

Topic: Conservation for wildlife

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Preface

● Background

Thanks to King Ling College, we got a precious opportunity to travel to Sri Lanka with the entire class from 30th March to 4th April. Other than building our collective memories, we also had an in-depth discovery of Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka, is officially called the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is an island country in South Asia near south-east India, as well as has maritime borders with India to the northwest and the Maldives to the southwest.

In Sri Lanka, there is a wide range of wildlife animal, especially the renowned elephants. This way, conservation for both the environment and antiques is of paramount importance, especially when eco-tourism constitutes one of the vital economic pillars to Sri Lanka. Thus, the topic of this project is the conservation for both the environment and antiques in Sri Lanka.

● Project objectives

1. What have the government and locals Sri Lanka contributed to the conservation for the environment in the country?
2. Is the existing conservation work carried out by the government and locals in Sri Lanka sufficient and effective enough in protecting the wildlife?

1.2 Area of investigation



Figure 0
Map of Sri Lanka

Chapter 2 Methodology

2.1 Choice of method

Several methods were adopted for this project and the methods included: literature review and photograph analysis. Literature review was done by doing further research like reading books and doing research online. Photographs were taken during the trip in Sri Lanka.

2.2 Classification of the studying target

Indeed, Sri Lanka government has been always endeavoring to protect the local wildlife environment such as holding eco-tourism that constitutes one of the vital economic pillars to Sri Lanka.

In this project, we have chosen conservation as the topic and aimed at finding out the conservation work for environment carried out by the government and locals in Sri Lanka, as well as evaluate whether they have been doing enough currently.

2.3 Target group

The target group of this project was the Sri Lanka government and locals because we were studying about the conservation work carried out by them for protecting the wildlife environment.

2.4 Problem faced and solution

We encountered a few problems and limitations when collecting data. The reason behind was that the literature review and photographs that were useful to the project could only be done or taken at a later stage of the project. However, our group had to predict the outcome in earlier stage even before we arrived the destination.

Fortunately, after paying an all-out effort, the variation could finally be minimized.

Literature Review

Most of the materials found were in Sinhala and it was difficult to understand and translate all of them into English. It became more challenging to analyze the information.

Photograph

Although most of the photos were taken in Sri Lanka, those of the animals were not clear enough and we could hardly identify the species. Moreover, it was forbidden to take photos in some historical sites and museum. As a result, we had less resources for our project.

In response to the above limitations, some measures have been suggested as follows:

Firstly, dealing with the Sinhala sources or materials, we decided to translate them online with Google Translate and ask the local tour guide for a more accurate translation so that we could ensure that the sources were clearly expressed.

Secondly, we could label the species of animals on the photo immediately after the photo taking, in order to make the identifying process in the later stage of the project easier.

Chapter 3 Literature review

1. Policies and programs in relation to conservation in Sri Lanka

The National Policy on Wild Life Conservation in Sri Lanka

- According to the official website of the Sri Lanka government¹, this policy renews the commitment of the government to conserve wildlife resources through promoting conservation, maintaining ecological processes and life sustaining systems, managing genetic diversity and ensuring sustainable utilization and sharing of equitable benefits arising from biodiversity. It emphasizes the need for effective protected area management with the participation of local communities.

MEF Program

- Millennium Elephant Foundation (MEF), a family run non-government organization, which is dedicated to improving the welfare of domestic elephants throughout Sri Lanka. MEF was started in 1999 in memory of Sam Samrasinghe. The organization fund the care, medical treatments, food, mahout salaries, the running costs of the charity as well as having an on call Mobile Veterinary Unit which travels around the country treating sick elephants in need. The organization runs an international elephant volunteer program 365 days per year. The volunteers applied are dedicated to the daily care of the elephants kept by the organization.²

2. Damages to the wildlife in Sri Lanka

- According to the media report, many elephants were killed or crippled by land mines during Lanka's armed conflict. Between 1990 and 1994, a total of 261 wild elephants either died as a result of gunshot injuries, or were killed by poachers and land mines. Between 1999 and 2006 nearly 100 wild elephants were killed every year.
- The Sri Lankan elephant population is now largely restricted to lowlands in the dry zone, east and southeast. Elephants are present in wild life reserves and a small remnant population exists in the Peak Wilderness Sanctuary. Apart from Wilpattu and Ruhuna National Parks, all other protected regions are less than 1,000 km² in extent. Many areas are less than 50km², and not large enough to encompass the entire home ranges of elephants.
- The reduction and fragmentation of habitat have increasingly brought wild

¹ <http://www.environmentmin.gov.lk/policies.htm>

² <http://millenniumelephantfoundation.com/>

elephants in conflict with man. As food and water becomes scarce, the elephant population is forced to feed on cultivated land. The predation of the elephants has destroyed the livelihood of farmers and thus they have been increasingly viewed as pests. The DWLC claims that in the last decade at least 1,369 elephants have been killed as a result of crop raiding. ³

³ <http://www.eleaid.com/country-profiles/elephants-sri-lanka/>

Chapter 4 Photo Report



Figure 1

Figure 1 is the photo of a warning signboard located in the roadside. The kind of signboards is used to remind drivers driving in the suburb that there may be elephants crossing on the roads, as there are many elephants living in the countryside of Sri Lanka.



Figure 2

Figure 2 is a photo of the elephants kept in the Dehiwala National Zoo, which is managed by the Department of National Zoological Gardens. From the photo, one can see that all elephants were bound up with metal chains so as to prevent them from escaping and hurting the tourists. However, this kind of treatment is quite inhumane and unfair to the elephants as they only got a small area for daily movement.



Figure 3

Figure 3 is a photo of wild monkey taken when we visited the Sigiriya Rock Fortress for sightseeing. As there is a huge fortress surrounding this tour spot, we

could see a lot of monkeys climbing on the stairs of the mountain that we were hiking on, and resting everywhere freely. Some of those monkeys would even steal some food from the tourists passing by.



Figure 4

Figure 4 is a photo of hippopotamuses kept in the Dehiwala National Zoo. From the photo, one can see that instead of using cages, there are only fence built around the living area of hippopotamuses. This practice gives the hippopotamuses more space to move around and thus making their habitat more comfortable and suitable for living.



Figure 5

Figure 5 is a photo of an elephants kept in the Dehiwala National Zoo. The photo showed that the elephant was bathing while the stuff from the zoo were helping to clean the elephant's body. This practice reveals that the stuff from the zoo actually cares a lot about the cleanness of the animals, as sanitation is of paramount importance in order to keep the animals healthy physically.



Figure 6

Figure 6 is a photo of wild cow taken when we were going back to Amaara Forest Hotel, a hotel located in the countryside. Owing to the hotel's special location, we could see a lot of animals like sheep and peacocks wandering around freely.

Chapter 5 Analysis

1. Locals

During the whole trip, we could see that most of the locals were paying great effort in order to protect the wildlife. For example, the wildlife environment and habitat were not destroyed even when the Amaara Forest Hotel, a hotel located in the countryside, was built. This reveals that economic activities do not weigh over the natural environment in Sri Lanka. Besides, the employees of the hotel are all friendly to the wild animals in the countryside. For instance, the staff may sometimes prepare some water for the elephants wandering around at night.

Moreover, the locals have also set up some organizations in order to protect the wildlife. For example, Millennium Elephant Foundation (MEF), a family run non-government organization, is dedicated to improving the welfare of domestic elephants throughout Sri Lanka.

2. Government

The government in Sri Lanka has also done a lot of conservation work in relation to the wildlife.

Firstly, the government has set up a myriad of warning signboards in the roadsides so as to remind people to pay more attention to the animals in the surrounding. For example, we had seen a warning signboard located in the roadside, reminding drivers driving in the suburb that there may be elephants crossing on the roads

Secondly, the Department of National Zoological Gardens has been managing the Dehiwala National Zoo. In the zoo, most of the animals are not kept in cages. Instead, there is just a few fences surrounding the living areas of the animals. Besides, the settings of the living areas for animals sometimes resemble their wildlife habitats. This way, the animals can live in a more comfortable space. However, some of animals are treated inhumanely out of safety concerns. For instance, all elephants in the zoo were bound up with metal chains so as to prevent them from escaping and hurting the tourists.

Moreover, despite the setting up of signboards on the roadside, the government seems to pay less attention to the animals in the forest. For example, for the monkeys that we encountered in the Sigiriya Rock Fortress, there is yet any government departments or organizations regulating their daily activities. This is the reason for why the monkeys could wander around the tourist spot and even steal food from the tourists.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

After the project, the contribution and effectiveness of the animal conservation in Sri Lanka by the government and locals were discovered.

From our research, the Sri Lanka government have carried out different environment policies to promote environment conservation or wildlife conservation. The policies help conserve wildlife resources and maintain biodiversity. Also, the zoo managing by the Department of National Zoological Gardens has tried to resemble animals' wildlife habitats in their living area. Other than government policies, there are some non-government organizations trying their best to protect the wildlife in Sri Lanka, for example, the Millennium Elephant Foundation (MEF) which is dedicated to improving the welfare of domestic elephants throughout Sri Lanka. Moreover, the locals were paying great effort in order to protect the wildlife. For example, the locals may sometimes prepare some water for the elephants wandering around at night.

However, the government seems to pay less attention to the animals out of the zoo. There are lots of conflicts between humans and animals in Sri Lanka, lots of elephants were killed in past years. Besides, their population was largely restricted and the protected regions are not large enough to compass the entire home ranges of elephants. This situation is detrimental to both elephants and human, like the predation of the elephants has destroyed the livelihood of farmers.

It is known that after this tour, not only did we gain a collective memory, but we also learnt beyond classrooms by having observations, which was a great and unforgettable experience for all of us.

Chapter 7 Reflection

Li Man Chak (30th March 2017)

I deeply remembered everything happened on the first day when our class arrived Sri Lanka .We went to the airport from the school by bus. The plane took off at 8 : 20 pm and we all had a wonderful meal on the plane . Although it was at night, the views I saw through the windows of the plane were stunning and magnificent. It was so unbelievable that we were sitting 15000 feet beyond the ground. We all took a good nap with these spectacular sight on the plane. Finally, we arrived Sri Lanka at midnight.

When I first stepped on the land of Sri Lanka, it was so agitating and revitalizing. Sri Lanka was like a whole new world for me. All the sight, the smell, the people, and even the taste of the country were eye-openers for us. Every moving car and every word that the local people spoke, were like parts of a great show preforming in front of me. I would never forget this feeling that made me feel so fresh and touching. At last, we all arrived to the hotel, and had a good sleep, preparing for the next few days tour. I was looking forward to it.

O King Yee (31st March 2017)

In the second day of our Grand Tour, we were planning to visit the secondary school in Sri Lanka actually. However, as that secondary school was going to hold an exam very soon, we changed our plan in order to avoid disturbing the students there. We went visiting another international school in Sri Lanka. I thought that we might understand "Plans can never keep up with changes" and it was not only an unforgettable experience, but also a special and valuable lesson before the exchange activity.

When I travelled with my family, they would always warn me that" Never focus in your mobile phone whenever you are bored or tired, in the car or waiting for something. This is a good time for you to learn more other different culture from the life of the local inhabitants." This warning helps me learn a lot in this Grand Tour. Although I have never been to Sri Lanka before, I saw a great many differences between Sri Lanka and Hong Kong this time. Moreover, I also tried to put down my Hong Kong identity and get immersed into the local culture. I believed that it was what teachers want us to learn and it was one of the purpose of Grand Tour. Seeing the smiles of the international school's students, I was very happy and honored that we could have the meaningful exchange day with the international school students in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka was relatively less-developed in all aspects when being compared with Hong Kong so we also served the students there by refurbishing their chairs and desks in the classrooms. Although Sri Lanka was not as prosperous as Hong Kong and the locals might need our help, but I would never look down on them and be willing to lend them a helping hand. It was only because I am luckier than they are. That was why I am grateful to what I have been enjoying now and I promise that I will cherish what I have.

We played cricket with the students there during the visit. Cricket was the national sport of Sri Lanka. This miserable experience really gave us an illuminating lesson and proved that "People are born to be good at their own" again. Also, I really saw and learned about what were called "Practice make perfect" and "Equal spirit".

All in all, Grand Tour was an unique experience without doubt. I was so glad that it became a part of my valuable memory and benefited me a lot.

Yung Shun Wa (31st March 2016)

The second day, our class visited an international school of Sri Lanka. We helped them refurbishing the table and enjoyed playing cricket. Consequently, we felt extremely tired and had a feeling that the students there were totally different from us.

I were shocked when meeting them at the very beginning. A girl gave me a gorgeous wreath and two thin boys played their local music to us. No one was tepid to welcome us.

I remembered that when there were other students from oversea schools visited King Ling College last time, I just turned a blind eye on them and felt that there was nothing special. After visited the international school, I felt guilty to my previous attitude and though that the personality traits of the students there was better than us. At least, they were being kind and friendly to all the guests and strangers Therefore, I thought I should change my attitude about treating other from now on.

After participating in the volunteer work, I did not feel exhausted. I enjoyed the work and learned that it was more blessed to give than to receive. When I helped them, I thought I had done my best in the limited time. The students there were pleasant but I believed that we were gladder than them.

Chan Hoi Yuet (1st April 2017)

It was my honor to have a chance to go to Sri Lanka as my grand tour destination. In Sri Lanka, I had experienced the custom and tradition there.

On the third day of the trip, our class had gone to Sigiriya Rock Fortress. Although it was not as steep as those mountains in Hong Kong, it was still a challenging task for me to climb up a lot of stairs with my weak body. I needed to be brave and firm when I felt very tired and afraid of the horrible height. With the encouragement and helping hands from my classmates, I finally reached the peak of the mountain.

We also went to the Dambulla Cave Temple. I have learnt the historical development of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. Moreover, I have experienced a special culture in temple --- taking off the shoes before everyone enters the temple.

The trip in Sri Lanka was an unforgettable experience for me. I learnt to be thankful for everything I enjoy in my daily life. When comparing to Hong Kong, Sri Lanka was not that well developed. In fact, I could not fit in the environment of Sri Lanka at all. However, the people there were very nice and completely different from Hong Kong citizens. It was a good lesson for me to reflect on myself and my attitudes of dealing with people.

In short, the trip in Sri Lanka was indeed an unforgettable experience for me.

Hung Kit Shan (3rd April 2017)

On the fifth day of the tour, we visited the Dehiwala zoo and National Museum of Colombo.

As a citizen in Hong Kong, it was rare for me to see so many kinds of animals at the same time. During the visit in the zoo, I saw the animals that I had never seen before and learned about their ecosystem. This was indeed a fantastic experience.

Furthermore, in the museum, we met some local students. They were all friendly to us even when we had different skin colours. Unlike the people in Hong Kong, when we waved to those kids, they responded to us enthusiastically. I could feel that even though they were not rich, they still had a more affirmative mind for facing the world than Hong Kong citizens do.

Ko Ka Ying (3rd April 2017)

On 3rd April, the last day that we stayed in Sri Lanka, the entire eclass experienced a great unexpectedness.

Originally, we planned to visit the Galle Dutch Fort in the morning. However, the plan was cancelled accidentally. The reason behind was that one of our classmates encountered a burglary and his phone was stolen by a staff of the hotel. At the very beginning, all of us just thought that the schedule would only be put off for a while and would find out his phone very soon. After discovering that he actually encountered a burglary, it was inevitable that Mr. Lo and the tour guide went to the police station and reported the case to the police. This way, we did not have enough time to visit the Galle Dutch Fort.

In fact, I understood that the classmate should not be blamed because it was really an unfortunate unexpectedness that no one wanted it happen. Despite this, I still learned a lesson from it. The message told is that: people may sometimes think that how they manage their belongings is their own business and concern, but in reality, other people may also be affected when they carelessly manage their stuff and even encounter a burglary, especially when they are working with others as a team. Thus, it can be said that we should also be cautious and wisely manage our own stuff no matter we are travelling or not. This way, we can be responsible to not only ourselves, but also people in the surrounding.

Moreover, all of us was in an ordeal on that day. We were all tormented by the extremely hot weather, especially when the air-conditioning system in the bus malfunctioned.

After experience the extreme hotness, a unique feature of Sri Lanka, I understood that all the felicity that I used to experience in Hong Kong was not a matter of course. In many less developed countries or developing countries like Sri Lanka, people's quality of life is not as high as ours or even not up to par. We may think that having no air-conditioning in the summer is nonsensical, but for many people in those country, they may have yet seen air-conditioner once throughout their whole lives. Living in Hong Kong, we are so lucky that we can enjoy great lives full of various materials. Thus, we ought to cherish what we have not and learn to be grateful. Before complaining next time, I will indeed think of the people in Sri Lanka and ask myself a question—"Do you really think that you are so unlucky?"

Lor Wing Yan (3rd April 2017)

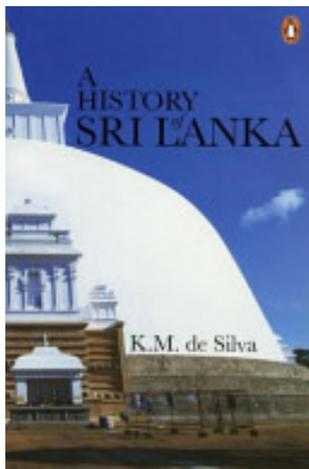
This was a great chance for me to visit Sri Lanka. I had experienced a lot in Sri Lanka. On the 5th day of the trip, we went to National Museum of Colombo.

In the National Museum of Colombo, it had recorded some information of Zheng He. The record of Sri Lanka was different from Chinese's official documentary. In this trip, I learnt about how to think in different aspects instead of having an one-track thought. We could not trust the information that the others gave to us blindly. We should have the suspicions in everything and find out the truth by ourselves.

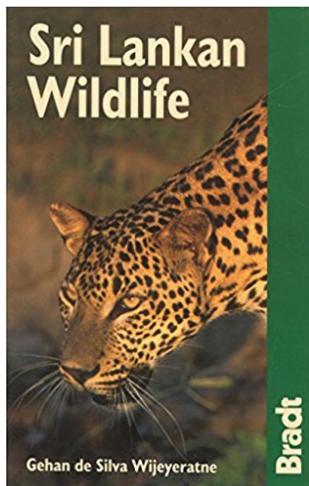
I also learnt that I should be always thanksgiving. When we met some local primary students in the museum, they were so excited simply because they got a chance to visit the museum. They could be so cheerful for this. Comparing with Sri Lanka, Hong Kong is a place that has many museums built. However, not many Hong Kong citizens would be excited for simply visiting the museum. Some of them might even have zero interest in visiting the museums in Hong Kong. We should be thanksgiving and treasure what we have.

I reflected a lot on myself after I visited Sri Lanka. It was an amazing place and it taught me a lot.

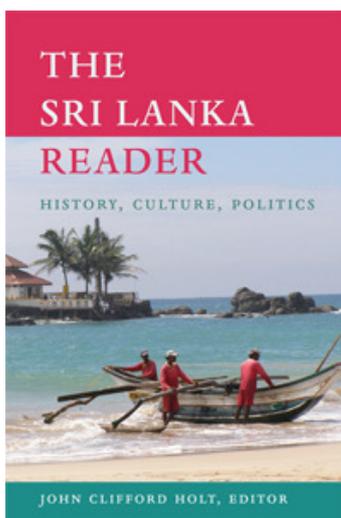
Chapter 8 Appendix



1. This book provides comprehensive coverage of all aspects of Sri Lanka's development from a classical Buddhist society and irrigation economy, to its emergence as a tropical colony producing some of the world's most important cash crops, such as cinnamon, tea, rubber and coconut, and finally as an Asian democracy.



2. Sri Lanka is home to elephants, leopards, bears and water buffalo and boasts one of the highest species densities of marine mammals in the world.



3. *The Sri Lanka Reader* is a sweeping introduction to the epic history of the island nation located just off the southern tip of India. The island's recorded history of more than two and a half millennia encompasses waves of immigration from the South Asian subcontinent, the formation of Sinhala Buddhist and Tamil Hindu civilizations, the arrival of Arab Muslim traders, and European colonization by the Portuguese, then the Dutch, and finally the British.

Chapter 9 Reference

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