



Overtourism in Minneriya National Park Sri Lanka

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About me



Madura Thivanka Pathirana

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Managing Director for Honeybee Holidays*

Senior lecturer for the strategic management and tourism management. Engaging with post graduate students to enhance the knowledge on strategic management aspects.

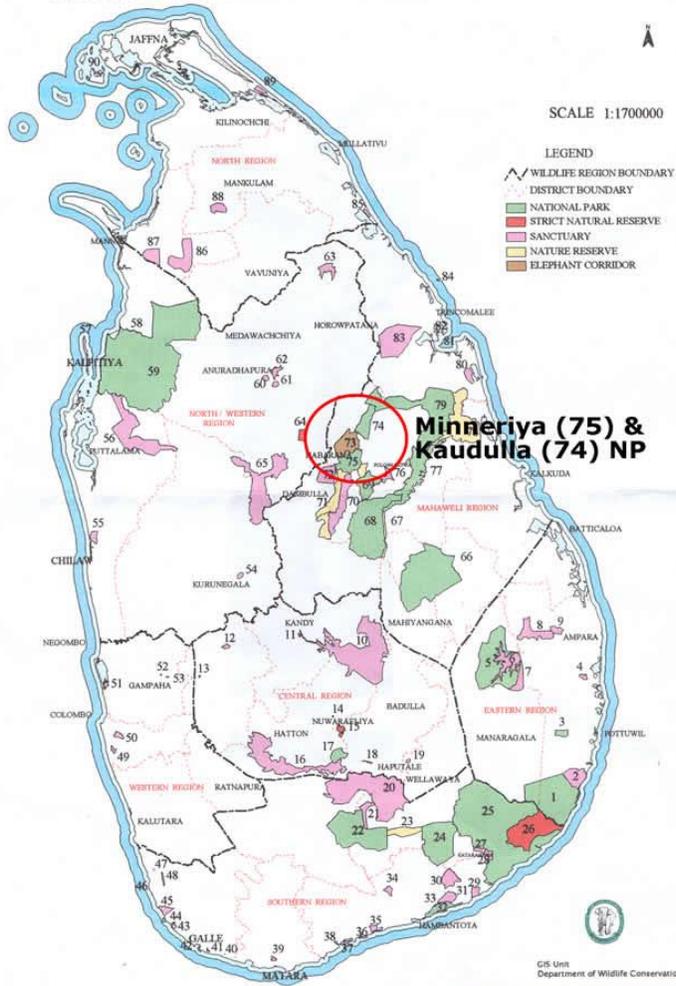
As a strategic consultant guiding tourism service providers for a sustainable future to have a long term survival.

Co founder and managing director for a locally own brand name “Honeybee Holidays” for Sri Lanka tourism.



Minneriya National Park

PROTECTED AREAS UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION



Minneriya National Park

This national park is one of the best places in the country to see wild elephants, which are often present in huge numbers. Dominated by the ancient Minneriya Lake, the park has plenty of scrub, forest and wetlands in its 88.9 sq km to also provide shelter for toque macaques, sambar deer, buffalo, crocodiles and leopards (the latter are very rarely seen, however).

Elephants Gatherings

Being part of the elephant corridor which joins up with Kaudulla and Wasgomuwa parks, Minneriya National Park gives the opportunity to see herds of Elephants throughout the year. May to October is the best period to visit Minneriya National Park in view of the famous Gathering of the wild elephants.

Elephant Gatherings



Sri Lanka a victim of over tourism

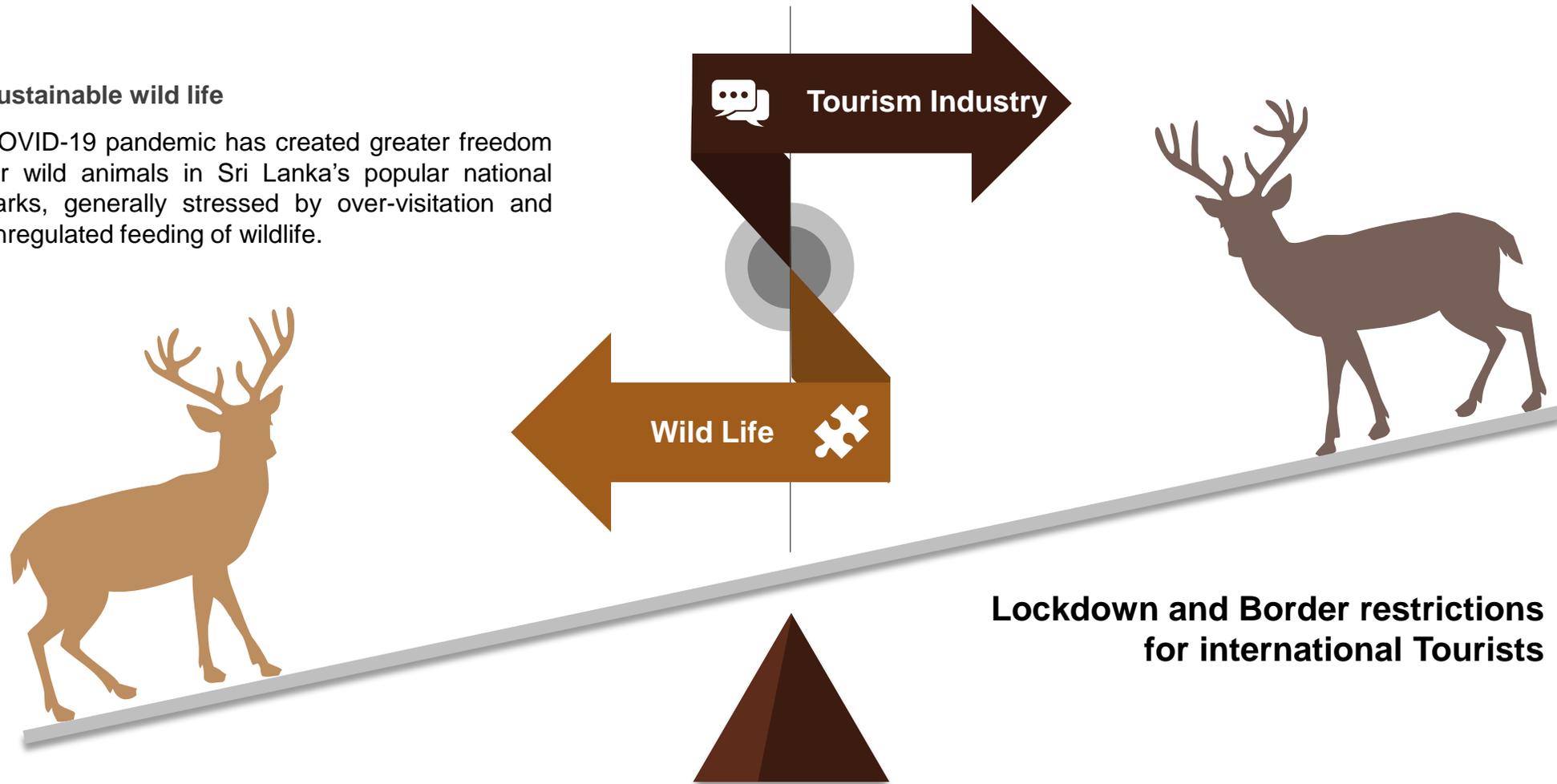
Great wildlife but suffering from overcrowding



Sri Lanka's COVID-19 lockdown

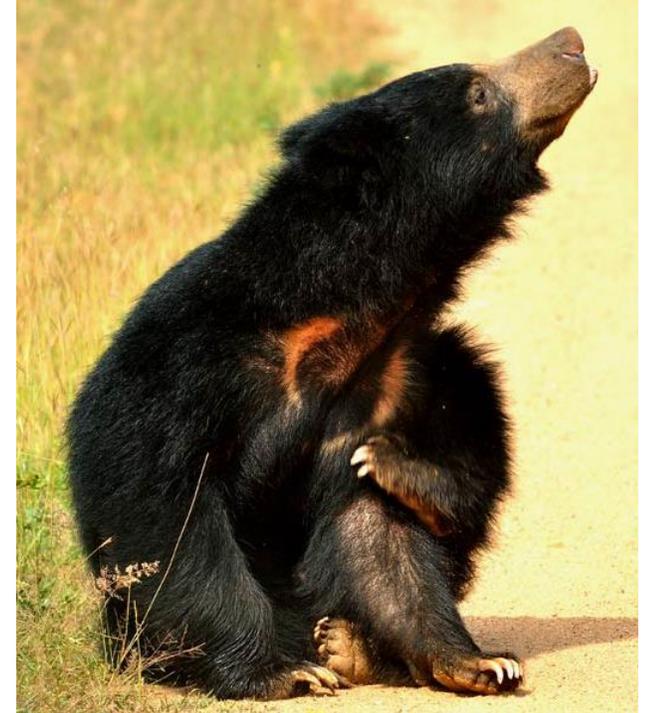
Sustainable wild life

COVID-19 pandemic has created greater freedom for wild animals in Sri Lanka's popular national parks, generally stressed by over-visitation and unregulated feeding of wildlife.



Wild Life during COVID-19

Sri Lanka's COVID-19 lockdown sets wildlife free

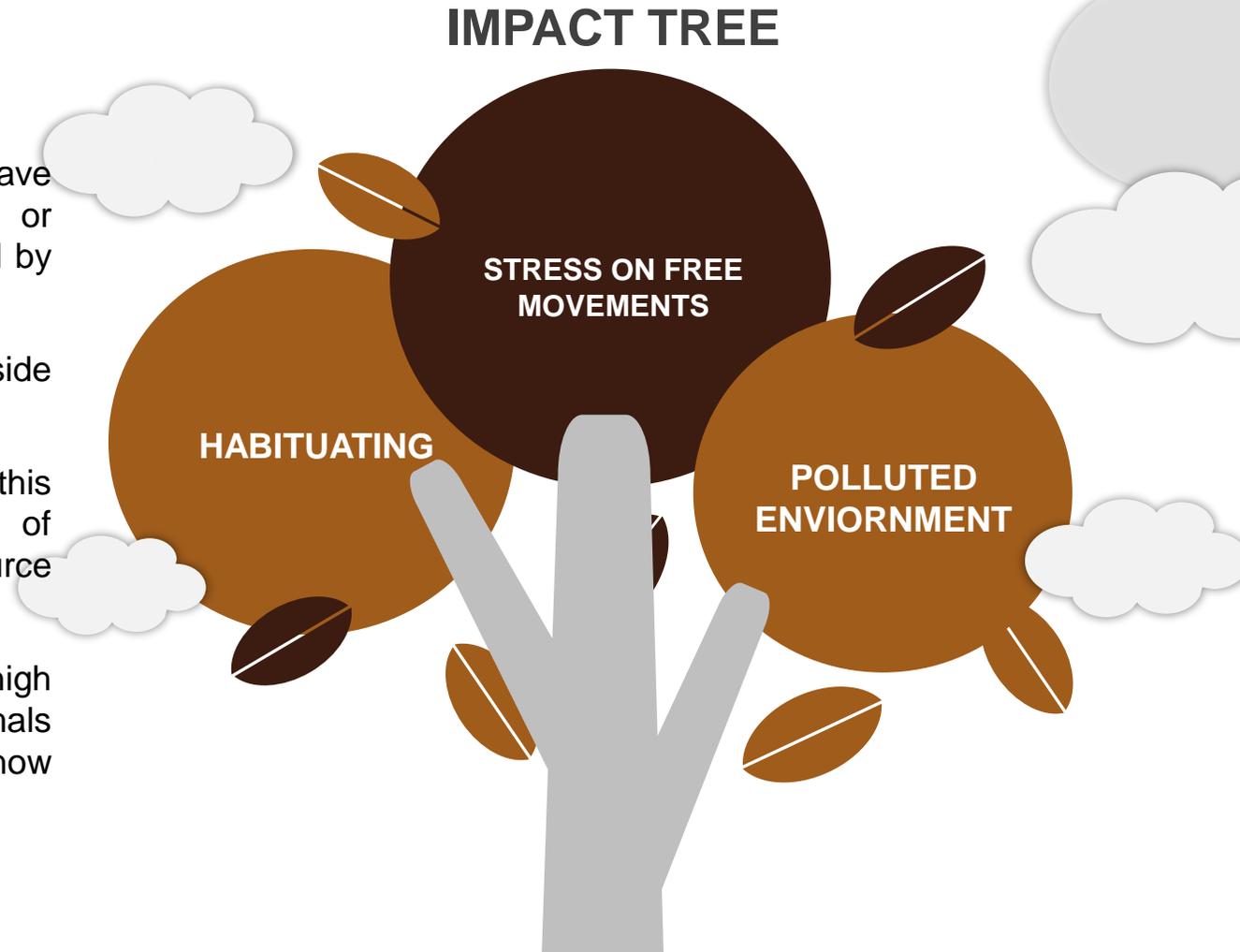




Impact of overtourism in Minneriya National Park

Three pillars of the impact tree are the key major impacts to wildlife from overtourism .

1. Many elephants, at Minneriya park have become used to being fed by visitors or looting food from them — all habituated by constant feeding by humans.
2. It's also common to find elephants outside national parks posted up by the road.
3. The COVID-19 crisis has put an end to this practice overnight, with roads empty of traffic and the elephants' food source suddenly coming to a halt.
4. On regular days, the park traffic is so high that vehicles actually block animals crossing the roads now park animals now appear quite relaxed



RESETTING THE WILDLIFE

Should use this existing situation to develop a solution to reset the wildlife with a paradigm shift

Testing the model

Identifying the most applicable model to reset the wildlife



Integrating VR and AR

Developing virtual reality and augmented reality experiences for the national parks.



Profitable and sustainable model

Developing a profitable and sustainable model while focusing the sustainable elements.



Setting rules and regulations

Implementing rules and regulations focusing on sustainability.



Social awareness

Improving the stakeholder awareness about the importance and advantages of sustainable wild life tourism.



Primary Data Collection

Data collection from stakeholders

Future agenda



Future research agenda

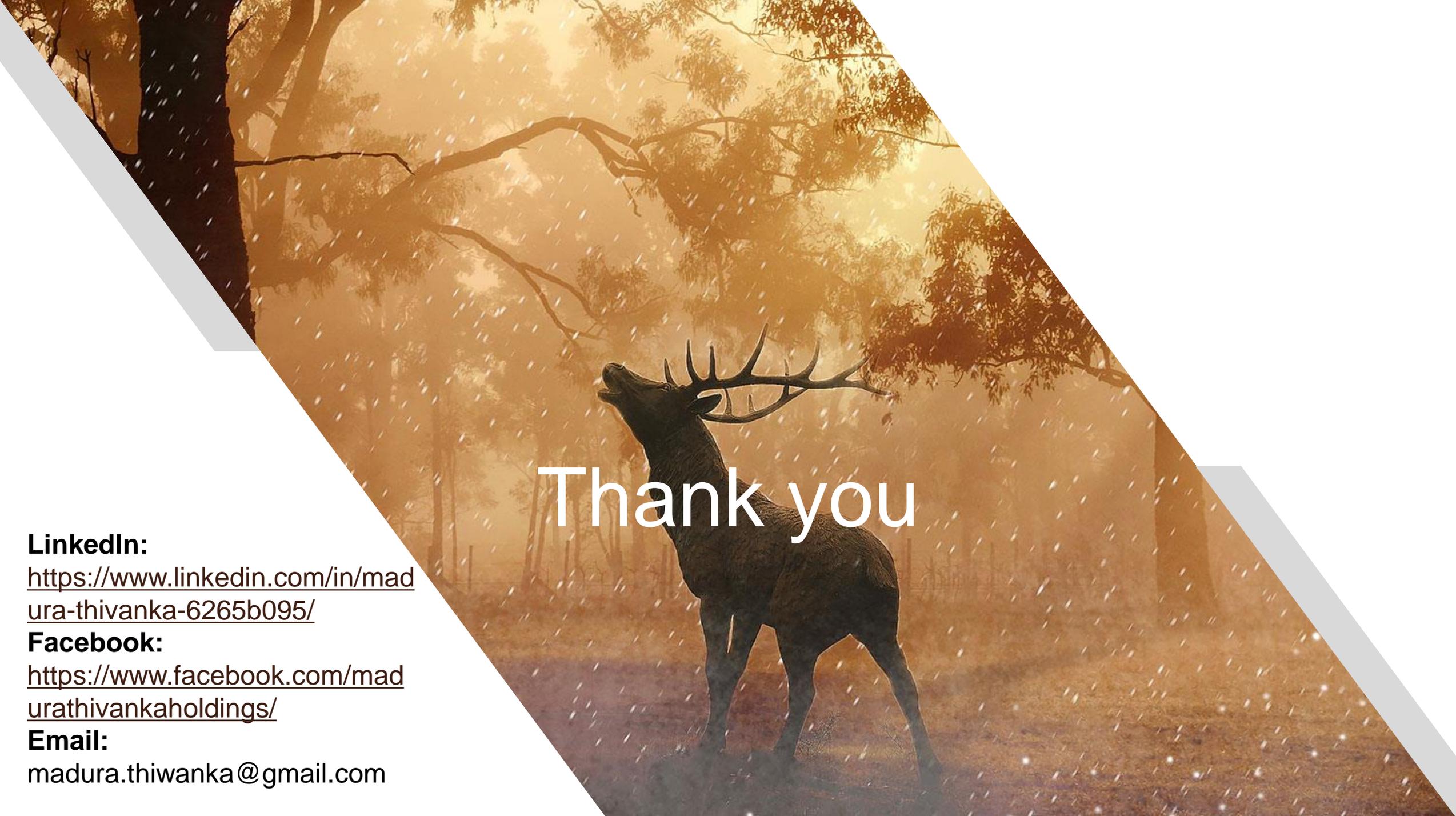
Full research paper on this aspect will be presented by the end of 2021.

Sustainable wild life tourism strategy will be developed focusing on Sri Lankan context.

See you all in 2021

Key findings are expecting to present during upcoming event in 2021.

Looking forward for the comments about this context for detail studies.



Thank you

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