

## **Darwin Initiative Final Report**

Herewith I am forwarding Project EMBioC extension project Final Report. Apologies for the late submission of this report. Final workshop of the project was delayed due to the tsunami in Sri Lanka.

Should you require further clarification of any matters discussed in the report, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards

Dr. P. Wattage  
Darwin Project Leader

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***Effective Management for Biodiversity Conservation in Sri Lankan Coastal Wetlands (EMBioC )***

A mini project of CEMARE, University of Portsmouth, UK and the Department of Town & Country Planning, University of Moratuwa, Katubedda, Sri Lanka.

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## *Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species*

### *Final Report*

#### **1. Darwin Project Information**

Project title	Effective management for biodiversity conservation in Sri Lankan coastal wetlands (EMBIO C)
Country	Sri Lanka
Contractor	Centre for the Economics and Management of Aquatic Resources (CEMARE), University of Portsmouth
Project Reference No.	09/002
Grant Value	£12,000
Starting/Finishing dates	January 2004 / January 2005

#### **2. Project Background/Rationale**

##### **2.1. The location and circumstances of the project:**

Muthurajawela Marsh and Negombo Lagoon (MMNL), Sri Lanka are the locations of this project. MMNL are independent ecological systems that have been regarded as one wetland within the framework of this research. The wetland is located at mainly sea level in the Gampaha District, Western Province, about 20-30 km. North of Colombo. The wetland represents a large area of brackish marshes, mangrove swamps and fresh water marshes merging into an estuarine lagoon about 3200 ha to the northwest. The marshes cover an area of approximately 3,100 ha. The lagoon opens to the sea at its northern end and receives fresh river water input from the Ja-Ela and the Dandugam Oya. The total area covers about 10,000 ha and the balance is made up by rivers, canals and other water bodies, a dune belt along the coast, the shore areas of the lagoon and some higher lands along the eastern and southern periphery of the marsh. In these latter areas most of the population is settled. The town of Negombo is situated at the northern end of the lagoon, near its mouth.

Research outputs of the project EMBIO C have been communicated to the relevant government departments and policy makers. The purpose of this mini project was to disseminate project findings to the local communities.

## **2.2. What was the problem that the project aimed to address?**

MMNL is important coastal wetlands in the Colombo suburbs that have been selected for restoration under the Wetland Conservation Project of the GOSL, and because of this they are particularly pertinent locations to weigh the wetland benefits against other development options. An economic force behind the development drive can cause significant extinction of biological diversity. It is the result of the failure of economics and the decision making process used to capture the actual value of the resource.

Project EMBioC has estimated the values of biodiversity conservation and communicated to the relevant government departments and policy makers. Policies that prevent or reduce biodiversity loss can be justified on economic grounds using these values, and the market place and institutional mechanisms can protect biological diversity. The aim of this mini-project was to disseminate project findings to the local communities.

## **2.3. Who identified the need for this project and what evidence is there for a demand for this work and a commitment from the local partner?**

The national report prepared for the seventh meeting of the conference of the contracting parties to the convention on wetlands (Ramsar) has identified that economic valuation in the natural resources sector was not properly developed. As a result of this the economic value of natural resources is always under-estimated in Sri Lanka even though the economic valuation of natural resources has been accepted as a tool in national planning and policy formation (Ramsar COP7, 1999). Therefore, the government of Sri Lanka originated the idea of the (original) project EMBioC.

Project partners felt that the dissemination of work to state sector has been successfully carried out at the end of the first project. However, educating local communities on findings of original project was not very successful. Hence, local partners of the project suggested the need of this extension.

## **3. Project Summary**

### **3.1. What were the purpose and objectives (or purpose and outputs) of the project?**

The objectives of the mini project were to communicate following findings of the project EMBioC to the local communities:

- a). Extend current understanding of the specific socio-economic and institutional factors and processes that mediate the relationship between humans and wetland ecosystems and of the socio-economic carrying capacity of those ecosystems. However, rarely have the linkages and consequences been estimated in terms of

their socio-economic dimension.

b) Extend current understanding of the potential held by natural wetland ecosystems to assist in addressing the challenges of population growth and consumer demand on wetland resources. Population pressure for land adjacent to Colombo city limits area is very high. As such the threat to wetland resources is at an increasing rate. These are public lands that are open for any misuse or conversion into development activities. The project aims to advise and train users of mangroves on best management practices while maintaining mangrove ecosystem integrity.

c) Estimate human demand for wetland resources and eco-system services using mangroves in the project area – the ecological footprint – functionally required in supporting human activities.

### **3.2. Were the original objectives or operational plan modified during the project period?**

Objectives or operational plan was not modified during the project period.

### **3.3. Which of the Articles under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) best describes the project?**

Article number 6 of the CBD the “General Measures for Conservation & Sustainable Use” best describes the project. The main objective of the project was to make an awareness of the total value of wetlands to develop national strategies that integrate conservation and sustainable use. Making a choice between conservation of wetland and the conversion for development can be made more vividly if both values are correctly identified. Value of development is always right and straightforward although the value of conservation is always very murky in an analysis of the two.

Training on bio-diversity conservation was one of the main aspects of this project, which is in line with article 12. The project has already established programmes for scientific and technical education in valuing the environment, identification, conservation and sustainable use of mangrove ecosystem. It has promoted research contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in Sri Lanka and also in the Asian region.

Public education and awareness was the main activity of the project. Article 13 of the CBD is about the public education and awareness on the biodiversity conservation.

### **3.4. Briefly discuss how successful the project was in terms of meeting objectives.**

The main objective of the project was to disseminate findings of project EMBioC to the local communities. To achieve that four workshops were organised in different locations

of the project area during the project period. All four workshops were successful, however, the last workshop was delayed by a month due to the tsunami.

First two workshops were organised for only wetland users as originally suggested in the application. However, it was decided in the second wetland users workshop that policymakers and grass-root level officers should interact with wetland users in the next two workshops to achieve maximum benefits of the programme. Policy makers and grass-root officers were invited to the last two users workshop.

First workshop was held in the South Pitipana Conference Hall, Pitipana, Negombo in **May 16, 2004**. The second one was held on **July 18, 2005**, in Ja-ela, Sri Lanka.

Topics covered in the **first half** of the day included: (a). Significance of the MMNL area in terms of economics activities and conservation (b). Importance of mangrove and its sustainable exploitation, (c). Fisheries related problems in the area and sustainability issues (d). Role and the function of a sanctuary and (e). Socio-economic importance of the wetland in terms of livelihood improvement.

Group activities were used in the **Second half** for dissemination of project findings to community participatory groups further than those who participated. Group leaders were selected in group meetings and the task of each group leader was to discuss project findings with at least 5 other villagers of his/her area when he returned back to the village. Two training officers were visited the village later on a agreed time with the group leader and villagers to verify whether the message was accurately passed on to other villagers.

Outcome of this exercise was very successful in dissemination of project activities. Resource users were gained an understanding of the sustainable ecosystem functions through further dissemination in wetland. Target of 50 wetland users were not attended in the first workshop, but were more than 50 in the second workshop. Workshop objectives of creating awareness among wetland users on wetland ecosystem were achieved. Active participation of wetland users was helped to disseminate research findings on wetland conservation.

Policy workshop for policy makers was held at the BMICH conference hall, Colombo in **August 06, 2005**. Wetland users and policy makers both have had a chance to discuss their problems in this workshop. In this platform policy makers have learned first hand information from wetland users regarding their livelihood and their attitude towards wetland conservation.

Final workshop was held for government officers working at grass root level, NGOs, and wetland users (community group leaders those who have attended in the three previous meetings). This was held in **February 11, 2005** and the delay was mainly due to the tsunami of Boxing Day, 2005.

## **4. Scientific, Training, and Technical Assessment**

### **4.1. Research.**

The purpose of the mini project was mainly dissemination of the results of project EMBioC. There was no component of research in the project.

## **4.2. Training and capacity building activities.**

Two project training officers were recruited from 01.01.2004 to work in the project on full-time basis. Mrs. Dilrukshi Karunaratna was graduated from the University of Colombo (UoC) with a first-class (Hons.) degree in Geography and worked two years at the UoC. Miss Purnima Adikari also a graduate of the UoC with a second-class pass in Geography. Both have had previous work experience in wetland and bio-diversity conservation activities. In addition to the structured meetings on wetland conservation, two training officers regularly visited wetland users and discussed about their problems on sustainable management of wetland resources during the project period.

A preliminary survey was carried out in January to March 2005, to find out training needs for the wetland users and also to select key leaders in the community to use in users workshops by training officers. Ten village leaders were identified from the group of 35 in each workshop to further disseminate the major findings discussed in each workshop. Each leader was further discussed with at least another five wetland users those who have not participated in the workshop about the effective conservation methods of wetlands. The progress of their activities will be discussed in the next users workshops. Training materials were prepared and handed over to the participants at the workshop. Some of selected community leaders were participated in the policy workshop, which was held on August 09, 2004. This is one of the best opportunity wetland users have had to interact with policy makers on their problems on sustainable wetland use and conservation. Similarly these village leaders and their selected trainees have attended the last user workshop, which also invited the local level government officers to interact with wetland users.

Two training officers and selected village leaders are going to work in the area with the wetland users in future.

## **5. Project Impacts**

### **5.1. What evidence is there that project achievements has led to the accomplishment of the project purpose?**

The project has achieved all of the objectives or outputs that it promised to deliver during the project period. The general purpose of this project was to disseminate findings of the project EMBioC to wetland users. In the process of working with wetland users, it was found that one of the problems they are facing is having healthy dialogs with policy makers and local level government officers working in wetland areas. The last two workshops were modified accordingly to accommodate wetland policy makers and local level officers. The discussions between officers and policy makers were very useful because the understanding among conservation and wetland uses were helped to resolve some of their life long problems. This evidence suggests that project achievements have led to the accomplishment of the project purpose.

**5.2. To what extent has the project achieved its goal, i.e. how has it helped the host country to meet its obligations under the Biodiversity Convention (CBD).**

Economic valuation of natural resources has been accepted as a tool in national planning and allocation of state funds for conservation (Ramsar COP7, 1999). Research findings of the project EMBioC components have helped to develop proper guidelines and indicators for economic valuation of natural resources. With this information a valid decision can be derived in allocating state funds in development and conservation. A proper value of the conservation would help to justify conservation activities against development activities in wetland areas. Making wetland users are knowledgeable on assigning a proper value to the wetland conservation would make them to re-think on damaging the resource. Also they would like the fact that having more value to the wetland conservation hinders converting lands to development activities.

**5.3. Contribution made by different components of the project to the measures for biodiversity conservation.**

Project components that have contributed to the measures for biodiversity conservation as defined in the CBD articles are shown in Appendix I.

**5.4. Training or capacity building elements of the project.**

As discussed in section 4.2, there was a strong element of training and capacity building in the project. The training of village leaders and training officers have a multiplier effect, as such, the local capacity for the future biodiversity work in the host country, should continue to grow.

**5.5. The impact of the project in terms of collaboration to date between UK and local partner.**

University of Moratuwa (UOM) has already set-up a centre of excellence to conduct research and teaching in environment management including wetlands as a continuation of the project. University of Portsmouth and UOM have a collaborative link in research on wetland areas.

**5.6. In terms of social impact, who has benefited from the project?**

The immediate beneficiaries of the project are local people those who are living in and around the MMNL area. As shown in the user group meetings people of the area would prefer to conserve the wetland to converting it for other development activities. Local people are aware that maintaining a healthy biodiversity in the MMNL area would help their livelihood activities such as fishing and receiving quality water. Converting the area for development activities would bring benefits to the entrepreneurs at the cost of local people. Project would motivate people those who are living in and around the MMNL area on conservation of wetland by providing both use and non-use values.

## 6. Project Outputs

### 6.1. Quantification of all project outputs.

Project outputs are given in the table in appendix II using the coding and format of the Darwin Initiative Standard Output Measures.

### 6.2. The differences in actual outputs against those in the agreed schedule.

There are no differences in actual outputs against those agreed in the initial 'Project Implementation Timetable' and the 'Project Outputs Schedule'.

### 6.3. Publications and materials. .

Project publications and materials are given in the appendix III.

### 6.4. Information relating to project output and outcome dissemination.

Most of the other information can be accessed through the project website. The URL of the web site is <http://www.pbs.port.ac.uk/econ/cemare/darwin.htm>. UoM has already set up a centre to carry out similar work in future and this project will have a real and lasting impact on setting up the foundation. A link programme with the UoP will help to disseminate results in detail to other researchers and policy makers.

## 7. Project Expenditure

### 7.1. Grant expenditure using the categories in the original application

**Table 7.1: Budgeted and actual project expenditure:**

Items	<i>Budgeted Expenditure.</i>	Actual Expenditure
Total	12000.00	12000.00

\* *Percentage of time allocated to the project.*

## **7.2. Agreed changes to the budget**

Changes have not been made to the original budget.

## **7.3. Any variation in expenditure where this is +/- 10% of the budget**

None.

## **8. Project Operation and Partnerships.**

### **8.1. Details about the project partners**

At the time of the project preparation and also the implementation of the project, local consultation was a very strong element of the project. As such project modification was not required in response to local consultation. Local partners who worked in the project activities are more or less the same as in the initial plans for partnership.

### **8.2. Collaboration existed with similar projects elsewhere in the host country.**

While organising workshops for wetland users, project partners have been able to collaborate with similar projects in Sri Lanka and the region. For example, Wildlife Department, Coast Conservation Department and the IUCN Sri Lanka are other collaborative bodies that were useful in this project in Sri Lanka.

### **8.3. Details about international partners participated in project activities.**

UK partner is the only international partner who has been participated in the project.

### **8.4. Participation with the local biodiversity strategy process and other local Government activities.**

Partners are working with the Urban Development Authority (UDA) of Sri Lanka and as such their participation with local authority on biodiversity strategy is very strong. Workshops of wetland users with policy makers and the local government officers have linked the project to local biodiversity strategy process and other local government activities.

## **9. Monitoring and Evaluation, Lesson learning**

### **9.1. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy.**

The main method employed during the project period to monitor and evaluate the project activities in Sri Lanka was an e-mail link between partners. It was cost effective and very useful. In addition to this the UK partners have spent 4 man-weeks in Sri Lanka. The outputs achieved by the project demonstrate that outcomes of the project actually contribute to the project purpose.

### **9.2. Internal or external evaluation of the work during the project period.**

The project leader has constantly checked and evaluated project activities during the project period. As a result all field activities have been carried out according to time and funding schedule prepared at the beginning of the project. However, there was a delay in the final workshop, which was delayed due to the destruction of the area by recent tsunami.

### **9.3. Key lessons drawn from the experience of this project.**

One of the lessons we learned was to plan well ahead and leave a sufficient margin to get work done by our collaborators. Project partners were very active in conducting field workshops as such we have not experienced any major problems. It was so difficult to plan against natural disasters, however, the tsunami was not affected to achieve targets of the project.

## **10. Darwin Identity.**

### **10.1. Effort made to publicise the Darwin Initiative.**

We have given due prominence to the Darwin Initiative in all four workshops as the key donor for the research activities of the project. Everybody related to the project have used the Darwin identity as fellows during the project period.

### **10.2. Understanding of Darwin Identity in the host country.**

Project area provides important coastal wetlands in Colombo suburbs that have been selected for restoration under the Wetland Conservation Project which are ideal locations to weigh the wetland benefits against other development options. With the funding of the Darwin Initiative this research has raised awareness of the real worth of wetlands and convinced it to wetland users. Many people have come to know the Darwin identity in the project area from the inception of the project.

### **10.3. Project impact in forming a part of a larger programme in biodiversity.**

The common opinion is that wetlands are wastelands that can be reclaimed for economic benefits. The total benefits (use and non-use values) of the MMNL area has been identified and found that the benefits of conservation of wetlands outweigh the benefits

of other development activities. Since economic valuation of natural resources has been accepted as a tool in Sri Lanka, this is the best way to address the development forces that threaten biodiversity at the local level. This has helped to change the people's attitude on wetlands. As a result the exploitation of wetlands for commercial, agricultural, residential and industrial development, and also use as a dumping grounds for domestic, agricultural and industrial waste have been reduced.

## **11. Leverage.**

### **11.1. Additional funds were attracted to biodiversity work associated with the project.**

None.

### **11.2. Efforts made to strengthen the capacity of partners to secure further funds for similar work.**

In order to continue work in the future in the region and to set-up a link programme, further funding will be sought from the European Union.

## **12. Sustainability and Legacy.**

### **12.1. Project achievements those are most likely to endure.**

The common opinion is that wetlands are wastelands that can be reclaimed for economic benefits. The total benefits (use and non-use values) identified in the MMNL area shows that the benefits of conservation of wetlands outweigh the benefits of other development activities. Since economic valuation of natural resources has been accepted as a tool in Sri Lanka, this is the best way to address the development forces that threaten biodiversity at the local level. Explain this phenomenon to wetland users in simple terms is the most endurance benefit of this project.

### **12.2. Continuation of the project and funding sources.**

Project activities will continue with the work of local partners of the project area. Additional funds will be sought to continue work in the Asian region.

## **13. Value for money.**

### **13.1. Rating of the project in terms of value for money.**

The damage caused to the wetland environment by development activities has been overlooked mainly due to the lack of information on value of wetland. If the policy makers consider true value of wetland eco-system in deciding the development options,

the savings could be phenomenal in terms of conserving the wetland environment. On the other hand informing wetland users about the right value for the resources make them more attentive to the resources. Hence, the value of the project in terms of money spent is probably more than ten fold.

Dr. Premachandra Wattage / 25.04.2005.

**Author(s) / Date**

## **References.**

Coastal Conservation Department (CCD) (1990) *Coastal Zone Management Plan*, CCD and Coastal Resources Management Project of the University of Rhode Island, Colombo.

Ramsar COP7 (1999) *National Report of Sri Lanka for COP7*, National report prepared for the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the conference of the contracting parties to the convention on wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971), Department of wildlife conservation, Sri Lanka.

## Appendix I: Project Contribution to Articles under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Please complete the table below to show the extent of project contribution to the different measures for biodiversity conservation defined in the CBD Articles. This will enable us to tie Darwin projects more directly into CBD areas and to see if the underlying objective of the Darwin Initiative has been met. We have focused on CBD Articles that are most relevant to biodiversity conservation initiatives by small projects in developing countries. However, certain Articles have been omitted where they apply across the board. Where there is overlap between measures described by two different Articles, allocate the % to the most appropriate one.

<b>Project Contribution to Articles under the Convention on Biological Diversity</b>		
<b>Article No./Title</b>	<b>Project %</b>	<b>Article Description</b>
<b>6. General Measures for Conservation &amp; Sustainable Use</b>	30	Making wetland users more attentive to the resources by informing the value of conservation and sustainable use.
<b>7. Identification and Monitoring</b>	05	Identify processes and activities, which have adverse effects; maintain and organise relevant data.
<b>8. In-situ Conservation</b>	05	Educate wetland users on in-situ conservation and its values.
<b>9. Ex-situ Conservation</b>	0	Adopt ex-situ measures to conserve.
<b>10. Sustainable Use of Components of Biological Diversity</b>	25	Support local populations to implement remedial actions; encourage co-operation between governments and the private sector.
<b>11. Incentive Measures</b>	0	Establish economically and socially sound incentives to conserve wetlands.
<b>12. Research and Training</b>	05	Established programmes for scientific and technical education in identification, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity components and value.
<b>13. Public Education and Awareness</b>	30	Promote understanding of the importance of measures to conserve biological diversity and propagate these measures through workshops.

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<b>14. Impact Assessment and Minimizing Adverse Impacts</b>	0	Introduce EIAs of appropriate projects and allow public participation; take into account environmental consequences of policies; exchange information on impacts beyond State boundaries and work to reduce hazards; promote emergency responses to hazards; examine mechanisms for re-dress of international damage.
<b>15. Access to Genetic Resources</b>	0	Whilst governments control access to their genetic resources they should also facilitate access of environmentally sound uses on mutually agreed terms; scientific research based on a country's genetic resources should ensure sharing in a fair and equitable way of results and benefits.
<b>16. Access to and Transfer of Technology</b>	0	Countries shall ensure access to technologies relevant to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity under fair and most favourable terms to the source countries (subject to patents and intellectual property rights) and ensure the private sector facilitates such access and joint development of technologies.
<b>17. Exchange of Information</b>	0	Countries shall facilitate information exchange and repatriation including technical scientific and socio-economic research, information on training and surveying programmes and local knowledge
<b>19. Bio-safety Protocol</b>	0	Countries shall take legislative, administrative or policy measures to provide for the effective participation in biotechnological research activities and to ensure all practicable measures to promote and advance priority access on a fair and equitable basis, especially where they provide the genetic resources for such research.
<b>Total %</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Check % = total 100</b>

## Appendix II: Outputs

Please quantify and briefly describe all project outputs using the coding and format of the Darwin Initiative Standard Output Measures.

Code	Total to date (reduce box)	Detail (←expand box)
<b>Training Outputs</b>		
2	0	No specific qualification based training
4a	0	No field training
4b	2	Training was mainly on while working in the field.
6b	150	Over 150 wetland users were benefited from direct workshops. Another 200 were informed of wetland conservation values using selected group leaders.
7	8	Handouts about conservation activities.
<b>Research Outputs</b>		
8		No research activities.
10		None
11a		None
11b		None
12a		None
12b		None
13a		None
13b		None

<b>Dissemination Outputs</b>		
14a	Number of workshops organised to present/ disseminate findings from Darwin project work	Four workshops in total for wetland users. Wetland policy makers and local level government officers were invited to last two workshops.
14b	Number of conferences/seminars/workshops <b>attended</b> at which findings from Darwin project work will be presented/ disseminated.	One. Conference on Economic Association of Fisheries Economists (EAFE), Rome, Italy 05-09 April 2004. Paper presented on “Total economic value of fishery dependent area conservation in Sri Lankan wetlands: Estimating use and non-use values”.
15a	Number of national press releases or publicity articles in host country(s)	One at the beginning of the project in February 2004.
15b	Number of local press releases or publicity articles in host country(s)	None
15c	Number of national press releases or publicity articles in UK	None
15d	Number of local press releases or publicity articles in UK	None

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16a	Number of issues of newsletters produced in the host country(s)	Several handouts to wetland users at the workshop.
16b	Estimated circulation of each newsletter in the host country(s)	
16c	Estimated circulation of each newsletter in the UK	None
17a	Number of dissemination networks established	One web site.
17b	Number of dissemination networks enhanced or extended	One.
18a	Number of national TV programmes/features in host country(s)	None
18b	Number of national TV programme/features in the UK	None
18c	Number of local TV programme/features in host country	None
18d	Number of local TV programme features in the UK	None
19a	Number of national radio interviews/features in host country(s)	None
19b	Number of national radio interviews/features in the UK	None
19c	Number of local radio interviews/features in host country (s)	None.
19d	Number of local radio interviews/features in the UK	None.
<b>Physical Outputs</b>		
20	Estimated value (£s) of physical assets handed over to host country(s)	None
21	Number of permanent educational/training/research facilities or organisation established	None.
22	Number of permanent field plots established	None
23	Value of additional resources raised for project	None.

### Appendix III: Publications

Provide full details of all publications and material that can be publicly accessed, e.g. title, name of publisher, contact details, cost. Details will be recorded on the Darwin Monitoring Website Publications Database that is currently being compiled.

Mark (\*) all publications and other material that you have included with this report

<b>Type *</b> (e.g. journals, manual, CDs)	<b>Detail</b> (title, author, year)	<b>Publishers</b> (name, city)	<b>Available from</b> (e.g. contact address, website)	<b>Cost £</b>
<b>None</b>				

## Appendix IV: Darwin Contacts

To assist us with future evaluation work and feedback on your report, please provide contact details below.

Project Title	Effective management for biodiversity conservation in Sri Lankan coastal wetlands (EMBioC) Extension Project
<i>Ref. No.</i>	09/002
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