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FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL'S DESK

The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) completes over twenty four years in existence this year and the organization continues to take an active role in promoting regional cooperation in the field of environment.

The organization was further strengthened in 2002 by an extensive review of the organization, which resulted in a comprehensive Strategy and Work Programme for SACEP in 2003. This strategy and work programme is complementary to the UNEP's various strategies for initiating programmes which can bring about a fruitful partnerships that can draw on the expertise and commitment from the region for sustainable development. The work programme has prompted SACEP to widen its project base in line with the review.

As the new Director General, I look forward to directing SACEP in addressing new challenges through the formulation and implementation of programmes and projects in a variety of areas. The work programmes undertaken will be reflective of general priorities set by WSSD/MDG/SoE, decisions at various ministerial fora and sub regional environment policy dialogues (SEPD) etc. They will concentrate mainly on the issues of sustainable development and environmental management with attention to issues of poverty, equity, gender, economic stability, and cultural norms in programmes undertaken. The programmes taken up will primarily reflect the needs of the region. The aspect of community participation initiatives will form an integral part of the programme implementation. I am also undertaking active measures to expand SACEP's partner network. The primary focus is building partnerships with key institutions related to SACEP's priority subject areas and in line with the approved Work Programme. Some of the institutions include GPA, IMO, IOGOOS, WCMC. Further on, efforts will be concentrated to strengthen the specifics outlined in the MoU with SAARC addressing implementation of programmes of common attention by both the regional secretariats.

SACEP has also initiated steps to actively assist activities in the region in response to the Tsunami. SACEP is currently cooperating with UNEP and the government of Sri Lanka in the rapid assessment of environmental damages after the tsunami. It has already pledged its support to regional cooperation in relation to developing a disaster management action plan for the region.

Already, SACEP is actively involved in a number of projects. Currently, it is involved in the publication of handbooks on environmental law for each of the member countries, part of a series of successful publications in environmental law. SACEP is also involved in the third phase of activities relating to the implementation of the Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its likely Trans-boundary effects for South Asia. It is also working on the development of environmental education projects in line with its action plan.

SACEP is also actively developing projects on the following issues: South Asia Biodiversity Clearing House Mechanism; conservation and integrated management of marine turtles and their habitats in the South Asia Seas region; reef-based corals management; accelerated penetration of cost effective renewable energy technologies; establishment of a Basel Convention Sub-Regional Centre for South Asia; protected areas management of World Heritage areas and implementation of Ramsar Strategic Plan at sub-regional level.

I look forward to strengthening SACEP's relations with its member countries, as well as strengthening existing partnerships and forging new ones, which will help SACEP in becoming an even more effective player in the protection of environment and sustainable development in the region.

Dr. A. A. BOAZ, DIRECTOR GENERAL

REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS HELD IN COLOMBO

Regional consultations / workshops were held in close collaboration with UNU during June 2004 and February 2005 to present the status from the stocktaking activities conducted by the UNU for the region as a part of the project for the MEA Inter-linkages conducted by the GEIC, UNU.

The most recent one, titled "Integrated Capacity Development for Multilateral Environmental Agreements in South Asia" in February this year, was the 2nd in a series of regional workshops UNU has held with its regional partners to follow up a series of country case studies on the use of interlinkages in strengthening national governance.

The primary objective of the workshop was to develop a concrete plan of action based on the identified opportunities for, and constraints in, strengthening cooperation and mutual supportiveness of environmental agreements across scales and issues in the three sub-regions.

Several recommendations were made at the conclusion of this workshop, particularly in relation to SACEP. These recommendations included:

- building SACEP's capacity through its member governments, international and other agencies;
- encouraging SACEP to develop global and regional partnerships with other organizations;
- encouraging UN and other international agencies to coordinate better on capacity building.

REGIONAL CONSENSUS TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NETWORK OF CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

One of the key recommendations from these regional workshops were to develop the centers of excellence regional network.

The workshops concluded with the suggestion from the members of the region that a proposal be made to the consideration by UNEP-GEF to the establishment of this network.

It is envisaged that a PDF-A project period will undertake necessary surveys within the region and propose a Medium Sized Project for the establishment of the CoE network.

UNU and SACEP will constitute the main executing agencies.

The initial PDF-A project period to prepare the MSP is expected for a 5-month duration.

PROPOSED TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR NEGOTIATORS OF MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS

A follow up of the needs expressed during the Regional Workshop on Compliance with and Enforcement of MEAs held in September 2003, is another regional workshop being considered to be held in close collaboration and patronage of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Government of Sri Lanka and UNEP.

The regional workshop is intended to build and enhance the capacity of MEAs negotiators in the South Asia region. It is envisaged that follow up activities at national level in the region after the above regional workshop will be considered to expand the knowledge base and negotiation skills of current and future negotiators. It is expected that the training

workshop will accommodate at least 25-30 MEA Negotiators in South Asia to participate effectively in the negotiation of MEAs, as well as serving as potential trainers in national-level training courses. This workshop will target both aspiring negotiators and those with previous negotiating experience (who may be trained as trainers).

The workshop will have three primary goals:
(1) To build capacity of novice MEA negotiators in South Asia;
(2) To build capacity of potential trainers in South Asia to deliver such a course at the national level;
(3) To develop and refine training materials for MEA negotiators, including a primer being developed by UNEP.

SAS ACTIVITIES PRESENTED AT ICRI CO-ORDINATION AND PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

SACEP Director General Dr. A.A. Boaz and SAS Interim Coordinator Mr. Prasantha Dias Abeyegunawardene participated at the recently held General Meeting of the International Coral Reef Initiative, in Seychelles April 25-27, 2005.

In his presentation at the meeting, Dr. Boaz gave an overview of the South Asian Seas Programme, as part of the section on ICRI Member reports. He highlighted some of SACEP's work in relation to coral reefs, including work with the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN), Coral Reef Degradation In the Indian Ocean (CORDIO) and Focal Point Activities under ICRI.

Some of SACEP's work that was highlighted included the coordination of the preparation of the South Asian Regional Report for International Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management Symposium (ITMEMS 1). SACEP has also developed a project to Assessment of Areas Vulnerable to Sea Level Rise in the South Asian Seas Region.

The objective of this is to develop A Community Diversity Index and an Aquatic Biodiversity Index, that would assist in locating resources for economic development and managing the biodiversity of the ecosystems in extreme condition of events.

SACEP WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR GENERAL DR. A.A. BOAZ



Dr. A. A. Boaz is SACEP's new Director-General, taking over from Mr. Mahboob Elahi, who completed his term of office in April of this year. Dr. Boaz joins SACEP as the first DG to be selected on a competitive basis. Prior to this, the DGs were nominated by the member countries for a three year term. The Review Committee of SACEP had recommended this to give a new thrust to the activities of SACEP so that it may play a pivotal role in the Environmental Activities in the region. Dr. Boaz joins SACEP from the Indian Forestry Service (IFS), where he has served for 26 years. He was a Chief Conservator of Forests of the State of Chhattisgarh since 2001. Prior to that, he held the post of Conservator of Forests in the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department for eight years. He has also served as the Director, Tourism, Archaeology, Culture, Museums and Archives for the Indian state of Chhattisgarh and also as the Managing Director of the Chhattisgarh Tourism Board. He has also worked as a consultant and resource person for several international organizations, including the FAO, the World Bank, International Development Research Organization, Canada, the Centre for International Forestry Research, Indonesia, and the Winrock International.

While in the IFS, Dr. Boaz was instrumental in implementing a variety of initiatives in the forestry sector, including projects on eco-development, social forestry, sustainable livelihoods and medicinal plants. Dr. Boaz has also been involved in the formulation of several important policies, including the Ecotourism Policy and the Biodiversity Conservation Policy of the State of Madhya Pradesh, and the Cultural and Tourism policies for the State of Chhattisgarh.

DG ESTABLISHES LINKS WITH NATIONAL, REGIONAL, INTERNATIONAL OFFICIALS

The new Director General Dr. Boaz met with Regional Director, UNEP-ROAP Mr. Surendra Shrestha when he visited SACEP during a three day visit to Sri Lanka to coordinate UNEP's contribution towards Sri Lanka with respect to meeting the Environmental Concerns with respect to the recent Tsunami Disaster.

In discussing the cooperation between SACEP and UNEP, Dr. Boaz welcomed UNEP's role as the strategic partner in implementing Governing Council (GC) decisions and sought advice on revitalizing SACEP. Both organizations agreed to prepare and finalize a strategy document on this cooperation for endorsement at the 9th Governing Council of SACEP to be held later that year.

Dr. Boaz also began establishing relations with SACEP Focal Points, with meetings with Focal Points and other government officials in Sri Lanka, Male, and India, to discuss with them the future goals and vision of SACEP. In Sri Lanka, he met with Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Hon. Mr. A.H.M. Fowzie, as well as with the Secretary, Mr. P. Leelarathne and Additional Secretary, Mr. W.R.M.S. Wickramasinghe. In Maldives, he met with Hon. Mr. Abdullahi Majeed, Deputy Minister of Environment and Mr. Ahmed Jameel, Deputy Director, Environment Assessment, Ministry of Environment, Energy and Water. In India, he met with the Minister of Environment and Forests Hon. Mr. A. Raja, and several senior Ministry officials: Dr. Pradhipto Ghosh, Secretary, Ms. Meena Gupta, Special Secretary, Mr. Sudhir Mital and Ms. Veena Upadhyay, Joint Secretaries. He also met with Dr. Harsha Gupta, Secretary, Department of Ocean Development, as well as Hon. Mr. Kapil Sibal, Minister of Science and Technology.

Dr. Boaz visited the International Maritime Organisation headquarters in London and met senior officials and finalized various activities to be conducted in the region with IMO collaboration. These include: a regional workshop on measures to collect, handle, treat and dispose of waste generated in applying anti-fouling systems (AFS) on ships; development of a project proposal on port reception facilities; regional seminar/workshop on ratifying and implementation of the OPRC-HNS Protocol, the AFS Convention and identification and establishment of PSSAs; National OPRC Level 3 for Bangladesh and Maldives; National MARPOL/Ship Recycling Workshop, Bangladesh. Dr. Boaz also met Dr. Veerle Vanderweerd, the UNEP-GPA head and the head of the Regional Seas Programs in The Hague, The Netherlands. He discussed ways to strengthen the SAS program and the various new initiatives that could be taken in the South Asian region.

SACEP Governing Council Members

Afghanistan

H. E. Mr. Mustapha Zaher

Director General, National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA)

Bangladesh

H.E. Mr. Tariqul Islam

Minister of Environment and Forests

Bhutan

H.E. Dasho Nado Rinchen

Deputy Minister, National Environment Commission Secretariat

India

H.E. Mr. A. Raja

Union Minister for Environment and Forests

Maldives

H E Mr. Ahamed Abdulla

Minister, Ministry of Environment, Energy and Water

Nepal

H.E. Mr. Prakash Koirala

Minister of Environment, Science and Technology

Pakistan

H.E. Major (Rtd.) Mr. Tahir Iqbal

Minister of Environment

Sri Lanka

Hon. Mr. A.H.M. Fowzie

Minister of Environment and Natural Resources

LANDMARKS OF CHANGE: SACEP'S ADAPTIC

INCEPTION OF SACEP



Lighting of the traditional oil lamp at the Inaugural Meeting of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme in February 1981.

In February 1981, the Environment Ministers of the South Asian countries met in Colombo to launch the South Asia Co-operative Environment

Programme (SACEP), the culmination of two years of discussions between the countries of the region on the feasibility of regional co-operation on environmental oriented development.

At the meeting, the Ministers approved the Declaration and the Articles of Association for the initiation of the SACEP. Since its inception in 1981, the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme has been active in addressing regional environmental problems and addressing the needs of its member countries in relation to the better protection of its environment.

The establishment of SACEP was itself an attempt to address a changing world outlook to the environment, as countries began to realize that better management of the environment was urgently needed if the countries were to achieve a successful level of development.

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

Over the years, SACEP has tried to live up to its objectives through well-thought out work programmes, as well as answering the needs of the moment. Some of the areas in which SACEP has achieved milestones include environmental law and environmental legislation, biodiversity and resources management. SACEP has also played a large role in capacity building measures for the region.

CAPACITY BUILDING MEASURES

As an intergovernmental organization working for the South Asia region, SACEP has been well placed to address the training and building needs of the region, as well as individual countries. It

has been instrumental in holding capacity building workshops at national and regional levels, particularly in the areas of environmental impact assessment, environmental management, air pollution management, coastal area management and environmental law.

SACEP STRATEGY AND WORK PROGRAMME

In an effort to further strengthen and streamline SACEP's work, a review was carried out by a three member review panel was appointed and a report formulated by R. Rajamani, Atiq Rahman, and Devanesan Nasiah. The review report titled “SACEP Programme Review Report” gave 21 recommendations for the betterment of SACEP. The report was the initiative for the SACEP Strategy and Work Programme carried out by R. Rajamani in 2003.

In November 2003, at the 3rd Special Session of the Governing Council of SACEP, the GC adopted the SACEP Strategy and Work Programme, aimed at strengthening SACEP's work in the region.

The programme highlighted areas of work for SACEP's focus, grouped into three categories, namely: study and assessment; exchange of experience; training and capacity building. The projects covered a variety of areas, including sustainable development, environmental law, forestry, land, coastal and marine issues, wetlands, coral reefs, inland water resources, biodiversity and environmental economics. SACEP's focus is on the implementation of this work programme, formulated according to the needs of the region.



The 3rd Special Session of the Governing Council of SACEP held in November 2003. The countries agreed to move towards strengthening SACEP through the adoption of the SACEP Strategy and Work Programme.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

SACEP was instrumental in promoting environmental education in the region through a series of publications for children, titled: “ABC Naturally”; “Puzzling Out Pollution”; “Where's Away”; “Forest Tales”. These publications reached a wide number of children in the South Asian countries and created awareness amongst school children, particularly “ABC Naturally” which was illustrated by children.

NS TO CHANGES IN WORLD ENVIRONMENT

PROTECTION OF THE SEAS

Five of SACEP's seven members are bordering the Indian Ocean Bay of Bengal System. All of them depend on the area for their livelihoods and trade. The protection and development of the seas of the region is therefore of vital importance. In this context, SACEP took the lead role in the implementation of the South Asian Seas Programme, part of the Regional Seas Programme of UNEP.

The aim of the SASP is to protect and manage the marine environment and related coastal ecosystems of the region in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner. SACEP is currently the Secretariat of the South Asian Seas Action Plan. Its current priorities are integrates coastal area and river basin management, turtle conservation, coral reef management, oil spills and Global International Water Assessment (GIWA), Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem Project (BOBLME). Some of the proposed areas of activities include development of port reception facilities, ballast water programme, development of programmes of action for the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities.

SACEP also formulated the regional Environmental Education and Training Action Plan.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

SACEP hosts the South Asia Environment and Natural Information Center (SENRIC), established for the purpose of facilitating exchange and access to information, seen as a priority for the development in the region. Some of its activities have included the preparation of GIS training manuals, training of trainers in GIS, setting up of Training Units and provision of hardware and software for GIS purposes in the region.

One of its main achievements was a programme on Strengthening Environment Assessment and Monitoring Capabilities in Asia Pacific region (SEAMCAP) (1998 - 2002). SENRIC assisted UNEP in implementing this project on Strengthening National Capabilities on Environment Assessment and Monitoring towards the Preparation of the Global State of the Environment Report 2000 in the SACEP countries.

The SEAMCAP project assisted in strengthening the capacities of the institutions and staff on data management and were also involved in preparing national and regional SoE reports which were a contribution to "2002 Global State of Environment Report" and "2002 World Summit for Sustainable Development".

BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMMES

Recently, SACEP released the publication "Alternative Livelihoods Through Income Diversification: An Option for Sustainable Coastal Reef and Associated Ecosystem

Management in Sri Lanka", compiled and edited by its programme officer Nishanthi Perera. The book was published with the assistance of CORDIO (See SACEP Publications, p.8)

SACEP is in the process of developing a South Asia Biodiversity Clearing House Mechanism to address trans-boundary biodiversity issues, as well as meeting the needs of the region, linking with national CHMs and providing a forum for promoting regional scientific and technical cooperation.

SACEP also assisted in the formulation of a regional action plan for the management of faunal biodiversity, as part of its programme on the assessment of faunal biodiversity, which also included capacity building workshops.

ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION PROGRAMMES

Handbooks on environmental laws for each of the countries of the South Asian region are in the process of being finalized.

In addition, four books on environmental law were published, including a compendium of environmental cases, a handbook on international environmental agreements, and the report of the regional symposium of the judiciary.

SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

A Workshop on Integrating Environmental Considerations into the Economic Policy Making Process in Sri Lanka (with UN-ESCAP) was held with the aim of integrating environment concerns into economic development.

A South Asian Forum on Environmental Co-operation, India was held to encourage private sector participation in environment management (with UNEP-NORAD)

IMPLEMENTATION OF MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS



Asia Pacific Regional Workshop on the Compliance and Enforcement of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (seen in the picture Mr. Maco Gonzalez Executive Secretary, UNEP Ozone Secretariat, Mr. Donald Kaniaru, Special Adviser to Executive Director UNEP, Ms. Amy Hindmen, Legal Adviser to UNEP, Hon Rukman Senanayake, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Sri Lanka, Mr Mahboob Elahi, Director General SACEP and Prasantha Dias Abeyegunawardene, SAS Interim Coordinator

Continued on page 8

Country focus

BHUTAN

SACEP prepares for two high-level meetings in Bhutan

SACEP is preparing for its 9th Governing Council Meeting to be held August 24-26, 2005, in Thimpu, Bhutan. The meeting will be attended by the Environmental Ministers of the region.

The 3rd Intergovernmental Meeting of Ministers for the South Asian Seas Programme will also be held back to back with the GC Meeting.

The 2nd Intergovernmental Meeting for SAS was held in July 2002 in Colombo. In accordance with the decisions at 1st Intergovernmental Ministerial Meeting in 1999, such meetings are required every two years or as the need arises.



SAS INTERIM CO-ORDINATOR ATTENDS THE NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

Interim Coordinator SASP, Mr. Prasantha Dias Abeyegunawardene attended the National Symposium on Natural Resources Damage Assessment arising from Tasman Spirit Oil Spill from May 30-31, 2005 at Karachi Pakistan.

The results of the Natural Resource Damage Assessment Study (NRDA) conducted by the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry of Environment with the support of UNDP under the NEAP support Programme, were presented at this Symposium. Mr. Prasantha Dias Abeyegunawardene was presented a memento for the services rendered to this project by the Hon Major (Rtd.) Mr. Tahir Iqbal, Minister incharge of Environment in Pakistan.

Post-tsunami Assessment Reports released for Sri Lanka



The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Sri Lanka has launched the synopsis report of the Post Tsunami Assessment in Sri Lanka which had been carried out by the Ministry with assistance from United Nations Environment Programme, along with SACEP coordination.

The report was the outcome of a programme carried out by the Ministry with UNEP assistance. The approach to the assessment was divided into two components: the Ecosystem Assessment (Green Issues) and the Physical Environmental Damage Assessment (Brown Issues).

The programme, known as the Tsunami Disaster Assessment and Response Plan (DARP) had as its objectives a rapid and

accurate assessment of damages, while providing a foundation for planning the reconstruction and sustainable development of the affected areas.

Its ultimate goal is the development of a comprehensive plan for sustainable development in the coastal region.

SACEP earlier entered into an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UNEP to provide coordination services for the conducting of the rapid assessment in Sri Lanka.

In pursuit of its cooperation with UNEP for the assessment activities, SACEP also hosted UNEP staff members engaged in the work of the Tsunami Task Force and provided technical, administrative and logistical support.

DRAFT REPORT ON PILOT PROJECT ON APPLICATION OF ICARM CONCEPTS IN SOUTH ASIA COMPLETED



A pilot project to test the Integrated Coastal Area and Area Basin Management (ICARM) concepts in South Asia was initiated by SACEP, using Sri Lanka's Attanagalu Oya River basin as the focus. The project, supported by UNEP-Regional Seas Programme, was implemented by the Conservation Department of Sri Lanka.

UNEP provided the financial support for the first phase amounting to US\$25,000 which was completed with an integrated management framework and an action plan for this river basin. The objective of the study was to apply the ICARM concept to control the loss and degradation of the environmental quality of the Attanagalu Oya river basin and coastal area and then improve the livelihood of the community in the area. The project envisaged the establishment of the Integrated Coastal Area and River basin Management (ICARM) in the Attanagalu Oya River Basin, so as to ensure stability and the productivity of the aquatic systems, which in turn will uplift the socio-economic conditions of the area.

This project began in March last year and ended in January 2005. The draft report of the study is in the process of being finalized.

The Attanagalu Oya River Basin is one of the most heavily populated and highly industrialized river basins in Sri Lanka. The pollution of this river basin involved significant and detrimental impacts upon the downstream coastal wetlands. Therefore the fisheries, recreational and ecological values of the wetland were seriously affected by activities surrounding the wetland. There are also other problems including lack of control over state land with improper guidelines for land management, dumping of waste oil from fishing boats and unplanned boat landing sites. These cumulative impacts result in frequent disease outbreaks affecting human health of nearby communities.

International/Regional Happenings

2006 YEAR OF THE TURTLE FOR INDIAN OCEAN AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA REGION

The **Indian Ocean and South East Asia (IOSEA) Secretariat** announced that 2006 had been declared the “Year of the Turtle” for the IOSEA region. The organizers expect to carry out a campaign that is geared to raise awareness among the diverse social, cultural groups in the region and to address issues on ecological and economic values of marine turtles conservation.

This initiative will promote collaborative and concerted actions to conserve and manage these threatened animals, as well as the habitats on which they live and depend.

SACEP has outlined a set of activities for the region which will be communicated to the member countries once funding is secured. SACEP is one of several international organizations working with the IOSEA secretariat in finalizing the initial proposals for the sub regional, regional and national activities. These organizations are preparing for the upcoming official launch of the YoT campaign, planned to coincide with the Fourth Meeting of the IOSEA MoU Signatory States.

Interim Coordinator South Asian Seas Program (SASP) Prasantha Abyegunawardena the Interim coordinator SAS will serve with the YoT Steering Committee during this period. SACEP proposes to publish a regional synthesis report to mark the YoT with the cooperation of the member countries. SACEP can be contacted for the proposed regional work.

SACEP/SAS RELATED MEETINGS

Joint Regional workshop by SAS and IMO

The workshop will be conducted on measures to collect, handle ~~treat and dispose of waste generated in applying AFS~~ Chennai, India, October 2-7, 2005.

7th Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Programme

The objective of this meeting is to discuss on strengthening the long-term sustainability of the Regional Seas Programmes (RSPs) and the sustainability of the implementation of national programmes - Helsinki, Finland, October 18-20, 2005.

OTHER MEETINGS

SAICM PrepCom3, 19-24 September 2005

The third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Development of a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM PrepCom3) - Vienna, Austria, September 19-24, 2005. More at www.chem.unep.ch.

COP2 to the Rotterdam Convention on PIC

The Second Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent - Rome, September 26 to 30, 2005. More at www.pic.int/index.html.

Environmental Education

The 7th Global Conference on Environmental Education - Agra, India, September 19-23, 2005 by the Indian Environmental Society (IES).

PEACE THROUGH TREES

The protection of the environment received true international recognition when African Prof. Wangari Maathai was awarded the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize for her work in protecting the environment of Kenya. For the first time, the Nobel Committee's definition of peace was expanded to include environmental activism, recognizing the role of sustainable development in achieving peace.



Prof. Maathai, the first African woman to have been awarded the prize, founded Kenya's Green Belt Foundation in 1977 to fight poverty through environmental action. To date, the organizations has helped plant 30 million trees, mostly through poor women. The results have included the greening of desert areas, jobs for women managing plantations, and more resources for day to day living provided by the plantations.

Her work often led her into controversy, as she challenged political corruption that was resulting in massive deforestation, and other sensitive problems. She was arrested and imprisoned frequently during the 1990s, labelled as a dangerous subversive. However, in 2002, Maathai was elected to the Kenyan Parliament with 98% of the vote and now is the country's environment minister. She plans to use the Nobel prize money for more tree-planting activities, as well as the promotion of culture.

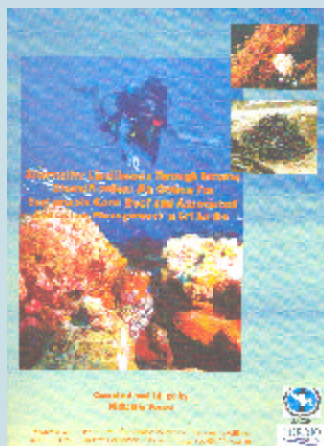
Statement on wetland management adopted at regional Ramsar Convention

Participants at the the Asian Regional Meeting of Ramsar Convention held in Beijing May 13-16, 2005 agreed to adopt and disseminate the Chilika Statement among the Asian countries. The Chilika Statement on the conservation and wise use of wetlands in Asia through networking of international and national organization and individuals, was agreed upon by 400 participants from 32 countries in the Asian Wetland Symposium 2005 when they met at Bhubaneswar and Chilika, Orissa, India, February 6-9, 2005.

SACEP has already taken steps to translate the above message into Sinhala and Tamil for distribution in Sri Lanka in line with this proposition. SACEP participated in first symposium, where SAS Interim Coordinator Prasantha Dias Abyegunawardene presented “Key Principles to Guide the Reconstruction of Coastlines Affected by the Tsunami”, at a Special Session of the Symposium.

The Chilika Statement commemorated the Chilika Lagoon in India, which participants agreed was “an outstanding example of wetland conservation and wise use following the principles of integrated management with strong emphasis on local people's participation and shared decision-making through networking of local national and international experiences.”

SACEP PUBLICATIONS/REPORTS



Alternative Livelihoods as an Option for Coral Reef Management

SACEP in collaboration with the Coral Reef Degradation in the Indian Ocean (CORDIO) Programme has released a publication titled "Alternative Livelihoods Through Income Diversification: An Option For Sustainable Coral Reef and Associated Ecosystem Management in Sri Lanka". The book takes a look at a variety of alternative livelihood options that can be made available to local communities in place of coral mining.

It also draws out recommendations for future initiatives. It is an ideal reference material for the management and protection of coral reef in the region and Sri Lanka because of its emphasis on alternative livelihoods for coral miners.

South Asia Environmental Education and Training Action Plan

Limited copies of the South Asia Environment and Education Action Plan are available for distribution to interested individuals and organizations. The Action Plan proposes education training strategies for curricular and non-curricular initiatives, planning and decision making, public awareness and participation, networking, communication and collaboration. It is currently the environmental education programme of SACEP, which seeks to work with national and regional stakeholders to implement this plan.

State of the Environment Reports

Copies of the State of the Environment Reports South Asia published for 2001 are available at SACEP for academic institutions and other relevant organizations. Those who are interested, please contact the SACEP Secretariat. Because of limited copies, SACEP will be selecting those to whom the copies could be sent. There are also limited copies of the SoE Reports for India and Bangladesh. Electronic versions of this and country reports are also available at www.sacep.org.

For details on obtaining these publication, please contact the SACEP Secretariat.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

SACEP would like to highlight in its newsletter, regional and national initiatives and needs in the area of environmental protection in its newsletter. We welcome articles or information from outside contributors on issues relating to environmental issues in the South Asian region.

SACEP is also planning a series of publications compiling articles on regional environmental issues. Each publication will be centred around specific topics. We are currently in the process of compiling a database of experts, individuals in the field, and case studies and initiatives in the areas of environmental protection, sustainable resource management and community-based participatory management.

Anyone who is interested in being a part of this database, please send details and to SACEP.

.....Continued from page 5

An Asia Pacific Regional Workshop on the Implementation of Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements and the Review of the Training Manual was held in Sri Lanka in 2003.

A Regional workshop on "Integrated Capacity Development for Multilateral Environmental Agreements in South Asia" was organized with the United Nations University, resulting in the recommendation of a Regional Network of Centers of Excellence.

A National Workshop on facilitating the implementation of UNFCC and the Institutional Design of the Cooperative Implementation Mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol, was held Colombo, Sri Lanka in with the assistance of UNEP and UNFCC.

A workshop on Port Reception Facilities was organized in Colombo, Sri Lanka as part of activities for facilitating the ratification/ implementation of MARPOL 73/78, with the assistance of UNEP and the International Maritime Organization.



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Printed by:

R.S. Printek

765/2, Waduwegama Road,
Malwana