

CITES, 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

The 14th CoP meeting of CITES (The Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species) was held during 03-15 June, 2007 at Hague, Netherlands. The meetings provided an occasion for the Parties to:

- Review progress in the conservation of species included in the Appendices;
- Consider (and where appropriate adopt) proposals to amend the lists of species in Appendices I and II;
- Consider discussion documents and reports from the Parties, the permanent committees, the Secretariat and working groups;
- Recommend measures to improve the effectiveness of the Convention; and make provisions (including the adoption of a budget) necessary to allow the Secretariat to function effectively.

The 10th Governing Council of SACEP had decided that it should incorporate combating illegal trade in Wildlife and its products in its work programme. This will help strengthening enforcement of CITES in the region and in controlling illegal domestic and international trade in wild fauna and flora which is seriously impeding biodiversity conservation efforts by all countries. SACEP made efforts at the CoP to take this initiative forward and proposed to become part of the CAWT (Coalition Against Wildlife Trafficking) and also proposed to establish a regional network similar to the ASEAN -WEN Initiative with the help of TRAFFIC International and other key partners and donors. After discussions of the Di-

rector General, SACEP, Dr Arvind Boaz with the Executive Director, TRAFFIC International, Mr. Steven Broad it was agreed to sign an MoU between the two organizations for establishing such a network. Discussions were also held with Hilary Thompson, Head of Wildlife Species Conservation Division of DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), United Kingdom, to garner support for the network.



L-R Mr. Steven Broad (Executive Director-TRAFFIC International), Dr. A.A. Boaz, Director General of SACEP and Mr. Roland Melisch (Global Coordinator TRAFFIC International) at the Conference Hall.



Workshop for the Development of the National Report on Market Based Instruments for Environmental Management

The Final Workshop with respect to SACEP's UNEP/GPA funded Project on Market Based Instruments (MBIs) for the Implementation of the National Program of Action for the Protection of Marine Environment from Land based Activities in Sri Lanka was held on 18th June 2007 at Hotel Taj Samudra, Colombo.

The Chief Guest on this occasion was Honourable Patali Champika Ranawaka, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. Dr. Arvind Boaz, Director General of SACEP, Dr. Anjan Datta, Programme Officer, UNEP GPA, Mr. W. R. M. S. Wickremasinghe, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment & Natural Resources also spoke on the occasion. Ms. Padmini Batuwitige, Director Environment, Ministry of Environment & Natural Resources presented the update of project. Dr. Stefan Speck, International Consultant and Dr. Fuard Marikkar, Na-

tional Project Co-ordinator presented the detail report before the august gathering of professionals.

The workshop was held to discuss the Draft Final Report on Development of Market Based Instruments for Environmental Management in Sri Lanka.

There were over 50 delegates who attended this workshop. These included experts and representatives from concerning ministries who deliberated on the report and gave their valuable suggestions. Subsequently, a wrap-up meeting was held at the Ministry to finalise the schedule for completing the report after incorporation of the suggestions received at the workshop and also to draft a Policy Paper by 2nd July. It was decided that finalisation of the National Report on MBIs should be done by 20th July and complete documentation should be done by the end of August. It was also decided to go ahead with the other components of the Project.

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1st International Congress on Critical Perspectives on Energy, Environment, Technology and Water Development and Protection Worldwide

The Congress was sponsored by the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Fayetteville State University, and held during 2nd to 5th, April 2007, at the Holiday Inn Bordeaux in Fayetteville, North Carolina. At the inaugural, the Keynote Speakers were Beverly Perdue and Reginald Holley. It was supported by 350 environmentalists, professors and practitioners from around the world. Dr. Arvind Boaz, Director General represented the SACEP at the Congress and delivered a talk on *"The Role Of SACEP in Environmental Programmes in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal Pakistan and Sri Lanka."*

The Congress provided leadership experience and skills to participants and encouraged partnership among partici-

pants who addressed environmental matters from multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives. The forum for discussion on innovative technologies concerned with conservation policies and legalization, ecology, emerging technologies, alternative energy and total expenditure for the utilization of regenerative energies worldwide. The Congress also engaged with the impact of molecular nanotechnology on energy and environment, industry, development strategies and the built environment. The protection, urbanization, waste water treatment, and technology-society interface were also concerns of the Congress. It laid emphasis on the educational values in the pursuit of sustainable development and environmental management that nurture the environment and improve the quality

of life without compromising that of future generations, and looks for providing foundations for future endeavors through the identification of new and innovative areas of environmental research, development and professional practices.



Dr. Arvind Boaz, Director General of SACEP with the workshop Delegates

Asian Mayors' Policy Dialogue -Promotion of Environmentally Sustainable Transport in Cities

The United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), the ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (AWGESC), the Ministry of the Environment - Government of Japan, and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) jointly organised the Asian Mayors' Policy Dialogue for the Promotion of Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) in Cities from 23-24, April 2007 in Kyoto, Japan. The Keynote Speech delivered by Mr. Loh Ah Tuan, Chairman of ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (AWGESC).

In the dialogue, city mayors attending from 14 Asian countries (Japan, 7 ASEAN countries, China, Korea, Mongolia, India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka) shared their experiences and elaborated on best practices and

lessons learned in the promotion of EST. The discussions focused on further promotion of EST in urban transportation in Asian Cities. After the discussions, the *"Kyoto Declaration on Promotion of EST in Asian Cities"* was adopted.

Dr. Arvind Boaz, Director General represented the SACEP at the meeting and presented a talk on "EST from South Asia perspective." He emphasized that a lot of initiatives in EST have been taken in SACEP member countries and the time has come when UNCRD and other organizations should play a more active role in further developing EST and helping the countries of South Asia to introduce recent technologies. The situation in South Asia needed immediate attention because of the rapid increase in population and the fast pace of urbanization that is lead-

ing to immense congestion in many cities of South Asia. He proposed that SACEP could play a major role in taking this initiative ahead in South Asia. The organizers express their desire to work with SACEP as a partner organization in the future for consolidating the EST in South Asia. The Ministry of the Environment, Japan will continue to endeavor to pursue fruition of EST in the Asian region.



Dr. A.A. Boaz, (M) Director General of SACEP with Mr. Narayanlyer Venkataraman (Advisor, Bajaj Auto Ltd., India), Dr. R.C. Mohanty (UNCRD), Mr. Dalip Rao, Administrator, Bangalore Mahanagarapaleka, Mr. Upendra Tripathy, M.D. Bangalore Metro Transport cooperation.

ICRI General Meeting

In conjunction with the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, the Governments of the Japan and the Republic of Palau, as co-hosts of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) Secretariat, the third General Meeting of the current secretariat was held during 22nd-24th April 2007, at Rikkyo University and the Crown Plaza Hotel in Tokyo, Japan. Dr. Arvind Boaz Director General represented the SACEP at the meeting. The third general meeting of the Japan/Palau ICRI secretariat was attended by 65 participants including representatives from 15 countries.

Outcomes

A Review of ICRI The Meeting adopted "A Review of ICRI", a formal review and analysis of ICRI's activities

over the past 12 years.

International Year of the Reef, 2008

The terms of reference of the International Coordination of the International Year of the Reef 2008 were adopted. The new composition for the Ad-Hoc committee was also adopted and is composed of the following members: Australia, France, Mexico, USA, Japan, Philippines, Reef Check, the Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP), the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (CCRMN), and the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN)).

Marine Protected Area Network In order to respond to the WSSD target

(2002) to "commit to the development of representative networks of marine protected areas by 2012", a recommendation encouraging ICRI members to take urgent actions to establish and effectively manage representative regional and national networks of MPAs that include coral reefs and related ecosystems was adopted.

Climate change and coral reefs A Resolution on coral reef & climate change was adopted

Ocean Acidification It was decided that draft recommendation on Ocean Acidification will be posted to the ICRI Forum for comments from ICRI members and adopted under the rules of organization to management of ICRI.



SACEP, has come a long way in regional co-operation in the field of environment. It has spread out its wings in order to further the decisions taken at the 9th and 10th Governing Councils. One of the main thrust areas, as identified by the External Review Committee of SACEP and emphasized during both the Governing Councils, was the extension of collaboration with International agencies, that will help SACEP to develop new initiatives for the benefit of its member countries. I am happy to inform that in the past two years SACEP has been able to raise its profile will collaborative Agreements and MoUs with several important UN and other International agencies like WMO, IMO, UNEP, UNESCO, IUCN, TRADA and the Royal Belgium Institute of Natural Sciences. These MoUs have been taken forward by negotiations and finalisation of several projects and funds allocations in the priority areas as identified by the Governing Councils. These include projects on Marine Litter and PoPs, Market Based Instruments, Capacity Building in CHM for the CBD, Raising awareness on IMO conventions on Anti-fouling Systems for Ships, Mangroves and Capacity Building of Negotiators for International Conventions. SACEP has also recently become a member of important International bodies like the IUFRO and the Asia Forestry Partnership.

Moreover, collaborations with Non-Government Organisations and Regional Centres of Excellence have been taken forward with signing of MoUs for specific projects like with the Centre for Environment Education, India for a Scoping Exercise on Adaptation to Climate Change issues in South Asia and with Development Alternatives, India on a Scoping

Exercise of the E-waste Management in South Asia.

Another major achievement has been the sanction and implementation of the European Union funded project on Marine Protected Areas and the approval at the 10th Governing Council of the establishment of South Asia Coral Reef Task Force that will be launched on 27th July in Colombo. The South Asian Region has been long working towards the establishment of a Regional Office of the Basel Convention. This effort culminated when SACEP took up the issue at the 8th CoPs of the Basel Convention at Nairobi in December 2006 and this led to CoPs decision 8.3 where the Regional Centre for Basel Convention was approved to be established at the SACEP Secretariat in Colombo. Another area of work has been to garner support for SACEP activities from the private sector. SACEP has been able to get both technical/ financial support for its South Asian Games, (SAG) Waste Management Project from Abans Environment Services, Colombo and also from Standard Chartered Bank for its School Environment Awareness Programme.

The Oil Spill Contingency Plan, one of the major initiatives of SACEP, was finally got endorsed from all member countries in December 2006 and steps initiated to finalise the MoU to be signed by all the member states at a meeting of Plenipotentiaries with the technical and financial support of the IMO.

SACEP's Trust Fund was established this year with an initial contribution of INR 10 million from India. This fund will be utilized for Programme development in SACEP. This along with a 9th Governing Council decision to divert 30% of Arrears realized for Programme development

has enabled SACEP to develop several Concept Papers and Projects in house and pose them to donors. I am grateful to the Host Sri Lankan Government for doubling the Host Country Contribution to SACEP from the current year (2007). I am also thankful to my member countries for clearing the arrears of Country Contributions and also to India for enhancing the Country Contributions.

It has been my endeavour not only to keep my member countries involved but to seek their constant blessings in taking the SACEP forward and be of service to them in taking initiatives at the regional level for their environmental concerns and act as a bridge for cooperation in the South Asian Region. This has been ensured through several regional workshops, training camps and scoping exercises that have brought together Government Officials, Donors, National and International experts, NGOs and other stakeholders. In the past two years, two Governing Councils, the 9th and the 10th, have been held to bring together the Honourable Ministers of Environment and the Senior Secretaries of the Ministries of Environment to discuss about the Policy issues of SACEP and the way ahead and also to be briefed of its progress. In 2007, SACEP had the proud privilege to celebrate its 25th Anniversary that was graced by the Hon' Finance Minister of Nepal and attended by Ministers of Environment and high level officials of all member countries and delegates from several International organisations.

It is my privilege to be at the helm of SACEP at this crucial period where it is undergoing a transformation to become a dynamic and productive organization for the benefit of its member countries and trying to fulfill the dreams of its founding fathers.

7th Asia Pacific Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production

Sustainable development requires new ways of thinking, new technologies and new systems for the interacting with urban and rural communities and more importantly, new partnerships between business and government. Asia and the Pacific is the fastest growing economic region in the world and if Asian-Pacific development does not find sustainable pathway, then the goal of sustainable development will remain out of reach for all of us.

The Asia - Pacific Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production was formed in 1997 to foster dialog among industry, government, academia, and non-government organizations in the region to address pollution, development problems and solutions.

Since its inception, the APRCP has held seven successful Roundtables. The current 7th Conference was held in the his-

toric city of Hanoi, Vietnam during the 25-27 April 2007. Dr. Arvind Boaz, Director General represented the SACEP at the meeting and presented a paper on "Ecosystems based Development and Rural Livelihoods - A case study of Government facilitated community initiatives in Central India".

The 7th APRSCP in Hanoi was a unique opportunity in one of the region's rapidly developing economies, to hear regional and global experts present their views on the key issues and risks, as well as debate solutions for accelerating the shift to sustainable development pathways. In all six Roundtables, delegates--numbering around 300 or more from various countries from around the region participated in an intensive three-day program consisting of the parallel sessions, presentation of submitted papers, concurrent panel discussions,

plant visits and other activities designed to stimulate debate and meet head-on the challenges posed by the threats to our environment.



Dr. Arvind Boaz, Director General of SACEP making a presentation at the round table



The Role of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in the Settlement of Disputes Relating to the Law of the Sea in Northeast, Southeast and South Asia

Professor S. Jayakumar, Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore, Co-ordinating Minister for National Security and Minister for Law at Tribunal for the Law of the Sea inaugurated the Workshop on "The Role of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in the Settlement of Disputes relating to the Law of the Sea in Northeast, Southeast and South Asia". The rapid economic growth of Asian countries in recent decades has moved the centre of gravity of global shipping towards Asia.

This Workshop was the fourth in a series of regional workshops, held at the Royal Pavilion Ballroom II, Regent Hotel during 29 -31 May 2007. It was a privilege that SACEP was invited to attend this meeting looking into its initiative in the field of law. Dr. Arvind Boaz,

Director General represented the SACEP at the meeting.

The Tribunal brings together 21 Judges with exceptional experience and learning in the law of the sea. Within the past decade, the Tribunal has made significant contributions to the jurisprudence on the law of the sea, and has proven itself as a forum where parties can expect prompt and efficient disposal of their cases. The seas of Northeast, Southeast, and South Asia are important not just to the countries in the region but to the international community. Through the years, the Tribunal has shown itself able to render justice in a fair, prompt and cost-effective manner.

United Nations Conferences on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) has always had to deal

with and balance numerous competing interests. It is because of this that UNCLOS is universally supported, even by those few States, such as the United States, which have not yet acceded to it. In this regard, the Tribunal is an important cornerstone of UNCLOS as it plays a central role in ensuring that States Parties are faithful in their interpretation and application of the Convention. During discussion, SACEP was able to express its competence and desire in taking capacity building initiatives for its member countries and hold training camps and workshops. The proposal was well received by the representative from UN DAOLOS, Ms Gertrude Blake, who said that they could explore possibilities of collaborating with SACEP to conduct such trainings in the South Asian region.

Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution National Stakeholders Forum –Sri Lanka

Under the SIDA funded UNEP -SACEP Malé Declaration Project, the National Stakeholders forum of Sri Lanka was held on 12th June 2007 at the Auditorium of the Central Environmental Authority of Sri Lanka. The event was inaugurated by the Minister of Environment & Natural Resources Hon. Patali Champika Ranawake and Welcome Address was given by Dr. A. A. Boaz Director General of SACEP. Mr. Iyngararasm of UNEP RRCP, Bangkok in his address elaborated on the achievements of the project during the current phase.

The forum was jointly organized by UNEP - RRC, SACEP, SEI (Stockholm Environment

Institute), Ministry of Environment & Natural Resources, Sri Lanka and the Central Environmental Authority of Sri Lanka. The Forum was attended by the representatives of the above organizations and also by key stakeholders and experts. It provided a good platform for the stakeholders to exchange their views and comments.



Hon. Mr. Patali Champika Ranawaka, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Sri Lanka and Dr. Arvind Boaz, Director General of SACEP lighting the Oil lamp at the inauguration of the Forum.



Programme Management Committee (PMC) Meeting & Male Declaration

The Programme Management Committee (PMC) and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting of the SIDA (Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency) funded RAPIDC (Regional Air Pollution in Developing Countries) Project was held in Stockholm, Sweden from 15 - 16th May 2007. Dr. A. A. Boaz, Director General of SACEP, being a member of both the committees attended the meetings.

The RAPIDC Programme is co-ordinated by Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) and is carried out in collaboration with UNEP, SACEP, Swedish Universities and research organization together with international agencies and research organiza-

tions in Asia and Africa. The aim of the RAPIDC programme is to facilitate the development of agreements, protocols and to implement measures which prevent and control air pollution through promoting international co-operation & developing scientific information for the policy process.

The PMC consisting of all core collaborators within RAPIDC programme meet periodically to report on progress and to advise SEI & SIDA as the efficient management of the programme.

During the PMC meeting it was pointed out by SACEP that it was still awaiting to play a greater role in the implementation of the IIIrd phase. It was decided

that UNEP will ensure a clear role for SACEP to build its capacity during the balance phase and that the role clarity will be discussed and finalized during the Inter-government meeting to be held in September 2007.

At the meeting SIDA informed the PMC that in order to take the programme forward in the IVth Phase, additional funding resources should be explored. It also emphasized on greater ownership of the programme by the regions and member countries. RAPIDC was also requested to submit the draft proposal for the Phase IV implementation by January next year.





Coral Reef Livelihoods Initiative (CORALI)

One of the major projects under implementation by SACEP is the European Union (EU) funded project, “ Long Term Management and Conservation of Marine and Coastal Resources in South Asia”. CORALI (Coral Reef Livelihoods Initiative), a component of the larger EU project, is carried out with the help of IMM and IUCN. The second CORALI workshop was held between 4 -10 June 2007 in Sri Lanka to review Phase I of the fieldwork, and to develop phase II for implementation.

The Overall CORALI Pilot Fieldwork Objective is to develop and test a regionally appropriate approach to livelihood development in association with coral reef management.

Outputs:

A key output of the first workshop in January/February 2007 was the development of a fieldwork methodology for the first phase of work.

The first phase of the initiative concentrates on developing participants understanding of the nature of livelihoods in the areas

To build the relationships and partnerships for sustainable development

understanding livelihoods and livelihood change.

The fieldwork is being implemented by the participants over a period of 3 months between the periods of March-June 2007 in 6 sites:

Field Overview (March-June 2007)

India – Middle Andaman Island

Initial community meetings held, literature search been completed and livelihood data gathered from secondary sources. Partnerships forged with village leaders, actively involved with the field team in the collection of household data.

India – Lakshadweep Islands: Minicoy and Agatti

Review of secondary information and available data completed, field discussions held with fishermen, reef gleaners, construction workers, tourist resorts, youth groups, women’s Self Help Groups in both islands. Assessments of the situation and livelihood aspirations vis a vis the reef conservation and sustainability issues will also be conducted.

India – Gulf of Mannar: 5 Villages

including Thirespuram and Inico Nager Meetings with partners, unions, CBOs, self-help groups and traditional leaders held. Household surveys and key informant surveys conducted.

Indonesia, Aceh, Weh Island: 3 villages of Le Meulee, Ujong Kareung and Anoi Itam

First meeting held at the end of April in Sabang, to share the activities and aims with the team. Information collected from the labour department, village offices, family planning department, and consultations held with these institutions.

Sri Lanka – Bar Reef

First round of field work was carried out and secondary information collected. First round of assessment carried out in a village called Kudaw located in close proximity to the Bar Reef. 3 focal group discussion sessions and several interviews were conducted.

Maldives – Baa Atoll: Eydhafushi

Fieldwork initiated with the assistance of Ministry of Planning and National Development and Ministry of Environment Energy and Water.



8th Meeting of the United Nations Open -ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea

In 1999, the General Assembly decided to establish the United Nations Open -ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea -UNCLOS (the Consultative Process) in order to facilitate the annual review by the General Assembly, in an effective and constructive manner, of developments in ocean affairs and the law of the sea by considering the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea and by suggesting particular issues to be considered by it, with an emphasis on identifying areas where coordination and cooperation at the intergovernmental and inter-agency levels should be enhanced. The 8th Meeting of the Consultative Process was held during 25 -29 at the UN Head Quarters, New York. All States Members of the United Nations, States members of the

specialized agencies, all parties to UNCLOS, and intergovernmental organizations with competence in ocean affairs as well as major groups, as identified in Agenda 21 participated in the event.

In particular, key intergovernmental organizations addressed possible responses to the issues raised in the panel from the point of view of their mandates and available practical tools and in the context of cooperation and coordination. Relevant non-governmental organizations also invited to submit a joint statement on the possible contribution of civil society with respect to the issues raised in the panel within this year.

The meeting was organized by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Laws of the Sea,

Office of Legal Affairs. In a side meeting between Mr. Vaclav Mikulka, Director, DOALOS and Dr Arvind Boaz, Director General, SACEP, discussions were held on a collaboration between SACEP and DOALOS on the delivery of a number of capacity building activities that DOALOS is presently engaged in. These include a multi -disciplinary training course on the development, implementation and management of Marine Protected Areas and a training course on ecosystem approaches to Ocean Management. Action to conduct these courses for the benefit of the member states of SACEP has been initiated.





SACEP signed a MoU with TRADA, UK

Timber Research and Development Association (TRADA), is an independent research association in UK established in the year 1934. The International division of TRADA has been implementing projects in timber and timber related industries in developing countries for more than two decades and has specialized in bamboo development programmes for sustainable livelihoods.

SACEP and TRADA intend to cooperate in the areas common to their programmes in South Asia according to the signed MoU at the SACEP Secretariat on 21st April 2007. Mr. Lionel Jayanetti, Head of TRADA and Dr. A. A. Boaz, Director General of SACEP signed the MoU on behalf of the two organizations.

TRADA and SACEP have identified the thematic areas of Access to Benefit Sharing, Community Development, Equitable sharing of resources. The main thrust will be to specifically address Poverty reduction and livelihoods issues, sustainable timber and wood production through demonstrating Best Practices, sharing skills and knowledge as the substantive fields on which the partnership will be built. This will be a major step to developing the communities adaptive capacity to the impacts on the forest resources because of climate change and consequent effect on productivity of the natural resources on which the local

communities are dependent for their livelihood.



Dr. A. A. Boaz, Director General of SACEP and Mr. Lionel Jayanetti exchanging the MoU at SACEP Secretariat



Second Meeting of the Maldives Partnership Forum (MPF II)

The Second Maldives Partnership Forum (MPF) was held in Bandos Island Resort, the Republic of Maldives, on 03 June 2007. The Forum was organized by the Department of External Resources of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and attended by international development partners (donor countries, international organisations, and international financial institutions), representatives of national civil society, and private sector organizations. The MPF is a key building block in the government's coordination efforts, establishing a platform for all key development partners (multilateral, bilateral, civil society, private sector) to discuss the nation's development objectives in an open and frank atmosphere. H.E. President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom inaugurated the Forum, calling it "a window of opportunity" to establish long-term part-

nerships with key international development agencies. Speaking on the pace of development in the Maldives today, the President noted that economic and social progress over the past twenty years has taken the country to new horizons.

The Forum was attended by high-level dignitaries, including the heads of the resident missions that was a clear indication of the interest and support generated towards Maldives. SACEP was invited to attend the Forum and Dr. A. A. Boaz represented SACEP at the meeting.

The Forum Focused on two major issues.

National Adaptation to climate change
Investment opportunities in Maldives
Dr. Boaz reiterated the support of SACEP in taking forward the environmental concern of Maldives especially with respect to the adaptation issues related to climate change. He emphasized that Adaptation to

Climate Change has been identified as one of the Priority Areas in the SACEP Work Programme for 2007-08 and SACEP had initiated several new projects in which Maldives was an integral part. SACEP had also carried out a scoping exercise on the adaptation issue in January this year in which the way forward was decided in consultations with the member countries of SACEP.



His Excellency Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of the Republic of Maldives addressing the meeting

Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and Its Likely Transboundary Effects: Exchange Programme held in Bangkok

Under the Project of Malé Declaration on control and prevention of Air Pollution and its likely transboundary ponder effects for South Asia, an exchange programme was held from 22nd – 31st May 2007 at the UNEP RRC.AP, Pathumthani, Thailand to initiate the planning for the Phase IV and to collate the learning from Phase III activities. The exchange programme was attended by national level policy managers representing countries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Iran.

The objective of the exchange programme was to

- Discuss the data from the monitoring stations and develop a national level policy report,
 - Develop a proposal for national level priorities for Phase IV implementation of the Project.
 - Compile a general proposal for regional level activities in phase IV
- Ms. Priyankari Alexander, Programme Offi-

cer from SACEP participated in the programme and helped develop the proposal for the IVth phase. A detailed proposal for activities to be conducted by SACEP was also sent to UNEP to be incorporated in the Proposal. This will ensure role clarity between UNEP and SACEP in the 4th Phase of the Project and will help to ensure greater ownership of the project in the region.



World Environment Day 2007

World Environment Day was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1972 to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. Another resolution, adopted by the General Assembly the same day, led to the creation of UNEP. World Environment Day, commemorated each year on 5 June, is one of the principal vehicles through which the United Nations stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and enhances political attention and action.

The World Environment Day slogan selected for 2007 is **Melting Ice – a Hot Topic?** In support of International Polar Year, the WED theme selected for 2007 focuses on the effects that climate change is having on polar ecosystems and communities, and the ensuing con-

sequences around the world.

The main international celebrations of the World Environment Day 2007 was held in Norway. The day's agenda is to give a human face to environmental issues; empower people to become active agents of sustainable and equitable development; promote an understanding that communities are pivotal to changing attitudes towards environmental issues; and advocate partnership, which will ensure all nations and people enjoy a safer and more prosperous future.

World Environment Day is a peoples' event with colourful activities such as street rallies, bicycle parades, green concerts, essays and poster competitions in schools, tree planting, as well as recycling and clean-up campaigns. In many countries, this annual event is used

to enhance political attention and action.

On this World Environment Day the theme chosen is important not only for the survival of the Polar bear but life on earth as a whole. Let us examine the state of our environment and consider carefully the actions which each of us must take, and then address ourselves to our common task of preserving all life on earth in a mood of sober resolution and quiet confidence.

Source: www.unep.org/wed/2007

World Day to Combat Desertification

"Desertification and Climate Change - One Global Challenge"

The World Day to Combat Desertification is celebrated every year on June 17 all over the world in order to highlight the urgent need to curb the process of desertification and to strengthen the visibility of this serious drylands issue on the international environmental agenda.

Another environmental issue of growing urgency today is climate change. This is reflected in the theme for this year's World Day, which focuses on the important synergy between desertification and climate change. The Day will draw attention to the significant benefits of an integrated approach to tackling these

two major environmental challenges. 17 June represents an opportunity to reinforce the message that desertification is not a fatality, that solutions exist, and that it can be effectively tackled through strengthened community participation and cooperation at all levels.

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the only internationally recognized, legally binding instrument that addresses the problem of land degradation in the drylands and which enjoys a truly universal membership of 191 country Parties. It plays a key role in global efforts to eradicate poverty, achieve sustainable develop-

ment and reach the Millennium Development Goals, in particular with regard to the eradication of extreme poverty. As we approach the halfway stage in the timetable for achieving these goals, the need to fully implement the Convention is becoming increasingly urgent.

Let us not limit ourselves in organizing events only to mark the World Day to Combat Desertification but involve ourselves in a continuous effort to help raise awareness of the problem and to encourage as broad a public as possible to become actively involved in finding solutions.

Source: www.unccd.int

Desertification is the degradation of land in arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid areas. It is caused primarily by human activities and climatic variations. Desertification does not refer to the expansion of existing deserts. It occurs because dryland ecosystems, which cover over one third of the world's land area, are extremely vulnerable to over-exploitation and inappropriate land use.





Reach us on the web!

www.sacep.org
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Future editions of this Newsletter will highlight regional and national initiatives and emerging environmental issues. We would like to receive related articles or information to share with our readers. Any information published will be duly acknowledged.

We look forward to receive information that could be part of our database of experts and institutions in the region. We also request for information on case studies of best management practices and initiatives in the areas of environmental protection, sustainable resource management and community based participatory resource management.

The SACEP Newsletter is published quarterly and can be downloaded from the website.

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Photographs Invited

Please send us your photographs on waste Management issues or Adaption to Climate Change Issues in South Asia. Selected Photographs will be published in future issues and duly acknowledged.

Future Events of SACEP

16th of July, 2007

“Soba Sankalpana” School Environmental Education Competitions

SACEP has organised a School Environment Awareness Programme award ceremony collaboration with the CEE on 16th of July, 2007 at the Mahaweli Center Auditorium, Colombo 07. Chief Guest Hon. Mr. Mahanth Thakur, Chairman of SACEP and Minister of Environment, Science and Technology, Government of Nepal will grace the occasion. A Panel discussion on “Adaptation Strategies to Sea Level Rise in South Asia” and a Video presentation on Sea Level Rise will be screened to show the global picture followed by a awards ceremony to the winners of the School Environment competition. A representative of the Best and most active winning School will be fully sponsored to participate the 4th International Conference on Environmental Education 26 -28 November, Ahmedabad, India.

25-27 of July, 2007

“Regional Coordination Workshop on South Asia MCPA Project and Launch of the South Asia Coral Reef Task Force”

Under the European Union (EU) funded project, “Long Term Management and Conservation of Marine and Coastal Resources in South Asia”, a second regional workshop will be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 25th-27th July, 2007. On the final day, the South Asia Coral Reef Task Force (SACRTF) that has been approved at the 10th Governing Council of SACEP and its membership finalized by the Country Governments and experts will be officially launched on 27th July 2007.

20-21 of August, 2007

“Marine Litter Workshop”

With funding of UNEP-GPA a project for review of Marine Litter Activity in the South Asian Seas Region was launched by SACEP. In order to finalise the report of this activity this workshop will be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka during 20-21 August 2007.

27-28 of August, 2007

“Scoping Exercise on E-waste Management in South Asia”

SACEP has organised this workshop in collaboration with the Development Alternative (DA) in New Delhi, India. This will be attended by country focal points from the Ministries of Environment of the member countries, experts, NGOs and other stakeholders.

Two new staff members at SACEP

Dr. Naveen Namboodiri

Ms. Madhuri Peiris

Dr. Naveen assumed duties as a Project Officer of the EU funded ICRAN SACEP MPA Project in January 2007. He has recently completed his Ph.D. in Marine Biology, from the Anna-malai University, India. Prior to joining SACEP, he worked with the Kerala State Remote Sensing and Environment Centre as a facilitator and also did some short-term projects on the conservation of otters of India.

Ms. Madhuri Peiris assumed duties as a Project Assistant at SACEP in May 2007. She is a graduate from the University of Delhi, India and is enrolled for her M.Sc. in Environmental Science at the University of Colombo. Prior to joining SACEP, she has worked at the Ministry of Environment as a Project Assistant attached to the Environmental Economics & Global Affaires Division.

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