

THE COLOMBO DECLARATION ON THE SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (SACEP)

The Meeting of Ministers to Initiate the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)

At Colombo on 25th February, 1981.

Having considered the report of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) Intergovernmental Expert Group Meeting convened at Bangalore, March, 1980,

Having further considered the report and recommendations of the Meeting of Officials to Initiate the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) held at Colombo, 18-21 February 1981,

Noting the possibilities of the occurrence of severe ecological disequilibrium and the threat of environmental degradation in the Region,

Noting also the warm support of their countries in the aims and aspirations of the proposed Programme, as expressed at the foregoing meetings, in contacts among themselves and with UNEP, and the wealth of capability and expertise available within the Region,

Noting in addition the offer of the Government of Sri Lanka to provide the facilities for the Secretariat of SACEP, the offers of the Governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Pakistan and Sri Lanka to serve as Focal Points for Programme development and implementation in selected subject areas, and the interest shown by the Governments of Bhutan, Burma, Maldives and Nepal,

Conscious of the readiness of their countries to co-operate and extend mutual assistance to each other in matters of environmental concern, to contribute through the application of their resources, to the work of the Focal Points and, in the case of Sri Lanka, to the Secretariat of SACEP,

Taking note of the active interest and possibilities of support from various donor countries, international financing institutions, agencies and bodies,

Recognizing the pioneering nature of the proposed co-operative programme and the organizational arrangements thereto,

Commending the significant contribution and imaginative initiative of the Director of the Regional Office of UNEP as noted by the Bangalore Meeting and the Meeting of Officials at Colombo,

Appreciating the firm support and encouragement extended by the Executive Director of UNEP in this regard,

DECLARES:

1. Its *decision* to establish a co-operative programme to be known as the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme;
2. Its *endorsement* of the agreed institutional arrangements, the over-all programme content, and technical co-operation and the financing arrangements;
3. Its *resolve* to sustain, strengthen, and utilize to the fullest, for the benefit of the peoples of their countries, the agreed programme and the arrangements for its implementation;
4. Its *intention* to foster the Programme as essential for the promotion of human welfare, development and amelioration of poverty in the region;
5. Its *commitment* to work out a harmonious balance between the process of development and resources of nature;
6. Its *conviction* that this Programme and the co-operative arrangements thereto, could provide a valuable basis for mutual co-operation, in the fields of social and economic development;

Calls upon:

1. The interested donor states, international financing institutions, agencies and other bodies to extend their support readily and in imaginative and concrete terms, keeping in mind the importance of maintaining the momentum in implementing a Programme of such far-ranging significance;

2. The United Nations system, UNDP in particular and UNEP, to assist SACEP, as required, with financial support, technical assistance, information, and guidance in the implementation of the Programme;

3. The member states of the SACEP region to see in these a worthy cause with goals and objectives fully capable of attainment through their common perceptions, friendly co-operation and mutual assistance.