

various development projects and industries within the land area and along the coastal zone. Due to the scarcity of the land area some industries and/or cultivations may be occurred within the Deltaic zones at the coasts. This paper describes the benefits and disadvantages or negative effects of those industries to the country and for the delta zones.

The total length of the coastline is 1639km. Two thirds of the Islands' coastline is considered as □ straight coast □ and 20% belongs to bays, estuaries and lagoons. About 9% covered by sand spits and barrier beaches. Less than 1% of the coastal zone belongs to delta type geomorphological zones. Due to the short total length of the river courses the country has only small deltaic deposits at the coasts. About 45% of coastline is urbanized and 17% of country's agriculture produces from the rest area. 80% of the total fish production comes from this coastal zone. The country's principal coastal resources are; coastal habitats/ecosystems, the coastal fishery, mineral sands and limestone deposits, coastal land and water resources.

Due to rapid urbanization along the coastal zones people were used the delta areas for some industries and other economical and commercial activities. Fishing, tourism, industry and agriculture sustain the growing economy of the coastal region. Coconut is the major plantation and coconut based industries have been developed. Salt industries and prawn farming are the other industries within the lagoon areas and deltas. More bare lands have been converted to residential and industrial areas and commercial purposes as well as fishermen villages. These industries provide employment for many people and improve their living conditions. Development of infrastructure increased the facilities for residents.

The human activities due to the population increase create major environmental problems to the society. The most significant of these include sand mining from river beds and beaches, coral mining and destruction of reefs, removal of mangroves and other coastal vegetation as firewood for domestic, kilns and illicit distilleries and land clearing, improper locations for housing units, dumping of garbage and sewage disposal and various illegal activities are some of those. Therefore it is difficult to maintain the ecological balance.

There are many benefits to the people from some industries operating in the delta zones in Sri Lanka. It mainly reduces the employment

problem in the country. It is necessary to the highly populated small country. On the other hand illegal human activities always create many environmental problems to the society and to the country. To reduce such damages and maintain the balance of ecological environment the existing law should be enforced seriously.

Recent settlement and soil formation altering the late Holocene sedimentological and vegetation record in the northern Mekong Delta, Vietnam

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This article presents a sedimentological, geochemical and palynological study of a late Holocene sediment core taken in the northern Mekong Delta. Material at the base of the core is indicative of the mid-Holocene sea level highstand, revealing an intertidal flat with a nearby mixed mangrove forest (partly sandy but overall muddy sediment, predominantly mangrove pollen and the oyster *Placuna placenta*). Overlying muddy sediments record a decline in mangrove pollen and absence of *P. placenta*, which demonstrates the development of a coastal plain with initial marsh/swamp vegetation during the late Holocene sea level regression and delta progradation. The progressive development of the marsh/swamp vegetation recorded in the upper core is interrupted by an agricultural signal dated into the late 18th century where settlers were burning/clearing the area (predominantly mangrove pollen due to lack of grass pollen, high amounts of charcoal). The postdepositional acid sulphate soil formation influences the distribution of elements through the core and depending on the conditions in the soil (oxidic vs. reducing) specific elements are enriched or heavily leached. Thus the geochemical signal can only be used cautiously in the interpretation of the facies development.

Nature of organic matter on the Ayeyarwady continental shelf and gulf of Martaban

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