

Statement of SACEP

Thank you Madam Co-Chair,

I make this statement on behalf of South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme, also known as SACEP. SACEP is an intergovernmental organization established by eight south Asian countries namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

South Asian Seas Programme, one of the Un Environment's regional seas programmes, also hosted and administered by the SACEP Secretariat. Five maritime countries of SACEP, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are the members. Unlike many other regional seas programmes, South Asian Seas Programme has its own organization structure where inter-ministerial meeting of South Asian Seas Programme is the main decision making body.

Madam Co-chair,

Under the south Asian seas programme, we are implementing a number of activities to protect and conserve our prestigious marine and coastal environment. Mentioning few, the Regional oil and chemical contingency action plan and its associated MoU has been ratified by the all five member countries and as such it is now in operation. Since 2006, SACEP in partnership with five maritime member countries has been organizing many activities to commemorate the International Coastal Cleanup Day to make the public aware of the growing problem of debris accumulated in coastal areas. Tones of Litter such as plastic bags, soda cans and broken glass collected and dispose with the participation of governments. General public, school children and so on.

Madam Co-Chair,

Plastics and marine litter are our utmost concern since very beginning. We are now implementing a project on 'Capacity Development for Marine Litters Management at National Level of South Asian Seas (SAS) Region' with the participation of two island nations namely; Sri Lanka and Maldives.

And, very recently, we implemented another project in partnership with UN Environment to develop National and a Regional Policy/Action Plan on Marine Litter for the South Asian Seas Region. The objective of development of these

National and the Regional Policy/Action Plan is to encourage member states to take appropriate measures to reduce volume of litter in the marine environment and to minimize at maximum level entering the marine environment, from sea and land-based sources in the South Asian Seas region. Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter for the South Asian Seas Region is finalized and will be tabled for formal adoption at the 6th Inter-ministerial Meeting of the South Asian Seas Programme next year. There are number of recommendations made in this regional action plan to be implemented.

Thank you Madam Co-chair.