

# Strengthening Coastal Resilience in South Asia: A Policy Advocacy Webinar Series



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### Background:

The coastal regions of South Asia are acutely vulnerable to the impacts of global climate change, which manifest through increased frequency and intensity of tropical storms, rising sea levels, and the degradation of vital ecosystems like mangroves and coral reefs. The project titled *“Building a multi-country, civil society partnership to increase the resilience of coastal populations in South Asia”*, aims to bolster the resilience of rural coastal communities in Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives. By fostering a robust transnational partnership among civil society organizations (CSOs), the project seeks to implement sustainable practices that conserve and restore coastal ecosystems, enhance food security, diversify income opportunities, and decarbonization of Coastal Communities (promoting renewable energy solutions). However, achieving long-term resilience and sustainability requires more than localized efforts. It necessitates a concerted policy advocacy strategy to influence national and regional policies effectively.

As part of this multi-country project in South Asia, partner CSOs are working at the grassroots level with communities to enhance coastal resilience. Their first-hand experiences and learnings are invaluable in informing and improving policies. The proposed webinar series will feature CSO partners from this project who will share their knowledge and insights, contributing to evidence-based policy advocacy. These grassroots efforts provide crucial data and real-world examples that can shape more effective and responsive policies.

Policy advocacy is crucial for scaling up successful local initiatives and ensuring that they receive the necessary support and recognition from government bodies and international organizations. Through structured knowledge transfer, capacity building, and strategic engagement with policymakers, CSOs can drive significant policy changes that align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This includes advocating for policies that protect and restore critical coastal ecosystems, support sustainable livelihood practices, and facilitate the adaptation of communities to climate change.

The webinar series is a vital component of this strategy, aiming to equip CSOs and other stakeholders with the knowledge, skills, and networks required to influence policy effectively. By fostering dialogue and collaboration across borders, the series will help amplify the voices of marginalized communities, ensuring their needs and experiences shape the policies that affect their lives.



## Proposed Policy Advocacy Themes Based on Project Interventions:

### Six webinars

1. Coastal Regulatory Policies
2. Ecosystem-based sustainable coastal development (with a special focus on Mangroves restorations)
3. Adaptation and decarbonization of coastal communities.
4. Coastal livelihood resilience & Capacity building
5. Innovative approaches to food security
6. Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI): Coastal Resilience & role of women & youth

### Project countries:

India, Bangladesh, Maldives, Sri Lanka

### Project Partners:

- Global Nature Fund (GNF), Germany
- Bangladesh: Bangladesh Environment and Development Society (BEDS),
- India: Nature Environment & Wildlife Society (NEWS); Centre for Research on New International Economic Order (CReNIEO); TERRE Policy Centre; SaciWATERS
- Sri Lanka; EMACE Foundation and Nagenahiru Foundation (NF)
- Maldives: Huvadhoo Aid (HAD)

### Panelists/ Speakers for Six Webinars: 60-75 minutes

Welcome remarks & Context setting: GNF

Keynote Address in each webinar: Global Mangrove Alliance (GMA)

Webinar Series Moderator: SaciWATERS

1. Coastal Regulatory Policies: NEWS, CReNIEO, BEDS & SaciWATERS
2. Ecosystem-based sustainable coastal development (with a special focus on Mangroves restorations): NEWS, CReNIEO, TERRE Policy Centre & HAD
3. Adaptation and decarbonization of coastal communities: NF, BEDS & NEWS
4. Coastal livelihood resilience & Capacity building: EMACE Foundation, BEDS & NEWS
5. Innovative approaches to food security: EMACE Foundation, CReNIEO & BEDS
6. Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI)-Coastal Resilience & role of women & youth: BEDS, TERRE Policy Centre, NF