



May You be Blessed with Long Life.....

- This is the, age-old Sri Lankan, traditional gesture of welcome!
- Ayu- Life; Bovan- long

Ecotourism's Global Impact :
The Future for Seas, Forests, & Humankind

**Sustainable Ecotourism;
Contributions to Poverty Reduction, Economic
Development, Employment Creation, and Education**

Palitha Gurusinghe
President, Sri Lanka Ecotourism Foundation
Sri Lanka

Ecotourism & Sustainable Tourism Conference 2017

ESTC 2017



My presentation is based on a Case Study on one of the Ecotourism Projects initiated by Sri Lanka Ecotourism Foundation

- Theme; **How Religious and Cultural Ecotourism** could contribute to alleviate poverty, promote Sustainable Ecotourism, Economic Development, Employment Creation, and Education
- Name of the Ecotourism Project; Madurawala Ecotourism Project; Location; Anguruwatota, Sri Lanka (Western Province Kalutara District) (www.discovermadurawala.net/www.ecotourismsrilanka.net)
- **Mission of the Project; Development of tourism in the village while conserving the environment, culture and heritage, and assure economic benefits for the local community”**
- **Long-Term Goals;** “ Use Ecotourism as a tool to conserve environment and biodiversity, to assure maximum socioeconomic benefits to the community in minimizing the poverty, preserve age-old cultural and heritage of the community for the next posterity and to provide in-depth education and information about quality development of tourism for all stake-holders”

Madurawala CBT; an overview

- Madurawala is an ancient rural village located by one of the four main rivers in Sri Lanka named Kalu.
- The village is part of the medieval Kingdoms of Sri Lankan kings. So the village has a historical background
- These regions are once the liberation centers of Sinhalese fought against colonial powers.
- During the colonial periods of Portuguese and Dutch in Sri Lanka (1505-1796), Madurawala, (located in the town of Anguruwatota) was a famous stop over for the rafts which ferried all sorts of spices, timber from the upstream of Kaluganga (Kalu River) to the main trading center of Kalutara City, the gateway to the South Coast of Sri Lanka.
- In and around of Madurawala, Anugurwatota, there are a lot of ancient Buddhist Hermitages and pre-historic caves, that history goes back to before the Christian era.
- Since the village is located close to the river it is very much prone to the seasonal floods.
- The main livelihoods of people in the village are agriculture, rubber tapping, cottage tea plantation etc.
- The poverty level of the village is below the accepted poverty line.



Madurawala CBT

- Madurawala was a sleepy village until ecotourism programmes were initiated around the year 2012.
- Many people of the village including Buddhist monks, school teachers, elderly local community with religious background did not like tourism come to the village
- **Because the project activities are revolving around a Buddhist Temple**

How this CBT was initiated

- This CBT was initiated in a very small scale in 2012. The driving force behind the CBT Project is Rev. Hatiyalwela Chandananda – scholarly Buddhist Monk and the Chief Incumbent of the temple who is physically disabled
- He has founded the Project supported by Sri Lanka Ecotourism Foundation with the sole intention of **promoting people-friendly tourism** in the locality with a view to assure economic and social benefits to the community, living around in this rural ambience. We believe tourism should be used as a tool to conserve environment, biodiversity and to assure maximum socioeconomic benefits to the host community in minimizing poverty and preserve age-old cultural and heritage.
- This CBT could be the first Community Based Ecotourism Project in Sri Lanka based in a Buddhist Temple, dedicated to support the community and conservation of the environment and the cultural heritage through tourism

Challenges

- When the SLEF tried to introduce Ecotourism activities to generate alternate income, initially, it was difficult to convince the community in the village on;
- How tourism could play as a tool to conserve environment, biodiversity
- How to assure maximum socioeconomic benefits to the host community in minimizing poverty
- How to preserve age-old cultural and heritage of this ancient village.

These were the big challenges!

How we addressed the challenges

- We explained to the community that Ecotourism is something different from mass/main stream tourism
- Ecotourism is based on sustainability and it assures environmental and biodiversity conservation, it will assure an alternate income for the village community
- Ecotourism would support in widening the horizons of the knowledge base and the education at community level
- Ecotourism would strictly adhering to the religious belief of the community, culture and heritage preservation of the village

Income generating activities

- After conducting series of regular awareness and training programmes on ecotourism, villagers slowly understood **how ecotourism was different from main stream tourism.**
- Later, SLEF introduced diverse ecotourism programmes to the CBT with a view to widen the knowledge base of the villagers and to generate alternative income.
- Subsequently, SLEF introduced diverse ecotourism income generating activities which could be offered to the domestic and foreign tourists.
- Currently, a good income is being generated and shared amongst the community of the village through Home Stay Programme, operating tours to the cultural and heritage sites, regeneration of traditional crafts such as pottery, iron work, weaving, sale of handicrafts, dairy and agricultural products are the most important income generating ecotourism activities.

Damma Deep Foundation, Tripura, India



- During conducting the awareness programmes for the local community SLEF has sited examples from neighbouring countries of Sri Lanka on how religious and cultural tourism could develop the livelihoods of the rural communities



- Good example; Similar ecotourism project is being operated by Damma Deep Foundation, Tripura, India)

Web site; www.ddstripura.org

mail; dhammapiya@yahoo.com

International support

- Since the CBT is operating successfully, many international organizations such as ERASMUS + STARS Programme of Education, Cultural Agency of the European Union (EU) supported the CBT. The focus of the EU Programme is “Sustainable and Ecotourism in Rural Societies” (STARS) The STARS Project has mainly been focusing on elimination of poverty and unemployment of youth from the island nations.
- Since the CBT has received much publicity and attention through the social media it attracted many interns and volunteers from many countries during past few months www.discovermadurawala.net

Current situation of the CBT

- The Madurawala Community Based Ecotourism Project is still being developed. However, the CBT now offers the following diverse ecotourism packages for the genuine domestic and international visitors who are looking forward for an authentic, lifetime ecotourism experience

Ecotourism activities

- Culture and Heritage Tours, History and Archaeology
- Nature trekking, Community camping and River bathing
- Boating and canning in the river
- Visits to the rice fields, tea and rubber plantations, organic farming (Agrotourism)
- Festivals and cultural events
- **Open fire cooking demonstrations with the village women**
- Cycling
- Bird watching



Ecotourism activities

- Village life tours
- Meet and talk to village artisans, black smiths, pottery, handicraft manufacturers, handloom weavers and to see all of them are in action
- Traditional (indigenous) Ayurvedic Medicinal practices and to experience, Spiritual Tourism such as meditation, yoga
- Nature Photography
- Cross-cultural experience
- Home Stay
- Voluntourism



Observable and measurable research results of the project

1. Buddhism is a religion that contributes greatly in conserving environment, the biodiversity and alleviation of poverty
2. Ecotourism programmes could easily be operated in a Buddhist religious background
3. Conducting training and educational programmes are vital to convince village people on the importance of sustainable tourism products. (How Ecotourism differentiate from main stream tourism)



අපේ දැක්ම

".....මධුරාවල සංචාරක සංවර්ධන පදනමේ ප්‍රධානතම අරමුණු වන්නේ, පාරිසරික සංචාරක ක්‍රියාත්මක කිරීම, පාරිසරික හා ජෛව විවිධත්ව සංරක්ෂණය සඳහා පුරාවිද්‍යාත්මක දැයකර්මය ලබා ගැනීමත්, ඒ සඳහා අපේක්ෂා කෙරෙන ජනතාවගේ ආවේණික සවිමත් කිරීම හැරුණු විට, දිළිඳු බව අවම කිරීමත්, ජනතාව විසින් විවිධත්ව කාලයක් මුළුල්ලේ රැකගෙන එන්නා වූ සාමාජිකයන් හා සංස්කෘතිය උරුමයන් ඉදිරි පරපුර සඳහා හවුරුවත් රැක දීමත් ගුණාත්මක සංචාරක සංවර්ධනයක් උදෙසා සියලු පාර්ශවකරුවන් දැනුවත් කිරීමත් වේ....."

OUR MISSION

"Mission of the Madurawala Tourism Development Foundation is to use Ecotourism as a tool to conserve environment and biodiversity, to assure maximum socioeconomic benefits to the community in minimizing the poverty, preserve age-old cultural and heritage of the community for the next posterity and to provide in-depth education and information

Madurawala Community Based Ecotourism Project

"....Ecotourism at its best in Kalutara District...."



Promoted and Managed by:
Madurawala Tourism Development Foundation

Supported by:
Sri Lanka Ecotourism Foundation



Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Madurawala, Anguruwatota, Kalutara District, Sri Lanka
+94 725673163 / +94 774245022 / +94 777631334

Helping needy communities



Location: **Madurawala, Anguruwatota**



Madurawala and Anguruwatota are located in the Western Province, Kalutara District. From Kalutara to Madurawala is just 30 KMS. Madurawala is accessible from Neboda-Horana Road or Horana-Kalutara Road. The Madurawala Village is located around 52 KMS from Colombo.

Madurawala is located in close proximity to Anguruwatota Ancient Village which is part of the ancient Kingdom of Sitawaka and Raigam Kingdom.

These regions are once the liberation centers of Sinhalese fought against Portuguese. (Sinhala: සිතාවක) This kingdom was located in south-central Sri Lanka. It emerged from the division of the kingdom of Kotte following the Spoiling of King Vijayabahu in 1521, and over the course of the next seventy years came to dominate much of the island. Sitawaka also offered fierce resistance to the Portuguese, who had arrived on the island in 1505. This kingdom was the abode of the rulers of Sitawaka Rajasinghe and regional leader of Mayadunne in 1594. During the Portuguese and Dutch periods in Sri Lanka (1505-1796) Anguruwatota was a famous stop over for the rafters which ferried all sorts of spices from the upstream of Kaluganga (Kalu River) to Kalutara. In and around of Anguruwatota there are a lot of ancient Buddhist Hermitages that history goes back to before the Christian era.

Profile:

Madurawala Tourism Development Foundation and Madurawala Community Based Ecotourism Project

“Developing tourism while conserving the environment, culture and heritage, and supporting the local community”



Madurawala Tourism Development Foundation and Madurawala Community Based Ecotourism Project

The driving force behind the Madurawala Tourism Development Foundation and Madurawala Community Based Ecotourism Project is Rev. Hatiyalwela Chandananada –an erudite Chief Incumbent of Sri Sumangalaramaya Temple, Ampitigala, Madurawala, Anguruwatota, Sri Lanka. He has founded these two organizations in this rural village with the sole intention of promoting people-friendly tourism with a view to assure economic and social benefits to the community living around in this rural locality. He believes tourism should be used as a tool to conserve environment, biodiversity and to assure maximum socioeconomic benefits to the host community in minimizing poverty and preserve age-old cultural and heritage. Madurawala Community Based Ecotourism Project is being supported and promoted by Sri Lanka Ecotourism Foundation (SLEF), the pioneer National Ecotourism Society of Sri Lanka with the support offered by Sustainable Tourism Agents of Rural Societies (STARS)

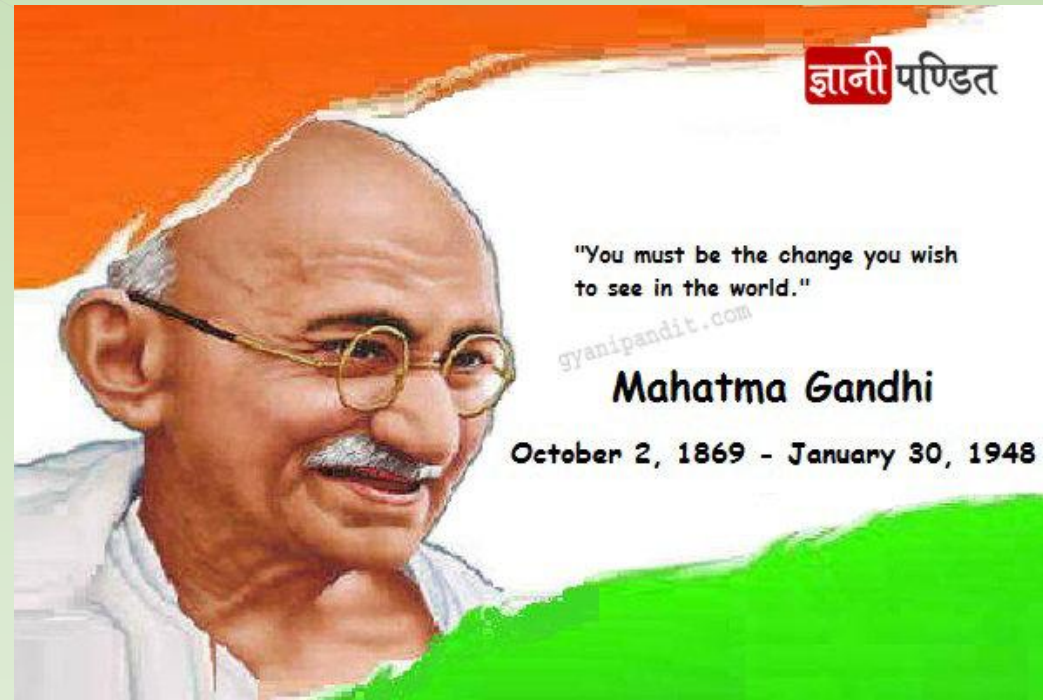
The Madurawala Community Based Ecotourism Project now offers the following diverse ecotourism packages for the domestic and international visitors who are looking forward for an authentic, lifetime ecotourism experience:

01. Culture and Heritage Tours
02. Nature trekking
03. Boating and canoeing in the river
04. Visits to the rice fields, tea and rubber plantations
05. Festivals and cultural events
06. History and Archaeology
07. River bathing
08. Open fire cooking demonstrations with the village women
09. Cycling
10. Bird watching
11. Organic Farming and Agro Tourism
12. Village life tours
13. Meet and talk to village artisans, black-smiths, pottery craftsmen, handloom weavers and see all of them in action
14. Traditional (indigenous) Ayurvedic Medicinal practices and Experience
15. Spiritual Tourism such as meditation
16. Community camping
17. Nature Photography
18. Cross-cultural experience
19. Home Stay



Concluding Remarks;

In sustainable Tourism, 'distinguishing rich from poor and empowering the poor by enabling them to participate as subjects, not as objects in their own developments'



The greatest son of India, Mahatma Gandhi's used to say very often

“nature has given plenty of resources to meet mankind's need, but not the greed...”

Our thanks to

- Mayor, Ansan city, Mr. Jon Jeel Je
- Kelly Bricker, on Bruno of TIES
- ESTC Secretariat, staff, volunteers of

THANK YOU!

