

USE OF GEO-INFORMATION FOR LAND USE PLANNING IN UPPER MAHAWELI CATCHMENT IN SRI LANKA

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This paper presents the results of a study which attempted to evaluate the demand for Geo information of the key decision positions involved with sub-district level planning and decision making in comparison with the existing supply of spatial information in the Upper Mahaweli Watershed Catchment in Sri Lanka.

The main objective of the paper was to examine the user satisfaction with respect to the Geo information of selected mapping applications for land use and land potential and how to cater to the demand of key decision positions of the sectors.

The major finding of this study shows that as far as the demand of Geo information is concerned there are a number of government institutions and donor funded projects involved in sector specific land use planning and decision making activities at sub-regional level. Also, it was found that there was an increasing demand for accurate, reliable and more up-to-date, detailed information specially addressed to their specific sector development.

Where the supply of Geo information was concerned there were fifteen of such applications, which cater to the user demand. Some of the products are widely used in project planning, education and all purposes while some are specially catered to the specific sector development. Where suppliers are concerned it was not only Survey Department which provide standardised maps. Seven detailed applications of maps in the study which catered to specific sector development in relation to land use planning was found.

In terms of effectiveness and user satisfaction it was found that there were gaps in information, the scale it has been provided, actual demand and availability for planning and decision making in all the sectors.

Finally, the factors or instruments for better matching the demand for Geo information with the existing supply of information was identified.

The results of this study are useful to all the users and suppliers of Geo information who are engaged in mapping, planning, monitoring & implementation and policy formulation in relation to sector specific land use planning and decision making.