



## A BLUE-GREEN ERA

One of the major challenges faced by the world today is the rise of global warming which has a direct link with the activities of the people. Since it is estimated that the world population will be increased by another 2 billion by the year 2050 it has become absolutely necessary to control a further rise of world warming due to activities of this increased population. Thus it is incumbent on the present generation to employ appropriate measures to utilize limited natural resources of the world for a sustainable production process and consumption for the benefit of future generations.

World Leaders who attended the United Nations Conference on Climate Change, (21<sup>st</sup> Session of Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change - COP 21) held in Paris from 30<sup>th</sup> November to 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015 have resolved that all possible actions be taken to limit the rise of global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius from the pre-industrial level by the year 2100. It was further resolved that should be the desire of all developing countries to limit this to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Sri Lanka is a signatory to these resolutions and, hence, has to adopt all appropriate measures to curb the rise of global warming especially in view of the fact that it is a developing Island Nation, highly vulnerable to adverse effect of climate change that affect all social, economical and development activities. Especially noteworthy are some natural disasters that took place in the recent past causing damage to valuable lives and economic resources of the country which in turn challenges our future existence.

It is apparent that the root cause of such disasters is the unsustainable production and consumption patterns of the populace that contribute to major environmental hazards such as air pollution, water pollution, marine pollution and soil pollution and degradation which endanger the existence of humans as well as flora and fauna. Hence, correcting social, economic and physical development strategies and its directions is a great service for the sustainability of future generations. Thus, it is most timely and opportune to adopt a blue-green development strategy for the sustainable development of Sri Lanka in order to provide a more fruitful, happy and healthy livelihood for the populace.

This blue-green development strategy could lead us in the following directions.

### 1. Blue Development (Blue Economy/Ocean Economy)

Geographically, Sri Lanka is positioned at a vantage point consisting marine resources in an extent of 532,619 sq.km which is proposed to be extended up to 1,714, 687 sq.km, and an attractive and resourceful sea coast of 1600 km. It is necessary to identify the sustainable development strategies to manage these marine resources without causing environmental pollution. Some development opportunities could be listed as follows:

#### I. Oceanic Fish Resources:

Efforts should be made to utilize these resources employing sustainable strategies.

#### II. Other Marine Biological Resources:

Sri Lanka's marine region consists of valuable resources including corals and other marine life and priority should be given to maximize the use of these resources.

**III. Oceanic Mineral Resources:**

Sri Lanka's coast line, its environment and the ocean floor contain valuable mineral resources which can be converted to value added products for commercial purposes. Possibilities in this respect need to be explored.

**IV. Oceanic Navigation and Port Facilities:**

Economic prosperity could be achieved by developing oceanic navigation sea voyages and natural and modern sea ports in an eco-friendly manner.

**V. Development of Tourism Industry Utilizing Coastal and Oceanic Resources:**

Encouragement of the development of tourism industry using sustainable and eco-friendly means should be considered in promoting Sri Lankan beaches rich in attractions and good climatic conditions and the oceanic floor with valuable resources.

**VI. Promoting Beach and Oceanic Sports:**

To bring Sri Lanka to a prominent position in beach and oceanic sports utilizing the natural and attractive beaches and the ocean floor.

**VII. Maritime Archaeology and Anthropology:**

Historically, for centuries, Sri Lanka was a centre of a popular sea route and the numerous related activities contributed to a rich maritime archaeology need to be fully explored for economic benefits.

**VIII. Centre for the Security of the Ocean:**

Sri Lanka is an important centre in the global geo political map in view of its relationship with international sea routes. Hence, several economic benefits could be obtained by turning attention to the sphere of protection of the ocean.

**IX. Oceanic Energy:**

Due to its richness in oceanic resources, many areas of renewable energy could be identified. Feasibility of generating energy using sea waves and offshore wind power and OTEC (Oceanic Thermal Energy Conversion) needs to be identified and developed.

**X. Production of Medicine Using Oceanic Resources:**

Possibilities should be explored to research medicinal value of oceanic resources and developed to produce medicines for humans utilizing oceanic resources.

**2. Green Development :**

**I. Green Industrial Production:**

All Industrial productions should be made according to eco-friendly standards for sustainability which in turn will provide economic benefits while protecting the environment.

**II. Green Agriculture:**

Sustainability should be ensured by utilizing eco-friendly means for the development of agriculture.

**III. Green Energy:**

Utilization of environment friendly tools to be encouraged for the production of green energy for the social and economic development of Sri Lanka.

**IV. Green Constructions:**

It is necessary to encourage all construction agencies to utilize environment friendly means for construction and planning of all buildings. Attention in this regard is necessary in the use of raw materials, utensils and instruments as well as interior and exterior decorations.

**V. Green Transport:**

One of the biggest challenges for sustainable development of Sri Lanka is the internal transport strategy which needs to be developed according to green standards. It is necessary to encourage the use of renewable energy and bio-fuels for this purpose.

**VI. Green Cities/Villages:**

Developers should be encouraged to utilize environment friendly standards for the construction of green cities and villages.

**VII. Green Employment:**

In creating employment opportunities for future generations, attention should be paid to environment friendly approaches for the creation of green employment in order to produce healthy, happy and contented work force.

It should be the fervent hope of all of us, Sri Lankans, to concentrate on all aforementioned areas and effectively utilize all available strategies of 'Blue-Green Development' for social and economic development of future Sri Lanka. In doing so, attempts should be made to reduce emission of Green House Gases (GHG), polluted water as well as other pollutants that pollutes the environment. These will afford us sustainable development which in turn will make a happy and prosperous future generation, for which the world will respect Sri Lanka; the beautiful paradise.

***Sgd.***

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and

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