Topic 4: Reporting on the contribution of collective action of indigenous peoples and local communities

Biocultural Protocol on *Kithul* Livelihoods of Sinhala Community is Sri Lanka

The Nirmanee Development foundation has informed that they are willing to develop a Community Biocultural Protocol on *Kithul* Palm (*Caryota Urens*). Kithul tapping to extract the phloem sap to produce sweet trickle, substitute to commercial sugar was a livelihood of the Sri Lankan Sinhalese from the ancestral time. It possesses a large repository of Collective Biocultural Heritage. Nowadays as the younger generations are moving towards the towns looking for more sophisticated occupations Kitul Collective Biocultural Heritage is in danger for extinction. The Biodiversity Secretariat initiated mapping *Kithul* Collective Biocultural Heritage.

*Kithul* Palm is known as *Kalpawruksha* (according to the legend, a tree in heaven gives everything) inside the mature tree stem kithul flour can be extracted, known as medicinal food.

Mature stem used for handy crafts. *Kithul* fruits are one of a favorite food for wild civets endemic to Sri Lanka. These Civets helps seed dispersal.

Nowadays, the BDS is developing methodologies for reporting on this process. In Early June, remaining *kithul* tappers in rural areas will be gathered and they will discuss the in built methodologies to map collective Biocultural Heritage. That will be supported by Nirmanee Development Foundation.

As the National Focal point Biodiversity Secretariat will monitor the activity.