ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

FEDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
SRI LANKA

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VISION & MISSION

Vision

To spearhead the protection of Sri Lanka's environment as an active member of the conservation community.

Mission

- To effectively share knowledge and expertise to support environmental protection and sustainability.
- To connect different interest groups to consistently organize, mobilize, educate and campaign against environmental destruction
- To promote awareness and projects that are vital for the sustainability of the country's environment.
- To Influence environmental policy through the conducting of research and knowledge enhancement.

CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

Covid lockdowns, curfews, several crises – political, economic and fuel – this past year have been unprecedented, not just for FEO, but also for the Nation. However, despite it hampering much of our work, an astonishing number of objectives were achieved too:

It was a record-breaking year in terms of funds received and work carried out.

FEO extended its presence and influence in eight (8) districts by successfully carrying out training for 108 CBOs/CSOs, on a wide range of topics. The objectives were to build NGO/CBO/CSO capacities to manage environmental issues in which they have a stake:

- By reaching out to relevant Government and other support institutions for redress.
- By bringing in projects to solve local environmental issues, and
- By actively participating in managing their own environments.

FEO currently works with CBOs and CSOs in the Monaragala, Matara, Hambantota, Knuckles, Colombo, Mannar, Puttalam and Nuwara Eliya Districts. FEO has also extensively collaborated with local area Divisional Secretariats and other NGOs, most prominently the Centre for Environmental Justice (CEJ), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Marine Environment Protection Authority (MEPA) and the Central Environmental Authority, to bring these programmes to light.

We have also relied on the wealth of experience of the Board of Trustees in building up the curriculum best suited for the identified needs of the CBO forum.

Details of the programme and curriculum developed by FEO are found in the next section of the Annual Report.

Conservation should not be restricted to work within National Parks and other protected areas only, but should also involve the surrounding communities. This year, we have focused on the Lunugamvehera area, due to our work on Habitat Management within the Park. We have employed approximately 60 community members in the removal of invasive plants. We have also carried out Livelihood Development Projects in the communities to which they belong. In addition, we have set up two (2) CBOs, under the FEO aegis, and hope to set up a few more within the next year.

Our youth leadership initiative 'ENVFORCE' has also taken off and several schools in Colombo and in Lunugamvehera are engaging in our programmes.

The development of the FEO Online Platform – Mihidora has been progressing steadily. The first half of the year was spent developing the wire frame design and high-resolution visual guides for the front end of the platform. Ecotechnology was contracted to develop the site and commenced work in June 2022 with Lanka Software Foundation continuing to provide oversight in an advisory capacity to FEO. The overall delivery of the platform is targeted for completion by end 2022. Ecotechnology will be engaged for an additional 12 months for maintenance and troubleshooting the site.

The flagship activity under this objective is the development of a powerful online platform to achieve economies of scale through the use of technology to share knowledge, skills and resources that a smaller CSO/NGO could afford nor have the capacity to develop on their own.

CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

Twenty-five organisations have been shortlisted from across the country to run a pilot introductory workshop to familiarise and on-board them on to the platform. This will allow FEO to test the platform prior to an official launch of the site which is targeted for the first quarter of 2023.

None of this would have been possible if not for the generosity of our donors - individuals whose contributions helped during the hard times and the corporate entities who subsequently added the financial muscle to our endeavours. Of these, we would like to particularly highlight the funding from the MAS Group of Companies and the Lacoste Foundation, which enabled the Lunugamvehera Habitat Management Project to be conducted across a large area of the National Park.

Our sincere gratitude to the Asia Foundation (TAF) for their strategic grant in support of most of our activities, and of the payment of staff salaries, during the past year. The term of this grant will conclude at the end of December 2022.

FEO's administrative and financial procedures and controls were also strengthened during this time:

- Financial and Procurement Policies were set in place.
- We migrated to a Quick Books Accounting Package which has greatly helped us to complete and analyze our accounts in a more orderly manner.
- FEO, in collaboration with TAF, conducted a full day Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) facilitated by a consultancy firm brought on board by them. This process has helped identify functional areas that require improvement and helped set priorities and future steps for improving them.

Though much has been achieved, there is so much more to be done. The environment and wildlife of Sri Lanka still face a multitude of threats – deforestation, loss of habitat, increase in poaching and, of course, global warming being in the forefront of these.

I would like to thank the great efforts of FEO's fully fledged Administrative Team led by the Coordinator, Mahesha, Programme Manager, Kanchana, Research Officers, Parami and Kithmee, Field Research Officerm Chryshane, Junior Research Officer, Natasha, and the Field Project Coordinator, Dhammika.

My deepest gratitude to all the Trustees too, who worked tirelessly in spite of the many obstacles and difficulties of this extraordinary year. I have every faith that FEO will enjoy an even more productive 2022/23.

It has been a great honour to serve as Chairperson for a second year. I shall be stepping down as Chair in 2023 and, as unanimously agreed by the Board of Trustees at its last meeting, Keith Wijesuriya, our Secretary, will assume the role of Chair. I wish him every success.

Dr. Yohan Weerasuriya

FEO TRUSTEES & TEAM

FEO BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dr Yohan Weerasuriya (Chairperson)
Keith Wijesuriya (Secretary)
Namal Kamalgoda (Treasurer)
Nishad Wijetunga
Ashani Basnayake
Lalith Dassenaike
Dr Anila Dias Bandaranaike
Tharuka Dissanaike
Prof Enoka Kudavidanage
Prof Devaka Weerakoon

FEO TEAM

Kanchana Perera Kern - Programme Manager
Mahesha Bandaranayake - Co-ordinator
Amila Dunuwille - Project Liaison
Parami Peiris - Research Officer
Kithmee Gunasekera - Research Officer
Chryshane Mendis - Field Research Officer (Projects)
Dhammika Gamage - Field Project Co-ordinator
Natasha Mamuhewa - Junior Research Officer

AUDITORS

Wijeyeratne & Company
No 15, Maitland Crescent, 7, Colombo

FEDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

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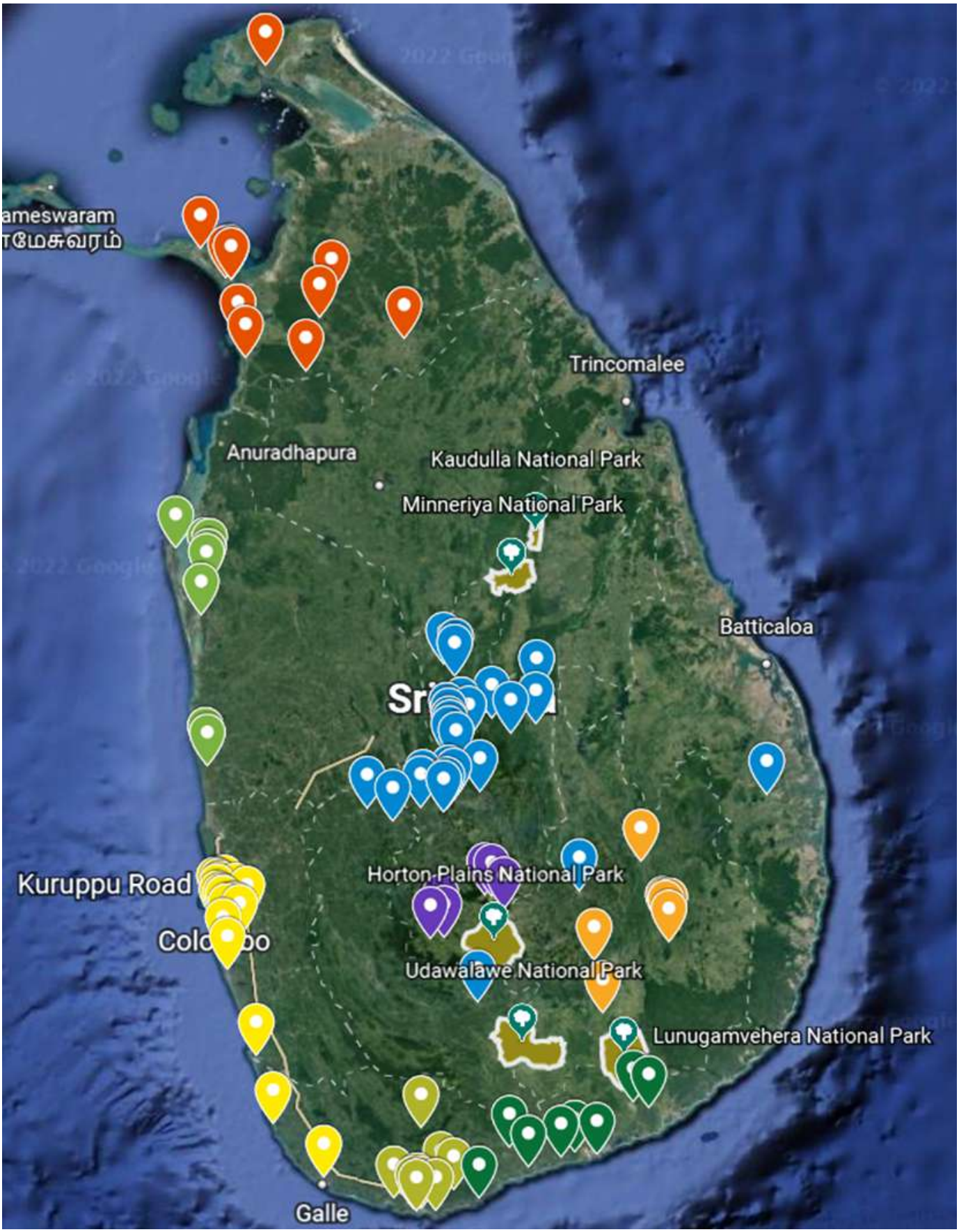
HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021



Above: Map showcasing overarching FEO presence

HABITAT RESTORATION & COVID-19 COMMUNITY RELIEF

A1. Minneriya and Kaudulla National Parks (NPs)

PERIOD
July 2020 – Ongoing (2022 – maintenance)

FUNDING PARTNERS
Private Individuals and Companies

COLLABORATIVE PARTNER/S
Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC)

BENEFICIARIES
Tourism Industry, Local Fishing Communities, Wildlife

TOTAL VALUE
LKR 3.1 Million (2020)

- An estimated 20% of the tank beds of the major reservoirs in the NPss had been taken over by the invasive alien species 'Agada' (*Xanthim indicum* – Common Cocklebur) which was rapidly spreading across their grasslands in June 2020.
- This extensive loss of grasslands from the Minneriya and Kaudulla tank beds posed a serious threat to the primary grazing grounds of the wild elephants that depended on them, and thereby threatened the famous Annual Elephant 'Gathering' for which these Parks have become globally renowned.
- A rapid response in preventing seed dispersal was critical in controlling the spread of any alien invasive species, and hence, urgent action was essential to reverse the process of the loss of grasslands at Minneriya and Kaudulla.
- In collaboration with the Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC), FEO cleared 265 hectares of invasive plants from the Minneriya NP, and 281 hectares from the Kaudulla NP.
- The primary cost was for labour, which was recruited from those who had lost their sources of income due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the resulting suspension of the tourism industry which was their mainstay. The balance costs were for the transport of workers to the clearing site, equipment costs and the tractor hire for the transport of the removed invasive species to the disposal site.
- This project also provided additional foraging area for wild elephants within the NPs, thereby reducing their necessity to migrate to other areas in search of food.
- Maintenance clearing is being carried out in August / September 2022 together with the DWC.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDGs)

One of the crews working on the invasive plant species removal at Minneriya National Park

Invasive alien species, 'Agada' covering grasslands

Grasslands before the clearing of invasive alien plants

Grasslands after the clearing of invasive alien plants

HABITAT RESTORATION & COVID-19 COMMUNITY RELIEF

A2. Lunugamvehera National Park

PERIOD
February 2021 - Ongoing

FUNDING PARTNERS
The Asia Foundation (TAF), MAS Group Companies, Private Individuals, Lacoste Foundation
Potential for Other Donors

COLLABORATIVE PARTNER/S
Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC)

BENEFICIARIES
Local Communities, Wildlife

TOTAL VALUE
LKR 49 Million

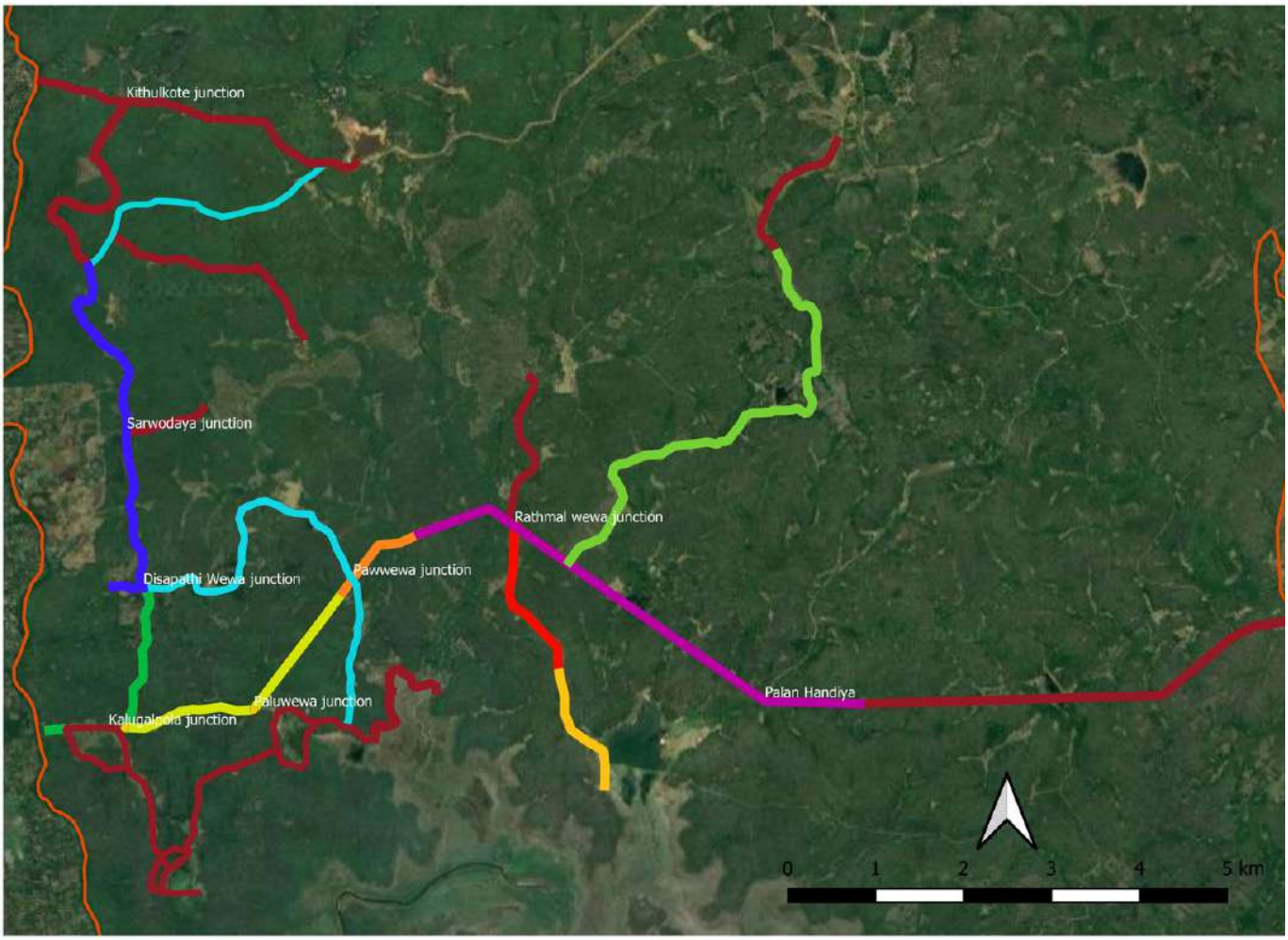
- The Lunugamvehera National Park (LNP) covers an area of approximately 23,500 hectares and functions as a Habitat Corridor between the Uda Walawe National Park to its west and the Yala National Park to its east.
- The natural habitat of the park is under threat from Invasive Alien Species (IAS) of flora which have taken over approximately 5-10% of the land area of the park. The main species identified are ***Lantana camara*** *(S. Gandapana)* and ***Eupatorium odoratum*** *(S. Podisinghomaran)*.
- FEO has targetted the clearing of 900 ha of these two IAS species by mid 2023; and has completed clearing of nearly 500 ha by August 2022.
- The extensive spread of invasive plants inhibits the growth of native plant species and thereby causes extensive loss of habitat and grazing grounds in the LNP, posing a serious threat to the elephants and other herbivore populations that are resident or visit the Park, and to their interconnected ecological food webs.
- A rapid response in preventing seed dispersal is critical in controlling the spread of any invasive alien species. Hence, urgent action has been taken to remove these plants prior to their seed generation, to facilitate the growth of native species.
- LNP is surrounded by communities whose livelihoods have been affected by the Covid-19 crisis. This Project has already made a positive impact by providing employment for around 60 villagers, giving them a steady source of income, undertaking the manual removal of the invasive plants.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDGs)

One of the crews working to clear the invasive alien plant species at Lunugamvehera National Park

Grasses regrown after the removal of invasive alien plant species at Lunugamvehera National Park

Elephants returned to cleared areas and removed invasive plants can be seen piled up



Lunugamvehera National Park

Donor Areas for clearing of IAS

Legend

- Donor 01 - 24 ha
- Donor 02 - 7.6 ha
- Donor 03 - 24 ha
- Donor 04 - 20 ha
- Donor 05 - 50 ha
- Donor 06 - 40 ha
- Donor 07 - 40 ha
- Donor 08 - 40 ha
- Donor 09 - 40 ha
- Donor 10 - 300 ha

HABITAT RESTORATION & COVID-19 COMMUNITY RELIEF

A3. UdaWalawe National Park

PERIOD
October 2022 - Ongoing

FUNDING PARTNERS
MAS Group Companies, Private Individuals
Potential for Other Donors

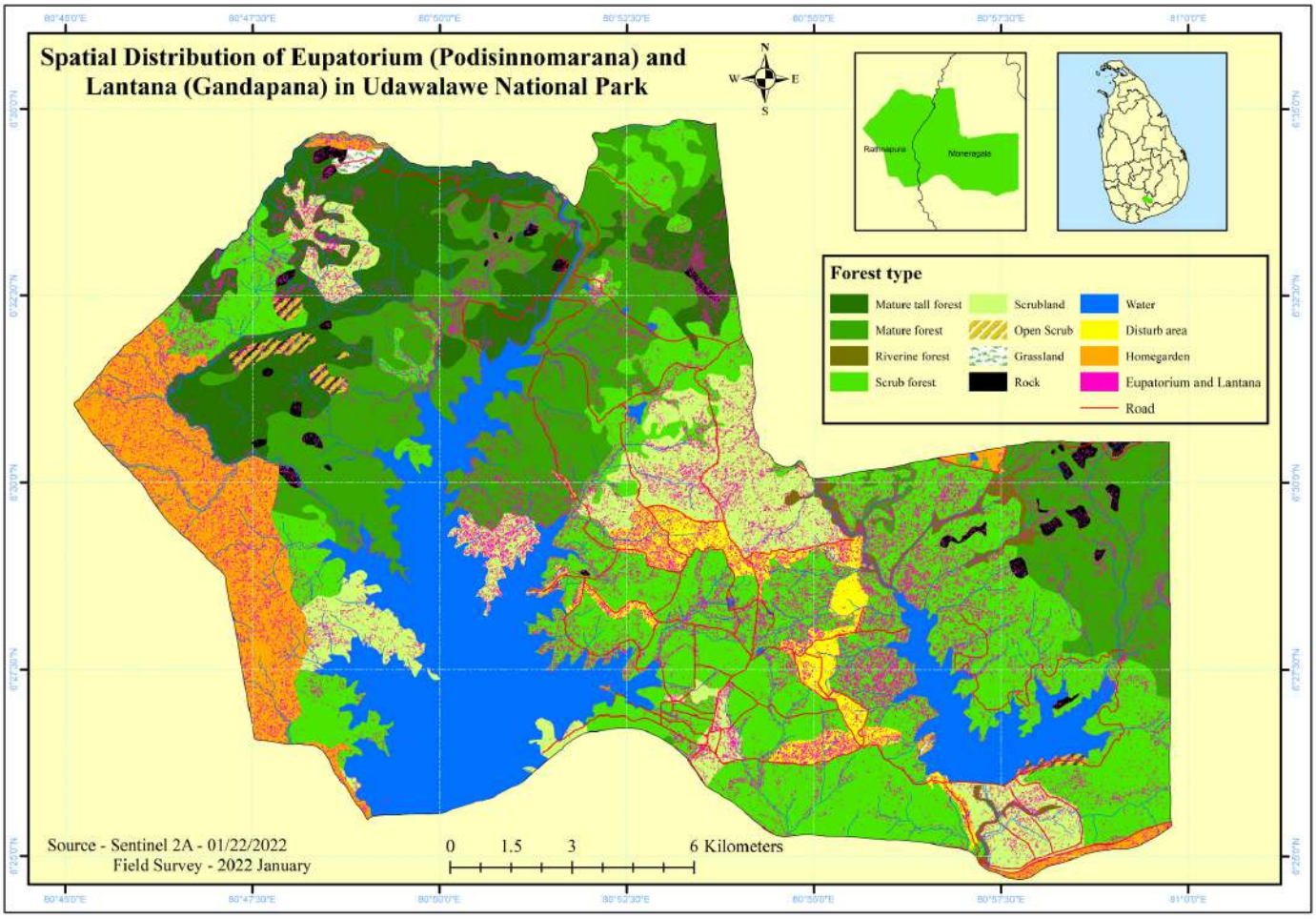
COLLABORATIVE PARTNER/S
Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC)

BENEFICIARIES
Local Communities, Wildlife

TOTAL VALUE
LKR 20 Million for Stage 1

- Udawalawe National Park (NP), established in 1972, consists of 31,067 hectares of land. It is an extremely important habitat for a range of flora and fauna, a popular tourist destination and the second most visited national park in Sri Lanka in 2018 (STLDA, 2018).
- The natural habitat of the park is under threat from Invasive Alien Species (IAS) of flora which have taken over a significant land area of the park. The main species identified are ***Lantana camara*** (S. Gandapana) and ***Eupatorium odoratum*** (S. Podisinghomaran).
- The grassland area has decreased by 59% in the park, suspected to be aided by the spread of invasives such as L. camara and E. odoratum within the park. Grasslands are extremely important for herbivores, in fact of the habitat types in Udawalawe NP, grasslands recorded the highest species richness for birds and mammals and a relatively high species richness for reptiles (DWC, 2008). This indicates that the observed decline in grassland as per the Perera et al., study will be detrimental to a range of other species besides the elephant.
- The initial stage of clearing will take place in an area of 300 Hectares. The primary cost is labour, by employing those who have lost their income sources due to the COVID-19 induced downturn in tourism, their transport to the clearing sites, equipment costs and supervision costs.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDGs)



*Above: Spatial distribution of **Eupatorium** (Podisinghomaran) and **Lantana** (Gandapana) within the national park as per FEO's preliminary analyses*

HABITAT RESTORATION & COVID-19 COMMUNITY RELIEF

A4. Horton Plains National Park

PERIOD
October 2022 - Ongoing

FUNDING PARTNERS
MAS Group Companies, Private Individuals
Potential for Other Donors

COLLABORATIVE PARTNER/S
Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC)

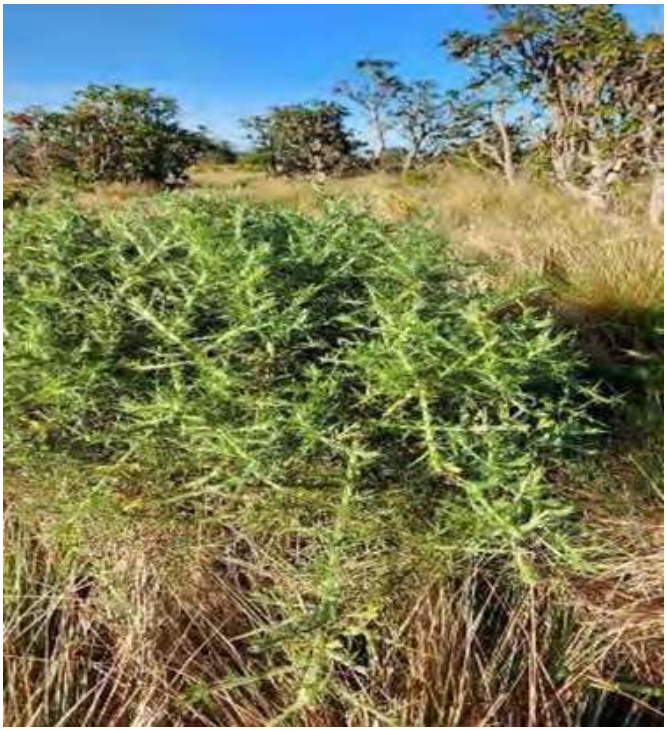
BENEFICIARIES
Local Communities, Wildlife

TOTAL VALUE
LKR 11.7 Million over 3 years

- Horton Plains, its forests and the adjoining Peak Wilderness constitute Sri Lanka's most important catchment area. Almost all major rivers of Sri Lanka, such as the Mahaweli, Kelani and Walawe originate from here. The waterways within Horton Plains also feed Belihul Oya, Agra Oya, Hiriketi Oya, Uma Oya, and Bogawantalawa Oya
- The extensive spread of invasive plants inhibits the growth of native plant species and thereby causes extensive loss of habitat and grazing grounds in the Horton Plains National Park (NP), posing a serious threat to the sambar and other herbivore populations that are resident or visit the Park.
- The invasive alien plant species (IAPS), ***Ulex europaeus*** (Ulex), is threatening the native biodiversity in Horton Plains NP.
- Rapid response in preventing seed dispersal is critical in controlling the spread of any invasive alien species. Hence, urgent action is essentiacritical to remove these plants prior to seed generation, to facilitate the growth of native varieties. In light of this, the Federation of Environmental Organizations (FEO) is initiating an IAPS removal project within the NP.
- In the past, there were sporadic attempts by different Individuals /Groups to remove Ulex but to no avail. However, a well-planned, concentrated effort was made by MAS Holding over a period of 2 years, (2016/2017), which resulted in all the Ulex bushes being removed. At that time, Ulex had spread over 120 Acres. Unfortunately, the said project ended in 2017, but the Ulex seeds that had dispersed started germinating and small plants were visible around April/ May 2018.

- Based on a survey done in 2022, new Ulex plants are visible in the same areas that were cleared in 2016/17. The growth is not as dense as in 2016/17, and the age of the plants are 5 years or less, compared to the removal of some plants which were over 20 years, in the previous removal. However, if not removed now, it will be a much more difficult exercise in years to come. We estimate that Ulex has spread over approximately 50 to 60 hectares of Horton Plains National Park, based on a study carried out by the DWC. A comprehensive mapping study will be carried out in the next couple of months to verify this figure.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDGs)



B

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

B1. Nature Interpretation Programmes in Minneriya, Kaudulla & Wilpattu National Parks

PERIOD
June 2018 - Ongoing

FUNDING PARTNERS
Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA)
Sri Lanka Association of Inbound Tour Operators (SLAITO)

COLLABORATIVE PARTNER/S
Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC)

BENEFICIARIES
Safari Jeep Drivers | Wildlife

TOTAL VALUE
LKR 7 Million

- FEO trained over 1,200 Safari Jeep Drivers with the primary objective of placing Sri Lanka on the path to becoming a globally recognized destination for a total wildlife experience – the 'Best Wildlife Tourism Experience outside of Africa'; the 'Wildlife Wonder of Asia'.
- The secondary objective was to establish a structure to create a more responsible and Wildlife Tourism Industry in Sri Lanka through an easy approach 'Nature Interpretation' Training Programme. This was for the largest tourist operator base servicing Sri Lanka's wildlife parks - the Safari Jeep Drivers.
- The workshops gave the participants valuable knowledge on the flora and fauna found within each respective National Park, a brief history of the Park, including of any places of archaeological importance sited within them, a reinforcement of the Park Rules and Regulations, and examples of poor visitor reviews and their negative impact on the industry.
- In addition, they were educated on tourism trends and visitor expectations.
- To further enhance the latter, time was taken by the trainers to explain, in detail, the behaviour of the iconic species of Sri Lanka - the elephant, leopard and bear – as observed by them on every sighting, to share of this knowledge with their customers and further enhance their 'Total Wildlife Experience'.
- An additional 40 Jeep Drivers were trained from the Minneriya/ Kaudulla area in August 2022

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDGs)

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

B2. Capacity Building of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and Community Service Organisations (CSOs) around the Country

PERIOD
June 2021 - Ongoing

FUNDING PARTNERS
UNDP - GEF, The Asia Foundation (TAF)

COLLABORATIVE PARTNER/S
Local area Divisional Secretariats, Other NGOs, Centre for Environmental Justice (CEJ), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Marine Environment Protection Authority (MEPA), Central Environmental Authority

BENEFICIARIES
Environmental CBOs and CSOs

TOTAL VALUE
LKR 6.85 Million

- The objective is to build NGOs/CBOs/CSOs capacities to manage their own environs through identifying micro, meso and macro level environmental issues in which they have a stake, to reach out to relevant government and other support desks for redress, to bring in projects to solve local environmental issues, and actively participate in managing their own environments
- FEO has developed lecture/knowledge materials on Conservation and Environment, Project Formulation, Knowledge Management, Climate Change, Environmental Impact Assessments, Environmental Law and Participatory Environmental Governance.
- FEO is further tailoring their content to address specific issues faced by the communities in their respective regions i.e., Animal-Human Conflicts, Specific Habitat Conservation Knowledge such as on Knuckles Landscape management, Ocean Conservation, Mangroves and Wetlands, etc.
- FEO currently works with CBOs and CSOs in Monaragala, Matara, Hambantota, Knuckles, Colombo, Mannar, Puttalam and Nuwara Eliya
- FEO is hoping to expand this project in the following districts in the coming year – Ratnapura, Matale, Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa
- FEO also conducts post workshop support, guidance and evaluation.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDGs)

Left: Map indicating spread of local Environmental CBOs across the country, specifically in Knuckles, Colombo, Mannar, Lunugamvehera, Matara, Puttalam, Nuwara Eliya and Hambantota.

Below: Capacity building workshops being conducted in Hambantota, Puttalam and Nuwara Eliya.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

B3. ENVFORCE – FEO Youth Alliance Programmes

PERIOD
July 2021 - Ongoing

FUNDING PARTNERS
The Asia Foundation (TAF)
Potential for Other Donors

COLLABORATIVE PARTNER/S
ENVFORCE Schools, The Pearl Protectors, Small Cat Advocacy and Research, Biodiversity Conservation and Research Circle of Sri Lanka, Vraie Cally Balthazaar, Central Environmental Authority

BENEFICIARIES
ENVFORCE Schools, Schools in border villages of the Lunugamvehera National Park

TOTAL VALUE
LKR 3 Million

- FEO has successfully initiated and conducted a series of seminars for youth, focused on building conservation awareness, critical thinking and exploration of green jobs, social responsibility and leadership, and fueling continuous growth and learning.
- FEO has developed an Activity Booklet to be used in conjunction with the FEO Butterfly and Larval Plant Guides; these are expected to facilitate the creation of medicinal and butterfly gardens in school environs.
- The FEO Butterfly Gardens Programme Includes technical expertise in selecting and sourcing plants, overlooking planting operations and guiding students, providing necessary compost and guidance on plant identification (botanical names and common names).
- FEO will also drive programmes to minimize the use of Plastics, Polythene, and other non-perishable waste, and introduce Waste Management and Segregation Initiatives in identified schools.
- FEO has also conducted and planned a series of field visits for the schools on the perimeter of Lunugamvehera NP. This is not only for them to enjoy the total experience of visiting a National Park, but also that they might learn the fundamentals of conservation, and coexistence with wildlife in given ecosystems.
- The ENVFORCE Digest has been established to keep our ENVFORCE readership abreast of Regular Updates, Brain Teasers, Conservation Conversations, Stories and much more.
- FEO will also formulate student-led research projects relating to conservation and habitat restoration.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDGs)

ONLINE SEMINARS HELD IN 2021 – 2022

Left: ENVFORCE Digest: A Snapshot

How to make your own Herbarium Pocket Guide was created and launched at the pilot rural schools programme in Thanamalwila National School.

It is now being used in conjunction with other field notes on conservation and biodiversity appreciation FV with ENVFORCE schools

SCHOOLS PROGRAMMES AND FIELD EXCURSIONS IN THANAMALWILA NATIONAL SCHOOL AND OYAGAWA RANAWAWARNAWA VIDYALAYA:

PLASTIC WASTE

ENVFORCE ST THOMAS' PREP SCHOOL PROGRAMME; 6TH JUNE 2022:

ENVFORCE ROYAL COLLEGE BUTTERFLY GARDENS PROJECT:

C

LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

C1. CBO establishment and Sustainable Communities' Development

PERIOD
October 2021 - Ongoing

FUNDING PARTNERS
The Asia Foundation (TAF)
Potential for Other Donors

COLLABORATIVE PARTNER/S
Local area Divisional Secretariat, Grama Niladaris of the identified villages, Village CBOs such as the Govi Samithi, Women's Organization, Maranadara Samithi and Samurdhi Society, Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) , Central Environmental Authority

BENEFICIARIES
CBO Mihi Abhimani "මිහි අභිමානී" Ranawarnawa and CBO "දෑ අභිමානී" Daya Abhimani Kithulkotte, West of border villages of the Lunugamvehera NP

TOTAL VALUE
LKR 5 Million

- FEO supports the community on the West of the border of Lunugamvehera NP by establishing CBOs that may, in the future, function as a supporting force for safeguarding the Lunugamvehera NP by no longer seeing it, and its wildlife, as a threat to them, or for exploitation, but as a valued resource to be preserved for posterity. Through different sources of funding, FEO also hopes to fund Community Capacity Building through relevant training programmes.
- As such, two CBO's were established in that area and FEO has now embarked on facilitating a Sustainable Livelihoods Programme targeting communities of the five (5) villages; with particular focus on Communities' and Women's Empowerment and Education.
- Of the 5 Villages where FEO hopes to work on Sustainable LIvelihood Programmes – Ranawarnawa, Kithulkotte, Bogahawewa, Dewramvehera and Padavigama - FEO has focused its energies first, on the villages with the majority of the 60 workers in the Lunugamvehera IAS removal project as well as based on the scoping and brainstorming workshop conducted with all these villages in January 2022 on a needs basis.
- The GN Division of Ranawarnawa was selected for the livelihoods project due to the majority of workers employed under FEO IAS removal project being from this village; and GN Division of Kithulkote was selected based on several villagers being employed under FEO in the IAS removal project.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDGs)

Map of Lunugamvehera National Park with surrounding Grama Niladhari Divisions. The GN Divisions focused on by the FEO are: Kithulkote, Ranawarnawa, Dewramvehera, Bogahawewa, and Padavigama

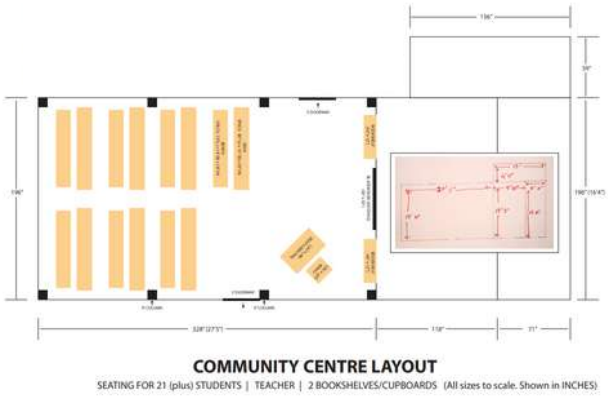
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAMMES CONDUCTED IN RANAWARNAWA AND KITHULKOTTE

C1.1 Community Centre Project Ranawarnawa

- Reconstruction of the Community Centre and Preschool in Jandura, Ranawarnawa.
- The hall was originally built in the 1980s through Sarvodaya when the Jandura settlement was established, and was used as a Montessori for many years, before it fell into disuse and abandonment.
- The reconstruction was assisted by many volunteers from the village daily, most of whom are 'alumni' of the Centre, via the CBO which FEO helped to establish. The reconstruction commenced on 26th May 2022 with a small opening ceremony with the patronage of the Chief Monk of the Village temple.
- We envisage the housing of Preschool Facilities, Tuition classes and Vocational training for adults, as well as Library facilities in the premises. The Centre will also promote income generation for women and worker families and the immediate community, when the Community Agri Garden Centre and Plant nursery are up and running in the Centre garden.

Signing of the CBO Charter at Ranawarnawa, establishing the CBO, "Mihi Abhimaani"/ "මිහි අභිමානී"

Above: The Hall before restoration; Below: The Hall after restoration



OPENING CEREMONY of "මිහි අභිමානී" Ranawarnawa Community Centre - 8th July 2022

C1.2. Bee Keeping Programme Kithulkotte

- FEO tied up with the Bee Resource Protection Organization (BPO) "bingu sampath surakimu"to conduct workshops with the Kithulkotte GN division. We had 13 families register with us and the support of the GN throughout the 2-day programme.
- The programme was met with great enthusiasm and active participation with many new ideas and thoughts to build sustainability into the programme coming from the community
- FEO together with BPO will follow up at regular intervals and we have also together identified the markets and buyers for Honey on behalf of the farmers.
- Over the course of the coming month the community contribution is sourcing further bee boxes and bee pots etc will be made and FEO will contribute an equal amount of what Kithulkotte proposes for the project.
- As part and parcel of the bee keeper training, appreciation and significance of flora in bee pollination and conservation needs, wasp management and conservation and further knowledge of the importance of these creatures, in order to mitigate unsustainable culling and felling of both these animals and plants species was disseminated to the trainees.
- The highlight of the experience was when three young girls bravely removed a wasps nest from a water tank, giving confidence to all the villagers to try their hand at bee keeping.

C1.3. Herbal Garden Programme Kithulkotte

- Mr. Saman Bandara of the Central Environmental Authority, during the preliminary meeting discussion, showed willingness to provide expertise and plants to start this programme.
- In consultation with him, it was decided that a scoping workshop be first held regarding the importance of herbal plants and for the scoping of the ideal plants to be grown in the region.
- The CBO's role will be to monitor the herbal gardens at the homes of the membership and provide plants when required.
- Commencement of introductory session on the importance of herbal plants and procedure of running a herbal nursery was conducted by– by Prof. Marasinghe
- 10 varieties of herbs that grow in the vicinity were discussed, for their use, preparation methods and market value. Some of the discussed herbs were Komarika, Nil Katarolu, Bing kohomba, Katu Anodara, and Vishnukanthi.
- Furthermore, plants suitable for 'kolakanda' were also discussed, such as Iramusu, Gotukola, Hathawariya, and Kansa.

LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

C2. Sustainable Consumption Guide and Sustainable Living Campaign

PERIOD
October 2021 - Ongoing

FUNDING PARTNERS
The Asia Foundation (TAF)
Potential for Other Donors

COLLABORATIVE PARTNER/S
Volunteer Experts from Corporate and non-corporate sectors, ROAR Media

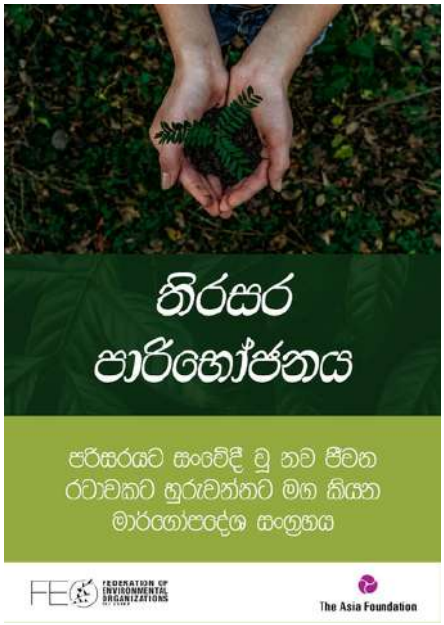
BENEFICIARIES
Interested individuals and consumers, Supermarkets, ENVFORCE Schools, Environmental CBOs and CSOs

TOTAL VALUE
LKR 1 Million

- The objectives of FEO are to inculcate awareness of environmental issues resulting from overconsumption, reduction in the use of single-use plastics, encouraging lifestyle changes to reduce overconsumption habits, facilitate behavioral changes to encourage greater recycling, etc. It will also increase awareness of available Collection Centers and outlets for various types of recyclable waste.
- Eventually, it is envisaged that FEO will work in partnership with corporate companies and supermarkets to reduce waste created from their sales of single use plastic packaging and utensils.
- In line with the ethos of the Sustainable Consumption Guide, FEO created a series of social media posts to discourage overconsumption during the holiday season, the Sustainable Consumption Guide (SCG) was launched in English in March 2022 and subsequently translated into Sinhala and Tamil.
- FEO has further collaborated with ROAR media to create an awareness video which will be launched in August 2022

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDGs)

One Plenary Discussion Undertaken in conjunction with the launch of the FEO Sustainable Consumption Guide.



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REGREENING

PERIOD
July 2020 - Ongoing

VISION
To make the City of Colombo the greenest city in South Asia by increasing the urban green space within the city and contributing to the health and wellbeing of its community.

FUNDING PARTNERS
Private Individuals, Rotary Club of Colombo

BENEFICIARIES
Borella Cemetery, ENVFORCE Schools, St Paul's Milagiriya Church

TOTAL VALUE
LKR 5 Million

- FEO's primary objective of its urban greening initiative is to increase canopy cover to provide shade, thereby helping reduce the temperature in certain parts of the City; and to increase urban ecology and biodiversity i.e. tree diversity and provide a suitable habitat for small mammals, birds and insects.
- In addition, this programme will help increase vegetation health by systematically replacing the aging trees of the City. It could also assist in the reduction of air pollution.
- The Colombo Tree planting project was initiated in the Borella cemetery. The goal was to plant trees along the perimeter of the cemetery (where possible) with deep root trees so that the roots don't disturb the surface.
- FEO proposes to initiate several long term City Tree Planting Projects utilizing private and public lands within the Greater Colombo Area. The planting of indigenous species will predominate. However, selected exotics will also be planted based on the specific service they render the environment.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDGs)

ADVOCACY AND POLICY

FEO's policy and advocacy work revolved around key environmental issues that were in the limelight over the past year. Other policy initiatives stem from FEOs field experience and activities in improving ecosystem health in protected areas.

Policy briefs are being developed to provide recommendations and policy directions in several key areas. These are described below. In addition, FEO is also an active member of the Mangrove Conservation Sustainable Livelihoods (MCSL) Forum consisting of 05 conservation organisations. Currently the MCSL Forum is advocating for enhanced conservation measures and protection of the Vidathalativu National Park; and avenues for sustainable use of coastal resources such as Vidathalativu to benefit local communities. The Forum has requested accurate information on the release of land for aquaculture from the conservation agencies involved and is currently putting together a detailed report,-based on expert ideas on how this landscaped can be managed for conservation and livelihood benefit.

Policy paper development:

- Human Elephant Conflict: Managed Elephant Reserves -putting theory to practice
  - Focus on practical solutions to the human-elephant conflict, managed elephant reserves (MER) have been suggested as practical measures to manage landscapes that have both human activity and high density of elephant population. However the practical aspects of 'managing' such a reserve is yet to be tested out on the first ever MER in Mattala, Southern Province. This policy paper will set out the institutional structures, decision making processes and livelihood choices that will support such transition.
- Water Management and Elephant Gathering
  - Around 400-500 wild Asian Elephants keep moving within the Minneriya-Kaudulla-Hurulu complex. The elephants first congregate in the drawdown area of the Minneriya reservoir from May to October (dubbed as "The Gathering") and attract large numbers of local and foreign tourists to the park. However, in 2018 construction of an upstream reservoir (Moragahakanda) has changed the water regime of the Minneriya reservoir.
  - This has resulted in the reduction in the drawdown area accompanied by a corresponding decline in the elephant numbers disrupting the elephant movement cycle which has gone on for centuries in this region. This has resulted in a significant loss of tourism revenue. Further, loss of traditional feeding grounds has prompted elephants to look for alternate feeding opportunities outside the protected areas that has resulted in an increase in the human-elephant conflict.
  - This policy paper will look at tradeoffs between agriculture and economic value generated by national parks through tourism with spill over benefits for the entire rural economy and the policy framework that should govern decision making when there are conflicting demands on the same resource.

Data and information gathering for future policy development and advocacy:

- Invasive management
  - Focus on FEO's work within protected areas, managing invasives cost-effectively and with community benefit.
- Cattle grazing in protected areas
  - FEO is working on gathering data on illegal grazing of domestic cattle in national parks. This practice has severe consequences on the key species that are being protected in national parks, such as elephants, and cause habitat degradation, spread of invasives and diseases to wild populations. The idea is to propose viable alternative feeding/grazing practices for these cattle farmers.

RESEARCH

F1. Study of Regeneration and Ecology of Invasive Plant Species in Lunugamvehera

PERIOD
February 2021 - Ongoing

FUNDING PARTNERS
The Asia Foundation (TAF)

COLLABORATIVE PARTNER/S
Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC)

BENEFICIARIES
Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC), Forest Department Sri Lanka, Wildlife

TOTAL VALUE
LKR 750,000

- Objectives:
  - Establishing effective methodology for IAS removal particularly, *Lantana camara (S. Gandapana)* and *Eupatorium odoratum (S. Podi singho maran)*
  - Monitoring the regeneration and study of the ecology of invasive plant species and native plant species
  - Improving Habitat management and restoration in National Parks (NP) and protected areas
- Scientific aspects of invasive plant removal: Numerous strategies have been used in the past to remove invasive plant species from the environment. The study of previous attempts at mechanical removal made it clear that there is a rapid re-growth of invasive plants; it was determined that the mechanical method did not differentiate between removal of invasives and all native plants.
- Consequently, in the regrowth invasives dominated the terrain over native plants due to their highly competitive nature. Therefore, selective removal using a manual method with the least disturbance to the native plants was established. Up to date, clearing has been conducted in 3 cycles as of June 2022 in identified locations to eliminate IAS seed populations on the ground.
- Monitoring on regeneration and the ecology of invasives: monitoring of the regrowth of IAS and native plant species are done separately for each cleared cycle to understand the variations at different stages of the clearing, using the standard procedure for vegetational monitoring.
- Data collection is conducted monthly under the following parameters: Percentage of grass cover, Soil condition, IAS - count of the number of regenerated plants and height, Dominant native species - count and height, Other native species – count, Disturbances/Other data within and outside the plot
- Monitoring on regeneration and the ecology of Dominant Native species: Clearing of invasive plants often sees a change of species composition and regenerative domination. This knowledge is required for the continuous management of invasives and also to make strategic changes where necessary. The final analysis will correlate the changing composition of the native species to the regeneration of invasives.

- Vertical Analysis of selected plots: Selective plots are analyzed vertically through time in narrative form, to examine in detail the changes that have taken place since the clearing of IAS. The conditions vary from plot to plot but the most notable highlight is the change in the dominant community of IAS. In most cases, since the first cycle of clearing, the dominant invasive is *Eupatorium odoratum* due to its high growth rate in varied conditions. The dominant native species also seem to be changing with time, in pre-clearing and during 1st cycle and subsequent cycles. Individual analysis of plots can provide a wealth of data to understand the ecology of the two focal species.
- The other data-supported observations include the changes in the mean growth of the invasive plants over time and the time taken for flowering over subsequent rounds of removal. It is scientifically known that flowering and fruiting can happen as a result of stress. Observations made on plots indicate that the invasives, especially Eupatorium are showing signs of early flowering in subsequent cycles of removal. This observation is further supported by the fact that early flowering may be observed in the regeneration of plants from older stems left behind as well.
- It has also been observed that there is a considerable reduction of *Lantana camara* plants after initial clearing. Even in previously *Lantana camara* dominant areas, post removal presence has declined significantly and, the re-growth of IAS in the first cycle is almost only *Eupatorium odoratum*, which has shown great drought resistance.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDGs)

Above: Research Plot 32 at Lunugamvehera National Park during different stages of IAS clearance

Manual removal of plants was determined as the best mechanism for effective clearance of IAS plants

RESEARCH

F2. Determination of Optimum water levels in Minneriya & Kaudulla Reservoirs

PERIOD
May 2022 - Ongoing

FUNDING PARTNERS
Private Individuals
Potential for Other Donors

COLLABORATIVE PARTNER/S
Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC), Department of Irrigation, Dr Sumith Pilapitiya

BENEFICIARIES
Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC), Forest Department Sri Lanka, Department of Irrigation, Local Farming Communities, Local Tourism Communities, Wildlife

TOTAL VALUE
LKR 30 Million

- The issue: Minneriya and Kaudulla NPs are home to 'The Great Elephant Gathering': an annual mating, bathing, and feeding ritual of over 400 Asian elephants. However, in recent years, elephant numbers have drastically declined, with less than 50 elephants seen at the Gathering last year. This decline is suspected to be due to development projects, particularly the Moragahakanda dam that have led to hydrological changes and the flooding of the reservoirs. The elephants' new migration and feeding patterns, primarily encroaching on farmland, have also led to an increase in Human-Elephant conflict (HEC) in the area.
- The project: In collaboration with the Department of Wildlife Conservation, Irrigation Department and elephant researchers, FEO has commenced a 3-year research project to study the changes in water levels that affect the elephant numbers inside and HEC outside the Parks. The project aims to determine the optimum water regime in the Minneriya and Kaudulla reservoirs needed to support the elephants of the Gathering and reduce HEC in this area, protecting the elephant populations while also supporting the livelihoods and safety of the neighboring communities.
- Project Components:
  - Conducting weekly elephant counts in Minneriya, Kaudulla and Hurulu Eco Park where elephants are known to move between during the Gathering season
  - Correlating these elephant counts with water level data obtained from the Irrigation Department
  - Studying changes in HEC levels by conducting surveys in the 25km radius of the protected area complex
  - GPS Collaring of elephants and camera trap studies to study their movement patterns through these areas
- Component 1 of the project commenced in May 2022, and a trained assistant has been conducting elephant counts weekly in Minneriya and Kaudulla. Preliminary analysis has shown that elephant counts between Minneriya and Kaudulla vary significantly in relation to water levels in the reservoirs as well as in relation to each other.As more data is collected and correlated with data being acquired from the Irrigation department, we aim to confirm these correlations and formulate recommendations for the protection of these habitats and the large elephant population that depends on them.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDGs)

FEDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANISATIONS SRI LANKA

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS OF MARCH 31, 2022

	NOTES	2022 Rs.	2021 Rs.
ACCUMULATED FUND			
Accumulated fund	**Note-01**	21,267,348	4,611,967
		21,267,348	4,611,967
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property plant and equipment	**Note-02**	1,068,317	37, 569
		1,068,317	37, 569
CURRENT ASSETS			
Investment in fixed deposits	**Note-03**	5,489,668	3,300,000
Cash and cash equivalents	**Note-04**	14,746,363	1,289,398
		20,236,031	4,589,398
TOTAL ASSETS		21,304,348	4,626,967
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accrued expenses	**Note-05**	37, 000	15,000
TOTAL LIABILITES		37, 000	15,000
TOTAL NET ASSETS		21,267,348	4,611,967

Signed on behalf of the Governing Council ;

The above Statement of Financial Position and Income & Expenditure Accounts of The Federation of Environmental Organizations for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 has been prepared in accordance with the books and information furnished to us.

Chartered Accountants
Colombo
24th August 2022

WIJEVERATNE & CO.
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
COLOMBO

FEDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANISATIONS SRI LANKA

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED AT MARCH 31, 2022

	NOTES	2022 Rs.	2021 Rs.
DONOR FUNDING	Note-06	41,404,481	5,353,021
COST OF PROGRAMS	Note-07	(18,080,559)	(4,523,999)
EXCESS OF DONOR FUNDING OVER COST OF PROGRAMS		23,323,922	829,022
OTHER INCOME	Note-08	-	32,700
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	Note-09	(1,313,619)	(169,503)
STAFF EXPENSES	Note-10	(5,476,307)	(650,000)
FINANCIAL INCOME	Note-11	121,386	205,562
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE		16,655,381	247,781

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note-01

ACCUMULATED FUND

	2022 Rs.	2021 Rs.
Balance at the beginning of the year	4,611,967	4,364,186
Add: Surplus for the year	16,655,381	247,781
Balance at the end of the year	21,267,348	4,611,967

Note-02

PROPERTY PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	As at April 01, 2021 Rs.	Additions/ Charge for the year Rs.	(Disposals)/ Adjustments Rs.	As at March 31, 2022 Rs.
Cost				
Freehold assets				
Computer equipment	56,250	753,400	-	809,650
Telephone	12,592	59,980	-	72,572
Office equipment	-	359,100	-	359,100
	68,842	1,172,480	-	1,241,322
Accumulated depreciation				
Freehold assets				
Computer equipment	28,125	112,392	-	140,517
Telephone	3,148	6,897	-	10,045
Office equipment	-	22,444	-	22,444
	31,273	141,732	-	173,005
Carrying value	37,569			1,068,317

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2022 Rs.	2021 Rs.
Note-03		
INVESTMENT IN FIXED DEPOSITS		
Sampath bank - Fixed Deposit	1,500,000	1,500,000
Sampath bank - Fixed Deposit	-	1,000,000
Sampath bank - Fixed Deposit	-	800,000
DFCC bank - Fixed Deposit	3,989,668	-
	5,489,668	3,300,000
Note-04		
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		
Sampath bank	4,115,629	879,892
Sampath bank	999,554	397,506
DFCC bank	9,209,379	-
DFCC bank	6,173	-
DFCC money marketing	55	-
DFCC money marketing	28	-
Sampath bank	344,850	-
Cash in hand	70,695	12,000
	14,746,363	1,289,389
Note-05		
ACCRUED EXPENSES		
Audit fee	22,000	10,000
Accounting fee	15,000	5,000
	37,000	15,000

FEDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANISATIONS SRI LANKA

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED AT MARCH 31, 2022

	2022 Rs.	2021 Rs.
Note-06		
DONOR FUNDING		
Donation - AGADA project	-	3,317,422
Donation - Greening Colombo	195,150	335,000
Donation - Lunugamvehera Project	21,479,171	1,700,599
Donation - The Asia Foundation Funds	17,579,295	-
Donation - General	364,320	-
UNDP Small Grant Programme (Global Environment Facility)	1,786,545	-
	41,404,481	5,353,021

Cash-basis accounting has been used to report donor funding.

Note-07		
COST OF PROGRAMS		
Cost of program - AGADA project	50,984	3,183,001
Cost of program - Greening Colombo	90,000	210,000
Cost of program - Lunugamvehera Project	16,655,638	1,130,998
Cost of program - The Asia Foundation Funds	1,219,788	-
Cost of program - Small Grant (Global Environment Facility)	64,150	-
	18,080,559	4,523,999

Note-08		
OTHER INCOME		
Other income	-	32,700
	-	32,700

Note-09		
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES		
Accounting fee	10,000	5,000
AGM expenses	-	7,500
Audit fee	12,000	10,000
Bank charges	19,930	6,000
Baseline & needs assessment expenses	200,060	-
Computer maintenance	40,200	-
Depreciation	141,732	17,211
Internet expenses	-	7,618
OSF video/WNPS	85,320	101,489
Other expenses	9,340	-
Printing & stationery	10,253	-
Refreshments	-	4,470
Telephone, mobile & internet charges	208,691	10,215
Technical materials & development expenses	125,060	-
Transport	451,033	-
	1,313,619	169,503

FEDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANISATIONS SRI LANKA

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED AT MARCH 31, 2022

	2022 Rs.	2021 Rs.
Note-10		
STAFF EXPENSES		
Salaries	4,979,411	650,000
EPF	435,803	-
ETF	61,093	-
	5,476,307	650,000
Note-10		
FINANCE INCOME		
Interest income	121,386	205,562
	121,386	205,562

FEDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS
SRI LANKA

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