

NEWS LETTER

Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution
and Its Likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia

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Intergovernmental Meeting, and Regional Stakeholders cum Coordination Meeting



Participants of the Ninth Session of the Intergovernmental Meeting and Regional Stakeholders cum Coordination Meeting

The Ninth Session of the intergovernmental Meeting and the Fourth Session of the Regional Stakeholders cum Coordination Meeting were inaugurated on 1 October 2007 in Malé, Maldives by His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Abdullah, the Minister for Ministry of Environment, Energy, and Water (MEEW), Maldives. His

Excellency Ahmed Abdullah, during the inaugural address stated that nearly 10 years has passed after the adaption of the Malé Declaration and technical capacity of Maldives to monitor air pollution has significantly increased during these 10 years. In 1998, when the Malé Declaration was adopted, we had no air quality monitoring station

in Maldives. Now Maldives is operating 3 monitoring stations on a continuous basis. H. E mentioned that the Ninth Session of the Intergovernmental meeting may consider strengthening the basis of the Malé Declaration by moving towards conventions during the next 3 years.

Eighth Session of the Intergovernmental Meeting

The Eighth Session of the Intergovernmental Meeting was attended by the National Focal Points (Ministries of Environment) and National Implementing Agencies (NIA) of the participating countries, members of the Monitoring Committee (MoC) for the implementation of Malé Declaration, South Asian Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP), Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), United Nations Envi-

ronment Programme (UNEP), and an independent facilitator.

The meeting reviewed the progress in the implementation of Malé Declaration during 2007 and adopted a work plan for the activities in 2008.

The meeting adopted the proposal for implementing Phase IV of the Malé Declaration. The proposal has been developed based on a series of consultations with the participating countries,

culminating in a final consultation at an Exchange programme with the Project Managers of the Malé Declaration. The meeting also endorsed, in principle, a "Compendium of best practices on Prevention and Control of Air Pollution" for publication.

In this issue

Intergovernmental Meeting, and Regional Coordination Meeting

Stakeholders participation

- National Stakeholders meeting in Sri Lanka
- Malé Declaration and SAYEN

Monitoring

- Inter-laboratory comparison
- Passive sampler inter-comparison

Impact assessment studies

- Regional Training on health impact
- Regional Training on crop impact

For more information
www.rrcap.unep.org/md/malereport

AIR POLLUTION AND HEALTH

Three schools in the central part of Dhaka city are participating in a health impact assessment study to understand the impact of pollution levels on respiratory problems. Around 2000 students of class VI, VII & VIII were included in the study. The National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine (NIPSOM) is conducting the study, in collaboration with the Department of Environment and the Meteorological Department. Prof. Frank Murray of Murdoch University, Perth, Australia provides the technical guidance for the study.



The Fourth Session of the Regional Stakeholders cum Coordination Meeting

The Fourth Session of the Regional Stakeholders cum Coordination Meeting was attended by the National Focal Points (NFP) and National Implementing Agencies (NIA) of Malé Declaration as well as representatives from various stakeholder groups and ongoing initiatives on air pollution at national, sub-regional, regional, and global levels.

The meeting provided the opportunity for the stakeholders to review the implementation of Malé Declaration. The meeting also provided a forum for coordination among various activities on air pollution issues in South Asia.

The meeting agreed that joint programmes between the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP) and Malé Declaration will benefit capacity building programmes under the Malé Declaration and requested the Malé Secretariat to express the interest of the Malé Declaration to the LRTAP Secretariat.

The Third Regional Stakeholders and

Coordination meeting ended with concluding remarks from Mr. Rajamani, Regional Facilitator. Mr. Rajamani summarized the progress in each country and appreciated that most of the targets set for Phase III are being achieved. From the deliberations, he observed that a lot of capacity exists within the Malé countries, which could be tapped. He stressed the need for better networking and improved awareness building about air pollution related issues and about the progress of the Malé Declaration activities in particular.

Exchange Programme

National Project Managers of the Malé Declaration participated in a two-week exchange programme during the third and fourth weeks of May 2007 organized at the Malé Declaration Secretariat. The aim of the programme was to exchange experience between the national level Project Managers of the

Malé Declaration and the Secretariat at UNEP.

The outcomes include:

- Each country developed a national brochure on the progress within the last decade; and

- The programme developed national and regional priorities for Phase IV implementation of Malé Declaration.



National brochures

Stakeholders Participation

National Stakeholders meeting in Sri Lanka

A National Stakeholders forum was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on June 12, 2007. The forum, organized by the National Focal Point and the National Implementing Agency in Sri Lanka, was inaugurated by Hon. Champika Ranawaka, Minister, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. The Hon. Minister, during his inaugural address, praised the Malé

Declaration for providing the forum for regional cooperation on addressing air pollution issues, which requires collaboration among the countries. The national stakeholders forum, attended by major stakeholders in Sri Lanka, reviewed the implementation of the Malé Declaration in Sri Lanka and provided recommendations for further progress



Hon. Minister Champika Ranawaka inaugurating the National Stakeholders Meeting.

Participation of Youths in the implementation of the Malé Declaration

As part of the Malé Declaration implementation, the South Asia Youth Environment Network (SAYEN) is developing public awareness materials to promote the control and prevention of air pollution in South Asia.

The awareness materials are being developed through a series of consultations. The consultation process was started with an inception workshop held during 19-20 May 2007 in Bangalore, India. The final editorial workshop was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka during

21 – 23 September 2007. The editorial workshop was jointly organized by SAYEN secretariat, the Centre for Environment Education (CEE) India, and CEE Sri Lanka. Selected youth from South Asian countries participated in the workshop.

The main objective of the workshop was to finalise the document titled “The Malé Declaration: Youth Version”. The document includes but is not limited to the major sources of air pollution, impacts of air pollution, mitigation and

prevention measures and the Malé Declaration and its contribution to the prevention of air pollution in South Asia. Based on the publication, SAYEN will develop an animated CD to be used by youth in the sub-region as resource and awareness materials on Clean Air. The draft document was submitted to the ninth session of the intergovernmental meeting for consideration and the meeting endorsed the document with some changes and comments. SAYEN will incorporate these changes for publication in 2008.



Youths discuss the promotion of control and prevention of air pollution in South Asia

Monitoring

Inter-laboratory comparison

In order to improve the quality of the participating laboratories of the Malé Declaration, an inter-laboratory comparison is being introduced under the framework of the Malé Declaration. In order to facilitate the inter-laboratory comparison, an inter-laboratory comparison protocol has been developed. The draft protocol was reviewed by various technical trainings and is available for the participating laboratories of the Malé Declaration.

Passive sampler inter-comparison

A passive sampler inter-comparison study has been initiated to compare the available passive samplers in the region with the IVL, sampler, which is currently being used under the Malé Declaration, for their data quality and analytical procedure. The study has two main components: to implement a Passive Sampler inter-comparison and to compare Passive Samplers with active samplers. The Pakistan Environment Protection Agency (Pak-EPA); the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka; the National Building Research Organisation (NBRO), Sri Lanka; and National University of Singapore are participating in this study.

Installation of AAS in Bhutan



Training and installation of AAS in Bhutan

In Bhutan, transboundary air pollution monitoring is being conducted by the National Environment Commission (NEC). As part of the capacity building programme an Atomic Absorption Spectrometer (AAS) was installed in the NEC laboratory in Thimphu. Nine technical personnel were trained on operation of the AAS during 27-28 November 2007

Upcoming events

- **Air pollution and Asthma Workshop** will be held in Bangalore, India during January 2008. Expert and Stakeholders from India will participate.
- **Second Workshop on Corrosion Attack on Materials** will be held in Zambia, Africa during February 2008. APANA (Air Pollution Information Network for Africa) will host the meeting and four other Asian, Malé countries will participate in the meeting.
- **The Third Emission inventory preparation, scenarios, and atmospheric transport modeling workshop** is scheduled to be held during 28th January to 3rd February 2008 in Bangkok, Thailand.
- **Regional Workshop on Rapid Urban Assessment (RUA)** will be held in Kathmandu, Nepal, March 2008.
- **National Stakeholders Meeting in Nepal and Bhutan** are scheduled to be held during first quarter of 2008.
- **Workshop on decision support information for policy formulation and air pollution prevention** is scheduled to be held during second quarter of 2008
- **The Sixth Regional training and refresher Course on Monitoring transboundary air pollution** is scheduled to be held in March 2008.

Site Audit

The Monitoring Committee members of the Malé Declaration conducted site audits of the monitoring facilities in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka, and provided site specific recommendations for further improvement of the data quality.

Capacity Building on Impact Assessment

Regional training programme on the assessment of impacts of air pollution on crops

Under the framework of the Malé Declaration, the first training workshop on “Impact of air pollution on crops” was held in Dhaka and Mymensingh, Bangladesh during 15-16 August 2007. This regional level training course was conducted to share expert experiences and to finalize a protocol for conducting crop impact assessment under the Declaration.

Twenty-seven participants from seven countries attended the workshop, drawn from Ministries and Agencies dealing with agriculture, environment, and meteorology. Participants were addressed by Dr. C.S Karim, Honourable Advisor of the Ministry of Environment & Forests; AHM Rezaul Kabir, the Secretary of the Ministry of Environment & Forests; Dr. Khandaker Rashedul Haque, Director General of the Department of Environment; Mr. Mylvakanam Iyengararasan of UNEP and Dr. Lisa Emberson of Stockholm Environment Institute, York, U.K. The participants also had the chance to visit the Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh,

where a bio-monitoring experiment on the impact of tropospheric ozone on crops is being conducted under the Malé Declaration.



Crop experimental field in Mymensingh

Regional training programme on the assessment of health impacts of air pollution

Health impacts assessment was one of the priority areas identified for capacity building under Phase III implementation of the Malé Declaration. As part of capacity building exercise, the second Training Workshop on health impacts of air pollution was held during 15-18 October 2007, at the AIT Conference Center, Thailand as a follow up to the first workshop held in Bangkok during February 2007.

Thirteen participants from eight countries attended the training workshop. They were drawn from the Government agencies dealing with environment and with health issues. Prof.

Frank Murray, Murdoch University, Dr. Dieter Schwela, Stockholm Environment Institute, and Dr. Sarath Guttikunda, New Delhi participated the training programme as resource persons.

The participants presented the status in their own countries and discussed the priority issues. The progress of the health study conducted under the Malé Declaration on “Assessment of impact of air pollution among school children in selected schools of Dhaka city in Bangladesh” was presented during the training.



Group discussions on health impact assessment

National Focal Points (NFP) and National Implementing Agencies (NIA)

Bangladesh

NFP: Ministry of Environment & Forest

NIA: Department of Environment
Dhaka

Bhutan

NFP & NIA: National Environment Commission
Thimpu

India

NFP: Ministry of Environment and Forests

NIA: Central Pollution Control Board
New Delhi

Iran

NFP & NIA: Department of Environment
Tehran

Maldives

NFP & NIA: Ministry of Environment, Energy and Water Malé

Nepal

NFP: Ministry of Environment Science and Technology

NIA: International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)
Kathmandu

Pakistan

NFP: Ministry of Environment, Local Govt. & Rural Development

NIA: Pakistan Environment Protection Agency, Islamabad

Sri Lanka

NFP: Ministry of Environment & Natural Resources

NIA: Central Environment Authority, Colombo

Coordinating Agencies

UNEP Regional Resource Center for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP RRC.AP)
Bangkok, Thailand



South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP)
Colombo, Sri Lanka



Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI)
Stockholm, Sweden



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Malé Declaration Newsletter

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