

## SWITCH-Asia Networking Meeting

### 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Hospitality and Tourism Management “SWITCH-Asia solutions to sustainable tourism in Asia”

**Colombo, Sri Lanka  
8 October 2014**

Venue: Hotel Galadari, Colombo, Sri Lanka

#### PRESS RELEASE

In conjunction with the 2nd International Conference on Hospitality and Tourism Management, the SWITCH-Asia Network Facility organised a parallel session titled ‘SWITCH-Asia solutions to sustainable tourism in Asia’. The SWITCH-Asia Programme ([www.switch-asia.eu](http://www.switch-asia.eu)) currently is the largest EU-funded development cooperation programme with Asia and has promoted sustainable consumption and production (SCP) in Asia since 2008.

So far, SWITCH-Asia has funded more than 80 grant projects across 16 countries in the region, a number of which have developed the sustainable tourism solutions in various countries including Sri Lanka, Bhutan, the Philippines and Thailand. Mrs Libuse Soukupova, Head of Operations of the EU Sri Lanka Delegation, confirmed the EU’s commitment to support Sri Lanka’s green development stating that “the EU’s SWITCH-Asia programme also supports national policymakers in designing policy frameworks for sustainable consumption and production through National Policy Support Components. The Sri Lanka national policy support component will work closely with the Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy, and will be launched in the coming year 2015.”

The SWITCH-Asia programme also works closely with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP) which is defining a global process for achieving sustainability across priority sectors and themes based on SCP principles. Catalina Etcheverry, Consultant to UNEP’s Tourism and Environment Programme stated “Sustainable tourism is but one of six priority programmes that has been given an inter-governmental mandate through the 10YFP. This is potentially the first opportunity for governments and other stakeholders to be organized to implement the programme and achieve its objectives with a mechanism for technical support, and funding provided by a Trust Fund and other sources. UNEP is facilitating the process that, with the involvement and collaboration of stakeholders at global, regional and national levels, can achieve the programme’s goals and objectives within the 10-year time frame.”

The conference was also supported by the UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). “The World Tourism Organization is committed to working across the industry, both in the public and private domains, to advance a coherent response to Climate and Development imperatives, placing businesses at the heart of the transformation to a low carbon economy”, stated Ms. Zoritsa Urosevic, Head of International Relations and Resource Mobilization, World Tourism Organization.

“World wide more than 1 billion people travel internationally every year. The SWITCH-Asia Programme and the Network Facility will continue to engage with projects on sustainable tourism in Sri Lanka and support the development of a sustainable tourism industry in Sri Lanka,” added Dr. Uwe Weber, Teamleader of the SWITCH-Asia Network Facility.

