

Call for Papers

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN SOUTH ASIA

15th October 2024

‘Sambhashan’, the peer-reviewed online journal of the University of Mumbai, invites research papers for its special issue ‘Sustainable Development Goals in South Asia: Challenges and Opportunities. We are exploring the multifaceted dimensions of sustainable development in South Asia. We invite scholars, researchers, and practitioners to contribute original research articles, reviews, and case studies that delve into the complex challenges and emerging

opportunities within this dynamic and diverse region. This special issue aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how South Asian countries can navigate the intricate landscape of sustainable development, with a focus on policy-making, regional cooperation, and strategic initiatives.

South Asia, comprising Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, is home to over 1.8 billion people, making it one of the most densely populated regions in the world. The region is characterised by its rich cultural heritage, deep historical roots, and significant economic potential. The diversity in cultures, languages, religions, and geopolitical landscapes contributes to South Asia’s unique identity on the global stage. However, these factors also present challenges that complicate efforts toward sustainable development, necessitating a nuanced and collaborative approach.

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is crucial in fostering collaboration among these nations in various domains, including economic development, social progress, and environmental sustainability. Established in 1985, SAARC has been instrumental in promoting regional integration, though political tensions and economic disparities among member states have often hampered its effectiveness. As South Asia's largest economy, India holds a significant position within SAARC. With its substantial socio-economic, cultural and political influence, India has been a driving force behind numerous regional initiatives to promote sustainable development, enhance connectivity, and ensure



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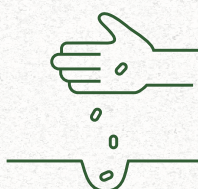
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collective security and stability. India's gross domestic product (GDP) accounts for over 70% of the region's total GDP, underscoring its central role in shaping the economic landscape of South Asia. Additionally, India's leadership in sectors such as information technology, renewable energy, and healthcare has the potential to catalyse regional growth and development.

Despite its potential, South Asia faces numerous challenges that impede sustainable development. Poverty and economic inequality are pervasive, with over 300 million people in the region living below the international poverty line. Economic disparities within and between countries exacerbate social tensions and hinder inclusive growth. Political instability in several South Asian countries, such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan, further complicates governance and regional cooperation, with corruption, weak institutions, and conflict, posing significant obstacles to achieving the targeted, sustainable development goals. Environmental degradation and the impacts of climate change also present severe risks, particularly in vulnerable countries like Bangladesh and the Maldives, highlighting the urgent need for coordinated regional action on environmental sustainability. Social inequalities, including gender disparity and lack of access to quality education and healthcare, remain critical issues that must be addressed to achieve human development and ensure equitable distribution of economic growth.

However, there is a magnanimous scope and opportunities for sustainable development in South Asia as it has immense potential for developing renewable energy sources, particularly solar and wind power. Technological innovation in these areas can help mitigate climate change's impacts and reduce the region's reliance on fossil fuels. Enhanced regional connectivity through infrastructure projects, such as the International North-South Transport Corridor and the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor, can boost trade, foster regional integration, and drive economic growth. Investing in education and healthcare is essential for building a skilled workforce and improving overall human development. Regional cooperation can lead to shared solutions and best practices that benefit all South Asian countries.



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As far as India is concerned, maintaining harmony, stability, and cooperation within South Asia is paramount. As a significant player in the region, India seeks to foster trade relationships, support regional development projects, and participate in diplomatic initiatives to resolve conflicts. India's vision for South Asia includes a stable and prosperous region where countries are interconnected through trade, infrastructure, and cultural exchanges. Promoting connectivity is vital to India's strategy of integrating South Asia into the global economy. India actively engages with its neighbours through bilateral and multilateral initiatives, such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and the South Asia Sub- regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC), which facilitate cooperation on issues ranging from disaster management to energy security. The challenges and opportunities faced by South Asia are intricately linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Addressing poverty, ensuring access to clean energy, promoting gender equality, and combating climate change are just a few of the SDGs directly relevant to the region. Research exploring how South Asian countries can align their national policies with the SDGs while considering the region's unique cultural, political, and economic contexts is particularly welcome for this particular issue.

We encourage submissions backed by empirical research, data analysis, and case studies that provide actionable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and scholars. Manuscripts should be original, unpublished works not considered by any other publications. Submissions should adhere to the journal's formatting and style guidelines.

Suggested Themes but not Restricted to it:

- Climate Change and Vulnerabilities
- Environmental Hazards and Degradation
- Marine Pollution
- Health and Education
- Indigenous Knowledge
- Cultural Connectivity and fostering cooperation
- Forced Migration and Internally Displaced Persons

- Coastal Borders and CRZ
- Poverty Alleviation
- Public Policies adopted
- Humanitarian Crisis and Sensitising Human Rights Awareness
- Implication of Covid 19 Pandemic
- External debt and Vulnerabilities
- Role of State and Non-State Actors

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Guidelines to follow for writing a research paper in Sambhashan:

Original, scholarly, creative and critical papers with adequate references and empirical work (if applicable).

All references to the author should be removed from the submission to enable the anonymous review process.

There should be a limit from 4000-6000 words (for papers), 1500-2000 words (for commentaries) and 1000 words (for book reviews).

Essays should follow the Times New Roman font in size 12 with double space and be submitted as a word document.

All contributions should follow the author-date referencing system detailed in chapter 15 of The Chicago Manual of Style (17th Edition). The style guidelines can be consulted on the journal webpages for quick reference.

Authors should submit a statement that their contribution is original without any plagiarism. They can also, in addition, submit a plagiarism check certificate.

The December 2024 issue of Sambhashan will be on the above themes. Last date for the submission of the article is 15th October 2024. The style of Writing the article is given on the website: <https://mu.ac.in/sambhashan> Kindly follow the instructions given on the website. Submit your article through a Word file on the following email id: coeditor.sambhashan@mu.ac.in