

Malé Declaration

on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution
and its Likely Transboundary Effect for South Asia



**Twelfth Session of the Intergovernmental Meeting
and
Sixth Session of the Regional Stakeholders cum Coordination Meeting**

OPENING SESSION

1. The Opening of the Twelfth Session of the Intergovernmental Meeting (IG12) and the Sixth Regional Stakeholders cum Coordination Meeting (RSC6) was held on 28 June 2011 in Delhi, India.
2. The Opening was attended by the Malé Declaration National Focal Points (NFPs) and National Implementing Agencies (NIAs) of the participating countries which include Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Experts from South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP), Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNEP Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP RRC.AP), a resource person from Murdoch University Australia, expert from Swedish Environmental Research Institute Ltd (IVL), Technical Committee Member (ToC) of the Malé Declaration, an independent facilitator, and other stakeholders from the participating countries of Malé Declaration also participated in the Opening.
3. Prof. S.P. Gautam, Chairman, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) delivered a Welcome Address. The history, background and achievements of the Malé Declaration were briefed. He commended the strong cooperation that is being demonstrated by the member countries, the efforts for future development of the Malé Declaration as well as the achievements under the Phase III implementation. Current implementation activities that cover monitoring, capacity building, strengthening cooperation and awareness raising under the Phase IV are on-going. He mentioned the establishment of regional centres to support the development of the Malé Declaration; the establishment of a sustainable financial mechanism that will support further development in a phase-wise manner; and the discussions on strengthening the regional framework on air pollution reduction in South Asia. He welcomed all distinguished guests, participants of the IG12 and RSC6 and the media people. He wished all the participants of the meetings a successful deliberation.
4. Ms. Jacintha Tissera, SACEP, delivered an Opening Remarks. On behalf of SACEP, she welcomed all participants of the meeting. She said that the Declaration calls for a regional cooperation to combat the increasing pollution and its transboundary effects. The initiative has come a long way and gives pride to the region observing the collaborative efforts among NFPs, NIAs and networks around the world to achieve common goals and share success stories. SACEP has the mandate to take the lead role on environment issues in South Asian region and their desire of having a more pro- active role in Malé Declaration was expressed. She thanked UNEP RRC.AP, and the government of India, CPCB for organizing the events.

She also expressed her thanks to all the participants and urged everyone to continue to work together with collective effort to combat air pollution in the region.

5. Mr. Mylvakanam Iyngararasan, UNEP Headquarters, in his Opening Remarks mentioned the importance of Malé Declaration as an intergovernmental forum for atmospheric issues in South Asia in relation to the recent global initiatives pertaining to this issue and concern. The atmospheric environment issues are at high political level globally and regionally. The global level commitment requires the efforts of the government and stakeholders at the national level to implement the action. In Asia, for last more than 10 years, governments have taken initiatives to put up regional cooperation in the region. He briefed on the progress of some existing initiatives related to atmospheric issues in Asia and the Pacific which include: a) Central Asia Environment Convention; b) Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Haze Agreement; c) Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET); and d) Malé Declaration in South Asia. He thanked UNEP RRC.AP, Malé Declaration member countries, SACEP, SEI, Sida, and Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) India and CPCB for making the events successful.
6. Mr. T. Chatterjee, Secretary, MoEF, India delivered a Welcome Address. He mentioned that the focus of Phase IV implementation is on strengthening cooperation, more relevant monitoring, and impact assessment of transboundary air pollution. He stressed on better actions to deal with and not just coping with transboundary air pollution. He suggested the following initiatives under Malé Declaration: a) build partnership on technical cooperation among participating countries to take up epidemiological studies in each country and link specific health effects to specific pollutants; b) take up source apportionment at domestic and transboundary passive monitoring stations; c) set up regional centres for training and research on wet and dry deposition: greenhouse gases and transboundary air routes and linking to policy. He urged the participating countries of the Malé Declaration to be more self-reliant and cooperative union of states to deal with the transboundary air pollution in the region. He saluted the pioneering efforts of SEI and UNEP on setting up monitoring system that survived and led the countries to more necessary domestic action.
7. Mr. J.S. Kamyotra, MoEF, India delivered a Vote of Thanks. He specially thanked the presence and support of the Secretary, MoEF India. He also stressed gratefulness to SACEP, UNEP, SEI, IVL and Sida for all the unending support. He thanked all the representatives from the participating countries of the Malé Declaration for all the support and cooperation displayed. He thanked all colleagues of CPCB, MoEF and UNEP RRC.AP for the valuable efforts in successfully organizing the meetings. He thanked all the Stakeholders and the members of the media for their participation and cooperation. He also thanked Mr. Rajamani, who has been there since the beginning of Malé Declaration, guiding the countries.
8. In closing, Mr. Mr. J.S. Kamyotra, urged everyone to develop technical expertise and to share this among the participating countries in-order to build self -reliance in dealing with the transboundary air pollution issue, and he ultimately, thank all the participants for continuous support and cooperation.