SOUTH ASIA CO-OPERATIVE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

SACEP STRATEGY 2020 – 2030

Approved by the 15th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP held on 6th November 2019

SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030

1. Background

South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) was established by the South Asian countries to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region at the High Level Meeting to Initiate SACEP held on February 1981 at Colombo, Sri Lanka. As of Article of Associations, SACEP became a legal entity on 9th February 1982 with the ratification of at least three member states. Eight South Asian countries; Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are members of SACEP. The Colombo Declaration on the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme and Articles of Association of SACEP constitute the legal basis for SACEP. The principle organs of the governance structure of SACEP are the Governing Council (GC) consists of Ministers of Environment of the member countries, Consultative Committee (CC) drawing from representatives of Embassies/High Commissions of the member countries stationed at Colombo, National Focal Points (NFP), Subject Area Focal Points and the SACEP Secretariat. The Secretariat is headed by a Director General, located in Colombo, Sri Lanka where host facilities are provided by the Government of Sri Lanka. SACEP also serves as secretariat for the South Asia Seas Programme (SASP) which is one of the eighteen Regional Seas Programmes of the UN Environment. SACEP registered with the UN Secretariat as a multilateral organization in accordance with article 102 of the charter of the United Nations.

SACEP has an impressive record in capacity building and policy dialogue with government officials of member countries and other environmental stakeholders, developing and promoting tools and good practices for sustainable development and for public/stakeholder involvement, implementing ministerial mandates and contributing to international processes. Much of these efforts have been in the thematic areas of Biodiversity Conservation, Sustainable Consumption and Production, Air, land and water pollution with trans-boundary implications, Coastal and Marine Environment, Climate Change, and Environmental Planning, Policy and Law. These activities implemented under number of Strategic Programmes since SACEP's inception. Up to 1991, the work programmes determined by the Governing Council were guided by National Focal Points and Subject Area Focal Points. The first five-year strategy, SACEP's Strategy Programmes 1 (SSP1) was implemented from 1992 to 1996. Then, SACEP's Strategy Programmes 2 (SSP2) implemented from 1996 to 2002. In 2003, SACEP went through an external review to evaluate the past performance of SACEP over 2 decades and for identification of bottle necks in its funding, new strategy and implementation mechanisms to achieve its objectives. According to that strategy, SACEP was required to develop two work programmes, biennium and quennium for implementation thereafter.

It has been more than a decade since the last strategy adopted by SACEP and there are many changes taken place in the areas of national, regional and global environment concerns and priorities which requires new policies and strategies to overcome the new challenges.

This long-term strategy (2020 – 2030) builds on the decisions made by SACEP Governing Council at its previous sittings, SACEP's own experiences of coordinating and assisting the region's environment protection efforts over the years as well as from its needs advancing forward, Post 2015 South Asia Development Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

2. Regional Context

South Asia is home to one of the oldest civilizations of the world. The sub-region comprises eight countries, namely - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. South Asia habitats a total population of around 1.5 billion, burgeoning at the annual rate of 1.8%, in-spite of covering only 4.8 per cent of the world's total land area. This figure is expected to rise to about 25 per cent by 2050. India is the most populated country in the region, followed by Pakistan. Countries like Bhutan and Maldives are comparatively less populated than the other nations in the region *ibid*. The region remains one of the fastest growing sub-regions in the world. South Asia has yet to cross many hurdles to attain the lofty goal of sustainable development.

Rapid urbanization, affluent life-styles, and increased demand for resources and services associated with economic growth are exerting increasing pressure on ecosystem resources. South Asia shows the largest growth of the urban population, 2.66 percent per year among the sub-regions in Asia and the Pacific region[2]. The urban population of South-Asia during 2011 was 32.6%. It has been estimated that by the middle of the twenty-first century, at least 50 percent South Asians will be residing in urban areas, which means that the urban population of this region will be over 1.2 billion[1].

Consumption and production of goods and services are vital components of economic development. This 'development' is directly proportional to the supply of natural resources. It leads to disruption of the environment, deteriorating the environmental quality. As in the rest of world, the region's economic development is coupled to unsustainable consumption patterns and waste production. Consumption behavior has changed and domestic consumption has started to increase alongside export industry growth. Intensive human activities and energy consumption in urban areas lead to the generation of increasing amounts of pollution and waste, with multiple adverse impacts on urban environments. Air pollution in the form of emissions of pollutants, like oxides of Sulphur and Nitrogen, Carbon dioxide, is also a by-product of economic development. Deterioration of air quality can be majorly observed in the mega cities of region[1].

Increasing resource use, with little improvement in the efficiency of such use, is causing widespread environmental degradation, loss of ecosystem services, generation of excessive waste and additional financial burdens. The region's material consumption has been increased sharply over the past four decades, but material productivity has not improved and is still very low. The main driver of accelerating domestic material consumption is the growth of consumption by the expanding middle class and, to a lesser extent, population growth[2]. The material intensity of many countries in the region has increased significantly over the past four decades. In 2015, on average, 1.35 kilograms of materials were needed globally to produce USD1 of economic output but 3.75 kilograms were required in South Asia, almost three times the global average[2]. Similarly, water intensity in South Asia region was almost double the world average in 2015.

Almost half the land area in South Asia has become degraded in one form or another and even the water resource base is seriously threatened due to overexploitation and pollution. With the biodiversity under severe threat, the resource base in the sub-region is largely degraded due to its low-lying geography, low per-capita income and high population density. South Asia shelters approximately 15 percent of the known global flora and fauna. Unfortunately, the rich natural endowments are constantly under threat including the precious gene pool. More recently, traditional knowledge and ownership rights of indigenous communities are also being threatened by global trade and patenting agreements.

Land-use and related pressures have caused severe damage to local species richness. Ecosystems have been altered for millennia in South Asia, with a net increase in provisioning ecosystem services from man-made systems like farmland, aquaculture and plantations, which lead to decline the regulating and cultural ecosystem services; for example, intact forests that reduce erosion, or associated declines in biodiversity. (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). Loss of biodiversity will impact the ecosystem services, which will affect the benefits people receive directly as well as indirectly. These include: Provisioning services (food, clean water, timber, fibre); Genetic resources regulating services (the regulation of climate, floods, disease, water quality, and pollination); Cultural services (recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits) and Supporting services (soil formation, and nutrient cycling). Despite the high deforestation rates and declining forest cover, South Asia reports a higher proportion of forest area covered by forest management plans than other areas, which may help to halt the decline in future (FAO 2015).

Solid waste disposal has emerged as a major environmental problem, particularly in the urban areas in recent times. Rapid urbanization, growing affluence, changing consumption patterns, low level of awareness and poor civic sense are the key factors causing increased waste generation.

Pollutants, originating from both land and sea, are responsible for significant lethal and sub-lethal effects on marine life. Pollution impacts all trophic levels, from primary producers to apex predators, and thus interferes with the structure of marine communities and consequently ecosystem functioning. From the available data it could be inferred that the major sources of marine pollution including debris/litter are domestic/industrial wastes, ports and harbours including fishing harbours and landing centres, ship breaking yards, fish/food processing industries, tourist resorts/beaches, solid waste dumping, urban runoff, oil rigs, coastal aquaculture, fishing industry including fishing gear, shipping including garbage from ships, recreational and leisure use, marine mining, construction activities, etc[6].

The effect of climate change and disasters impose economic losses that could offset development gains, increase poverty and inequity, and threaten water and food security. As pointed out in the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2007, South Asia is likely to be one of the regions that will be a major casualty of all the negative impacts of climate change. Climate change will have wide-ranging impact on environment as well as on socio-economic and related sectors, including water resources, agriculture and water security, human health, terrestrial ecosystems, biodiversity and coastal zones. Its effects include changes in rainfall patterns leading to severe water shortages and/or flooding; melting of glaciers causing flooding and soil erosion; and rising temperatures affecting food security and increasing the rates of extinction for many habitats and species.
Increasing sea level means a greater risk of storm surge, inundation and wave damage to the coastline. Low-lying coastal cities will be at the forefront of receiving most of the impact, being most vulnerable to the risks of sea level rise and storms. Elevated seawater level would also increase the risk of flooding due to rainstorms by reducing the coastal drainage.

Drylands and mountain regions are likely to be more vulnerable than others and ecosystem degradation is the largest in this region. Climate change is likely to cause additional inequities, as its impact is unevenly distributed over space and time and disproportionately affects the poor[3].

One of the manifestations of the impact of climate change has emerged in the form of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) hazard. This hazard has shown an increasing trend over the past decades, especially in the Himalayan region. In Nepal and Bhutan, melting glaciers are filling glacial lakes beyond their capacities, contributing to 'GLOFs'. Of the 2,323 glacial lakes in Nepal, 20 have been found to be potentially dangerous with respect to GLOFs[3].

Another common aspect of the region is the need for strengthening the landscape of policies and legislation and their implementation. Environmental issues are more pressing than ever and there has been a corresponding increase in multilateral environmental agreements, factors that have expanded the demand for effective policy intervention in the region.

Many environmental policies in South Asian nations have yet to realize their full potential. Due to resource constrains and limitations in institutional coordination, these policies have not been fully implemented. Governments and policy experts advocate integrated and comprehensive approaches to policy creation as well as science-based policy as fragmentation of policy and non-scientific policy design often leads to ineffective implementation. Transformative change would require a strengthening of policies, policy coherence and a corresponding bolstering of their implementation.

Policy assessment and evaluation is a crucial step to determine the effect of a policy intervention. Policy formulation and its assessment requires comprehensive methods and trained personnel. Sound scientific and actionable solutions are needed not only for emerging environmental issues but also to address shortcomings in existing environmental policies.

3. Contemporary Development at Global Level

It is equally important to look at the global challenges and contemporary measures agreed upon at international level when strategically thinking of addressing the regional challenges. In this 21st century, countries are continuously facing the four extra-ordinary and interrelated challenges of pervasive poverty, environmental degradation, climate change, and global strife accentuating the wave of international migration already apace due to economic insecurity in an increasingly unsustainable and inequitable world. In an exceptional demonstration of a global effort and consensus, in 2015, the world community reached two land mark agreements, namely, The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and The Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Together these agreements sought to address the mentioned challenges.

The historic agreement reached in Paris in December 2015 outlines a global commitment to keep warming to 2°C and to strive to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C. Under the agreement, every country will implement its own climate action plan that will be reviewed periodically. Developed countries also committed to deliver significant flows of money and technical support to help developing countries cope with curbing their greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change[4].

The United Nations Resolution A/RES/70/1 of 25 September 2015, adapting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development describes it as 'a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity' also seeking 'to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom'. The agenda contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. It provides that 'all countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership', are expected to implement[5]. The new Goals are unique in that they call for action by all countries, poor,

rich and middle-income to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and addresses a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection. All the SDGs reflect the concern for environment, some more than others, but SDGs 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 are often labelled as environmental SDGs.

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) addresses the critical environmental challenges facing the world today. The Environment Assembly meets biennially to set priorities for global environmental policies and develop international environmental law. Through its resolutions and calls to action, the Assembly provides leadership and catalyses intergovernmental action on the environment. The fourth session of the UNEA held in March 2019 adopted a number of resolutions including Sustainable Nitrogen Management, Sustainable coral reefs management, Sustainable Management for Global Health of Mangrove, Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities, Innovations on biodiversity and land degradation, Addressing Single-use Plastic Products Pollution, Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste, Environmentally Sound Management of Waste, Marine Plastic Litter and Microplastics, Innovative Pathways to Achieve Sustainable Consumption and Production and its ministerial outcome document highlighted three main priorities for enabling Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) to become a reality around the world: better global environmental data and partnerships; sustainable and efficient resource management; and robust engagement of civil society, citizens and academia in promoting innovative approaches.

Financial supports for environment protection, from various resources have been increasing since last decade but still insufficient. Different financial mechanisms are now available at the regional and global levels to support environment actions in developing countries. The Paris Agreement provides the latest guidance to countries and multilateral development banks on climate finance and the need for financial flows to developing countries to support climate action. Under this Agreement, developed countries are committed to mobilizing USD 100 billion/year by 2020 from public and private sources to support climate action in developing countries, with a new higher target to be agreed by 2025. Access to these financial resources, however, is still a challenge for the most of developing countries including South Asian countries.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' also recognized regional organizations as key actors in coordinating the implementation, follow-up, and review process of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This statement clearly highlights the importance of the roles that regional organizations like SACEP play in the achievement of the United Nations global goals by supporting its member states with the design of action plans for sustainable development, and monitoring the implementation of these commitments.

4. SACEP Strategy 2020 -2030

Based on the decisions made by SACEP Governing Council at its previous sittings, SACEP's own experiences of coordinating and assisting the region's environment protection efforts over the years as well as from its needs going forward, Post 2015 South Asia Development Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and Paris Agreement on Climate Change, SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030 is presented as follows. This is a long-term strategy spanning the period through 2020-2030. Thus, the vision, mission, goals, and objectives/outcomes have a long-term orientation.

4.1 Vision

A healthy environment, resilient society and regional prosperity for the present and future generations.

4.2 Mission

To promote regional co-operation in South Asia in the field of environment, both natural and human and on issues of economic and social development which also impinge on the environment and vice versa; to support conservation and management of natural resources of the region and to work closely with all regional, national and international institutions, governmental and non governmental, as well as experts and groups engaged in such co-operation and conservation efforts.

4.3 Guiding Principles (Values)

This SACEP Strategy was developed based on the following guiding principles:

(a) **Respect**: respect and value the SACEP member countries, governments and people; partners, service providers and all others;

(b) **Equity and Equality**: foster gender equity without discrimination on the basis of race, creed, gender, faith and age or any other consideration. Merit should be the basis for all decisions.

(c) **Enabling**: enable others including member countries, institutions and individuals in pursuing environmental responsibility and aspirations and, help and mentor SACEP's staff, interns, volunteers, trainees and colleagues in the quest for excellence in professional careers and personal lives;

(d) **Partnerships**: pursue partnerships among SACEP and other international players, private sector, academia and Civil Society to overcome environmental challenges and embrace opportunities.

(e) **Creativity and innovation**: encourage creativity and innovation to effectively achievie goals with limited resources and incentivize mobilization of additional resources for SACEP to grow its support for the member countries' work in environment;

(f) **Service Orientation**: Service orientation is fundamental to success as a membership organization and seek, support synergy with members, and partners, remaining complementary and avoiding duplication of efforts;

(g) **Lead by Example**: act as leaders by providing responsible and proactive service to member countries;

(h) **Track the Progress**: monitor, evaluate and report on the Strategy implementation and follow-up actions;

(i) **Transparency**: transparency is important both as a strategy and as a means of accountability. SACEP will ensure transparency in its financial management. All technical knowledge resources are open-source and accessible in public domain. Seek to always meet, and possibly exceed, the transparency and accountability, expected.

4.4 Goals

During the 2020–2030 period, SACEP will pursue the following strategic goals in the region. Together, these goals define the core priorities and focus of SACEP for the next ten years:

1. Enhance resilience to the impacts of climate change through mitigation and adaptation measures
2. Conservation of ecosystem and biodiversity
3. Ensure effective waste management at all levels
4. Ensure better air quality to safeguard health and well being
5. Strengthened low-emission development, improve resource efficiency for transition to an inclusive green economy and fostered sustainable and healthy lifestyles
6. Strengthen environmental governance for evidence based decision making

4.5 Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes for identified six Goals are listed below. Each goal specifies a number of objectives/key outcomes. While each goal is a key focus in its own right, all six are closely interrelated.

Goal 1: Enhance resilience to the impacts of climate change through mitigation and adaptation measures

Outcomes:

1.1 Countries more resilient to the adverse impacts of climate change.

1.2 Countries are assisted in preparation of national and regional adaptation strategies and the integration of adaptation aspects into sectoral policies, especially in the agriculture, water management, forestry, health, energy and transport sectors.

1.3 Capacity of SACEP member countries to implement national climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), obligations to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and disaster risk reduction are strengthened.

1.4 Multiple pressures on vulnerable ecosystems by implementing ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation to sustain biodiversity and the provision of ecosystem services that support livelihoods and sustainable development are minimised.

1.5 Countries are assisted to access climate finance to address the challenges of climate change

1.6 International process under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are supported.

Goal 2: Conservation of ecosystem and biodiversity

Outcomes:

2.1 Capacity at local, national and regional level is strengthened to enable them to implement legislation on the protection of biodiversity and its integration into planning and economic decision making.

2.2 Marine, freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems are managed in an integrated manner that enables them to maintain and restore biodiversity, ecosystems' long-term functioning and supply of ecosystem goods and services.

2.3 Support provided for the designation, protection and management of areas of natural value. Special attention given to initiatives and activities that promote sustainable use of ecosystem for the conservation of natural resources as part of a larger commitment to preserving and enhancing our natural capital as a necessary condition for smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive growth.

2.4 Socioeconomic and ecological impacts of invasive species are reduced significantly.

2.5 Governments and public at large in South Asia are aware of the state of the art as to the magnitude of these resources and the trends in their conservation or degradation;

2.6 Private Sector is encouraged to invest in conservation activities.

2.7 Decade of Ecosystem Restoration (2020 – 2030) as decided by the CoP 14 of the Convention on Biological Diversity will be given due consideration and ecosystem based approach is applied for conservation of all ecosystems including mountain ecosystems.

Goal 3: Ensure effective waste management at all levels

Outcomes:

3.1 Promoted integrated waste management across the region including cleaner production, the 3Rs – (reduce, reuse, recycle), zero waste, and the circular economy.

3.2 Strengthened capacity at national, and regional levels for waste management including for chemicals, hazardous wastes, plastics and waste water.

3.3 Emissions sources identified, policies, legal, regulatory, fiscal and institutional frameworks and mechanisms for the reduction of air pollution developed, institutional capacity built for improved air quality, and air quality assessments done by countries.

3.4 Exchange of ideas, experiences, research and information on air quality is facilitated and investment in national and regional air quality monitoring networks, assessment systems, institutional capacity and information disclosure to the wider public is strengthened in order to address gaps in capacity, data, information and awareness.

3.5 South Asia regional roadmap for implementing the Global Waste Management Goals towards addressing SDGs is developed and implemented.

Goal 4: Ensure better air quality to safeguard health and well being

4.1 A regional clean air Action Plan/Roadmap is developed and implemented

4.2 Reduced number of deaths due to human exposure to outdoor air pollution levels

4.3 Reduced levels of ambient particulate matter (PM 10 and PM 2.5);

4.4 Reduced ambient air levels of NOx and SOx;

4.5 Capacity building for managing and mitigating indoor air pollution and industrial waste water are addressed.

Goal 5: Strengthen low-emission development, improve resource efficiency for transition to an inclusive green economy and fostered sustainable and healthy lifestyles

Outcomes:

5.1 Regional and national Sustainable Consumption and Production policies and initiatives are developed and implemented.

5.2 Application of life-cycle approaches to resource efficiency, energy, chemicals and waste including hazardous waste management is promoted.

5.3 Sustainable Consumption and Production approaches are integrated into sectoral policies of SACEP member countries.

5.4 Best practices, technological advances and innovations are encouraged in sectors such as energy, transport, manufacturing, health, agriculture, biodiversity, forestry and waste management.

5.5 Multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms that contribute to transparent deliberative processes for generating and sharing knowledge on sustainable infrastructure, to ensure that accurate and relevant information is publicly available and reaches key stakeholders at all levels are established and supported.

Goal 6: Strengthen environmental governance for evidence based decision making

Outcomes:

6.1 Strengthened synergies between science, policy, and traditional and local knowledge to guide decision making.

6.2 Strengthened environmental data collection, monitoring, and analysis and reporting on results, nationally and regionally.

6.3 Dialogue between researchers and policy makers is facilitated and both parties are encouraged to work hand in hand for science-based decision making in the region.

6.4 South – south cooperation and north – south cooperation in technological transfer for better conservation practices are promoted.

6.5 SACEP may align with the centers of excellence in the region. A training center/venue can be established at SACEP complex to implement the capacity development activities.

6.6 Improved national capacity for good environmental governance supported by technical assistance for the development of policies and legislations.

6.7 Participatory governance put into practice in the field of environment and sustainable development by supporting public access to information, public participation in decision making and access to justice.

6.8 Best practices in participatory governance and public participation identified, exchanged and integrated into the water, waste, energy, transport, nature protection, climate change, agriculture, and sustainable consumption and production sectors.

4.6 Coastal and Marine Environment

Coastal and Marine Environment is a cross-cutting theme for SACEP. Coastal and marine environment is considered as one of the most important area for South Asian countries as major portion of its population are directly and indirectly depending for their livelihood on it. In addition to food production, tourism,

recreation, ports and harbours as well as coastal protection, comprise other important goods and services obtained from these ecosystems and they, therefore, have great economic, social and cultural importance to individual countries and to the region as a whole. Coastal ecosystems are highly productive and thus highly valuable to people. Out of eight, five member countries of SACEP are maritime countries and they are members of South Asian Seas Programme which is one of the 18 Regional Seas Programmes of UN Environment.

The South Asian Seas Region is comprised of the coastal and marine waters of Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and is physically divided by the Indian subcontinent into three distinctive areas: two large marine ecosystems – the Arabian Sea in the west and the Bay of Bengal in the east; and a large area of the open Indian Ocean to the south of India, Sri Lanka and Maldives. The region hosts an extensive system of river deltas and diverse marine and coastal habitats, encompassing mangroves, sea grass beds and coral reefs that support some of the richest concentrations of biodiversity in the world. Sustaining coastal systems in the face of a changing climate and increasing human demands is an ongoing challenge. Conservation and restoration efforts require sound science for effective design, implementation and assessment of success.

Considering its importance, SACEP has a major responsibility to support its members to protect and manage the coastal and marine environment and related ecosystems of the region in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner and therefore the issues related to coastal and marine environment is dealt under the South Asian Seas Programme.

The South Asian Seas Programme Action Plan was adopted on 24th March 1995 at the Meeting of Plenipotentiaries and today enjoys the unqualified support of the region's five countries (Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka). South Asian Seas Programme is under the umbrella of SACEP.

The South Asian Seas Action Plan identified the areas where priority activities need to be developed for implementation. These priority activities are in the following four specific areas:

- Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)
- Protection of Marine Environment from Land based activities
- Human Resources Development through Regional Centers of Excellences
- Development of national and regional oil and chemical spill contingency plans

SACEP, under the South Asian Seas programme assists member countries to address the multiple issues on coastal and marine environment which has direct and indirect impacts on the sustainability and biodiversity.

4.7 Implementation

Achieving our goals requires strengthening the approaches, in which we exercise our national and regional responsibilities. These include the following:

4.7.1 Resourcing SACEP's Work

The importance of access to more resources for SACEP, as alluded to before, can't be over emphasized. Other than the continued support of the member countries to maintain the Secretariat, nothing will determine the future success of SACEP more than its access to resources. Financial sustainability will be maintained through

diversified funding via multilateral and bilateral donor relationships, by further mobilising and increasing financial resources from the competitive market, by strengthening partnerships, as well as exploring possibilities for strengthening the trust fund. The idea is for SACEP to strive not only to secure more funds for its work but also enhance the member countries possibilities to better harness the opportunities of donor finance and investments.

The strategy in this regard is:

(a) Seeking enhancement in member's contributions that has remained modest for a long time;
(b) encourage member countries to contribute financially and technically on voluntary basis for project activities
(c) Better intelligence and eventually greater ability to access donor aid;
(d) identifying business opportunities and attracting private sector participation and support for SACEP's work;
(e) capitalizing on the market for SACEP's unique and value-added services, and working to extend this market in the future;
(f) taking the necessary steps to include SACEP in the list of international organisations eligible for Official Development Assistance;
(g) conducting joint programming and fundraising within established partnerships; and
(h) exploring the possibilities for strengthening the trust fund.

The greater challenge SACEP faces in expanding its project activities is the lack of adequate technical personnel working at the Secretariat due to the financial constraints. SACEP will request member states to consider secondment of officers to the Secretariat on voluntary basis in which all emoluments of the officer to be borne by the respective member state.
In order to optimise the use of the available financial resources, SACEP will monitor all expenses and, in particular, make every effort to reduce overhead costs. SACEP will also maintain the greatest possible transparency in its financial management and in the use of obtained funds in order to underline the consistency of results with donors' expectations.

4.7.2 Engaging Private Sector

Mobilizing private sector in support of environment is a whole discipline of its own but it suffices to mention here that businesses are likely to be more forthcoming when there is an opportunity to make business in an environment of mutual trust and where their contribution will additionally be rewarded by public recognition. It is therefore need for better coordination and coherence between efforts to support enabling environments and instruments to leverage private finance, the need for a robust and better communicated theory of change for engaging the private sector, and the importance of building on the comparative advantages of development co-operation agencies and development finance institutions especially considering the need for the right skills and competencies to engage the private sector.

Implicit here is also the notion of partnerships that are important for both harnessing mutual strengths and distribute risks, especially when undertaking innovative projects.

4.7.3 Partnerships

Partnership is in the organizational design (organizational DNA) of SACEP given it is a membership organization and its primary mandate is to coordinate, support and promote collaboration among its member countries. SACEP also can and be

more strategic in employing partnership as a tool beyond the notion of partnership with members or in the context of project activities it undertakes.

This would entail understanding and pursuing partnerships in a longer-term perspective. Sustained and result-orient engagement with donors can potentially lead to recurring core and project support as exemplified by the relationship between SACEP and UNEP. In addition, partnerships entail pooling resources, human, fiscal and institutional, that enables doing more than would be otherwise possible. Equally important, the notion of partnership is attractive to potential donors. The partners' contribution in a collaborative effort can be used as collateral to leverage additional support. With some investment already on the table, additional funding is easier to attract and more likely to be forth coming.

Establishing partnership with renowned Universities of member countries and other centers of excellence would strengthen the capability of SACEP in implementing its work programme. For SACEP, this means to think of partnerships in all it seeks to do. Partnerships are demanding to create and sustain in terms of time and effort but, when successful, they pay dividends.

4.8 Governance

The SACEP Strategy 2020 – 2030 will be governed and monitored through Governing Council of SACEP and periodically through the Consultative Committee of SACEP.

The Governing Council consists of the Ministers for Environment from the SACEP's member countries and convenes every two years. Its extraordinary meeting would be invited when necessary. As the principal review and deliberative body of SACEP, the Governing Council determines the organizations policies and programme. The Governing Council endeavours, at all times, to reach agreement by consensus.

The Consultative Committee consists of representatives of diplomatic missions of member countries residing in Colombo and meets once in every three months. It is responsible for facilitating implementation of policies, strategies and progammes determined by the Governing Council.

SACEP Secretariat consists of Director General, professional and administrative staff will implement the strategy with the guidance of the Governing Council, Consultative Committee and National Focal Points.

4.9 Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring of SACEP's Strategy 2020 - 2030 implementation will be achieved through governance mechanism. This Strategy will be implemented through annual work plans approved by the Governing Council. The goals, objectives/outcomes and indicators approved in the work plans are translated into specific goals and targets for each programme areas of staff members. Progress achieved towards the results outlined above will be measured through a set of key performance indicators. These are based on expected project outputs. Reporting will be made to the Governing Council and the Consultative Committee periodically. Reporting period will vary throughout the ten-year cycle of the plan as Governing Council and Consultative Committee meetings schedules are alternating to accommodate the participation of all countries at Ministerial level.

4.10 Risk Analysis

Political support of member countries at its highest level is key to enabling the implementation of SACEP activities. Lack of continued common regional political will is a significant risk. SACEP will mitigate this risk through regular bilateral/ multilateral discussions with members and as well as with donors and other partners.

Lack of necessary funding and delaying of funding also pose a significant risk. As stated under the 'Resourcing SACEP's Work', this risk will be mitigated by diversified funding via multilateral and bilateral donor relationships, by further mobilising and increasing financial resources from the competitive market, by strengthening partnerships, as well as exploring possibilities for strengthening the trust fund.

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