



SRI LANKA CLIMATE SUMMIT 2026

**From Risk to Opportunity: Mainstreaming Climate
Action into Sri Lanka's Growth Story**

09

JUNE 2026

9.00 AM - 5.00 PM

**THE GRAND MARQUEE, TAJ SAMUDRA
COLOMBO**

Building on the 2024 foundation,

the 2026 Climate Summit will pivot from "High-level Advocacy" to "Technical Readiness and Compliance." As Sri Lanka enters the 2026 compliance cycle, climate action has shifted from a voluntary "good-to-have" to a mandatory trade and financial requirement.

9.00 AM – 10.15 AM

Opening Plenary:

9.00 am – 9.05 am: Welcome Address

Mr. Krishan Balendra
Chairperson - The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce

9.05 am – 9.20 am: Keynote Speech

Hon. Dr. Dammika Patabendi
Minister of Environment

9.20 am – 10.15 am: High-level panel on Theme:
Is Sri Lanka Climate Ready for Investment?

Panelists - **Mr. Vimlendra Sharan** - UN-FAO Country Representative for Sri Lanka and Maldives

Mr. Dilhan Fernando - Chairman & CEO, Dilmah Tea

Ms. Shannon Cowlin - Country Director for Sri Lanka Asian Development Bank

Moderator - **Mr. Shiran Fernando** - Secretary General and CEO The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce

10.15 AM – 10.25 AM

Certificate Presentation Ceremony Youth Climate Challenge 2026 Winners

Mr. Krishan Balendra
Chairperson - The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce

Hon. Dr. Dammika Patabendi
Minister of Environment

10.25 AM – 10.45 AM

Refreshments and Networking

10:45 AM – 11.45 AM

Session 1: **Build Better — Before, During, and Beyond**

10.45 am – 11.05 am: International Expert

Case studies: how countries reduced losses and created investment pipelines from resilience:

Keynote Speaker

Mr. Marco Toscano-Rivalta - Chief of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

11.05 am – 11.45 am: Panel Discussion

Panelist - **Mr. Rohan Cooray** - Climate Frontiers Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Specialist

Moderator - **Dr. Lalanath de Silva** - Executive Director, Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide

11.45 AM-01.00 PM Session 2: Sector Pathways Where Policy Meets Industry

11.45 am – 12.00 pm : Keynote Speech

Ms. Azusa Kubota – *UNDP Resident Representative in Sri Lanka:
Policy pipeline and private sector entry points*

12.00 pm – 12.15 am: *International Case Study How countries operationalised carbon markets and PPP climate projects; How public-private arrangements could add value + Policy environment*

Dr. Lalanath de Silva – *Executive Director, Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide*

12.15 pm – 01.00 pm Panel Discussion

Panelists – Mr. K.R.Uduwawala – Secretary, Ministry of Environment

Dr. Hans Wijayasuriya – *Chief Adviser to the President on Digital Economy
how digitization can help drive the climate policy integration into practice*

Mr. Sanath Manatunge – *Managing Director/CEO
Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC*

*Moderator – Mr. Saliya Wickramasuriya – Co- Chair
The Ceylon Chamber Energy Committee*

01.00 PM – 02.00 PM Lunch

02.00 PM – 03.15 PM Session 3: Climate in the Boardroom: From Compliance to Competitive Advantage

02.00 pm – 02.15 pm Keynote Speech

Keynote – Ms. Neha Khanna – Associate Director, Climate Policy Initiative

02.15 pm – 03.15 pm Panel

Panelists – Ms. Sabrina Esufally – Managing Director, Hemas Consumer Brands

Dr. Leonie Vaas – *General Manager – Group Sustainability
Hirdaramani Apparel*

*Moderator – Ms. Yasangi Muditha Randeni – Group Chief Sustainability Officer
AVP – Corporate Strategy & Sustainability, Aitken Spence PLC*

03.15 PM – 04.45 PM Session 4: Unlocking Climate Finance: From Global Funds to Local Projects

03.15 pm – 03.35 pm Keynote Speech

Mr. Rajesh Miglani – *Senior Climate Business Specialist and
Climate anchor for IFC in South Asia*

03.35 pm – 03.45 pm Presenter and moderator

Dr. Ananda Mallawatantri – *Co-Chair, Climate Action Committee
The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce*

03.45 pm – 04.45 pm Panel

*Panelist – Ms. Shayani Weerasinghe – Sustainable Business Specialist
Expertise France*

Ms. Punyamali Saparamadu – *Senior Vice President
Commercial, Colombo Stock Exchange*

**04. 45PM – 05.00PM Closing Plenary: The Integration Roadmap:
What Happens After Today?**

Summit Findings

Dr. Ananda Mallawatantri and Sheran Fernando
Co-Chairs, Climate Action Committee

**Presentation by Economic Intelligence Unit
The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce**

05.00PM Onward Networking and Refreshments

RESOURCE PERSONS



Dr. Ananda Mallawatantri

Ananda Mallawatantri is a recognized leader in sustainable development with over 30 years of experience across international and national organizations. He has held senior roles with United States Agency for International Development, United Nations Development Programme, and the International Union for Conservation of Nature, as well as contributions to the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and the Presidential Secretariat of Sri Lanka. His expertise spans disaster management, energy transition, green finance, climate resilience, conservation, and corporate sustainability. He holds a BSc in Chemistry and a Diploma in Business Administration from the University of Colombo, an MSc in Environmental Science, and a PhD in Soil Physics from Washington State University, USA, earned as a Fulbright Scholar.



Ms. Azusa Kubota

Azusa Kubota joined the United Nations Development Programme in Sri Lanka as Resident Representative in January 2023. Before this appointment, she served as UNDP Resident Representative in Bhutan from 2019 to 2022, leading programme implementation, strategic planning, and country operations. She has also held leadership roles with UNDP in the Solomon Islands, Lao PDR, and the Maldives, in addition to working with UNDP's Independent Evaluation Office on country and thematic evaluations across regions. Ms. Kubota began her UNDP career in Malawi in 2002 and has previous experience with NGOs and international training programmes in the United States and Africa. A national of Japan, she holds a Master's Degree from Columbia University and a Bachelor's Degree from Smith College.



Hon. Dr. Dammika Patabendi

Dr. Dammika Patabendi is a distinguished medical professional and public servant currently serving as the Minister of Environment of Sri Lanka. With a background in medicine, holding an M.B.B.S. degree from the University of Colombo, he has dedicated his career to both healthcare and national development. As a Member of Parliament and former regional leader, he is recognized for his commitment to environmental sustainability and public service.



Mr. Dilhan C. Fernando

Dilhan C. Fernando is the younger son of Dilmah Founder Merrill J. Fernando. A graduate of the London School of Economics and Chairman of Dilmah Tea, as Trustee of the Merrill J. Fernando Foundation, and Director of Dilmah Conservation he directs the fulfillment of his father's unique commitment to serving humanity and environment through business. Dilhan serves as Chair of UN Global Compact Network Sri Lanka and Biodiversity Sri Lanka, a pioneering environmental collaboration amongst the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, IUCN and Dilmah Conservation.



Dr. Hans Wijayasuriya

Hans Wijayasuriya is the Chief Advisor to the President of Sri Lanka on Digital Economy and Chairman of the Information and Communication Technology Agency. He previously served as Group Executive Director and CEO of Telecommunications Business at Axiata Group, where he led pan-regional telecom operations across multiple Asian markets. With over 30 years of experience in the telecommunications industry, he has held senior leadership roles for more than two decades and has been widely recognized for his contributions to the global digital and mobile sector, including awards from the GSM Association. He has also served on several international and national boards, including GSMA-related bodies, and played a key role in Sri Lanka's ICT sector development.

He holds a PhD in Digital Mobile Communications from the University of Bristol, a degree from the University of Cambridge, and an MBA from the University of Warwick.



Mr. Kamal Rohitha Uduwawala

Kamal Rohitha Uduwawala is a Special Grade officer of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service and currently serves as Secretary to the Ministry of Environment. He also serves as Chairman of the Sri Lanka Climate Fund and as a member of the Governing Council of the Sri Lanka Institute of Local Government. A Physics graduate of University of Peradeniya, he also holds a Master's Degree in Organizational Leadership from Monash University and has contributed to research and innovation, including patented electronic devices. Over his distinguished public service career, he has held several senior leadership positions in education, higher education, public administration, and pharmaceutical regulation, while also contributing to national committees on science, technology, climate, energy, and COVID-19 response.



Dr. Lalanath de Silva, PhD, LL.M

Lalanath de Silva is the Executive Director of the Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide and a seasoned public interest environmental lawyer with decades of international experience. He previously practiced in Sri Lanka's private bar for over 20 years, served as a legal consultant to the Ministry of Environment, and was a member of the national Law Commission. His global leadership includes senior roles at Transparentem, where he worked on supply chain accountability, and as the first Head of the Green Climate Fund's Independent Redress Mechanism, where he established its systems and procedures. He has also served with the United Nations Compensation Commission, World Resources Institute, and the Asian Development Bank. He holds a PhD from the University of Sydney and an LL.M from the University of Washington, and is also trained as a mediator.



Dr. Leonie Vaas

Leonie Vaas is the General Manager of Group Sustainability at Hirdaramani Group, where she leads sustainability strategy and implementation across Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Vietnam. With over 17 years of experience in the apparel and textile sector, she is recognized internationally for her leadership in responsible production and was named a UN SDG Pioneer in 2021. She holds a PhD in Sustainability Management from IIC University of Technology, an MBA from Cardiff Metropolitan University, and is a chemical engineer certified by the Engineering Council UK. She also holds professional certifications including Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, GRI Standards, and ISO 14001 Lead Auditor. In addition to her corporate role, she serves as a visiting lecturer in sustainability at the University of Moratuwa and is a frequent international speaker on sustainability and industry transformation.



Mr. Marco Toscano-Rivalta

Chief of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). Over 25 years of experience in international cooperation with the UN and other international organizations at the headquarters and in the field in the areas of sustainable development, disaster risk management, humanitarian relief, and refugee, IDPs and human rights protection.



Ms. Neha Khanna

Neha Khanna is Associate Director at the Climate Policy Initiative, where she leads the organization's green and sustainable finance practice from Delhi. She works with governments, financial institutions, regulators, and development partners to design innovative finance solutions that align capital flows with climate and sustainable development goals. With over 15 years of experience in financial advisory, risk consulting, and development finance, she has advised banks, DFIs, multilaterals, and corporations across Asia, Africa, and the United States. At CPI, she has been instrumental in establishing the Center for Sustainable Finance and has led work on transition finance, green banking, and climate risk frameworks, including contributions to India's Sustainable Finance Roadmap and National Adaptation Plan. She holds a Bachelor's in Computer Science Engineering and an MBA from the Indian Institute of Technology Madras and serves on expert bodies including GARP, the GroW Network, and the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi) Financial Institutions Net-Zero Standard advisory group.



Ms. Punyamali Saparamadu

Punyamali Saparamadu has over 13 years of experience in equity markets, fixed income, corporate finance, and investment management. She began her career as an equity analyst and later worked in the Deal Advisory Division at KPMG, specializing in mergers and acquisitions, valuations, capital structuring, and due diligence. She also served as an investment manager in the insurance sector and later led Treasury and Corporate Finance at People's Leasing & Finance PLC. She currently heads the Commercial Division at the Colombo Stock Exchange, where she oversees the commercialization of equity and debt products, including sustainable bonds, while managing external relations, advocacy, and revenue initiatives. She holds a BSc in Mathematical Finance from the University of Colombo and is a qualified ACMA, CGMA, and CFA charterholder.



Mr. Rajesh Miglani

Rajesh Miglani serves as Senior Climate Business Specialist and Climate Anchor for the International Finance Corporation in South Asia, bringing around 30 years of experience in climate finance, carbon markets, GHG accounting, and sustainable investment strategy. He plays a key role in integrating climate considerations into investment projects and advancing private sector climate finance across infrastructure, manufacturing, and financial institutions. Over 19 years at IFC, he has led initiatives on carbon pricing, blended finance, sustainable housing, and low-emission development pathways, while also contributing to government expert committees on climate finance. Prior to IFC, he worked for seven years at Ernst & Young, where he helped develop India's early carbon markets and executed pioneering carbon credit transactions.



Mr. Rohan Cooray

Rohan Cooray is a distinguished climate risk and finance analyst with over two decades of experience in disaster resilience, climate policy, and sustainable development. He currently serves as a visiting lecturer at the Faculty of Technology of the University of Colombo and is a technical working group member of National Science and Technology Commission. Rohan is actively contributing to Sri Lanka's sustainable finance framework through collaborations with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka and the Climate Bonds Initiative on the national Green Finance Taxonomy. He has also worked with leading international organizations including United Nations Development Programme, Asian Development Bank, and the Green Climate Fund, specializing in climate-responsive governance and sustainable finance.



Ms. Sabrina Esufally

Sabrina Esufally is the Managing Director of Hemas Consumer Brands, driving growth and portfolio expansion across the Home and Personal Care and Learning sectors. She plays a key role in building and scaling home-grown brands across emerging categories, working closely with sales, marketing, innovation, and supply chain teams across Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

Sabrina is an alumna of the University of Durham and Harvard Law School, combining strong brand building expertise with commercial leadership and frontier market insight.



Mr. Saliya Wickramasuriya

Saliya Wickramasuriya is a petroleum engineer with over 27 years of international experience at Schlumberger, where he worked across China, Pakistan, India, the North Sea, the Middle East, and Africa in technical, operational, and leadership roles. After returning to Sri Lanka, he served in several senior government and regulatory positions, including Chairman of the Board of Investment, Sri Lanka Ports Authority, Petroleum Development Authority, and Ceylon Petroleum Corporation, as well as leadership roles in Port City and petroleum storage entities. He also contributed to national energy sector reforms, supporting the development of the Electricity Act 2024. In the private sector, he co-chairs the Energy Committee of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and serves on multiple corporate boards.



Mr. Sanath Manatunge

Sanath Manatunge is a senior Sri Lankan banking professional and Fellow of multiple global and local professional bodies, including the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (UK) and the Institute of Bankers of Sri Lanka. He holds an MBA from the University of Sri Jayawardenepura and an MSc in Sustainable Management from the University of Bedfordshire. With over 36 years of experience in banking, he has held senior leadership roles at the Commercial Bank of Ceylon, including Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer before becoming Managing Director and CEO. He also serves on several corporate and national-level boards and committees, contributing to banking governance, private sector development, and international advisory platforms.



Ms. Shannon Cowlin

Shannon Cowlin is the Country Director of the Asian Development Bank Sri Lanka Resident Mission, where she leads the Bank's operations in the country and manages a portfolio of approximately \$2.81 billion. She serves as the primary liaison with the Government of Sri Lanka, private sector stakeholders, development partners, and civil society, and oversees the implementation of the Country Partnership Strategy 2024–2028 focused on resilient and inclusive economic recovery. Her expertise spans investment project management, policy dialogue, and knowledge work in energy, climate change, environment, air quality, public health, and the energy–food–water nexus. Prior to her current role, she served as ADB Country Director for Mongolia, leading strategy and operations from 2023. She holds a bachelor's degree in Environmental Engineering Sciences and a master's degree in Environmental Health Sciences from the University of California, Berkeley.



Ms. Shayani Weeresinghe

Shayani Weeresinghe is an Environmental Scientist with over 13 years of experience in sustainable finance, environmental policy, ESG investment strategy, and EU-funded technical cooperation. She is currently a Sustainable Business Specialist at Expertise France, supporting the EU-funded Green Recovery Facility in Sri Lanka (EUR 5 million, 2023–2027), focusing on policy reform, investment climate improvement, and sustainable finance mechanisms.

She has led EU Horizon 2020 science and technology cooperation programmes on disaster resilience and supported Global Affairs Canada initiatives on gender-responsive governance. Her experience includes ESG investment research at Moody's Analytics and ESG fintech and regtech innovation at RS Metrics. Earlier, she worked at Coca-Cola Sri Lanka, contributing to 203% water positivity and mobilising USD 1.5 million for recycling initiatives.

She has presented at international conferences, contributed to Elsevier publications, and was nominated for Environmental Finance's Sustainable Debt Awards 2026. She is a former World Economic Forum Global Shaper and a member of the Institution of Environmental Sciences (UK).



Mr. Shiran Fernando

Shiran Fernando is the Secretary General/CEO of The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, having previously served as Chief Economic Policy Advisor and Chief Economist. In his earlier role, he led the Chamber's Economic Intelligence Unit, focusing on economic research and policy advocacy, and served on its Steering Committee on Economic Policy. He was previously Lead Economist and Senior Product Head at Frontier Research.

He has contributed extensively to national and international economic forums as a speaker, panelist, and moderator, and writes the monthly Economic Outlook column for LMD. He is an alumnus of the U.S. IVLP program and a Chevening Scholar.

Shiran serves as a Board Director of World Vision Lanka and sits on several advisory panels, including Softlogic Investment, Biodiversity Sri Lanka, and the Petroleum Development Authority of Sri Lanka. He holds degrees from the University of London (BSc) and SOAS (MSc), along with ACMA, CGMA, a PG Diploma in International Relations (BCIS), and an Executive MBA from PIM, Sri Lanka.



Mr. Vimlendra Sharan

Vimlendra Sharan is the Country Representative for the Food and Agriculture Organization in Sri Lanka and Maldives, bringing nearly 30 years of leadership experience in agriculture, rural development, and food security. A member of the Indian Administrative Service, he has worked extensively in rural and tribal development in Maharashtra and contributed to national agriculture and food policy in India's Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

Prior to his current role, he served as Director of the FAO North America Office and earlier as India's Permanent Representative to the Rome-based UN agencies, including FAO, World Food Programme, and International Fund for Agricultural Development. He holds a degree in Economics from St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and an MBA in Public Policy from the University of Birmingham, UK.



Ms. Yasangi Randeni

Yasangi Randeni is a strategic sustainability executive with nearly two decades of experience in embedding sustainability into corporate strategy, governance, and risk management. She serves as the first Group Chief Sustainability Officer of Aitken Spence PLC, where she led a strategy-driven sustainability model that earned extensive national and international recognition for corporate responsibility and policy excellence. Under her leadership, the Group has repeatedly been recognized as Sri Lanka's Best Corporate Citizen, including five wins and 19 consecutive top-ten rankings by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce. An engineer by qualification, she holds a postgraduate diploma in Sustainable Development from SOAS University of London and is an alumna of Monash University. She has integrated human rights and disaster risk reduction frameworks into corporate sustainability while aligning strategies with global standards such as GRI, SASB, IFRS S1 and S2, and the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi). She also actively contributes to UN Global Compact platforms and regional disaster management initiatives, promoting responsible business, climate action, and inclusive growth.

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For more details
events@chamber.lk / +94 11 55 88852