

Co-produced by:

TVE Asia Pacific



and  
MTV Channel (Pvt)  
Limited

In partnership  
with:



International Union  
for Conservation of  
Nature

Supported under  
the Raising  
Environmental  
Consciousness in  
Society (RECS)  
Project sponsored  
by the Government  
of the Netherlands.



On Sirasa TV  
Thursdays  
at 10.45 pm from  
22 May 2008

Broadcast dates and  
times for Channel One  
MTV not yet decided.

**Media Release**  
Colombo, 3 June 2008

## **Sri Lanka 2048 explores limits of our fisheries**

Sri Lanka's fisheries industry has now recovered from the tsunami, and recorded the highest ever catch of 291,000 metric tons in 2007. But are we getting closer to the maximum sustainable annual fish yield, and is there a danger of over-fishing in some areas? Can our fish stocks collapse leading to a major crisis?

And why did we import over 71,000 metric tons of canned fish and dried fish last year when this island nation - with an exclusive economic zone of sea that is 7 times the land area - could catch all the fish it needs?

These are among the key issues being addressed in this week's programme of *Sri Lanka 2048* -- an innovative series of television debates exploring prospects for a sustainable future for Sri Lanka in the Twenty First Century.

The debate will be broadcast on Sirasa TV at 10.45 pm on Thursday 5 June 2008 (World Environment Day). It involves -- as panel and studio audience -- over two dozen Sri Lankans from academic, civil society, corporate and government backgrounds.

The panel comprises (L to R in photo): Mr G Piyasena, Secretary, Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources; Dr Champa Amarasiri, Head of Marine Biological Resources Division, National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency (NARA); Professor J M P K Jayasinghe, Head, Department of Aquaculture and Fisheries, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka; and Luxman Nirodhawardhana, Programme Director of Sri Lanka Small Fishers Federation.



Fishermen from Sri Lanka's eastern and southern coasts join the debate from the studio audience voicing their concerns for the future of their industry.

The debate takes up the premise that the sea might seem limitless at first glance, but its resources are increasingly depleted. They need to be carefully managed if they are to serve our future needs. Managing these resources must take into consideration over-exploitation, the destruction of marine and coastal habitats by development, destructive fishing practices and poaching by foreign fleets armed with more advanced fishing technology.

The discussion also looks at the state of inland fisheries and aquaculture, which yielded 15 per cent of total 2007 fish catch, and probes what holds back its expansion.

The debates are being co-produced by TVE Asia Pacific, an educational media foundation, and IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, in partnership with MTV Channel (Private) Limited. This TV series is supported under the Raising Environmental Consciousness in Society (RECS) sponsored by the Government of the Netherlands.

For more information, visit: [www.srilanka2048.com](http://www.srilanka2048.com)

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