

**DEVELOPMENT OF A DECISION SUPPORT TOOL FOR
MONITORING WATER QUALITY OF THE COLOMBO
CANAL SYSTEM.**

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A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Engineering in Environmental Water Resources Engineering

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JULY 2008

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ABSTRACT

The Colombo Canal System comprises of a rather complex network of large open drainage canals, smaller tributary canals and low lying marshes functioning as natural retention ponds. It caters to the drainage needs of the Greater Colombo area, reducing incidence of flooding, and thereby improving the health and sanitation conditions of the urban community.

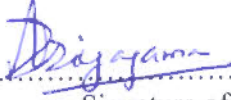
Pollution of the Colombo Canal System has been recognized as a major issue of concern for the past two decades. It is especially detrimental to the health and well-being of the urban poor who frequently inhabit canal banks and low-living regions of Colombo. Although a commendable effort has been made to improve the canal water quality under the Greater Colombo Flood Control and Environment Improvement Project (GCFC&EIP), the pollution levels of some of the canals are significantly high even at present. A Comprehensive Water Quality Monitoring Program has been carried out by Sri Lanka Irrigation and Reclamation and Development Corporation (SLLR&DC) from 1975 to date under GCFC&EIP, where monthly measurements have been recorded at 16 locations in the greater Colombo Canal System for 10 physical and chemical Parameters. However, no detailed study has been carried out so far to analyze the short term and long-term variations in water quality, or the relationship between water quality and other variables, such as rainfall. Therefore, the present study aims to fill the above gap by Integrating the available raw data, analyzing the water quality regime of each location, as well as a study of its relationship with canal water level, average daily rainfall and canal discharge in a single user-friendly computer package. The end product of this exercise is a simple informative decision support tool called the Water Quality Monitor (WQM).

At present there exists an array of water quality models incorporating hydrodynamics and water quality, and the majority of these have been developed in the USA either by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) or the US Army Corps of Engineers. In addition, the Danish Hydraulic Institute (DHI) has also developed a few water quality models. These models serve as decision support tools for adopting water quality improvement measures. Many of the above models appear very complex, requiring a plethora of input data and are intended to be used only by specialists in the field. Therefore, it was felt that there existed a need for a simple tool, which serves the dual purposes of knowledge dissemination as well as decision support, with regard to surface water quality in the Colombo area, while utilizing the existing wealth of data; hence this study. In addition, this report also discusses some of the more complex models along with earlier studies on water quality of the Colombo Canal System.

An attempt has been made to look at the total quality regime of each monitored location, and assist in arriving at a realistic quality criteria, which could actually be met by improving canal water quality. In addition, the relationships between canal water level and water quality, are also between average daily rainfall and water quality are also examined. The relationship between water quality and canal discharge is examined for one location where discharge data is available. At the end of the analyses a user of the package will be aided in making a decision regarding the reachable level of quality for a particular site in Colombo, and also examine the relationships between water quality and other variables such as water level and rainfall. A special feature of the tool is the facility provided to analyse the user's own set of data other than the built-in Colombo data. This report also discusses some prominent outcomes of applying the tool to the Colombo Canal System, and winds up by discussing some feasible interventions for improving canal water quality, based on those outcomes.

DECLARATION

I certify that this dissertation does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any university and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written or orally communicated by another person except where due reference is made in the text.


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Signature of the candidate

To the best of my knowledge the above particulars are correct.



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.....
Prof (Mrs.) N. Ratnayake

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost I would like to thank Mr. P. P. Ghnanapala, Deputy Director General (Research and Designs), Sri Lanka Land Reclamation and Development Corporation (SLLR&DC) for his guidance, support and encouragement in selecting my research topic, as well as in the acquisition of data. I am much indebted to him for enabling me to make use of canal water quality, water level and discharge data collected under the Greater Colombo Flood Control and Environment Improvement Project.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Prof. (Mrs.) N. Ratnayake for her guidance and supervision, and above all, her extreme patience without which I would not have been able to accomplish this research. Her understanding and patience motivated me to continue the research to its end during an extremely difficult period of my life. I would also like to thank Dr. Niranjana Gunawardane for his invaluable advice on the statistical aspects of the research.

My sincere thanks are due to the staff of the Research and Designs Division of SLLR&DC, especially, Engineers Mrs. L. C. G. Soysa, Mrs. A. H. Thushari, Mr. Neelanga Weragala, Mr. Withana and Mr. Ratnayake, Field Supervisor Mr. Perera, and Computer Operators Miss Ganga Chandani, Mrs. Nalini De Silva and Ms. Raleena all of whom helped me in numerous ways. A very special thank you to Dr. Vladimir Smakhtin of International Water Management Institute (IWMI) whose vision and ideas benefited me to a great extent in carrying out my research, and to Dr. Charlotte De Fraiture for continuously encouraging me to see this research through. I would also like to thank Mr. A. D. Ranjith of IWMI for his help in obtaining GIS Coverages of Sri Lanka and also the Department of Meteorology for providing rainfall Data. My sincere thanks are also due to the MapWindow Open Source Team led by Dr. Daniel P. Ames of Idaho State University (USA), and John Champion (USA) for granting permission to use software programming components developed by them. Last, but not least, I would like to thank my parents, husband Chandana Wijeratne and two children Erandathee and Dhananjaya for their patience, support and encouragement throughout the entire period of this study.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BOD	-	Biochemical Oxygen Demand
CEA	-	Central Environmental Authority
COD	-	Chemical Oxygen Demand
ESRI	-	Environmental Systems Research Institute
GCFC&EIP	-	Greater Colombo Flood Control and Environment Improvement Program
GIS	-	Geographic Information Systems
SLLR&DC	-	Sri Lanka Land Reclamation and Development Corporation
TDG	-	Total Dissolved Gas
USEPA	-	United States Environmental Protection Agency
WGS	-	World Geodetic System
JICA	-	Japan International Corporation Agency
1-D	-	One Dimensional



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