



Long Term Management and Conservation of Marine and Coastal Resources in South Asia

Project Information Sheet



The Challenge: The 2003 United Nations List of Protected Areas ranked the South Asia region lowest in the world in terms of declared Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs), making the Indian Ocean with its wealth of coral reefs, seagrasses, and mangrove forests, one of the world's most poorly protected coastlines. As a result, and despite current protection measures, the degradation of coastal and marine resources continues at an unprecedented rate.



The Response: Through a grant from the European Union, activities have commenced in the 5 maritime nations of South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka): **to develop management capacity and training tools** for staff at marine and coastal protected areas; **to improve communications and data management**; **to strengthen cooperation** in marine and coastal management efforts; and **to develop a systematic approach to livelihood diversification** and enhancement in coastal communities. The project is implemented by the South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) and the International Coral Reef Action Network (ICRAN) in collaboration with international and local partners. Actions will support countries to meet commitments to develop networks of MCPAs in line with Multilateral Environmental Agreements (CBD, WSSD, MDGs).



South Asia Coral Reef Task Force (SACRTF)



To advance cooperation and coordination for the management of coral reefs and associated ecosystems in South Asia, one of the major anticipated outputs of the project is the establishment of the South Asia Coral Reef Task Force (SACRTF). The SACRTF will help participating countries to work together more effectively to safeguard their marine and

coastal resources. The project team have been working alongside Governments, key stakeholders and experts from across the region to prepare the constitution and role of the SACRTF. The SACRTF will be launched through an official ceremony, to be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, following the second Regional Coordination Workshop of the project.



Regional Coordination Workshop



The second regional workshop of the project will be conducted on **25 - 27th July 2007** in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The workshop will bring together marine and coastal experts, and representatives from government and scientific institutions from the 5 participating countries, providing an opportunity for the targeted exchange of information and experiences relating to the management and conservation of marine and coastal resources in the region, and the identification of collaborative opportunities in support of effective management. The workshop dialogue will further the understanding of the present status of MCPAs in the region and assist in the identification of priority issues for consideration in the SACRTF work plan.

The participants will be charged with the finalisation of the SACRTF constitution documents, building on the efforts of the regional SACRTF Review Group, to reach consensus on the operating procedures and mandate. SACRTF members will develop a comprehensive work plan for the SACRTF in line with defined national and regional goals and priorities.

Key stakeholders will be invited for the official launch ceremony of the SACRTF.



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