

## Viewpoint: Sri Lanka's ban on synthetic crop chemicals put ideology ahead of science. Here's a rethink on sustainable agriculture

In April 2021, the Sri Lankan president [announced](#) that the import of synthetic fertilizers was banned and no more would be procured once the stocks ran out.

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The Sri Lankan experience offers some insights in the area of developmental policies. When we look at this case in terms of the UN Sustainable Development Goals framework, we see that when the Sri Lankan government tried to advance UN SDG 13 (Climate Action) through an abrupt overnight move, it negatively affected SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) to the point that the entire economy is in crisis now.

The SDG Framework has some flaws that prevent targeted policy action from being implemented and hinder forecasting the outcome of these actions.

The second lesson is that sustainable development cannot be achieved if developmental policies are not appropriately analyzed in tandem with available resources. Lifting successful policies from the developed nations and planting them in developing nations without tweaking them according to the local requirements will lead to counterproductive results, as we have seen in Sri Lanka.

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The key takeaway from the Sri Lankan organic-farming debacle is that it provides valuable lessons to other South Asian countries on implementing developmental policies in a contextualized manner rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach.

[\*\*This is an excerpt. Read the original post here\*\*](#)