**MANGROVES IN LGGAOS ECOLOGICALS: A NGLERTED HABITAT IN SRI LANKA**

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INTRODUCTION

Mangrove ecosystems are commonly understood to be made up of a collection of red, white, and black mangrove species that fringe and protect the shores and lagoons and other estuarine sediments. These plants grow in saline and widely salinized water or brackish waters, such as along dunes, estuaries, lagoons, and in estuaries of saline or fresh intertidal zones and move their greatest extent radially on tropical coasts, especially in the Indus (Figure 1). And in some suburban areas, when they regularly form mangrove stands.

Mangrove forest in Batticaloa Lagoon

| Figure 1. Distribution of mangrove orange in Sri Lanka, | Figure 2. Distribution of mangrove stands in Sri Lanka. [Katupotha et al., 2010]. |

**PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE**

Ecological conditions and multiple uses of mangrove in Sri Lanka are considered by many as essential for the conservation of the local flora and fauna of the coastal environment. Mangrove stands provide a habitat for a vast array of species, including birds, fish, invertebrates, and brackish fish. These habitats are crucial for maintaining the biodiversity of the coastal ecosystem. They help in stabilizing the coastline, preventing soil erosion, and mitigating the effects of coastal flooding.

Mangroves are also essential for the livelihoods of coastal communities. They provide essential resources, such as wood, fuel, and food, and support traditional practices, such as fishing and boat-building.

However, mangrove stands are under threat due to various human activities, such as deforestation, urbanization, and pollution. The destruction of mangrove stands can lead to a loss of biodiversity and erosion of the coastline. Therefore, it is crucial to conserve and protect the mangrove ecosystems in Sri Lanka and globally.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Mangrove stands provide different resources for local communities. These include the production of wood, fuel, and food, and support traditional practices, such as fishing and boat-building.

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## Key Points

- Mangrove ecosystems are essential for the conservation of the local flora and fauna of the coastal environment.
- Mangrove stands provide a habitat for a vast array of species, including birds, fish, invertebrates, and brackish fish.
- Mangrove stands are under threat due to various human activities, such as deforestation, urbanization, and pollution.
- Mangrove stands provide essential resources, such as wood, fuel, and food, and support traditional practices, such as fishing and boat-building.
- Mangrove stands are vital for the livelihoods of coastal communities.