

Message from the Country Representative



IUCN is a unique organization - a democratic membership union - composed of over 1,200 Members (Government and Non-Government entities) and 11,000 scientific experts in thematic Commissions, namely, the Commission on Education and Communication (CEC), Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL), Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), Species Survival Commission (SSC), and World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA). The “Secretariat Support” for IUCN members and commissions is provided by over 1,000 staff working in more than 160 countries attached to 50 offices with 10 offices located in Asia.

IUCN is not anti-development. It only promotes sustainable development. IUCN believes that well managed, healthy and diverse ecosystems and the biological resources they encompass are critical for a healthy, safe and prosperous world. We help to restore forests, rivers and wetlands, and bring our oceans back to life. In that context, IUCN advocates “nature-based solutions” to address development challenges and as a way to mitigate and adapt to climate change; secure water, food and energy supplies; and reduce poverty and drive economic growth. In the process we try to harness global experience through IUCN networks and working with other development partners in UN, multilateral and bilateral agencies.

In Sri Lanka IUCN plays a key role in promoting environment sustainability. Our strength is the in house staff experienced in biodiversity, coastal and marine, water, land use, climate change, ecosystem based economics etc., along with easy access to many experts. Our work is further facilitated by the host Country Agreement between Government of Sri Lanka and IUCN that provides us with opportunities as well as privileges.

IUCN National Committee provides the strategic direction. It is led by the Forest Department with the Ministry in charge of Environment, Department of Wildlife Conservation, Central Environment Authority, Department of Zoological Gardens, Western Provincial Ministry of Agriculture, Agrarian Development and Environment, Environmental Foundation Limited, Federation of Wildlife Conservation, Green Movement of Sri Lanka, Sevalanka Foundation, Small Fishers Federation of Sri Lanka and Wildlife and Nature Protection Society of Sri Lanka as members.

We are of keen to contribute, through our ecosystem approaches, to create a win-win scenario, within the on-going fast-tracked development that also has a high potential to add pressure on the natural resources. As such our work cuts across multiple disciplines needing multi-sector approaches involving Governments, Non-government entities, Universities, Media, private sector and communities. While supporting the development to be sustainable, we also like to promote Sri Lanka professionals to join the IUCN global networks so that they can contribute and enhance the skills and exposure. IUCN Union Portal is the gateway for such professionals to get registered.

As a world biodiversity hot spot with many natural resources providing productive and diverse ecosystems plus the availability of high calibre professionals in the country, IUCN strongly believe that working together we can demonstrate that the perceived economic growth can be achieved and made sustainable based on ecosystems-based thinking and approaches.

Let us work towards a greener, prosper and a safer world!

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