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Meeting of Plenipotentiaries on the Action Plan for
the Protection and Management of the Marine and
Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region

New Delhi, 24 March 1995

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF PLENIPOTENTIARIES ON THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE
PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE MARINE AND COASTAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE
SOUTH ASIAN SEAS REGION**

INTRODUCTION

1. The Executive Director of UNEP, in co-operation with SACEP and the Government of India, convened the Meeting of Plenipotentiaries on the Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region in order to review and adopt the draft Action Plan, the Institutional and Financial Arrangements for its implementation, and the related Resolutions and Final Act.
2. The following organizations were also invited to participate at this meeting: ADB, ESCAP, FAO, IMO, IOC, IUCN, SACEP, UNDP, UNESCO, UNIDO, World Bank, WHO and WMO.
3. The meeting was held in New Delhi, India, on 24 March 1995.
4. This document is the Report of the Meeting. The complete List of Participants is attached as Annex I of this Report.

Agenda item 1: Opening of the Meeting

5. The Representative of the Executive Director of UNEP, Mr Peter Schroder, Director, Ocean and Coastal Areas Programme Activity Centre, UNEP, Nairobi stated in his opening address that it was indeed a historical occasion now that the maritime countries of South Asia have come together in a remarkable spirit of regional co-operation to ensure the protection and management of the regional seas. He went on to add that the commitment shown by the countries augurs well for the success of the programme. He complemented the Government of India on the arrangements made for the meeting and warm hospitality extended to all participants.
6. The meeting was then addressed by Mr Eduardo Faleiro, Minister of Ocean Development, Government of India. He expressed pleasure in the fact that the meeting was being held in India. He pointed out that India has been committed to the protection of the environment in general, and that of the marine environment in particular. He added that his country had contributed significantly to the process which led to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982). Of prime importance was establishment of a regional cooperative network of concrete projects. These projects would both benefit from and further the cause of people-centred development, and promote an exchange of scientific and technical expertise and sharing of experience for the benefit of all. He concluded by saying that India, as a founding member of UNEP and the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), was grateful to the support given by the two organizations for the efforts of the South Asian Maritime countries which have led to the finalization and adoption of the Action Plan.
7. The meeting was inaugurated by Mr Pranab Mukherjee, Minister of External Affairs, Government of India. In his inaugural address Mr Mukherjee said that the meeting assumed particular significance at a time when issues on the use of oceans, marine resource exploitation and protection of the marine environment were prominent on the international agenda. He noted that the coming into force on 16 November 1994 of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) reflected the fact that problems affecting the use of the seas and the seabed needed to be tackled by all nations, developed and developing alike, if efforts to resolve them are to be effective. Mr Mukherjee further stated that regional co-operation with a view to protecting the marine environment was particularly important in the South Asia region as it has a long, highly indented coastline and numerous islands which support very fragile ecosystems. He also drew attention to the fact that major urban and industrial clusters were developing in areas that are located in, or in proximity to, ecologically vulnerable coastal areas. It was therefore necessary for the nations of the South Asian seas to cooperate on the issue of protecting the fragile coastal ecosystems. In conclusion Mr Mukherjee said that he was pleased to note that the meeting was going to finalize and adopt an Action Plan to protect and manage the region's marine environment and related coastal ecosystems.

8. The Vote of Thanks was delivered by Dr B.R.Subramanian, Principle Scientific Officer, Department of Ocean Development, Government of India.

Agenda item 2: Organization of the Meeting.

9. The secretariat proposed to apply mutatis mutandis the Rules of Procedure of UNEP Governing Council for the conduct of the Meeting. The Meeting agreed to this proposal.
10. The Meeting elected the following officials:

Chair:	Mr Eduardo Faleiro (India)
Vice Chair(s):	Mr Muhammad Abul Quasem (Bangladesh)
	Mr Asif Shuja Khan (Pakistan)
	Ms Srimani Athulathumudali (Sri Lanka)
Rapporteur:	Mr Hussain Shihab (Maldives)
11. The Provisional Agenda [UNEP(OCA)SAS IG1/1] was introduced by the Secretariat with reference to the Provisional List of Documents [UNEP(OCA)SAS IG1/INF.1]. The meeting considered the proposed Agenda and adopted it with the addition of one item.

The Agenda as it was adopted and the List of Documents are attached respectively as Annex II and Annex III of this Report.
12. The elected officers of the Meeting assumed the responsibilities of the Credentials Committee.
13. The Secretariat proposed, and the meeting agreed, to carry out its work in plenary session.
14. The Meeting was conducted in English.

Agenda item 3: Report of the Executive Director on the preparatory activities leading to the proposed adoption of the Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region

15. The Report of the Executive Director, giving a summary of the process and the activities that have been undertaken in preparation for the formal adoption of the South Asian Seas Action Plan, was presented by Mr Peter Schroder, Director, Ocean and Coastal Areas Programme Activity Centre, UNEP, Nairobi.

Agenda item 4: Review of the draft Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region with Annexes, and including the draft Institutional and Financial Arrangements for the implementation of the Action Plan

16. The Secretariat introduced the draft Action Plan, including the Institutional and Financial Arrangements for its implementation, as revised and endorsed at the Fourth Meeting of National Focal Points held in New Delhi on 23 March 1995. The Meeting agreed upon the final text of the Action Plan, without amendments. The Action Plan would be formally adopted upon signature of the Final Act.
17. The agreed text of the Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region with Annexes, and including the Institutional and Financial Arrangements for its implementation is attached as Annex IV of this Report.

Agenda item 5: Review of the Resolutions

18. The Secretariat introduced the Resolutions as discussed and finalized at the Fourth Meeting of National Focal Points. The Meeting agreed upon the final text of the three resolutions. They would be formally adopted upon signature of the Final Act. The Resolutions are attached as Annex V of this report.
19. The delegates from Pakistan and Sri Lanka indicated agreement in principle with the financial arrangements (Resolution 3) pending formal approval by their respective Governments.

Agenda item 6: Consideration of the Report of the Credentials Committee

20. The Report of the Chairman of the Credentials Committee was accepted by the Meeting.

Agenda item 7: Adoption of the Action Plan, the Institutional and Financial Arrangements, and the Resolutions

21. The Meeting adopted the finalized text of the Action Plan, including the Institutional and Financial Arrangements for its implementation, and the Resolutions.

Agenda item 8: Adoption of the Final Act

22. The Meeting adopted the Final Act.

Agenda item 9: Draft Resolution to the eighteenth session of the Governing Council of UNEP

23. The meeting agreed that a Resolution would be tabled at the eighteenth session of the Governing Council of UNEP. This resolution would seek UNEP's support for the South Asian Regional Seas Programme. The SACEP Secretariat was requested to formulate the resolution and make it available for comments by the concerned member Governments. After taking into consideration their comments, this resolution would be submitted to the eighteenth session of the Governing Council of UNEP by the Government of India on behalf of the member States of the South Asian Regional Seas Programme.

Agenda item 10: Signing of the Final Act

24. A formal ceremony was held for the signing of the Final Act by the Plenipotentiaries. The Final Act is attached as Annex VI of this Report.

Agenda item 11: Closure of the Meeting

25. The Meeting was closed at 1200 hrs by the Chairman.

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

BANGLADESH

Mr Muhammad Abul Quasem
Joint Secretary (Administration)
Ministry of Environment and Forest
Bangladesh
Tel: (880 2) 831297
Fax: (880 2) 869210

INDIA

Honorable Eduardo Faleiro
Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers, and
Departments of Ocean Development and Electronics,
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi-110 001.
Tel: (91 11) 386519
Fax: (91 11) 384020

Mr P. Rama Rao
Secretary
Department of Ocean Development
Block 12, C.G.O Complex
Lodhi Road
New Delhi 110003
Tel: (91 11) 436 0685
Fax: (91 11) 436 0336
Tlx: (031) 31865 DOD IN

Mr J.V.R. Prasada Rao
Joint Secretary
Department of Ocean Development
Block 12, C.G.O Complex
Lodhi Road
New Delhi 110003
Tel: (91 11) 436 0685
Fax: (91 11) 436 0336

Dr B.R. Subramanian
Principal Scientific Officer
Department of Ocean Development
Block 12, C.G.O. Complex
Lodhi Road
New Delhi 110003
Tel: (91 11) 436 0685
Fax: (91 11) 436 0336

Mr H.S. Puri
Joint Secretary (Navy)
Ministry of Defence

Mr A.K. Pandey
Director (UNE)
Ministry of External Affairs

Mr Keshav Desiraju
Director (IC)
Ministry of Environment and Forests

MALDIVES

Mr Hussain Shihab
Director
SACEP, 84 Lorensz Road
Colombo 4
Sri Lanka
Tel: (94 1) 582553
Fax: (94 1) 589369
Tlx: 21494 GLOBAL CE

PAKISTAN

Mr Asif Shuja Khan
Director General
Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency
Islamabad
Tel: (92 51) 224582
Fax: (92 51) 824122

SRI LANKA

Honorable Ms Srimani Athulathmudali,
Minister for Transport, Environment and Women's Affairs,
Government of Sri Lanka,
D.R. Wijewardene Mawatha,
Colombo 10
Tel: (94 1) 694547
Fax: (94 1) 687311

Ms Sulochana Sabaratnam
Additional Secretary
Ministry of Transport, Environment & Women's Affairs
Environment Division
6th Floor, Unity Plaza Building
Colombo 04
Tel: (94 1) 508274
Fax: (94 1) 502566

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Mr Brij Kishore
Regional Adviser
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
The United Nations Building
Rajadamnern Avenue
Bangkok 10200
Thailand
Tel: (66 2) 288 1234
Fax: (66 2) 288 1025

INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION OF UNESCO

Mr Yihang Jiang
IOC Assistant Secretary for WESTPAC
IOC Sub-Commission for the Western Pacific, Regional Secretariat
196, Phaholyothin Road
Chatujak, Bangkok 10900
Thailand
Tel: (66 2) 579 6000
Fax: (66 2) 579 6001

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

Capt G. Singhota
International Maritime Organization
4 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7SR
United Kingdom
Tel: (44 171) 735 7611
Fax: (44 171) 587 3210

SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Mr Hussain Shihab
Director
SACEP, 84 Lorensz Road
Colombo 4, Sri Lanka
Tel: (94 1) 582553
Fax: (94 1) 589369
Tlx: 21494 GLOBAL CE

Mr Prasantha Dias Abeyegunawardene
Programme Officer
SACEP, 84 Lorensz Road
Colombo 4, Sri Lanka
Tel: (94 1) 582553
Fax: (94 1) 589369
Tlx: 21494 GLOBAL CE

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Mr P. Schröder
Director
Oceans and Coastal Areas Programme Activity Centre
UNEP
P.O. Box 30552
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: (254 2) 622034
Fax: (254 2) 622788
Tlx: 25164 UNEPRS KE

Mr I. Dight
Programme Officer
Oceans and Coastal Areas Programme Activity Centre
UNEP
P.O. Box 30552
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: (254 2) 622 022
Fax: (254 2) 622 788
Tlx: 25164 UNEPRS KE

ANNEX II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Organisation of the Meeting
 - (2.1) adoption of the rules of procedure
 - (2.2) election of officers
 - (2.3) adoption of the agenda
 - (2.4) appointment of Credentials Committee
 - (2.5) organisation of the work
3. Report of the Executive Director on the preparatory activities leading to the proposed adoption of the Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region
4. Review of the draft Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region with Annexes, and including the draft Institutional and Financial Arrangements for the implementation of the Action Plan
5. Review of the Resolutions
6. Consideration of the report of the Credentials Committee
7. Adoption of the Action Plan, the Institutional and Financial Arrangements, and the Resolutions
8. Adoption of the Final Act
9. Draft Resolution to the eighteenth session of the Governing Council of UNEP
10. Signing of the Final Act.
11. Closure of the Meeting.

ANNEX III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Working documents:

UNEP(OCA)SAS IG1/1	Provisional agenda
UNEP(OCA)SAS IG1/2	Provisional annotated agenda
UNEP(OCA)SAS IG1/3	Draft Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region
UNEP(OCA)SAS IG1/4	Draft Resolutions
UNEP(OCA)SAS IG1/5	Final Act

Information Documents:

UNEP(OCA)SAS IG1/INF.1	Provisional list of documents
UNEP(OCA)SAS IG1/INF.2	Provisional list of participants
UNEP(OCA)SAS WG3/Rep	Report of the Fourth Meeting of National Focal Points on the Development of an Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the South Asian Seas Region

ANNEX IV

ACTION PLAN FOR THE PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE MARINE AND COASTAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE SOUTH ASIAN SEAS REGION

INTRODUCTION

1. With the formation of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), the interest of South Asian Coastal States in the Regional Seas Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was revived and at the request of these States the "South Asian Seas" has been designated by the Governing Council of UNEP ^{1/} as an area in which UNEP, in close collaboration with SACEP and the Governments concerned, should assist in the formulation of a Plan of Action for the environmental protection of the region within the framework of the Regional Seas Programme, in line with the provisions of Chapter 17 of Agenda 21.
2. The following preparatory work contributed to the development of this action plan:
 - 2.1 A mission to the States of the region in October/November 1982 and February 1983 to ascertain the views of the Governments regarding a Regional Programme in the South Asian Seas
 - 2.2 Meeting of National Focal Points on the Development of an Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the South Asian Seas Region (Bangkok, 19 - 21 March 1984)
 - 2.3 Meeting of Experts on the South Asian Seas Regional Programme (Bangkok, 2 -5 December 1986)
 - 2.4 Second Meeting of National Focal Points on the Development of an Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the South Asian Seas Region (Bangkok, 7 - 11 December 1987)
 - 2.5 ESCAP/UNEP/SACEP Workshop on Management Strategies for the Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment in the South Asian Seas Region (Colombo, 20 - 23 December 1993)
 - 2.6 ESCAP/UNEP/SACEP Intergovernmental Meeting on Capacity Building in Coastal Environmental Management in the South Asian Seas Region (New Delhi, 17 - 19 May 1994)
 - 2.7 Third Meeting of National Focal Points on the Development of an Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the South Asian Seas Region (Colombo, 23 - 25 November 1994)
 - 2.8 Fourth Meeting of National Focal Points on the Development of an Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the South Asian Seas Region (New Delhi, 23 March 1995)
3. For the purposes of this Action Plan, the South Asian Seas Region covers the marine and related coastal environment, including international waters adjacent to the following states:

Bangladesh
India
Maldives
Pakistan
Sri Lanka

^{1/} Decision 11/7 of 24 May 1983

4. All components of the Action Plan are interdependent and provide a framework for comprehensive action which should contribute to both the protection and the continued development of the region. No component is an end in itself. Each activity is intended to assist the Governments of the region to strengthen the process through which environmental management policies are formulated and to improve the quality of the information on which these policies are based.
5. The objective of the Action Plan is to protect and manage the marine environment and related coastal ecosystems of the region. This objective includes the promotion of sustainable development and sound management of regional marine and coastal resources by:
 - (a) establishing and enhancing consultations and technical co-operation among States of the region;
 - (b) emphasising the economic and social importance of the resources of the marine and coastal environment; and
 - (c) Establishing a regional co-operative network of activities concerning concrete subjects/projects of mutual interest for the whole region.
6. The general goals of the action plan are:
 - (a) to promote policies and management practices for the protection and development of the marine and coastal environment on a national and regional level, including appropriate legislation at the national level;
 - (b) to prevent deterioration of the region's marine and coastal environment originating from activities within and outside the States of the region;
 - (c) to provide for protection and rational development of the marine and coastal resources of the region, which are a natural heritage with important economic and social values and potential, through the preservation of habitats, the protection of species and careful planning and management of human activities that affect them;
 - (d) to strengthen and encourage, through increased regional collaboration, the activities of institutions within the region involved in the study of marine and coastal resources and ecosystems;
 - (e) to improve training, technical assistance and exchange of scientific and statistical data at all levels and in all fields relating to the protection and development of the marine and coastal environment; and
 - (f) to stimulate the growth of public awareness at all levels of society of the value, interest and vulnerability of the region's marine and coastal environment.
7. More specifically, the activities of the Action Plan should aim at:
 - (a) Assessment and evaluation of the causes, magnitude and consequences of environmental problems, in particular the assessment of marine pollution from land and sea based sources, and the study of activities and social and economic factors that may influence or be influenced by environmental degradation;
 - (b) Promotion of methods and practices for the management of social and economic development activities that safeguard environmental quality and utilize resources rationally on a sustainable basis;

- (c) Promotion of national legislation, if necessary, for the protection and development of the marine and coastal environment which will facilitate mutual collaboration and operational efficiency of the Action Plan, having due regard to the need for and suitability of such a framework;
 - (d) Promotion of research and development and exchange and sharing of their findings among the member states; and
 - (e) Strengthening of institutional machinery and adoption of financial arrangements required for the successful implementation of the Action Plan.
8. A general description of the main components of the Action Plan is given below. These components and related activities are not listed in order of priority. Priority activities that have been selected for the implementation by SACEP Member States are presented in Annexes to the Action Plan. They should be considered only as a general description of activities which will have to be refined and elaborated in more detail. All activities will be carried out in close co-operation and in consultation with the National Focal Points.

A. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

9. To ensure the effectiveness of the Action Plan it is necessary to provide for continuous and systematic assessment of the main factors influencing the environmental quality of the region. This is particularly important as the present assessment of the environmental processes in the region is incomplete, and any sound action requires an understanding of the links between development and the environment. Among the tasks that should be carried out are:
- 9.1 Assessment of national and regional capabilities to investigate and manage environmental problems, including scientific and administrative institutions, manpower, research facilities and equipment together with identification of institutions with potential to serve as "regional activity centres" in particular disciplines, and as regional or subregional activity centres co-ordinating specific inter-state projects;
 - 9.2 Strengthening of national capabilities in marine science and for monitoring and assessing the state of the marine and coastal environment and the condition of living and non-living resources, including training of scientists and technicians from the region in methods and techniques related to the assessment and evaluation of marine pollution and participation of such scientists in intercalibration exercises;
 - 9.3 Encouragement of collaboration among regional scientists and technicians and their institutions through the establishment of a co-ordinated regional marine pollution monitoring programme, based on intercomparable methods, for the study of the various processes occurring in the coastal areas and open ocean of the region and the assessment of the sources and levels of pollutants and their effects on marine life and human health;
 - 9.4 Survey and assessment of present social and economic activities, including development projects, that may have an impact on the quality of the marine and coastal environment;
 - 9.5 Compilation of an inventory of the sources and amount of pollutants reaching the coastal waters of the region from land-based and maritime sources including dumping of hazardous wastes;
 - 9.6 Collection, analysis and dissemination of data on resource potential and resource utilisation in relation to competing demands for such resources;

- 9.7 Preparation of a comprehensive classification of coastal and marine habitats and mapping of critical habitats;
- 9.8 Establishment of national data bases on the status and trends in the quality of the marine and coastal environment, linked into regionally co-ordinated network, compatible with similar networks in adjacent regions; and
- 9.9 Monitoring of the effects of climate and sea level change on the marine and coastal environment.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

- 10. Sustainable, environmentally sound development depends upon the rational management of natural resources. Such management should take into account the goals of development as defined by national authorities, the assimilative capacity of the environment, and the economic feasibility of proposed policies. The following activities should serve to strengthen the ability of the Governments to adopt appropriate environmental management policies:
 - 10.1 Strengthening of national and regional capabilities to prevent, control and combat marine pollution from land and sea-based sources and co-operation in implementing and enforcing existing international agreements related thereto;
 - 10.2 Strengthening of national & regional capabilities, co-operation and co-ordination in responding to marine pollution emergencies which pose a threat of pollution to the marine and coastal environment;
 - 10.3 Strengthening of national and regional capabilities and co-operation for the management of coral reefs;
 - 10.4 Promotion and harmonisation of national and regional strategies for preventing and mitigating the damages and adverse impacts caused by natural disasters;
 - 10.5 Formulation of regionally and locally applicable guidelines and standards where ever appropriate, for the management and control of domestic, agricultural, industrial and other wastes, including the developing of principles governing treatment and disposal of such wastes;
 - 10.6 Strengthening or expanding of the relevant on-going development activities that demonstrate sound environmental management practices;
 - 10.7 Development and implementation of integrated coastal environmental management plans for specific coastal areas to serve as models with a view to promoting environmentally sound utilisation of coastal resources and preventing environmental degradation;
 - 10.8 Strengthening national capabilities for the environmental impact assessment of developmental projects and promoting the inclusion of environmental impact assessments and integrated development approaches in the planning stages of all major development activities;
 - 10.9 Studies of the environmental, social and cultural effects of tourism, and elaboration of environmentally sound strategies for tourism development. Particular attention should be given to the health aspects of tourism developments in coastal areas;

- 10.10 Co-operation in devising where necessary, alternatives to present land-use practices, coral and sand mining procedures, waste disposal into coastal waters, other development activities including transportation and disposal of hazardous wastes which may lead to environmental degradation;
- 10.11 Formulation and harmonisation of policies on the management of natural habitats, wildlife and genetic resources;
- 10.12 Co-operation in the establishment and management of national protected coastal and marine habitats, in the establishment of a regional network of protected areas, in joint activities to protect coastal ecosystems and wildlife and in the training of technical and managerial personnel in the conservation of wildlife and habitats; and
- 10.13 Co-operation in conservation and protection of marine living resources from pollution and over-exploitation.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION

- 11. National legislation and regulations pertaining to the protection and management of the marine and coastal environment, which are at various stages of development, should be reviewed, and when necessary, expanded, updated or strengthened. It is necessary to ensure the effective enforcement of national legislations related to marine and coastal resources.
- 12. National legislations and regulations for the protection and development of marine and coastal resources should be harmonised whenever international uniformity is required to meet the obligations of such legislation; e.g., legislation concerning the protection and management of migratory species of estuarine marine areas within the region.
- 13. An up-to-date compilation of national laws of the states of the region related to the protection of the marine and coastal environment should be maintained.
- 14. The ratification and implementation of existing international agreements concerning the prevention and control of marine pollution and the protection of marine resources should be encouraged.
- 15. Technical assistance and advice on the drafting of national legislation for the effective implementation of relevant international agreements should be provided upon request.

D. INSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 16. In carrying out the Action Plan, the national capabilities available in the region and the capabilities of regional and international organisations and co-ordinating bodies, as well as their existing programmes, should be used to the greatest possible extent.
- 17. The agreed programme should be executed primarily through existing national institutions and capabilities. Where necessary, they should be strengthened so that they may participate actively and effectively in the various projects. For some of the projects technical assistance and experts from outside the region may be requested whenever such assistance and experts are not available from within the region.

18. To ensure the harmonious and integrated evolution of each of the components of the Action Plan, SACEP is designated as the Secretariat of the action plan to assume responsibility for its technical and administrative co-ordination with the support and close co-operation of UNEP, especially during the initial phase of activities. In discharging its functions, SACEP should seek the co-operation and assistance of national, regional and international organisations and institutions; these bodies should also be invited to extend all possible support to SACEP.
19. The overall authority over the Action Plan should be vested in the governments of the region. Through periodic meetings of their representatives, the governments should review the progress in the implementation of the action plan and decide on the priorities for future activities, as well as on financial and institutional arrangements supporting these activities.
20. A National Focal Point should be designated by each Government to facilitate the work of, and communication with, the regional secretariat and to co-ordinate activities within the State concerned related to the Action Plan.
21. The activities agreed upon as part of the implementation of the Action Plan should be financed principally by contributions from Governments, international and regional organisations and competent non-governmental organizations. Initially, support may be provided by the United Nations system on the assumption that this financial contribution will progressively decrease as the Governments themselves assume financial responsibility. Noting the need for additional financial resources to support the programme, the United Nations system is requested to assist the Secretariat and the Governments of the region to further develop the priority activities with a view to obtaining financial support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as well as other donors.

E. SUPPORTING MEASURES

22. The ultimate aim should be to make the proposed regional programme self-supporting, not only by developing institutional capabilities to perform the required tasks, but also by providing training, equipment and other forms of assistance from within the region.
23. As support for the activities of the regional co-operative programme:
 - 23.1 Training programmes should be organised for personnel from the region. These programmes should be carried out through existing national, regional or international institutions ready to offer their facilities; and
 - 23.2 Campaigns should be organised on a national and regional basis to create public awareness of national and regional issues relating to the Action Plan. Special efforts should be made to prepare materials which may be used to bring environmental concerns and activities of the regional co-operative programme to the attention of target populations.
24. Education in the principles of protection and development of marine and coastal resources should be provided as part of the ordinary educational curricula at primary, secondary and university levels, through training of special instructors or specialised training of educators, and through seminars and courses offered to the general public.

ANNEX I of the Action Plan
Integrated Coastal Zone Management

Introduction

1. The ESCAP/UNEP/SACEP Intergovernmental Meeting on Capacity Building in Coastal Environmental Management in the South Asian Seas Region, 17 - 19 May 1994, New Delhi, endorsed Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) as a priority element for environmentally sound and sustainable development of marine and coastal areas in the region (ENR/CBCEM/REP). This is in harmony with worldwide acknowledgement of the urgent need for Integrated Coastal Resources Management as expressed in Agenda 21, Chapter 17.
2. The region as a whole has important assets in terms of human and institutional capacity in relevant scientific, economic, social and technological fields and planning experiences. Therefore, specifically targeted regional co-operation activities could boost the exchange of experiences, information, data and expertise in relevant sectors; promote co-operative research programmes and technology transfer; and support the development of suitable planning guidelines, awareness-raising initiatives, scientific and technological means and capacity -building activities.
3. Activities should be carried out through the implementation of pilot projects in ICZM in each country of the region. Guidelines for the development of pilot project activities are presented in document ENR/CBCEM/2/REV.2 - Capacity-building requirements: Priority Projects and Strategy for their Implementation - of the ESCAP/UNEP/SACEP Intergovernmental Meeting on capacity Building in Coastal Environmental management in the South Asian Seas Region.

Activities

4. The following activities have been selected for staged implementation by South Asian Member States:
 - (a) Preparation of Coastal Profiles, including:
 - project scope, i.e. definitions, geographic boundary;
 - identification of issues and priorities;
 - preparation of development outlooks and strategies for their achievement, and analysis of the social and economic implications of the proposed strategies;
 - identification of information gaps;
 - proposal for the preparation of a comprehensive and integrated management plan;
 - analysis of the legal and financial requirements posed by the ICZM Project Proposal; and
 - proposal for the institutional arrangements needed to support the co-ordination and implementation of the pilot project.
 - (b) Analysis and Forecasting, including:
 - surveys and research on selected issues within sectors of human and economic activities
 - analysis of natural systems, and human and economic activities in the coastal area;
 - assessment of exposure to risks, e.g. sea-level rise, natural hazards; and
 - preparation of resource atlas.

The purpose of this phase is to provide an analytical basis for the establishment of precise goals and objectives. and definition of management strategies for sustainable development in the coastal area.

(c) Definition of Goals and Strategies, including:

- refinement and adoption of goals and objectives;
- preparation of strategies; and
- evaluation of and decision on the most suitable energy.

Decision-making bodies at the highest level must approve of the goals and strategies of environmentally sustainable development in the coastal area concerned.

(d) Integration of detailed Plans and Management Policies, including:

- establishment of procedures for the approval and periodic revision of the plan;
- identification of those authorities which will adopt the planning policies and introduce the planning controls into their operations;
- definition of expenditure priorities and the technical personnel required to implement the plan; and
- specify the instruments to be used in the plan implementation.

(e) Implementation of Plans

The plan implementation will be most efficient if implemented in well defined phases.

ANNEX II of the Action Plan

Development and Implementation of National and Regional Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Planning

Introduction

1. The ESCAP/UNEP/SACEP Intergovernmental Meeting on Capacity Building in Coastal Environmental Management in the South Asian Seas Region, 17 - 19 May 1994, New Delhi, endorsed the Development and Implementation of National and Regional Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Planning as a priority element for environmentally sound and sustainable development of marine and coastal areas in the region (ENR/CBCEM/REP). This is in harmony with worldwide acknowledgement of the urgent need for Integrated Coastal Resources Management as expressed in Agenda 21, Chapter 17.
2. The risk associated with oil transportation along the routes of the region is high due to the intensity of oil tanker movements. Therefore, this component builds on earlier studies and regional initiatives in the field and aims at enhancing consultation and technical co-operation among the states of the region. The proposed strategy involves capacity building activities in marine environmental monitoring; marine pollution modelling and impact assessment; information storage and exchange; planning and operational capabilities required for marine pollution emergencies; and development of adequate policies and management practices and appropriate legislation in the field.
3. Activities should be carried out through the guidelines for the development of project activities that are presented in document ENR/CBCEM/2/REV.2 - Capacity-building requirements: Priority Projects and Strategy for their Implementation - of the ESCAP/UNEP/SACEP Intergovernmental Meeting on Capacity Building in Coastal Environmental Management in the South Asian Seas Region.

Activities

4. The following activities have been selected for the implementation by the South Asian Seas member States.
 - (a) Updating the South Asian Marine Pollution Emergency Plan;
 - (b) Risk analysis and assessment of infrastructure requirements for pollution emergencies, and development of mechanisms for implementation of the Plan;
 - (c) Assistance in developing and updating National Marine Pollution Contingency Plans;
 - (d) Preparation of national training and manpower development plans for marine environmental monitoring, response and combat including surveillance of oil spills and information collection and management;
 - (e) Collection, storage and dissemination of data through RENRIC of SACEP;
 - (f) Assistance in the development of national legislation where necessary; and
 - (g) Preparation of technical guidelines and dissemination to member states.

ANNEX III of the Action Plan

Human Resources Development through Strengthening Regional Centres of Excellence

Introduction

1. The ESCAP/UNEP/SACEP Intergovernmental Meeting on Capacity Building in Coastal Environmental Management in the South Asian Seas region, 17 - 19 May 1994, New Delhi, endorsed Human Resources Development through Strengthening Regional Centres of Excellence as a priority element for environmentally sound and sustainable development of marine and coastal areas in the region (ENR/CBCEM/REP). This is in harmony with worldwide acknowledgement of the urgent need for marine environmental protection as expressed in Agenda 21, Chapter 17.
2. The region as a whole has important assets in terms of human and institutional capacity in relevant scientific, economic, social and technological fields and planning experiences. The centres of excellence should address the requirements of human resource development in a regional perspective, through training programmes targeted to personnel from the countries of the region, fellowship schemes for enhancing the inter regional sharing of expertise and experiences, and joint research programmes in relevant fields. The centres should serve the main purpose of strengthening the development of human resources within the region in close link with the activities identified in Annexes 1 and 2.
3. Activities should be carried out through the guidelines for the development of project activities that are presented in document ENR/CBCEM/2/REV.2 - Capacity-building requirements: Priority Projects and Strategy for their Implementation - of the ESCAP/UNEP/SACEP Intergovernmental Meeting on Capacity Building in Coastal Environmental Management in the South Asian Seas Region.

Activities

4. The following activities have been selected for the implementation by South Asian member States:
 - (a) Development of research programmes and projects and sharing of experience in the empowerment of local communities;
 - (b) Development of guidelines for multidisciplinary research in Integrated Coastal Zone Management (based on the implementation of the pilot projects) and for the replication of pilot experiences;
 - (c) Training of personnel involved in pilot projects on ICZM in all aspects of ICZM and for future ICZM projects and preparation of training manual; and
 - (d) Refinement and testing of methodologies and techniques for participatory research and for eliciting community participation that would facilitate plan implementation.

ANNEX IV of the Action Plan

Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities

Introduction

1. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea 1982 came into force on November 16, 1994. Its universality has been assured by means of an Implementing Agreement relating to Part XI of the Convention which was opened for signature in July 1994. All the countries of the South Asian region are signatories to this umbrella Convention which regulates the activities of nations in the ocean sector both within and outside national jurisdiction. The Convention has specific provisions relating to the prevention, reduction and control of marine pollution from land-based activities.
2. The South Asian Seas region is characterized by the location of some of the largest population concentrations in the world. The cities and urban agglomerations situated on the coast are the single largest polluters of the marine environment. Untreated sewage and industrial effluent, solid waste and agricultural activities are identified as amongst the most significant causes of pollution of coastal waters. Other causes of degradation to coastal ecosystems include the mining of sand and coral, and exploitation of fishery stocks. Coral reefs and mangroves are identified as among the most important ecosystems that are threatened from land-based activities.
3. In this context, it should be noted that a Regional Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the South Asian Seas from Land-based Activities was prepared by SACEP for the Meeting of Government-designated Experts to Review and Revise a Global Programme of Action to Protect the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, Reykjavik, 6-10 March 1995 (document UNEP(OCA)SAS WG3/9). This document will be reviewed and adopted at a later date.

Activities

4. The following activities have been selected for implementation by South Asian Seas member States:
 - (a) Development of a strategy, including refinement of the Programme of Action, for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the South Asian Seas from Land-based Activities;
 - (b) Development of a regional programme for monitoring of marine pollution in the coastal waters of the South Asian Seas and the regular exchange of relevant data and information;
 - (c) Development of pilot activities in countries of the South Asian Seas to control the degradation of the marine and coastal environment from land-based activities;
 - (d) Training of personnel involved in these pilot projects to control the degradation of the marine and coastal environment from land-based activities, including preparation of a training manual;
 - (e) Development of a regional programme to identify the special problems of the largest coastal cities, each having a population of more than 10 million by the year 2000, and of the island States in the areas of: (i) disposal of domestic effluents; and (ii) collection and disposal of solid wastes;

The programme may also include identification of appropriate technologies from the developed world for disposal of these wastes and their application.

- (f) Development of a regional programme for identification of industrial technologies which are clean, environmentally friendly and existing in the countries of the region, and their introduction to ensure minimization of effluent generation and efficient disposal;

The programme may also include strengthening of institutions in the countries of the region for developing these technologies with the support of developed Nations and global funding.

- (g) Development of a special programme to address the problems of the island States and territories in terms of regulating use of non-biodegradable and hazardous substances imported from outside.

INSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN

1. The efficient implementation of the Action Plan will be mutually dependent upon action at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. It is therefore, important to identify the lines of authority and communication for both policy and technical working levels and to develop appropriate institutional capabilities and co-operative mechanisms for each. This will contribute to strengthening of the Regional Seas Programme as requested in Agenda 21.

OVERALL AUTHORITY AND POLICY GUIDANCE

2. The regular periodic meeting of the Governments (Intergovernmental Meetings) will be the sole authority in determining the content, review, progress and approval of the workplan of the regional programme. The purview of the Intergovernmental Meeting will also include the financial implications of the regional programme.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETINGS

3. The meetings of Governments of Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka shall normally be held every two years, or as the need arises.
4. The chairmanship of the meeting shall be given to each Member State, in turn, in alphabetical order. The chairmanship shall be for a period of two calendar years.
5. It shall be the function of the meetings of the Governments to keep under review the implementation and execution of the Action Plan and should make policy decisions concerning all substantive and financial matters and, in particular, should:
 - (i) review the progress achieved in implementing the programmes since the previous meeting;
 - (ii) careful evaluation of the results achieved;
 - (iii) adopt a workplan for the implementation of the programme in the subsequent two year period;
 - (iv) provide the policy guidance for the procedures to be followed in the implementation of the programme;
 - (v) approve the budgetary resources required to support the workplan and their allocation for a two year period;
 - (vi) agree upon the means for financing activities of the programme, including firm pledges for contributions to be made by Governments; and
6. The Rules of Procedure of SACEP Governing Council will be applied mutatis mutandis for the conduct of the Meetings.
7. Intergovernmental meetings of participating States will normally be held at Ministerial Level.

8. The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, which is the Secretariat for the Action Plan, shall make all arrangements for conducting the meetings at a suitable venue as decided by the meeting of Governments. The Director, SACEP, will act as the Secretary to the Meeting.
9. A Consultative Committee comprising of the diplomatic representatives of the Member States of the South Asian Seas in Sri Lanka will meet quarterly at the SACEP Secretariat. The Director, SACEP, will act as the Secretary to the Committee.
10. The functions of the Consultative Committee will be mainly:
 - (i) to deliberate on the activities which require immediate action; and
 - (ii) to review the progress achieved in implementing the Action Plan.

NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS

11. The active participation and co-operation of the South Asian Seas States in the programme are basic prerequisites for its success. In order to achieve efficient and well co-ordinated co-operation at both the national and regional levels, a National Focal Point should be established (or an existing structure should be designated) at a high level in each of the participating Governments to harmonise, on the National level, all matters concerning the regional programme. The involvement of the NGOs in the implementation of the Action Plan will be encouraged.
12. The role of the National Focal Point should be:
 - (i) to act as the only official channel of communication with the Member States;
 - (ii) to co-ordinate, as appropriate, the participation of national institutions and agencies through National Project Co-ordinators in the agreed programme; and
 - (iii) to consult with all relevant organisations concerned in their respective Governments on the activities and progress achieved in implementing the Action Plan.

NATIONAL PROJECT CO-ORDINATORS

13. The activities identified under the action plan will be implemented by and large on project basis. In order to achieve successful implementation of the projects identified under the action plan through the Government Departments, National and other institutions, National Project Co-ordinators for each project will have to be established by the National Focal Points.
14. The role of National Project Co-ordinators should be:
 - (i) to co-ordinate, as appropriate the participation of Government Departments, National and other institutions and agencies in the formulation and implementation of the projects identified; and
 - (ii) to periodically inform the National Focal Point and SACEP about the progress made under the projects identified.

NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

15. National institutions to be selected and designated by the National Focal Points (such as Research Centres, Laboratories, Government Institutions and Agencies, Universities) should provide the institutional basis for carrying out the technical work of the programmes's activities. They should be the principal executing or implementing agencies of the project activities and will be under the overall control of National Project Co-ordinators identified by the National Focal Points. The involvement of Non-Government Organizations in the implementation of the Action Plan should be encouraged.
16. In order to allow for complete and effective participation in agreed activities, technical and managerial assistance (such as equipment and training) should be provided through the Action Plan to strengthen, when necessary, the capabilities of national institutions participating in the programme.

NATIONAL CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

17. Experience has shown that a higher degree of efficiency and mobilisation of National Institutions can be achieved by the establishment, in each of the participating States, of a National Committee for the regional programme composed of representatives of the most important National Institutions (Ministries, Government Institutions and Agencies, Universities, other Research Centres, etc). Such a committee, to be set up by each country, can play a crucial role in mobilising support within each State, for the activities of the regional programme. In proposing the establishment of such a committee, it is clear that it is left to the discretion of each government to review its national administrative structure and to decide whether such a committee could usefully serve to promote and strengthen its national participation in the regional programme.

NETWORKING

18. A networking system will be established among SACEP, National Focal Points and National Project Co-ordinators. Under the network, SACEP will play the key role of co-ordination in carrying out various activities and projects identified under the Action Plan. The interaction of SACEP will always be with the National Focal Points and the National Project Co-ordinators in carrying out its tasks. Regional institutions participating on a voluntary basis can have interaction both with SACEP as well as with the National Project Co-ordinators.

SECRETARIAT

19. The foregoing established the need for a Secretariat, which will be responsible for the overall co-ordination and continuous monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan.
20. Taking into consideration the fact that UNEP's contacts with the Governments concerned during the preparatory stages leading to the adoption of the Action Plan showed a strong support for designating the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) as responsible for the Secretariat functions of the regional programme. The Second Meeting of National Focal Points on the Development of an Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the South Asian Seas Region held on 7 - 11 December 1987, recommended that the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) should be considered as the Secretariat of the Action Plan once it is adopted.

21. It is recommended that the Secretariat be strengthened, but be kept to a minimal size in order to ensure that the maximum amount of available funds may be used to achieve the programme goals, set forth in the Action Plan.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SECRETARIAT

22. The Secretariat would be responsible for the overall technical management and co-ordination of the activities carried out under the regional programme, including the administration and management of the programme, its project activities and budget as adopted or modified by the Intergovernmental Meeting and Management of the finances of the South Asian Seas Programme.
23. The general functions of the Secretariat shall be to:
- (i) formulate project documents for specific activities agreed upon as part of the regional programme and locate and mobilise funds for the projects from donors;
 - (ii) negotiate and co-ordinate the execution of regional projects through the network of National Focal Points and National Project Co-ordinators as well as international, regional and sub-regional organisations;
 - (iii) collect, collate and analyse results obtained through project activities and disseminate relevant and related information as appropriate;
 - (iv) organise Expert, Focal Point and Intergovernmental Meetings to be held in connection with the regional programme, including preparation of reports and other documents for the meetings;
 - (v) keep the National Focal Points and the Consultative Committee regularly informed of the progress achieved in carrying out the work programme, the results achieved and problems encountered;
 - (vi) manage the financial resources available for the implementation of the Action Plan; and
 - (vii) seek and encourage the involvement of United Nations Organizations, multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors, and Non-Government Organizations in the implementation of the Programme of Action.
24. The Secretariat will not be expected to conduct field research and execute projects, since such research and project execution will have to be undertaken primarily by the National Institutions, if necessary, with the co-operation and assistance of international and regional organisations. The Secretariat would serve as a co-ordinating centre providing information, identifying regional experts and institutions to aid participating States in solving specific environmental problems, facilitating information exchange and co-operation among these experts and institutions and promoting project activities identified by the Governments.

PERSONNEL/STAFF

25. The composition and expertise of the staff of the Secretariat will depend upon the activities and the magnitude of the programme adopted by the Governments. It is proposed as a long term objective that the Secretariat for the regional programme should be adequately strengthened.
26. For tasks that require specific expertise, the Secretariat will be assisted by consultants recruited from the region as far as possible.

COST OF THE SECRETARIAT

27. The costs of the operation of the Secretariat are related to the co-ordination of the activities agreed within the framework of the adopted programme and includes the servicing the meetings, core staff and the administrative costs. The estimated annual cost for the core staff of the Secretariat of the South Asian Seas Regional Programme is given in Appendix I.

SOUTH ASIAN SEAS ACTION PLAN TRUST FUND

28. The Second Meeting of the National Focal Points on the Development of an Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the South Asian Seas Region held on 7 - 11 December 1987, recommended that a Fund supporting the Action plan should be established and SACEP should be entrusted with its management. The fund is to receive:
- (i) annual contributions from the Member States to meet the cost of institutional arrangements;
 - (ii) contributions from the Member States as well as from the UN, including catalytic funding from the UNEP Regional Seas Programme and other organisations, agencies etc., to meet the cost of implementation of projects identified under the action plan; and
 - (iii) contributions from any other source agreed to by the Member States.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

29. The management of funds contributed by the Members States to meet the institutional costs of the Secretariat will be entrusted to SACEP. With reference to funds required to implement the projects identified under the action plan, the financial contribution by the member states will always be on a project basis. The countries involved in the project would contribute on a mutually agreed basis.

Financial contributions in support of implementation of the Action Plan may also come from, for example, United Nations Organisations, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), States supporting the regional programme but not participating in it, and regional and international organisations which are not part of the United Nations System. Funds may also come from any other source agreed to by the Member States. Contribution to the Action Plan activities and projects may be both on a cash or in kind (staff time, experts, training facilities, ship time, services etc) basis.

SCALE OF CONTRIBUTION TO INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE SECRETARIAT

30. The Third Meeting of National Focal Points on the Development of an Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the South Asian Seas Region, held on 23 - 25 November 1994, considered many possible ways to determine the level of contributions for the institutional arrangements and recommended the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) Scale of Contribution to meet the institutional arrangements as follows:

All participating States shall on an annual basis, contribute to the South Asian Seas Trust Fund according to the same ratios in the SAARC Scale of Assessment agreed upon by SAARC Member States, where the maximum contribution from a Member State is 35% whilst the minimum contribution is to be 5%.

SAARC SCALE OF ASSESSMENT

CONTRIBUTOR	A	B
BANGLADESH	11.35	14.50
INDIA	32.10	35.00
MALDIVES	5.00	6.50
PAKISTAN	23.85	29.50
SRI LANKA	11.35	14.50
T O T A L	83.65	100.00

COLUMN A: Percentage contribution to the SAARC Secretariat

COLUMN B: Contribution to the proposed South Asian Seas Fund based on A with a maximum contribution being 35% and minimum being 5%.

APPENDIX 1: ESTIMATED COST FOR THE SECRETARIAT OF SAS REGIONAL PROGRAMME

(Expressed in US \$)

	COST ITEM	FIRST YEAR	SECOND YEAR
1.	<u>PERSONNEL</u>		
	International		
	Programme Officer(s)	40,000	
	Local		
	1 Secretary	2,500	
2.	<u>OFFICE INFRASTRUCTURE</u>		
	Furniture	1,500	
3.	RENTAL AND MAINTENANCE	5,000	
4.	ADMINISTRATION COSTS	5,000	
5.	MEETINGS AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL	10,000	
6.	DOCUMENTS	2,500	
7.	CONTINGENCIES	5,000	
	TOTAL	71,500	
	RECURRENT	70,000	76,000
	CAPITAL	1,500	

ANNEX V

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION 1: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOUTH ASIAN SEAS ACTION PLAN

The Meeting of Plenipotentiaries.

Noting that the overall authority for the Action Plan is vested in the Governments of the region and having adopted, on 24 March 1995, the Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region,

1. Decides that, for the period 1995-1996, programme activities should be undertaken in the following areas, subject to the availability of resources:

Annex 1 - Integrated Coastal Zone Management;

Annex 2 - Development and Implementation of National and Regional Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Planning;

Annex 3 - Human Resource Development through Strengthening Regional Centres of Excellence; and

Annex 4 - Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment from Land Based Activities.

2. Invites the Director of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP),

- (a) To act as the Secretariat for the South Asian Seas Action Plan and to enhance its capacities for this purpose.
- (b) To prepare, with the support of the UNEP's Regional Seas Programme and in co-operation with the other competent international and regional organizations, including ADB, ESCAP, IOC of UNESCO, IMO, UNDP and Governments of the region, detailed documents describing the operational details of projects to be developed on the basis of priorities identified in 1. above.
- (c) To convene, quarterly at the SACEP Secretariat, meetings of the Consultative Committee to review the progress achieved in implementing the Action Plan and to deliberate on activities which require immediate attention. The Consultative Committee will also advise on financial implications of project implementation and if necessary advise the secretariat on their revision.
- (d) To co-ordinate the implementation of the projects agreed at the Meeting of Plenipotentiaries, subject to the availability of funds.

RESOLUTION 2: INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOUTH ASIAN SEAS ACTION PLAN

The Meeting of Plenipotentiaries.

Having adopted the Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region,

Noting the willingness of SACEP to accept the designation as the organization responsible for the secretariat functions of the South Asian Seas Action Plan (SASAP),

1. Calls upon the Director of SACEP, in consultation with the Governments of the South Asian Seas region, with the support of UNEP and in close co-operation with the relevant United Nations bodies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to make such arrangements as required to achieve the objectives of the SASAP.

2. Also calls upon the Director of SACEP to convene every two years an Intergovernmental meeting of the States of the South Asian Seas region in order to keep under review the implementation and execution of the Action Plan and make policy decisions concerning all substantive and financial matters relating to the SASAP. Specifically, the Intergovernmental meetings should:

- (a) review the progress achieved in implementing the programmes since the previous meeting;
- (b) carefully evaluate the results achieved;
- (c) adopt a workplan for the implementation of the programme in the subsequent two year period;
- (d) provide the policy guidance for the procedures to be followed in the implementation of the programme;
- (e) approve the budgetary resources required to support the workplan and their allocation for a two year period; and
- (f) agree on the means of financing activities of the programme, including firm pledges for contributions to be made by Governments.

3. Requests the Director of SACEP to convene in 1997 an Intergovernmental Meeting in order to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the Action Plan and to further consider the institutional and financial arrangements.

4. Also requests the Director of SACEP to convene, quarterly at the SACEP Secretariat, a meeting of the Consultative Committee to provide the secretariat with policy guidance on the implementation of the decisions taken at the Meeting of Plenipotentiaries and subsequent Intergovernmental Meetings.

RESOLUTION 3: FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOUTH ASIAN SEAS ACTION PLAN

The Meeting of Plenipotentiaries,

Having adopted the Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region,

Noting the willingness of SACEP to be entrusted with the management of the proposed South Asian Seas Action Plan (SASAP) Trust Fund,

Also noting the readiness of the States of the region to contribute to the costs for implementation of the Action Plan through a SASAP Trust Fund,

1. Decides that the SASAP Trust Fund be financed, at least for the initial two year period, by annual contribution according to the ratios in the SAARC Scale of Assessment agreed upon by SAARC member States, where the maximum contribution from a member State is 35% whilst the minimum contribution is 5%. The actual contributions from the states are to be assessed as follows:

COUNTRY	%	1995 US\$	1996 US\$
Bangladesh	14.5	10,367.50	11,020.00
India	35.0	25,025.00	26,600.00
Maldives	6.5	4,647.50	4,940.00
Pakistan	29.5	21,092.50	22,420.00
Sri Lanka	14.5	10,367.50	11,020.00
TOTAL		71,500.00	76,000.00

2. Requests the Director of SACEP to assume responsibility for administering the SASAP Trust Fund.

3. Urges the States to pay their contributions in equal yearly installments, starting from April 1995.

4. Calls upon the Director of SACEP, with support from UNEP's Regional Seas Programme, UNDP, ESCAP, IMO, IOC of UNESCO, Asian Development Bank and other relevant organizations to search for additional financial resources which may be available for the implementation of the SASAP, in particular to approach the Global Environment Facility on behalf of the participating States to seek funds for the implementation of the components of the South Asian Seas Action Plan.

5. Undertakes to explore potential international sources of additional financial support for the implementation of the South Asian Seas Action Plan.

ANNEX VI

Meeting of Plenipotentiaries on the Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region

New Delhi, 24 March 1995

FINAL ACT

1. The Meeting of Plenipotentiaries on the Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas Region was convened, at the request of the Governments of the region, by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme pursuant to decision 11/7 of the General Council, adopted 24 May 1983, which requested "*...the Executive Director to designate the South Asian Seas as a region to be included in the regional seas programme, in close co-operation with the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme and the Governments of the Region, and to assist in the formulation of a plan of action for the environmental protection of the South Asian Seas.*"
2. The Meeting was held in New Delhi at the invitation of the Government of India on 24 March 1995.
3. The States invited to participate at the Meeting of Plenipotentiaries were the: People's Republic of Bangladesh, Republic of India, Republic of Maldives, Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.
4. All of the afore mentioned states accepted the invitation and participated in the Meeting.
5. Representatives of the following Intergovernmental organisations also attended the Meeting: Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP); International Maritime Organization (IMO); Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO; South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP); and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
6. The Meeting was inaugurated on behalf of the Government of India by Hon. Mr Pranab Mukherjee, Minister for External Affairs. The meeting was opened, on behalf of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, by Mr Peter Schroder, Director, Oceans and Coastal Areas Programme Activity Centre. An opening statement was also made by Mr Eduardo Faleiro, Minister for Ocean Development, Government of India.
7. The Meeting elected Mr Eduardo Faleiro (India) as President of the Meeting, Mr M. Abul Quasem (Bangladesh), Mr Asif Shuja Khan (Pakistan) and Ms S. Athulathmudali (Sri Lanka) as Vice Presidents, and Mr Hussain Shihab (Maldives) as Rapporteur.

8. The Meeting considered the Report of the Fourth Meeting of National Focal Points, presented as UNEP(OCA)SAS WG3/REP. This document contained the proposed final drafts of the Action Plan with Annexes, Institutional and Financial Arrangements, Resolutions and the Final Act to be adopted by the Meeting of Plenipotentiaries.

9. As a result of the deliberations at the Meeting, the Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the South Asian Seas Region, with Annexes, and the Institutional and Financial Arrangements for the Implementation of the Action Plan were adopted.

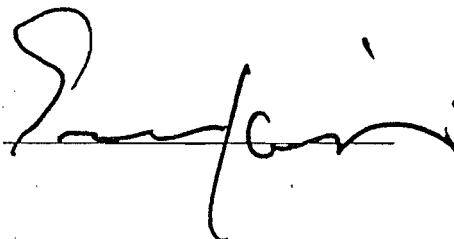
10. The Meeting also considered and adopted the Resolutions, the texts of which are appended to this Final Act.

The Action Plan for the Protection and Management of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the South Asian Seas was signed by the representatives of: People's Republic of Bangladesh; Republic of India; Republic of Maldives; Islamic Republic of Pakistan; and Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

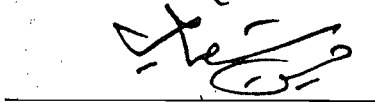
In witness whereof the representatives have signed this Final Act.

Done at New Delhi, this 24th day of March, 1995, in a single original copy, to be deposited in the archive of Department of Ocean Development, Government of India, New Delhi.

People's Republic of Bangladesh



Republic of India




Republic of Maldives



Islamic Republic of Pakistan



Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

In witness whereof 
UNEP