

Bank Of Ceylon Signs MoU To Grow 100 Hectares Forest In Gal Oya

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Ajith Mannapperuma, State Minister to the Mahaweli Development and Environment Department (fourth from right) and Ronald C Perera, Chairman, Bank of Ceylon (third from left) exchanging the MoU, in the presence of Senarath Bandara, CEO/GM, BOC, C Amarasinghe, DGM – Sales and Channel Management, BOC; E M Jayaratne, DGM – Retail Banking (Range 1 and Range 2), BOC; Anura Dissanayake, Secretary to the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment; M P D U K Mapa Pathirana, State Secretary to the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment; and W A C Weragoda, Conservator General, Department of Forest Conservation.

Assisting the objective of improving Sri Lanka's forest cover up to 32 percent by 2020 in accordance with an agreement with the United Nations addressing global climate change, Bank of Ceylon (BOC) formulated a project to reforest 100 hectares in Gal Oya Forest Reserve, in a stretch close to the Habarana-Colombo-Trincomalee main road.

BOC signed an MoU with the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment and the Forest Department in the presence of Ajith Mannapperuma, State Minister of Mahaweli Development and Environment. Ronald C Perera, Chairman, BOC and Senarath Bandara, CEO/GM, C Amarasinghe, DGM Sales and Channel Management, E M Jayaratne, DGM Retail Banking (Range 1 and Range 2), represented BOC. Anura Dissanayake, Secretary of the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment, M P D U K Mapa Pathirana, State Secretary of Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment and W A C Weragoda, Conservator General, Department of Forest Conservation were also present. The Gal Oya Forest Reserve consists of 14,000 hectares of land, of which almost 6,000 hectares have been deforested. BOC will ensure that this project comprehensively looks at improving its land scale. Through this initiative, the growth of invasive plants such as Shrub

Verbena (Gandapana), Spear Grass (Iluk) and Ceylon Citronella (Mana) will be eliminated, while reducing the chances of wildfires and the spread of such, as well as limiting the feeding of cattle inside the forest reserve, while regenerating the natural growth of plants that form the forest. Being a concerned partner in protecting the environment in the country, BOC takes responsibility by actively engaging in causes that deliver sustainable results for society, its citizens and the environment.