



EDITORIAL

The fragile eco-systems on which all human societies are built, are dependent on clean air, fresh water and productive soil. We human beings in the recent past, have individually or collectively eroded these foundations almost nearing the point of no return. It is reported that should this trend continue, when we enter the 21st Century, one-third of world's productive land would only be dust and more than one million species may have been driven to extinction and the world climate would most certainly have changed bringing about with it enormous intolerable changes in the natural eco-systems.

Air pollution is continuing to destroy thousands of lakes and vast expanses of forests, whilst unsafe drinking water kills about 25,000 people a day in the Third World Countries.

Therefore, it is increasingly clear that these challenges to the environment have to be met and should be met with a mobilization of a regional effort and with attacks from all fronts.

In this context, the role of SACEP in the South Asian Region takes on an added importance. The formal concurrence on the Action Plan for the South Asian Seas Programme and the implementation of the already identified six priority projects which includes the preparation of guidelines and formulation of policies for controlling Land Base Sources of Marine Pollution, the Development of an Operational Regional Contingency Plan for Responding to Marine Pollution Emergencies will be its topmost priority. The other projects presently coming under execution are the setting up an Environmental Information Network with ADB assistance, the proposal for declaring the 90's as the Decade of Environment for South Asia, the UNIDO assisted setting up of a major Pilot Plant for the Treatment of Industrial Effluents using Modern Technologies with adequate provision for training needs of the Member States and the possible establishment of a close link with SAARC in combating Environmental Disasters in South Asia Region.

The need to support SACEP in the above ventures was never greater than that of the present for the Member States and the International Organisations.

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5TH GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING OF SACEP

The 5th Governing Council Meeting of SACEP scheduled to be held in September 1989 in Colombo had to be postponed due to some unavoidable reasons. The Consultative Committee of SACEP which met subsequently on this issue, has decided this Meeting be held sometime in 1990.

The Government of Sri Lanka, who stepped in to host this Meeting in September 1989, has informed the Secretariat that since they have already hosted such a Meeting and an opportunity should be afforded to other Member Countries who have not yet had the honour of hosting such a Meeting.

Consequently, the Consultative Committee has authorised the Secretariat to ascertain from the Member States which have not yet hosted such a Meeting, whether they are willing to host the SACEP Governing Council V Meeting sometime in 1990.

As such, the Secretariat is now in communication with the concerned Member States to obtain their agreement for hosting this Meeting sometime in 1990.

SACEP CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING MEETING/WORKSHOPS

TITLE	TIME FRAME	VENUE
1. 1st ESCAP Expert Group Meeting on the Report of the State of the Environment in Asia and Pacific.	30th April-4th May '90	Bangkok
2. 2nd ESCAP Expert Group Meeting on the Report of the State of the Environment in Asia and Pacific.	End June 1990	Bangkok
3. SACEP/ESCAP Workshop on Coastal Resources Management Planning	10 Days in August 1990	Karachi, Pakistan (Venue to be Confirmed)
4. ESCAP Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in Asia and the Pacific	10-16 October 1990	Bangkok
5. SACEP GC V Meeting	2nd Half 1990	To be confirmed

MALE DECLARATION ON GLOBAL WARMING AND SEA LEVEL RISE, MALE, 14-18 NOVEMBER 1989

In the light of the scientific consensus regarding the likelihood of climate change and global warming and deeply concerned over the changing global environment and its possible adverse effects, particularly the threat of sea-level rise, the Small States gathered here in Male' from 14-18 November 1989, declare their intent to work, collaborate and seek international co-operation to protect the low-lying small coastal and island States of the world from the dangers posed by climate change, global warming and sea level rise.

THEREFORE, WE, THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SMALL STATES GATHERED HERE:

1. **Decide** to develop a programme of action within the small States for co-operation and exchange of information on strategies and policies in relation to climate change, global warming and sea-level rise which are common concerns of mankind; and in particular, to:
 - a) establish an Action Group, initially comprising of representatives from the Caribbean, South Pacific, Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean regions, to oversee the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Small States Conference on Sea Level Rise, to co-ordinate a joint approach on the issues of climate change, global warming and sea level rise, and to pursue and follow up on global and regional response strategies.
 - b) consider the establishment of a climate and sea level programme and a monitoring network as an important component within the global measuring systems; recognizing the urgent necessity to take initial measures to create a monitoring infrastructure, bearing in mind the specific interests of small developing island States, to apply to the appropriate United Nations Agencies (in particular WMO, UNEP, UNESCO) for assistance in its implementation;
 - c) mount a campaign to increase awareness of the international community of the particular vulnerability of the small States to sea level rise;
 - d) consider the most effective manner in which the small States can participate in the work of the Inter-governmental Panel on change, and seek assistance for such participation; and
 - e) seek assistance from the UN, its Agencies and other appropriate institutions in the implementation of the decisions contained in this Declaration.

2. **Call upon** all States of the world family of Nations to take immediate and effective measures according to their capabilities and the means at their disposal, to control, limit or reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, and to consider ways and means of protecting the small States of the world which are most vulnerable to sea-level rise.
3. **Urge** all States to take immediate measures to enhance energy efficiency and to formulate plans and strategies for a change over, as far as possible, to alternative, less environmentally harmful sources of energy.
4. **Recommend** that where necessary all States take immediate measures to establish the institutional framework to protect and manage their coastal zones and to enact legislation to facilitate such measures.
5. **Call upon** all States to undertake environmental impact assessment studies for all development projects, review existing development programmes in terms of environmental impact assessment and strengthen environmental management capabilities.
6. **Recommend** that small coastal and island States take adequate measures to maintain their aquifers and protect vulnerable natural ecosystems such as coral reefs and mangroves, which may already be at risk, as they can provide natural protection against the adverse effects of climate change, global warming and sea level rise.
7. **Appeal** to all States to embark on intensive afforestation and/or re-vegetation programmes with emphasis on the selection of plants and trees suitable for the different soil conditions, and salt-tolerant varieties for the protection of coastal areas.
8. **Recommend** that research be intensified in understanding the complex inter-relationships concerning climate change, greenhouse effect sea-level rise and their implications on the environment and also to determine methods of ameliorating the impacts of these changes on coastal ecosystem.
9. **Urge** the industrialized nations to develop modalities and mechanisms to facilitate funding, technology transfer and training in areas related to the causes and problems associated with the rise in sea level. In this regard, the States facing immediate threat should be assigned a higher priority for assistance.

10. **Support** the call by the developing countries of the world for the strengthening of the existing funding, technology transfer and information mechanisms, not excluding the development of new mechanisms to assist them in implementing measures to control, limit or reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and adapt to and protect themselves from the adverse effects of unavoidable climate change, global warming and sea level rise. Such mechanisms would also help to ensure that the transition to a more and environmentally sound worldwide programme of sustainable development can be achieved.

11. **Call** for negotiations for a framework convention on climate change to start as soon as possible after the adoption of the interim report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

MS. BENAZIR BHUTTO PRIME MINISTER OF PAKISTAN

"We can stop the advancing deserts and regreen the lost areas by replanting the trees. We can use the forests and rangelands more judiciously and check floods and soil erosion. We can combat water logging and salinity and make better use of land for farming. We can prevent pollution and improve the quality of life in human settlements. Above all, given the will, we have the capability to alleviate poverty, the major cause of most of our environmental problems."



Mr A.M.S. Hoque, Director South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, (SACEP) delivered the Key Note Speech at the Seminar held at the Institution of Engineers, Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 2nd November 1989 on 'Air Pollution and Controlling Measures in Bangladesh.'

AFGHANISTAN

NEW AND RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY

The Republic of Afghanistan is rich in new and renewable sources of energy viz, Biogas, solar, wind and Micro-hydel resources. Renewable energy can substitute for oil in a variety of modern sector uses in transport, industry, and production of electric power, etc. Traditional energy sources such as firewood, charcoal, crop residues and animal dung, account for virtually all of the fuel used in rural areas and may account for about 75-80% of the total energy consumption in Afghanistan.

The rural energy crisis stems from the fact that Afghanistan like other developing countries has been consuming its wood supplies more rapidly than it is renewing them, with grave environmental, economic, and human consequences.

Fuel wood harvesting in the Republic of Afghanistan to meet the energy needs of growing populations, land clearing for agricultural purposes and increased lumbering together may consume the forests at rate of some 1 - 1.5% per year.

As the fuel wood supplies have dwindled, people have turned increasingly to burning of agricultural residues depriving the soil of valuable nutrients and organic conditioning materials.

The development of renewable energy will have its most important impact in helping Afghanistan meet this "Second" energy crisis. This impact should be measured not only by the quantity of energy produced but also by the condition made towards welfare and development.

New and Renewable Energy, in particular Biogas, solar, wind and Micro-hydel can have a major impact on rural development and touch the lives of large numbers of peasants and rural population in the Republic of Afghanistan by providing energy for: Agriculture, Rural industries, and domestic purposes. In urban areas like Kabul, it can provide the energy requirement for heating and cooking, etc.

One of the development priorities of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan is the most effective and efficient utilization of the country's scarce domestic resources, with the ultimate aim of further self-sufficient development process and of increasing the standard of living of its peasants, workers and other population.

To this end, the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has established

a project entitled "New and Renewable Energy R and D Centre" under the Ministry of Electrical Energy in Kabul with the aid of the United Nations, regarding the following objectives:

1. Establishment of a fully functioning Centre.
2. Established capacity within the Centre of applied research on development of NRSE equipments and projects Renewable Energy building designs, locally made, and imported solar devices and solar photovoltaic equipment like pumps for their application in Afghanistan.
3. Established capacity of local production on a pilot basis, of cost effective appliances based on solar energy for domestic Industrial and Agricultural uses. (space heating, water heating, cooking, drying).
4. Established capacity to organize public information programme for mass education on the use and economies of NRSE appliances.

BANGLADESH

75 Per Cent City vehicles emit Black Smoke

The Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) has asked the motor vehicle owners whose vehicles have been found to be emitting excessive black smoke and have other faults to repair their vehicles by December 20.

An Official handout says that the time limit in this regard has been extended and if the owners fail to repair their vehicles by December 20, they will face prosecution and route permits, and fitness certificates of their faulty vehicles will be cancelled.

According to a survey carried out by the Department of Environment (DOE), nearly 75 per cent of the vehicles in the city emit harmful black smoke in the air.

The survey found that the number of vehicles in the city has been increasing with the rise of population since the independence. The vehicles plying on the city streets are mostly old and reconditioned. They emit sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, hydro carbon, lead chloride etc., which, mingling with dust and industrial pollutants, pollutes the city's environment.

The black smoke and the different harmful elements in it are dangerous to human health, causing headache, heart trouble, poisoning of blood stream, nausea, and cough, asthma, itching and burning of eyes, high blood pressure, anaemia etc.

What causes the black smoke?

The survey found that most of the vehicles plying in the city, lack proper maintenance, and that engines whose life span had expired long ago were being used. To meet the situation, the DOE pressed for government attention.

But occasional police checking had resulted in disappearance of vehicles from the city streets, causing inconvenience to the people.

Finally, the government formed a committee under the auspices of the Home Ministry that decided recently to conduct identification check of faulty vehicles at least twice a week in different parts of the city.

After identification, the owners of the faulty vehicles would be asked to correct faults in their vehicles within a specific time limit. After the correction of the faults, the vehicle owner must obtain a certificate from the traffic authority. Otherwise, they would be prosecuted, the committee decided.

BHUTAN

WOOD FOR ENERGY

Bhutan with its 64% land under forest, is heavily dependent on wood energy for household cooking, space heating and for several agricultural and industrial enterprises. Of the gross non-commercial energy consumption in Bhutan, wood energy accounts for about 97.4%. For people living in rural areas, wood energy is the only energy source. Due to severe climatic conditions in most parts of the country, per capita consumption of woodfuels is as high as 3.01 cu m/year or about 2.74 tons/year which is by far the highest in the region.

Most of the policy planners in the Government are convinced that the abundance of forest resources is not the reason to be complacent and that a timely action for their conservation is necessary. The fuel efficiency of the household cookstoves is hardly 10% thus resulting in burning more than 3.8 million cu m of wood annually to keep the hearth warm.

Some woodfuel using industries need large quantities of wood/charcoal. Daily consumption of charcoal by Bhutan Carbide and Chemical Industries (BCCL) alone is estimated to be about 35 tons. Additionally, industries like Cardamom drying and lemon grass oil distillation consume huge quantities of fuelwood.

The results of preliminary studies show that 30-40% of household fuelwood needs in rural areas are met from private lands and immediate farmland environment. With this background, organized plantation of fuelwood/fodder trees on private/community lands have recently been initiated. To avoid pressure on existing forests, Government is leasing private land to the industries to

raise energy plantations for their own use. Wastewood from logging areas is utilized for charcoal production. Fuelwood marketing has been started by the Government, for meeting urban needs. Special forest areas are assigned to the army, police and to urban centres, whose fuel wood consumption is very high.

Bhutan is fully aware of the lessons, good or bad, learned by other Asian countries in dealing with their forest resources. Royal Government has initiated well in time, significant measures for development and sustainable use of forest resources, on a long-term basis. A national environment strategy and forestry master plan are under preparation to orchestrate the forest based needs of the people with due concern for landuse and environment.

INDIA

NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES

The Government of India through its Department of Non-Conventional Energy Sources in the Ministry of Energy, have made vast strides in accelerating various programmes on New and Renewable sources of Energy. Research and Development activities both basic and applied, National Programmes on Biogas Development, community/Institutional Biogas Plants, National Programme on Improved Chulha, Solar Thermal Extension Programme, Solar Photovoltaic systems and Biomass programmes have progressed well.

The installation of biogas plants provides a whole range of socio-economic and environmental benefits, especially for rural development upto 1988-89. 10,80,000 Nos, family size biogas plants have been set up. Assuming 85% functionality of these plants for only 80% of the year, it is estimated that there is now an annual production of 1100 million cubic metre gas, equivalent to 38.18 lakh tonnes of fuelwood per year, valued at Indian Rs. 152.7 crores per annum. In addition, these plants are producing 18.36 million tonnes of enriched manure per year valued at Rs. 152 crores. Thus the benefits to society from the biogas plants are already in excess of Indian Rs. 300 crores per year.

The National Programme on Improved Chulhas (NPIC) continues to over-achieve the targets since inception. The cumulative numbers of improved Chulhas installed all over the country would be around 60,00,000 Nos by the end of 1988-89 and are expected to result in saving of 4.2 million tonnes of wood equivalent per year, valued at Indian Rs. 168 Crores per annum, apart from numerous benefits for the environment of rural houses and villages, and for women's welfare due to the reduction in black smoke, Rural Development efforts for improved chulhas have resulted in developing newer designs.

Solar Thermal Systems and devices in the temperature range upto 100°C are very popular. During 1988-89, 624 Nos of commercial and industrial solar water heaters of aggregate capacity of 9,57,055 litres per day with 19141 M² collectors have been installed. 1046 Nos of domestic solar water heaters with total capacity, of 1,40,250 litres per day and 2800 M² collecting area and 486 Nos of solar stills for purifying saline and brackish water have been set up.

Solar Photovoltaic technology is emerging as one of the best options for meeting decentralised electric power needs quickly in remote and isolated areas. Such power is being supplied for a variety of applications such as street lighting, lighting of community centres, primary health centres, adult education centres, drinking water supply and micro-irrigation, television, radio, night schools, railway signalling, wireless, microwave repeater station, rural telephone exchange, low-power TV transmitters etc.

Wind Energy offers another source for pumping as well as electric power generation. India has potential of over 20,000 MW for power generation and varieties as one of the promising countries for tapping this source. The cost of power generation from winds farms has now become lower than diesel power and comparable to thermal power in several areas of the country, especially near the coasts.

Under the Biomass Programme, energy plantation projects have been taken up, with a view to fulfill the needs of fuel, fodder and power generation together with food potential for rural employees upto 1988-89, 374 Nos. of gasifiers stirring engines systems totalling about 4MW capacity, have already been installed in the country.

Research and Development work on various other New and Renewable sources of Energy such as Hydrogen Energy, Ocean Energy and Chemical methods of harnessing Solar energy and other sources of energy, like power through Magneto Hydro Dynamics are continuously being intensified and expanded.

In order to reduce the consumption of diesel/petrol in the transport sector, the Department is developing renewable energy systems for transport needs and also to avoid pollution. Experience of operating a fleet of battery-powered vehicles in Delhi is being utilised in extending facilities of battery operated vehicles in some other cities of the country, such as Sri Nagar, Ahmedabad, Bharatpur, Bhatinda and Pune. As a result of R & D undertaken by the Department, Methanol fuelled engines have been developed for the entire fleet of eight buses. Equipped with these systems busses were introduced in Delhi for trial. These buses have shown saving upto 20% of diesel and covered over 4 lakh kilometers. Under another R & D Project of the Department, hydrogen is being used as a fuel to operate a motor-cycle.

The Information and Public Education campaign has contributed to Mass Awareness and larger adoption of renewable energy systems and devices. During the year, various media such as Films, TV, Radio, Press, Exhibitions, etc were fully utilised for the purpose. Exhibitions of the Department continued to be in high demand all over the country, Exhibitions were organised in rural, remote and hilly regions for helping popularisation and use of New and Renewable Sources of Energy (NRSE) systems and devices in these areas.

A report by three expert economists on the 'Economic Aspects of Renewable Energy Systems: A Collation from Available Studies' has confirmed and emphasised that many of the renewable energy systems based on solar, biogas, wind etc are now already economic from the view point of society and that there is an urgent need to give greater investment support to renewable energy systems even where they are installed in individual premises. This study concluded that the capital subsidies on renewable energy systems should be considered as investments in energy supply (apart from their environmental and social advantages) and adequate and greatly increased fund allocation should be made for such capital subsidies/investments so that more and more systems can be installed. Such investment will be more economical than investment on supplying the same energy from conventional centralised systems in many areas even today. The study also confirms that the cost of electric power from several renewable energy systems has now become competitive with conventional alternatives in several areas of the country, if all national coasts are taken into account.

PAKISTAN

INDIA-PAKISTAN CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

A Conference titled "INDIA PAKISTAN CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT" sponsored by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resource (IUCN) was held in Lahore in the month of December 1989. The main objective of this conference was to set up a mechanism for changing of information on environmental problems between the 2 countries and the theme adopted was "Growth of Environment Consciousness".

This Conference saw the participation of about 75 environmentalists from the 2 countries and also attending the

conference was the President of IUCN, India. The Secretary General of SAARC and Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Co-operative. The Chief Guest at the Inaugural Session was the Senior Federal Minister Begum Nusrat Bhutto.

In her inaugural address, she emphasised the need for more vigorous policies on environmental issues, in view of the climatic change and depletion of the ozone layer, she also observed that what is now required is a more widespread understanding of the situations and appreciation of the efforts being made in this direction by the world community. She showed satisfaction to see environmentalists from India and Pakistan coming together with the purpose of deliberating upon the problems of environmental concern common to both countries and endeavouring to seek solution. The concluding session was presided over by the Honourable Minister of State for Environment Mr Syed Qasim Shah.

SEMINAR ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION CONTROL

A Seminar on "Environment Pollution Control" arranged by the environmental protection agency of Punjab, with assistance of concerned industrialists was held in November 1989. The Chief Guest was Syed Afzal Ali Shah, Minister for Housing, Physical and Environmental Planning.

In his inaugural address the Minister emphasised for improving the Environment because the indiscriminate disposal of municipal sewage and industrial wastes to the water bodies, land and air was affecting the usefulness of these resources. He observed that pollution was also increasing in our urban areas due to emissions from vehicular traffic and uncontrolled smoke from industries. Pollution was affecting globally and efforts are, therefore, to be made by all concerned for its control and mitigation. Holding such seminars is useful and benefits should be achieved through inter-action between entrepreneurs, engineers, scientists and regulatory bodies.

The Director General, EPA Sheikh Mohamed Ashraf delivered the welcome address whilst Mr Anwar Kabir Sheikh, Secretary to Governor of Punjab, HP and EP Department presented the Keynote address.

The eminent speakers who addressed the Conference highlighted the relationship between environment, health and forest, the use of remote sensing for monitoring environment, review of industrial waste treatment, methods and studies, treatment of refinery waste and assessment of the effect of effluent discharges.

A large number of engineers, doctors, scientists, media men, representatives of non-governmental organisations and industrialists participated in the seminar.



Syed Afzal Ali Shah (Punjab) Minister for Housing, Physical & Environmental Planning Delivering Inaugural Address at the Seminar on Environmental Pollution Control

SRI LANKA IMPORT OF TOXIC CHEMICALS TO BE CONTROLLED

Chemicals which are banned or severely restricted in other countries are freely imported to Sri Lanka at present, thus exposing the people to numerous hazards caused by these chemicals.

In view of haphazard manner in which chemicals are being imported without due consideration to their toxic effects, one of the series of recommendations made by the Central Environmental Authority and recently approved by the Government is that toxic chemicals imported will be listed and certain chemicals which considered to be highly hazardous in nature will be permitted to be imported only after clearance is obtained from a Special Technical Advisory Committee.

In a recently concluded study by the CEA, a list of over 400 chemicals were compiled but the proper identity of over 125 chemicals was not known as they were imported under their trade names.

The drawing of a complete list of chemicals imported to the country, identification of the more hazardous of these and the regular revision of the list are considered prerequisites for the intended control procedure.

The importers of more hazardous chemicals will be required to obtain clearance from the above technical advisory committee after furnishing details such as quantities, trade names, chemical names, toxicity data and other relevant data about the chemicals to be imported before approval is granted.

Of relevant importance is the fact that the Central Environmental Authority acts as the focal point of UNEP's

Provisional Notification Scheme for restricted and banned chemicals. Under this scheme, countries, which have taken action to ban or restrict a certain chemical, notify other countries participating in this scheme of their action and the reasons for the ban. Up to date the Central Environmental Authority has received around seventy five such notifications. Since the majority of these are for pesticides, the information has been transmitted to the Registrar of Pesticides for necessary action. With respect to the notifications on other chemicals, the newly appointed Technical Advisory Committee will take the necessary action in future.

ENVIRONMENTAL PIONEER BRIGADES

The Central Environmental Authority, with the objectives of extending environmental awareness among school children and enlisting their participation in environmental conservations launched the formation of Environmental Pioneer Brigades.

Under this programme children of post primary level of schooling are organised in groups and are exposed to lectures and demonstrations on environmental subjects. They take part in environmental study tours and investigations, keep records, engage in activities like tree planting and other similar environmentally oriented activities. Their performance is evaluated annually and awards are given.

Since the formation of the first brigade in 1987, 32 more brigades have been formed to date. Each school brigade is expected to have 50 - 100 students. The Environmental Pioneer Brigades have been advised to be closely associated with the District environmental Agency.

ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES. A PRE-REQUISITE FOR EIA PROCEDURES

The development of Environmental Standards and Guidelines is an important pre-requisite, for the implementation of Environmental Impact Assessment procedures. These are meant to serve as guides to industries, industrial planners and those involved in advising and approving industrial projects.

At the request of the Central Environmental Authority, the Sri Lanka Standards Institute (SLSI) has laid down National Standards for several areas of environmental concern with the concurrence of experts in the relevant fields. The following national environmental standards are now available.

- * Specification for potable water
Part I - Physical and Chemical requirements
Part II - Bacteriological requirements
- * Tolerance limits for industrial effluents discharged into inland surface waters.
- * Tolerance limits for industrial and domestic effluents discharged into marine coastal waters.
- * Tolerance limits for inland surface waters used as raw-water for public water supply.
- * Tolerance limits for marine coastal waters liable to pollution.
- * Tolerance limits for industrial effluents discharged on land for irrigation purposes.
- * Tolerance limits for effluents from rubber factories.
- * Tolerance limits for effluents discharged from tanning industry.
- * Tolerance limits for gaseous emissions from sulphuric acid plants.
- * Tolerance limits for effluents from textile industry.



H.E. R. Premadasa, President of Sri Lanka planting a tree at the National Tree Planting Day ceremony held in Sri Lanka on September 1989

EXTRACT FROM THE SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR RANJAN WIJERATNE, HONOURABLE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT THE 7TH SESSION OF THE SAARC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HELD AT ISLAMABAD, DURING THE 9TH AND 10TH OF NOVEMBER 1989

One of the subjects on which urgent action would also be very feasible for us even at this early stage of our Organisation is SAARC co-operation on the protection and management of our Regional Environment.

The South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) based in Colombo needs to be made a fully effective institution for this purpose.

This would call for the development of close linkages between the environmental authorities and non-government agencies of the various Member Countries and SACEP Members may wish to consider also whether 1991 or 1992 should not be declared the Year and the Decade following as the Decade of our Environment.

SACEP could thus draw up an action programme in consultation with Member Countries. A Meeting Asia and Pacific Ministers of environment is due to convene in 1990.

I would suggest that SAARC should work closely with SACEP and its Member States to ensure that the interests of our region are looked after properly.

SOUTH ASIAN REGIONAL SEAS

The South Asian Seas Programme has now entered into an important and critical phase whereby the concerned Member States are due to meet in Bangkok in early February 1990, to discuss the legal as well as the technical matters pertaining to the approval and the implementation of the South Asian Seas Action Programme.

It is critical and important because the decisions arrived at this Meeting would be crucial for the successful implementation of this Action Plan. It is also an important activity in SACEP's calendar of events since the Member States without any reservation have placed confidence on the SACEP Secretariat and have recommended to UNEP that SACEP should be the Secretariat for the implementation of the activities and programmes envisaged in the Action Plan.

Since all Member Countries have given their reassurances regarding the need for a South Asian Regional Seas Programme, OCA/PAC is going ahead with the finalisation of the priority projects which had been kept in abeyance due to the delay in the Member Countries responding to a clarification requested by UNEP.

The SACEP Secretariat is confident that the February Meeting of the Legal and Technical Expert will be a success and that possibly mid 1990, a Meeting of Plenipotentiaries will be convened for formally approving the ACTION PLAN for the SOUTH ASIAN SEAS.

SACEP ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE DECADE 1991-2000

Perhaps for the first time since the Stockholm Conference of 1972 and the years immediately succeeding, a series of International Activities have been initiated which will culminate in a proposed United Nations Global Meeting on the Environment and Sustainable Development in 1992. There will also be an ESCAP Ministerial Meeting on the same subject for Asia and the Pacific in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in May 1990.

As a fore-runner to this Meeting, ESCAP, in association with UNDP, UNEP and ADB had a Meeting of Eminent Persons from around the world on "Greening the Development Process" in order to evolve a strategy for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development. This Meeting noted among other things, the importance of sub-regional bodies in the development of such programmes.

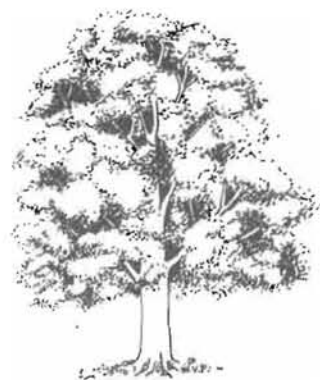
In November 1989, at the Seventh Session of the Council of Ministers Meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) held at Islamabad, Pakistan, the importance of the protection of South Asian Environment was reiterated. The Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka Honourable Ranjan Wijeratne in addressing the Sessions called for a close working relationship with SACEP and the formulation by SACEP of an Action Programme in this respect in consultation with its Member Countries. The 4th Governing Council Meeting of SACEP held in Kabul in April 1988, also emphasised the need for the close co-operation of SACEP with SAARC.

Furthermore a Non Governmental Level Meeting of Senior Experts of the South Asian Countries held in New Delhi in February 1989 advocated the needs for a strong co-operative programme in South Asia and the role of SACEP in developing the same.

With these recommendations forming the back-drop, the SACEP Secretariat has undertaken the preparation of a Draft Action Plan for the Nineties for the protection of the Environment in the South Asian Region, since it's a fact that the timing is most appropriate and the need for it was perhaps never greater.

The Secretariat has requested all its Member Countries to kindly consider, in the context of its national priorities and their perception of the regional needs, to forward proposals on the components of such a programme for South Asia so that the Secretariat, could then taking into consideration these proposals, put them together appropriately for further consideration by the Member States and on approval, place before suitable funding agencies for implementation.

A MARINE POLLUTION EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN FOR SOUTH ASIA



As human beings it is our responsibility to try to mitigate the adverse conditions of Nature, to protect and preserve it for perpetuation of life on this planet. I know, we are incapable of protecting the environment of the whole world. But why should we not deploy efficiently whatever skill we have to protect the environment? It is with this aim that we have formed the "International Institute of Environmental Studies and Disaster Management" and also Bangladesh River Research Institute. We have reduced the price of petrol nearly fifty per cent in order to encourage consumption of petrol. Diesel produces carbon six times more than petrol to poison the atmosphere. We have decided to observe the year 1990 as the Year of Environment and to observe the current decade as the Environment Decade. We shall not rest with mere declaration. We have deployed all forces for the preservation of environment we have formed a new ministry called the Ministry of Environment and Forest. We have laid emphasis on afforestation. We have taken effective steps for proper disposal of industrial wastes. In the Non-aligned and Commonwealth summits I presented an action-programme to combat the environmental hazards. We are doing all these because in the ultimate analysis of our future, may our existence depends on the environment.

Hussain Muhammed Ershad
President of Bangladesh.



Speech on Environment in the National Assembly, January 1990.



Participants at the IMO/UNEP Workshop on South Asia Marine Pollution Emergency Action Plan December 1989

As per decision of the Meeting of National Experts held on the South Asian Seas Regional Programme convened by UNEP, in co-operation with SACEP, in 1987 in Bangkok one of the six priority projects recommended for initiation prior to the formal adoption of the Action Plan was 'development of an Operational Regional Contingency Plan for Responding to Marine Pollution Emergencies for the South Asia Region.'

It was also decided that the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) should be the implementing agency for this project due to their wide experience in this field and IMO representatives present at the Meeting agreed that they would be implementing the project in co-operation with the concerned National Institutions of the Member Governments and SACEP, the Regional Lead Agency.

Following this Meeting, a formal Project Proposal, formulated by IMO, was finalised and approved by UNEP in late 1987.

The workplan of the project consisted of 2 phases. Phase I involved the collection of data and the preparation of updated overviews of National Capabilities, the Expert Advisory Mission of five Marine Member States of SACEP and the preparation of a draft regional contingency plan and technical background information.

Phase II of the project was the convening of a workshop for 15 participants from the Marine Member States of SACEP where the 5 national contingency plans and the Regional Plan would be discussed and made final for formal ratification by the respective SACEP Member Governments.

The SACEP is indeed very happy at the successful completion of both these activities and is very grateful to UNEP OCA/PAC and IMO for this project.

The Draft Regional Action Plan was discussed thoroughly in the workshop and revised. The Member Countries of SACEP are expected to formally ratify the Action Plan at an early date so that the same could be made operational soon.

The following recommendations were also made by the participants of the workshop.

- To continue support to the implementation of contingency plans for response to national and regional marine pollution incidents as required by the individual countries of the South Asia Region.
- To arrange regional workshop/seminars for training of the personnel involved in implementation of the South Asia Marine Pollution Emergency Action Plan.
- To arrange for training abroad for concerned personnel which are directly involved in the field of marine pollution prevention and combating under its fellowship programme.
- To establish a regional training, monitoring and response center for combating major incidents of marine pollution in the South Asia Region.
- To set up a computer data bank on all aspects of marine pollution information which may effect the marine environment of the region.

SACEP wishes to place on record its deep appreciation for the excellent arrangements made for the Workshop to Dr Nay Htun, Regional Director, UNEP, Mr Reza Amini, Senior Environmental Affairs Officer, UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, Mr. H.T. Henriksen, Regional Adviser on Marine Pollution for Asia and the Pacific, IMO Mr Roy Nichols IMO Consultant.

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARING HOUSE SERVICES PROJECT

This project which was approved at the First Governing Council Meeting of SACEP in January 1983, has undergone certain modifications and the Asian Development Bank has agreed to fund this project which is now titled - REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTRE (RENRIC). The project is expected to get off ground very shortly and the total cost is US\$ 1,24,000 of which US\$ 100,000 will be from the ADB.

MODERN TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE TREATMENT OF INDUSTRIAL EFFLUENTS IN SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES

This project has been approved by UNIDO and they have now submitted it to UNDP for funding. Total cost is US\$ 2.92 Million. Meanwhile, prior to finalisation of the project a Dutch Scientist is expected to visit Sri Lanka to carry out a preliminary survey of the various sources of pollution.

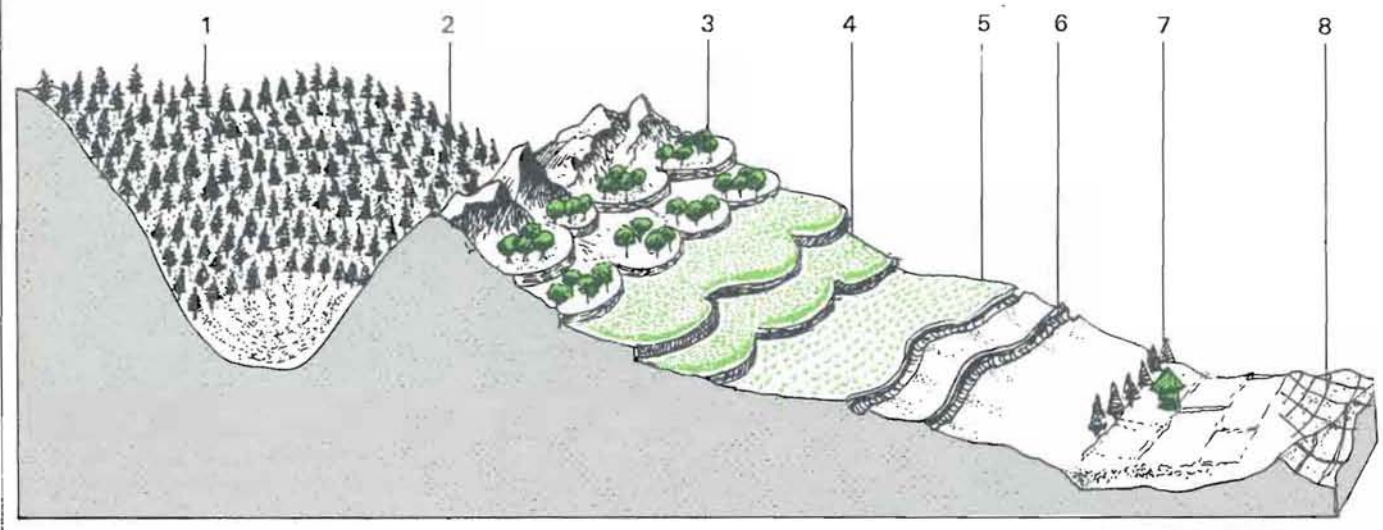


FORESTRY EXTENSION POSTER (PAKISTAN)
Let's plant trees to make Pakistan prosperous (Forest Department, Sind, Pakistan)



Golestan Wildlife Reservation in Islamic Republic of Iran.

Eight ways to prevent desertification



(1.) reforestation projects. (2.) plant trees along gullies. (3.) grow tree crops on eyebrow terraces. (4.) terrace steep land. (5.) cultivate along the contour. (6.) build bunds to control the run-off of surface water. (7.) plant shelter belts and windbreaks. (8.) stabilize sand dunes.