



## **Environmental and Socio-economic Problems Caused by Dumping Garbage in Mangrove Areas**

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### **Abstract**

As a developing country, protecting the environment including resources such as land, mangroves and other resources is extremely essential in Sri Lanka. Dumping garbage is a major environmental issue in Sri Lanka and at present it has become a national concern. The dumping of garbage in mangrove land in Kamburugamuwa west in Matara area affects the residents a distance of about 1 1/2 km area surrounding the dumping site. In addition, there are rising several problems in close proximity of the piles of garbage, which can be identified as environmental and socio-economic problems. The area for the study comprise of Kamburugamuwa west area, which is located in Weligama District Secretariat Division. Main objective of this study is to examine environmental pollution and its impacts caused by dumping garbage. Specific objectives are to understand health problems, social problems, loss of mangrove land due to garbage dumping, and to suggest recommendations. The primary method used for data collection in the research was a questionnaire survey using random sampling to obtain the primary data and also field observations were used. In addition, secondary data from relevant institutions have been used. The questionnaire was administered to 132 heads of the family in the affected area. Research was done from January to March in 2014. Results indicated that environmental pollution has increased by garbage dumping. Due to environmental pollution, health, social, and economic problems have resulted. Study area has exposed more than 40% of the residents to virulent diseases including dengue, fever, cough, itch, and other gastro-intestinal infections. And more than 80% of the residents are affected by mosquitoes and flies. There is a social and political problem that the president of Weligama Pradeshiya saba resides in this area and he approved this land to dump the garbage. Economically, residents of this area cannot take anything of mangrove land such as wood, green leaves, fruits, sticks and other things. Mangrove land has been reduced due to the effects of garbage dumping. Some flora and fauna species have succumbed to garbage, and deposited chemical residues. Therefore, this garbage dumping is a threat for the environment, and government should regularize regular garbage dumping to prevent further contamination of the mangrove environment.

**Keywords:** *developing country, denguefruits, garbage, pollution, sticks.*