

The role of urban waters in the human settlement development : case study – city of Colombo

Ilmi Anandagoda¹ and Chamali Hewawasam¹

It is an evident fact in the human settlement development that all the settlements were evolved based on water bodies. Sri Lanka too had a hydrological civilization, with water playing a very prominent and influential role. Like in many other countries, urban water in Sri Lanka too has a great potential for the settlement development. Colombo, being a city formed with the colonial influence is endowed with a considerable amount of water resources, which is ideal to study about the urban waters in the Sri Lankan context. This study makes an attempt to identify how the country has considered the urban waters in the human settlement development of the City of Colombo & to what extent Sri Lanka has harnessed the potential of urban water as a resource for human settlement development and the city structure. The involvement of urban waters has been seen by many, in different perspectives in the context of human settlement development. This paper describes and illustrates in detail the role played by urban waters in the process of settlement development. One of the main issues in the contemporary practices is that, people consider urban waters as a burden or a backyard function, which has to be given serious consideration in the future settlement development to have conducive environment for human well-being.

Key words: Colombo city, Urban water, Human settlement development, Role, Potentials

¹ Department of Town and Country Planning, University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka