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# SAARC and SACEP unite for Environmental Protection

A significant Memorandum of Understanding to promote the protection of the environment was signed on July 8 by Secretary General of the South Asia Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) Q.A.M.A. Rahim, and Director General of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme

(SACEP) Mahboob Elahi. The Memorandum, a result of discussions over several years, provides a framework of co-operation between the two organisations that will benefit the people of South Asia by enabling SAARC and SACEP to combine their political and technical strengths to address environmental

issues in the region.

The two organisations would now be able to implement their respective environmental programmes and action plans, as well as exchange information on the state of the environment in the region and collaborate on reports and studies on priority concerns, in order to give

them a strengthened capacity to address global and regional environmental concerns.

SACEP is an inter-governmental organisation established in 1982 by the countries of South Asia to promote environmental protection and management in the region.

SAARC is an inter-gov-

ernmental body working to provide greater understanding in economic, social and cultural spheres between the countries of South Asia. It was established in 1985.

The ever-expanding populations and economies of the countries of South Asia make it increasingly difficult to safe-

guard its environment and natural resources.

The MoU between SAARC and SACEP will go some way in minimising duplication of their activities and is a realisation of the importance of capitalising on the separate strengths of the two bodies to address environmental issues.