

Meeting 1/2024

Brainstorming on Collaborative Approach to SDGs in South and South-West Asia Climate Change and the Way Forward

Apr 3, 2024
2:30 PM – 4:30 PM India Standard Time
Online Meeting

Background

Promoting regional cooperation is one of the mandates of ESCAP, and South and South-West Asia has constantly been working on regional cooperation to foster SDGs. However, the existing subregional organisations, such as SAARC, face serious challenges in promoting collaboration and cooperation amongst member states. As influential institutions from South and South-West Asia, the SANS Network has the potential to create an alternative mechanism for regional cooperation amongst member States in the subregion, since most SANS members also are advising their national governments on various policy formulations.

In order to have effective subregional cooperation and ensure the interest of the member States, one needs to select certain issues that are challenging the entire subregion. One such issue relates to Climate Change (SDG 13) and we are all aware that the subregion is regressing on SDG 13. Various issues relating to this broader topic have been in discussion over the past few years between ESCAP and SANS members. Discussions were held in the subregional forum in Islamabad in December 2022, followed by a brainstorming session on Feb 15 2023, and in a side event during the 79th Commission Session in Bangkok on May 18 2023.¹

From the earlier discussions, certain key areas have emerged which require collective action by ESCAP and SANS. One such area relates to assisting countries not only in achieving their net zero goals but also in accelerating the process. In this regard, specific actions are required to be taken for a **clean energy transition**. What interventions are required at the country level will be an important point of discussion, especially to assist countries in promoting policies for promoting renewable energies, electronic vehicles, energy efficiency, and productive capacities, among others. Another area which could be of interest to countries in the region relate to addressing issues relating to air pollution. ESCAP conducted studies on how crop burning is leading to deterioration in air pollution not only at the local level but its coverage goes beyond national boundaries. Studies were conducted on Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan. A subregional report was also

¹ Report available using this [link](#)

developed to explore key actions and the possibility of a subregional cooperation framework to promote sustainable and integrated management of straw residues.²

The subregional office of ESCAP has also included in its work programme for assisting countries in the subregion to achieve SDG 13. For this technical assistance, policy advisory and sharing of good practices and cooperation will be required to be provided to countries on an as-per-need basis. In this regard, the the following:

- Identify specific topics and strategic interventions that will be required to be given to SSWA member States to make them achieve SDG 13. How can SANS support ESCAP’s activities on SDG 13?
- Role of SANS: what support are you providing to your government on SDG 13? How can SANS members, using their existing resources and knowledge, collaborate amongst themselves to address the challenges faced by the countries (Policy advocacy, sharing of good practices, etc.)?
- How can ESCAP effectively bring the agenda of regional cooperation in the activities of SANS members (SAES, SDC, etc.)? What needs to be done to make the engagement more effective and meaningful? How can SANS help achieve these objectives?

Tentative Programme	
2:30 PM – 2:45 PM	<p><i>Opening Remarks</i></p> <p>Ms Mikiko Tanaka, Head of ESCAP South and South-West Asia Office (ESCAP-SSWA), New Delhi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and setting the agenda
2:45 PM – 4:15 PM	<p>Moderator: Ms Mikiko Tanaka, Head of ESCAP South and South-West Asia Office (ESCAP-SSWA), New Delhi</p> <p><i>Open discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All SANS Members
4:15 PM – 4:30 PM	<p><i>The way forward and conclusion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Mikiko Tanaka, Head of ESCAP South and South-West Asia Office (ESCAP-SSWA), New Delhi

² Link to the studies:

<https://www.unescap.org/kp/2023/sustainable-management-crop-residues-bangladesh-india-nepal-and-pakistan-challenges-and>

<https://www.unescap.org/kp/2023/integrated-straw-management-pakistan>

<https://www.unescap.org/kp/2023/integrated-straw-management-india>

<https://www.unescap.org/kp/2023/integrated-straw-management-nepal>

<https://www.unescap.org/kp/2023/integrated-straw-management-bangladesh>