



**South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
and
Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS)**

**Capacity Building Training Programme
for the Clearing House Mechanism
of the Convention on Biological Diversity in South Asia**



**Colombo, Sri Lanka
19 to 22 and 26 to 29 March 2007**

1. Introduction

The project on “Capacity Building for the Clearing House Mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity in South Asia: A Case Study for Sri Lanka” has been designed to train post graduate students on various issues concerning biodiversity conservation, related international conventions and clearing house mechanism. It also gave an opportunity to the participants to discuss their research problems with the eminent people in the area of biodiversity conservation who enriched the training programme as resource persons. There were two training programmes held back to back.

2. Objective

The objective of the project was “to create awareness among post graduate students on Clearing-House Mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity and build their capacity on how to make use of it for conservation activities”.

3. Venue, Dates, Roles and Participants

The training programmes were held at the Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute in Colombo, Sri Lanka. There were two four day residential training programmes held back to back from 19 to 22 and 26 to 29 March 2007. They were organized by South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) in collaboration with Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of Sri Lanka and Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity with the financial assistance from Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS).

Applications were called from the local students who have registered to follow a postgraduate degree in a field related to biodiversity conservation. The information regarding the training programme and the application forms were sent to all Universities of Sri Lanka and it was published in SACEP website for wider publicity. There were ninety five applications received and out of them sixty were selected into two batches (30 each) to follow the training programme. Even though, the programme was designed for the post graduate students, few senior lecturers, who are teaching the subject in their Universities, requested to participate. As the overall objective of the programme was to educate the people on biodiversity conservation and assuming that lecturers will deliver the information to a larger number of students, SACEP considered their request and gave them the opportunity to participate. Out of sixty, forty nine students, 29 in batch 1 and 20 in batch 2 attended the programme. The list of participants is given in Annex I

4. Cost

Annex II

Activities and Proceedings

5. Pre-training course activities

The course contents, detailed programme and the identification of resource persons were finalized with the assistance of Prof. Sarath Kotagama. The programme and list of resource persons is given in Annex III and IV respectively. A brief information brochure was prepared and sent to the concerned Universities/Institutions together with a pre-registration form (Annex V and VI).

6. Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony was conducted from 9.00 am to 10.00 am on 19 March 2007 at the Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute in Colombo. Hon. Mr. Patali Champika Ranawaka, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Government of Sri Lanka graced the occasion as chief guest. Several government officials, media persons, other invitees and trainees also attended the inauguration. (The programme is attached as Annex VII).



Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Hon. Mr. Patali Champika Ranawaka delivering the inaugural address



Hon. Minister Mr. Patali Champika Ranawaka, DG – SACEP Dr. Arvind Boaz and Prof. Sarath Kotagama

The Guests, other dignitaries and some trainees at the inauguration



7. Training Sessions

The training was conducted in an informal manner. Participants were encouraged to ask questions and clarify their doubts any time during the sessions. The PowerPoint presentations, overlays and white board were used during the training. Resource persons were extremely facilitative and helpful to the trainees and gave their fullest effort to deliver the best within the given time period. The trainees were extremely enthusiastic and actively participated by asking many questions on the subject. The PowerPoint presentations, overlays and lecture notes circulated are given in Annex VIII.



Participants of Batch I participating at the training

8. Practical Session

Ten computers were hired with the internet facilities and made available throughout the programme. Trainees were given opportunity to access CHM websites and search for information required. They have been trained to use the internet for finding important information available in internet for the research and study purposes.

9. Field Trip

Both Batch I and Batch II were taken to Plant Genetic Resources Centre at Ganoruwa and National Herbarium at Peradeniya on 21 and 28 March 2007 respectively. At the Plant Genetic Resources Centre, they were able to get information on gene bank, data bases and the various methods used for preservation of genetic materials.

At the National Herbarium, they were given exposure to the procedures followed to identify species using herbarium specimens, how to prepare a herbarium specimen and the databases managed by the herbarium. The Director General of Department of National Botanic Gardens gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on various activities undertaken by them on ex-situ conservation.

10. Assessment and Anticipated Outcome

The summary discussions of the training course indicated that the majority of trainees were pleased with the content of the training programme. The majority indicated that after the training they were better informed on the subject matters.

11. Evaluation

An evaluation form was given to all participants the end and all of them completed and returned it.

Summary of responses to the questions in the evaluation form

The training was conducted in a cordial, relaxed and enthusiastic atmosphere which was much appreciated by all. In general the participants were of the opinion that the content of the training course was very good and that the delivery of the lessons had been positive and encouraging. Some of them highlighted that they may need more exposure to the CHM. They were satisfied with the practical session. Field trip was well organized and extremely useful.

At the end, the trainees were invited to comment in general on the workshop content and management. One trainee spoke on behalf of all participants and it was encouraging that the trainees were pleased with the training programme and accordingly, no negative comments were received. A lot of enthusiasm was noticed amongst the participants especially the lectures who were of the view that such training programmes should be continued. Also several requests by students from many universities are being received to give them a chance to participate in such trainings in the future.

12. Closing Ceremony

At the end of final day of each batch, a short closing ceremony was held. There, a certificate was given to the all participants (Annex IX).

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