

**FOCUS-LK 2018: Managing the Oceans and Boosting the Blue Economy**

One of the French Embassy's annual events - FOCUS-LK – aims at sharing knowledge on themes of common interest to both Sri Lanka and France. The initiative designed for 2018, supported the initiation of a multi-stakeholder engagement process – 'Managing the Oceans and Boosting the Blue Economy in Sri Lanka'. The objective of the initiative is to promote sustainability of the ocean around Sri Lanka and to ensure multi-stakeholder participation in implementing relevant actions. The Embassy of France to Sri Lanka and the Maldives, invited Biodiversity Sri Lanka, as the focal point for private sector entities with a focus on biodiversity/environmental conservation to come on board in implementing FOCUS-LK 2018.



A Preparatory Technical Workshop was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2018 with the participation of 30 individuals representing the government, non-government, private and academic sectors of the country, working on marine environment-related issues. The outcome of this technical workshop was the selection of the coastal stretch in between Vakaraai and Batticaloa on the East Coast of Sri Lanka and the prioritization of activities that need to be paid attention to, when developing a project proposal to be implemented in the area.

Development of a project proposal to be implemented by multiple stakeholders, is currently ongoing and will be presented to the larger public at a concluding seminar scheduled for the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2018. The French Embassy along with BSL and other collaborating partners – IUCN, the Munasinghe Institute for Development and the French Development Agency – hopes that the collaborative project will be adopted for implementation by a collective of multiple entities. This will result in a first of its kind multi-sectoral, multi-partner collaborative initiative to conserve the valuable biodiversity resources in the marine realm surrounding Sri Lanka.

