

THE IMPACT OF UNPLANNED URBANIZATION ON UPPER MAHAWELI CATCHMENT AREAS.

J.M.S. Jayaweera

Abstract: The unplanned urbanization that is taking place on hilly areas of river basins in Sri Lanka has resulted in many negative impacts upon the development of both upstream and downstream areas of river basins. This Paper inquires into the situation in the Upper Mahaweli Catchment area, and identifies several major issues that have arisen because of the lack of proper guidelines in urban development planning. The study emphasizes the importance of considering river basin development as an integrated whole. It examines the situation in Nawalapitiya, an important junction-town; both in terms of road and rail transport, and highlights several problems arising from unplanned urbanization. The Paper makes certain important recommendations to mitigate current problems and formulate a suitable urban plan for the future.