asia' and circulated it among the member States and other International donor organizations such as UNESCAP, UN Environment, ADB etc. Plans are made to convene the First Meeting on Establishing a Regional Platform on Air Quality Management in South Asia in 2020. In this connection SACEP has approached some of its member countries to host the meeting which met positive response from them. SACEP is also in contact with its International Partners for technical and financial support.

SACEP will also address this issue at the regional level at the 'South Asia Environment Forum' scheduled to be held in the First Quarter of 2020 and the venue is yet to be decided.

7. Workshop on Capacity building of public sector, private sector and civil society stakeholder in SACEP member countries for Sustainable Energy and Road Transport policy, planning and implementation.

SACEP has developed a Concept Note for consideration of the member States and donor agencies and has been circulated among the member States for their consent.

8. Adaptation to Climate Change

Since 2005, as recommended by the 9GC.SACEP adaptation to Climate Change has been one of the priority areas of SACEP's work plan and the secretariat has been carrying out various

activities during the period. South Asian countries are also actively participating in the annual meetings of the UNFCCC and other global fora for promoting cooperation to address the multifaceted challenges of climate change. The Member States have prepared climate change policies, strategies and plans of action and integrated climate change imperatives in their socio-economic planning and decision-making and also have established institutions to address climate change-related issues.

At present all the Eight Member States of SACEP have completed their national ratification procedures and have submitted their first Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) communicating specific measures to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate change and are now preparing for their implementation in 2021.

At present all the Eight Member States of SACEP have completed their national ratification procedures and have submitted their first Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), communicating specific measures to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and adapt to climate change, to UNFCCC and are now preparing for implementation.

8.1 Regional Workshop on Advancing Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) In South Asia, Bangkok, Thailand, from 26 - 27 September 2019

In this regard, SACEP, with the assistance from ADB, organized a workshop to analyze and support the implementation of the NDCs in SACEP Members Countries namely; Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. SACEP carried out a structured survey to shed light on the status of NDC implementation, with a view to supporting them towards enhancing preparedness and implementation of the various activities specified in their NDCs.

The objectives of the workshop were to understand the current challenges faced by SACEP member countries for NDC implementation and to explore possible modalities of support, and opportunities for collaboration, at national and regional levels. Country NDC Focal Points were requested to fill out a questionnaire to help assess the current status of NDC activities and to identify outstanding challenges and opportunities for progress. Responses were processed and helped to guide workshop design and discussions. SACEP is in contact with ADB, UN Environment, UNFCCC Secretariat to get technical and financial support for its member countries for implementation of NDCs.

8.2 SACEP Side Event held during the 24th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24), Katowice, Poland on 13th December 2018

As climate change adaptation is highly location specific and sustainable development should leave no one behind, a multi-level approach to both fields and their integration is crucial. The Paris Agreement already confirms that adaptation is a global challenge faced by all with local, subnational, national, regional and international dimensions. In this regard, in order to develop and implement effective adaptation strategies, all levels of government need to be involved in the process. A number of regional governments are already involved in the adaptation planning of their national governments and they also work closely with their local counterparts.

Due to their key position between the national and local level, regional governments promote the coordination and vertical integration of policies, which is key to a coherent and efficient action oriented to lasting results.

The topic of the Side Event was titled 'Integrating adaptation and the SDGs - The potential of multi -level governance'

The event was graced by Hon' Hussain Rasheed Hassan, Minister of Environment, Government of Maldives. This Side Event provided fruitful discussion and thorough dialogue on the integration of adaptation and sustainable development policies at the national and regional level and the participants of the event included high level representatives from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and the Basque Country, São Paulo and the GIB Foundation.

9. South Asia Nitrogen Hub

SACEP/SASP participated in a Regional meeting jointly organized by UNEP-GPA and the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem Project (BoBLME) in June 2012, in Phuket, Thailand to share experiences in addressing Land-based sources of Marine Pollution and facilitate development of a Regional Strategic Action Plan for the countries along the Bay of Bengal and at this meeting SACEP/SASP was requested to develop and submit a project proposal to BoBLME to address the mitigating nutrient loading to the marine environment.

In this regard SACEP developed a project concept titled 'Controlling Nutrient Loading and Eutrophication of Coastal Waters of the South Asian Seas Region' with the inputs from UNEP-GPNM. The main objective of the project was to reduce and control of nutrient loading into the coastal waters of the South Asian Seas Region through development of a Regional Action Plan and Policy Forum/Framework.

SACEP signed a LoA with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in April 2013 to implement the above project. Although Pakistan is not part of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem, Pakistan also jointed the activity with financial support of the SACEP Secretariat.

A draft report on Scoping Study of Nutrient Pollution on the Coastal and Marine Systems of South Asia was prepared by a group of consultants (Indian Nitrogen Group). This report was validated during the two-day regional workshop held from 20 to 21 May 2014 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The ecosystem approach to pollution management was tested in the workshop which proved to be an excellent approach to managing the nutrient pollution in the region and the participants agreed on a vision 'South Asian Seas free of nutrient pollution by 2020'. This vision was further supported by setting targets, hence opportunities for technical and financial support from multi-stake holders are highlighted. The draft report was updated with comments received during and after the workshop and then yet again circulated among the member countries for any concerns. The workshop report and the updated scoping study report then were submitted to BOBP-IGO/FAO and were further revised with the inputs received from them.

SACEP is working closely with BoBLME-Phase 2 to incorporate some of the actions identified in 1st Phase Report. The Phase 2 will commence in 2020.

As a further follow up for second activity, SACEP worked with UNEP-GEF on a global project titled 'Targeted Research on the Global Nitrogen Cycle, towards the establishment of an International Nitrogen Management System (Towards INMS)' and SACEP acts as the South Asian collaborating partner in this forum. This activity was initiated during the UNEP/GEF Global Nutrient Cycle Project, First Steering Committee Meeting held in Bhubaneswar (Orissa), India in March 2014. The First Plenary in Preparation for the Global Project 'Targeted Research on the Global Nitrogen Cycle, towards the Establishment of an International Nitrogen Management System' (Towards INMS) was held in Lisbon, Portugal from 27 – 30 April 2015 and SACEP could not attend the meeting but made the presentation through the web link and became a partner of International Nitrogen Management System (INMS) to work as the regional partner in South Asian region.

SACEP with the assistance of INMS organized a regional meeting in Maldives on Nitrogen Management from 12-14 September, 2017. The report was finalized and a Draft Resolution on Nitrogen was developed submission to the United Nations Environment Assembly.

Decision No. 11 of the 14GC.SACEP held from 26-28 March 2018 recommended to redraft the Resolution according to the theme of the UNEA-4 and with reference to other resolutions already adopted at previous UNEA in coordination with the Member States. Accordingly, the Resolution was re-drafted, shared with Member States and urged the member states to forward the re-drafted resolution on Nitrogen Management in South Asia to the UNEP secretariat for its registration and placement before the UNEA-4 for considerations. Government of India took the lead role and submitted the Nitrogen Resolution to UNEA-4 in March 2019.

The Resolution on Sustainable Nitrogen Management was adopted by UNEA-4 while giving recognition to SACEP for initiating the process.

9.1 SACEP is a partner of the 'South Asian Nitrogen Hub', which is in collaboration with the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and many other organizations across the UK and South Asia. The Hub is funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under its Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF). This will contribute to protection from marine pollution, air pollution and climate change from land-based sources in South Asia, with a view to establish policy recommendations for the nitrogen management in the South Asian Region.

Over the next five years, South Asian Nitrogen Hub (SANH) will study the impacts of the different forms of pollution to form a coherent picture of the nitrogen cycle. In particular, it will look at nitrogen in agriculture in eight countries namely – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

9.1.1 South Asian Nitrogen Hub Inception Meeting on 25 – 27 February, 2019, Kathmandu, Nepal

The Inception Meeting of the South Asia Nitrogen Hub was held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 25 to 27 February, 2019. The meeting was organized in partnership with SACEP. Government representatives from all SACEP member countries participated with the invitation of SACEP and many other partners of the project also took part in this Inception Meeting. Participants were able to discuss in detail the modalities, time frame in implementing each research programmes. There were over 140

participants representing Governments, Universities, Research Institutions both from South Asia and UK, NGOs participated during three day programme.

9.1.2 Role of eutrophication in exacerbating coral bleaching and coastal impact (GCRF SANH W.P 3.2), 2 - 5 September 2019, Maldives

The specific Work Programme Meeting of the South Asian Nitrogen Hub was held in Malé Maldives from 2 - 5 September 2019. The meeting was organized and hosted by the National University of Maldives. Government representatives from Maldives, India and Sri Lanka participated with the invitation of SACEP and many other partners of the project also took part in this workshop. Around 45 participants attended this Special Work Package workshop. The participants were able to discuss the opportunities, challenges and initial recommendation for research for the following areas:

- Coral monitoring and experimentation: assessing changes in coral cover, abundance and health in space and time, and their relationships to external stressors including;
- Water quality monitoring and tracing of nitrogen pollution and around reefs and associated systems
- Societal opportunity and challenges: ecosystem services and social approach to understand opportunities for change.

9.1.3 Workshop on Regional Nitrogen Modelling (GCRF SANH), 11 - 13 September 2019, Chennai, India

The Modelling Workshop was held in Chennai, India and hosted by the National Center for Sustainable Coastal Management, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India under the SANH. The participants were from field specific experts and from the SANH Research Programme. Around 45 participants attended the workshop to discuss the Terrestrial/freshwater on modelling in South Asia under the following areas : WP4.1, Harmonization of data and integration of nitrogen flows. Research Programme 4 Workplans i.e WP4.2 Atmospheric modelling workplan, WP4.3 Terrestrial, freshwater, ocean modelling workplan and WP4.4 Soils modelling workplan.

The workshop also aimed to develop country and region-specific N scenarios for South Asia which draw on and feed into global N scenarios from INMS activity and will be consistent with N narratives in SSP framework and agreed that the scenarios will be developed with high, medium and low policy ambition which will integrate different SSPs and aim to achieve targeted radiative forcing RCP2.6, RCP4.5 and RCP6.0 Wm⁻².

9.1.4 International Nitrogen Management System (INMS) South Asia Regional Demonstration Workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The workshop was hosted by the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural

University, Government of Bangladesh under the INMS and INI activities. All SACEP member countries participated in the workshop. The demonstration workshop was about template for preparing the database to develop the inventory for different forms of reactive nitrogen to facilitate improved understanding of global nitrogen cycle by segregating the wastage (Solid waste treatment, Domestic waste water, Industrial waste water) and agricultural (Production and Consumption of fertilizers, Major Food grains, Oilseeds, Horticulture crops, Aquaculture : Marine/Coastal waters, Aquaculture: Fresh and Brackish waters, Livestock Fermentation, Manure Management) data set. It was agreed by the participants for preparing a common types of data set formats for inputting and sharing the country wise data that support and requirement for all RPs and WPs activity for SANH.

9.1.5 Launch of United Nations Global Campaign on Sustainable Nitrogen Management 23 – 24 October, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Government of Sri Lanka and the UN Environment in partnership with South Asia Nitrogen Hub will organize the Launching of United Nations Global Campaign on Sustainable Nitrogen Management on 23 – 24 October, 2019 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. SACEP as a partner organization of South Asia Nitrogen Hub and as this is being held in SACEP's host country, the Secretariat will play a significant role in organizing this important event as a partner.

This launch follows the successful adaption of the Sustainable Nitrogen Management Resolution during the Fourth Session of the UN Environment Assembly held on 11 - 15 March 2019, at the UN Environment Programme headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.

10. SACEP Strategy

A document called 'Initial thoughts toward SACEP's Strategy 2016 – 2030' was submitted to the 14th meeting of the Governing Council as a none-paper for its consideration. The meeting was of the view that the inclusion to the Progress Report referred to as Agenda Item No 6.1 with reference to sub heading 6.1.18 on the 'Initial thoughts toward SACEP's Strategy 2016 – 2030' would not be discussed at this meeting given the limited time for the National Focal Points to review the document. The 14GC-SACEP informed the Secretariat to circulate the updated draft of the document as per the prevailing procedure followed, to all Member States for comments and consent prior to the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP for consideration of the proposal.

Accordingly, SACEP Secretariat reviewed and updated the document and circulated among the member countries as 'Draft SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030' for comments and suggestions. All comments received upto 15 September 2019 were incorporated.

6 Financial Matters :

The status of recovery of Country Contribution arrears of SACEP to date is as follows :

Country	Arrears upto 1 Jan 2014	Agreed CC 2014	Received CC 2014	Arrears upto Dec 2014	Agreed CC 2015	Received CC 2015	Arrears upto Dec 2015
		US \$	US \$		US \$	US \$	US \$
Afghanistan	-	8,050.00	8,050.00	-	8,050.00	8,050.00	-
Bangladesh	63,900.00	23,430.00	21,300.00	66,030.00	23,430.00	-	89,460.00
Bhutan	-	3,555.00		3,555.00	3,555.00	7,110.00	-
India	68,971.00	31,850.00	56,835.00	43,986.00	31,850.00	75,836.00	-
Maldives	-	14,575.00	14,575.00	0.00	14,575.00	14,575.00	-
Nepal	16,100.00	8,050.00		24,150.00	8,050.00	-	32,200.00
Pakistan	46,816.04	31,850.00	31,004.86	47,661.18	31,850.00	31,367.14	48,144.04
Sri Lanka	48,602.14	16,220.00	5,000.00	59,822.14	17,842.00	4,862.18	72,801.96
TOTAL	244,389.18	137,580.00	136,764.86	245,204.32	139,202.00	141,800.32	242,606.00

Country	Arrears upto Dec 2015	Agreed CC 2016	Received CC 2016	Arrears upto Dec 2016	Agreed CC 2017	Received CC 2017	Arrears upto Dec 2017
	US \$	US \$	US \$	US \$	US \$	US \$	US \$
Afghanistan	-	8,050.00	8,050.00	-	8,050.00	-	8,050.00
Bangladesh	89,460.00	23,430.00	23,350.00	89,540.00	23,430.00	22,947.10	90,022.90
Bhutan	-	3,555.00	3,555.00	-	3,555.00	3,555.00	-
India	-	31,850.00		31,850.00	31,850.00	31,850.00	31,850.00
Maldives	-	14,575.00	14,575.00	-	14,575.00	14,575.00	-
Nepal	32,200.00	8,050.00		40,250.00	8,050.00	-	48,300.00
Pakistan	48,144.04	31,850.00	31,444.71	48,549.33	31,850.00	31,466.54	48,932.79
Sri Lanka	72,801.96	17,842.00	90,643.96	-	17,842.00	-	17,842.00
TOTAL	242,606.00	139,202.00	171,618.67	210,189.33	139,202.00	104,393.64	244,997.69

Country	Arrears upto Dec 2017	Agreed CC 2018	Received CC 2018	Arrears upto Dec 2018	Agreed CC 2019	Received CC 28 Aug 2019	Arrears upto 30 Sep 2019
	US \$	US \$	US \$	US \$	US \$	US \$	US \$
Afghanistan	8,050.00	8,050.00		16,100.00	8,050.00		24,150.00
Bangladesh	90,022.90	23,430.00	46,398.66	67,054.24	23,430.00	46,835.00	43,649.24
Bhutan	-	3,555.00	3,555.00	-	3,555.00	3,555.00	-
India	31,850.00	31,850.00		63,700.00	31,850.00	31,850.00	63,700.00
Maldives	-	14,575.00	14,575.00	-	14,575.00	14,575.00	-
Nepal	48,300.00	8,050.00		56,350.00	8,050.00		64,400.00
Pakistan	48,932.79	31,850.00	31,850.00	48,932.79	31,850.00	31,850.00	48,932.79
Sri Lanka	17,842.00	17,842.00	17,842.00	17,842.00	17,842.00	16,220.00	19,464.00
TOTAL	244,997.69	139,202.00	114,220.66	269,979.03	139,202.00	144,885.00	264,296.03

Status of Contribution to the SACEP Trust / Corpus Fund

The establishment of the Corpus Fund was proposed by the External Review of SACEP, which was accepted at the Third Special Session of the Governing Council of SACEP held on 6 November 2003 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Contributions to the SACEP Corpus / Trust Fund is voluntary, and the member countries have been requested to contribute to this fund which will strengthen the financial and project base of the organization and enhance SACEP to be a pro-active regional environment organization.

Periodical reminders are sent to the Member States of SACEP for this purpose.

Country	Receipts as at date
	US \$
Afghanistan	-
Bangladesh	-
Bhutan	-
India	200,000.00
Maldives	-
Nepal	-
Pakistan	-
Sri Lanka	-
SACEP	120,000.00
TOTAL	320,000.00

The Member States of SACEP are requested to consider contributing to the SACEP Corpus Fund to strengthen the financial and project base of the organization and enhance SACEP to be a pro-active regional environment organization.

PROJECTS SANCTIONED FROM APRIL 2018 to SEPTEMBER 2019

Activity	Donor	Budget US \$
To finalize and adopt the Regional Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Strategy for South Asia	UNEP-ROAP	50,000.00
To co-operate with respect to the project/programme entitled South Asia Forum on Sustainable Consumption and Production Training and Policy Dialogue on Sustainable Public Procurement and Consumer Information in South Asia.	UNEP-ROAP	48,312.00
For preparation of a Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter for the South Asian Seas region based on national information collection.	UNEP Ecosystems Division, Nairobi, Kenya,	50,000.00
To contribute to strengthening local and regional enabling environments to foster the uptake and adoption of innovative approaches in reducing threats to coral reefs from nutrient and wastewater and other land-based pollution in Sri Lanka .	UNEP Ecosystems Division, Nairobi, Kenya,	84,700.00
For Preparation of Status Report on Waste Management and Sub-Regional Roadmap for improving waste management in South Asia towards achieving SDGs and NDCs - Activity 1	IGES, Japan	43,037.00
For Preparation of Status Report on Waste Management and Sub-Regional Roadmap for improving waste management in South Asia towards achieving SDGs and NDCs - Activity 2	IGES, Japan	50,000.00
For Preparation of Status Report on Waste Management and Sub-Regional Roadmap for improving waste management in South Asia towards achieving SDGs and NDCs - Activity 3	IGES, Japan	50,000.00
MoU Between SACEP and International Maritime Organization (IMO) for effective implementation of IMO's Global Maritime Standards and the Marine Environment Strategies adopted by SACEP under the South Asian Seas Programme (SASP).	IMO, London	64,720.00

PROJECTS SANCTIONED FROM APRIL 2018 to SEPTEMBER 2019

Activity	Donor	Budget US \$
Letter of Agreement exchanged between SACEP and Asian Development Bank to organize a workshop to analyse and support the implementation of the NDCs in SACEP member states to understand current challenges in implementation of NDCs and to explore possible modalities of support, and opportunities for collaboration, at national and regional levels.	ADB Funded (Not physical fund transfer)	55,000.00
SACEP in collaboration with Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) organized the following activities		
South Asian Nitrogen Hub Kick-off Meeting for the implementation of global nitrogen management in order to maintain harmony between human with nature for sustainable growth in the region.	GCRF Funds Physically not transferred	45,000.00
South Asian Nitrogen Hub Work-Package 3.2 Coral Workshop in Maldives to review, refine and finalise the Work Plan including discussion and agreement on resources (human, technical and financial) required to establish and deliver the coral reef and water quality monitoring and also to discuss other existing or potential initiatives in the region (India, Maldives, Sri Lanka)	GCRF Funds Physically not transferred	25,000.00
Workshop on Regional Nitrogen Modelling from 11-13 September, 2019 in Chennai, India to share knowledge between researchers and build capacity in regional nitrogen modelling, in particular linking the different nitrogen flows, levels and impact types.	GCRF Funds Physically not transferred	55,000.00
Workshop on Regional Nitrogen Modelling from 15-16 September, 2019 in Dhaka, Bangladesh to better understand and collect all the available information on reactive nitrogen and quantify the overall budget for Nitrogen Management for South Asian countries.	GCRF Funds Physically not transferred	50,000.00

GC 15.SACEP / NFP
Agenda Item 6.2

PROJECTS SANCTIONED FROM APRIL 2018 to SEPTEMBER 2019

Activity	Donor	Budget US \$
Workshop in Colombo, Sri Lanka to :-Harmonize research approaches between the partners: 1) firm measurement approaches to be used, 2) confirm who is doing what measurements, and 3) agree a firm time plan for delivery.	GCRF Funds Physically not transferred	55,000.00
To undertake the activities in relation to GEF Project on Healthy Landscapes: Managing agricultural landscapes in social-ecologically sensitive areas to promote food security, wellbeing and ecosystem health on the terms and conditions set out and to organize and facilitate activities linked to the preparation of the Full Project Proposal for the Healthy Landscapes project.	Bioversity International, Italy	20,781.03
Fund Received for Meeting Participation	Meeting Organizers	44,196.85
TOTAL		790,746.88

PROPOSED SECRETARIAT BUDGET FOR 2020 - 2021

	PRESENT AGREED INCOME	EXPENDITURE
	US \$	US \$
1 ANTICIPATED INCOME		
1.1 AFGHANISTAN	8,050.00	
BANGLADESH	23,430.00	
BHUTAN	3,555.00	
INDIA	31,850.00	
MALDIVES	14,575.00	
NEPAL	8,050.00	
PAKISTAN	31,850.00	
SRI LANKA	17,842.00	
TOTAL COUNTRY CONTRIBUTIONS	139,202.00	
1.2 Interest earned	38,000.00	
1.3 Secretariat Cost from Sri Lanka	45,750.00	
TOTAL INCOME	222,952.00	
2 ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE		
2.1 Salary Director General		60,000.00
2.2 Salaries of Local Staff		77,750.00
2.3 International Travel		20,000.00
2.4 Secretariat Cost		84,500.00
SUB TOTAL		242,250.00
3 Capital Costs		17,500.00
4 TOTAL EXPENDITURE		259,750.00
5 INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE		(36,798.00)

PROPOSED SECRETARIAT BUDGET FOR 2020 - 2021

	ANTICIPATED INCOME WITH 10% INCREASE US \$	EXPENDITURE US \$
1 ANTICIPATED INCOME		
1.1 AFGHANISTAN	8,855.00	
BANGLADESH	23,430.00	
BHUTAN	3,910.00	
INDIA	35,035.00	
MALDIVES	16,033.00	
NEPAL	8,855.00	
PAKISTAN	35,035.00	
SRI LANKA	17,842.00	
TOTAL COUNTRY CONTRIBUTIONS	148,995.00	
1.2 Interest earned	38,000.00	
1.3 Secretariat Cost from Sri Lanka	45,750.00	
TOTAL INCOME	232,745.00	
2 ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE		
2.1 Salary Director General		60,000.00
2.2 Salaries of Local Staff		77,750.00
2.3 International Travel		20,000.00
2.4 Secretariat Cost		84,500.00
SUB TOTAL		242,250.00
3 Capital Costs		17,500.00
4 TOTAL EXPENDITURE		259,750.00
5 INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE		(27,005.00)