



Water Allocation Issues and Suggestions in Sri Lanka

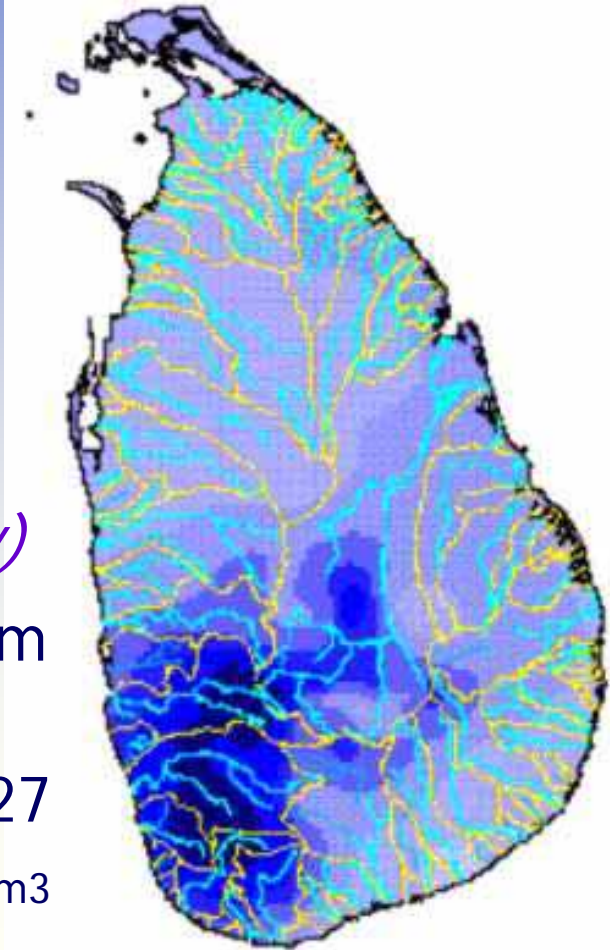
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BACKGROUND

- ☞ Sri Lanka receives rainfall from two monsoons
 - ☞ *South-west (May to September)*
 - ☞ *North-East (December to February)*
- ☞ Mean annual rainfall varies from 900mm – 5500mm.
- ☞ Total annual rainfall is approximately 127 billion m³. Total Surface Run-off per Annum-50 billion m³
- ☞ There are 103 river basins of Sri Lanka
- ☞ 17 River Basins > 1000sqkm
- ☞ Mahaweli River Basin is the Largest, 10327 Sq.km.



Seasonal & Regional Variation

- 5 South west quadrant
Known as Wet Zone

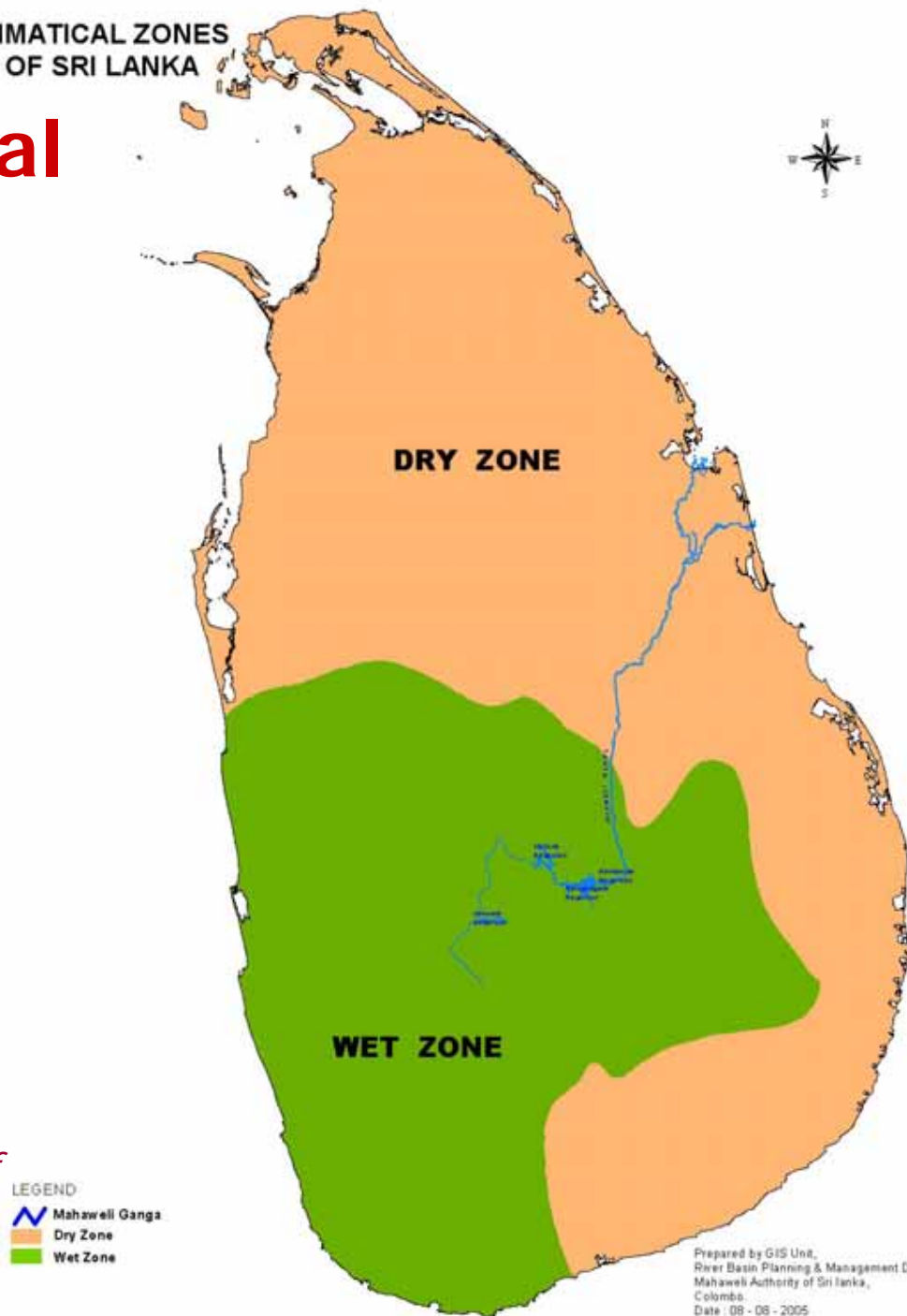
*Mean Annual Rainfall
2300mm*

- 5 The rest of the part is dry
zone

*Average annual
rainfall 1,300mm*

*2nd highest Y2Y variability of RF of
22 Asian & Pacific Countries.*

CLIMATICAL ZONES
OF SRI LANKA



Hypothesis-Water Allocation & Water Rights

- The term “water allocation” refers to the assignment of rights to use water, *hence water allocation and water rights are two faces of a same coin that may not be viewed separately* when considering possible modifications to existing legislation

History of Water Resources Allocation

- **Water Resources in Sri Lanka are relatively abundant.**
- **Therefore allocation among different users or water using sub-sectors had not been a problem until recently.**

Water Allocation Policy is not new to Sri Lanka.

- **In anticipation of Water Scarcity arising from increasing demand , in 1947 Sri Lanka Law-Makers introduced an Allocation Policy(Water use permits) through “State Land Ordinance”**
- *But the system of permits introduced by State land Ordinance has itself remained on paper.*

Statutory Power was vested on number of Agencies to meet the requirements of their respective mandates by different Acts.

- **Irrigation Ordinance -1946**
- **National Water Supply & Drainage Board Law-1974**
- **The Ceylon Electricity board- Act 1950**
- **Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka- Act 1979**
- **Agrarian Services Act-1979**
- **The Municipal Ordinance - 1947**
- **Urban Council Ordinance-1939**
- **Pradeshiya Sabhas Act-1987**
- **Fisheries & Aquatic Resources Act-1996**

Present Practices of water Allocation

- ☞ Mahaweli Authority(MASL)- Reservoirs within the Mahaweli area and related Basins
- ☞ Irrigation department (ID) -Major irrigation tanks which are not coming under MASL
- ☞ Ceylon Electricity Board (CEB) - Large hydro-reservoirs outside the Mahaweli system
- ☞ Village communities -Medium and minor irrigation reservoirs

Water Allocation Practices within the Mahaweli Project

- ③ Water Management Secretariat(WMS) was formed in the MASL to facilitate Water Management Panel (WMP).
- ③ WMS is the policy making body representing MASL, ID, CEB and NWSDB other relevant Government organizations and officials with frames from all irrigation schemes.
- ③ WMS prepares Seasonal Operating Plan (SOP) for each year two SOPs in association with ID & CEB on the basis of information relating to water demand.

③ These plans are approved by the WMS.

③ The Implementation of the seasonal operational plan is monitored and reviewed by a weekly water Panel.

Allocation Practices in Minor Irrigation Schemes

- ❧ Water allocation practices in the Minor irrigation schemes in the dry & intermediate zones have a different value base.
- ❧ Agricultural settlement in dry zone include – Tank villages, Mountain Villages (Central highland), Rain-dependent villages (Eastern province) and Chena Villages
- ❧ The villages work together to keep the reservoir which is situated on a higher elevation, the paddy fields being located

- ❧ Water is conveyed to the fields through a canal and then from field to fields
- ❧ The first to be served are the farmer who cultivates the fields , which are farthest from the tank
- ❧ The distribution of water from a tank particularly in terms of drought season is based on “**Diyamura**” (rotation) or “**Bethma**” (division of land).
- ❧ Decisions concerning this kind of allocation are made at the cultivation meeting and are respected by seasonal operational plans made by state agencies

Organizational Issues-Clarity of Authorities in National Government

- **Currently number of State Organizations are handling water in different sectors and the result is they are not respect to the needs of other sectors and try to fulfill their needs only.**
- **Country need an integration approach and management should be spread from one key agency.**

Suggestions to Improve Water Allocation Practices in Sri Lanka

- ③ Develop a comprehensive Water Policy for Sri Lanka and establish National Water Resources Authority as an Apex Regulating Body for the entire Water Sector , instead of having number of old legislations and having sectoral interests.
- ③ Introduce River Basin as the most logical Unit for integration Water resources management and demonstrate that majority of current problems in the water sector could be solved through this approach.
- ③ Gradually introduce Bulk Water Allocation practices to heavy water use sectors and aware them on it's advantages .

Effort of Developing a Comprehensive Water Policy

In 1996 national Water Resources Council was formed to formulate the National water Policy. A draft policy was drafted with institutional recommendations and a draft legislation was introduced. With political & mass media interference the draft policy was upheld without further action.

Solution Needed!

- **Mass communication Campaign to aware public on reality of Water Sector Today.**
- **Need to develop a document which is simple and acceptable to anybody in the society.**
- **It should be a Readable Document.**
- **It should introduce to School Curriculum.**

**Thank you for your
Attention**



