

Impact of climate change on mangrove forest and regional co-operation in South Asia

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Abstract

Climate change has emerged as a major challenge for the humanity and an area of critical concern in South Asia. The mangrove forests in South Asia are extremely vulnerable to climate change. Sunderbans is well known for being one of the largest mangrove forest area covering 10,000 sq.km .It is the seat of Royal Bengal tiger and has a large number of flora and fauna. This area has crucial ecological and environmental importance. It has helped to maintain the metrological and hydrolological balance of the region by providing the forest cover. Keeping into mind its importance UNESCO has declared it as a World Heritage Site. In the same way mangrove forest are there in India, Maldives and Sri Lanka. In order to mitigate the impact of climate change on mangrove forest local, national and regional efforts are required. Since this problem affects a number of states national solutions may not be enough and regional collaborative efforts to mitigate the adverse impact of climate change are inevitable. The regional organization in South Asia i.e., South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) has taken several initiatives in this direction. Climate change was the main theme of the sixteenth SAARC summit held in Thimpu, Bhutan in April 2010. The summit declaration was subtitled “Towards a green and happy South Asia” and emphasized on the steps to be taken to improve the condition of forests at the regional level. This research paper will examine the crucial importance of mangrove forest in South Asia with special focus on Sunderbans. It will analyze the impact of climate change on mangroves. The paper will focus on the initiatives taken by regional co-operation in South Asia-SAARC to deal with them. In the end it will high light the best practice to deal with climate change and mangroves in other regional associations e.g. Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Keywords

climate change, regional collaboration