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# World Accreditation Day 2021 highlights the role of Accreditation in supporting the implementation of UN Sustainable Development goals

## World Accreditation Day 2021 Joint Statement



**by Xiao Jianhua, Chair IAF, and ETTY Feller, Chair ILAC**

Accreditation: Supporting the Implementation of the  
SDGs

ILAC and IAF have maintained a close strategic partnership and technical cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) as it recognizes the important role that accreditation plays in the achievement of the sustainable development agenda and its impact on industrial development and economic growth.



The United Nations (UN) ambitious strategy to end poverty by 2030 and make significant global social and environmental progress could create almost 380m jobs and opportunities worth \$12trn (£9trn) in sectors ranging from affordable housing and energy efficiency to circular economy models and advances in healthcare. The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future. They address global challenges including, poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, and justice.

There are 17 SDGs with 169 associated targets that seek to guide all global, regional, and national development endeavors. Accreditation and, with it, other quality infrastructure (QI) institutions, including metrology, standardization, conformity assessment, and market surveillance, is a critical cornerstone in supporting the SDGs and the three interrelated thematic priorities: creating shared prosperity, advancing economic competitiveness, and safeguarding the environment.





The technical and operational foundations that are critical to the functioning of developed and developing societies are delivered through accreditation. It supports policy objectives in areas including cross-border trade, food safety, health and environmental protection, and industrial and infrastructural development.

It provides a trusted platform for defining, developing, and verifying requirements for products and services, helping to ensure that demonstrating that products and services meet specified requirements.

While there have been a number of successes around the world, the theme of this year's World Accreditation Day 2021 has been chosen to ensure that policymakers continue to use Accreditation and QI services to support their SGD Agenda.

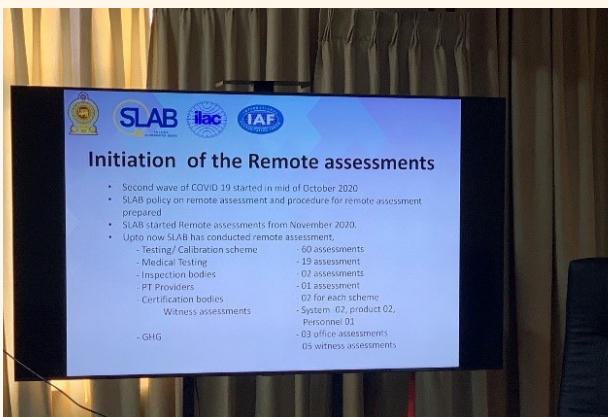
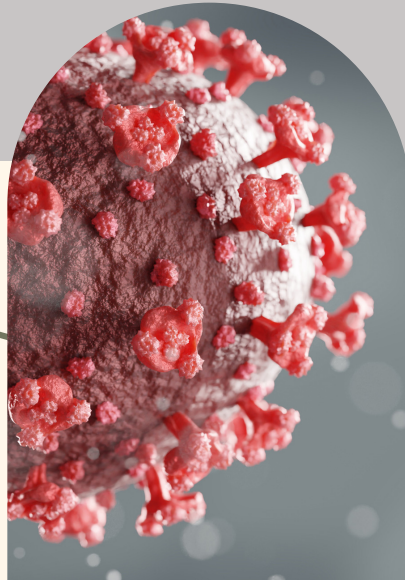
It provides the opportunity for ILAC and IAF members to share examples of how it may be applied to meet objectives such as increasing trade, addressing health and safety concerns, and improving the general overall quality of output in an economy. The theme can also act as a trigger for evolution, and to ensure that accreditation continues to be relevant in the face of ever more rapid technological innovations, the impact of the 4th Industrial Revolution and the threats posed by climate change, pollution, and the diminution of resources.

Resources such as [business-benefits.org](https://business-benefits.org) and [publicsectorassurance.org](https://publicsectorassurance.org) will support events, press and television coverage, and workshops and seminars taking place in conjunction with the celebration of World Accreditation Day in over 100 economies to raise awareness of the value that accreditation plays in supporting the implementation of the SDGs.





# SLAB's response to COVID 19 Pandemic



COVID pandemic effect to Sri Lanka started from 2020 March. From the beginning of the pandemic, SLAB got prepared for the situation. WORKING FROM HOME concept implemented well and first did planning and documentation work only while having back-to-back meetings with management and staff. Once realize the situation continues decided to conduct online remote assessments as well.

Pre survey on feasibility and readiness to online assessment was conducted via google survey and analyzed. CABs were informed to ready for the assessments with the necessary equipment, facilities, and online background preparations. A meeting for CAB representatives was conducted.





## Actions taken by SLAB to implement online work,

- SLAB policy on remote assessment and procedure for remote assessment prepared based on APAC guidelines and SLAB previous experience and communicated to CABs and published in the website.
- Purchased ZOOM packages to conduct webinars/ training/ meetings/ assessments.
- Portable routers and internet dongles as backups were purchased to ensure uninterrupted internet access
- Installation of video conferencing facility and smart board to enhance the effectiveness of online training and meetings
- External assessors/ experts allowed to work from home/ office or SLAB office.

With all the above preparatory work, SLAB started remote assessments from November 2020, and training was conducted from the beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic. General Training schedules changed and re-scheduled to comply with online background and conducted online training effectively since 2021. In the virtual background, more opportunities were provided to stakeholders in training and awareness sessions organized by SLAB, and also more opportunities were given in international training. Awareness sessions and small group discussions to promote accreditation were conducted successfully.

Engagement with regulators and related agencies was conducted as ZOOM meetings and worked closely to prepare and implement

policy decisions easier than physical meetings. Client forums were conducted in every scheme as an online ZOOM event. Annual assessor meetings in each scheme were conducted as an online zoom event. All Technical Advisory Committee meetings were held as Zoom events and completed the preparation of guidelines and supportive documents. Accreditation committee meetings were conducted as Zoom meetings and successfully completed the decision-making events. As a new initiative, SLAB management started courtesy discussions with CABs as virtual meetings, and inputs given by the clients were used to improve our services as a national authority. As a whole, during a pandemic, SLAB functions 100% of its work without undue delay in a virtual background with ensuring the health and safety of employees and stakeholders.



# Accreditation is a strong moral which imparts essential inputs for Sustainable Development



"Allowing prosperity for now and future generations", Sustainable development consists of a long-term goal, integrated approach to developing and achieving a healthy community by jointly addressing economic, environmental, and social issues, whilst avoiding the overconsumption of key natural resources. The aim of sustainable development is to balance economic growth with environmental and social needs.

In September 2015, countries adopted a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. Overall, the seventeen goals show that important progress in improving lives. But Sixteenth and seventeenth goals, peace, justice, and strong institutions with the partnership for the goals play a significant role as conflict, insecurity, weak institutions, and limited access to justice remain a great threat to sustainable development.

It is an essential requirement that ensures strong institutions, global standards of justice, and a commitment to peace everywhere. Persecution, injustice, and abuse are tearing at the very fabric of civilization. The establishment of Strong institutions aims to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels, emphasizing the importance of public access to information, protection of fundamental freedoms, and the promotion of non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

Accreditation is a formal, independent verification that a program or institution meets established quality standards and is competent to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks. Accreditation is important, because it helps determine quality standards, determines acceptable institutions, creates goals for institutional self-improvement, a self-regulatory alternative for state oversight functions, provides a basis for determining eligibility in each and every sector of the country, including economy and society.





Accreditation has been used over the years as the definitive means of evaluating organizations and is now utilized by all the world's major economies and many developing economies.

Sri Lanka Accreditation Board is the National Accreditation Authority of Sri Lanka has the responsibility to promote accreditation activities and provide the necessary accreditation services to facilitate conformity assessments. Legal framework and the body is available, but at the same time, increases in persistent inequalities are preventing, and in some cases, undoing progress.

As a developing country in Sri Lanka today, we are standing at the question marks on participation in accreditation.

Whether testing, inspections, certifications, and decisions are transparent? Independent? Accreditation has been used, but regulatory agencies such as the Consumer protection agencies, quality standard agencies, Environmental Protection Agencies recommend typical accreditation to verify the technical competence of organizations like laboratories, inspection bodies, and certification agencies. Conformity assessment tasks may include but are not limited to testing, inspection, or certification.

Each and every organization responsible for public safety, health, and welfare should seek accreditation to demonstrate their competence and reliability. That will help to reach standard qualities which will open the door of the global market.

In short, we are making progress in areas where there are strong international actions, but to meet sustainable development, we must raise our ambitions.



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# *Ensuring the Prosperity of the Nation through Nature Conservation*



## **LIFE ON LAND (SDG 15)**

Nearly 30% of the land surface of the planet earth is covered with forests, which provide vital habitats for millions of species. Further, forests provide innumerable goods and services, inter alia, food, and medicine, watershed protection, prevention of soil erosion, purification of air and water. Forest also acts as the second-largest carbon store globally and therefore plays a crucial role in combating climate change. Over 2 billion people depend on forests directly or indirectly for their subsistence. Yet, the world has lost nearly one-third of its forests over the last 10000 years and continues to lose an estimated 10 million hectares each year directly or indirectly due to human activities, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. This has resulted in large-scale extinction of biodiversity resulting in the sixth mass extinction that has taken place on the planet.

Therefore, one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 15, "Life on land") is to ensure the conservation and restoration of the terrestrial ecosystems such as forests, wetlands, drylands, and mountains as this would ensure human well-being, enhance livelihoods, help combat climate change, ensure safe drinking water, enhance food production and slow down the extinction of species. Thus, achieving SDG 15 provides a pathway to achieving several other SDGs such as 2 (Zero Hunger), 3 (Good health and well-being), 6 (Clean Water), and 13 (Climate Action). The aim of this paper is to discuss the importance of achieving SDG 15 "life on land" in order to ensure sustainable development, especially for Sri Lanka.





## SRI LANKA AS A BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOT

Sri Lanka is a moderate-sized continental island listed as the 25th largest island in the world. Although Sri Lanka is a small island, it has a wide variety of climatic, topographic, and soil conditions that have resulted in a diverse array of aquatic and terrestrial habitats. Historically, Sri Lanka was part of the ancient Gondwanaland and was located adjacent to the African continent. Around 160 million years ago, the Deccan plate, which comprised of India and Sri Lanka, broke away from the Gondwanaland, drifted northwards, and collided with the Asian plate around 55 million years ago. Thereafter, Sri Lanka separated from India due to the submersion of the land bridge between the two countries about 20 million years ago. These zoogeographic, climatic, topographic, and edaphic factors have shaped the species diversity of Sri Lanka, which supports unusually high biodiversity compared to any other moderate-sized tropical island. The hallmark of Sri Lanka's biodiversity is signified by the presence of large populations of megafauna (Asian elephant, leopard, sloth bear, etc.) that do not occur in other moderate-sized islands and the presence of a large proportion of endemic species (species that are naturally found only in Sri Lanka). Therefore, Sri Lanka, along with the Western Ghats of India, is listed as one of the 36 biodiversity hotspots of the world.



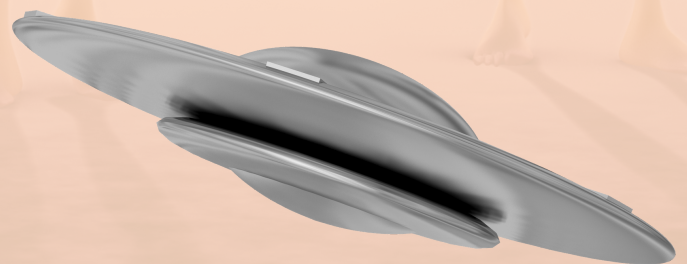


## DRIVERS OF CHANGE


The drivers that contribute to loss of biodiversity can be broadly divided into three categories, viz, habitat-related drivers, species-related drivers, and climate-related drivers. Habitat-related drivers include processes that contribute to a reduction in the extent of a habitat (Habitat loss), complete or partial loss of key ecological component(s) of a habitat (Habitat degradation), and or breakdown of large habitats into several disconnected pieces (Habitat fragmentation). According to the available historical records and fossil evidence, much of Sri Lanka has been covered with forests in prehistoric times. These forests have been subjected to major remodeling by natural forces such as climate change at first, and land-use changes brought about by humans during the last 2 to 3 thousand years. Sri Lanka has a rich history that dates back to 500 BC. As Sri Lanka's civilization is based on agriculture, there has been extensive remodeling of natural habitats during this long history, first in the dry zone during the height of the hydraulic civilization, then in the wet zone during the colonial period and after regaining independence in 1948, the focus has shifted to the dry zone again. During the last century alone, nearly 50% of the forest cover in Sri Lanka has been lost due to the conversion of forest to croplands. At present, Sri Lanka continues to lose an estimated 7000 hectares annually. The resulting loss and fragmentation of habitat have been the major drivers that have resulted in many species becoming extinct or driven towards the brink of extinction.

Overexploitation, the introduction of invasive alien species, and human-wildlife conflict are the three major species-related drivers that contribute to the loss of biodiversity in Sri Lanka. Overexploitation mainly affects marine fish and shellfish resources, trees with commercial value such as timber trees and medicinal plants, fish and plants that are used in the aquarium industry.

Invasion by non-native species is considered today as one of the greatest threats to the world's biodiversity. Sri Lanka is an island with a high proportion of endemic plants and animals due to its long geographic isolation that limits immigration of new species, allowing established species to evolve in the absence of strong competitors and predators. Therefore, invasive alien species introduced due to human activities have a dramatic effect on such isolated ecosystems where it can become a leading cause of species extinctions. Furthermore, islands are more vulnerable to invasion by alien species as they lack natural competitors and predators that control populations in their native ecosystems. In addition, islands often have ecological niches that have not been filled because of the distance from colonizing populations, which further increase the probability of successful invasions. Also, due to their isolated nature and limited resource availability, islands have to interact more with the outside world. The present trends in globalization have led to increased trade, tourism, and transportation, responsible for most accidental introductions of potentially invasive species. The rapid expansion of human use areas has resulted in habitat loss, loss of predators, disruption of movement patterns, unmanaged solid waste disposal, all of which have contributed to conflict situations between humans and wild animal populations that have resulted in further deterioration of conservation status of many of these conflict creating species which are already threatened with extinction.







The global climate is changing rapidly, which is considered a global driver of change, especially biodiversity. Climate change magnifies existing threats, for example, by potentially increasing the distribution and abundance of introduced plants and pest animals already present in Sri Lanka. It is also likely to bring with it new threats, including long-term changes in rainfall and temperature patterns, rising sea levels, and changes to the frequency and severity of extreme events like fires, floods, and droughts. These changes bring a high risk of an accelerating wave of extinctions and disruptions to ecological processes throughout the 21st century and beyond. As a tropical island, Sri Lanka is extremely vulnerable to the predicted climate change-related impacts such as sea-level rise, saltwater intrusion leading to increased salinization of low lying areas, rising ocean temperatures and ambient temperatures, changes in rainfall patterns, and increased frequency of storms and other natural hazards such as floods and landslides. These changes will have a significant effect on Sri Lanka's biodiversity.



## SRI LANKA'S APPROACH TOWARDS CONSERVATION OF ITS RICH BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The biological resources of Sri Lanka are protected by the constitution of Sri Lanka and several ordinances, acts, regulations and policies. The Department of Wildlife Conservation, Forest Department, and Coast Conservation Department is the key line agencies responsible for biodiversity conservation in Sri Lanka. In addition, several other line agencies indirectly contribute to the sustainable management of biological resources. Apart from the government sector, international and national non-government organizations, community-based organizations, and the corporate sector also play a key role in biodiversity conservation.

Sri Lanka has set aside nearly one-third of its total land extent as protected areas for conserving natural ecosystems. These protected areas are declared mainly under the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance (FFPO) and the Forest Conservation Ordinance. Six types of protected areas, namely Strict Natural Reserves, National Parks, Nature Reserves, Jungle Corridors, Sanctuaries, and Managed Elephant Reserves, have been declared under the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance. Three types of protected areas, namely Conservation Forests, Reserved Forests, and Village Forests, have been declared under the Forest Conservation Ordinance. However, nearly 88% of the protected areas are located in the dry and intermediate zone of Sri Lanka, and the wet zone that harbors more than 75% of Sri Lanka's critical biodiversity elements are represented by only 12% of the protected area network. Therefore, the protected area network does not provide adequate protection to the critical biodiversity of Sri Lanka, which is one of the greatest challenges that need to be addressed in the next few decades.

In addition to protecting habitats, Sri Lanka has also taken steps to protect endemic and threatened species through legal instruments, especially FFPO and a number of other acts that can be used to directly or indirectly regulate the exploitation of species. Further, Sri Lanka has also established a number of ex-situ facilities such as botanical gardens, zoological gardens, germplasm conservation centers to support the conservation of species. Finally, Sri Lanka has established the necessary framework for managing invasive alien species and respond to climate change-driven changes.





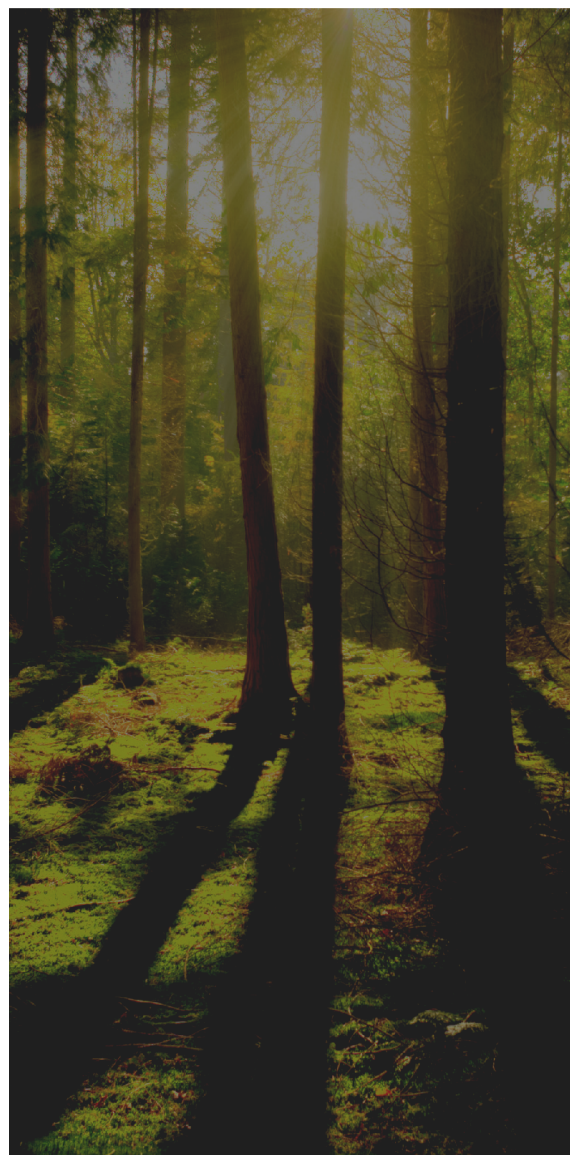


## SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF FORESTS IN SRI LANKA

United Nations has declared the period 2021 to 2030 as the Decade of Ecosystem Restoration to promote the protection and revival of ecosystems around the world. Sri Lanka has also pledged to increase its forest cover by 2% through the restoration of degraded forests and reforestation of abandoned lands. This would require restoration or reforestation of approximately 130,000 ha, which is an extremely challenging task, and so far, very little progress has been made towards achieving this goal. On the contrary, the current development strategy pursued will result in further decline in the existing forest cover. Therefore, Sri Lanka is in need of a national plan on how to manage its forest cover in a sustainable manner and mobilize all available resources towards implementing such a plan in an effective manner.

### INTEGRATING ECOSYSTEM AND BIODIVERSITY VALUES INTO NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING

The existing legal and sectoral policy framework comprising the constitution, laws, and policies support biodiversity conservation. However, there are serious gaps in law enforcement and policy implementation. Likewise, institutional mandates, visions, and missions of agencies overlooking biodiversity conservation are well formulated to support biodiversity conservation. However, poor institutional coordination and collaboration for biodiversity conservation at national as well as sub-national levels is one of the main drawbacks that preclude integration of biodiversity conservation into sectoral and cross-sectoral plans and programs of relevant line agencies, including integration into development and fiscal policies, financial planning and the overall financial system in general. Another barrier is that biodiversity receives low attention among key government policymakers, financial experts, top-level administrators, bankers, and business leaders. This has led to low priority for investments in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of bio-resources. This is caused by inadequate awareness of the immense potential offered by Sri Lanka's biodiversity to contribute to economic development. Therefore, Sri Lanka has to go a long way in achieving this goal of integrating ecosystem and biodiversity values into local and national level planning and decision making.







## **TOWARDS ACHIEVING A DELICATE BALANCE BETWEEN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Sri Lanka, though a small island, has a relatively high human population, and to cater to the needs of its human population, Sri Lanka has undertaken many large-scale development projects. Sri Lanka's economy heavily depends on agriculture, and agricultural expansion is one of the major drivers of biodiversity loss. As indicated above, around 7000 ha of forests are cleared annually, primarily expand food production. However, the conversion of forests will result in the loss of critical ecosystem services as well as makes Sri Lanka more vulnerable to climate change-driven changes. For instance, deforestation of the catchment areas will affect the flow regimes of the rivers, where during the rainy season, there is high water flow in the rivers resulting in floods, and during the dry season, rivers dry out, resulting in floods. Both of these conditions will have a direct negative effect on agriculture and other economic activities that depend on a regular flow in the rivers, such as hydropower

generation, beverage production, provision of safe drinking water, etc. Further, loss of forests will lead to loss of habitat, forcing many wild animals to enter into human use areas that lead to an escalation of the human-wildlife conflict that will also have a significant negative impact on agricultural production, on the one hand, pushing conflict causing animals more towards the brink of extinction as a response by humans to conflict causing animals will result in increased mortality rates of these animals. For example, Sri Lanka loses more than 400 elephants annually due to the conflict, even though elephants are one of the key tourist attractions in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the current development strategy followed by Sri Lanka cannot be defined as a sustainable development approach as it will result in loss of critical natural assets while at the same time prevent Sri Lanka from accruing the full benefits of its investments in development or achieving its long-term development goals. Therefore, Sri Lanka is in need of a paradigm shift in our approach to development where traditional approaches need to be replaced with novel, innovative nature-based solutions in order to ensure sustainability.





## GLOBAL EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE SDG 15

SDG 15 has set out 12 targets to be achieved by 2030. Progress has been made on achieving some of the targets, such as conservation and restoration of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems and increasing financial resources for the conservation of biodiversity. For instance, from 2000 to 2018, the average worldwide coverage of terrestrial, freshwater, and mountain key biodiversity areas by protected areas increased from 33% to 46%, from 31% to 43%, and from 33% to 45%, respectively. In 2015, bilateral official development assistance (ODA) in support of biodiversity amounted to the US \$8.8 billion, an increase of 39% in real terms over 2014. Further, the commitment by the global community to conserving biodiversity has shown a significant improvement as evidenced by 144 countries ratifying the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and 96 countries ratifying the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization, as of April 2017.

However, it should be noted that while global commitments towards implementation are increasing, the indicators available on the state of Life on Land show a decline. For instance, the Red List Index that defines the status of major species groups has declined from 0.82 in 1988 to 0.73 by 2019. Likewise, the overall forest area net change rate stands at -0.09%. Further, land degradation continues to take place, and no significant progress has been made with respect to the management of Alien Invasive Species. Wildlife poaching and trafficking continue to take place, posing a serious challenge to wildlife conservation while land and soil degradation undermine the security and development of all countries, currently bringing more than 1 billion people under threat.

This indicates that much more needs to be done in order to achieve the desired targets of SDG 15. First, governments need to provide an enabling environment to support evidence-based policymaking and development planning. Second, it is essential to mainstream biodiversity into all levels of decision-making. Finally, a greater emphasis should be placed on providing nature-based solutions to present-day human problems.

## IMPACT OF “COVID’19 PANDEMIC” ON ACHIEVING SDG 15

The current Covid-19 pandemic will pose a significant challenge to achieving SDG 15 within the specified time frame, 2030. Initially, the pandemic resulted in a global reduction in human activity, which resulted in significant positive improvements in air and water quality signifying the human footprint on our fragile planet. However, in the aftermath of the pandemic, most countries are attempting to accelerate their economic activities to respond to the global economic downturn that has been triggered by the pandemic. These activities will have a significant negative impact on natural resources, which will be counterproductive, as explained in the previous section. Further, the actions taken to prevent the spread of the disease has resulted in new waste streams, which will further exacerbate the impacts of human-generated waste on the planet. Whilst it is important for countries like Sri Lanka to overcome the economic challenges imposed by Covid-19, the approach to face these challenges should not be at the expense of our natural resources but by wise use of these natural resources, which requires a great deal of planning.



## WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE IN SRI LANKA TO ACHIEVE SDG 15?

As in the case of the Global situation, Sri Lanka has already achieved some of the SDG targets, such as conservation and restoration of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems and the extent of the protected terrestrial land. For instance, from 2000 to 2018, the average coverage of terrestrial, freshwater, and mountain key biodiversity areas by protected areas in Sri Lanka has increased from 36% to 44%, from 35% to 41%, and from 20% to 31%, respectively. Further, the terrestrial area under the protected area in Sri Lanka stands at 33%, exceeding the global target of 15%. However, the percentage of land under forest has declined from 38% in 1880 to 34% in 2020, while the overall forest area net change rate shows a declining trend of -0.32%. Further, the proportion of land that is degraded over total land area stands at 36%. Finally, the Red List Index that defines the status of major species groups has declined from 0.69 in 1988 to 0.56 by 2019. Therefore, with respect to achieving SDG 15, Sri Lanka has much to do, as evidenced by the response indicators for SDG 15. Even though successive governments have shown commitment towards achieving the SDG goals, the outcomes do not support the commitment. Therefore, solving this dichotomy between commitments and outcomes is a must if Sri Lanka is to achieve SDG 15, especially with the constraints imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic.



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# ★ SDGs AND ACCREDITATION ★

## The Sri Lankan Context, Current Status and Way Forward

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The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), was adopted by the United Nations member states, including Sri Lanka, in 2015. The agenda provides a holistic approach to development, addressing the economic, social, and environmental challenges that confront us in our journey towards sustainable development.

The Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) had taken various initiatives to ensure the country's development process is on par with the sustainability standards even before this agenda came into being in 2015. One of the best examples is the formulation of the National Green Reporting System and Guidelines by the Ministry of Environment in

2011 to recognize, appreciate and reward the manufacturing and service sectors based on their sustainability performances.

The national policy framework "*Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour*" contains various strategies to promote sustainable development, such as promoting bio-fertilizer and organic fertilizer, proper waste management system integrating the 3R concept (Reduce, Re-use and Recycle), measures to control air pollution, decarbonization and to protect the environment, etc. Under Budget 2021, GoSL has banned single-use polythene and plastic productions and initiated the "Surakimu Ganga" program with the objective of providing clean drinking water for all while conserving the environment and bioresources.





In order to advance Sri Lanka's journey towards achieving SDGs and in recognizing the role accreditation could play in driving and accelerating the SDGs implementation process in Sri Lanka, the Sustainable Development Council (established in terms of the Sustainable Development Act No. 19 of 2017) recently joined hands with the Sri Lanka Accreditation Board. The main objective of this partnership is to create awareness and assist relevant government and private implementation agencies in achieving SDGs, with the main focus on quality enhancement through accreditation.

Accreditation is a formal verification that a program or an institution conforms to established quality standards and has the competencies to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks. Accreditation acts as an enabler in promoting sustainable development by testing, inspection, or certification of the products and services. Accreditation can be used as a tool to eliminate harmful products to the people and harmful practices to the planet while supporting economic prosperity. Hence, it supports the three pillars of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental.



Accreditation promotes economic sustainability through facilitating international trade and supporting sustainable business practices of a country. Accredited certification ensures that a product is fit and safe for consumption and meets all regulatory requirements, national standards, and trading partner requirements and thereby removes all technical barriers to trade. Research is done by the Italian Accreditation Body, INAIL, and the AICQ, Italian Quality Institute [1], found that accredited certification of health and safety management system provides a number of benefits to a company: 90% of the survey respondents stated that accredited certification had increased their competitiveness while 70% of respondents reported that accredited certification had created new market opportunities.

[1] Nisi, Alessandro. Amatucci, Silvia. Barra, Maria Ilaria. Morinelli, Giuseppe. Rosso, Claudio. Occupational health and safety certification - The Experience of Organisations. Accredia, the Italian Accreditation Body, INAIL, a public insurer, and AICQ, the Italian Quality Institute.





SDG Target 8.9 focuses on promoting the formulation and implementation of policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products. Research is done by David Taylor, Ingrid Rosemann, and Garry Prosser [2] identified that improvement in business focus, increase in the industry leadership profile, increase in the sense of pride and staff morale, improvement of standards of operations and operational efficiencies, health and safety standards improvement and costs reduction through discounted advertising and insurance as the benefits accruing to businesses through accreditation.

Accreditation also promotes social sustainability by helping countries and communities to improve the health and well-being of their citizens. For example, SDG target 8.8 aims to protect labor rights and safe and secure working environments for all workers. Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries are the indicators to measure progress towards this target. Research done by the Italian Accreditation Body, INAIL, and the AICQ, Italian Quality Institute found that companies with accredited certification of their health and safety management systems experience reduced severity and frequency of workplace accidents.

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[2] Taylor, David. & Prosser, Gary. & Rosemann, Ingrid. & Tourism Council Australia. & Centre for Regional Tourism Research. & Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism. & Australian Tourism Accreditation Authority. (2000). The effect of accreditation on tourism business performance : an evaluation. Lismore, N.S.W : Centre for Regional Tourism Research





The final pillar addresses the protection of the natural world. Accreditation underpins environmental performance by reducing contamination of greenhouse gases and controlling waste and pollution. It helps businesses to manage environmental impacts through implementing an environmental management system, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption, and encouraging companies towards responsible consumption. Looking at the comparative experience and best practices from across the world on how accreditation can be used to implement SDGs will be useful for Sri Lanka in formulating its own standards. The government of India has used accreditation to ensure safe drinking water in rural areas [3]

India has mandated laboratories to obtain accreditation from the National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies to ensure technical competence and compliance with the international standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017. New Zealand has published standards and criteria for accrediting Building Consent Authorities aiming to ensure the safety and sustainability of buildings [4] Thus, it can be used in many ways to promote the sustainable development of a country.

With just ten years to go, we must utilize every possible means to accelerate Sri Lanka's progress towards SDGs by 2030. Improving accreditation, regulation, and quality standards will certainly make a vital contribution to this process.

[3] Government of India. (2020). Accreditation Policy of Central Ground Water Authority. Department of Water Resources, RD & GR Central Ground Water Authority, Ministry of Jal Shakti , Government of India

[4] <https://publicsectorassurance.org/case-study/accreditation-of-building-consent-authorities-new-zealand/>



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# ROLE OF ACCREDITATION TO ACHIEVE SDG 15 – LIFE ON LAND



Since the Copenhagen Declaration of 1995, the UN system has played a major role in providing direction to achieve universal development with the people as its focus. Important documents such as "Shaping the 21st Century" (1996), "We the People: Role of the United Nations in 21st century" (2000) set the trend for this at the global level culminating with the Millennium Summit in 2000 and the declaration thereof. It was subsequently in the "Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration"( 2001) presented by the Secretary-General that contained specific reference to "the Millennium Development Goals." With modification and consensus agreement, the Millennium Development Goals containing 8 Goals, 21 Targets, and 48 Indicators was signed by 189 countries, coming Z effect from 2003. The MDGs were to be achieved by 2015.

As the targeted year was coming to an end in 2015, the criticism of the process was heavy, and according to many, it did not achieve its intended objective. Among some of the main criticisms were the insufficient emphasis on environmental sustainability, lack of cohesion, poor emphasis on Agriculture, the absence of ownership of the actions by the people, poor emphasis on human rights, and even in the education sector. But on the positive side were that it facilitated worldwide participation in poverty alleviation, provisions for better health, etc. At the end of 2015, poverty levels in two of the densest countries, China and India, came down.

Despite the criticisms and the accolades, as the deadline was closing, the UN system supported the interventions to take the process forward through the discussions on Sustainable Development Goals( SDGs). Transforming our world is the aim of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its corresponding 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



The adoption of SDGs with 17 Goals, 169 Targets, and 247 (231 – 16 repeats) Indicators. It is quite clear that the effort to be as inclusive as possible had been an objective of this new direction. The themes interestingly became "Inclusive," "Leave No One Behind," etc. Thus the desired change to achieve a sustainable, habitable future for all was conceived as the prime objective.

The SDGs clearly recognized the Ocean( SDG 14) and Land (SDG 15) as important and require targeted attention into the future. Thus to ensure the attainment of its targets through the set indicators becomes a major challenge.

No action can achieve its objectives without appreciation, consensus, and acceptance at the highest level of recognition. To ensure this at a Global or National level, it requires a uniform system applicable at such levels. Today, we recognize this system as containing "Accreditation, Certification and Standardization" - three terms that are inclusive and incomplete without each other.

The English word Accreditation is derived from the Latin word *credito*, which means trust. It is important for the public to trust that they are pursuing a worthy endeavor, and the system to help ensure the trust is what is called accreditation. The system evolved in the University education system as more universities and courses were introduced. "Accreditation scholars" had written that the first "period" in the historical development of accreditation began when the University of the State of New York was established in 1784. The system had taken three years of squabbling. Subsequently, in 1787 the existing rules were changed, allowing all other similar institutions to have their own boards of institutional accreditation authority. This development in the medical field unmistakably showed the feasibility of specialized accrediting agencies possible, and around 1890, a movement began to "accredit" institutions that meet minimal standards, which then became a major force after 1901.

This beginning has come a long way now. Good International Standards, through the process of accreditations, has come to be a mechanism to provide confidence to the public regarding actions and processes or products, etc.





## ACCREDITATION AND SDGS

Voluntary national and international standards support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in different ways. Some standards are cross-cutting and provide guidance to all types of organizations, regardless of their size or location. They support the integration of socially and environmentally responsible behavior in the management of plants and workplaces. Examples include standards that reduce and monitor emissions or energy use and standards that help close the gender pay gap and curb discrimination against female workers.

The Sustainable Development Accord is at the core of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a broad and ambitious plan of action with the overarching objective of leaving no one behind. The UN's SDGs represent a blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future. These SDGs address global challenges, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, and justice.

SDGs to enhance peace and prosperity, eradicate poverty and protect the planet is recognized globally as essential for the future sustainability of our world. It calls on the contribution from all elements of society, including local and national governments, businesses, industry, and individuals.

The process requires consensus, collaboration, and innovation. ISO has published more than 22 000 International Standards and related documents that represent globally recognized guidelines and frameworks based on international collaboration.

Built around consensus, they provide a solid base on which innovation can thrive and are essential tools to help governments, industry, and consumers contribute to the achievement of every one of the SDGs.

ISO standards support all three pillars of sustainable development, namely Economic, Social, and Environment. Economic sustainability is facilitated by ensuring quality infrastructure and supporting sustainable business practices by facilitating international trade, improving a country's national standing. A sustainable future means balancing the needs of the environmental, social, and economic systems, while organizations are increasingly expected to play a significant role in achieving this.

# 15 LIFE ON LAND







## SOCIAL

ISO International Standards promote social sustainability by helping countries and communities to improve the health and well-being of their citizens. They cover all aspects of social welfare, from health care systems and related products to social inclusion and accessibility.



## ECONOMIC

With over 450 recommendations that directly impact the SDG goals, ISO 26000 provides guidance on how businesses and organizations can operate in an ethical and transparent way that contributes to sustainable development.



## ENVIRONMENTAL

ISO International Standards promote environmental sustainability by helping businesses and countries manage their environmental impact. They cover such aspects as implementing an environmental management system, measuring and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption, and encouraging responsible consumption.

**The SDG 15 Goal is to "Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss."**

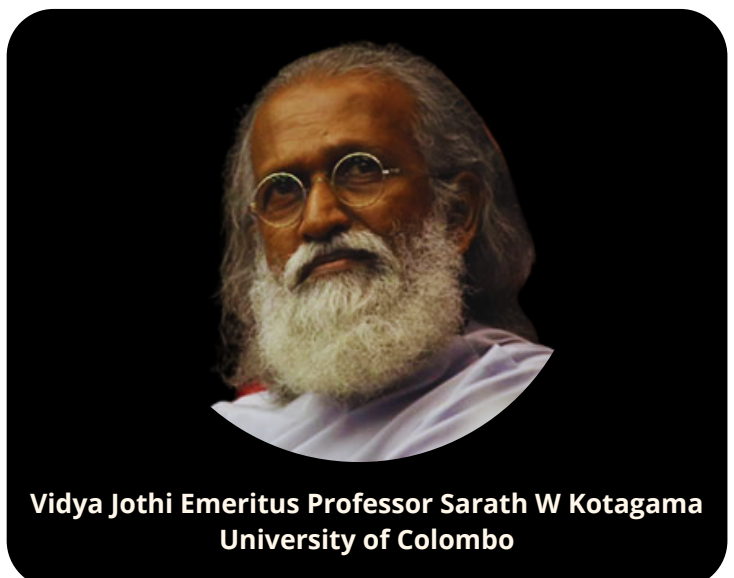


The application of accreditation to achieve this target would basically apply to its maintenance and products.

Accordingly, applying the hundreds of diverse ISO standards to protect and promoting life on land through better use of resources is the prime objective. For example, the two-part series ISO 14055, on Environmental management –Guidelines for establishing good practices for combatting land degradation and desertification, is a welcome addition to the ISO 14000 family of standards for environmental management.

Another area of focus for ISO is the sustainable use of land-based resources such as forestry. The upcoming ISO 38200 - Chain of custody of wood and wood-based products will promote traceability in the wood supply chain by encouraging greater use of wood from sustainable sources and will be an essential tool for helping to combat illegal deforestation.

These examples amply demonstrate the value of accreditation and the use of standards to ensure sustainability in the effort of protecting the planet. Their appropriation for Sri Lanka through the Sri Lanka Accreditation Board will enable Sri Lanka to be in line with international standards while ensuring the conservation of our Land-based resources as required by SDG 15. The Commitment on this "Accreditation Day" is a lifelong commitment for the Nation – may you all have the strength to do so !!!!!



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# Introduction to accreditation & SDGs with an overview on current trends and proposals for filling the gap



## What is accreditation

?

"Accreditation" is third party attestation related to a conformity assessment body conveying a formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific tasks (Source: ISO/IEC 17011:2017). In the above definition, there two main terms which should also be clearly understood by us in order to get a general understanding of the concept of accreditation. They are "competence" and "specific conformity assessment tasks." The general meaning of conformity assessment is an assessment of conformity of the product, process, system, or person/body against specified requirements through specific conformity assessment activity such as testing, calibration, certification, or inspection. The term "competence" is a principal objective of accreditation to ensure that a particular conformity assessment body (laboratory, certification body, inspection body, or validation/verification body) has the required capability, expertise, and required resources to carry out particular conformity assessment activity.



## ACCREDITATION IN SRI LANKA & INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

Under the Act No 32 of 2005, the Sri Lanka Accreditation Board for conformity assessment as the national accreditation authority of Sri Lanka established operates accreditation schemes for Testing, Medical & Calibration laboratories, Certification bodies for management systems (FSMS, QMS, EMS, OHSMS, EnMS), Product certification, Personnel certification, GHG validation/verification, Inspection bodies, Proficiency testing and also Good Laboratory Practice in accordance with international standards.

The accreditation body provides confidence in the impartiality and competence of conformity assessment bodies while acting at the top of the confidence pyramid. There is no higher-level body to assess their conformity with the requirements. Instead, accreditation bodies from different countries have formed multilateral agreements through which they carry out peer assessments on each other. At present, SLAB has faced several peer evaluations by regional accreditation apex bodies and secured its international recognition continuously since 2009. At present, SLAB is a signatory to Mutual Recognition Arrangement of International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC MRA) for laboratories and inspection bodies and Multilateral Agreement of International Accreditation Forum (IAF MLA) for Accreditation of FSMS, EMS, QMS, EnMS, Product certification. (Source: [www.slab.lk](http://www.slab.lk))

The main role of accreditation is to support governments in implementing policies and regulations. There are many ways in which accreditation can support and interact with governments. In other countries, governments themselves are often the operators of their economy's national accreditation bodies as they are in view accreditation as a public interest activity and have proposed that there should be no forms of commercial competition between accreditation bodies. In Sri Lanka, SLAB is playing a significant role as a governmental accreditation body. Other countries proposed a single accreditation body for each economy. This view is strongly evident in the European Commission's development of its policy on accreditation in its revision of its "New Approach" technical regulations. ( Source: <https://ec.europa.eu>).

Accreditation of bodies that carry out conformity assessment provides governments with additional confidence for their purchasing needs that compliance with their specifications has been confirmed by competent bodies. As a specification body for conformity assessment services, Government departments, regulatory authorities, and agencies will often specify the use of accredited bodies. References to accredited bodies may be found in their public policies, government specifications, and regulations. This again provides governments with additional confidence that consumers and society, in general, have been protected by the use of competent bodies in determining compliance with laws, regulations, and specifications.







## ACCREDITATION FACILITATES TRADE

The accreditation is being used as a tool to facilitate international trade and for underpinning government-to-government mutual recognition agreements for conformity assessment activities. Some governments have recognized (or designated) their national accreditation bodies as the bodies which should demonstrate competence of conformity assessment activities in their economy, relevant to specific regulated sectors covered by government-to-government MRAs.

For liaison on trade and technical barriers to trade, governments work closely with their accreditation bodies, at various levels of formality, in their negotiation of trade and technical barriers to trade issues with foreign governments. The availability of a well-established accreditation body also provides governments with a resource to demonstrate that their economy has a process available to achieve the objectives of acceptance of foreign conformity assessment certificates and data as sought in the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade. In order to facilitate domestic and international trade and implementation of legislation, there are accredited entities that provide different conformity assessment services.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

### SDGS AND ITS ORIGIN

In 2020 (September), 189 countries under the United Nations committed to achieving a set of eight development goals by 2015 named as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These MDGs were related to eradicating extreme poverty and Hunger, achieving universal education, promoting gender equality, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability, and develop a global partnership for development.

The MDGs were innovative in providing a common framework for a global agreement in key areas of development. As the due date of achievement has already been achieved by 2015. United Nations launched new goals as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which comprise 17 goals and 169 targets to be achieved by 2030. As a partner country, Sri Lanka is also agreed to achieve set goals and targets by 2030. ( Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>)





## SDGS IN SRI LANKA

SDGs include ending poverty and Hunger, ensuring healthy lives, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, achieving gender equality, and several goals related to the environment, natural resources, and climate change, as detailed in the latter part of this paper. Sri Lanka also embarked on this new development agenda. It is required to achieve set objectives collectively & in association with relevant stakeholders. In this regard, effective coordination, monitoring, and provision of necessary resources are the key challenges faced by the responsible government institutions having a direct and indirect relationship with sustainable development goals and targets.

As we are aware, Sri Lankan government agencies, for example, Sustainable Development Council of Sri Lanka, Department of Census and Statistics, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Skills Development, Ministry of Technology, Research and Innovation and many other ministries and institutions under the purview of ministries are collectively working to achieve SDGs by 2030.

# Health

## Education





## REVIEW OF STATUS -VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW (2018)

Sri Lanka did a voluntary national review in 2018, and the report is available through the UN SDG website

(<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/membersstates/srilanka> ). The introductory briefing given in this publication says;

*"Having overcome a three-decade long terrorist conflict, Sri Lanka has begun its "transformation towards a sustainable and resilient society". The poverty rate has dropped to 4.1% in 2016 and country is reaching towards the upper middle-income status with a per capita GDP of USD 4,066 in 2017. Unemployment rate stood below 5% for last seven years. Free education and health policies have resulted in high life expectancy (75 years) and high youth literacy (98.7%) rates. UN has recognized Sri Lanka among "high human development" achieved countries."*

## REGULATORY SUPPORT FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SDGS

As highlighted in the voluntary national review, it is expecting to achieve set targets through a multi-stakeholder approach, and in order to facilitate this approach, an Act of parliament was passed and named as the Sustainable Development Act, and it has provisions for formulating a national sustainable development policy and strategy. The President has appointed the Sustainable Development Council to implement the Act. In addition, The government adopted mainstreaming SDGs into institutional plans as its main strategy to achieve SDGs. Auditor General's department reviews how institutions incorporate targets and indicators of relevant SDGs into the institutional master plan and action plans.

## LINKING ACCREDITATION & SDGS - WORLD ACCREDITATION DAY 2021

09 June 2021 marks World Accreditation Day, a global initiative established by IAF and ILAC to promote the value of accreditation. This year's theme is Accreditation: Supporting the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

According to the information brochure jointly published by ILAC/IAF to promote World Accreditation Day 2021, Accreditation, in collaboration with other quality infrastructure institutions, including metrology, standardization, conformity assessment, and market surveillance, provides the technical foundations that are critical to the functioning of developed and developing societies. It is an enabler for industrial development, trade competitiveness in global markets, efficient use of natural and human resources, food safety, health, and environmental protection.

The positive impact of accreditation is therefore clearly aligned with the pillars of People, Prosperity, and Planet and provides policymakers, businesses, and other stakeholders with the solutions to implement, measure and monitor many of the objectives and targets contained in the SDGs and the support to achieve them. ( Source: [www.ilac.org](http://www.ilac.org) & [www.iaf.nu](http://www.iaf.nu)) .



## ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT STATUS OF INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES - SRI LANKA

It is important to see the big picture of the relationship between Accreditation and SDGs and shed light on possible cooperation in relation to a national context. In this regard, SDGs and Targets are critically evaluated against the mandate of Sri Lankan institutions and related enforcement activities, the use of conformity assessment activities, and the role of the national accreditation body.

According to the SDG index  
( <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/LKA> )  
current assessment of Sri Lanka is given in Figure 01 and trends of each goal is given in Table 01.

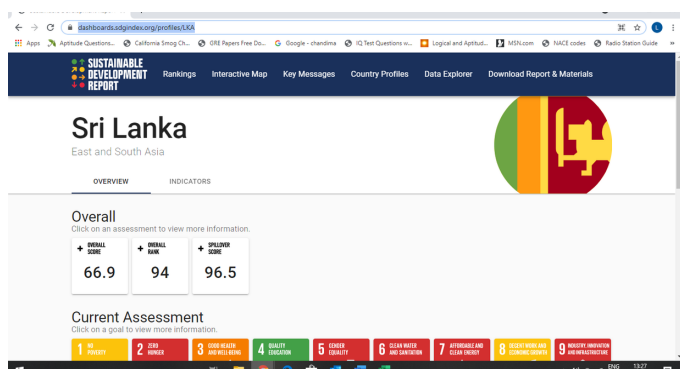


Figure 01: Current Assessment of Sri Lanka  
( Source: <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/LKA>)

"Sustainable Development Report (formerly the SDG Index & Dashboards) is a global assessment of countries' progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a complement to the official SDG indicators and the voluntary national reviews. All data presented on this website are based on the publication Sachs et al. (2020): The Sustainable Development Goals and Covid-19. Sustainable Development Report 2020. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press." (Source: <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org>)

Goal	Trends	Goal	Trends
Goal 01-No Poverty Goal 04-Quality Education Goal 13-Climates Action	↑ On track/ maintaining achievement	Goal 10 – Reduced Inequalities	●● Information Unavailable
Goal 02- Zero Hunger Goal 03- Good Health & Well-being Goal 06- Clean Water & Sanitation Goal 08- Decent Work & Economic Growth Goal 09 -Industry Innovation & Infrastructure Goal 17 -Partnership for the Goals	↗ Moderately improving	Goal 15 -Life on Land	↓ Decreasing
		Goal 05 -Gender Equity Goal 07-Affordable & Clean Energy Goal 11- Sustainable Cities and Communities Goal 14- Life Below Water Goal 16 -Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	→ Stagnating

Table 01: Current Trends related to each goal (Source: <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/LKA> )








Country	Current Trend				
	On track/ maintaining achievement 	Moderately improving 	Stagnating 	Decreasing 	Information Unavailable 
Sri Lanka	1,4,13	2,3,6,8,9,17	5,7,11,14,16	15	10
India	1,6,8,13	2,3,7,9	4,5,11,14,16,17	15	10,12
Bangladesh	1,4,8,13	2,3,6,7,9,11	5,14,16	15,17	10,12
Pakistan	1,13	3,6,8,16	2,4,5,7,9,11,14,17	15	10,12
Nepal	6,8,13,17	1,2,3,4,5,9	7,11,15,16	None	10,12,14
Bhutan	1,8,13	2,3,4,5,6,7,9,11	None	15	10,12,14
Maldives	1,3,6,7,11,13,17	2,8,9	4,5,14	15	10,12
Afghanistan	4,13	3,6,7,8,17	2,5,9,11,16	15	1,10,12,14
Australia	3,5,8	1,2,4,6,7,9,16	10,11,13,14,15,17		12
Japan	3,4,6,8,9,11,16	1,2,7,15,17	5,13,14	10	12
UK	7,8,9,17	1,3,4,5,6,11,13,14,15,16	None	10	12

Table 02: A comparison of current trends with neighbouring ( SAARC) countries and selected developed countries (Source: <https://dashboards.sdgindex.org>)

As per current trends, Sri Lanka is also on track for goals 1,4 & 13, whereas India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and the Maldives are a little bit ahead of us. All countries except Nepal are having an issue of decreasing life on land. Sri Lankan Information is not available only for Goal 10, whereas other SAARC countries do not have information more than one goal. Comparison between Sri Lanka & SAARC countries and other selected countries also indicates a similar pattern which shows all are on track only for few Goals, and most of the goals are improving moderately or stagnating.

A summary of review of selected SDGs and Targets and related institutions (potential, directly related, and indirectly related) and how SLAB can assist activities related to the implementation of relevant goals and targets is given in Table 03. This would create a dialogue between SLAB and relevant institutions to identify how SLAB could assist in implementing SDGs. The main limitation is the table 03 does not cover all targets and possible cooperation.

#### Acknowledgment:

The use of information already published by different organizations and websites in order to develop this article is acknowledged with thanks, and due references were given under relevant sections.

Goal	Target	Related institutions	Possible assistance from National Accreditation Body (SLAB)
Goal 15	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	Ministry of Environment, Department of Forests Department of Wildlife related institutions responsible for the subjects covered under goal 15	Introduction of Forest Certification Scheme to cover Sustainable Management of Forests as well as Chain of Custody  Encourage the introduction of sustainably managed forest management practices
Goal 07	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy	Ministry of Power & Energy and Institutions responsible for the subject of power & energy	Use of inspection and testing facilities to ensure that imported fuels are within the specifications. Encourage to household instruments with required energy efficiency and strengthen energy labelling scheme supported by accredited testing, inspection bodies and certification bodies. Introduction of importation rules to make sure imported items are within the expected energy efficiency and use accredited laboratories and inspection bodies in exporting country.
Goal 11	Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Institutions responsible for Urban Development, City Planning, Building and Municipal Councils and Local Governments	Introduction of Green Building concept and promote certification of buildings under accredited green building certification schemes.
Goal 14	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources	Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Fisheries, Coastal Conservation Department and institutions responsible for Marine Environmental Protection	Introduction of inspection and certification schemes to regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices. Strengthen testing, inspection activities related marine pollution with accredited testing /inspection facilities
Goal 03	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Ministry of Health and responsible institution for the subject areas under goal 03	Promote the use of accredited medical test reports for medical treatments Improve quality of service delivered by hospitals through hospital accreditation or quality assurance programmes Introduce road safety standards and inspection schemes
Goal 17	Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	Ministries and Institutions responsible for Finance, Trade, Technology and other related institutions	Promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system as guided by the World Trade Organization. For this purpose, introduce necessary technical regulations with the implementation mechanism which could use accredited conformity assessment services. Export promotion and facilitation with accredited export inspection schemes is timely requirement.



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# CONTRIBUTION OF ACCREDITATION IN ACHIEVING SDG 13: TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

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*Climate change has become one of the major global concerns as it is affecting every country on every continent. Changes in climate including change of weather patterns, rising of sea levels, extreme weather conditions, etc has affected individual lives up to the national and global economies. The main reason for the recent climate changes is human activities which aggravate global warming.*



## IMPACTS OF CLIMATIC CHANGE

Impacts of climatic change are not limited to a country but it applies to the whole world. The main impacts of the climatic changes which affect the world as well as humans are:

- Rising of sea levels – It is estimated that Sea levels have risen by about 20 cm (since 1880 and are projected to rise another 30–122 cm by 2100. This will result in the sinking of many islands and lowlands.
- Melting ice – It is projected within next 100 years the world glaciers will disappear, releasing water to the oceans that aggravate the sea level rising.
- Extreme weather conditions – It is projected effects of the water cycle will create strong storms, tornadoes, typhoons and hurricanes which ended up with floods and major destructions.
- Heatwaves and prolonged droughts – Climatic change affects some regions resulting in desertification of the areas.
- Effects on ecosystems – Changes to the climate affect the sensitive and vulnerable ecosystems and species.
- Reduced food security – Food security has even been threatened by climatic change by creating unsuitable and unpredictable conditions for agriculture.
- Pests and diseases – Rising of the pests and related diseases have been recorded with climatic change.



*Therefore, combatting climatic change has been a global challenge and has been identified as even a Sustainable Development Goal (SDG-13).*



In response to the climatic change, the following are some climate-positive actions proposed:

- The Green transition towards the green movements such as Hydropower, Wave power, etc
- Green jobs and sustainable and inclusive growth
- Green economy, Carbon neutral and Carbon negative initiations for the societies
- Invest in sustainable solutions instead of fossil fuel subsidies that end in pollution
- Confront all climate risks by vigilance and preparedness
- Cooperation between the nations as no country can succeed alone.

“Accreditation: Supporting the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” has been selected as the theme for World Accreditation Day 2021 and it has been identified that accreditation plays a vital role in implementing SDG-13 even though many areas of accreditation such as:

- Validation and Verification of GHGs released to the environment
- Certification of Environmental Management Systems, Energy Management Systems and other types of certifications related to environmental movements (eg: CORSIA, Carbon footprint)
- Testing and inspection of waste material including emissions
- Proficiency testing producers who produce a range of environmentally related activities (eg: Drinking water)
- Reference material producers who produce reference materials for many materials for testing and inspections of environment-related aspects.



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# Diabetes and Sustainable Development Goals: Optimizing Patient Care through Accreditation



The world accreditation day falls on 9th June and the theme for the year 2021 focuses on “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” put forth by the United Nations in 2015,[1] with aims to protect the planet and improve the well-being of the people through the promotion of health, peace and prosperity.

There are 17 SDGs, with 169 targets and 244 indicators mapping the journey of achieving the goals globally by 2030.[2] The 194 member states of the United Nations General Assembly including Sri Lanka have pledged to work towards achieving these aspiring goals. SDG 1 is “No Poverty” and SDG 2 is “Zero Hunger”. [1]

Goal 3 of the SDGs focuses on “Good Health and Well-being”, with 13 targets and 27 indicators to measure fulfillment.[2] One of the targets of Goal 3 (target 3.4) is to reduce by one-third, the premature mortality of non-communicable diseases by prevention and treatment. The indicators for achieving the target 3.4 are the percentage reduction in mortality rates attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, or chronic respiratory diseases from the baseline.[2]



According to the Department of Census and Statistics, the baseline data in 2013 for the premature mortality rates in Sri Lanka are as follows; the mortality attributed to cardiovascular disease is 15.3 per 10, 000 population aged 30 – 69 and the mortality attributed to diabetes stands at one-third of that at 5 per 10, 000 population aged 30 – 69.[2] Diabetes and cardiovascular disease have strong associations, diabetes confers a twofold risk for a range of cardiovascular diseases including coronary artery disease, ischaemic stroke and haemorrhagic stroke according to a recent meta-analysis.[2]

The International Diabetes Federation estimates the age-adjusted prevalence of diabetes in the population of 20 – 79 years in Sri Lanka as 10.7% which is even slightly higher than India (10.4%). [4] it is estimated that more than half of the patients with type 2 diabetes remain undiagnosed leading to undetected comorbidities developing in these patients.[4] The underdiagnosis negatively affects the achievement of the SDG target of reducing mortality attributable to diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Diabetes mellitus is a metabolic disease characterized by hyperglycaemia of which the screening and diagnosis are entirely dependent on biochemical investigations conducted in a medical laboratory. The most commonly used biochemical investigation for screening and diagnosis of diabetes is plasma glucose performed either in fasting or casual state. The international guidelines recommend that plasma glucose be estimated in an accredited laboratory. [5]

This highlights the need for having accredited clinical laboratories for plasma glucose testing. The accreditation of medical laboratories commenced in Sri Lanka in 2008 and as of 2021, the number of medical laboratories accredited by the Sri Lanka Accreditation Board with an active accreditation status for the field of testing in Clinical Biochemistry/Chemical pathology is 16.6 All of them offer plasma glucose testing in their accredited scope.6 Glycosylated haemoglobin (HbA1c) is used both for diagnosis and monitoring of control of diabetes and only eight laboratories are accredited for this test.6 Fifteen laboratories are accredited for serum creatinine and only three laboratories have active accreditation status for urine microalbumin [6] which is the most sensitive test for detection of diabetic nephropathy.

The state sector laboratories in Sri Lanka, which cater for most of the laboratory testing in the country are yet to achieve accreditation as per the ISO 15189 standard. Accreditation status of laboratories pave way for enhanced credibility of test results as laboratories need to improve and maintain the quality of the total testing process through the allocation of adequate resources, staff training and regular monitoring of analytical quality using internal quality control and external quality assessment. It is essential to use test methods traceable to reference methods and results thus produced are traceable to higher-order certified reference materials whenever applicable.[7] The results generated by accredited laboratories are comparable and reduce the rates of missed diagnoses and lead to harmonized patient care.



The improved quality in test results achieved through accreditation will have a positive impact on indicators of the target 3.4 related to diabetes. In addition, the indicators of the other components of target 3.4 which include cardiovascular disease, cancer and chronic respiratory diseases would be positively affected as they too require laboratory diagnostics for optimum patient management.

It is the demand by the users which drives the development of products and services. The professional colleges representing various clinical disciplines need to make a call for the accreditation status to be mandatory for both state and private sector medical laboratories which would have a major impact on achieving health and well-being for all Sri Lankans by 2030.



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# CONTRIBUTION OF ACCREDITATION IN TRADE FACILITATION & SDGS



Sri Lanka, along with the other member states of the United Nations endorsed the Sustainable Development Agenda in 2015, a Universal Call to Action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. Our National Policy Framework, Vistas of Prosperity has been developed focusing on Sri Lanka's commitment to achieving SDGs.



Recognizing the strategic importance of SDGs for the upliftment of mankind & the environment and considering the vital role played by accreditation in achieving SDGs, the two global accreditation organizations namely, the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) and the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) have declared the theme of this year's Accreditation Day as "*Accreditation: supporting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*". This article briefly reviews how accreditation supports facilitating international trade and thereby supporting to achieve sustainable economic development and prosperity.



Today the world has become a global economy where trade is vital. All types of manufactured products or food and beverage made in one economy are sold in another economy. Therefore, the enhanced awareness and assurance for the safety and quality of traded products and services are required. Export is critical to the growth of any economy, be it fresh fruits and vegetables, cut flowers, garments, minerals or manufactured goods. As a developing economy, Sri Lanka needs to take advantage of new global opportunities and expand its export basket to increase export earnings which is an essential requirement today.

To support and facilitate international trade, a system is needed whereby the importing country has confidence that the imported goods and services meet performance and quality expectations that are established using standards. Accurate, traceable and repeatable measurements are essential for industrial production. The globalization of production has significantly increased the need and demand for measurements that can be trusted.

To provide confidence in the products and services, we need to provide documentary proof such as test reports, inspection reports and certifications issued by a testing laboratory, inspection body or a certification body. To ensure the technical validity and international acceptance of these reports, the conformity assessment body (testing laboratory, inspection body or certification body) has to get Accreditation from an internationally recognized Accreditation Body. Accreditation demonstrates their competency, impartiality and integrity to provide internationally accepted reports. Further accreditation helps to create a level playing field for all businesses in operation.

In addition, accreditation supports the regulatory agencies such as Food Authority, Import and Export Control Department, Consumer Affairs Authority, etc to implement their technical regulations with confidence using accredited reports. Thereby accreditation supports effective domestic markets and helps to promote sustainable economic development.



The economic success depends on their ability to manufacture and market precisely made and tested products that are accepted by the trading partners and meet the requirements of the destination market and their consumers. Manufacturers need to ensure that their products are of consistent quality, comply with relevant regulations and standards, and meet the requirements and specifications.

The 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes international trade as an engine for economic growth and poverty reduction as an important means to achieve the SDGs. The WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) acknowledges the role of regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures (such as testing, inspection and certification) for the efficient achievement of goals, and sets rules to ensure that these measures are prepared, adopted and applied in ways that do not create unnecessary barriers to international trade. The TBT Agreement specifies a “code of good practice” which member states must also implement in the preparation, adoption and application of standards. National standards bodies (NSBs) and related QI institutions collaborate on national, regional and international levels to maintain and develop the technical infrastructure required to address non-tariff barriers (NTBs) including TBT and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) issues.

The Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (APAC), a recognized regional body of ILAC & IAF, is a forum where national accreditation bodies in the Asia Pacific region cooperate to harmonize their accreditation practices and facilitate the mutual recognition of their accredited test, inspection and certification results. The APAC Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) reduces the need for the re-testing of products as they move between countries. Sri Lanka Accreditation Board (SLAB) being a member of the APAC, operates our accreditation services in compliance with ISO/IEC 17011:2017 and other IAF and ILAC procedures and guidelines. As the National Accreditation Authority, we are committed to expanding our accreditation services further, to cater the expanding needs of the industry and thereby to support the SDG 2030 agenda.



**Ms. Chandrika Thilakaratne**  
**Director/CEO**  
**SLAB**





Water is the most important requirement of all living beings. It is also the primary resource for agriculture and many other industries. Consumption of water at the global scale has increased drastically over the past 100 years and continues to grow steadily at a rate of about 1% annually with the population growth, economic development and consumption pattern shifts. According to several studies, it is predicted that the world may face a 40% water deficit by 2030 assuming the consumption and demand patterns would remain the same. While the demand for water is increasing at a very high rate, the world's freshwater resources are increasingly polluted with organic waste, pathogens, fertilizers and pesticides, heavy metals, and other types of pollutants. Pollution of water due to organic matter is increasing as a result of the municipal and industrial wastewater release and the increase of agricultural practices.

Eutrophication, another well-known phenomenon because of the release of fertilizer nutrient enrichments on the surface waters as a result of unproductive wastewater and agricultural runoff management. On the other hand, contamination of water from pathogens is another common water quality problem particularly in developing countries. Yet, the impact of these prevailing pollutants is compromising the water quality in developed as well as in developing countries, creating serious consequences on ecosystems as well as humans. Sri Lanka has abundant water resources with approximately 103 river basins, over 20 major wetlands, 2905 km<sup>2</sup> of other inland water bodies, and abundant groundwater. We are receiving over 2000 mm annual rainfall island-wide. However, management of water resources has many issues such as periodical water shortages, deterioration of quality of surface and groundwater, unequal allocation and sharing, economic losses from natural disasters etc.



As a matter of fact, we have more than 50 legislative instruments in action for the management of water resources, where the authority has been delegated among many state institutes. However, lack of coordination among these institutions has led to poor management of water resources here in Sri Lanka. Pollutants from household, industrial and agricultural sources contaminate both surface and groundwater affecting public health as well as the environment. This has created a gap in demand and supply in the provision of water and sanitation services to the public as well. The issues of water quality, catering the demand and water conservation have not been adequately addressed. The quality of potable (drinking) water is a noteworthy contributing factor to our well-being. The deterioration of water quality island-wide, in both surface waters and groundwater due to unmonitored and uncontrolled urban, agricultural, and industrial pollution and solid waste and wastewater discharge. Satisfactory attention has not been drawn to safeguard water sources for drinking water from pollution due to leachate from solid waste landfill, industrial wastes, pesticide residues, hospital wastewater, etc. Apart from the implementation of stringent rules and regulations, the concepts of certification and accreditation could contribute to the conservation and effective management of water resources immensely.



In general, the certification is used to verify that a particular device, product, process or a service meets a given level of quality and safety. Ex: certification of bottled drinking water, calculation of water footprint of a product. The certification will be carried out by an independent organization that validates the claims of a product, process or a service against a formal standard or criterion or provides an independent assessment. A certification body possibly is responsible for seeking data from manufacturers, generating test results, conducting inspections, audits and making recommendations on products, processes or services. In addition, testing the quality of water is also another activity that is used for the water resource management. During the drinking water treatment, wastewater treatment and development projects, the quality of the water have to be tested for a set of defined parameters and permitted levels. The main objectives of these certifications, inspections and testing are to assure that their use is not compromising the safety of the user, to ensure uniform quality and condition of products, to control of materials and chemicals used and discharged to water resources. The accreditation would be the last step of this journey which provides the user or the general public an assurance of the quality and the conservation status of water resources. The accreditation process assesses the activities of certification bodies, inspection bodies and testing laboratories who are involved in different aspects of ensuring the quality of water for their competence against standard requirements when carrying out their tasks.



The Sri Lanka Accreditation Board, as the national authority to provide accreditation services, is accrediting certification bodies against ISO/IEC 17065 (Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services), ISO/IEC 17021 (Conformity Assessment — Requirements for Bodies Providing Audit and Certification of Management Systems) and accrediting testing laboratories against ISO/IEC 17025 (General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories). Granting accreditation for a certification body that is auditing water-related product manufacturers, management system practitioners and water testing laboratories, would give the end-user an additional assurance on the quality of water. Thereby, the Sri Lanka Accreditation Board (SLAB) has been able to contribute for safeguarding the water resource of Sri Lanka.



**Dr. Niranjan Kannangara**  
**Assistant Director**  
**SLAB**



# ROLE OF ACCREDITATION IN IMPLEMENTING SDG 12: RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12 Responsible Consumption and Production is all about ensuring Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) patterns. According to the Oslo symposium in 1994, SCP recounts the use of services and related products which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life. Those products and services shall be provisioned while minimizing the use of natural resources & toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life-cycle.

Current resource depletion and environmental pollution problems are triggered by manmade activities which are driven by consumption patterns. Therefore, the key to the sustainable development is sustainable lifestyles shaped by sustainable consumption patterns. The

products and services those we consume today generate environmental impacts not only in production and consumption stages but also throughout the life cycle from extraction of raw materials to the end of life disposal. Hence it is necessary to address those environmental impacts over the entire life cycle. In other words, meeting SDG 12 calls for sustainable products of which environmental impacts has been minimized over the life cycle. The life cycle environmental impacts can be analyzed by Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)s (ISO 14040 -14044 series). Material Flow Cost Accounting (ISO 14051) is also getting popular in Japan, Germany etc. in order to analyze the life cycle material flows. These analyses are conducted using various LCA software tools and country specific life cycle inventory databases.





Subsequently, the new products have to be designed and the existing products have to be redesigned minimizing those life cycle impacts. There are SCP tools such as Eco-design (ISO14006), Design for Environment and Design for Sustainability to systematically integrate environmental considerations into design and development process of products with the purpose of reducing the environmental impacts throughout the life cycle.

Such eco-designed products and services shall gain a substantial market-share in order to operate SCP as a viable business model. For this purpose, the information related to those sustainable products and services has to be communicated to the consumer in a trustworthy manner and thereby positioning as a sustainable product or service system in the market. There are SCP tools such as sustainable product declaration, Eco-labelling etc. for this purpose.

When we focus to the consumer groups in the market, government is the single largest buyer in any country. So Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) is promoted as a leading SCP tool to facilitate sustainable consumption of the public goods and services. Large number of countries in the world has adopted SPP whereas the policy is in pipeline in Sri Lanka in the name of Green Public Procurement (GPP). Corporates adopt instead the Green Procurement (GP) for the same purpose. In both Public and corporate level procurement as well as in individuals purchase decisions, the above-mentioned sustainable production declaration schemes are widely used. Eco-labelling can be of three types as Type I - Environmental Labelling (ISO 14024), Type II Self-declaration and claims (ISO 14021) and Type III - Environmental declarations (ISO 14025). Type I & III Eco-labels can be operated under accredited product verification schemes based on ISO 14065 standard.



When we adopt the life cycle thinking we can realize that the production stage has a significant contribution to the environmental degradation in terms of both quantities and toxicities. The value addition of the production function also outstanding when we undertake value chain mapping. Therefore, there are proactive environmental management tools dedicated for enhancing the environmental performance of the production stage. Tools such as Energy and Environmental management systems (ISO 14001 & ISO 50001) are used for this purpose of continually improving the sustainability performance of the production facilities. As we are aware those management systems are certified under accredited certification schemes developed according to ISO 17021-1 standard on Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems. Therefore, accreditation is an essential requirement for operating those certified ISO management systems.

Further, those business entities who are in the domain of responsible production are looking forward to communicate in public their sustainability performance. Most popular Environmental footprint indicators used for this purpose are Organizational and Product carbon footprints (ISO 14064-1 & ISO 14067). Those Greenhouse Gas emissions and removals related footprint declarations are verified under accredited verification schemes to make those claims acceptable and credible. There are some other very important footprint indicators such as water footprint (ISO 14046) which are not yet upgraded as certifiable standard. In addition to that there are vital footprint indicators such as Ecological footprint, Material intensity per service unit (MIPS) etc. which are not covered yet under ISO standards. But those footprint indicators also will be upgraded to operate under accredited verification schemes in future.

Various SCP tools require distinctive competencies to handle the tool. Implementation of SCP tools successfully across the various industry and business sectors of the country require the competent persons as specialized consultants on respective tools. Those professionals can be certified under the accredited schemes of Certification of persons according to ISO 17024 Conformity assessment — General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons standard. Sri Lanka Accreditation Board (SLAB) has received applications for accrediting the schemes for Cleaner Production Consultants, Environmental Management Systems Consultants, Energy Management Systems Consultants, Water footprint assessment consultants and Greenhouse Gas Quantification consultants.



Environmental performance at organizational level is regulated by environmental legislation in any country. Therefore, a large number of environmental performance tests are carried to evaluate the compliance. The testing staff of the laboratory must be competent and the testing equipment must be in calibrated status to ensure the accuracy and reliability of test results. Those environmental testing laboratories also follow accreditation under ISO 17025 standard on General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories. Therefore, in a summery, it is obvious that the SCP tools are the key drivers to accomplish SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production whereas Accreditation is widely used in application of those SCP tools. In facts so many other SCP tools are also expected to be coming under accredited schemes in the future to come. Efficient application of those SCP tools will depend on competencies of the professionals who handles those and therefore accredited schemes of Certification of persons are very much crucial in order to accomplish this requirement. Accredited laboratory services are imperative in guaranteeing the performance of testing personnel and equipment as environmental performance leads to compliance obligations. Accordingly, the role of accreditation has become and essential prerequisite in achieving objectives and targets of SDP 12 Responsible Consumption and Production.



**Mr. Samantha Kumarasena, BSc (Eng), MSc, MBA**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**National Cleaner Production Centre**





## NEW AREAS OF ACCREDITATION

Sri Lanka Accreditation Board has currently identified the following areas as emerging needs in accreditation in Sri Lanka and worldwide. We encourage all interested parties to join with us to contribute to the National/International needs in enhancing the recognition and acceptance of the products and services in domestic and international markets.

### I. ACCREDITATION SCHEME FOR REFERENCE MATERIAL PRODUCERS (RMP) BASED ON ISO 17034:

ISO 17034 specifies general requirements for the competence and consistent operation of reference material producers and it covers the production of all reference materials, including certified reference materials. Reference materials (RMs) are used in all stages of the measurement process, including for method validation, calibration and quality control. They are also used in interlaboratory comparisons for method validation and for assessing laboratory proficiency..

The demonstration of the scientific and technical competence of RMPs is a basic requirement for ensuring the quality of RMs

The demand for new RMs of higher quality is increasing as a consequence of both the improved precision of measuring equipment and the requirement for more accurate and reliable data in the scientific and technological disciplines. It is not only necessary for RMPs to provide information about their materials in the form of RM documents, but also to demonstrate their competence in producing RMs of appropriate quality.

This scheme would also be important for new Proficiency Testing Providers to become accredited RMPs.



## 2. ACCREDITATION TO CARBON OFFSETTING AND REDUCTION SCHEME FOR INTERNATIONAL AVIATION (CORSIA) BASED ON ISO 14065:

Climate change is a global problem, which requires global efforts. The CORSIA is a global scheme for the global international aviation industry. *The more States join the CORSIA, the more emissions are covered by the offsetting requirements of the Scheme and the higher its environmental effectiveness becomes.* Each participating State brings International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) closer to meeting its global aspirational goal of carbon neutral growth. For States with particular interest in eco-tourism, participation in CORSIA provides the additional benefit of *greening air transport connections* to the rest of the world.

Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) is the backbone for successful implementation of CORSIA, which requires reliable information on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and offsetting requirements. ICAO MEMBER STATES PARTICIPATING IN CORSIA need to ensure that their aeroplane operators comply with the CORSIA offsetting requirements every three years (starting in 2021), in addition to annual CO<sub>2</sub> MRV.

Sri Lanka is member of the ICAO and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) of Sri Lanka is the regulator body.

Director General of the Civil Aviation Authority (DGCA) issue the Implementing Standards / directions in order to give effect to the International Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) contained in the Annex 16, Volume IV – “Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation” (CORSIA).



The verification Bodies will provide reasonable assurance that the aeroplane operator's Emissions Report is materially fair and an accurate representation of emissions over the period of the Emissions Report. However, the verification bodies shall be accredited to ISO 14065 and other relevant requirements of the scheme by a national accreditation body, in order to be eligible to verify the Emissions Report of Aeroplane Operator.

SLAB has successfully conducted a training programme with the assistance of CAA and ICAO CORSIA for potential clients and SLAB assessors. SLAB and CAA work together to initiate the scheme in Sri Lanka.



### 3. ACCREDITATION TO ECO LABELLING SCHEMES BASED ON ISO/IEC 17065:



Eco label is a type of environmental labels and one of the tools used widely in promoting ecofriendly products conveying the message to producers and consumers regarding the overall environmental performance of products and services based on life cycle considerations. Eco Labels are advantageous in variety of ways such as providing consumers with more information about the environmental effects of their consumption, encourage producers, governments and other agents to increase the environmental standards of products/services.



International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has published International Standards for labelling practices in ISO 14000 series. Three standards are providing the guidance for three types of Eco Labels namely ISO 14024 (Type I), ISO 14021 (Type II) and ISO 14025 (Type III).

The use of Eco Labels in Sri Lanka is not significantly popular among the local consumers. Therefore, the Environment Planning and Economics Division of the MoE has initiated to develop an Eco Labelling Framework in collaboration with the main stakeholders including Sri Lanka Accreditation Board (SLAB), Sri Lanka Standard Institution (SLSI) and Ministry in charge of the subjects of Science, Technology & Research (MoSTR) as there is no any national level Eco Labelling scheme established at present.



# HIGHLIGHTS 2021

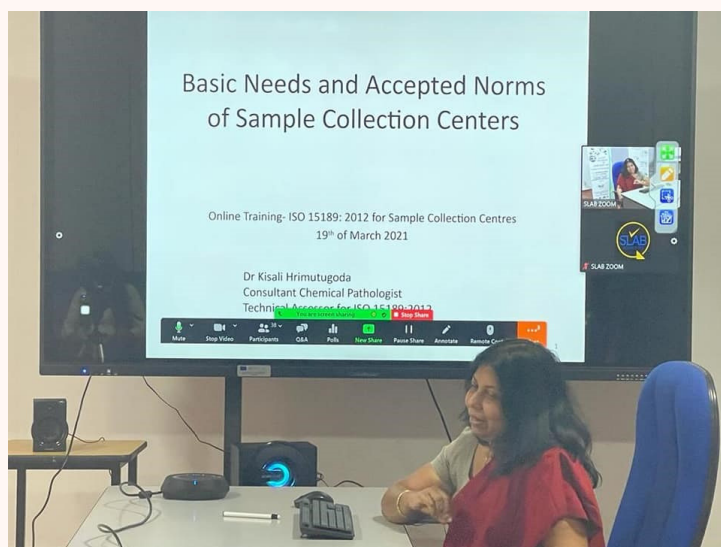
## Webinar on SLS 1672 – Implementing COVID-19 Safety Management System Standard for Organizations

Considering the existing pandemic condition of the country, SLAB as the National Accreditation Authority of Sri Lanka has organized the above webinar on the new SLS standard, SLS 1672 on COVID-19 Safety Management Systems on 2021-01-26.



## Webinar on “Sharing experiences on remote assessments and way forward”

Webinar on “Sharing experiences on remote assessments and way forward” organized by the PTB and SAARC Secretariat for the Accreditation bodies in the region. SLAB participated for this event and shared our experiences with others on conducting remote assessments which was started as an interim arrangement to face the challenges imposed by COVID-19.



## Online awareness training on ISO 15189:2012 for Sample Collection Centers

This programme is specially designed for the individuals who are working in sample collection centers of Medical Laboratories. Aim of the programme is to provide a broad understanding on the norms and correct practices at the collection centers.



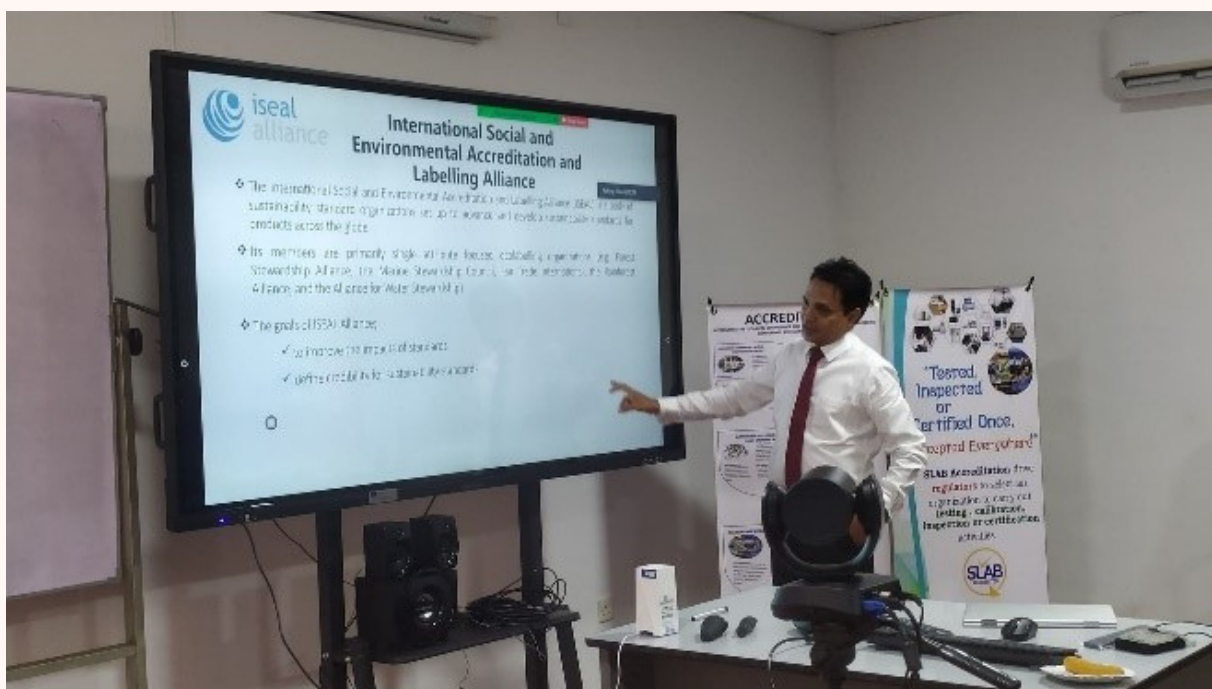
## Webinar on quality perspectives of Organic Agriculture

SLAB conducted the above webinar on 2021-03-22 & 23 covering the role of National Organic Control Unit (NOCU), Organic certification schemes, SLS 1324 for Organic certification and SL GAP and the experience of Sri Lanka and way forward.



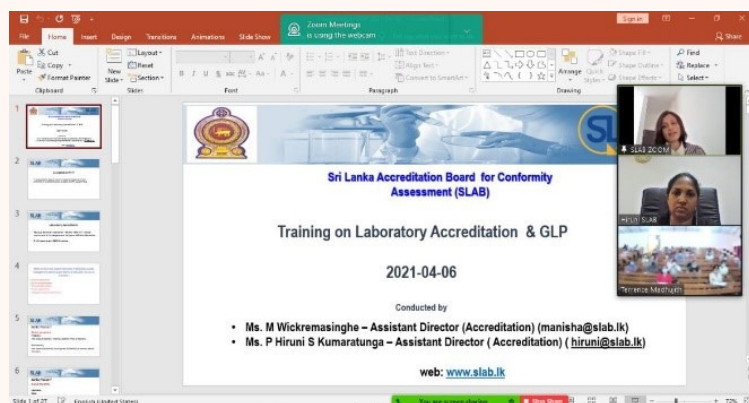
## Awareness workshop on the applicability of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 and other relevant ISO/IEC standards to develop National Ecolabelling framework

SLAB has identified the active involvement of regulators and guiding them on suitable models of accreditation to be used in their regulatory work is a key success factor in promoting the quality of goods and services. SLAB is working with Ministry of Environment to assist them to develop a National Ecolabelling framework.



## Training session on GLP

Strengthening laboratories to generate technically valid results is a prime requirement today. In parallel, need to promote Research and Development Laboratories as well in order to promote internationally recognized research and innovations. Partnering with the Research Council of University of Peradeniya, SLAB has conducted a training session for the Technical Offices on GLP.



## Virtual training on “Technical guidance for accreditation of GM testing laboratories”

Implementation of the National Biosafety Framework in Sri Lanka in accordance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety Project has planned to establish Accredited National Referral Laboratories in Sri Lanka for detection of Genetically Modified (GM) Food. As an initial step FAO Sri Lanka has organized a virtual training session above and SLAB has contributed as the Resource personnel. 32 Participants representing FAO Sri Lanka, BISL India and proposed referral laboratories participated for the training.



## Webinar on “Need to have an accredited inspection network in strengthening National Regulatory Framework of Sri Lanka”

SLAB conducted a Webinar on “Need to have an accredited inspection network in strengthening National Regulatory Framework of Sri Lanka” for the regulatory organizations and potential inspection bodies representing government and private sector organizations. SLAB will be working continuously to assist regulators to identify suitable models of accreditation which will assist them to implement technical regulations effectively. Mr B.S.P.Mendis, Founder Director/CEO SLAB, Mr L.H.D.Bandusoma, Deputy Director SLAB and Ms Chandrika Thilakaratne, CEO SLAB conducted the sessions.



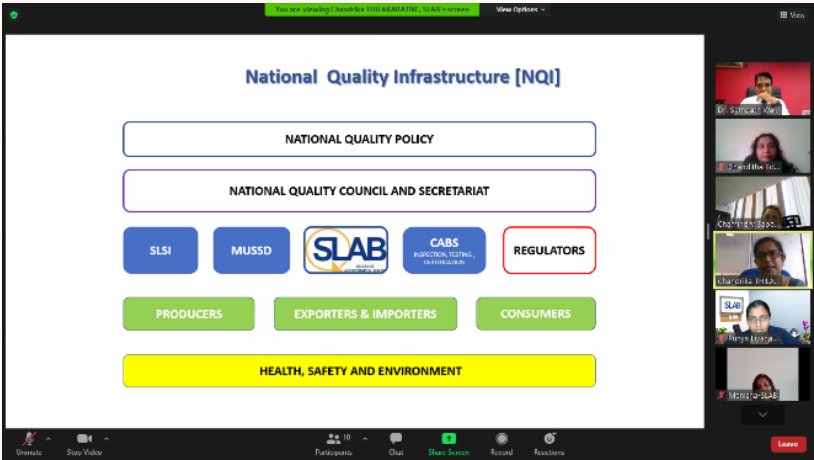
# SLAB collaborations with Chamber of Commerce

SLAB initiated a dialogue with the Chamber of Commerce today with the objective of assisting the exporters to get accredited conformity assessment services within the country. Identifying the Conformity assessment (Testing, Inspection, Certification) requirements of exporters which are currently not provided by accredited laboratories in the country was identified in this discussion. As the next step SLAB plans to have a meeting with SLAB accredited conformity assessment bodies, University & R&D laboratories, exporters and EDB to make aware the relevant parties about the new conformity assessment requirements of the exporters. Wherever possible accredited CABs are expected to expand their scopes and competencies.



# SLAB collaborations with Sustainable Development Council, Sri Lanka

SLAB initiated discussions with Sri Lanka Sustainable Development Council (SDC) on possible collaborations in implementation and promotion of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)2030. World Accreditation Day will be marked in this year under the theme “Accreditation; Supporting the implementation of SDGs”. SLAB Chairman, CEO, other key staff and Director General, SDC participated in the discussion.





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