

**KATHMANDU DECLARATION
10th GOVERNING COUNCIL OF SACEP**

We, the Ministers of Environment and the Governing Council of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, having met in Kathmandu on 25th January 2007 at the Tenth Governing Council of SACEP

1. *Considering* on this historic occasion where we are celebrating 25-years of dedicated commitment towards meeting ever changing environmental demands, both regionally and globally,
2. *Renewing* our commitment to the regional secretariat South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region, and *having recommended* to the implementation of the reviewed strategy for the Secretariat's functional aspects,
3. *Noting* the Agreement reached between the two regional secretariats South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and SACEP in June 2002, to collaborate in implementing regional programmes,
4. *Further revisiting* commitment at the Global Agreements, to the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the provisions of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, which carefully incorporates the priority initiatives the sub-regions and the South Asia in particular; the Millennium Development Goals (2000), the Bali Strategic Plan for Capacity-Building and Technology Support (2005), the Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development (2006-2010) agreed upon at the UNESCAP Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development (MCED 2005) reassuring the commitment for environmental sustainability,
5. *Readdressing* the understanding of the region at various Summits and the Technical Committees of the SAARC highlighting the necessity for the regional understanding and promotion of the South-South cooperation; addressing the necessity to the capacity building for the region through the

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strengthening of Centres of Excellence; with particular reference to the Islamabad Declaration adopted on January 2004 and to the Dhaka Declaration adopted in 2005,

6. *Noting in particular* the Millennium Development Goal addressing environmental sustainability achieved through poverty alleviation, ensuring appropriate health and sanitation, and gender equality, further by reducing and reversing the rate of degradation of environmental sustainability,
7. *Reaffirming* that South Asia, as the fastest growing region in the world, with the largest part of global population and the largest number of people suffering poverty and hunger, has a critical role to play in promoting global sustainable development,
8. *Noting* the understanding and commitments at the Sub regional Environmental Policy Dialogue (SEPD) that Capacity Building services in the region to address the priority issues will include Science and Assessment, Policy Instruments and Awareness,
9. *Further noting* that the region needs to be prepared in advance to the emerging environmental issues and adopt to the 3-R Concept (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) to the use of resources and products; to conserve environmental and natural resources,
10. *Observing* the necessity to the well established knowledge base to counter act the ill effects from issues such as e-waste, nitrogen pollution, climate change and the consequences; prepared status for Glacier Lake Outbursts of Floods (GLOF), and sharing of such information,
11. *Recognising* the immediate necessity for the conduct of assessments to the issues of concerns and appropriate institutional mechanisms; establishment of Centres of Excellence, education at various levels of schooling through media,

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Make the following declaration providing various options and alternatives drawn from earlier multilateral agreements to encourage voluntary implementation, taking into account the diversity in development needs and capabilities of countries.

- A. *We shall endeavour to improve environmental performance through mechanisms such as the following:*
- (a) Ensuring the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements at global and regional level to which we are party; and supporting the efforts to such implementation strategies and observing the inter-linkages among the agreements
 - (b) Promoting the effective enforcement of national laws, regulations and standards relating to sustainable development, including laws governing environmental impact assessments;
 - (c) Establishing or promoting institutional structures such as national sustainable development mechanisms for the purpose of mainstreaming sustainable development objectives in decision making process
 - (d) Encouraging the sharing of experiences in the use of environmental sustainability and environmental performance indices, and promote through the concepts of an environmental knowledge hub for the region;
 - (e) Encouraging the use of the ecosystem approach to strategic planning and management with regard to natural resources and the environment; and
 - (f) Ensuring better environmental governance through addressing issues such as bio-medicine, bio-Safety, Access and Benefit Sharing of Resources through better regional cooperation
 - (g) Encouraging sustainable development as a component of education at all levels and enhanced public awareness of sustainable development as a follow up to the regional training action plan on education agreed in 2003,

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- (h) Encouraging further strengthening of collaboration between the two regional secretariats SAARC and SACEP in serving the region to the appropriate implementation of sustainable development strategies,
 - (i) Promoting regional cooperation through strengthened institutional understanding between SAARC and SACEP to ensure better institutional linkages and networks at national and regional level to promote and implement the programmes addressing the regional concerns of mutual interest between SAARC and SACEP
- B.** *We emphasize* the importance of regional cooperation at various levels on bilateral and multilateral basis in achieving sustainable development, especially the strengthening of SAARC, SACEP partnership in achieving such goals
- C** *We agree* that an Environmental Treaty for the sub-region be achieved as soon as possible
- D** *We reaffirm* our commitment to strengthen SACEP by extending co-financing to the project implementation to ensure necessary donor support
- E** *We urge* the donor countries, relevant United Nations bodies and agencies, multilateral financial institutions, other intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, academia, non-governmental organizations and civil society to provide full support, including financial and technical support to the SACEP secretariat in implementing the programme focus approved by the Governing Council.