



## *Sri Lanka Civil Society Statement*

**RIO+ 20**

*United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development*

*June 2012*



*Based on the civil society dialogue held on 17,18 May 2012, in Negombo Sri Lanka*



“Civil society should be able to engage in decision making beyond just voting.

Free and fair election is just part of the democracy. Meanwhile independence in Judiciary is important. Right to organize and right to oppose is a civil society right too. It is not enough to oppose via political parties. Civil society should be able to question the development paradigm of the regime and even request budget allocation based on public requirements. Access to such information is a undeniable while civil society should feel zero corruption”.

*Dharmasiri Lankapaeli, Journalist,*

## Preamble

All the nations once again will meet in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 to discuss the future of the world and the very survival of the humankind. However, in general no nation has a success story to share other than so called growth and increase of per capita income which is based on the over exploitation of the natural resources.

Most of the agreements made during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in 1992 in the city of Rio were not successfully implemented during the past two decades. As a result world is facing a bigger environmental crisis, economic crisis and a social crisis which represent the three fillers of the sustainable development. Today we are facing a Water crisis, climate crisis, food crisis, and energy crisis that lead to the social crisis appears as the civil wars in many parts of the world. There are many other wars due to the intervention of the rich nations in order to looting oil and mineral resources owned by the poorer nations.

At the International level, we see the failure to reach targets agreed upon is the main issue. This is mainly because in conventional geopolitical games of rich and bigger countries, they are not willing to address the root causes i.e. over consumption instead the rich nations engage in deception and trickery of poor countries. Despite the rhetoric, the bottom-line is refusal to change lifestyles and levels of consumption by the rich countries. As we have learned the political leadership is not ready to tell their people that they must change and cut down resources consumption, due to the fear of losing power. Meanwhile we cannot forget that most rich countries have unfulfilled pledges regarding development aid, which is blocking the poorer countries addressing their poverty issues.

Growing disputes among the religious groups are aggravating in the world. Disregard of religious teachings and the lack of involvement of the Religious leaders in managing the world especially promoting sustainable development and peace building is a lost opportunity.

“Religious leaders are playing a very important role in peace building, natural resources management and awareness building. Rio + 20 must bring religious leaders for decision-making.”

*Ven Madampagama  
Assaji Thero*



“According to the unrecorded estimate around 100,000 people in the North central province are suffering from a unidentified Chronic Kidney disease unidentified etiology (CKDU). While more than 20,000 have died in the recent years about 22000 are in the death row.” Unless we pay proper attention there will be zero population in the agriculture areas in the Dry Zone.

### *A farmer leader*

Current social political situation is Sri Lanka was evolved through a 300 year colonization. Although the current state has some problems it has been developed as part of the independent struggle against the British colonial regime. Somehow there was no harmonization in the Sri Lankan society due to the religious, language, class and cast barriers. Hartal in 1953, language struggle in 1958, 1971 youth up rise, 1983 black July, 1988-89 second youth up rise are unforgettable. When talking on sustainable development we cannot forget that Sri Lanka was the centre for a civil conflict over three decades. While this war affected millions of lives across the nation, we have lost over estimated 80,000 – 100,000 people in Sri Lanka mostly from the North and Eastern and adjoining provinces. Over 300,000 people were displaced. There is no assessment to the environmental and social cost of this civil conflict.

According to the Statistics Sri Lanka is a low Middle-income country. However, poverty is still a big issue and about 23% of the population lives below the 1.25 USD poverty line. Growing disparity among the Sri Lankan society is visible while it is slowly moving towards a middle-income country.

We need to pose the question of whether we have a democratic economic status as the income disparity is so high; lowest income 10% get only 2% from the national economy, while highest 10% get 38% of the national economy. Lack of inclusiveness of the poor, youth and women in the development is a growing injustice in the society.

Sri Lanka is one of the South Asian Country to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) such as water, sanitation, and in the education sectors. Thanks to the socialistic policies of the regimes ruled since the independence, Sri Lankans still enjoy free education and free health. However, the open economic policies adopted by the Government of Sri Lanka in 1977 lead to the social hardships and social disparity and exclusion.

Business sector also face many problems these days especially the small businesses. All businesses the baseline is profits. But we should consider less profits in a sustainable world. ”

*Nelson Nagasinghe,  
Businessman*



“ There should be a space for dissent in our society. We need to raise the question whether we have this space in our society. Right to freedom of expression, right to organize are our fundamental rights which ensured by the constitution. Do we exercise those rights in our society today?

*Fr. Sarath Iddamalgoda*

Further, it appears that as access to natural resources and loosing rights of the local communities through land grabbing, privatization, and lack of governance, corruption are far reaching its limits. Also the democracy and the rule of law in the country is terribly violated within past three decades. This includes the minority rights and the freedom of expressions.

Mishandling of waste and dumping of toxic substances to the natural environment is an unnoticed disaster In Sri Lanka. Fish in the Negombo lagoon Chilaw lagoon and Weras Ganga has slowly becoming uneatable due to heavy pollution. As in the other parts of the world Sri Lankan soil becoming unsuitable for agriculture due to large dumping of toxic pesticide and fertilizer in the past six decades. Now people are suffering from unidentified diseases such as Chronic Kidney Disease in the North –Central, some parts of the Eastern province and growing number cancers patients across the country.

Meantime the attempt to collect e-waste is not yet successful. Instead of introducing the extended producer responsibility Government imposed a conservation levy to raise funds to manage e-waste. This was abandoned later due to management problems. The policy drafted was not yet finalized. It is essential that Sri Lanka produce a proper e-waste disposal mechanism in order to prevent low quality items entering Sri Lanka and introduce Extended Producer Responsibility to manage own waste at the end of the life cycle. There is very little attention to the toxics in consumer items especially foods, cosmetics , decorative paint etc.

Sri Lanka was home to 3000 rice varieties and 300 varieties of banana. This shows the rich biodiversity and agriculture in Sri Lanka. The green revolution brought by the multinational agro-chemical companies destroyed this rich culture. The destruction of the ancient cascade tank system and introduction of new irrigation system is somewhat responsible for the environmental problems in the dry zone. In Sri Lanka most dry zone farmers are depending on subsistence farming practices. Farmers in the colonies play a major role in providing food to the nation. However, due to the extensive use of toxic chemicals, most farmers in the Dry zone are now suffering

“We also call to protect small scale fishermen and traditional fisher folk. Destructive fishing practices are one of the main threat to livelihood of the fishermen. Law enforcement and take legal action is one of main responsibility of the law enforcement authorities.

*Loyal Peiris- Fisherman  
Leader, Puttlam District  
Fisheries Solidarity*

“I am a farmer from a farming colonies in the North Central province of Sri Lanka. In our agrochemical based agriculture First we killed soil, then killed animals and insects and then killed plants. Now we are dying due to Kidney disease and cancer.”

*Kavudulle Jayatissa, A farmer leader*

from various diseases and it is evident that soon small-scale farmers cannot play the traditional role of food supply to the country.

The development projects such as Colombo – Matara highway destroyed 5000 land plots and over 3500 houses, which their home garden plays the role of sustainable life. The traditional home garden and the paddy field is the basis for sustainable life in Sri Lanka. Most new development project are based on false Environmental Impacts Assessments and wrong feasibility studies. Uma Oya diversion is one such recent example.

Disregard of the EIA law will lead to destruction of sustainable living. We cannot forget the environmental cost of these projects. The development project such as Mahaweli river project, Pelwatta Sugar plantation has created a Human elephant conflict which kills more than 250 people and kills 200 elephant lives annually.

Destruction of archeological sites has become a big problem in the recent months. 92 such places have been destroyed only during the first 6th month in 2012. 220 in 2011 and 295 in 2010, 235 in 2009 have destroyed respectively. They have used high tech laser beam to find the treasures. It is unfortunate an ancient country like Sri Lanka destroy its own heritage for this short term benefits.

Sri Lanka has a rich traditional medical treatment methods. This plays the role of sustainable medicine without depending on the multinational pharmaceutical companies. Meanwhile our traditional food culture is the basis for healthy life. Disregard of the traditional food culture and the healing methods is a major problem. Although the minimum calorie requirement is 2030 a day people below the poverty line receive on 1696 calories a day. This situation is more harmful for the pregnant women and the children.

Although Sri Lanka can be sustainable with cow milk, we only produce 8000 Metric tons of milk in Sri Lanka. The annual estimated milk requirements is around 64,000 metric tons. Sri Lanka spent 15 billion Rupees for this alone.

Women populations in Sri Lanka are more than men. They play a great role in traditional agriculture, fishing and other forms of traditional livelihood. This is the main reason for sustainable nature of the Sri Lankan rural society. However, due to the natural resources crisis they are loosing

“Women play a very important role in traditional fishing and agriculture by making seeds, post harvesting. When people converted to make profits they become laborers. 38% anemia among women in Sri Lanka. 89,000 women become widows in North and East provinces. Women live in the militarization zone in the NE is an added problem for women”

*Padma Pushpakanthi-Savistri*



“Youth is a very potential group for making world a better place. However all leaders abuse this power We ask you to stop using youth for vested interest. We need mechanism to change how youth are thinking, to love nature and love earth. Religious values, social, mentally positive.”

*Jayalath, YMCA*

this role and the income generated. The younger women find jobs in garment industry and other industries for a nominal salary but with many hardships.

We recognize the role of overseas Sri Lankan workers in income generation. They have brought 5.1 USD billion in 2011 and this represent a major portion of the foreign income. However, they are suffering from violence in some countries and also their life at home are not always happy. While some has family disputes the children suffer from various social violence.

“Although we are still poor rice farmers in the past 4 decades, some middle men became billionaires from the rice industry.” This is the fate of 80 lacks traditional farmers as there is no program to protect them.

*A Farmer from Ampara district*

The civil conflict in the last three decades women in the North and East suffered from many violence and many of the women in both Sinhala and Tamil communities become widows. Growing insecurity to the women in the society, in the work place is a serious social problem in Sri Lanka and every part of the world.

Meanwhile the youth also has no place in decision-making. There are lack opportunities for the youth to engage in sustainable development, continuing traditional living path and role models to develop sustainable living. Instead of providing youth a better political environment and thinking most leaders abuse them for short-term benefits.

Sadly children suffer from the cruel society and violence against children. From 2007-2010 about 15158 cases have been recorded. These include rapes and other types of violence.

The above gives little understanding to the current crisis in the society, economy and in the environment. In both national and global level, today we are determined to ensure fulfilment of the rights of all peoples, to have access to water, food, energy, shelter, land, seeds, territories, and decent livelihoods.

In broad each creature on the planet call for the social and environmental justice against the commodification of life and nature by the elite and powerful because of politicization.

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in June 1992 in the Rio de Janeiro was at the peak of understanding

“Tourism expansion in Sri Lanka is detrimental to the Marine Protected Areas in Sri Lanka. We demand immediate stop of all such activities and ensure conservation of Marine protected Area as a feeding ground for ocean fish stocks and introduce eco-friendly tourism to benefit local communities”. A.

### *Pathmanathan- Fisheries Development Worker*

the world natural resources crisis and agreeing on solution to deal with them. Since then this global understanding was undermined and diverted towards, looting natural resources such as oil, timber, open sky, air and water resources.

Privatizing nature is the biggest sin in the current development model. The so called “green economy” model proposed by corporations and rich country for Rio+20 is about liberalizing market access to nature, generating new instruments of financial speculation, corporate control, and the external exploitation of territories. This is undoubtedly a green washing of corporate interests and a step backwards compared to the agreements made at the UN Conference on sustainable development in Rio 1992. At local and national level similar models, promoting privatization of profits and socialization of costs, cause environmental and social conflicts.

Sri Lanka is not a rich developed country. However, Sri Lanka is past moving towards the destructive track with its untamed and greedy development model. Although Sri Lanka has achieved some success as agreed in the Plan of Action in World Summit on Sustainable development which is also known as Rio + 10 and great successes in achieving selected non income MDG goals the total path is very unsustainable. Sri Lanka is past destroying its sustainable livelihood, which is the main root of sustainability in the past. It is past destroying water, food, land and energy nexus.

The world needs to move towards a simultaneous action at local, national regional and international level to confront the social, economic and ecological crisis which the present development model has caused. What we need instead is to defend our commons and total transformation towards sustainable consumption and production patterns. The greedy green economy is not a path for a solution towards this.

Reaching sustainable development at the global level is a myth. However, it is possible to reach sustainability within the communities and by nations those countries are rich of basic resources. It is important to understand what should and can poor countries do at their level. It is impossible to make a change towards sustainable development without mobilizing mass movement. It should include consciousness raising.

Lack of Environmental law enforcement is very visible in Sri Lanka. Most development project does not follow the environmental legislations. Politicization of development projects instead making development plans based on the needs and sustainability of the country is putting the country environmental and development at risk.

*Sajeewa Chamikara,  
Environmentalist*



“Women right should not in comparison with man. We have to respect to the Convention on all form of discrimination against women, In Sri Lanka, Minister on women is not in the cabinet committee. How to react when a disaster happen. There is no voting rights for overseas workers. No action on rural women rights. Need to separate child development and women capacitating.”

*Rohini Weerasinghe-Kantha Shakthi*

## Statement

In this context we the civil society organization in Sri Lanka join hands with the global civil society movement to demand all the government leaders, UN bodies, and the other international actors:

to stop the war against humankind and over the looting natural resources and demand to ensure human rights and sustainable peace within the country and globally;

to ensure all the resources utilization to prioritize those who depend on their livelihood;

to respect to the mother earth and stop all destructive development activities to the nature and its ecosystems and protect the right of the nature and its landscapes;

to fulfil at least the minimum obligations agreed at UN bodies by the Governments and to ensure equal rights of the people in every corner of the world by assuring basic needs of the people ;

to ensure women ,Youth, children and, indigenous people's rights in development decision making and ensure good governance;

to give due respect to the minority groups and ensure equality in access, manage and usage to resources;

consider women as a major actor for the sustainable development paradigm and ensure their active participation in planning- implementation and monitoring.

to ensure people's right to enjoy healthy living and sustainable green livelihoods. Green livelihoods encompass the right to safe and secure communities and workplaces and assuring the sustainable future what we want for the world and our children;

to respect to the inter generational equity and the protection of all children's right to a safe environment, recognising their unique vulnerability to the toxic environment;

to call for the fundamental changes in the unsustainable patterns of consumption, production, resource extraction and disposal that dominate the world economic system.

“In an increasingly interdependent world, most of us, however humble, be forced to ‘outsource’ certain jobs.” (such as being served at a roadside grocery store or vegetable market) Think of how we can, within the given constraints, improve the quality of the job of the person serving you, by being kind and courteous. This will be a small contribution to ‘creating decent jobs’”

*Prof H. Sriyananda*

We stress that peoples’ right to green livelihood and a sustainable future are being affected by over depending on synthetic toxic chemicals in the workplace, schools, agricultural areas and in the home, and that this may cause serious and irreversible damage such as cancer, birth defects;

We further call to stop all kind of corporate control, capture and monopolisation of the natural resources;

World is far behind responding to the climate crisis and therefore it is leading to a catastrophe. Market is not the solution for climate crisis. We reject all market mechanisms comes as a solution including REDD mechanisms. We reject any form of privatization of air, sea or space as climate solution.

Recognizing that the natural resources in Sri Lanka and worldwide are in a great crisis. It is widely understand that Natural resources is one of the limit to the growth. The dominating development paradigm in the world is not sustainable.

In this respect we call to keep water in public hands and stop all activities towards privatization and commodification of water and respect water as a human right as agreed by the United Nations.

We demand that all democratic regimes should be accountable to the citizens and every major development and political decision should based on the majority thinking;

We call the Government of Sri Lanka to assess the environmental disaster in the North and east and other parts of the country and stop all forms of land grabbing in the name of development and ensure democratic decision making and Rule of Law;

We further call the media Freedom, Right to freedom of expression, Right to dissent as in Agenda 21 & Article 14. We stress the need to re-establish the independent commissions such as Police, Judiciary, public, bribery and corruption, as stipulated in the 17th amendment of the Sri Lankan constitution;

Also call to remove oppressive legislations such as prevention of terrorism act[PTA], public security act etc or bring under the international standard to ensure public security;



“There should be a strong collaboration between the people who struggle against exploitation of peoples wealth, nature and the natural capital. To bring people in to this struggle we need to have a democratic space.”

*Sudarshana Gunawardene, Rights Now,*

We stress that the space for CSOs and recognition of their role in development is vital. Right to Information, and the CSO engagements in the policy formulations is vital;

Land and specially forestland and wetlands are becoming a scarce resource. We call no further destruction of Forest land or wetlands including paddy lands. We demand no further land quality deterioration including use of agrochemicals and reject all forms of land grabbing. Considering the threats to the land we call the Government of Sri Lanka to produce a land reform and agriculture policy.

We are aware that oceans have become the dumping grounds due to toxic, garbage and nuclear release and oil exploration. We demand to stop all types of destructive fishing methods, destruction of coral reefs, sand dunes, mangroves, wetlands and coastal ecosystems . We call for recognition of fishers rights and customary rights and follow the ILO rule 169 which is to ensure Free and prior informed consent.

We also believe that the implementation of Biodiversity convention is far behind. We demand implementation of the convention to ensure the benefits to the local communities and the country.

Tourism expansion in Sri Lanka is detrimental to the Marine Protected Areas in Sri Lanka. We demand immediate stop of all such activities and ensure conservation of Marine protected Area as a feeding ground for ocean fish stocks and introduce eco-friendly tourism to benefit local communities.

Recognizing that most people are depending on agriculture, livestock development and fishing. These Livelihood sectors must be safeguards to avoid any devastation of the human civilization especially in sensitive ecosystems.



“ Only if mothers who heads the families and their children have sustainable living and if the women in coastal areas do not fear of the displacements due to tourism project, if the women in agriculture communities could send their children to school without getting any loans, if the women in the shanties and slums do not fear of eviction, if the women in the plantations feeds their children without putting their life in chronic malnutrition and anemia, we can say this development is sustainable. Are we really moving towards sustainable development? We as civil society should find answers. We need actions based on a vision for the sustainable development.”

### *Geetha Lakmini-National Fisheries Solidarity Movement*

Small Food Producers still plays a main role in ensuring Food Security. However, current market capture of food production is the main reason for the food crisis. Therefore we demand protection of small producers and small enterprises from large corporations.

Ninety percent of farms nationwide are less than one hectare, and dominate agriculture in the country employing up to 6.5 million people. The importance of small scale agriculture is multi-functional, it accounts for the majority of rural employment and food production as a developing country. Small scale agriculture is a key to preserving natural resources and biological and cultural diversity in this era of hegemonization encouraged by multi- nationals.

Small farming is the backbone of agriculture and food security, not only in the developing world but also in several industrialized countries in Asia and Europe. It not only feeds families, but also generates jobs and is a key in the growth of rural businesses, particularly in the sector of micro and small enterprises.

In addition organic farming plays an important part in our fight against climate change and an important avenue in our road towards a 'green economy.' This is due to the fact that in contrast to conventional systems that depend greatly on external inputs, like synthetic fertilizer, pesticides and weedicides, which are increasingly becoming expensive, harm the environment and are increasingly being controlled by a handful of corporations, organic farming systems are also more resilient.

It is important to have a soil fertility to have a healthy society. We call for a organics agriculture which cow and other animals play a major role. We believed it is important to recognize the organic agriculture and should propose methods how such farming systems can be popularized among farmers of our country.

We call to protect the small scale business sector to give a better price for agricultural products. Instead of big companies, adequate land should be given to the small scale farmers.

We also call to protect small scale fishermen and traditional fisher folk. Meanwhile, better coordination and promotion of inland fishery and protect inland fishermen is important. We also demand to stop entering Genetically Modified Foods, seeds, terminator seeds and hybrid seeds to the farm lands.



We call to protect the farmers suffering from various diseases due to the wrong agriculture policy and change the agriculture and veterinary services of the respective government agencies which are inactive at the moment. We also call to establish a paddy farming not based agri-industry or agri-business but agri-culture.

There should be a small industry promotion in order to produce local goods rather than producing goods through a big corporations. Promotion of Local production stop Unfair competition and small industries, Fair trade and protection of producers application of FPIC in Sri Lanka development process, [ILO 169 and Indigenous people's charter]

Estate sector is long suffering from Malnutrition. The salaries are not adequate for them. They cannot love the soil when there is no ownership. Without land rights there is no dignity for them. Therefore we call to provide land rights for them.

Promote health and sanitation in the estate workers especially for women and children. We also call to provide equal rights to estate workers and there children in education , Jobs, infrastructure facilities.

Respect to the rights of the working class to make in work related demands through strikes and no judicial actions should be taken. Also Proper wages policy for all is important.

Occupational health is a neglected subject in the estate and industrial sectors. Many workers are suffering from occupations health risks. It is important to establish and enforce occupational health and safety regulations. We also demand to make regulations to establish ILO agreed labour conventions.

The development have neglected the environment in general in Sri Lanka. No country or a nation will survive without proper environmental safeguards. The best safeguard is the proper environmental law enforcement.

“ Right to health should be recognized as a fundamental right of the people. It should be included in to Sri Lankan constitution. There should be a political dialogue among people on this matter. There should be involvement of the trade unions to change the health policies in the country.”

*Sirimal Peiris-People's Health Assembly*



Therefore:

We demand Proper environmental law enforcement and respect to the EIA process. We also demand truly independent EIAs and feasibility studies and analyse the true environmental cost for development projects so that the development will be sustainable.

We also call to respect to the international environmental conventions agreed and ratifies. We also demand to implement the Basel Convention and other similar conventions which Sri Lanka is signatory.

There is very little done on the Strategic Approach to International Chemical management (SAICM) in Sri Lanka. This is one of the outcome of the Rio + 10 (WSSD) held in 2002. We call better chemical management through all stakeholder support.

We stress the need of using precautionary approach towards entering products, material and drugs developed through Nano technology to the country.

Media freedom is a must for sustainable development. Currently most media only report political statements rather than giving better thinking towards a sustainable nation and a country. Therefore we call to protect media freedom and use media for promoting sustainable development.

We also demand to establish laws to protect children from socially destructive programmes and bring the legal control to the culturally sensitive advertisement.

Energy sovereignty is very important for a sustainable country. We recognize that the Sri Lankan transport and energy sectors are not sustainable. Both these sectors depend on the imported oil and coal. Sri Lanka need to move towards a green transport and energy systems while maintaining the energy security. We also recognize the high transport cost is directly affecting the food cost.

We also call the governments to give priority to the local energy sources and pro actively promote renewable energy sources such as wind and solar.

Therefore we call for a green transport system based on trains. We call for a cycling friendly roads and promote cycling in the cities.

Sri Lankan Health sector is deteriorating fast. Health is linked with food security and use of chemicals etc. We call for proper and free health service. We stress the need for a people friendly health policy, health education and upheld WHO to improve the health service in the world. We demand that Sri Lanka Constitution should add right to health as one of the fundamental right.

We call for proper acceptance for the local medical practices and conservation of them. We call the government to encourage and maintain the traditional

“Unless we stop Malaysian seeds coming to the country, we will destroy all our traditional seeds soon. The seed and agro chemical companies are a serious threat to the sustainable development”.

***Abdul Razaak-All  
Lanka Peasant Front***

food culture which build the immunity to the illnesses. Include education on traditional medical treatment and pass traditional knowledge to next generation.

Sanitation is linked to the health of the human and the environment. Lack of proper public toilets, open defecation and sanitation education and lack of occupational health need urgent attention. Millions of school children suffer from lack of clean toilets in the school. We call all the relevant authorities to provide such infrastructure for a healthy and sustainable society.

There should be a people centred health policy adopted by the government. In this the major emphasis should be on Senaka Bibile's drug policy. This will help to limit the number of drugs available in the market and to provide drugs in a reasonable price.

Gender integration to the sustainable development is very important. We call to secure women's greater access and control over assets, land tenure, inputs and natural resources including traditional common lands in this regard.

Promote women access to services and technologies needed for water ,energy, agricultural production, family care, household management and business enterprises. We call to provide comprehensive social protection and provide safe health care facilities including sexual and reproductive health.

We further call more space and the infrastructure for economic, social ,and the political empowerment for women. We stress the at least 40 percent women should be target to the active politics and the decision making stages to encourage them.

Strengthen Women's movement, self help groups is vital. We call to establish entrepreneurs and networks towards for sustainable development and encourage women contribution in national economy.

Ensure the assistance for the women headed families who lost the bread winners in the families due to war, tsunami and the other disasters Sri Lankan women faced during the few decades in the past.

We call for legislations, rules and regulations to ensure the voting rights of the migratory women who contribute major portion to the national economy through their earnings in foreign countries.



“There is no doubt that future generations will blame the current world leaders for their failure to save the world. Rich nations use all forms of threats to scare the resourceful countries in the developing world. Their corporations then come and suck all the natural resources to satisfy their overconsumption. Unless smaller countries united, the world will be a more dangerous place due to fighting over the basic needs such as water and food.”

**Hemantha Withanage,  
Environmental  
Scientist**

Protection of women from domestic violence and violence against women is a prime concern. This should be ensured with careful interventions in the society.

We stress the need to implement all CEDAW agreements which are relevant to economic and social empowerment of the peasant women. In this regards we call to resettle all the women in the IDP camps early.

We further call to establish a National Commission on Women, proposed and draft prepared by the Ministry of Women and Child Development which was rejected by the cabinet.

We are highly concerned that youth has no status in decision-making. Therefore we call for the freedom to have own religious, cultural and political thinking for the youth.

We also call to incorporate teaching on sustainable development to the formal and informal education for youth to aware how they can play a role in sustainable development and enjoy sustainable living.

We stress that education curricula should promote attitudinal changes rather than developing a child to sit for the examinations. Educational rights should be established and protected.

Both women and youth should be included in development in all levels so that the nation can ensure inclusive growth and sustainable living. Promotion of sustainable living is the only way forward in the resource stress environment.

Better governance is a must for a sustainable society. Better environmental governance and environmental justice should be assured for sustainable living.



## Conclusion

Sri Lanka still has the potential to convert to a sustainable country if it apart from the current growth based development model and follow the middle path in development as we proposed in 2002 for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). It is important to respect to the basic rights while ensure environmental safeguards and maintain a slow growth.

There is no doubt that current consumption pattern in the world leads to a insecure world jeopardizing the world peace, nature and very survival of the human kind. While we recognize that 2012 is already late for diverting world for a better place, any rhetoric in Rio + 20 will certainly destroy the world. We urge all the world leaders to make this gathering more serious and build a world respecting to the intergenerational equity and very survival of the people of the world.

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### **Organizations Endorsed and Participated to the Civil Society Dialogue on Rio+20**

National Fisheries Solidarity Movement (NAFSO), Negombo

Centre for Environmental Justice/ Friends of the Earth Sri Lanka, Colombo 08

Sri Lanka Nature Group, Nugegoda.

Environment Conservation Trust, Nugegoda.

Praja Abhilasa Network, Negombo

Puttlam District Fisheries Solidarity, Thoduwawa,

Sri Vimukthi Fisher Women Organization, Negombo

Praja Shakthi Development Foundation, Karuwalagaswewa

APEDCO Development Foundation, Thalavakele,

Savistri Women Development Organization, Rajagiriya,

Kantha Shakthi Foundation, Navala, Nugegoda.

United Fishers and Fish Workers Congress, Ratmalana,

Small Holder Milk Farmers Organization, Madampe.

Kalpitiya/ Dutch bay Islands Protection organization, Kalpitiya,  
All Lanka Peasant Front, Kurunegala.  
Law and Society Trust, Colombo.  
Trincomalee District Fisheries Solidarity, Pumphuhar, Trincomalee.  
Mannar district fisheries solidarity, Musoli, Mannar,  
Rural Workers Society, Urumpirai, Jaffna,  
Batticaloa district fisheries solidarity, Batticaloa.  
District fisheries solidarity, Addalachenai, Akkaraipattu.  
Meepura News Paper, Negombo.  
Center for People's Dialogue, Negombo.  
Young Zoologists association, Colombo.  
Institute of Community Health Care, Hanvella.  
Southern Fisheries Organization, Dondra, Matara,  
Miridiya Organization, Polonnaruwa.  
Peasants-Farmers-Fisheries Front, Hingurakgoda,  
Media Workers trade union federation, Colombo.  
United Federation of Labour, Colombo,  
Rights Now Collective, Navala, Nugegoda.  
Sri Lanka Bio Energy association, Colombo.  
Organization of Buddhist Monks for protection of National resources, Colombo.  
Future in our Hands Development Fund, [FIOH], Kanupalella, Badulla.  
Uva farmers collective of poison free agriculture (UFCPFA), Kanupelella, Badulla.  
Inform Human Rights Documentation Centre, Sri Lanka.  
Movement for National Land and Agriculture Reform, Malabe

Sugodini Foundation – Colombo

Environment Forum – Balangoda

Green Citizen Foundation – Nugegoda

MAS Foundation – Ragala

LOAM – Nugegoda

True Nature Conservation – Boralasgamuwa

Biodiversity Task Force

REDA - Maharagama

Janashra Foundation – Galle

Sri Rohana Environment Conservation Society

SCGD – DEHIWALA

Green Creation House – Nugegoda

Jana Sarasaviya (People’s University) – MAHARAGAMA

Participatory Development Foundation – Madawachchiya

Clergy Front for Protection of National Resources – Grandpas

National Environment Congress – Colombo 14

Small Tea Farmers Development Foundation – Elpitiya

Vikalpanee women Network

Dutugamunu Environment Friendly Farmers’ Society - Seruwawila







*Sri Lanka Civil Society Dialogue on Rio+ 20*

