**Let Justice Flow**

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This is a story about how community leaders activated the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka to intervene and save a river the Deduru Oya.

The river bed had been mined for years for sand. Sand is used in buildings and road construction. Over exploitation of the river had lead to major environmental damage river bank erosion, lowering of the water table, salt water intrusion, poor water quality and habitat destruction.

The Supreme Court acted on a human rights case brought by community leaders. Led by Chief [Justice](http://www.accessinitiative.org/glossary/7/lettera#term117) Sarath N. Silva, the Court banned sand mining in the river and ordered the Geological Survey and Mines Bureau to stop issuing mining permits. The Court galvanized the Police to arrest and prosecutes illegal miners. The issue received wide publicity in the press.

Mining operations have been stopped for about two years now. As a result natural recovery has begun. Additionally the community leaders have been able to obtain funds through the UNDP and commence rehabilitation of the river bank in two critical areas.

The case was made possible through financial and legal aid given to community leaders by the Green Movement of Sri Lanka. The green Movement is part of The [Access Initiative](http://www.accessinitiative.org/glossary/7/lettera#term79) Coalition of Sri Lanka.

Link to video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WbajY3GB7ZA>