

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Saturday, 3 July 2021 17:00 GMT +05:30
DIALOGUE TITLE	Sri Lanka's Transition to Sustainable Agriculture and the Role of Sustainable Finance
CONVENED BY	Mr. Adheesha Perera, Core Group Member of Sri Lanka Banks' Association's Sustainable Banking Initiative (SLBA SBI)
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/26939/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/26939/</a>
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Sri Lanka

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

# 1. PARTICIPATION

## TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

### PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18	2	19-30	34	31-50	7	51-65	66-80	80+
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### PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

28	Male	15	Female	Prefer not to say or Other
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### NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

33	Agriculture/crops Fish and aquaculture Livestock Agro-forestry Environment and ecology Trade and commerce	2	Education Communication Food processing Food retail, markets Food industry Financial Services		Health care Nutrition National or local government Utilities Industrial Other
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### NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

	Small/medium enterprise/artisan Large national business Multi-national corporation Small-scale farmer		Workers and trade union Member of Parliament Local authority
6	Medium-scale farmer	2	Government and national institution Regional economic community
3	Large-scale farmer	1	United Nations International financial institution
6	Local Non-Governmental Organization	20	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance Consumer group Other
2	International Non-Governmental Organization		
	Indigenous People		
2	Science and academia		

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

### HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

This dialogue centered on Action Track 3 on Nature Positive Production and on Finance as Lever of Change in support such a nature positive food system. The dialogue was intended to bring together diverse stakeholders from agriculture and finance sector from Sri Lanka and beyond. To obtain this wide representation, the event was put together as a jointly organized effort between Sri Lanka Banks' Association's Sustainable Banking Initiative - SLBA SBI - (through which the communications were sent out to all Sri Lankan banks), Sri Lanka Agripreneurs' Forum (through which communications were circulated to diverse stakeholders in the agriculture industry) and the SDB bank (a leading development bank proactively financing agriculture in Sri Lanka). This dialogue was also to complement the other dialogues that have been held in the country, in that it brought the additional dimension of finance as a lever of change, which had not been a specific focus of other dialogues organized in Sri Lanka, though this had been touched upon in other food systems summit as a key enabler. The dialogue was publicized through social media (facebook, LinkedIn, and Whatsapp networks) and via email and through word of mouth. Although 72 participants registered, only 43 persons attended. Due to popular request the recording of the webinar will be made available via social media pages of Sri Lanka Banks' Association's Sustainable Banking Initiative

### HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The dialogue captured the complexity of the current context in Sri Lanka (where currently there is an intense debate/discourse on organic and inorganic systems of production and the trade offs between food safety and food security, with the Government of Sri Lanka's decision to ban importation of chemical fertilizer and pesticides). Dialogue was forward looking in that it looked to be solution oriented exploring insights from other country experiences (such as India and Indonesia) and discuss the applicability for way forward in Sri Lanka. The dialogue connected those in agriculture sector and those in finance sector and it allowed for innovative solutions such as blended finance facilities towards sustainable agriculture to be discussed in detail.

### DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

The multi-stakeholder engagement, respect for divergent views and building on the work of others helped to make the dialogue more relevant and where it allowed to create new connections and collaborations to act urgently towards sustainable food systems.

# 3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?

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Yes

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No

# 4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

## MAJOR FOCUS

(iii) examination of links between one or more of the Action Tracks and levers of change:

The Independent Dialogue focused on Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production and Finance as a Lever of Change that could positively contribute towards such transformation.

### ACTION TRACKS

	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
✓	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

### KEYWORDS

✓	Finance	✓	Policy
✓	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
	Human rights		Governance
	Women & Youth Empowerment	✓	Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

## MAIN FINDINGS

- 1). Innovative mechanisms of financing such as blended finance vehicles being implemented in Indonesia (Tropical Landscape Finance Facility) and in India (Sustainable India Finance Facility) provide inspiration for Sri Lanka to also explore such options in the country through collaborations between the different stakeholders. The Global Alliance for a Sustainable Planet (GASP) offered support to Sri Lanka and invited local stakeholders to collaborate with them. SLBA SBI has been also exploring such blended finance facility in Sri Lanka for sometime.
- 2). Zero-Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) was discussed as an option for Sri Lanka in its aspirations to be the first country to produce food without the use of chemicals. The varying context was also discussed, with regards to availability of raw materials and labour, where the situation in Sri Lanka differs from that of India, although one of the speakers provided details of local alternatives for natural inputs/innoculants that could be used in Sri Lanka, where success has been observed. Mr. Satya Tripathi from GASP offered to connect Sri Lankan stakeholders with officials in Andhra Pradesh such as Mr. Vijay Kumar, who has been advising Andhra Pradesh state government on its ZBNF program.
- 3). The importance of the social context, where farmer to farmer knowledge sharing in India played a critical role in dissemination of knowhow on sustainable agriculture was discussed, and at a time when Sri Lanka's agri extension service was not nimble and adept as it used to be in the past, the need to strengthen all available means of disseminating agri knowhow and tech was underscored.
- 4). With the volume of food needing to be produced for food security and with the data on the increased yields due to chemical inputs, one of the speakers noted that while the amount of chemical inputs have to be reduced, it cannot be completely done away with without having ramifications to yield. He juxtaposed the statistics from 1940 (before Sri Lanka used agro chemicals) and the yields in 2020 to show the difference (4.8 tonnes of rice per hectare in 2020 as opposed to only 0.65 tonnes per hectare in 1940). He advocated for integrated plant nutrient systems and integrated pest management systems.
- 5). Some of the other speakers spoke about the environmental and health implications as well as foreign exchange implications for the country and Mr. Satya Tripathi revealed the drastic reductions of health issues reported in Andhra Pradesh in India, where natural farming had been adopted, based on hospital records.
- 6). Adaptation strategies in crop production such as aerobic rice, flood tolerant rice, short duration rice, salt tolerant rice, pre-monsoon dry sowing, inter-cropping and crop rotation and third season crops were seen as some of solutions that need to be supported to counter the impacts from climate change.

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		✓	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/2

Sustainable Finance Towards Sustainable Agriculture: The need for Sri Lanka to mobilize different funding avenues including blended finance, impact bonds, etc, were discussed. The need to access Green Climate Fund and other vertical funds through collaborative engagements with Government, banking sector and other actors coming together was reiterated.

ACTION TRACKS

KEYWORDS

	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all	✓	Finance		Policy
	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns		Innovation		Data & Evidence
✓	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production		Human rights		Governance
	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods		Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress			✓	Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/2

Regenerative Agriculture and Other Sustainable Agriculture Methods: Experiences over the past decades from Sri Lanka and beyond were discussed. The need to integrate technology and markets was highlighted. The onus on agriculture sector, finance sector and government to collaborate in exploring partnerships towards promoting such agricultural methods was underscored.

ACTION TRACKS

	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
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	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

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	Human rights	✓	Governance
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## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Divergent views were observed where those advocating for some level of chemical inputs for agriculture noted that given the food demand of the future, the approach would need to be a balanced one, where integrated approaches need to be taken forward (such as integrated plant nutrient systems and integrated pest management) with chemical inputs (more advanced slow release versions - 2nd and 3rd generation fertilizer) being supplemented with soil organic matter. The need to promote Sri Lanka Good Agricultural Practices (SLGAP) was seen as a more pragmatic solution than attempting to go completely chemical free.

The other school of thought was that it is possible to transform agriculture system to be completely chemical free and given the perilous state we are in with the planetary boundaries being crossed (especially due to the chemical based monoculture farming practices), priority should be towards food safety and restoring of ecosystems, since it is clear that the chemical systems are increasingly becoming unsustainable. The need to be bold and innovative in tackling this issue was highlighted.

Some expressed the opinion that much of the small holder farmers in Sri Lanka were part time farmers, where they were also engaged in other livelihoods to supplement their income. They argued that techniques like zero budget natural farming that require more labour intensive practices, will carry externalities that need to be factored in.

Everyone agreed that the use of technology could to a large degree avoid the need for chemical inputs. However, mainstreaming such technologies, where there is large digital divide and access to finance was seen to be a challenge that needed to be overcome.

The need for more research on the balance between organic and inorganic food systems was highlighted.

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# ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

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## RELEVANT LINKS

- **Virtual Dialogue - Sri Lanka's Transition to Sustainable Agriculture and The Role of Sustainable Finance**  
<https://youtu.be/igfLzKErUKs>