

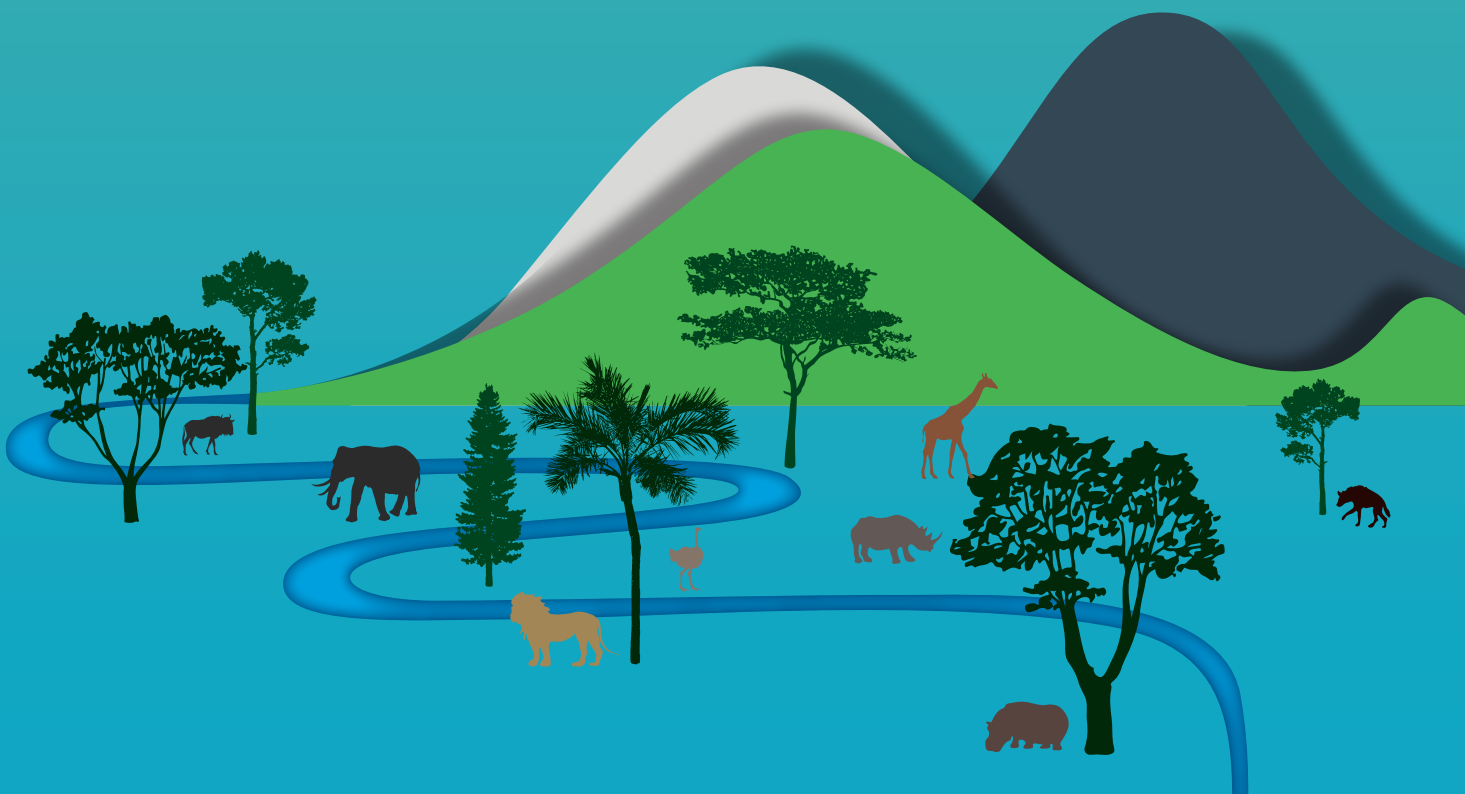


TOWARDS A RESILIENT SOUTH ASIA

REGIONAL CLIMATE SUMMIT 2023

8–10 September 2023 | Dhaka, Bangladesh

Declaration



TOWARDS A RESILIENT SOUTH ASIA



Forwarding

We are writing to share the Regional Climate Summit 2023 Declaration for your consideration. The declaration, a testament to the collaborative efforts of the participating nations and stakeholders, outlines a comprehensive set of commitments and strategies aimed at addressing the critical challenges of climate change and environmental sustainability.

Enclosed with this letter, you will find the Regional Climate Summit 2023 Declaration document, which reflects the shared dedication of the South Asian region to protect our environment and foster sustainable development. The declaration underscores the importance of regional cooperation, innovative solutions, and collective responsibility in mitigating climate change risks and enhancing climate resilience.

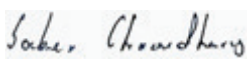
The Regional Climate Summit 2023 was organized by Climate Parliament Bangladesh, The Earth Society, Climate Parliament and ORF. The strategic partners include the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the Ministry of Power Energy and Mineral Resources, the Ministry of Water Resources, UNDP Bangladesh. The lead organizations include ActionAid Bangladesh, Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh, Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands in Bangladesh, Shakti Foundation, Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh, and USAID Bangladesh. The gold sponsors include Coca-Cola and Grameenphone. The co-lead organizations include Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and Change Initiative where Standard Chartered Bangladesh and Unilever Bangladesh as sustainable investment partner and the Sustainability Partner respectively. Other esteemed partners include Bangladesh Institute of Planners, Center for Atmospheric Pollution Studies (CAPS), Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS), COAST Foundation, South Asian Just Transition Alliance (SAJTA), U.S. Embassy in Bangladesh, WaterAid Bangladesh and Youth for CARE.

This summit brought together policymakers, scientists, experts, and stakeholders from diverse sectors from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. The summit facilitated enriching discussions and dialogues on crucial topics such as renewable energy, plastic policy, environmental pollution, water management, financing climate action, clean air, energy security, and sustainable resource utilization.

We believe that the commitments outlined in the declaration align with the goals and priorities of your office. The invaluable insights and recommendations shared during the summit, along with the collaborative efforts of the participating nations, will contribute significantly to the ongoing efforts to combat climate change and ensure a sustainable future for our region.

We request your esteemed office's consideration and endorsement of the Regional Climate Summit 2023 Declaration. Your support and engagement in pursuing the commitments outlined in the declaration will undoubtedly contribute to the materialization of them into policy domain in the South Asian countries.

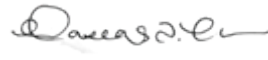
Thank you for your time, attention, and anticipated support in this crucial endeavor.



Saber Hossain Chowdhury, MP
Chief Parton
Climate Parliament Bangladesh



Tanvir Shakil Joy, MP
Chairperson
Climate Parliament Bangladesh



Waseqa Ayesha Khan, MP
Co-Chairperson
Climate Parliament Bangladesh



Nahim Razzaq, MP
Convenor
Climate Parliament Bangladesh





Regional
CLIMATE
SUMMIT
2023

Declaration

Preamble

Climate change is a formidable obstacle to sustainable development, and its impacts have the potential to negate the achievements made in advancing sustainable development goals. This summit, held at Dhaka, Bangladesh from 8 September to 10 September under the banner of Regional Climate Summit 2023, brought together stakeholders from diverse sectors and engaged in discussions that led to the identification of strategies, policies and collaborative initiatives necessary to address the challenges of climate change and sustainable development goals. We integrated the discussed issues and hereby, announce the following declaration.

Declaration

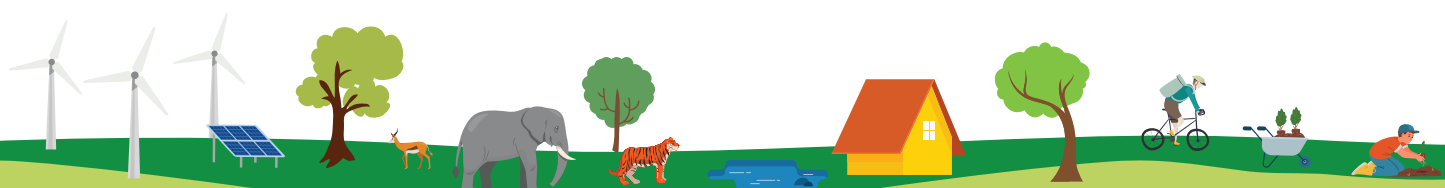
1. We acknowledge that climate change induced vulnerabilities directly impact our people, economies, and ecosystems, necessitating urgent action to enhance resilience and adapt to changing climatic conditions. We acknowledge that the impacts of climate change threaten the progress made in fulfilling our sustainable development goals. To effectively address this challenge, we recognize the importance of integrating adaptation and mitigation measures into holistic sustainable development initiatives and commit to rising above geopolitics in order to join hands and solve issues related to climate change.
2. Projections suggest that the South Asian economy could suffer a significant reduction of up to 9% annually by the end of this century due to climate change impacts. The financial toll could escalate further when accounting for damages from extreme weather events. We commit to take decisive action to ensure the economic stability and prosperity of the region.
3. We acknowledge the significance of the Paris Agreement in recognizing the crucial role of the ocean and ecosystem integrity in combating the adverse consequences of climate change and limiting global average temperature within 1.5 Degree Celsius. The South Asian region is particularly susceptible to climate change impacts, including floods, sea-level rise, and ocean acidification. We emphasize the need to prioritize the resilience and adaptation efforts of severely climate-affected countries and realize One Sun One World One Grid through interconnected grids, enabling all of us to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement.

Environment and Climate Change

4. In recognition of the intertwined challenges of air pollution and global warming, we pledge to collaboratively formulate and implement a multifaceted action plan. Our objectives encompass reducing air pollutants, advancing clean energy adoption, bolstering air quality monitoring, promoting public health awareness, and fostering regional cooperation. Our dedication to this cause is underpinned by the urgent need to address the severe health and environmental consequences of air pollution, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, where people are more exposed to outdoor and indoor air pollution. To support our efforts, we will mobilize adequate resources and establish partnerships to enhance our competencies.

5. Recognizing the urgent need to address plastic pollution, we pledge to promote products that are durable, reusable, recyclable, or compostable. We are deeply concerned about the health hazards posed by plastic pollution, as micro plastics and toxins from plastic breakdown can harm both humans and ecosystems. To tackle this challenge, we commit to fostering regional collaboration and knowledge sharing. By promoting circular business models and encouraging the adoption of sustainable alternatives, we aim to reduce plastic waste, conserve resources, and minimize carbon emissions associated with plastic production and disposal. We recognize the upcoming plastic treaty as a pivotal opportunity to strengthen international cooperation and harmonize our efforts. To implement this strategy, we will engage with stakeholders, set measurable targets, establish monitoring mechanisms, and prioritize in innovation and education, ensuring a sustainable and plastic-free future for our region.

6. We pledge to enhance regional collaboration for the preservation of biodiversity in shared ecological frontiers, particularly in the Himalaya, the Sundarbans and Coastal Regions. Recognizing these regions' ecological significance and vulnerability to climate change, we will work together to develop and implement policies that promote conservation and restoration of natural habitats. Embracing nature-based solutions, we will harness the collective expertise and efforts of governments, civil society, private sector, and local communities to safeguard biodiversity and ecosystem resilience. Furthermore, we will explore sustainable practices to promote the blue economy, fostering long-term planning and a holistic approach to environmental conservation.



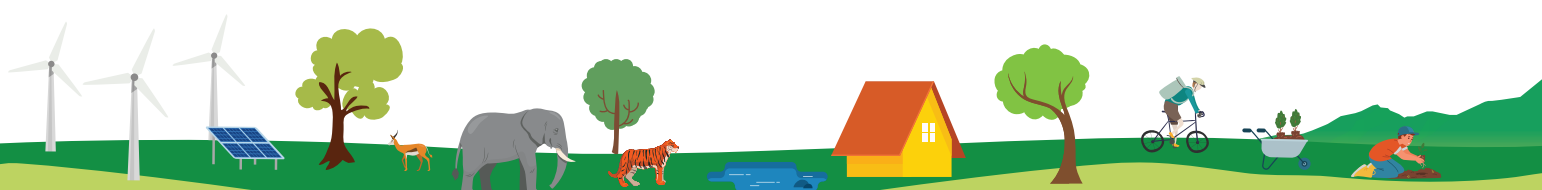
Water and Waste

7. Acknowledging the challenges posed by climate-induced water scarcity, as a result of disasters and hazards such as floods, and droughts, we will work to empower local governance, strengthen local institutions and enhance their capacity to manage water resources efficiently. We will ensure climate resilient Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) by promoting technologies and systems that promote safe drinking water and integrated waste management systems including solid waste and industrial waste that protect water resources, improve environmental quality, and enhance community resilience. We acknowledge the importance of community engagement in the decision-making process and implementation level regarding sustainable water and waste management.

8. We recognize the interdependencies of water and sanitation, energy and food security and emphasize the importance of adopting a nexus approach to address trade-offs and enhance synergies among these sectors. Integrated planning, stakeholder participation, and policy coherence will be integral to our efforts in improving resource efficiency, reducing wastage, promoting innovation, and building adaptive capacity in the water, energy, and food sectors.

9. We emphasize on enhancing synergies by establishing common Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna Basin Model, integrating flood forecasting warning systems, river-bank erosion, sediment management, water-use efficiency and ecosystem management. We also emphasize on revising existing water treaties to align with current circumstances and stress on regional cooperation on the moderation of floods and augmentation of dry-season flows.

10. We aspire to achieve green infrastructure, green building and smart solutions for climate-responsive urban development such as advanced energy management and efficient and real-time flood prediction sensors, and stress on integrating these suggestions into urban planning and development.



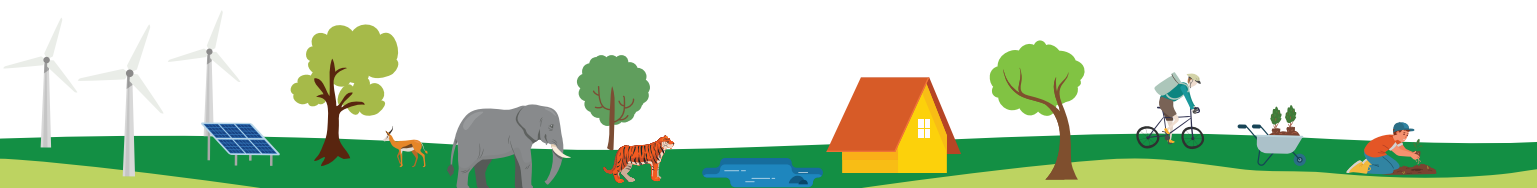
Future of Energy

11. We commit to reform the energy market to ensure Regional Power Market, Day Ahead Market, and Dynamic Pricing. We acknowledge the need to gradually phasing out subsidies for fossil fuels and reallocating these funds to finance renewable energy projects in order to move towards renewable energy sources. Hence, we emphasize on creating renewable based model villages/community and setting up national and regional Renewable Energy Innovation Lab (REIB). We recognize the importance of investment in sustainable construction of grid connection to reach in the most remote parts. We acknowledge the need to enable a policy for the Corporate Power Purchase Agreement (CPPA). In addition, we will promote the installation of Solar EV charging stations and further enhance energy efficiency through increased investments in renewable energy projects.



Building Resilience

12. We recognize the need to build local resilience to climate change and support community-based adaptation solutions. We will help communities develop and implement initiatives to cope with climate impacts, especially early warning systems for disaster readiness. We will also ensure food security by adopting strategies that protect access to nutritious food under changing climate conditions. We will address the challenges of climate-induced migration by developing and implementing resilience measures that respect the needs and rights of climate migrants. Furthermore, we will involve the private sector as a key partner in enhancing climate resilience by promoting sustainable business practices, investing in resilient infrastructure, and creating economic opportunities that benefit the resilience of South Asian countries.



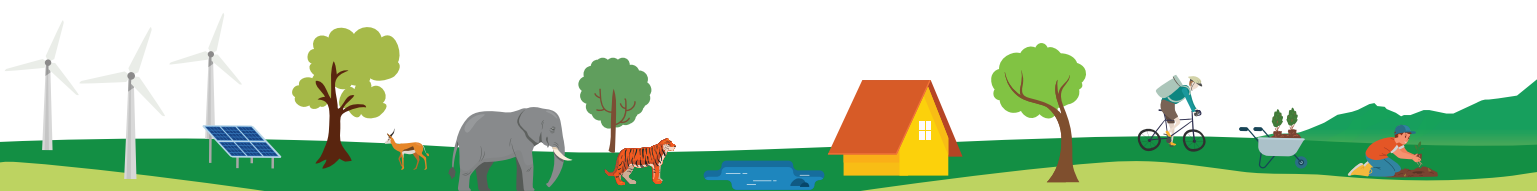
Regional Cooperation and Regional Climate Fund

13. We commit to promoting regional cooperation in the energy sector, enhancing regional and national policies and regulatory frameworks to foster Cross-Border Electricity Trade (CBET), and facilitating the integration of renewable energy sources into electricity generation sector. By exploring regional market opportunities and fostering economic collaboration, we aim to create an investment-friendly environment that advances sustainable development while bolstering the resilience of our economies. We aim to promote active cooperation on financial, technical and infrastructural development of CBET.

14. We call upon South Asian parliamentarians to establish an institutional framework for a sustained engagement on regional energy cooperation through a regional parliamentary forum.

15. We recognize the importance of green finance for sustainable development and work to mobilize the capital for low carbon climate-resilient development by creating innovative green markets and opportunities for investors and enterprises. We aspire to establish a South Asian Resilience Fund (SARF) to support adaptation projects in agriculture, WASH, livelihood resilience, clean energy, healthcare and green entrepreneurship. Also, we advocate for pursuing multilateral grant-based financing over bilateral development loans, ensuring a more sustainable and equitable approach. Besides, we recognize the importance of technology transfer as an essential component in our efforts to enhance sustainability and resilience.

16. We pledge to support green entrepreneurship as a vital driver of our energy transition. We recognize the potential of fostering innovation and entrepreneurship to develop and deploy clean energy technologies. Also, we will prioritize creating an enabling environment for research and development, providing green finance for startups and green skills for youth development, and promoting markets for green products. Also, we recognize the need to allocate 20% of climate fund for green entrepreneurship development along with tax rebate and zero vat for this sector.



Conclusion

17. We commit to mainstreaming gender, youth and inclusivity while formulating and implementing policies regarding climate change adaptation and sustainable development.

18. We recognize that the adverse impacts of climate change will trigger out-migration from the most climate vulnerable regions and propose to establish climate sensitive social protection measures to smooth the migration process for climate migrants.

19. In conclusion, we, the participants of the Regional Climate Summit 2023, reaffirm our dedication to addressing the policy gap and commit to fostering partnerships and collaborations among policymakers, scientists, experts, and stakeholders to promote sustainable development in the South Asian countries. Through enhanced collaboration, innovative solutions, and collective efforts, we commit to creating a pathway towards a more sustainable, climate-resilient, and prosperous future for all.



INAUGURAL CEREMONY



CLOSING CEREMONY



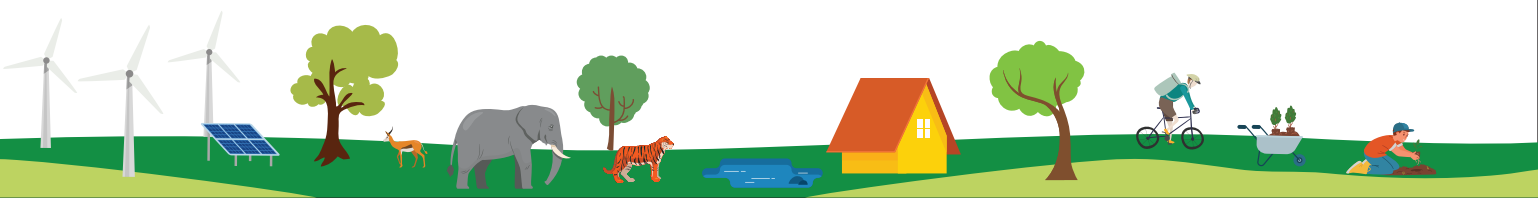




Photo Gallery







Photo Gallery



ORGANIZED BY



STRATEGIC PARTNERS



LEAD ORGANIZATIONS



GOLD SPONSORS



CO-LEAD ORGANIZATIONS



SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT PARTNER



SUSTAINABILITY PARTNER



PARTNERS

