Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 30-Mar-2020 | Report No: PIDA28487

BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Project ID	Project Name	Parent Project ID (if any)
South Asia	P171269	Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia	
Region	**Estimated Appraisal Date**	**Estimated Board Date**	**Practice Area (Lead)**
SOUTH ASIA	25-Mar-2020	15-May-2020	Environment, Natural Resources & the Blue Economy
Financing Instrument	**Borrower(s)**	**Implementing Agency**	
Investment Project Financing	The South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP)	South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

to strengthen innovation and coordination of circular economy solutions to plastic pollution flowing into South Asian Seas

Components

Supporting Competitive Block Grant Investments to Reduce Plastic Waste
Leveraging Public and Private Sector Engagement and Solutions
Strengthening Regional Integration Institutions

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US$, Millions)

SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	40.00
Total Financing	40.00
of which IBRD/IDA	40.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing

International Development Association (IDA)	40.00

IDA Grant	40.00

Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Moderate

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Regional Context

1. **Even with the recent economic contraction, the South Asia Region (SAR) has been growing faster than any other region which has translated into significant progress in poverty reduction.** While South Asia's average gross domestic product growth rate stands at 7.2 percent over the past decade, the region's multidimensional poverty remains well above the global average – at 26.6 percent of the poor population compared to 18.3 percent globally – and is lagging particularly for education and basic services. The region faces a number of economic vulnerabilities with domestic demand driven by private consumption higher than exports, increasing public debt, and sizeable fiscal and current account deficits. Moreover, the gains in poverty reduction and shared prosperity are at risk given SAR's vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change (800 million people live in climate hotspots). Fragility and conflict are increasing poverty in some areas. Long-term sustained and inclusive growth for poverty reduction and shared prosperity is not guaranteed.

2. **Strong economic growth, coupled with rapid population growth and increasing population density, has been putting pressure on the region's environment and its natural resources** (marine and coastal habitats, freshwater sources such as rivers, forests, fisheries, and wildlife). Home to over 1.92 billion people (one fourth of the world's population), SAR is not only the most populous, but also the most densely populated geographical region at 299 people per square kilometer and with a population growth rate accelerating at 1.27 percent per annum in 2016. The majority of people reside within 100 kilometers of the region's coast and ocean area or within the rich and fertile areas along major rivers and their tributaries. These ecological systems or natural assets, which are transboundary in nature, backstop economic systems: they provide valuable economic and other benefits and services. Their degradation from pollution from a variety of sources including plastic leakage into rivers and seas coupled with overuse, however, jeopardize hard-fought development gains, and affect livelihoods, especially of the poor.

3. **Against this backdrop, enhanced regional cooperation across SAR, particularly on environmental issues affecting all eight nations in the region will generate positive development outcomes.** While it is generally recognized that cooperation across countries offer substantial benefits, the political economy of regional cooperation in SAR is complex with a variety of influencers at the national and sub-national levels in each country.

Regional Organizations (RO) exist, such as South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), but they face limitations in development effectiveness due to regional geo-politics. However, while there are dozens of regional organizations established with varying mandates, The South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP), a regional organization established in 1982 with membership comprising all eight SAR nations - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka – and based in Colombo, has sustained an active convening role across member-states on environmental issues, including most recently, on mitigating plastic pollution that flows into the region's seas.

4. **The plastic pollution problem in South Asia is significant and politically dynamic, with active and engaged public, private and civil society organizations seeking solutions to its impact on rivers, seas, food chains and human health.** Younger generations are more educated and aware of the limits of past and current waste practices on human health, and the need to innovate and re-think the status quo models of behavior and consumption that generate high volumes of waste in the first place. They are increasingly demanding engagement by a wider set of actors in their respective roles including individuals, community organizations, governments and the private sector to tackle the problem and identify solutions. A key challenge and opportunity to strengthen regional work lies in enabling a multiplicity of actors that in partnership could add value to better understand the depth of the problem and promote larger scale solutions. Support from IDA to strengthen SACEP's value addition for coordination and convening with such actors, including member-states directly could catalyze scaled solutions.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

5. **The menace of plastic waste that pollutes land, flows into river systems and, ultimately into oceans, poses national, regional, and global threats to development, including far-reaching economic, ecological and health impacts.** The qualities that make plastic useful—lightness, durability, strength, versatility and low production costs—have resulted in fast growing demand, but mismanaged plastic waste has also created a mounting pollution crisis, eroding ecological systems like rivers and oceans, and health global concerns. The global production of plastic is currently estimated to be around 300 million tons per year, while plastic pollution in the marine environment alone (including beaches) estimated at 9.5 million tons with 1.5 million tons ending up in the ocean annually[1] – the equivalent of a dump truck worth of plastic entering the ocean every minute. The annual global damage of plastics to marine ecosystems in particular is conservatively estimated at US$13 billion per year[2], without considering externalities associated with air pollution generated from plastic production. Plastic waste has been acknowledged as one of the main global environmental challenges in recent years and the movement to combat marine plastic litter that accelerated from 2018-2020 is poised to become a feature of many national development plans and regional and global convenings over this new decade. Mitigating the problem of plastic pollution – the core focus of the proposed Project – is a challenge that many experts believe can be solved, even as decision-makers better understand the environmental and socio-economic impact footprint of plastic pollution overall.

6. **Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions from the plastic lifecycle and its associated pollution of air, land and sea is linked to the generation of virgin plastics and its use.** The plastic lifecycle includes oil extraction (6 percent

[1] Geyer, R., J.R. Jambeck, and K.L. Law. 2017. "Production, Use, and Fate of All Plastics Ever Made." *Science Advances* 3(7); http://advances.sciencemag.org/content/3/7/e1700782.full
[2] World Bank. 2019. "Combatting Marine Litter: How IDA will Play a Role, A Background Paper for IDA19 Replenishment."

of global oil production is applied to manufacturing plastic[3]) and transport, plastic refining and manufacturing, improper solid waste management practices and measures (particularly from single use plastics and waste packaging materials) and plastic pollution in the environment. In 2019, the production and incineration of plastic added an estimated 850 million metric tons of GHG into the atmosphere – equal to the emissions from 189 five-hundred-megawatt coal power plants[4]. A recent study on plastic decomposition shows that Polyethylene, which is the most produced and discarded polymer globally, is the most prolific emitter of methane and ethylene when decaying in air. The study also demonstrates that GHG emission in water can be significant, therefore decomposition of plastics represents a source of GHG emission that could be significant if the trends in plastic production and consumption continues (Royer et al., 2018). While there are a number of known and quantified economic benefits accruing to economies and society due to the creation and use of plastic and leading to transformations in medicine, transportation, and agriculture, to name a few, the cost of plastic pollution is significant, with pollution associated with single use plastics necessary to specifically target.

7. **Pollution generated from the lifecycle of Single Use Plastics (SUPs) is where the South Asia region is coalescing around due to environmental externalities and economic loss.** Due to its short first-use cycle and a lack of circularity, 95 percent of plastic packaging material valued at US$80–120 billion annually, is lost to the global economy; 32 percent of plastic packaging escapes collection systems, generating significant economic costs by reducing the productivity of vital natural systems such as rivers and the ocean, clogging urban infrastructure such as drainage, leading to flooding during period of high rainfall[5]. The cost of such after-use externalities for plastic packaging is conservatively estimated by independent experts in "The New Plastic Economy: Rethinking the Future of Plastics" at US$40 billion annually[6] – exceeding the plastic packaging industry's profit pool. In a business-as-usual scenario, the plastics industry would be responsible for 20% of total oil consumption by 2050, equivalent to 15% of the global annual carbon GHG (World Economic Forum, 2016). While such data and analytics are starting to be included in national decision-making, knowledge of interventions that can make a meaningful difference remain largely absent, including in South Asia.

8. **SAR is the third largest contributor to plastic waste globally; It's estimated to double by 2050 unless action is taken[7]**. The Maldives aside, all South Asia's coastal nations are among the top twenty most polluting nations ranked by the volume of mismanaged plastic waste with Sri Lanka ranked among the top six according to published studies. Modelled estimates of floating micro-plastic (<4.75 mm) and macro-plastic (>4.75 mm) abundance (items per square kilometer) suggest that the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem, the ocean system that touches South Asian ocean-facing nations, is in an ocean region with the highest plastic concentration[8]. The Indian Ocean is also host to one of the world's largest plastic gyres due to the flow of plastic from land to sea. While twenty percent of the estimated plastic pollution found in the marine environment

[3] The United States Energy Information Administration (2020). https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=34&t=6
[4] Center for International Environmental Law.2019. "Plastic and Climate: The Hidden Costs of a Plastic Planet." www.ciel.org/plasticandclimate.
[5] Ellen MacArthur Foundation. 2016. *The New Plastic Economy: Rethinking the Future of Plastics and Catalysing Action*. https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/assets/downloads/publications/NPEC-Hybrid_English_22-11-17_Digital.pdf
[6] World Economic Forum, Ellen MacArthur Foundation, and McKinsey and Company.2016. *The New Plastics Economy: Rethinking the Future of Plastics*. http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/publications.
[7] World Bank.2018. *What a Waste 2.0: A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050*.https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/30317
[8] Jambeck, Jenna R., Roland Geyer, Chris Wilcox, Theodore R. Siegler, Miriam Perryman, Anthony Andrady, Ramani Narayan, and Kara Lavender Law. 2015. "Plastic Waste Inputs from Land into the Ocean." *Science* 347 (6223): 768–771. doi:10.1126/science.1260352.

originate from sea-based activities, plastic waste "leakage" from high mountain states in the upper river watersheds travel via transboundary river systems such as the Indus (India, Pakistan, with the Kabul, Khurram, and Gumal riverine systems feeding into it from Afghanistan, Ganga (Nepal, India, Bangladesh) and Brahmaputra (India, Nepal, Bangladesh with riverine systems feeding into it from Bhutan) and contribute to accumulation downstream and eventually in the region's seas.

9. **The second most polluting *river* globally in terms of the volume of plastic waste flushed into the ocean is the Indus (11,977 tons/year according to Schmidt et al., 2017) and only overshadowed by China's Yangtze River; The Ganga-Brahmaputra and Meghna basin alone contribute an estimated 72,845 tons of plastic annually, making the *basin* the sixth highest contributor of plastic pollution to the marine environment.**[9] Following current trends, the amount of mismanaged waste (including plastic) across South Asia is projected to rise from 334 million tons per year in 2016 to 661 million tons by 2050[10]. This will adversely impact the region's ocean ecosystems and sustainable development more broadly. In addition, a growing concern with impacts and costs accruing to countries with weak waste management systems of their own has generated an evolving movement across Asia to ban the acceptance of global trans-shipments of waste. It has taken effect with a sharp spike in the number of returns of cargo shipments of mixed "recyclables" back to more developed countries. Key challenges remain with border enforcement of bans, waste tracking to combat pressures for illegal ocean dumping, coordination of action to avoid shifting problems across countries, disruptions to the global recycling markets, and underlying impacts on workers in developing countries, often informal. On the more positive side, this has created higher urgency on a regional and global scale to find new ways to reduce and better manage plastic pollution and shift human consumption patterns as costs are internalized to a greater extent within national borders. Finally, it elevates the need for greater harmonization of practices and standards across borders not only for South Asia but globally.

10. **There is growing global and regional recognition and call to reduce plastic pollution that ends up in the ocean**. World leaders, including representatives from SAR within the G7, G20, APEC, IORA, SACEP and the UN, have agreed to reduce plastic waste, and signed agreements supporting greater cooperation across nations. The 2018 G7 Summit in Canada attended by the World Bank and at least one Head of State from South Asia, Bangladesh, concluded with a *G7 Ocean Plastic Charter* and triggered the establishment of a World Bank Multi-Donor Trust Fund, PROBLUE with its Global Trust Fund Window 4 on Marine Litter and Pollution Prevention and Reduction; the June 2019 G20 Osaka Summit in Japan concluded with an agreement to establish the *G20 Implementation Framework for Actions on Marine Plastic Litter* to facilitate, through voluntary national actions, the *G20 Action Plan on Marine Litter* launched at the 2017 G20 Hamburg Summit. G20 leaders also announced the *Osaka Blue Ocean Vision*, which aims to eliminate additional marine plastic pollution by 2050. The APEC Summit in June 2018 concluded with its 15 member-states endorsing the preparation of an APEC Marine Debris and Action Plan. The South Asia Cooperative Environment Program's (SACEP) ministerial level Governing Council endorsed a Regional Marine Litter Action Plan for the South Asia Seas at its November 2019 Governing Council meeting, and all SAR countries agreed to deepen early stage draft country specific action plans. Most of these global and regional action plans focus on two specific interventions: more effective legislated and enforced bans on single use plastics, and activities that could support nations and businesses transition toward circularity.

[9] Schmidt, C., T. Krauth, and S. Wagner. 2017. "Export of Plastic Debris by Rivers into the Sea." *Environmental Science and Technology* 51 (21): 12246–12253. DOI: 10.1021/acs.est.7b02368.
[10] World Bank. 2018. *What a Waste 2.0: A Global Snapshot of Solid Waste Management to 2050*.https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/30317

11. **Several South Asian nations are pioneers in single use plastics bans, however more is needed.** According to the UN, about 127 countries (of 192 reviewed) have adopted some form of legislation to regulate single use plastic bags (5 trillion single use plastic bags are produced annually), ranging from outright bans to progressive phase outs to laws that incentivize the use of reusable bags. Sikkim introduced a ban on plastic bags as early as 1998, and Bangladesh in 2002 was the first country in the world to introduce national restrictions on single use plastic bags, followed by India (initiated in 2002, starting with New Delhi), Bhutan (2005, renewed with greater enforcement in 2019), Afghanistan and Nepal (2011), Sri Lanka (2011), and Pakistan (2013 municipal level ban). Maldives introduced a ban on single use plastic bags on *Bodufolhudoo* island in 2016, and established a National Steering Committee in 2019, mandated to advance the phase out of single use plastics by the end of 2020. While such policy instruments have had initial positive responses in many countries, due to a lack of enforcement, a failure to regulate plastic through its life cycle, too many exemptions, too few manufacturer limits, an absence of cost-effective alternatives, and growing but fragmented effort on public education and behavior change, these policy initiatives have not yet produced the desired results – a decrease in the use of single use plastics. As a result, better legislation coupled with new, innovative approaches that produce visible and measurable results are needed.

12. **Despite the challenges, there are many new and promising initiatives that promote reductions of plastic pollution adopting circular approaches where Regional cooperation could help better recognize, share, and replicate good practice models to reduce the stock and flow of plastic waste.** On the policy side, India leads the region on enactment of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws, a 2016 policy approach where producers must be responsible for the clean-up or recycling of their products. EPR encompasses management of the potential impacts of a product in all stages of production, use, collection, re-use, recycling, reprocessing, and disposal. In collaboration with the Government of Maldives, PARLEY pioneered an end to end circular plastic economy solution to plastic pollution: educating young people at their in-country and grassroots 'ocean schools' on the problem of plastic waste, organizing youth into youth-led waste collection teams, transforming intercepted plastic waste (discarded ghost fishing nets, single use plastic litter from beaches and the sea) into ocean plastic thread, and in partnership with major brands (Adidas, American Express), create consumer goods[11] made from ocean plastic and sold worldwide and that at end of life can be recycled again with a percentage of sales supporting youth education programs and public awareness in South Asia and globally. EPR and PARLEY are two examples of a more circular plastic economy approach, which prevents depletion of finite natural resources from the global economy, and instead better use natural resources already extracted to extend their useful lives.

13. **Over the past few years in particular, SACEP has made meaningful progress on convening SAR member-states around the need for action on waste management more generally, and marine debris and marine plastic pollution more specifically.** SACEP, for example, led member-states in the preparation of a Regional Marine Litter Action Plan for the South Asia Seas (2018) and A Roadmap for Sustainable Waste and Resource Management in South Asia (2019), which was followed by requesting SACEP to support to member-states in developing National Action Plans to reduce marine debris. While a first small step to address a massive problem, member states have mandated SACEP to lead regional work on plastics, waste, and protection of rivers and seas with a recognition that waste management is not only a national or subnational service delivery topic, but has

[11] To support global public awareness, Adidas' 'Parley for the Oceans' branded apparel formally kits out major professional sports teams including football (soccer), American football, hockey, rugby, and college swimming, thereby using the celebrity status of iconic players and teams to create highly visible awareness campaigns on the marine plastic pollution problem and circular solutions.

broader regional public good costs and benefits and inter-connected regulatory, policy, ecological, and trans-shipment issues that may be better achieved by working across states. The proposed regional IDA project will support and promote good practice circular economy approaches for plastics to move to a higher scale across and within countries. A **circular economy** is restorative and regenerative by design. This means materials constantly flow around a 'closed loop' system, rather than being used once and then discarded. In the case of **plastic**, this means simultaneously keeping the value of **plastics** in the **economy**, without leakage into the natural environment.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

to strengthen innovation and coordination of circular economy solutions to plastic pollution flowing into South Asian Seas

Key Results

- Circular plastic economy innovations developed and tested for application in participating South Asia countries;
- A South Asia-wide regional public private partnership platform to support participating countries transition to a circular plastic economy designed and operational;
- Funds leveraged for circular plastic economy investments.

D. Project Description

14. The Plastic free Rivers and Seas for South Asia (PLEASE) project consists of three components totaling US$40 million from IDA that will be implemented over a period of five years. A summary of activities is provided below.

15. **Component 1. Supporting Competitive Block Grant Investments to Reduce Plastic Waste:** The objective of this component is to develop, administer and support a platform that would identify, verify and invest in circular plastic economy solutions, support the exchange of knowledge and awareness raising. To this end, the component would establish a Regional Competitive Block Grant (RBG) scheme. The component would be supported through two sub-components: **Sub-component 1.1: Investing in Circular Solutions to Reduce Plastic Waste:** A Regional Competitive Block Grant (RBG) scheme for South Asia provides investment support to select organizations to accelerate their transition to a more circular plastic economy; **Sub-component 1.2: Promoting Knowledge Exchange and Public Awareness:** The project would exchange knowledge among recipients of Project investments, between RBG recipients and participating South Asian Countries, and between grantees and potential investors with a project supported interactive website to showcase RBG recipients. This would enable exchange of knowledge, learning from others, and potentially obtaining acceleration funding from different sources in addition to annual face to face convenings of recipients to foster dialogue, discussion, and technology transfer. The project would also support regional and national public awareness campaigns in support of plastic free rivers and seas and to ensure that innovations are more broadly known.

16. **Component 2. Leveraging Public and Private Sector Engagement and Solutions:** The objective of this component to provide support to improve national and regional strategies, policies and industry standards to

mitigate plastic pollution and a regular convening activity of public and private sector decision-makers to discuss and agree on mainstreaming circular plastic economy solutions and approaches. As a result, two sub-components would be supported: **Sub-component 2.1: Enabling Policies, Standards, and Analytics** will support a policy research function within SACEP that is focused on helping to respond to key priorities closely associated with agenda for public private engagement, including modelling, and analytic capability for lifecycle analysis of plastic across select industry value chains; **Sub-component 2.2: Enabling Regional Public and Private Engagement** brings public and private sector representatives together at least once per year to review and discuss strategies, policies and standards that can accelerate South Asian Countries toward a more circular and reduced use of plastics in the economy.

17. **Component 3: Strengthening Regional Integration Institutions:** The objective of this component is to strengthen regional organizations' capacity to support their member-states to better deliver on solutions to mitigate plastic pollution that flows into rivers and seas across South Asia and transition to a more circular plastic economy and project management. The component supports two sub-components: **Sub-component 3.1: Building SACEP's Institutional Capacity:** This sub-component provides support for building SACEP's institutional capacity and will support SACEP's proposed new headquarters (a center of excellence for the region with state of the art eco-friendly and energy efficient, carbon neutral design and state of the art auditorium) and provision of technical support and capacity building for regional organizations, line ministries and governments to uniformly collect, analyze and interpret pollution data to better inform policy and decision-making support for investment planning, design and implementation and design of structures for sustainability. **Sub-component 3.2: Project Management:** The objective of this sub-component is to ensure successful implementation of the activities carried out under the Project. The project will finance establishing and operating the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) led by a highly competent Director and well-regarded regional and/or global thought leader on circular plastic economy issues and include dedicated technical and support staff across all functions. In addition, the subcomponent will also finance consultancies required for the preparation and supervision of specific activities, monitoring and evaluation, trainings, exposure visits, studies for knowledge generation, and incremental operating costs.

Legal Operational Policies

	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	No
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No

Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

The proposed project is expected to have largely positive and beneficial impacts for SAR and its rivers and seas. The overall environmental and social impact of the project will be positive and beneficial as there will be reduction in the generation, use and dumping of plastic wastes in waterways that end up in coastal areas and oceans in SAR through support on policy formulation and harmonization, regional coordination, research, awareness raising, knowledge sharing, capacity building and innovative technologies that reduce, reuse and recycle plastics.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

The project will be financed through IDA Grants for eligible regional institutions. The following outlines proposed implementation and coordination mechanisms for the project:

(a) **SACEP, The Implementing Agency (IA):** The South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) is proposed as the responsible implementing agency for this project. SACEP is an inter-governmental organization established by Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 1982 to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region. SACEP's core program and project activities include waste management, incuding plastics and climate change adptation. In addition, SACEP serves as the secretariat of the South Asian Seas Programme (SASP), one of 18 such United Nations sponsored Environment Programs.

(b) **The Project Implementation Unit (PIU)** will be established by SACEP Secretariat and administratively housed within the Secretariat as a subsidiary organ, which it is able to establish as per its existing mandate. The SACEP Secretariat will ensure the PIU within the RO is effectively operating and will ensure structures to facilitate effective procurement (i.e. Procurement Selection Committee) and oversight over the proper use of funds, as well as environment and social safeguard measures, etc. The PIU is responsible for all aspects of the day-to-day management of the project, including planning, budgeting, technical coordination, implementation supervision, M&E, and ensuring compliance with World Bank environment and social standards. In addition, the PIU has technical capabilities to advise SACEP member-states on national and regional planning and would hire (through the project) and second (via partnership arrangements with member-states, and project partners (UNEP, UNDP, PARLEY) key skills required.

(c) **The Project Steering Committee (PSC)** Implementation of the PRS project is carried out under the oversight and guidance of the PSC, which is responsible for advising and resolving day to day matters concerning the project on an ad-hoc basis and as they arise. The PSC consists of SACEP's Director General, Head of Chancery, and Head of PIU. The PSC may also include key advisors from partner organizations, including UNEP, UNDP and PARLEY.

(d) **The Project Oversight and Governance Committee (POGC)** is a two-tiered and aligned with SACEP's existing governance, which is assessed as effective.

Tier 1: SACEP's Governing Council (GC) serves as the overall deliberative body responsible for organizational policy and green-lighting programs and represented by Ministers of Environment. The GC would meet annually to review and endorse regional strategies, policies, and programs under the project. GC (Ministers) and NFP (Secretaries) membership participation is also the mechanism to ensure project supported studies, policy review and revisions, data systems seamlessly support all SAR member-nations. The GC members and/or delegates appointed by their respective countries, which could include NFPs, participate and represent their respective countries at the project supported PPP Platform as earlier described.

Tier 2: SACEP's National Focal Points (NFP) institutional set-ups main function is to facilitate the decision-making process of the SACEP Governing Council on administrative, program and financial matters. This

tier 2 level would meet face to face at least twice per year (one in Colombo, Sri Lanka at SACEP headquarters), including to review the SACEP prepared and Bank-endorsed annual work plans. It should be noted that parallel efforts are ongoing by UNEP, the Government of Norway, Japan, Germany, and other partners to help member countries strengthen national capacity to engage through the establishment of Marine Litter Units or "cells" to support NFPs. SACEP's existing Consultative Committee (CC) – representatives of diplomatic missions based in Colombo – would be invited to participate in the Colombo-based meetings as per their existing mandate to facilitate implementation of programs and policies endorsed by SACEP's Governing Council. The CC would also be consulted more regularly as per the needs of the project.

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