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ASIA/SRI LANKA - Drought and monsoons: the dramatic situation especially for the poorest people

Colombo (Agenzia Fides) - After six months of drought and with forecasts of a monsoon arriving, Sri Lanka is likely to suffer serious losses in crops and significant decreases in the production of electricity. According to experts, the situation is dramatic. 5% (about 280 thousand tons of rice crop has already been lost due to the ongoing drought, which began in November 2013. With 200 thousand hectares of paddy fields, 20% of the annual crop, sown during the second season has been lost, and the situation could get worse with the arrival of the weak monsoon expected in May. According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), at the end of March 2014 more than 240 thousand families were affected by the shortage of water and the consequent loss of crops.
In Sri Lanka two monsoons are registered per year: the one that comes from the northeast from December to February, and the one from the southwest, from mid-May to September. The irregular rainfall in recent years has caused a reduction in crops and difficulties in the production of electricity. Another consequence of the drought is the increase in electricity prices. The poor will be hit hardest. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 04/04/2014)

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