



On Sirasa TV:
Thursdays
at 10.45 pm

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.



Media Release

Colombo, Sri Lanka: 20 May 2008

Sri Lanka 2048

TV debate series on creating a better future!

If current development trends continue, what would life in Sri Lanka be like by 2048 - when the country marks 100 years of independence?

How can Sri Lanka keep growing economically without triggering mass sickness and death due to poisoning of its air and water?

What smart choices do we need to make today so that the next generation can enjoy prosperity, good health and a clean environment?

How can we safeguard our island from extreme weather and natural disasters resulting from climate change?

These are among the many questions to be addressed in *Sri Lanka 2048* -- a new, innovative series of television debates exploring prospects for a sustainable future for Sri Lanka in the Twenty First Century.

The series, which begins airing on Sirasa TV on 22 May 2008, will be broadcast every Thursday at 10.45 pm on Sri Lanka's most popular channel. Each one hour debate will involve -- as panel and studio audience -- over two dozen Sri Lankans from academic, civil society, corporate and government backgrounds.

The debates are being co-produced by MTV Channel (Private) Limited in partnership with TVE Asia Pacific, an educational media foundation, together with IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

The editorially independent series will accommodate a broad spectrum of expertise and opinion. Broadcast in Sinhala (on Sirasa TV) and English (on Channel One MTV), it is aimed at all thinking and caring Sri Lankans who crave for a better future for themselves and their children.

Says Mano Wikramanayake, Group Director, MTV Channel (Private) Ltd: "Channel One and Sirasa TV are very pleased to partner with TVEAP in producing socially relevant programmes in which civil society can participate. This could be a forerunner to programmes which encourage public debate on issues that concern all of us."

"IUCN with its unique constitution of state and NGO membership is well positioned to facilitate discussions amongst all stakeholders on issues of topical interest," says Dr Ranjith Mahindapala, Country Representative of IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature. "It plays the 'honest broker' role to bring out the most current scientific and allied information on a broad range of subjects which are affecting the environment and our lives."

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"Sustainable development is not some utopian or technical ideal of environmental activists," says TVE Asia Pacific's Director and CEO Nalaka Gunawardene. "It's about creating a liveable society here and today - where everyone has an acceptable quality of life, ample opportunities to learn and earn, and the freedom to pursue their own dreams."

Sri Lanka 2048 debates in Sinhala will be based on topics including managing our waste, reducing air pollution, protecting biodiversity on land and in the seas, and buffering society from disasters. Two debates in English will be on business and the environment, and coping with climate change. All topics will be discussed at a non-technical level in the public interest.

The series is based on the premise that Sri Lanka has abundant land and ocean resources that can be used to build such a future -- but it faces many challenges in taking the right action at the right time.

"Just how do we make the smart choices? They don't just happen -- it requires study, reflection and discussion among concerned people in government, private sector, academia and civil society. This is what we are trying to catalyse through *Sri Lanka 2048* debates," says Nalaka Gunawardene, who will serve as executive producer in charge of content.

Sri Lanka 2048 will adopt an informal, talk show style format that allows ample interaction between the panel and active audience. Each debate will also feature 2 or 3 short video segments produced in advance, and played at key points during the debate to steer discussion.

This TV series is supported under the Raising Environmental Consciousness in Society (RECS) project of IUCN Sri Lanka, which is sponsored by the Government of the Netherlands.

More information on www.srilanka2048.com

Television for Education - Asia Pacific (TVE Asia Pacific) is a regionally operating educational foundation that uses television, video and web for communicating development. Anchored in Sri Lanka, TVEAP produces and distributes TV content to over 40 TV channels across Asia, and works with educational, research and civil society groups. www.tveap.org

MTV Channel (Pvt) Limited, part of the Capital Maharaja Group, owns and operates Channel One MTV (English), Sirasa TV (Sinhala) and Shakthi TV (Tamil) which are market leaders in terrestrial broadcasting in Sri Lanka. <http://www.capitalmaharaja.com/mtvchannels.html>

IUCN - The World Conservation Union is the world's largest conservation network. The Union's membership comprises 83 states, 110 government agencies, more than 800 non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and some 10,000 scientists from 181 countries who pursue sustainable development at local, national and global levels. Since 1988, IUCN has provided technical and policy support to government agencies, civil society and private sector in pursuit of sustainable development. <http://www.iucn.org/places/srilanka>

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