



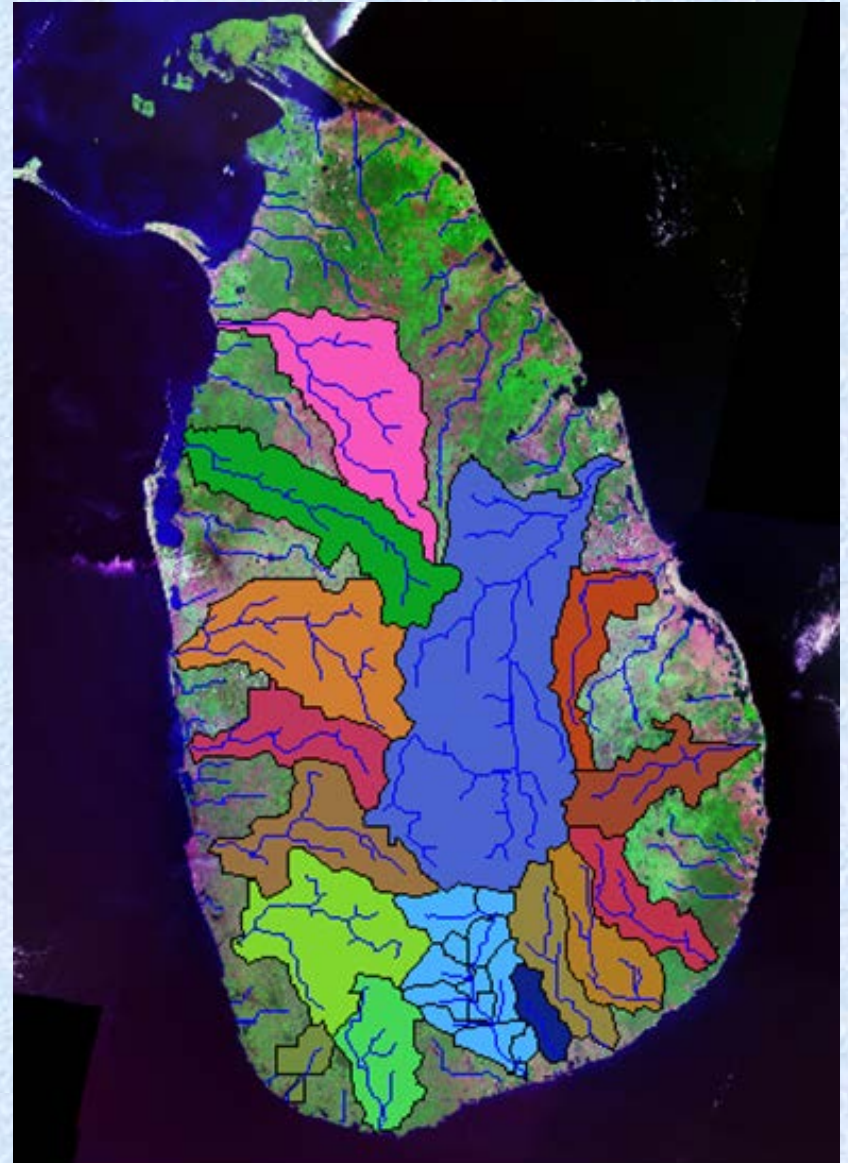
Unregulated / Illicit River Sand Mining in Sri Lanka- Impact of Awareness Campaign and Legal Recourse.

Experience from some interventions undertaken
by the Sri Lanka Water Partnership.

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Sri Lanka

- Sri Lanka has 103 river basins varying from 9 Sq Km to 10,327 Sq Km.
- 35 Rivers, most close to urban /construction centres adversely Impacted by sand mining.
- Post Tsunami construction boom from 2005 increased annual sand demand from 5M m³ to current 10M m³ .



Sri Lanka Water Sector

Management of Water Resources

40
Agencies

51
Acts

- Confusion
- Duplication
- Inaction



Impacts of RSM

- Lowered water table – Impacts on agriculture and drinking water supply.
- Collapse of river banks.
- Lowering of river bed and changes to flow regime.
- Damage to river related and road infrastructure.
- Disruption to social harmony and community cohesion.(Community divided-for/against RSM)
- Migration by poor due to loss of livelihood.
- Encourages corruption. Staff pressurized.
- Bio diversity/Ecosystems affected.

Some Impacts of RSM



Damage to banks and riverbed





Mechanized mining (Now banned)



Drinking Well

Damage to bank, infrastructure and change of river course

Enforcement and Regulation of RSM

- Several legal enactments provide for control and management of river resources.
- Decentralized licensing and regulation replaced by centralized control through the Mines and Minerals Act of 1992.
- Geological Survey and Mines Bureau functions as Regulator.
- Advantages: Integrated holistic approach to meet national needs , reduction of influence on local decision making.
- Disadvantages. Monopoly, Insufficient staff and oversight, out posted functionaries subject to political and other pressures.

Klitgaard Equation: Corruption = Monopoly + Discretion- Accountability.

Issues. (Problem)

- Multiplicity of laws and weakness in regulation results in poor and selective enforcement.
- Enforcement requires assistance of many institutions including mainly police.
- Institutions have own priorities.
- Regulation and enforcement staff subject to political and other pressures.

However

*The **Problem** is invariably part of the **Solution**.*

Approach by SLWP

- Awareness Campaign and Dialogues involving stakeholder agencies with focus on police as main enforcer.
- Community mobilization/Seek champions.
- Media as a Partner.(use media tours/Hot topics)
- Political roundtables.
- Link with other NGO/CBO for synergy.
- Legal redress- Support public interest litigation.
- Use Social Media (Blogs to highlight negative environment behavior)

Some Results.

- Enforcement coordinated and given priority.
- Public Interest litigation. (Supreme Court has banned RSM in two rivers)
- Better oversight by Regulator.
- Some decisions on clearances and regulation has now been devolved to local state administration.
- Area/Basin Communities organized to counter illicit RSM.
- Support of local religious leaders/champions.
- Mechanized mining in rivers now banned.
- Policy on sand for construction developed.
- Environment Police Units/Cells in all police stations.

Problems Remaining.

- Uses of river sand mainly outside basin, thus decisions within basin inadequate to control extraction.
- Decision making at political level sometimes overrides existing policy and regulatory framework. (Requirement of permits for transport of sand discontinued, resulting in resumption of some illegal operations).
- Banning of mining in some rivers only moves the problem to other rivers at distant (out of sight) locations, resulting severe damage to ecosystems.
- Severe damage by long haul transport to road infrastructure.
- Increase in cost of sand.
- Not much enthusiasm by politicians for sand alternatives.

Enforcement Staff and Police Training



Chief Minister at Central Province Police Training Programme 2011.



DG-GSMB (Regulator) at STF Training for 4 Districts in Western Province, 2011

STF Training Programme Southern / Eastern Province, 2012

Thank you.