

A study on human factors affecting the conservation and management of Bellanwila - Aththidiya wetland: A case of Kesbewa Divisional Secretariat

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Abstract

In the current world, various existing ecosystems are threatened by the human activities. On top of that, the threat on wetlands exists. Many countries face the problem of degradation of the aquatic ecosystems due to human activities. Aquatic eco system is of two types as fresh water ecosystems and brackish water (salt water) eco systems. Lagoons, mangroves, corals, seas, grasslands, bays are brackish water wetlands while rivers, streams are freshwater wetlands. Upon realizing the importance wetland pays on human lives, many countries have focused their attention on conserving and managing the wetlands. Presently, Sri Lanka is also facing the problems of wetland degradation. One specific wetland which is famous for its biodiversity in the Western province of Sri Lanka is the Bellanwila-Aththidiya Wetland. It is being degrading rapidly due to human activities. The objective of this research is to identify the human factors affecting the conservation and management of Bellanwila–Aththidiya wetland. In this study as of the study areas, 535 A Bellanwila Grama Niladhari Division and 533 F Borelesgamuwa West C Grama Niladhari Division were selected for this research as they possess a greater importance on this selected wetland. Simple random sampling method was used in selecting the sample and a sample of 27 households were selected from Bellanwila GN division while 15 households were selected from Borelesgamuwa West GN Division. Data were collected by using both primary and secondary data sources. As per primary data sources, a structured questionnaire and informal interviews were conducted while for secondary data sources journals were used. In getting a conclusion about the current condition of the wetland, it is discovered that the following threats are directed on the wetland: growth of invasive plants in wetlands, water pollution, reducing the number of birds which can be seen daily and declining of the natural process of the wetland. It was also discovered that, 38% of the effect on the wetland is occurred by the development projects done by the individuals while 28%, 14% and 10% of the effects are occurred due to various institutes, political influence and by the villagers respectively.

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