



UPDATE FROM OUR WORK  
IN ETHABENDIWEWA



ANIMAL WELFARE BILL



EXTREME WEATHER CAUSED  
BY CLIMATE CHANGE



## Raising Public Awareness on the Animal Welfare Bill

The 3rd consultation on the Animal Welfare Bill took place with a wide sectoral representation from the government as well as civil society actors, which included parliamentary members, representatives of various NGOs and youth delegations, lawyers, journalists and animal welfare advocates. Parliamentary member, Venerable Athuraliye Rathana Thero graced the occasion to address the furthering of the Bill on Animal Welfare.

**“In order to address adverse impacts of climate change, we need leadership and champions”**

In his address, Ven. Rathana Thero commented on the historical link between Buddhism and the advocacy of animal welfare, as is clearly outlined in the first of the five precepts of Buddhist philosophy. Accordingly, he observed that the Animal Welfare Coalition has strived to abolish cruelty against animals and to establish responsibility in terms of humane forms of slaughtering animals. Furthermore, the Venerable Rathana Thero noted the importance of selecting the most suitable ministry to further the cause of animal welfare.

Commenting on the symbiotic relationship between animals and humans as integral components of the environment, the Thero raised the need to include new amendments with regard to animal husbandry and the use of agro chemicals in agricultural activities, focusing on the adverse impact on fish and reptiles. In line with the Animal Welfare Coalition’s mission to expedite the passing of the parliamentary Bill on Animal Welfare, Ven. Rathana Thero stressed on the imperative need to get the Bill passed this year and agreed to accompany the members of the Coalition to discussions with the President.

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### New Director for SLYCAN Trust

Starting September 2016, Vositha Wijenayake will serve as the Director of SLYCAN Trust. An attorney-at-law and former policy and advocacy co-ordinator for Climate Action Network South Asia, she also co-chaired the Legal Working Group of Climate Action Network International on the work of the Paris Agreement in 2015. She has been working on climate change since 2009, on which she took the first steps as executive co-ordinator of SLYCAN, which at the time functioned as a network that focused primarily on climate change related issues with a youth perspective.

However, since 2015, SLYCAN established itself as a Trust and broadened its working areas and is now engaged in the fields of animal welfare, organic agriculture, social justice and gender.



*“It is a pleasure to start working with SLYCAN Trust, which was my doorway to climate change related work in 2009. My interest for the cause started due to one of the conferences of which SLYCAN was part of the organising team. It feels that both SLYCAN and I have evolved in our work on climate change together and I am very humbled to be able to contribute to the work at the national and international levels,” - Vositha.*

Dr. Sam Daniels, who held the office of additional secretary to the Ministry of Social Services, Welfare and Livestock Development, outlined the historical progression of the Animal Rights Bill thus far and highlighted the gaps in the prevalent laws and regulations on Animal Welfare in the constitution of Sri Lanka. Therein, the establishment of a legislative authority through the Animal Welfare Bill was highlighted as the focal point of immediate future action.

The necessity of creating public awareness on the Animal Welfare Bill was noted as one of the crucial issues to be focused on in the immediate plan of action. Wherein, the involvement of the media, social media and public engagement through youth delegations such as University based associations and Rotaract clubs was suggested as viable methods of creating awareness and influencing Parliamentary activity. Incident based propaganda was suggested as one of the many forms of creating awareness in the hopes of expediting the passing of the parliamentary Bill.

### Addressing Extreme Weather and Calamities Caused by Climate Change

The Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment in collaboration with SLYCAN Trust organised an introductory workshop to address the “Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage Associated with Climate Change Impacts,” on August 01, 2016 in Colombo. The workshop was organised with the intention of exchanging information and knowledge on the Warsaw International Mechanism on loss and damage associated with climate change impacts and its implementation mechanism and was attended by policymakers, relevant government ministerial officials, civil society actors, media and researchers. The Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment is the National Focal Point to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Kyoto Protocol. During the 19th session of the Conference of Parties (COP19) to the UNFCCC, the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage was established in Warsaw, Poland.

“This workshop is a timely intervention especially for low emitting countries like Sri Lanka as global efforts to address loss and damage due to climate change is largely and rapidly falling short. While there is hope with the introduction of loss and damage in the Paris Agreement, it must also be stated that Sri Lanka has included in its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) submission as well,” said Climate Change Secretariat Director Dr Sunimal Jayathunga. The workshop also becomes important when understanding the context and nature of the recent flood and landslides caused by irregular monsoons and extreme weather patterns.

Further, the 21st session of the Conference of Parties (COP 21) in 2015, held in Paris, France, recognised the importance of averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and slow onset events, and the role of sustainable development in reducing the risk of loss and damage. “It’s encouraging to know that In COP21, while loss and damage was only recognised as a separate element in the agreement, in COP22 in Marrakech, there is to be a 5-year plan on how to go ahead with loss and damage as well,” said SLYCAN Trust Policy Co-ordinator Vositha Wijenayake. She is also the Advocacy and Policy Co-ordinator for Climate Action Network South Asia, a coalition of over 147 civil society organisations in the region committed to bridge the gap between policies and practice among policymakers and civil society. The Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage is the main architecture developed under the UNFCCC to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable, in a comprehensive, integrated and coherent manner.

### Meatless Monday for the Welfare of Animals

Most of us love animals. But then a majority of us animal lovers also enjoy eating meat. While cutting down on meat completely seems a difficult task to some, there is also the option of reducing meat consumption. This could be done by taking a small step: stopping the consumption of meat, one day of the week.

This is why SLYCAN Trust is advocating for Meatless Monday, which as the name suggests is to forego meat every Monday, once a week.

While the act maybe small, imagine if the same act of vegetarianism was carried out by all people across the world. How big an impact would we make?



## **Advancing National Adaptation Plans Post Paris: NAP Expo 2016**

NAP Expo 2016 was organised in Bonn, Germany from the 11th to the 15th of July 2016. The fourth in the series, it included keynotes on latest science and approaches on climate change adaptation, best practices and lessons learned, and information from relevant bodies, organizations and agencies on support for the formulation and implementation of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). The event was attended by representatives of Parties to the UNFCCC, UN, international and bilateral organisations, agencies, experts, scientists and members of civil society.

### The objectives of the NAP Expo included:

- Providing a platform for focused interactions between all Parties and organizations on aspects that advance the formulation and implementation of NAPs;
- Serving as a forum for sharing experience, best practices, lessons learned, gaps and needs and information on support provided and received in relation to the process to formulate and implement NAPs;
- Offering a platform for countries to interact with providers of support, including the GCF and GEF, and bilateral agencies as means to improve access to financing for NAPs;
- Serving as a global forum on NAPs where different organisations and bodies can conduct specialised meetings and workshops with a view to ensuring coherence among the approaches undertaken in supporting countries undertake the process.

SLYCAN Trust contributed to the discussion held by the Nairobi Work Programme by sharing its experiences on adaptation at national level, and working on multi-stakeholder driven NAP formulation in the country. In addition to this SLYCAN Trust also contributed to the discussion on the role of the Civil Society Organisations in the NAP process. The participants of the session shared successful experiences and best practices with stakeholder engagement for a participative and inclusive NAP process, including building on stakeholder engagement efforts in the NAPA process; and early engagement of stakeholders at the concept stage to ensure good buy in for NAPs that are ‘implementable’, with all stakeholders actively engaged and ready to support implementation. They also identified the need for funding and support for effective engagement of all stakeholders, especially the most vulnerable; an enabling judicial system, education and capacity building including technical capacity building; and consideration of language/framing and communication of information so that a range of audiences will engage as the main enabling factors to motivate governments to engage with stakeholders, including vulnerable groups, private sector, academia, and CSOs to participate in NAP processes.

### **Focusing on Adaptation Actions & Sri Lanka’s NAP**

A workshop organised by Southern Voices on Adaptation, SLYCAN Trust, Janathakshan (GTE) Ltd, and CANSA Sri Lanka, was held on the 18th of August at Hotel Renuka, for the purpose of discussing on how to facilitate transparent and inclusive implementation of Sri Lanka’s National Adaptation Plan.

As a civil society initiative for promoting effective and equitable adaptation, Southern Voices has developed Joint Principles of Adaptation (JPA) which promotes multi-stakeholder participation in the shaping of policies on climate change adaptation. The workshop therefore targeted a wide stakeholder audience including policy makers, CSOs, academicians, researchers and media in the hopes of reinforcing Sri Lanka’s NAP.

In line with these objectives the workshop proceeded to define the role of Southern Voices in the process of Sri Lanka’s NAP and to outline the tentative plan of action for the next year. The mobilisation of CSOs as well as capacity building and creating awareness were among the measures to be taken in the immediate plan of action. As a preliminary measure, discussions with the key decision-makers who will receive recommendations including information and data would be carried out. It was discussed that SV-adapt in partnership with CANSA Sri Lanka would be facilitating a consultation space for dialogue and activity between various stakeholder groups especially in capacity building and creating awareness in local communities.

## Update from our Work in Ethabendiwewa

Sri Lanka's Department of Wildlife Conservation spends millions of rupees each year to address human-elephant conflict in affected areas. This money goes to large scale electric fencing around protected areas, and damage compensation. Whilst there are many sides to the consequences of each of above mitigatory measures, the 2016 budget approved 4000 million rupees for wildlife conservation, mainly to minimise human-elephant conflict. Despite the fact the government and non-government organisations run conservation projects in affected areas, about 50 human and 250 elephant deaths occurred annually during the last decade.

However, the Department has identified a novel approach when it comes to electric fencing; village fencing and agri fencing. As the names imply, these small scale fences will protect home gardens/villages and agricultural land from wild elephant damages. Regional Directors of the Department are supposed to identify Grama Niladari areas that need immediate attention to have village and agri fences. The process will be done in consultation with local authorities.



Following the Department's strategy, SLYCAN Trust wants to conduct an initial survey in Morawewa Divisional Secretariat, mainly focusing on Ethabendiwewa, to identify the nature and extent of the conflict scene in the area. This will be done consulting the villagers, Grama Niladari, DS and regional wildlife office. In this exercise, participatory rural appraisal will help in conflict mapping and farmer interviews will reveal the socio-economics of the local human-elephant conflict scenario. With this initial findings, SLYCAN Trust plans to help the Department of Wildlife Conservation facilitating and accelerating the projected electric fencing work in the area.

SLYCAN Trust also aims to conduct a series of farmer meetings in the area to discuss the principals of human-elephant co-existence. Local wildlife officers will be present at these meetings. Negotiating with wildlife and environmentally healthy farming practices will be among the themes to discuss. Awareness programs for the local school kids on environmental conservation too are in the list of activities to be completed during 2016.

If not for the active participation of the villagers, conservation of wildlife living along with them in their neighbourhood would be an impossible task.

## Promoting Meatless Monday at Regional Level



SLYCAN Trust and Member of Parliament Venerable Athuraliye Rathana partook at a symposium on "Mindful Eating" organised by Humane Society International in collaboration with IOGT VIỆT NAM and GIÁO HỘI PHẬT GIÁO VIỆT NAM held at the Vietnam Buddhist Institute of Hanoi. The symposium was also an opportunity for Kavindu Ediriweera from SLYCAN Trust to present its recently initiated Meatless Monday campaign.

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SLYCAN Trust and Member of Parliament Venerable Athurali Lanka Ven. Athuraliye Rathana stressed on the wastage of high calorie vegetarian foods that are being used to feed genetically modified breeds that are solely for meat production. He argued that thousands of people could have been fed with the “feed” and that would also contribute towards the reduction of carbon emission by way of reducing the meat supply.



**“It was interesting to see how different countries worked on their meatless Monday campaigns and the approaches they were taking. Our campaign is new in Sri Lanka and this symposium would no doubt be beneficial in making it a success in the coming days,”**

**- Kavindu Ediriweera**

“Animals have no ability to have conscious thought or reason. We are people of higher intelligence. Many Western philosophers have constantly reiterated on how we should not harm animals out of moral obligations and should treat them with as much as we care humans,” said Humane Society International - Farm Animals Asia Pacific Programme Manager Robert Lucius.

The speakers went on to emphasise on the importance of using the modern technology to not destroy the present environment but in its best interest. In addition it was also stressed that there should be no room for error when it comes to the protection of environment.

Furthermore he stated that people need an attitudinal change. He explained that instilling and promoting sustainable methods of living and toxin-free agriculture concepts would help to create the required outcome of a healthy eco-system. Ven Rathana also initiated the Bill through a private member Bill in Parliament in 2009. The symposium was also an important event for SLYCAN Trust as it was instrumental in providing more perspective towards its recently initiated Meatless Monday campaign.

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The speakers at the event focused primarily on “Buddhism and environmental protection”, the teachings of Lord Buddha and his environmentally friendly lifestyle.

## Global Youth Forum on Climate Change

Climate change is one of the key issues that the world is facing today. It does not spare anyone across the globe and increases the vulnerabilities of those who are already marginalised and discriminated due to other social and economic issues. In order to address adverse impacts of climate change, we need leadership and champions. And youth play a key role in creating change, and could be among those who play the roles as champions of change to come up through changes in lifestyles and innovative thinking. Global Youth Forum on Climate Change is organised as part of the Sri Lanka Next Conference organised by the Government of Sri Lanka, in Colombo from the October 17-19, 2016. The event, first of its kind will consist of research symposiums, exhibitions, and discussions on climate change which will discuss how to address its impacts at the national and the international level.

The youth forum to be held on October 18, 2016 and will focus on creating awareness on the different impacts of climate change at the national and international levels, discuss the role of youth in finding solutions to climate change and taking climate actions. Participants will gain the opportunity to interact with experts in the field of climate change, meet likeminded youth who share their interests and work on developing projects together, which could be implemented to address climate change, to mitigate and to adapt to its impacts.

If you would like to contribute, volunteer or speak to us, contact us:

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