



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



Regional Stakeholders Forum

**Dhaka, Bangladesh
8 October 2003**



PROCEEDINGS

REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS FORUM ON MALÉ DECLARATION

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C O N T E N T S

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BCAS	Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies
CPCB	Central Pollution Control Board
DoE	Department of Environment
MoC	Monitoring Committee
MoENR	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources
NEC	National Environment Commission
NFP	National Focal Point
NGOs	Non Government Organizations
NIA	National Implementing Agency
RAPIDC	Regional Air Pollution in Developing Countries
SACEP	South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme
SAYEN	South Asia Youth Environment Network
SEI	Stockholm Environment Institute
Sida	Swedish International Cooperative Development Agency
SMHI	Swedish Meteorological and Hydrological Institute
UNEP/ ROAP	UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
UNEP/RRC.AP	United Nations Environment Programme / Regional Resource Center for Asia and the Pacific

PROCEEDINGS

Air pollution is an emerging environmental issue in Asia as it is in other parts of the world. In particular, emissions of sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides have been rising steadily over the past few decades. In addition, rapid growth of cities, together with associated expansion of industry and transport systems, has made the Asian region increasingly concerned with these emissions.

To cope with the issue of transboundary air pollution in South Asia, the “Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and Its Likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia” was discussed and adopted by Ministers of the Environment at the seventh meeting of the Governing Council of South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) in Malé, Republic of Maldives.

The declaration is an agreement to achieve intergovernmental cooperation to address the increasing threat of transboundary air pollution and consequential impacts due to concentrations of pollutant gases and acid deposition on human health, ecosystem function and corrosion of materials. Besides laying down the general principles of intergovernmental cooperation for air pollution abatement, the Declaration sets up an institutional framework linking scientific research and policy formulation. The Malé Declaration also makes provision for the cooperation among the key stakeholders in tackling the transboundary air pollution in South Asia.

The First Regional Stakeholders Forum was held on 8th October 2003 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The main aims of the stakeholders forum are: increase the awareness on the transboundary air pollution; share and receive the stakeholders views and ideas on the implementation of Malé Declaration; improve the information exchange between information generators and users; and formation of a regional network of Stakeholders

Nearly 50 participants representing national governments, national implementing agencies, NGOs, Academia, SACEP, SEI, UNEP, and an independent facilitator participated at this first regional Stakeholders Forum. A list of the participants is enclosed in Attachment 1.

The meeting was organized by UNEP/RRC.AP, in collaboration with DoE, Bangladesh, SACEP and SEI. The meeting was funded by Sida as a part of the Programme on Regional Air Pollution in Developing Countries (RAPIDC).

1. Malé Declaration and its implementation

After a brief introduction on the objectives of the forum by Mr. R. Rajamani, independent facilitator, Mr. M. Iyngararasan, UNEP RRC.AP introduced the Malé declaration and presented the progress in the implementation. Details of the presentation is provided in the attachment 2.

2. Strategy for the participation of stakeholders

Mr. R. Rajamani, independent facilitator, presented the needs for the participation of all the stakeholders in order to achievement the goals of Malé declaration and introduced the strategy paper on the stakeholders participation. Details of the presentation is given attachment 3.

3. RAPIDC Program and European experiences

Dr. Johan Kuylensstierna, SEI, presented the RAPIDC program and the European experiences on tackling the issue of acid deposition. The presentation is provided in the attachment 4.

4. National level implementation of the Malé Declaration

National implementing agencies provided a brief on the national level implementation of the Malé Declaration in each of the participating countries.

Mr. Q.S.I Hashmi, DoE, Bangladesh briefed the institutional arrangements in Bangladesh and informed an intensive training program will be held in Dhaka in a week time to train the DoE staff on monitoring transboundary air pollution. Mr. Hashmi also informed that a transboundary air pollution monitoring site will be established at Shamnagar, Khulna in the Eastern Bangladesh before the end of this year.

Mr. Nedup Tshering, NEC, Bhutan provided the details of the monitoring station, which is fully functional at Gelipu in Southern Bhutan. The station was established in June 2003 under the Malé Declaration.

Dr. B. Sengupta, CPCB, India, presented the current status of air quality monitoring and the progress in implementing the Malé Declaration in India. The first site has already been established at Port Canning and it is partially operational. It will be further strengthened with the equipment from Malé Declaration.

Dr. Saeed Motesaddi Zarandi, DoE, Iran presented the activities of DoE related to air pollution and outlined the progress in implementing the Malé declaration in Iran. The monitoring site had been localized 40 kilometers south of Ilam province close to the Iraqi border. Currently the site is being established by DoE and will be fully operational before the end of this year.

Ms. Bidya Banmali Pradhan, ICIMOD, Nepal presented the progress in implementing the Malé Declaration in Nepal. Monitoring station under the Malé declaration is currently operational at Rampur, Chitwan in the southern Nepal since April this year and preliminary data from the station also presented.

Mr. Anura Jayathilake, MoENR, Sri Lanka presented the progress in implementing the Malé Declaration in Sri Lanka with specific focus on the establishment of monitoring site under the Malé Declaration. Currently the site is partially operational at Anuradapura in the North Central Part of Sri Lanka. The site establishment will be completed before the end of this year.

5. Acidification and modeling

Dr. Kevin Hicks, SEI, made a presentation on the potential risk of acidification and some methodologies for monitoring the impacts of acidification on the ecosystem (attachment 5). Dr Magnus Engardt, SHMI presented a methodology to model the regional air pollution together using MTACH model (attachment 6).

6. Discussions and Recommendations

Facilitated discussion on the involvement of stakeholders and further implementation of the declaration was held and the following were recommended:

- The participants agreed that the regional Stakeholders forum should be a continuing exercise for collective action as the Malé Declaration has gone beyond the initial phase to one where there is a need for greater awareness and action by a group wider than just those who understand and interpret the phenomena.
- It was felt that the emphasis on monitoring, analysis and integration of impacts of local air pollution should be increased as this has its own effect on transboundary pollutions.
- The stakeholders forum should join to spread awareness about the problem of air pollution and its likely transboundary effects among all the people of the region who are not in the forum.
- National regulation and policy makers should take more interest in regional issues and participate effectively in the follow up of the Malé process.
- The stage has not yet been reached where the Malé process should consider legal action, as the results of monitoring are not yet available and analysed. However, legal, technical options to mitigate the issue at the local level should be considered.
- Business and industry should be more involved in not only the regional stakeholders forum but also in the national stakeholders' discussions. Their role in causing air pollution and its mitigation should be highlighted with a view of sense their financial support for studies of impacts etc.
- The S & T (Science and Technology) institutions and academia should continue to assist the other Stakeholders and NIAs in assessment and monitoring of pollutants and their impacts. They could take existing models and methodologies in the Malé process and apply them at national level and also develop new ideas for implementing the Malé Declaration.
- The time has come to involve medical science and practice in this process by encouraging epidemiological studies and having input from those dealing with health problems caused by air pollution. It is important to find ways of collating studies on health in the region to aid the dissemination of vital information.
- Similarly institutions dealing with soils, agriculture and animal husbandry, heritage should be networked with NIA and the Stakeholders forums to give their input on the impacts on soils crops and animal health of the air pollution.
- Engineers, architects and others dealing with the maintenance and renewal of monuments structure or materials suffering corrosion due to air pollution should also be involved by NIAs.

- Women group and youth networks such as SAYEN should also join the regional and national Stakeholders forum along with select NGOs doing direct grassroots work on Socio-economic problems. All of them can help to improve spreading awareness, not only of the effects of air pollution (both local and transboundary), but also in taking preventive and mitigation measures.
- Think tank institutions which are involved in study of environmental problems, such as BCAS, should be involved in all the countries in the follow up of 'Malé' Declaration.
- The role of media, especially the Radio media has to be appreciated more and representatives of media involved as stakeholders to help further publicity to the Malé process and preventive as well as abatement measures.
- Forums of Parliamentarians and legislators should be report fully informed by NIAs about the development in the Malé process.
- Apart from keeping other formations in Governments such as Energy, Industry, Agriculture, Public Works, Municipal Departments informed, the NIAs should reach out to local Governments through their representative bodies or directly to carry the message of Malé Declaration and measures to be taken.

Strategy: The participants felt that UNEP and SACEP should ensure continuing of association of stakeholders by ensuring their meet regularly with NIAs and in this forum, which should meet annually.

The study of gains and losses and optional solutions should be entrusted to the NIAs and think tank institutions.

Funding mechanisms should be evolved to get local funding from Government and corporate sources, and not only rely on ODA for most of the follow up activities to ensure sustainability.

The strategy should incorporate the dimension of South Asian values and ethos especially for the benefit of the poor and marginalized in those societies in a spirit of sharing and caring.

