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## H.E. Mahanth Thakur, Chairman SACEP Visits SACEP Secretariat

The current Chairman of SACEP, H.E. Mahanth Thakur, Minister of Environment, Science and Technology, Government of Nepal was on a mission to SACEP during 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> July 2007 along with the Secretary, Mr. Laxman Prasad Mainali, the Joint Secretary, Mr. Khum Raj Punjali and Mr. Chhewang Lama, UNEP SACEP Focal Person. The Hon' Minister reviewed the activities being carried out by SACEP in a meeting held at the Secretariat where the Director General made a detailed presentation of the activities as per the decisions taken at the 10<sup>th</sup> Governing Council held at Kathmandu in January 2007. The Chairman was extremely appreciative of the various projects being undertaken by SACEP for the benefit of

the member countries. He also expressed his happiness on the various new initiatives being undertaken especially the landmark decision of the 8<sup>th</sup> CoPs of the BASEL Convention to establish the Basel Convention Regional Centre at SACEP in response to SACEP's proposal and the collaboration with TRAFFIC International to establish the SAWEN (South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network). He was also impressed by the immense response that SACEP was receiving from the international Community that was evident from the large number of MoUs that have been signed by SACEP in the last few months with both UN and other agencies like UNEP, UNESCO, IMO, WMO, TRADA, IUCN, TRAFFIC, DA and CEE. He also pleased that not only have these MoUs been signed

but several programmes have been finalized to be conducted under these MoUs.

The SACEP Secretariat is thankful to the Government of Sri Lanka who arrange a field Trip to the Peredeniya Botanical Garden and the Elephant Orphanage at Pinnawala.



**Dr. Arvind Boaz welcomes the Chairman of SACEP, H.E. Mahanth Thakur, Minister of Environment, Science and Technology, Government of Nepal**

## H.E. Mr. Ahmed Abdullah, Chairman, SAS Launches the South Asia Coral Reef Task Force (SACRTF)

The launch ceremony of the SACRTF was inaugurated by the Chief Guest, HE Mr. Ahmad Abdullah, Chairman, South Asia Seas and Minister for Environment, Energy and Water, Republic of Maldives and the Guest of Honour, Justice C.G. Weeramantry, former Vice President, International Court of Justice by lighting the oil-lamp on 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2007 Colombo, Sri Lanka. The SACRTF is only the second task force to be established in the world for conservation & Development of Coral Reefs.

Dr. Arvind Boaz, Director General, SACEP, welcomed participants and provided a brief on the past and ongoing environmental initiatives of SACEP in the region. Dr Boaz outlined the background

and rationale of the EU funded South Asia MCPA project, and highlighted the strategic significance of the South Asia Coral Reef Task Force in marine resource conservation in South Asia.

Dr. Kristian Teleki, Director, ICRAN, thanked the dignitaries and all the participants for their active participation in finalising the SACRTF structure and documents, and stressed the valuable role the SACRTF could play to enhance regional coordination and cooperation in the management and conservation of marine resources, identifying the project as a milestone achievement for the South Asia Region. Guest of Honour, Judge C.G. Weeramantry, provided an inspiring speech on the need to conserve the natural resources for

the younger generation, by finding a balance between natural resource conservation and development. He also pointed out the low-priority given to natural resources conservation at a legal and judiciary level, and the need to create awareness.

The Chief Guest, H.E., Mr. Ahmed Abdullah, Minister for Environment, Energy and Water, Republic of Maldives, spoke on the depletion of the Ozone Layer and the mounting evidence of the impending disaster of rising sea level. He congratulated SACEP on their efforts for the betterment of the environment in the region, highlighting the significant role the SACRTF could play in helping to mitigate the major environmental issues pertaining to marine resource conservation.



**H.E. Mr. Ahmad Abdulla, Chairman SAS and Minister of Environment Water and Energy, Maldives speaking on the occasion.**



**Formal launch of the SACRTF by the signing the Launch document. L-R: Dr. Arvind Boaz, D.G. SACEP, Hon' Minister for Energy Environment and Water, Maldives, Mr. Ahmed Abdullah, Hon. Judge C.G. Weeramantry, Former Vice President – International Court of Justice and Patron of the SACRTF and Dr. Kristian Teleki, Director, ICRAN.**

## Excerpts from Messages from the Heads of States for SACEP Silver Jubilee Celebration



Message by His Excellency Prof. Iajuddin Ahmed,  
*President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh*

"SACEP is a common platform for South Asian Countries to work together for a better South Asia in terms of protection of environment and sustainable use of natural resources and biological diversity which the region is blessed with. A large population and low level of economic attainment have restricted South Asia from doing justice to the management of the natural resources till today ..... I consider, economic development should not be at the cost of environmental degradation... .....I hope all the government of this region will come forward with every possible support to SACEP for making it an effective regional environmental organization. To that end, I reiterate the support of our people and the government towards SACEP."



Message by His Excellency Mr. Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk ,  
*Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan*

"With its mission to promote regional cooperation in the field of environmental management and sustainable development, SACEP today is lauded as the oldest regional intergovernmental environmental organization in the world. The organization is a reflection of our region's collective commitment to sustainable development and recognition that cooperative action is crucial to address both environmental degradation and poverty alleviation in the region.....Bhutan remains committed to the ideals and visions of SACEP and I extend my best wishes and Tashi Delek for the success of the organization in promoting environmental conservation and sustainable development in our region."



Message by His Excellency Dr. Manmohan Singh,  
*Prime Minister of the Republic of India*

"At the United Nations conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972, the Prime Minister , Mrs.Indira Gandhi expressed the feelings of many developing countries when she said ' How can we speak to those who live in villages and in slums about keeping the oceans, the rivers and the air clean when their own lives are contaminated at the source? The environment cannot be improved in conditions of poverty'. India is committed to a process of sustainable development that maintain a balance and harmony between the environment and imperative economic growth. I extend best wishes to SACEP on this significant milestone."



Message by His Excellency Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom,  
*President of the Republic of Maldives*

"Since its inception in 1982, SACEP has made an important contribution to promoting cooperation in protecting and preserving the environment of its member -states.....SACEP has successfully implemented a number of Programmes and projects in a variety of areas, including air pollution, protection and management of the coastal environment and environmental legislation.....SACEP's role in strengthening environmental protection standards in the Maldives is indeed significant. In this regard, I recall SACEP's assistance towards improving our State of the Environment reporting, and the implementation of the first phase of the historic 'Male' Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and its Transboundary Effects for South Asia'.....I am confident that SACEP will go from strength to strength, and continue to work in partnership with the member countries in preserving and protecting our environment."



Message by His Excellency Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala,  
*Prime Minister of Royal Government of Nepal*

"The SACEP represents our commitment to make collective efforts to address the environmental problems we are facing and to attain the lofty goal of sustainable development in the region. The efforts made by the SACEP in the field of Environmental Management are noteworthy .However , much remains to be done. I am confident that the SACEP will continue to make sustained efforts to address, in a comprehensive manner, environment related challenges and problems including those associated with climate change..... I wish the SACEP all success in its Endeavours ! "



Message by His Excellency Mr. Mahinda Rajapakse,  
*President of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka*

"The Government of Sri Lanka played a lead role in establishing SACEP and offered to host its Secretariat in Colombo. Taking stock of its achievements over 25 years, we see that SACEP has faced many challenging issues both within and out side the environmental sector, in South Asia and beyond. I am glad to note the significant achievements of SACEP in addressing these issues. The emerging environmental issues of trans-boundary nature call for collective action by the countries of the region. With the added complexities of globalization, the role of SACEP as the facilitator of environmental management in our region becomes more important. The collaborative arrangements between SACEP and other international organizations to meet emerging challenges are commendable....."

## From The Director General's Desk .....

The period of July to September has been one of a landmark achievement for SACEP. For the first time in the 25 years history of SACEP, this was the period when it had the privilege to have its Chairman, H.E. Mahanth Thakur, Minister of Environment, Science and Technology, Nepal and the Chairman of the South Asian Seas Programme, H.E. Ahmad Abdullah, Minister of Environment, Water and Energy, Maldives visiting SACEP in the same month of July, 2007.

The Chairman of SACEP besides his other programmes also graced, as the Chief Guest, the Panel Discussion on Sea Level Rise and the Award Distribution Ceremony in the First School Awareness Programme organized by SACEP in collaboration with CEE (Centre for Environment Education), India, SAYEN (South Asia Youth Environment Programme) and the Ministries of Environment and Natural Resources and Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka. The Programme was a huge success with more than 3500 entries from 31 schools in the painting, Essay and Poster competitions.

H.E. Ahmad Abdullah, the Chairman of South Asian Seas Programme was kind enough to accept my invitation to

launch the pioneering initiative of SACEP, the South Asian Coral Reef Task Force on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2007 -only the second in the world after the Nairobi Convention Coral Reef Task Force formed in Africa. I am extremely indebted to Hon' Judge C. G. Weeramanthy, former Vice President of the International Court of Justice for so kindly accepting my request to be the Patron of this Task Force.

The month of August was marked by the signing of the MoU between RECOFTC (Regional Community Forestry Training Centre for Asia and Pacific) and SACEP for facilitating capacity building in the South Asian Countries in the field of community forestry and Natural resource management. The same month saw us conducting the regional workshop on development of a regional activity on Marine litter for the South Asian seas region -an important event under the Governing Council decision to manage wastes in our region and to take forward the UNEP's Regional Seas Marine Litter Activity. The workshop finalized two documents - "the Review of Marine Litter in the SAS region" and "the Framework on Marine Litter Management in the SAS Region."

The month of September started with another landmark achievement for SACEP when the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the Open -ended Working Group of the Basel Convention, held in Geneva, 3 -7 September, 2007, de-

cidated that the Basal Secretariat should review SACEP's Proposal for the establishment of the BASAL Convention Regional Centre and to put it up to the 9<sup>th</sup> CoPs for consideration. The International Workshop on "Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve" was the first collaborative workshop held on 20<sup>th</sup> September at Chennai in fulfillment of the MoU between SACEP and UNESCO. The Hon' Minister of State for Environment, India, Thiru S. Raghupathy was the Chief Guest and the Director, UNESCO, New Delhi, Dr (Ms) Minja also graced the occasion. The MoU Between SACEP and Development Alternatives, India, also saw a regional activity being conducted as the Scoping Exercise on E -waste Management in New Delhi, that was well attended by Government representatives from several member countries, Industry Associations, NGOs, and International Organisations like World Bank and UNDP.

The basket of activities is growing for SACEP and it is gradually but surely taking confident steps into becoming a dynamic and relevant regional organization that is becoming more and more fruitful to the countries of the region. I am thankful to the strong support of all my member countries and the International and regional organizations that have placed their trust in us and I am confident that we will deliver and stand up to their expectations.

## Press Conference on SACRTF Launch

A press conference was held to celebrate the launch of the SACRTF. This was well attended by many national media reporters (press and television). Printed materials were distributed to the press to raise awareness of the South Asia MCPA project, and the SACRTF launched under the project. The project management team were on hand to field questions from the audience.

The press conference was started by an address by the Patron of SACRTF, the Hon' Judge Weeramanthy, who spoke at length on the launch of this task force and the benefits that the South Asian Region will derive from it. Dr. Boaz reiterated the significance of the initiative for the region, and highlighted the role of SACEP as a coordinating body for environmental efforts in the region. He also emphasised that this is the second task force to be established for conservation & Development of Coral Reefs in the world.

Dr. Kristian Teleki, and Ms. Nicola Barnard provided the background and rationale

behind the South Asia MCPA project, and its significance to the region as a milestone project, and presented information on the importance of the South Asia Coral Reef Task Force in enhancing cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders in the region, and as a mechanism to drive regional coral reef and related ecosystems conservation efforts.



**Dr. Arvind Boaz addressing the Press conference at the launch of the SACRTF**

## Scoping Exercise On E-Waste Management In South Asia

South Asia Co operative Environment Programme, along with the Development Alternatives India, a non-profit research, development and consultancy organization which recognizes the need for regional cooperation and multi stakeholder participation in South Asia, conducted a Scoping Exercise on "E -Waste Management in South Asia" in New Delhi India, on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2007. Waste Management as one of its prioritized areas which has been approved at the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> Governing Councils of SACEP. The workshop aimed at facilitating adoption of environmentally sound management for e-waste in the region.

The scoping exercise was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Information Technology, India, and Ministry of Environment &

Forest India, Ministry of Environment, science and Technology, Nepal and Central Environmental Authority of Sri Lanka and also by the delegates from the World Bank, UNDP (GEF Project), CII, and by the representatives from the NGO's and Industries from the South Asian Countries.

The aim of the exercise was to

Establish contacts with stakeholders, including governments and private sector

Develop background paper with on going practices and status on the initiatives at various levels (regional, national, local) under taken by the different agencies.

Develop project proposals in consultation with stakeholders for the consideration

of funding agencies, for promoting environmentally sound management of e-waste in south Asia.

A draft position paper made by DA/SACEP on e -waste management in South Asia was reviewed and discussions were held to identify the issues concerned and prioritizing the actions at both regional and country level.

A need for a Regional Task Force for the management of e - waste in the region was discussed and steps to be taken in future for its establishment were recommended.



Participants at the Workshop

## International Workshop on "Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve: an ecological model for Biodiversity Conservation, Livelihood and Sustainability"



**Hon. Minister of Estate of Environment , India releasing the workshop report and presenting to Dr. A.A. Boaz, Director General of SACEP . Dr. Minja Yang, Director of UNESCO –South Asia office, New Delhi and Dr. Venkatraman, Member Secretary, National Biodiversity Board India, are seen in the picture.**

An International workshop on "Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve: an ecological model for Biodiversity Conservation, livelihood and sustainability" was held in Chennai on 21 -21 September 2007. The workshop was jointly organized by SACEP, UNESCO and NBA, India . The workshop was part of the activities being conducted under the MOU signed between SACEP and UNESCO.

The Conference was inaugurated by Thirumigu S. Regupathy, Honourable Minister of State, Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Prof. Dr. S. Kannaiyan, Chairman, National Biodiversity Authority, Govt. of India, Chennai

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Arvind

Boaz, Director General, SACEP. There were also special addresses by Prof. Dr. T. Balasubramanian, Director, CAS in Marine Biology, Annamalai University and Ms. Minja Yang, Director, UNESCO, New Delhi UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme has a long tradition of promoting marine ecosystem studies within and among its Member States, in particular through its MAB coastal and marine resources programme

The MAB programme's main focus is to promote environmental sustainability through the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) where emphasis is placed on linkages between biodiversity conservation and socio -economic development in specific biosphere reserve contexts. The objective is to use the WNBR and its regional networks as vehicles for knowledge-sharing and exchange of experience, research and monitoring, education and training, and testing of participatory decision-making, thereby contributing to the emergence of "quality economies" and to conflict prevention. Accordingly, a large number of MAB international marine ecosystem workshops have been organized in various parts of the world.

This workshop had identified the following priority themes for future research in order to promote sustainable development:

- Biological diversity of Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve;
- Biodiversity conservation into sustainable development interventions.
- Integrated management of marine

resources for food security;

Assessing Gulf of Mannar ecosystem dynamics for poverty alleviation.

Coastal livelihoods and policy options for the benefit of coastal population (such as seaweed culture, ecotourism);

Scenarios and policy options for good governance in the context of global change;

Aquaculture for sustainable use;

Management of natural and man -made disasters- natural ecosystem recovery models using Gulf of Mannar case;

Sustainable development and knowledge sharing;

Environmental degradation and promoting rehabilitation;

Protecting and safeguarding the corals in Gulf of Mannar.

The workshop was attended by a large cross section of government officials, NGO's and Civil Society organizations, eminent Scientists and Researchers in the field of marine biology.



## SACEP signed a MoU with RECOFTC, Thailand

The Regional Community Forestry Training Center for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC) is an autonomous, not-for-profit international organization that works closely with partners to design and facilitate learning processes and systems to support community forestry and natural resource management. The institution's mission is to enhance capacities at all levels to assist people of the Asia-Pacific region to develop community forestry and manage forest resources for optimum social, economic and environmental benefits.

Dr. Yam Malla, Executive Director of RECOFTC, and Dr. A. A. Boaz, Director General of SACEP, signed the MoU on behalf of the

two organizations in August 2007. SACEP and RECOFTC intend to cooperate in the areas common to their programmes in South Asia in accordance to the signed MoU.

Both RECOFTC and SACEP's work in the area of forest management has a focus on community resource management; forest communities' involvement in forest management; poverty alleviation, poverty and rights with concerns for sustainable development, and guidance to the policy makers. RECOFTC and SACEP have identified the thematic areas of rural livelihoods and poverty reduction, forest governance, and productive and sustainable forest manage-

ment as areas for proposed collaboration through demonstrating best practices and sharing skills and knowledge.

A collaborative work plan of the activities will be completed within next 3 months, under the MOU signed between SACEP and RECOFTC. The work plan will be based on identification of possible project areas a way forward for finding funding and mobilising these projects and determining the respective roles of SACEP and RECOFTC in any given project ideas.



## 6th Session of the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal

The 6th Session of the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal was held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 03-07 September 2007. Dr. Arvind Boaz, Director General of SACEP and Mr. Rathnadheera, Senior Programme Officer of SACEP attended the conference.

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) expressed its interest to the Secretariat of the Basel Convention (SBC) to host the Regional Centre for the region comprising the countries of South Asia under Article 14 of the Basel Convention in June 2005. Subsequently, discus-

sions were held between SACEP and the SBC on the requirements to setup the Regional Centre. SBC, then, requested the SACEP to obtain the consent of the member countries and formulate a proposal for the setting up of the BCRC.

After obtaining the consent of the member countries, SACEP placed a proposal for establishing the Regional Centre for South Asia at SACEP, Colombo, Sri Lanka to the Eighth Meeting of the Conference Of the Parties to the Basel Convention (COP8) in November/December 2006. The COP 8 by its Decision VIII/3 has requested SACEP to submit a detailed proposal and the report on the feasibility study carried out for the region, to the

Open Ended Working Group in its Sixth Meeting (OEWG 6).

According to the CoP decision VIII/3, SACEP prepared a detailed proposal and a report of the feasibility study and submitted to the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) at its sixth meeting held from 3 to 7 September 2007 at Geneva, Switzerland. The 6th OEWG meeting decided that the BASEL secretariat should review the SACEP proposal & put it up to the COP 9 of the Basel Convention for considerations. The Cop9 is scheduled to be held in June 2008 in Bali, Indonesia.



**Dr. A.A. Boaz with the Executive Secretary for the Basel Convention Ms. Katharina Kummer Peiry**

## 2nd Global Conference on Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs)

The 2nd Global Conference on Large Marine Ecosystems, was held from 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> September at Qingdao, PR China, it focused on assessment and management methodologies for ecosystem-based approaches to the recovery and sustainability of marine resources, and methodologies for analyzing changing states of LMEs, and LMEs at risk from climate change. The Conference also provided a unique opportunity to interact with young Chinese scientists and with Conference participants from countries of the Pacific Rim.

The Conference was convened by Dr. Kenneth Sherman (NOAA/USA) and by Professor Qisheng Tang (Yellow Sea Fisheries Research Institute and Chinese Academy of Fishery Sciences, Qingdao, China). Dr. Boaz, Director General, of SACEP held discussions with the FAO representatives on issues regarding the Bay of Bengal Large Marine ecosystem Project and the role that SACEP can play in taking the project forward in the region.

It was sponsored by the Chinese Govern-

ment, Chinese science agencies, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the IUCN, and by 5 UN agencies. Conference themes included assessment and management methodologies for ecosystem-based approaches to the recovery and sustainability of marine resources, and methodologies for analyzing changing states of LMEs, and LMEs at risk from climate change. The Conference also provided a unique opportunity to interact with young Chinese scientists and with Conference participants from countries of the Pacific Rim.

The conference themes were:

The Large Marine Ecosystem (LME) Approach to Assessment and Management Marine Resources: Theory and Background

Practical implementation of the Ecosystem Approach in LMEs.

Assessment and Monitoring of LMEs and Development of Indicators and their Application.

State of Environment and Ecosystem

Information Systems in LMEs.

Integrating Socioeconomics, Science and Governance in LMEs.

Developing International Partnerships in Science and Management in LMEs.

Changing States of LMEs in Regional Seas: a Global Perspective.

LMEs at Risk: Adaptation to Climate Change.

Complementarity among LME Assessments, GOOS-GEOS and GLOBEC - Toward an LME network.



Dr. A.A. Boaz with the Delegates at the Conference

## Regional Workshop on Development of a Regional Activity on Marine Litter for the South Asian Seas Region



Inauguration of the Ceremony by the lighting of oil-lamp

A Regional Workshop on Development of a Regional UNEP and SACEP/SAS Activity on Marine Litter for the South Asian Seas was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 20 – 21 August, 2007.

The workshop was attended by national representative of Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. There was also the participation of resource persons from Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka and from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the SAARC ICZM Centre

The workshop was inaugurated by Mr. G. Piyasena, Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Government of Sri Lanka.

Dr Arvind Boaz, Director General, SACEP, welcomed the delegates and outlined the

importance of marine litter in South Asian Seas region and the efforts taken up by SACEP in the area of coastal and marine pollution related issues in the Region.

Dr Ellik Adler, Senior Programme Officer, Regional Seas, UNEP, in his address highlighted the role played by UNEP on marine litter activity under Regional Seas Program around the globe. He requested participants to give their concerted views on the two reports which will be presented by the Regional Consultant in the workshop, so that a meaningful programme for the marine litter management for the Region could be evolved and implemented.

In the Technical Sessions, the Regional Consultant Dr. V. Sampath presented to the meeting the following 2 draft documents, the Review of Marine Litter in the SAS and the "Framework on Marine Litter Management in SAS Region"

There were extensive discussions on the contents and the structure of the 2 main documents.

The following important decisions emerged as conclusion of the workshop.

SACEP would handle the regional level co-ordination of this activity and there should be a strong team consisting 2 or 3 experts funded from external sources to coordinate the effort.

The help of UNEP was sought to find donors for the activities that would be proposed by the National Governments and the need for a permanent structure to support this initiative was also emphasized.

SACEP would take up the issues on marine litter in the next Inter Ministerial Meeting of the South Asian Seas Programme for formal endorsement and also to solicit support from all the countries.

The establishment of a Marine Litter Task Force

The need for a Centre of Excellence in each country was also recognised which would be the implementing point from the country concerned. This should be nominated by the country government



## Second Regional Coordination Workshop– South Asia MCPA Project

The Second Regional Resource Coordination and Mobilisation workshop for the Long-term Management and Conservation of MCPAs in South Asia was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 25-27 July 2007. Mr. M.A.R.D. Jayathilake, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Sri Lanka was the Chief Guest of the ceremony and inaugurated the workshop in the traditional way by lighting the oil lamp. The Opening Remarks were delivered by Dr. Arvind Boaz, Director General, South Asia Cooperative Environment Program, who elaborated on the environmental initiatives undertaken by SACEP in the region and highlighted the progress made to date in the official endorsement and establishment of the South Asia Coral Reef Task Force (SACRTF)

Dr. Kristian Teleki, Director of ICRAN welcomed participants and encouraged them to an inclusive, and participatory workshop, with maximisation of the regional networking opportunity to develop essen-

tial links in support of this project and region wide issues. Mr. M.A.R.D. Jayathilake, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Sri Lanka, gave a brief speech, describing the South Asia MCPA project as a timely initiative, appreciating the foresight, cooperation and coordination of the member countries in the establishment of the SACRTF.

Representatives of the participating countries were invited to give presentations on the existing status of MCPA management in their countries, focussing on the five sites selected for inclusion in project activities.

### Workshop RECOMMENDATIONS

Work alongside existing bodies to encourage the adaptation and implementation of the coral reef CSI programme within the South Asia region

Build awareness of coral reefs at the ground level as a priority issue to ensure that training can be applied

Use the SACRTF as a champion for coral reefs among country governments, and to raise general public awareness of the need for sustainable use and conservation.



**Dignitaries at the Inauguration ceremony of the Second Regional Coordination Workshop. L-R Dr. Arvind Boaz, Mr. M.A.R.D. Jayathilake, Dr. Kristian Teleki, Ms. Nicola Bernard**

## School Environment Awareness Programme 2007 and Panel discussion on 'Adaptation to Sea Level Rise in South Asia'

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) in collaboration with the Centre for Environment Education, India (CEE), South Asia Youth Network (SAYEN), Ministry of Education and Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of Sri Lanka organized a "School Environment Awareness Programme" with the participation of the schools within the Colombo municipal area. The theme was "Adaptation to Climate Change and Waste Management". This included school competitions (Essay, Drawing and Painting, Poster and Photography) under four age categories and 31 schools participated. Out of the 3527 students who participated, 38 were selected as winners. The winners were awarded in an award ceremony held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2007.

Hon. Mahanth Thakur, Minister of Environment, Science and Technology, Government of Nepal and the Chairman of SACEP, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and Mr. Udaya Gammampila Chairman, Central Environmental Authority, Sri Lanka presided. Dr. A.A. Boaz, Director General of SACEP, gave the welcome address and thanked the Hon. Minister, his delegation and the Chairman, CEA Sri Lanka for gracing the occasion. Vishaka Vidyalaya, Colombo was awarded as the best school and SAYEN will be sponsoring an award winning student from Vishaka Vidyalaya to attend the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Environment Education which will be held in Ahmedabad India, November 2007. An exhibition of the winning entries and some selected paintings and posters was also opened by the Hon. Minister after the function.

Prior to the award ceremony, a Panel Discussion was held under the theme of "Adaptation strategies to sea Level Rise in South Asia". The Director General, Dr. A.A. Boaz elaborated on the adaptation strategies and told the august gathering that SACEP had identified the Adaptation to Climate Change as a priority area in the work programme and this Panel Discussion was the 1<sup>st</sup> in a series that will be held in the future. The Hon. Minister in his inaugural speech said that as Chairman, SACEP, he was happy to be the chief guest at this important function and the scope of this panel discussion is of extreme importance to the countries of the region. He expressed his happiness over the large gathering.

The Panel Discussion was moderated by Prof. S.W. Kotagama, University of Colombo. The discussion commenced by a clips from Mr. Al Soris movie elaborating the global picture of Sea Level Rise

and Dr. B.R.S.B. Basnayake (Meteorologist in charge, Centre for Climate Change Studies, Department of Meteorology), Mr. Arjan Rajasuriya (Research Officer, Marine Biological resource Division, National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency (NARA), Dr. E.M.S. Wijeratne, Research Officer, Oceanography Division, National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency (NARA), and Dr. Mala Amarasinghe (Senior Lecturer, Department of Botany, University of Kelaniya) elaborated on different sub topics. The audience consisted of Governmental Organizations (ministries, authorities, departments etc.), International Environmental organizations, Environmental NGO's, Universities and other institutions. Students from the participating schools actively participated in this discussion.



**Award winners with H.E. Mahanth Thakur, Chairman SACEP and Minister of Environment Science and Technology, Nepal & Mr. Udaya Gammampila, Chairman, Central Environmental Authority, Sri Lanka, Mr. Laxman Prasai Mainali, Secretary Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology, Nepal with Dr. A.A. Boaz, Director General of SACEP**



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**SACEP**

Future editions of this Newsletter will highlight regional and national initiatives and emerging environmental issues. We would like to receive related articles or information to share with our readers. Any information published will be duly acknowledged.

We look forward to receive information that could be part of our database of experts and institutions in the region. We also request for information on case studies of best management practices and initiatives in the areas of environmental protection, sustainable resource management and community - based participatory resource management.

The SACEP Newsletter is published quarterly and can be downloaded from the website.  
#10 ANDERSON ROAD, COLOMBO -5,  
SRI LANKA.

### New Publication

Report of the Workshop on Long-term Management and Conservation of MCPAs in South Asia held in Colombo, Sri Lanka. This report is a compilation of workshop proceedings, and Coral Reef Task Force information presented at the workshop.



### OUR COLLABORATORS AND PARTNERS IN PROGRAM MES



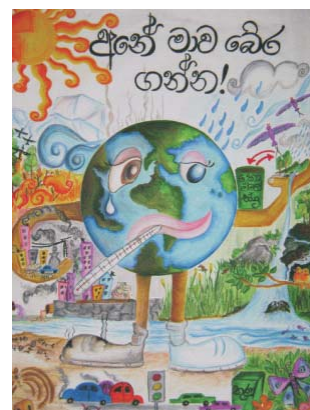
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