

Religions for Peace 

Sri Lanka Council of *Religions for Peace*

**Sri Lanka National Consultation for the
Religions for Peace**

10th World Assembly

**Report on the Conference Organized by the
Sri Lanka National Consultation for the Religions for Peace**

10th World Assembly

December 22, 2018

GSH Hotel, Colombo-Sri Lanka

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Introduction

Since the global wars of the 20th Century, there has been a focus on ensuring the world never sees such widespread conflict again. Institutions like the *League of Nations* and its successor the *United Nations* sprung to be houses of peace negotiations. Formal commitments followed, with nations signing and ratifying international documents. The second half of the 20th Century had an international focus on preventing a repeat episode of these tragedies even while struck by the paralysis of threatening nuclear war. At the last phase of the 20th Century experienced conflicts emerging with non-political factors such as social inequality, cultural incompatibilities and religious extremism.

In such a context the organization of the Religions for Peace was established on the purpose of promoting inter- religious coexistence among nations in the world. In achieving this aim, the Religions for Peace has organized several World Assemblies in many parts of the world covering all five continents in collaboration with enthusiastic religious leaders and the civil society activists. All those Assemblies were thematic and emphasized one specific theme related to most important world issues of the time that could be addressed through religious perspective. The organization of Religion for Peace has credited with holding such successful world assemblies since 1970s and has left several iconic landmarks.

	Year	Place	Theme
Kyoto Assembly –	1970	Japan	<i>Advancing Peace through Disarmament, Development and Human Rights</i> Participants – 300 Countries – 39
Leuven Assembly	1974	Belgium	<i>World Religions</i> Participants – 400 Countries - 53
Princeton Assembly	1979	United States of America	<i>Religion in the Struggle for World Community</i> Participants – 350 Countries - 48

Nairobi Assembly	1984	Kenya	<i>Religion for Human Dignity and World Peace</i> Participants – 600 Countries - 60
Melbourne Assembly	1989	Australia	<i>Building Peace through Trust</i> Participants – 650 Countries – 61
Riva del Garda Assembly	1994	The Vatican and Italy	<i>Healing the World Religions for Peace</i> Participants – 850 Countries - 63
Amman Assembly (First time in a Muslim country)	1999	Jordan	<i>Action for Common Living</i> Participants – 1200 Countries – 70
Kyoto Assembly	2006	Japan	<i>Conflict Transformation</i> Participants – 800 (All religious leaders) Countries - 100
Vienna Assembly	2013	Austria	<i>Welcoming the Other: A multi Religious Vision for Peace</i> Participants – 800 Countries - 141

Those previous World Assemblies of Religions for Peace have discerned positive elements of peace, common threats to peace, and a multi-religious consensus expressed through shared values for peace. The organization commit to common action based upon these deeply held and widely shared values, as a foundation for affirming the imperative of “welcoming the other” as the heart of the multi-religious vision of peace. This was agreed and guaranteed by the ***Vienna Declaration*** signed by the delegates at the World Assembly held in Vienna-Austria in 2013. In fact, World Assemblies reflected on the amazing achievements of the member states in the recent past.

The 10th World Assembly of Religions for Peace

Preface

Peace and harmony is a basic prerequisite. Peace and harmony can bring a peaceful and stable order to society, and they are a necessary condition for the survival and development of mankind.

The 10th World Assembly of Religions for Peace calls attention to a new dimension which is not a threat to World Peace but an advancing mechanism to promote Positive Peace. Thus the working theme of the 10th World Assembly is “**Caring for our Common Future: Advancing Shared Well-being**”.

Positive Peace provides a new way of conceptualizing the way communities can develop in order to sustain peace or to recover from conflict. The focus is too often on responding to violence or the threat of violence.

Positive Peace represents an ambitious and forward looking conceptualization of peace that moves beyond conflict and violence. It creates better economic and societal outcomes, as well as lessening the number of grievances and the levels of violence associated with them. In addition to the absence of violence, Positive Peace is also associated with many other societal characteristics that are considered desirable, including better economic outcomes, measures of wellbeing, levels of gender equality and environmental performance.

In order to look into the main theme ‘**Caring for our Common Future: Advancing Shared Well-being**’ more seriously and intensively Religion for Peace International has prepared commission papers based on themes of five World Assemblies:

1. Caring for our Common Future by Advancing Positive Peace
2. Caring for our Common Future through Preventing and Transforming Conflicts
3. Caring for our Common Future through Promoting Just and Harmonious Societies

4. Caring for our Common Future through Working for Sustainable and Integral Human Development
5. Caring for our Common Future through Protecting the Earth

The 10th World Assembly focuses three sub-themes which are indeed integrated with the main theme. They are:

1. Advancing Peace through transforming Conflicts
2. Advancing Peace by promoting just and Harmonious societies
This addresses the need of advancing good governance, migration and integration, promoting leadership qualities of women and Advancing leadership capacity of women
3. Advancing Peace by protecting the Earth
This emphasizes the preserving and promoting sustainable energy system, safeguarding rainforests and protecting and sharing water resources.

The Sri Lankan perspective in this regard discussed at the Preliminary Assembly where expert of the discipline disclosed their point of view on several sub-themes incorporating the main subject.

Each of the five Commission Papers suggested key discussion topics and questions, and the consultations were intended to achieve two main objectives:

1. To capture the key challenges in each national and regional context in relation to the previously mentioned four assembly themes, identify the 'religious resources' available to help address these problems, and areas of capacity building which require further development.
2. To reflect on the relevance and usefulness of the Commission paper in the Sri Lankan context and how they may be adapted and/or improved.

Considering the vitality of the purpose every polymath made their views on the basis of the Commission paper but related to Sri Lankan context. Experts were pre-assigned to all five sessions and they delivered their speeches in accordance with pre-circulated Commission Papers written by eminent subject experts.

Assembly Format

The one-day conference consisted of five sessions and five concurrent breakout sessions that were followed by a structured group report out and a closing plenary session that presented the perspectives of future plans and suggestions to explore issues related to the good governance through religious coexistence, youth participation in religious dialogues, strengthening women and facilitating civil society organizations towards peace building.

Targeted Audience

Representatives from the following sections of the society participated and shared their views and made suggestions how to care our common future by advancing shared well-being.

1. State and local government
2. Religious institutions, specially represented Buddhist monks, Muslim Maulavi and a Catholic father.
3. Practitioners in the field
4. Women organizations

All the presentations were wrapped-up with thought evoking discussions and dialogues which in turn provided a sound platform to think of more new themes for future Assemblies.

The Executive Summaries of the Five Thematic Sessions

Session 1

Caring for our Common Future by Advancing Positive Peace

Fr. Leopold Ratnasekara

Executive Committee Member and Former Deputy Secretary General SLCRP

Peace is realized when there is an atmosphere, an environment, a context and a social network of healthy relationships in a society of diversity. It results in the goodwill of all working together, hand in hand, for the common good. The most effective channel for peace is a stable political order buttressed by a robust economy and a cohesion which keeps a country and a nation on the path to grow and stability. Social justice demands that both the majority group and the minority groups of the civil population rest on even ground and the fundamental human rights of all are ensured.

Religions are a mighty social force, a cultural catalyst that can exert an abiding moral and ethical influence in the building up of a peace-filled society. All religions teach peace: peace and tranquility within each individual through personal discipline that is consciously exercised as well as peace and tranquility in the larger society, which is an integration of individuals and variety of groups through solidarity and collaboration in the achievement of common goals. Learning from the most recent events that have overtaken Sri Lanka, that plunged it in a chaotic crisis, we must as a country make serious efforts to change our political culture and lead the masses to a mature understanding of their democratic duties which will bring into government statesmen of honour and integrity who will serve with genuine love for the country bereft of ulterior hidden agendas. The four great religions that are on hold in this country can inspire and forge that moral and ethical motivation needed, to launch this drive of national renewal and transformation.

The contribution that religion can make to peacemaking--as the flip side of religious conflict--is only beginning to be explored and explicated. All three of the Abrahamic faiths contain strong warrants for peacemaking. When the faiths explore and practice common values, such as justice

and compassion, in public life, religious leaders can be an inspiration to others. Gerrie ter Haar summarizes Assefa's contention as:

"Bringing the spiritual dimension into the peacemaking process can create access to the more deep-seated, affective base of the parties' behavior, enabling them to examine critically their own attitudes and actions. People's conflict behavior is often based on more emotional considerations and thus may not be changed simply by rational negotiation processes and subsequent agreements. Cognitive decisions and commitments, he argues, do not necessarily translate into feelings and actions."

It is undoubted that we are deeply troubled by this rising hostility, in society and within and among religious communities. This hostility toward the "other" is an extension of intolerance, and too often takes the form of violence. Victims of hostility are often vulnerable populations, including members of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities; migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced and stateless persons.

We should keep in mind that involving faith in conflict resolution is not about converting the parties to a particular religion or abandoning secular international human rights standards that underpin peace processes. Rather, it is about reinforcing the path to peace and reconciliation with a religious grammar that is familiar to the actors involved and that enables them to fully engage in a process that also requires a degree of self-transformation.

Session 2

Caring for our Common Future through Preventing and Transforming Conflicts

Rev. Prof. M. Dhammajothi Thero

General secretary-SLCRP, Head Department of Buddhist Studies, University of Colombo

Conflicts are the most common universal features in the present-day context. It has been spread and rooted in every segment of the society spanned from family life to society at large. This situation has become so threatening to the survival of humankind. In the present day scenario it is unfortunate to mention that religion has become the generative source of many such conflicts. Religions are supposed to help to develop mutual trust and cooperation among the fellow beings. But, unfortunately religions have now turned out to be or purposely and willfully made out to be the force that provokes, ignites and inflames societies, propelling people to act in the most inhuman manner.

Religious fundamentalism, which sooner or later, naturally turns out to be religious lunaticism, is one of the most dreadful sources of conflict that creates havoc in the world. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (University of Chicago from 2004) in their work titled *Fundamentalisms Comprehended: An Anthology of Articles* has identified three main reasons for such religious fundamentalism. They are the Ultra-orthodoxy (which refers to the belief in absolute inerrant religious scriptures), Ultra-orthopraxis (adopted to practices religious life blindly and dogmatically accepting the literal meanings of the scriptures, without giving any consideration to reasonable interpretation.) and the Religious exclusion (which holds that one religion is right and all the rest is false and so on).

The general Buddhist view on conflict transformation is vital to understand at this point. As a religious dogma Buddhism views conflict in a different way which it tries to amalgamate reasons for conflicts with behavioral pattern of the human. Conflicts are of varying forms, and these could be rightly described as being coeval with the beginning of humankind. In Buddhism, 'conflict' as a particular aspect of suffering is viewed mainly from an ethical dimension. Hence, the Buddha's analysis of conflict is more concerned with the immoral or unethical roots that lead

to the generation of conflict. Further, Buddha has correctly noticed this intrinsic nature of conflicts in human existence and dealt with it under his pivotal teaching concerning ‘*dukkaha*’ a term generally rendered into subject as suffering.

When generally analyzing the theories formulated and practices prescribed by the modern theorists and practitioners one could clearly see that these finally get reduced to the question of egoistic perspectives adopted by all stakeholders.

The Buddha usually targeted the eradication, uprooting of all causes that generate conflict. Undoubtedly, the achievement of this final goal is ‘highly’ idealistic. The achievement has to be accomplished individually by each stakeholder, for Buddhism does not seem to adopt a ‘collective movement’ for this. Though the Buddha’s prescription is applicable to all yet, in practice, the eradication of conflict generating causes, has to be effected by oneself, bringing about a change in personality, a change effected within each individual. That is by removing such emotions as lust/attachment, hatred and delusion.

In fact to bring about major understanding of any conflictual issues, the Buddha advocates the rewording, the restatement of the issue involved. Through this, the Buddha seems to bring about a smoothening of the rigidness, inflexibility of the description of the issue. He encourages all parties involved in in conflicts, the stakeholders to generally give up their dogmatic assertions and to get into the shoes of the opponent, thus enabling him to obtain a more holistic view.

Session 3

Caring for our Common Future through Promoting Just and Harmonious Societies

Prof. Mookiah

Former Vice Chancellor, Eastern University and Director and Governing Council Member, National Peace Council

Religious communities today are deeply affected by trends such as polarized ideas, globalization and technological advances. At the same time people in every continent of the globe confront a sharp and ironic duality. At this juncture religious communities could work in complex partnerships, not only with other religious communities but with wide-ranging sectors, public and private, global, national, and local. The notion of sustainable development could be used as a platform to address and overcome conflict complexes in the present day and this has been suggested by the United Nations by introducing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September, 2015. It highlights the complex linkages among seemingly different objectives as a common vision and architecture for action.

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:

- the concept of 'needs,' in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.

2. Thus the goals of economic and social development must be defined in terms of sustainability in all countries — developed or developing, market-oriented or centrally planned. Interpretations will vary, but must share certain general features and must flow from a consensus on the basic concept of sustainable development and on a broad strategic framework for achieving it.

3. Development involves a progressive transformation of economy and society. A development path that is sustainable in a physical sense could theoretically be pursued even in a rigid social and political setting. But physical sustainability cannot be secured unless development policies pay attention to such considerations as changes in access to resources and in the distribution of costs and benefits. Even the narrow notion of physical sustainability implies a concern for social equity between generations, a concern that must logically be extended to equity within each generation.

Sustainable development has been described here in general terms. How are individuals in the real world to be persuaded or made to act in the common interest? The answer lies partly in education, institutional development, and law enforcement. But many problems of resource depletion and environmental stress arise from disparities in economic and political power. An industry may get away with unacceptable levels of air and water pollution because the people who bear the brunt of it are poor and unable to complain effectively. A forest may be destroyed by excessive felling because the people living there have no alternatives or because timber contractors generally have more influence than forest dwellers.

Ecological interactions do not respect the boundaries of individual ownership and political jurisdiction. Thus:

- In a watershed, the ways in which a farmer up the slope uses land directly affect run-off on farms downstream.
- The irrigation practices, pesticides, and fertilizers used on one farm affect the productivity of neighbouring ones, especially among small farms.
- The efficiency of a factory boiler determines its rate of emission and soot and noxious chemicals and affects all who live and work around it.
- The hot water discharged by a thermal power plant into a river or a local sea affects the catch of all who fish locally.

Traditional social systems recognized some aspects of this interdependence and enforced community control over agricultural practices and traditional rights relating to water, forests and

land. This enforcement of the 'common interest' did not necessarily impede growth and expansion though it may have limited the acceptance and diffusion of technical innovations.

The commitment of UN regarding preventing transforming conflict war, and terrorism. He emphasizes five serious matters regard to common future and importance of negotiated political settlement for this matter. He mentioned the importance of Brundland Commission and its report was the best report of that year. He highlighted that the developed countries have huge responsibility to protect environment and prevent conflict because they have capability of doing this also they have skillful persons and advanced technology. But highly developed countries did not contribute to the protect environment without the support of countries such as the USA the environment saving and conserving is not possible for two reasons:

1. They have skillful persons
2. They are the very big producer of Carbon dioxide

Due to these two reasons developed countries have a responsibility to protect our common future.

Session 4

Caring for our Common Future through Working for Sustainable and Integral Human Development

Dr. M.I. M. Jameel

Executive Committee Member, President SLCRP Ampara District Council

Integral Human Development is defined as the holistic development of the human person, covering all aspect of life, social, economic, political cultural and spiritual. It promotes the dignity of the human persons, equality between every person and the common good of all people in the community.

Sustainable development is defined as development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Sustainable development contains five critical elements. Those are,

1. Developing the capacities for good governance
2. Eliminating poverty
3. Creating jobs and sustainable livelihoods
4. Protecting and re-generating the environment
5. Promoting advancement of women

In Sri Lankan context, major issues at present is the political and economic instability which has been resulted due to the following reasons.

- a. Bad governance
- b. Religious/Communal intolerance
- c. Media mafia
- d. Underworld mafia

Then he descriptively reflected his observation son the above four categories by concerning reasons for above scenarios.

The bad governance was a product of several ill practices of the society and country at large. Selecting unsuitable personal for the Legislative Council, Provincial Council and other local

government bodies. Increasing the level of corruption, lacking and degrading of moral values, lack of educated political representatives in the Parliament and many such governing institutions have paved the path to bad governance.

Unsuitable activism and caliber of religious leaders or religious preachers are representing religious institutions in the present day and this has resulted increasing religious and/or communal intolerance in the Sri Lankan society.

Most of the media (both private and state-owned) do not respect moral values. The balance between coexistence and the religious tolerance thus has been challenged due to this media mafia. Similarly, under-world mafia is also one of the crucial issues that could not easily be tackled by the government as it has been hampered with several other anti-social activities such as narcotic drugs, abduction, murder, arson, rape etc.

Bad-governance, religious/communal intolerance, media and under-world mafia are therefore affecting the human development and have changed the life style of children, youth, women adults and elders.

In this situation the organization of Religions for Peace should focus on the improvement of good ethics including respect for freedom and rights of others patience and kindness to others, loyal to superiors, transparency in all kinds of dealing which effects to the society and bringing up a dialogue on conflict resolution transformation in a multi religious society.

Religious communities working together can be powerful actors to prevent violence before it erupts, diffuse conflict when it occurs, and lead their communities to rebuild war-torn societies. Excessive resources devoted to arms are better spent to alleviate poverty, advance education and basic healthcare for all, and address environmental challenges.

Session 5

Caring for our Common Future through Protecting the Earth

Dr. Vijitha Kumara

Senior Lecture, Department of Buddhist studies-University of Colombo

The notion of protecting the earth is comprised with four major issues including Climate Change, Air Pollution, Deforestation, Soil Degradation, Water Scarcity and Biodiversity.

As stated in Buddhist scripts as well as in other sacred texts superficial causes could be appeared merely to be physical. Nevertheless, according to the Buddhist teachings the exact causes for those environmental issues are psychological based. The solutions proposed by Buddhism are materialized to be the practices (behavioral approach). Such practices are taken place as an outcome of the positive attitudes. The positive attitudes are generated by the healthy psychology. There are two famous sayings in Buddhist teachings. The relevant climate is an additional wealth for the Country and Ruler. [How *upostharathana* (the gem of elephant or moon) come under seven gems in the *Cakkavattisīhanāda sutta* is defined by Prof. Oliver Abeynayake.].

Next saying that says the reign of a righteousness ruler brings prosperity to the country. (*devo varṣatu kālena sasyasaṃpattirastu ca/ sphīto bhavatu lokaśca rājā bhavatu dhārmikoh*’ . The cutting down trees is not approved in Buddhism. Instead Buddhism in a strong philosophical analyses makes to reveal how environment, human being and religion is affiliated with each other. Thus Lord Buddha once said that “Cut-off all attachment but not tress.

Buddhism addresses to these environmental issues directly and indirectly. Indirect ways that the Buddhist teachings applied are Textual records and cultural practices (we had incredible cultural practices in the past, but, the modernity demolished all of them). The direct solutions can be traced through the philosophical analysis only. The Buddhist Theoretical Approach towards the Issues are very clear, apparent and easy to be implemented. If pointed out major concepts:

1. Understanding the cause and effect theory
2. Enhancement of the right intention (Three intentions)

3. Attitudinal changes: The theory of consumption prescribed for monks (Just for survive not for greediness)
4. Loving kindness should be extended up to inanimate world (*mettañca sabba lokasmiṃ*)
5. Also need universal love/loving kindness

Ill-knowledge including incorrect vision of a person or state, attitudinal poverty which means selfishness, greed, lack of love and empathy, limited love/loving kindness and misbehaviors that deals with mismanagement of the resources are identified as causes for present day climatological changes and environmental issues.

The only solution for the issue relied on the society is to train people and educate them both hard and soft skills. Compare to hard skills, soft skills are more effective and productive for such an endeavor that is to implant a consciousness of environment that we live and breathe. Soft-skills are given by the spiritual teachings (religions) and aesthetical entertainments as well as its correlation with religious practices it could be more intensive than hard skills. Also it is worth of extending individual love up to universal love (to the industrial world) with slightly moderated by physical and psychological aptitudes.

Proposed Suggestions for Future Planning and Implementations

The following suggestions were made at the concluding of the 10th World Assembly of the Sri Lanka Consultation on the Religions for Peace to be implemented in the year 2019. Rev. Kyoichi Sugino, Deputy Secretary General of the Religion for Peace International strongly mentioned the need of strengthening the Council of Religions for Peace of Sri Lanka section under the leadership of Prof. Rev. M. Dhammajothi-General Secretary of the Organization.

1. Inviting key religious leaders in Sri Lanka covering all four religions (Buddhist, Hindu, Islam and Christianity) for a common forum.
2. Increase the number of District level forums from 14 to 15. It was suggested that before increasing the number it is needed to be peer reviewed the activities of those on-going district councils. Further proposed to increase the involvement and participation of women, youth, civil society representatives, personnel affiliated to Non-governmental organizations and media in those District Councils.
3. Strengthening women of faith
4. Setting-up an Inter-faith youth network specially focused on spiritual values and virtues.

Annexure 1

Sri Lanka National Consultation for the Religions for Peace 10th World Assembly

GSH Hotel, Colombo – Sri Lanka

PROGRAMME

OPENING SESSION	
9.00 – 9.30	Refreshments & Registration Moderator: Ven. Boralessgamuwe Pamarathana Thero, The President, Sri Lanka Council of Religions for Peace
9.30 – 9.40	Welcome Speech: Ms. Sivanandini Duraiswamy, Executive Committee Member SLCRP & President, Hindu Women’s Society
9.40 – 10.10	Introduction to the <i>Religions for Peace</i> 10 th World Assembly Rev. Kyoichi Sugino, Deputy Secretary General, <i>Religions for Peace</i> , New York.
10.10 – 10.30	1. “Caring for our Common Future by Advancing Positive Peace” Father Leopold Ratnasekera - Executive Committee Member & Former Deputy Secretary General SLCRP.
10.30 – 10.50	2. “Caring for our Common Future through Preventing and Transforming Conflicts” Ven. Prof. Medawachchiye Dhammajothi Thero, General Secretary, SLCRP Head, Department of Buddhist Studies, University of Colombo.

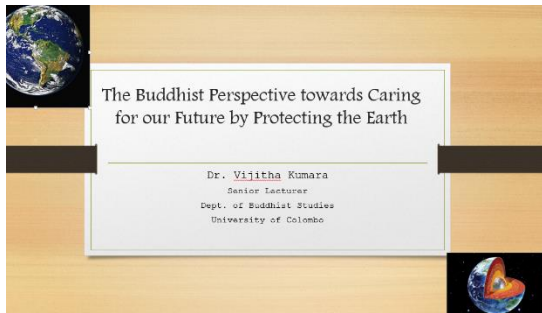
10.50 – 11.00	Vote of Thanks by Mrs.Christobel Saverimuttu, Treasurer, SLCRP
11.00 – 11.30	Group Picture
11.30 – 12.30	Lunch
SESSION 1	
12.30 – 12.50	<p>“Caring for Our Common Future through Promoting Just and Harmonious Societies”</p> <p>Expert: Professor Mookiah, Former Vice Chancellor, Eastern University & Director & Governing Council Member, National Peace Council</p> <p>Hindu Representative (Expert Youth/Woman)</p>
12.50 – 13.30	Comments on Commission Paper
13.30 – 13.50	<p>“Caring for Our Common Future through Working for Sustainable and Integral Human Development”</p> <p>Dr. M.I.M. Jameel, Executive Committee Member, President, SLCRP Ampara District Council</p> <p>Muslim Representative (Expert Youth/Woman)</p>
13.50 – 14.30	Comments on Commission Paper
14.30 – 14.50	<p>“Caring for Our Common Future through Protecting the Earth”</p> <p>Dr. Vijitha Kumara, Senior Lecturer, Department of Buddhist Studies, University of Colombo.</p> <p>Buddhist Representative: Expert (youth/women)</p>
14.50 – 15.30	Comments on Commission Paper

<p style="text-align: center;">15.30</p>	<p>Tea</p> <p>Conclusion</p>
	<p>Rapporteur & summarizing Commission Papers:</p> <p>For all the FOUR sessions</p> <p>a group headed by Dr. Y.A. Widyalandara</p> <p>Coordinators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Mr. P.D.Padmasiri, Administrative Officer SLCRP2) Mr. K.K. Vajira Priyankara, President, SLCRP Youth Wing, Kataragama DC

Annexure 2

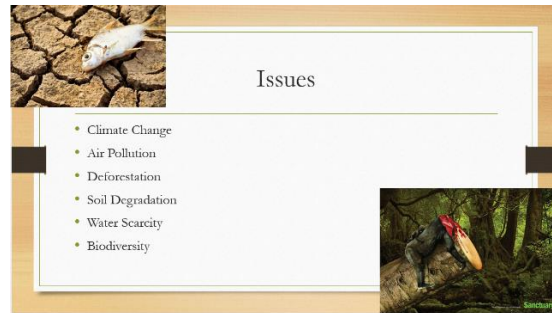
ATTENDANCE SHEET OF THE PARTICIPANTS			
	NAME OF THE PARTICIPANTS	SIGNATURE	TEL. AND REMARKS
1	Rev. Prof. M. Dhammajothi		0718039952
2	Rev. Kyoichi Sugino		19176072632
3	Rev. Fr. LEOPOLD RATWASEKERA		0764702299
4	MOU. S. H. Atharam Gan.		0777839527
5	Prof. Mrs. Mookiah		0772575676
6	Dr. Vijitha Kumar		0715874682
7	Rev. ET UPa l?		0771585292
9	Rev. P. u. Sumanadhissathar		0718195946
10	Sivanandini Duraiswamy		0779192909
11	Shantha D. Pathirana		0766547289
12	Ms. Ambikai Forman		0776610761 / Glad I am part of it
13	Ms. Komuli Vathanarajan		0776456999
14	Mrs Nagaktha Thripparan		0776047749
15	Ms. Krishnaruba - Balasingam		0776117577
16	Mr. Sp. Samarathna		0775962746.
17	Mrs D. S. Weragama		670 39 28 906
18	S. m. A. n. Subasinga		077266 9708
19.	M. A. Gunarathne		0774914875.
20	H. D. R. Madhavi		076 9656245
21.	A. M. Anwanthi		071-8798448.
22	Dr. S. A. Widyalanckara.		0718963699
23	Meeran Anjith		0714279479
24	K. K. V. Paikankara		0713977520
25	P. J. P. P. M. S. S. S.		072-4095804

Power point Presenttaion of Dr. Vijitha Kumara



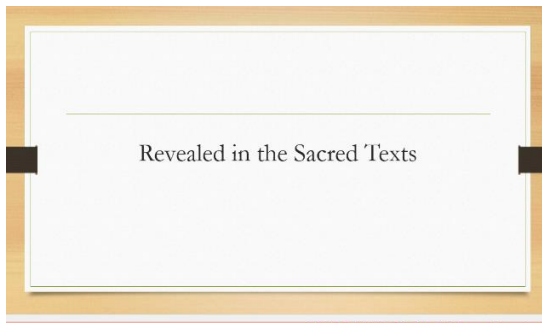
The Buddhist Perspective towards Caring for our Future by Protecting the Earth

Dr. Vijitha Kumara
Senior Lecturer
Dept. of Buddhist Studies
University of Colombo

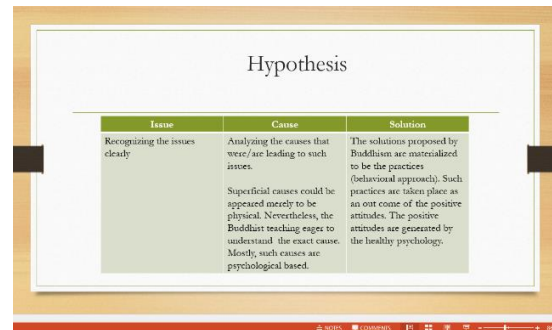


Issues

- Climate Change
- Air Pollution
- Deforestation
- Soil Degradation
- Water Scarcity
- Biodiversity

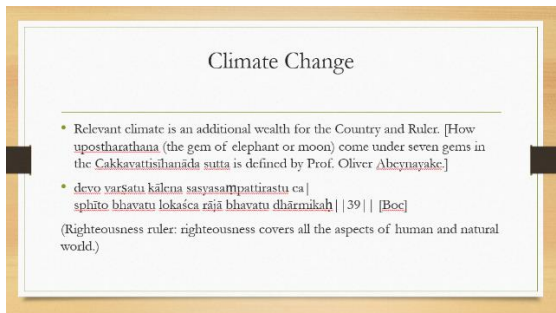


Revealed in the Sacred Texts



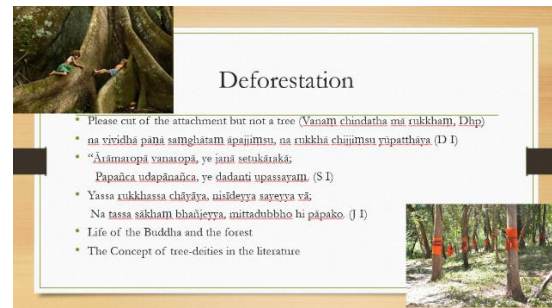
Hypothesis

Issue	Cause	Solution
Recognizing the issues clearly	Analyzing the causes that were/are leading to such issues. Superficial causes could be appeared merely to be physical. Nevertheless, the Buddhist teaching eager to understand the exact cause. Mostly, such causes are psychological based.	The solutions proposed by Buddhism are materialized to be the practices (behavioral approach). Such practices are taken place as an out come of the positive attitudes. The positive attitudes are generated by the healthy psychology.



Climate Change

- Relevant climate is an additional wealth for the Country and Ruler. [How upostharathana (the gem of elephant or moon) come under seven gems in the Cakkavattisihanāda sutta is defined by Prof. Oliver Abeynayake.]
- *devo varṣatu kālca sasyasampattirastu ca | sphūto bhavatu lokaśca rājā bhavatu dhārmikah || 39 || [Boc]*
(Righteousness ruler: righteousness covers all the aspects of human and natural world.)



Deforestation

- Please cut of the attachment but not a tree (*Vanam chindarha ma rukkham, Dhhp*)
- *na vriedha pana samghanam apajimsu, na rukkha chijimsu yipattihaya. (D I)*
- “*Ārāmatopā vanatopā, ye jana setukataka; Papanca udapanañca, ye dadanti upassayam. (S I)*
- *Yassa rukkhassa chāyāya, nādeyya sayeyya va; Na tassa sikkham bhāṇeyya, mittadubbho hi papako. (J I)*
- Life of the Buddha and the forest
- The Concept of tree-deities in the literature

Water Scarcity

- Na udāse uccāram vā passāvam vā khalam vā karissāmī sikkhā karaṇīyā (Vin IV)



Buddhist Theoretical Approach towards the Issues

- Understanding the cause and effect theory
- Enhancement of the right intention (Three intentions)
- Attitudinal changes: The theory of consumption prescribed for monks (Just for survive not for greediness)
- Loving kindness should be extended up to inanimate world (mettaṅga sabba lokasmīṃ)
- Also need universal love/loving kindness

Findings

Issue	Cause	Solution
Recognized issues: Climate Change Air Pollution Deforestation Soil Degradation Water Scarcity Biodiversity	Til-knowledge: Incorrect vision, of a person or state Attitudinal poverty : selfishness, greed, lack of love and empathy, limited love/loving kindness. Misbehaviors: mismanagement of the resources	People should be trained in both hard-skills and soft-skills Soft-skills are given by the spiritual teachings (religions) and aesthetical entertainments Individual love should be extended up to universal love(to the industrial world), need physical and psychological moderations.

Conclusion

- Buddhism addresses to these environmental issues directly and indirectly. Indirect ways that the Buddhist teachings applied are Textual records and cultural practices (we had incredible cultural practices in the past, but, the modernity demolished all of them) . The direct solutions can be traced through the philosophical analysis only.