



SAARC CONVENTION ON COOPERATION ON ENVIRONMENT

The Member States of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) comprising the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Kingdom of Bhutan, the Republic of India, the Republic of Maldives, Nepal, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, hereinafter referred to as the "Parties":

Mindful of the objectives as enshrined in the SAARC Charter;

Recalling the decision of the Twelfth SAARC Summit on the importance of an early and effective implementation of the SAARC Environment Plan of Action and drafting a Regional Environment Treaty;

Also recalling the Thirteenth SAARC Summit Declaration to consider modalities for having a Regional Environment Treaty in furthering environmental cooperation among the SAARC Member States while expressing deep concern at the continuing degradation of environment and reaffirming the importance of concerted efforts in the protection and preservation of environment;

Recognizing the interest of the Parties to promote sustainable management of environment and natural resources;

Taking into consideration the deep concerns of the Member States on the unabated degradation of the environment and the adverse impacts of climate change in the region and their shared interest in its conservation for the well being of present and future generations;

Determined to promote closer cooperation among the Parties for the protection and preservation, management and enhancement of environment;

Have agreed as follows:

**Article I
Objective**

The objective of this Convention is to promote cooperation among the Parties in the field of environment and sustainable development, on the basis of equity; reciprocity and mutual benefit, taking into account the applicable policies and legislation in each Member State.

**Article II
Scope**

Cooperation will extend to exchange of best practices and knowledge, capacity building and transfer of eco-friendly technology in the following areas but not limited to:

- a) Afforestation and reforestation;
- b) Air Quality Management;
- c) Biological diversity;
- d) Climate Change;
- e) Coastal Zone Management;
- f) Coral reef management;
- g) Eco-system management for sustainable livelihoods;
- h) Global environmental issues;
- i) Land Degradation and Desertification;
- j) Mountain eco-system glaciers and glacial lake including high altitude hydrological monitoring;
- k) River eco system including river cleaning;
- l) Seawater and Freshwater Quality Management;
- m) Strengthening disaster management capabilities;
- n) Waste Management;
- o) Wildlife conservation and combating illegal trade in wildlife and bio-resources;
- p) Water management and conservation
- q) Environmental Impact Assessment Studies;
- r) Soil erosion and sedimentation; and
- s) Role/impact of human activity.

Article III
Forms of Cooperation

1. Cooperation among the Parties may be carried out in the following form:
 - a) Collaboration among Parties and their agencies;
 - b) Collaboration among academic and research institutions in the Member States; exchange of information and dissemination of research findings;
 - c) Collaboration among SAARC Regional Centres on issues related to the environment;
 - d) Encourage collaboration between private sector institutions and civil societies of the Member States;
 - e) Any other form of cooperation, as agreed by the Parties;
2. The modalities for collaboration under this Article shall be developed by the Governing Council.

Article IV
Funding

The financial terms of cooperation shall be based on the norms followed in SAARC and as may be decided by the Governing Council.

Article V
Coordination and Implementation of the Convention

1. There shall be a Governing Council comprising Environment Ministers of the Member States. The Governing Council shall be facilitated by Senior Officials to ensure full and effective implementation of the Convention.
2. The Governing Council shall meet at least once in two years and the Senior Officials shall meet once a year.
3. All decisions of the Governing Council shall be taken on the basis of unanimity.

The Governing Council shall ensure the full and effective implementation of the Convention by the Parties.

The Governing Council, among others, will:

- (a) provide policy direction and guidance;
- (b) monitor and adopt recommendations, plans and programmes on the areas of cooperation;
- (c) commission studies and scientific data collection and facilitate transfer of technology on the areas of cooperation;
- (d) Adopt and periodically review the implementation arrangements, including access to funds following SAARC Development Fund (SDF) criteria for this Convention;
- (e) establish and maintain cooperation with other relevant international and regional organizations; and
- (f) take such other decisions as may be deemed necessary for the fulfilment of the objectives of this Convention.

Article VI

Other Treaties and Agreements

This Convention shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Parties under other bilateral or multilateral Treaties and Agreements to which they are a Party.

Article VII

Settlement of Disputes

Any dispute, between or among Parties arising out of the interpretation or application of this Convention shall be settled through negotiations.

Article VIII
Entry into Force

This Convention shall come into force thirty days following the date of deposit of the eighth Instrument of Ratification with the Depository.

Article IX
Ratification

This Convention shall be subject to ratification and the Instruments of Ratification by the Parties, shall be deposited with the Depository.

Article X
Amendments

This Convention may be amended at any time by unanimous agreement of the Parties. Such amendment shall enter into force upon ratification by all Parties.

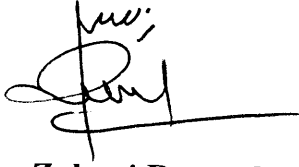
Article XI
Depository

The Secretary General of SAARC shall be the depository for this Convention. The Secretary General shall notify the Member States of signatures of this Convention and the deposit of instruments of ratification and shall transmit certified copies of instruments of ratification to each Member State. The Secretary General shall also notify the Member States of the date of entry into force of the Convention in accordance with Article VIII.

Article XII
Authentic Texts

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned plenipotentiaries, being duly authorized by their respective Governments have signed this Convention.

**DONE in Thimphu, Bhutan, On This Twenty-ninth Day of April
Two Thousand Ten In Ten Originals In The English Language, All
Texts Being Equally Authentic.**



Dr. Zalmay Rassoul
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan



Dr. Dipu Moni, M. P.
Minister for Foreign Affairs
People's Republic of Bangladesh



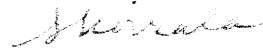
Khandu Wangchuk
Minister-in-Charge of Foreign Affairs
Kingdom of Bhutan



S. M. Krishna
Minister of External Affairs
Republic of India



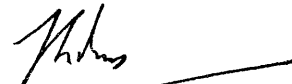
Ahmed Shaheed
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Maldives



Sujata Koirala
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Nepal



Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Islamic Republic of Pakistan



Prof. Gamini Lakshman Peiris
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Democratic Socialist Republic of
Sri Lanka
