

Review of Other Subregional Programmes

1. Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP)

NOWPAP established its secretariat, Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU), in Toyama and Busan in November 2004. The Action Plan for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northwest Pacific Region (NOWPAP), which was adopted at the first Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) in 1994, called upon “NOWPAP states, with assistance of UNEP, to work towards the establishment of a Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU)” while designating UNEP as an interim secretariat until the establishment of the RCU. However, it was the Fourth IGM in 1999 that decided on the need to establish the RCU in the future. The IGM received a member country’s interest in housing the RCU, and further requested the Executive Director of UNEP to prepare a proposal for the creation of the RCU. The member countries at the Sixth IGM in 2000 decided to accept the offers of the Governments of Japan and the Republic of Korea to co-host a RCU in Toyama, Japan and Busan, the Republic of Korea, respectively. Upon the decision of IGM and Governing Council of UNEP, the host countries finalized the institutional arrangement with UNEP including signing the Host Country Agreement and recruiting staff in 2004 for the inauguration of the RCU offices.

Furthermore, in order to undertake practical activities of NOWPAP, member countries at the third IGM in 1998 decided to establish Regional Activity Centres (RACs) within each country’s existing research organizations: Special Monitoring and Coastal Environmental Assessment Regional Activity Centre (CEARAC) in Japan, Data and Information Network Regional Activity Centre (DINRAC) in China, Marine Environmental Emergency Preparedness & Response Regional Activity Centre (MERRAC) in the Republic of Korea and Pollution Monitoring Regional Activity Centre (POMRAC) in the Russian Federation. All centres were subsequently established in 2000-2002.

2. Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET)

EANET, which is a multilateral mechanism on transboundary air pollutions in North-East and South-East Asia, has also made meaningful progress in its intuitional mechanisms as well as substantial activities. EANET formed as an expert meeting at the initiation of the Environment Agency of Japan in 1993, encompasses Southeast and Northeast Asian countries. Since its establishment, EANET held a series of four expert meetings sponsored by the Agency, and led the adoption of a proposal for the “design of the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia” at the last expert meeting in 1997. This adoption enabled EANET to obtain the status of a formal mechanism by hosting the first intergovernmental meeting of EANET in 1998, and establishing the Interim Network Center and the Interim Scientific Advisory Group. The second Intergovernmental Meeting in 2000 decided to establish the Secretariat, which is housed by UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, and to designate the Acid Deposition and Oxidant Research Center of Japan as the Network Center for handling scientific and technical matters of the network. While it is a multilateral mechanism, the operation of the Secretariat and activities has been mainly funded by the government of Japan.

3. South Asia Cooperative Environmental Programme (SACEP)

SACEP was established in 1982 encompasses eight South Asian countries, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. In terms of institutional mechanisms, SACEP consists of three major organs: the Governing Council, the Consultative Committee, and the Secretariat. The Governing Council (GC) is the principal deliberative and review body responsible for determining policies, strategies and programmes. It is represented at the ministerial level and periodically meets to take decisions of strategic significance. The Consultative Committee (CC) is responsible for facilitating implementation of policies, strategies and programmes determined by the governing council. It consists of representatives of diplomatic missions of member countries residing in Colombo. The CC is also expected to provide guidance to the Secretariat in the planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects. The Secretariat consists of the Director General, professional and administrative staff and supporting staff. From SACEP's inception in 1982, the Director General was appointed in rotation from the member states in alphabetical order, until the completion of the first cycle. The method of appointment was amended in 2003 to merit-based recruitment.

For the operation of the Secretariat and activities, SACEP has established four different categories of funding mechanism, which include as follows.

- Annual country contributions from the member governments on an agreed scale of assessment based on a combination of the South Asia Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and UN formula;
- Secretariat facilities provided by the Government of Sri Lanka, as the host country of SACEP Secretariat;
- Financial assistance from bilateral and multilateral donors to implement specific projects and programme activities. The donors include UNEP, UNDP, International Maritime Organization (IMO), ADB, Norwegian Development Aid (NORAD), and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

The nature and scope of the SACEP activities also show the comprehensiveness. In collaboration with various partners, SACEP has undertaken activities covering most subjects of subregional environmental cooperation. The modality of cooperation for the SACEP also varies in practice from policy dialogue, technical cooperation to project-based activities. So far, the areas of activities that SACEP has undertaken include: biodiversity conservation; sustainable tourism development; management of coral island ecosystems; management of fresh water resources; desertification; environmental legislation; participatory forest management; sustainable agriculture and land use; sustainable human settlements development; waste management; science and technology for sustainable development; education and environment; and air pollution. Furthermore, the SACEP operate South Asia Seas Programme (SASP), a regional sea programme of UNEP, South Asia Environmental and Natural Resources Information Center (SENRIC) and South Asia Biodiversity Clearing House Mechanisms.

4. South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

SPREP encompasses twenty-two Pacific island countries and four developed countries including Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States. During the first decade after the establishment in 1982, the SPREP was governed by the Coordination Group of

the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Cooperation (now the South Pacific Forum Secretariat based in Fiji), ESCAP, South Pacific Commission and UNEP. At the Governing Meeting in 1991, SPREP gained a momentum to be developed as an autonomous regional organization with the relocation of the Secretariat to Aipa, Samoa, and officially became autonomous when the Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region (the SPREP Convention or Noumea Convention) came into force in 1995. Thus, the SPREP is the Secretariat of the Convention. In addition, it acts as the Secretariat for other regional conventions, i.e. Convention on the Conservation of Nature in the South Pacific (Apia Convention), and Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Waste and to Control the Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region (Waigani Convention).

The activities of SPREP have been undertaken under the thematic approach, which is defined by four or five-years Action Plan. The 2001-2004 Action Plan included nature conservation; pollution prevention; climate change and variability; and economic development. In addition to the first three key issues identified in the Action Plan, the SPREP Action Plan 2005-2009 incorporates the following cross cutting priorities:

- Integrated policy, planning and partnerships;
- Environment monitoring and reporting;
- Multilateral environment agreements and processes;
- Human resources development and training;
- Public awareness and education; and
- Knowledge management.

Furthermore, the SPREP operate two programmes, Island Ecosystems and Pacific Futures (IEP) and Pacific Future (PF), between 2005 and 2009. To manage island resources and ocean ecosystems in a sustainable manner, the IEP carries out four projects: a) terrestrial island ecosystems; b) coastal and marine ecosystems; c) species of special interest; and d) people and institutions. PF essentially serves to support member countries and territories with sustainable development policies for improved environmental governance.

In terms of financial arrangement, SPREP has also made relatively significant progress compared with other subregional programmes in Asia and the Pacific. While a major proportion of SPREP budget is project-based contributions from UN bodies and developed countries including its own members, SPREP has four mechanisms of funding

- Core Fund: Based on members' annual contribution to cover the costs for the operation of the Secretariat and intergovernmental meetings.
- Programme Fund: Based on donors' contribution for implementing specified activities.
- Reserve Fund: Utilized as a backup fund for the Core Fund and the Programme Fund in the case of emergency

Pacific Islands Trust Fund for Nature Conservation: Aimed at supporting, particularly, the implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans in member countries.