

## **Biodiversity conservation and the growth of hotel industry: A case study based on selected hotels in Dambulla in Sri Lanka**

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### **Abstract**

Biodiversity is explored at three levels as genetic, species and ecosystem diversity. Sri Lanka is listed amongst the top 25 global hotspots for biodiversity. Hotel industry is one of the key drivers of the economic growth in the island and most leading hotels in Sri Lanka have a symbiotic and occasionally parasitic relationship with biodiversity. Objective of this research was to identify the contribution of biodiversity conservation for the growth of hotel industry in Dambulla region. This research was initially based on the primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected using structured forty questionnaires and key person interviews selected under convenience sampling method. Qualitative analysis method was used to analyze the data. The study found that identified hotels named Heritance Kandalma, Jetwing Vil Uyana, Amaya Lake and Aliya Resort and Spa have variety of importance in Biodiversity. The management of these four hotels has selected biodiversity rich places to construct their hotels. These hotels have implemented biodiversity conservation measures and techniques to protect their biodiversity; detailed records of the species diversity are kept for monitoring purposes, create awareness about biodiversity conservation through a resident naturalist and conduct nature tours promoting biodiversity conservation. Findings revealed that, most of Sri Lankans visit these hotels because of the popularity and most of foreigners visit because of the awareness of the stability of biodiversity in the surroundings of these hotels. Rather than the facilities and services provided by the industry, plant diversity and natural beauty has admired by both parties, which will lead them to confirm their future visits to the same hotels. The study found that biodiversity plays a major role among the factors that affect the growth of these hotels. Thus, management should concern about natural beauty and plant diversity in designing their hotels as those factors are key in attracting guests and in turn growth of the industry. Implementation of animal diversity concepts, which is a part of biodiversity could attract the local and foreign tourist to the region. Ex-situ method can be implemented as there is not enough number of animals in the surroundings of these hotels to implement in-situ method.

**Keywords:** *Biodiversity, Conservation, Hotel industry*

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