



Sri Lanka Country Statement

The High Level Segment of UNFCCC – COP 25 **10th to 11th December 2019, Madrid, Spain**

[Delivered by Ms. S. Hasanthi Urugodawatte Dissanayake, Director General of Ocean Affairs, Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Foreign Relations, Sri Lanka]

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Delegates.

It is indeed a great pleasure and a privilege to deliver this statement on behalf of the Government of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

I further wish to extend my gratitude to Chile for the successful Presidency of UNFCCC COP25 and the Kingdom of Spain for remarkable arrangements to host this event.

Sri Lanka wishes to align its Statement along with the Statement made by the representative of Palestine on behalf of G77 and China.

Further, Sri Lanka recognizes the importance of the role of COP, and highlights the need to take effective and definitive steps for finalizing the follow up actions of the Paris Agreement.

The rise of the global mean temperature and the resulting changes have created adverse impacts on key sectors of Sri Lanka, such as agriculture, forestry, biodiversity, marine and fisheries, tourism and energy (hydro power) sectors, leading to disastrous effects on its people, ecosystems and economy.

According to official statistics from 2008 to 2018, droughts, floods and landslides have affected over 15 million people, and losses and damages resulting from these calamities have been borne by Sri Lanka's national budget.

Climate science and the IPCC 1.5 Degrees Report highlight the threats on vulnerable ecosystems, such as coral reefs, mangroves and wetlands, which create additional burden on the country's biodiversity.

Ripple effects of climate change on soil and water contamination have also led to increase in diseases such as chronic kidney disease, creating additional burden on the country's healthcare system.

Today, Sri Lanka's agriculture sector experiences many hardships due to shifts in seasonal rainfall patterns and prolonged droughts. Lack of water for agricultural activities has already created social and economic changes among farmer communities, resulting in internal migration of farmers to cities in search of alternative livelihoods.

Sri Lanka is happy to note the successful outcome of Road Map set out under Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture, including the 4th Koronivia workshop held during COP25 focusing on improved nutrient use and manure management towards sustainable and resilient agricultural systems. In this context, Sri Lanka hosted and launched the UN Global Campaign on Sustainable Nitrogen Management in October 2019, at which a commitment was sought to halve the Nitrogen waste by 2030, depicting Sri Lanka's alignment with connected global initiatives.

Climate change impacts are real, and Sri Lanka is experiencing them, on a daily basis. To address the climate change impacts, Sri Lanka has identified and is implementing three (03) broad approaches, based on which many projects are implemented to build resilience among the most vulnerable communities, ecosystems and economic sectors of the country. They are as follows:

1. Rehabilitation of ancient reservoir cascade system (ecosystem based adaptation) to address the prolonged drought situation in the Dry Zone;
2. Rehabilitation and enrichment of watersheds and catchments to ensure perennial water flow to address the prolonged drought situation in the Dry Zone;
3. Diversion of excess water in the Wet Zone to Dry Zone where prolonged droughts are predicted and control floods in the wet zone.

These affirmative actions are also manifested in country's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) with due attention given to vulnerable communities and ecosystems.

In this blue COP, Sri Lanka wishes to highlight its commitment towards oceans, focused on sustainable use of its resources and rule-based ocean governance to benefit all, giving due consideration for the nexus between oceans and climate change.

Having recognized high contribution of mangroves for carbon sequestration, Sri Lanka has included mangrove restoration in country's ambitious projects to increase the forest cover from 29% to 32% by 2030. In line with these commitments, in 2018 Sri Lanka undertook to lead the Commonwealth Blue Charter Action Group on Mangrove Ecosystems and Livelihoods.

Sri Lanka's per capita Green House Gas emission is less than 0.05%, which is around one ton (1.09). However, as a part of the global community's efforts to reduce GHG emission, Sri Lanka also has undertaken several initiatives as reflected in its NDCs for mitigation.

From strengthening the resilience of smallholder farmers in the dry zone, building resilience in livelihoods among the impacted communities, to engaging youth of the country in the climate decision making processes, Sri Lanka is committed to inclusive and participatory climate actions to ensure that affirmative actions are taken to address the vulnerabilities of climate change.

Sri Lanka further wishes to stress the need for all financial flows including climate finance for loss and damage, taking into account the needs and priorities of developing country parties, and the most vulnerable communities. Faced with increasing number and intensity of extreme weather events, these countries are in urgent need of financial resources, including for technology development and transfer, capacity building to minimize and compensate the losses and damages.

Further, Sri Lanka reiterates the need for urgent, inclusive and participatory climate action, which extend to the inclusion and participation of vulnerable communities, and multiple stakeholders - including civil society, private sector, youth, women, academia and strengthening the public participation at all levels.

Sri Lanka wishes to reiterate the importance of gender responsiveness in climate action, and appreciate the review of the Lima Work Programme on Gender and its Gender Action Plan at COP25.

Sri Lanka assures its continued commitment to the success of the implementation of COP decisions under the UNFCCC. Further, Sri Lanka reiterate its full confidence and unreserved support to the Chairs, Co-Chairs and Co-facilitators of various subsidiary and constituted bodies of the UNFCCC.

Thank you.