

Respect for fauna and flora

A Green Country, a Clean Environment

My administration will be based on policies aiming at conserving the environment, nationally and internationally. Due to the application of the principle that the 'abuser should pay for the abuse' the Environment Ministry is self-financing reducing the burden on the Treasury. We were in a position to increase the income from the mineral sector by three fold during the last four years while the export of our natural resources as raw materials was curtailed. The State intervened in controlling the prices of mineral products through a Mining Company under the "Ran Derana Project." ending the era of importing sleepers for the railways and lamp posts for electricity projects. The Timber Corporation doubled its income under its "Timber Power" (Deva Javaya) programme.

For the first time, a national waste management programme was launched with the objective of creating a country without rubbish by 2012 under the "Pilisaru" Project. The "Gaja Mithuru" project seeks to ensure the co-existence of man and elephant reducing the threat to the elephant population. To prevent ocean pollution, I have strengthened the Ocean Pollution Prevention Authority through a new Act. We were internationally acclaimed as the best country that protected the Ozone layer in 2008.

Green Lanka for a sustainable future

It is evident that Sri Lanka cannot sustain its development efforts due to the lack of resources and environmental pollution. Consequently the "Haritha Lanka" programme will be launched from 2010-2020, under my leadership, with the objective of creating a base for sustainable development. This intervention includes activities to protect our water resources and catchment areas, protection of the ocean and aquatic resources, prevention of air pollution, soil conservation, the introduction of innovative methods for agriculture, promotion of renewable energy sources, promote eco friendly industries, build healthy towns and housing schemes, develop an environmental friendly transport system, implement waste management systems, prepare the country for environmental change, and to promote cultural awareness and education necessary for the above. Several themes will be selected for the action plan. Measures also will be taken to initiate joint action in facing the environmental challenges in the South Asian context.

An Action Plan will be implemented from 2010 to seek solutions to the problems emerging out of environmental changes such as droughts, floods, cyclones, Tsunami, extinction of species, endemic diseases and threats to food cultivation.

Garbage Free Sri Lanka

The responsibility for waste management is vested upon the urban councils and Pradeshiya Sabhas. However, in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry of Urban Development and the Board of Land Reclamation, under the initiative of the Central Environment Authority, I launched the "Pilisaru Project" in July 2008. I have launched a national waste management policy and a national plan of action aimed at a garbage free Sri Lanka by 2012, utilizing our own financial resources amounting to Rupees 5,600 million. By doing so, I have taken steps to rehabilitate the huge garbage mountains and implement a methodical waste management system in the future. I wish to state that I have taken measures to utilize foreign technology and private sector investment to achieve this end.

Beautiful Cities - "Green Villages"

To ensure sustainable urban development I have planned to convert the suburbs, of the capital city, into "beautiful green towns". I will launch 'green' walking lanes, conserve cultivable land and rehabilitate canals in our major cities. This will be done in collaboration with the Central Environmental Authority and the Urban Development Ministry, as they have already initiated, the concept of green cities.

I will launch green villages under the 'Lama Naguma' programme to make our villages environmentally friendly.

From Forest conservation to Water Conservation - "Girithuru Sevana"

Our hinterland is the base for water conservation and integrated water resource management. Due to the expansion of the plantation sector by the colonial powers and unplanned development, our catchment areas are destroyed. Therefore, I have launched a programme to re-forest the catchment areas titled the "Girithuru Sevana" programme. Furthermore, I will promote the planting of local trees instead of the imported species under the 'Hela Thuru Sevana' programme to promote indigenous reforestation.

Gaja Mithuro - Elephant-Human Co-existence

- Unplanned development and terrorism have destroyed our national parks and sanctuaries. Consequently, elephants have invaded villages and have created an elephant human conflict. As a solution to this problem, I have implemented the "Gaja Mithuro" programme in 2009. As a part of this programme, 'elephant control' units and electric fences were established over 600 kilometers during the last two years alone. I will complete these electric fences in all affected villages, including the North and the East, in the next three years.
- All sanctuaries such as Wilpaththu, Kumana, Yan Oya, and Mundikulam which were closed due to terrorist activities will be re-opened and modernized during the year.
- I will implement a new project, at a cost of 2,600 million rupees, to protect the threatened animal species and to promote environmental conservation from the year 2010.