Policy intervention in the forest management
(A study in the Bonavistar Gramaniladari Division, Rumassala, Galle)

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"Rumassala" is an Evergreen Rain Forest with regional variations situated in the Galle district. It extends up to about 150 ha and currently inherits a number of degradating environmental values. This study attempts to assess whether the existing policies are sufficient enough to conserve this forest belt, and whether they are practically active. Here, the attention was paid on the collection of both primary and secondary data. Questionnaire survey, focused group interviews, case studies and field observations were the methods used to collect primary data.

Improper colonization due to development projects was identified as the main reason for the degradation of Rumassala forest. Also, the absence of proper government intervention, absence of a substantial enforcement of laws, regulations, policy issues and ignorance of the community remarkably contribute to the enhancement of degradation of this forest belt.

As a recommendation, it can be suggested that boundaries of the holdings owned by settlers should be marked through a proper land survey and remaining land should be acquired, maintained and managed by the government as state lands. Settlers should be made aware of the importance and value of this forest and agro forests should be established in order to develop the Green Cover in the settlement areas with community support. Also, the places where there is a potentiality for tourist attraction could be acquired by a responsible institution and the regional development could be brought about by introducing Eco-Tourism.