



European Union

ஐரோப்பிய ஒன்றியம்

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PRESS RELEASE

The European Union organised the first meeting under the Collaborative Action towards Societal Challenges through Awareness, Development, and Education (CASCADE) project, held during the 3rd – 6th November 2013 at the Kandalama Heritage Hotel. The Project is funded under Horizon 2020, the new financial programme of the EU for Research and Development and with a budget of over €70billion for the period between 2014 and 2020.

The CASCADE project aims to provide the foundation for a future International Cooperation Network programme targeting South Asian Countries, which will promote bi-regional coordination of Science & Technology (S&T) cooperation. One of the key objectives of the 18-month CASCADE project is to assemble a regional position paper that identifies global challenges, research priorities and increases awareness on how to address common problems being faced.

In this context, the three day workshop in Sri Lanka has been platform where partners from various countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and their European colleagues) have actively engaged in constructive discussions on how to address prevalent issues in the disciplines of sciences' and humanities e.g. health, agriculture, maritime research, energy; climate action, resource management etc. This initiative involves a number of European and Asian research institutions, including the University of Salford (U.K.), the University of Moratuwa and the Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities.

Speaking on the occasion, the Science Counsellor of the EU Delegation in Delhi, Denis Dambois said "e.g. CASCADE is an excellent opportunity for raising awareness of the potential for EU-Southern Asia cooperation and stimulating regional and international participation. With the active contribution of countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, the endeavour will be to pave the way for more advanced, inclusive and innovative societies".

Confirming the importance of a project of this nature, the project coordinator of CASCADE, Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga said "this initiative is truly forward thinking and has generated great interest in the participating countries. Sri Lanka with it wealth of natural resources will play a key role in shaping future policies. I am pleased to be given the responsibility of this project will have long lasting impact on the lives of people."