

CLIMATE CHANGES IN SRI LANKA

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Abstract

Rainfall extremes have adverse impacts on the society and environment of Sri Lanka. Different regions of the country have witnessed either flooding or drought in quick succession in recent years. Some studies attribute such extreme events to climate change induced by global warming. However, there is a dearth of climatological studies addressing the spatio-temporal trends in rainfall over Sri Lanka in support of such attribution. Using daily rainfall data collected at the 22 main meteorological stations of the Department of Meteorology, this paper identifies spatio-temporal trends in the rainfall received during the four rainy seasons i.e. the Southwest monsoon, the first inter-monsoon, the Northeast monsoon and the second inter-monsoon during the period 1961-2002. It translates rainfall trends into trends in water volume by river basin using different GIS techniques, so that the practical implications of climate variability and change in recent decades are clearly identifiable. The study finds that the number of rainy days has decreased at all the meteorological stations except for the Nuwara Eliya station. It also finds that the 2000mm isohyet demarcating the wet zone of the country - has shrunk. Water volume by watershed shows a clear dichotomous distribution with watersheds in the north having increasing trends, and watersheds in the south having decreasing trends, in water volume.

1. Introduction

Rainfall is of primary importance to the both physical and cultural landscape of any region. Of all the standard climatic parameters, rainfall is the most variable parameter in time and space. Rainfall received across Sri Lanka varies dramatically from year to year, ranging from dry periods that can persist for months, to periods of intense downpours, storms and flooding. The temporal and spatial diversities associated with rainfall has provided the basis for dividing the climate year in Sri Lanka into four seasons. Two Monsoon periods and two Inter-Monsoon periods. The Southwest Monsoon (Summer Monsoon) prevails from May to September while the Northeast Monsoon (winter



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Monsoon) lasts from December to February. In between these two monsoon periods, two Inter-Monsoon periods exist: March to April - first Inter-Monsoon period and October and November ó second Inter-Monsoon (National Atlas of Sri Lanka, 1988). Westerly winds prevail during the Southwest Monsoon and North-easterly winds prevail during the Northeast Monsoon. The seasonal variations of wind direction and rainfall have a marked influence on human activities.

Sri Lanka has a food crop-oriented agricultural economy. Rainfall is a key determinant of the growing seasons and the types of agriculture practised. Rainfall plays an important role in agriculture as any shortages or excesses of rainfall gives way to a reduction in yields. For instance, rice is the main crop in Sri Lanka and is highly susceptible to rainfall variability. Other crops such as the plantation crops of tea and rubber are also dependant on the amount of rainfall received.

The number of rainy days in a season is of particular importance for tea and rubber crops. Yield decreases can be attributed to an increase in the frequency of droughts and reduction of the number of rainy days. Therefore, examining trends in the variability of the number of rainy days is vital as it is a decisive factor in agriculture. The number of rainy days is also important for industrial activities such as salt production. In recent years salt production in the salterns of southern Sri Lanka has decreased due to the changing pattern of rainy days in the Hambantota district.

Given the importance of agriculture the number of rainy days affects growing patterns and yields. Therefore, it is important to investigate the factors determining the variability of rainfall. There is a dearth of studies on rainfall variability in Sri Lanka. Such studies are essential to evaluate the impact of climate change on agriculture.

Since late-1980s, there appear to have been changes in weather patterns in Sri Lanka with an apparent reduction in rainfall received and more intense wet and dry spells. This paper aims to assess the magnitude and significance of rainfall variability and change over time using

statistical analysis techniques and spatial analysis techniques in Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

2. Objectives

The goal of this study is to obtain evidence of climate change in Sri Lanka over the last four decades. Although there are several climatic variables that could be included in a study of climate change, only rainfall has been selected for the current analysis. The paper has the following specific objectives:

- I. Examine overall trends in the number of rainy days
- II. Examine trends in the number of rainy days by rainy seasons
- III. Examine trends in average annual rainfall by different climatic zones
- IV. Analyze the water volume by different watersheds within different climatic regions.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data Sources

This study is entirely based on secondary data available from the Department of Meteorology. Daily rainfall data were collected for the period from 1961 to 2002 for 22 meteorological observatories bearing in mind the minimum 30-year period required for climatological analyses. The twenty two meteorological observatories are well distributed - over the entire country by elevation and climatic regions. The stations under study, their elevations and the period which data are available are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Meteorological stations

| Wet zone | | Dry zone | | Intermediate zone | |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Station name | Elevation (m) | Station name | Elevation (m) | Station name | Elevation (m) |
| Colombo | 7 | Puttlam | 2 | Kurunegala | 116 |
| Galle | 12 | Trincomalee | 3 | Badulla | 670 |

| | | | | | |
|--------------|-------|------------------|-----|-------------|-------|
| Rathnapura | 34 | Hambantota | 16 | Diyathalawa | 1,250 |
| Kandy | 479 | Anuradhapura | 93 | | |
| Nuwara Eliya | 1,880 | Maha Illupallama | 136 | | |
| Kalutara | | Batticaloa | 3 | | |
| Ratmalana | | Ampara | 15 | | |
| | | Jaffna | | | |
| | | Mulative | | | |
| | | Vavuniya | | | |
| | | Kankasanthurai | | | |

Source: Department of Meteorology, 2006

3.2 Methods of Analysis

Statistical analysis such as linear regression and time series analyses were utilized to examine periodic changes in both annual and seasonal contexts. GIS spatial analysis techniques such as Surface Interpolation, zonal statistics were utilized.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Number of rainy days

In order to examine trends in the number of rainy days, the annual number of rainy days was obtained from the original daily rainfall record at each station. Regression analysis was performed on the number of rainy days at each station. See Table 2 for the results.

Table 2: Trends in the number of rainy days for the period from 1961 - 2002

| Station | m (Slope) | c (Intercept) | Remarks |
|--------------|-----------|---------------|---------|
| Nuwara Eliya | 0.0477 | 107.07 | Low |
| Jaffna | -0.0589 | 193.83 | Low |
| Kandy | -0.065 | 312.77 | Low |
| Diyathalawa | -0.1308 | 420.54 | Low |

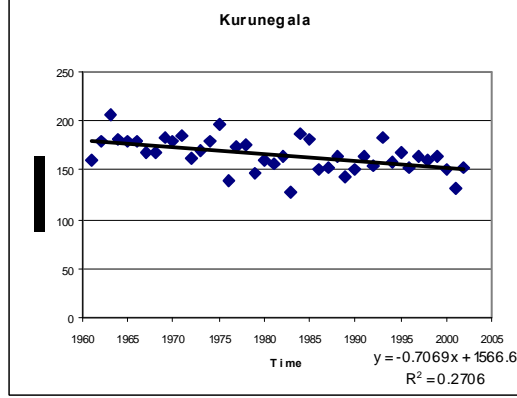
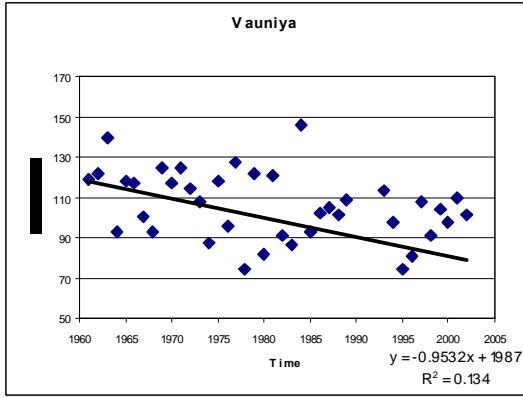
| | | | |
|------------------|---------|--------|------------|
| Mahailluppallama | -0.2847 | 675.88 | Low |
| Badulla | -0.3005 | 753.36 | Low |
| Rathnapura | -0.3023 | 833.22 | Low |
| Trincomalee | -0.3216 | 738.2 | Low |
| Mannar | -0.3472 | 757.0 | Low |
| Batticaloa | -0.3553 | 810.04 | Low |
| Rathmalana | -0.3765 | 926.97 | Moderate |
| Galle | -0.4007 | 991.91 | Moderate |
| Puttlam | -0.4255 | 946.8 | Moderate |
| Hambantota | -0.4334 | 970.21 | Moderate |
| Anuradhapura | -0.4587 | 1015 | Moderate |
| Kankasanthurai | -0.4874 | 1040.3 | Moderate |
| Colombo | -0.5375 | 1238.4 | Moderate |
| Kalutara | -0.5439 | 1236.6 | Moderate |
| Kurunegala | -0.7069 | 1566.6 | Remarkable |
| Mullativui | -0.8182 | 1714 | Remarkable |
| Vavuniya | -0.9532 | 1072.5 | Remarkable |
| Pothuvil | -0.9718 | 2013.1 | Remarkable |

Note: Data have been arranged in descending order according to the slope
Source: Regression results, Prepared by the author, 2008

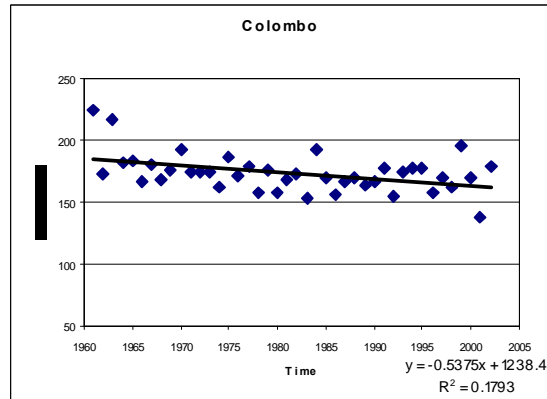
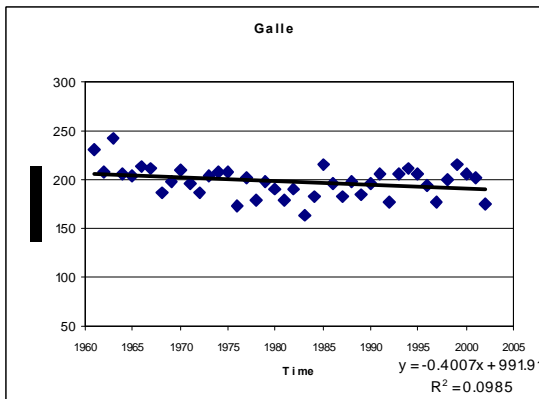
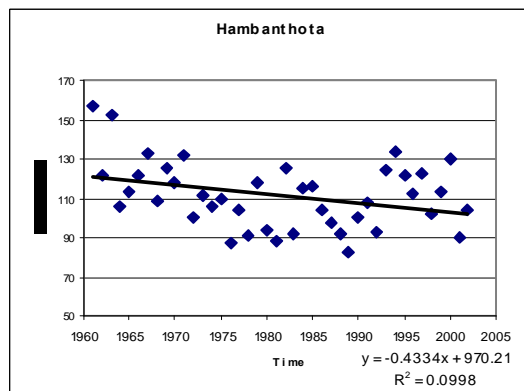
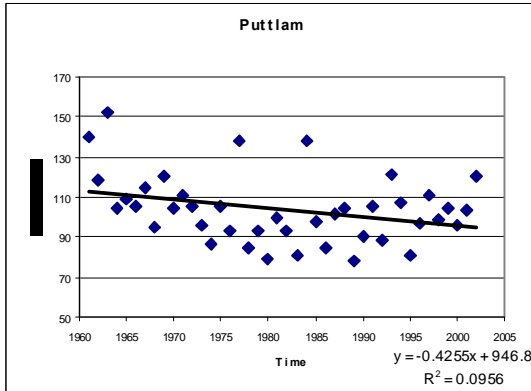
It is observable that all the stations except Nuwara Eliya have a decreasing number of rainy days. Nuwara Eliya is the only station that has shown an increasing trend but it is noticeable that the trend cannot be considered as a significant one as the R^2 value is only 0.0014. It is shown that four stations have had a marked negative trend and it is more pronounced in the Dry Zone Mullativu, Vavuniya and Potuvil have recorded as having the notable decreasing trend while Puttlam, Hambantota, Anuradhapura and Kankasanthurai in the Dry zone have shown a moderate decline in the number of rainy days received during the study period. Wet zone observatories like Galle, Ratmalana, Colombo and Kalutara have slightly less decreasing trends. Kurunegala ó within the Intermediate zone ó has a strong decrease in the number of rainy days. Trends at all other stations were not significant Figure 1). These factors can be clearly displayed in graphical form.

Figure 1

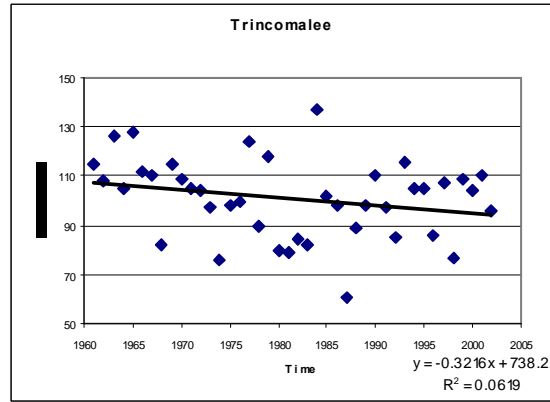
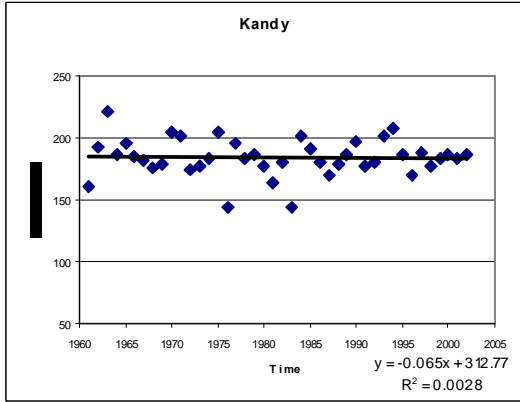
(a) Stations with remarkable negative trends in the number of rainy days



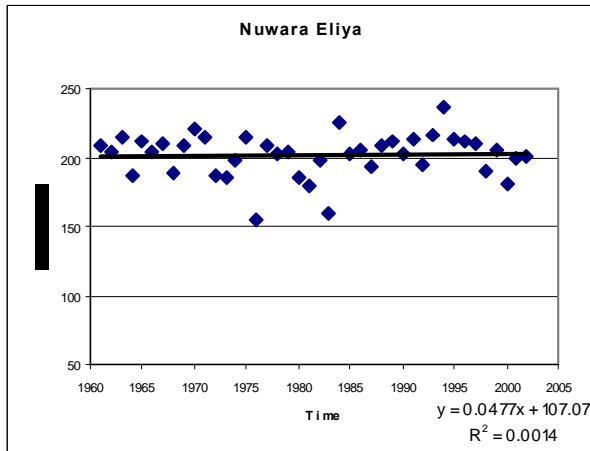
(b) Stations with moderate negative trends in the number of rainy days



(c) Stations with low negative trends in the number of rainy days



(d) The only station with the positive trends in the number of rainy days



This graphical representation clearly shows that some weather stations have high variability in the recorded number of rainy days.

4.2 Trends in the number of rainy days by season

With regard to the number of rainy days received in each season, the Northeast Monsoon Season (NEMS) has witnessed a negative trend in all the meteorological stations under study. In the First Inter Monsoon Season (FIMS) only the Mulativu observatory has shown a

positive trend while all the other observatories have gained an overall negative trend in the frequency of the rainfall. Mulativu, Nuwara Eliya, Badulla and Kandy have displayed positive trends both in the Southwest Monsoon Season (SWMS) and the Second Inter Monsoon Season (SIMS). Potuvil has depicted a remarkable decline in all seasons except in the SIMS. In the NEMS the decline has been more pronounced in the Central to Eastern parts of the country. During the SWMS, the decline has both negative and positive results for all zones of the country without being confined to one particular area. This result is interesting as the rainfall during the SWMS tends to be confined to the southwest quadrant of the country. Out of the two Inter-monsoon seasons, the FIMS has a comparatively higher rate of decline in the number of rainy days.

In the NEMS the same phenomenon has correlated between the amount of rainfall and the frequency of the rainfall except in the station Mulativu. All stations under study have negative trends in the amount of rainfall that received during a particular season. Despite the reduction in the number of rainy days at all stations during the NEMS, the total rainfall received at Jaffna and Ratnapura has increased.

In the SWMS, the most significant pattern that can be identified is that the all stations, except for Colombo and Ratmalana, with positive trends belong to the Dry and Intermediate Zones. All the other stations in the Wet zone have recorded decrease in rainfall. On the other hand one can assume that since the Dry and Intermediate zones are not greatly affected by the SWMS, the reduction has become more apparent in the Wet zone stations. Therefore, it could be inferred that the rainfall received in the western portion of the country has decreased. In contrast, the SIMS has been characterized with plentiful rainfall for the western part of the country. The SIMS is the period that an evenly balanced rainfall is received by the whole country. Just one station ó the the Galle meteorological observatory ó has a registered a decrease in rainfall during all four seasons.

4.3 Annual rainfall pattern

The annual rainfall of the country is conventionally considered as ranging between 1000mm in the driest parts to more than 5000mm in the wettest parts. There is a marked spatial pattern associated with the mean annual rainfall over Sri Lanka. Domroes has specified that in spite of the unequal length of the seasons - an unevenly balanced, seasonally greatly varying distribution of rainfall throughout the year can be derived for the entire island of Ceylon.

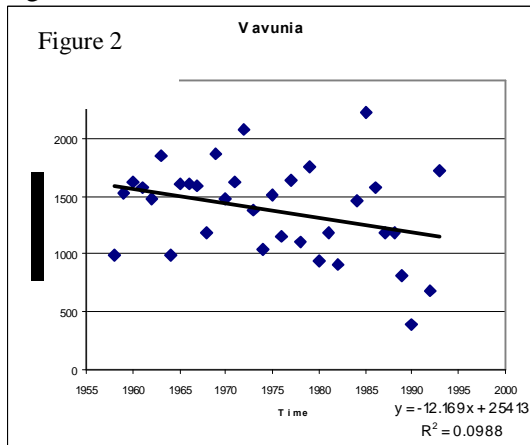
Monthly rainfall at each meteorological station was used to compute annual rainfall totals. Simple regression was then carried out to identify patterns in annual rainfall (Table 3).

Table 3: Annual Rainfall Pattern of the period from 1941- 2002

| Station | m (Slope) | c (Intercept) | R ² | Remarks |
|-----------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|------------|
| Jaffna | 1.7089 | -2299.9 | 0.0051 | |
| Puttlam | -0.3707 | 1740 | 0.0004 | Low |
| Colombo | -0.3835 | 2853.7 | 0.0003 | Low |
| Kandy | -1.4293 | 4513.7 | 0.0033 | Low |
| Kurunegala | -1.7055 | 5170.2 | 0.0048 | Low |
| Rathnapura | -1.7571 | 6920.5 | 0.0037 | Low |
| Badulla | -2.4553 | 6546.6 | 0.0115 | Low |
| Mahailuppallama | -2.8906 | 7094.4 | 0.0205 | Low |
| Ratmalana | -3.1974 | 8793.8 | 0.0218 | Moderate |
| Diyathalawa | -3.2762 | 7912.3 | 0.0309 | Moderate |
| Batticaloa | -3.4809 | 8513.4 | 0.0189 | Moderate |
| Nuwara Eliya | -3.491 | 8753.8 | 0.0297 | Moderate |
| Kankasanthurai | -3.9674 | 9002.3 | 0.0158 | Moderate |
| Hambantota | -4.4924 | 9840.9 | 0.0723 | Moderate |
| Galle | -5.3877 | 12804 | 0.0562 | Moderate |
| Trincomalee | -5.9501 | 13333 | 0.0453 | Moderate |
| Anuradhapura | -7.1183 | 15878 | 0.0507 | Remarkable |
| Mullativui | -8.7556 | 18539 | 0.1113 | Remarkable |
| Kalutara | -9.9088 | 22134 | 0.0503 | Remarkable |
| Vavuniya | -12.169 | 25413 | 0.0988 | Remarkable |

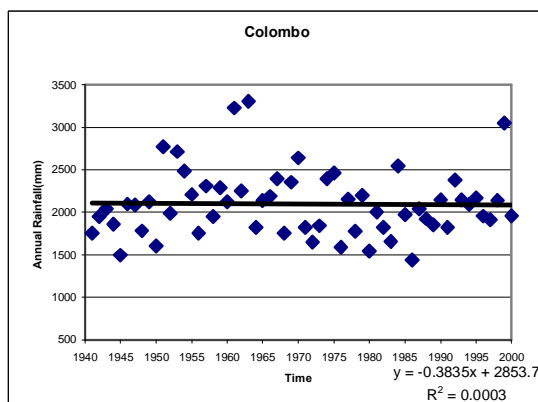
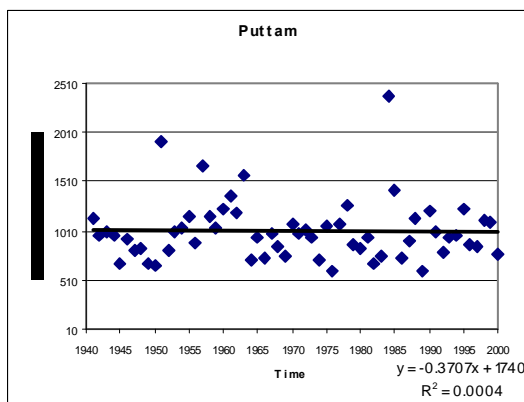
Note: Data have been arranged in descending order according to the slope

The above tabulation clearly shows that almost all the stations under study have registered negative trends in annual rainfall over time. Only Jaffna has shown a positive trend but it is not a significant relationship as the R^2 accounts for about 0.0051. The negative trend is more remarkable in stations such as Trincomalee, Anuradhapura, Mulativu, Kalutara, and Vauniya. It is seen that both Vavuniya and Mulativu have demonstrated remarkable negative trends in the annual rainfall pattern just as in the number of rainy days (Figure 2). From these results it can be



concluded that both these stations have experienced a reduction in the amount of annual rainfall received. In the case of Vavuniya it poses a question whether this high variability signifies more drought or rather increases dry spells. It is notable that Kalutara and Anuradhapura have a moderate decline in the number of rainy days but when it comes to the annual rainfall both stations are having remarkable reduction. The other noteworthy point is both Colombo and Puttalam. Although the number of rainy days at these two stations has decreased, there is no clear trend in the annual rainfall received (Figure 3). It implies that the decrease in rainfall frequency has not affected the total annual rainfall volume.

Figure 3: Annual rainfall pattern in Puttalam and Colombo



4.4 Average Annual Rainfall by Different Climatic Zones

For the basis of the present study the isohyets of the distinctive zones have been considered. Thus 2200mm isohyet is taken as the cut-off line between the Wet zone and the Intermediate zone and the 2000mm isohyet as the line between Intermediate zone and the Dry zone. The spatial pattern of the deviations of these lines was investigated using the IDW (Inverse Distance Weighted) Interpolation method available in ArcView 3.2 and the area of each zone is calculated with respect to each year (Table 4).

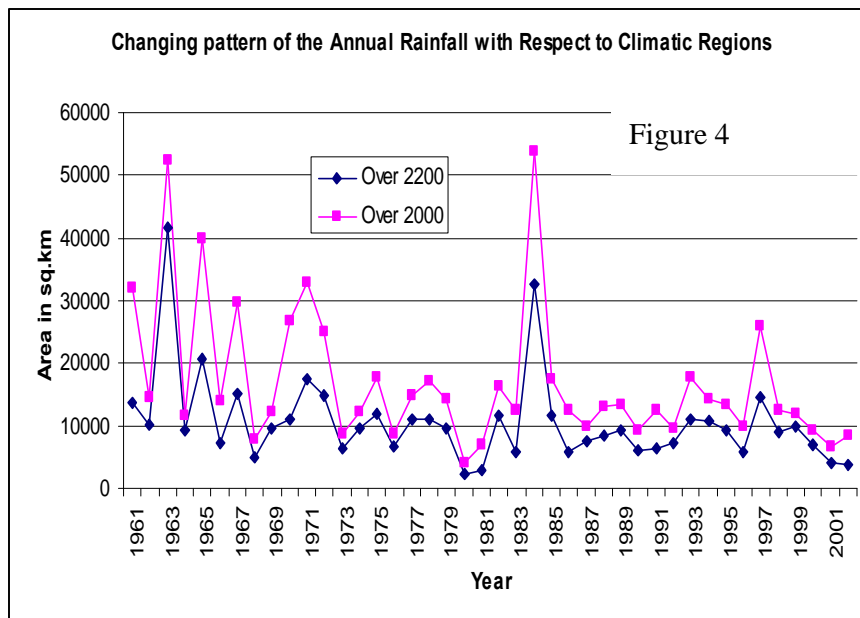
Table 4: Area under different probable limits

| Year | Probable Limits (mm.) | | |
|------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | Over 2200 | Over 2000 | Over 1500 |
| 1961 | 13680.75 | 32009.75 | 54203.25 |
| 1962 | 10147.50 | 14677.25 | 50144.75 |
| 1963 | 41582.75 | 52538.75 | 64376.75 |
| 1964 | 9311.75 | 11715.50 | 37148.00 |
| 1965 | 20666.25 | 39862.75 | 56607.50 |
| 1966 | 7297.00 | 13894.25 | 46611.50 |
| 1967 | 15181.25 | 29578.75 | 51113.25 |
| 1968 | 4940.25 | 7974.00 | 21434.50 |
| 1969 | 9649.00 | 12091.50 | 51792.25 |
| 1970 | 11055.00 | 26714.25 | 48842.25 |
| 1971 | 17488.00 | 32951.00 | 55499.25 |
| 1972 | 14824.00 | 24993.50 | 51572.25 |
| 1973 | 6539.50 | 8682.00 | 31894.00 |
| 1974 | 9571.00 | 12228.00 | 33613.75 |
| 1975 | 11859.75 | 17892.25 | 41738.25 |
| 1976 | 6673.25 | 8872.00 | 29414.75 |
| 1977 | 11030.25 | 14719.00 | 52037.25 |
| 1978 | 11150.00 | 17116.00 | 41868.25 |
| 1979 | 9531.75 | 14228.25 | 42035.25 |
| 1980 | 2195.00 | 3988.00 | 17129.75 |
| 1981 | 2945.75 | 7003.25 | 29046.25 |
| 1982 | 11622.25 | 16287.75 | 39629.25 |
| 1983 | 5872.00 | 12383.00 | 37423.00 |
| 1984 | 32665.75 | 53990.75 | 63843.25 |
| 1985 | 11526.75 | 17397.75 | 41895.50 |
| 1986 | 5872.00 | 12383.00 | 37423.00 |
| 1987 | 7526.25 | 9929.25 | 28062.25 |
| 1988 | 8485.25 | 13162.50 | 32114.00 |

| | | | |
|------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1989 | 9285.50 | 13468.50 | 37503.00 |
| 1990 | 6230.50 | 9359.25 | 49850.75 |
| 1991 | 6420.00 | 12649.25 | 50353.25 |
| 1992 | 7365.25 | 9703.25 | 33607.25 |
| 1993 | 11172.25 | 17748.50 | 61904.75 |
| 1994 | 10908.00 | 14283.00 | 48486.50 |
| 1995 | 9250.00 | 13350.75 | 36721.75 |
| 1996 | 5764.25 | 9871.75 | 35049.75 |
| 1997 | 14544.25 | 26041.50 | 51644.75 |
| 1998 | 8975.25 | 12569.25 | 27220.75 |
| 1999 | 9931.00 | 12026.50 | 44459.00 |
| 2000 | 6861.00 | 9428.00 | 41750.00 |
| 2001 | 4163.25 | 6635.75 | 29494.00 |
| 2002 | 3643.25 | 8546.00 | 51516.25 |

Source: Prepared by the author, 2008

According to the figure 4, it is clear that both the 2200mm and 2000mm isohyets have shrunk with the time. In 1963, the 2200mm line has covered a vast area of about 41582.75 km² and has even expanded over the Dry zone as well.



In year 2002 area under the 2200mm probable line decreased by about 37,000 km². The changing pattern which is illustrated in the figure 4 clearly shows that there had been an abrupt decline in the area which receives the annual

rainfall of about 2200mm. In 1985 there has been a gradual expansion of the area but despite that the overall pattern has acquired a negative trend. With regard to the 2000mm isohyets

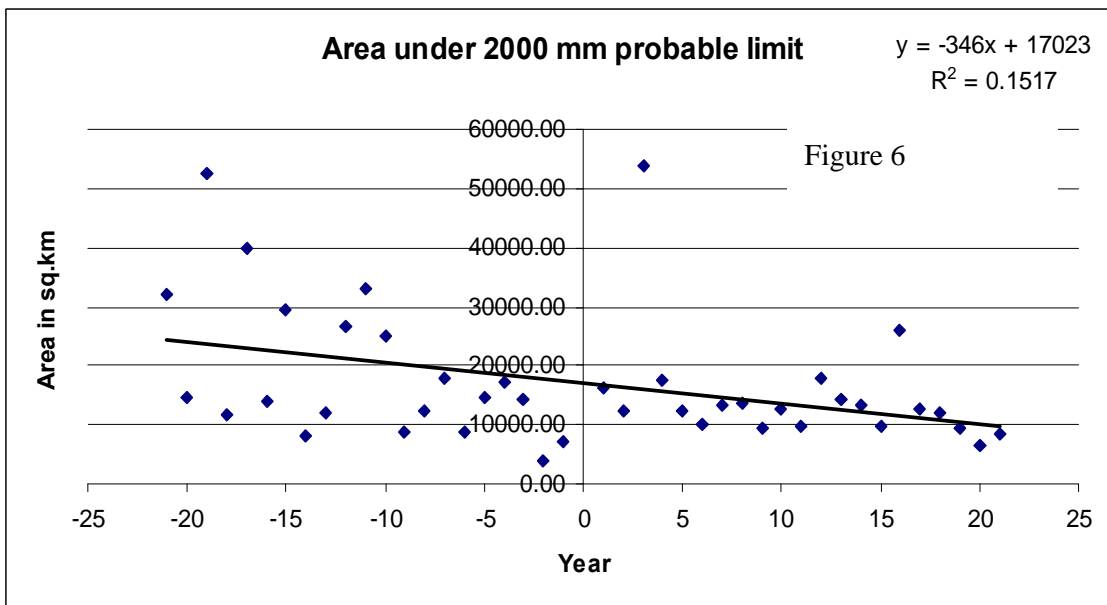
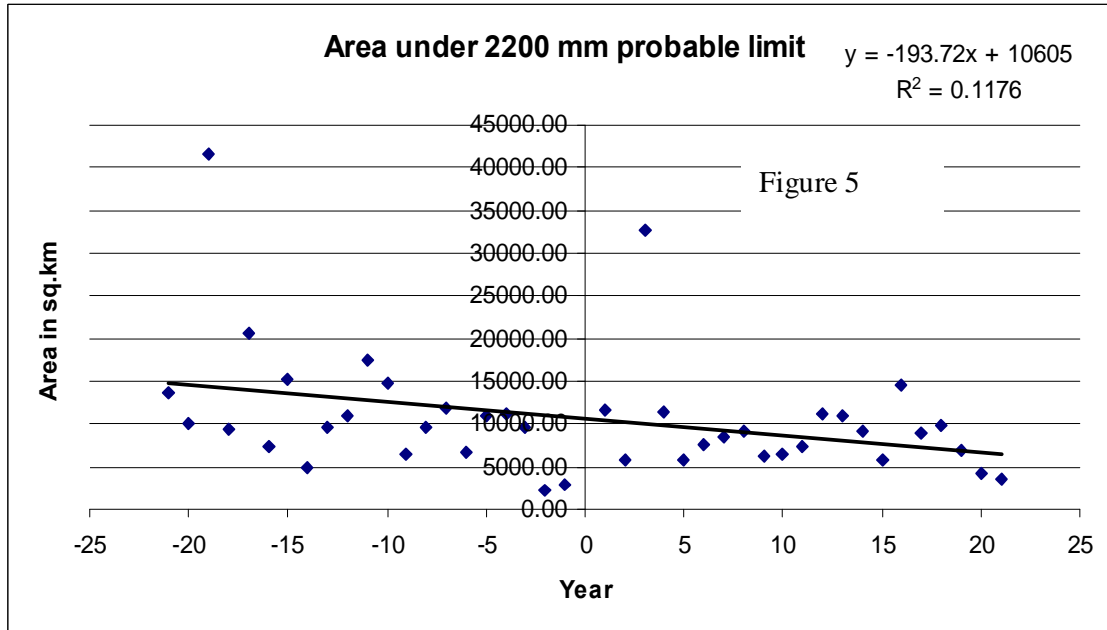


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too, the identical pattern is apparent particularly after 1975. The most outstanding declining has taken place from 1975 to 1980. The area has reduced by about 8691.11 km². Taken as a whole, the total covered area of the 2000mm line has decreased by about 9723 km² from 1960 to 2000. 2200mm line and the 2000mm line have conventionally been considered as the demarcation of the Wet zone and the Intermediate zone boundaries. The reduction of the area covered by these two isohyets signifies the importance of the reclassification of the Wet zone and the Intermediate zone boundaries. The shrinking of the area is more pronounced in the Wet zone compared to the Intermediate zone (Figure 5 and 6).

By contrast, the Dry zone has kept on expanding area as a consequence of the shrinking of the other two climatic zones. The Dry zone area has increased from 25323.84 km² to 57227.43 km². The area has almost doubled during the 40 year period.



4.5 Water volume by Watershed areas

Since Sri Lanka has an agriculture based economy, the water received in the watersheds is an important factor. This section of the paper attempts to examine the changing pattern of water volume by river basins in Sri Lanka.

Water volume can be defined as the total amount of water received by any particular region assuming there is no water loss by infiltration, runoff and evaporation.. Water volume can be calculated by multiplying the average rainfall in a given season by the area of a watershed. Since there could be more than one meteorological observatories within a watershed, the average water volume has been extracted based on the interpolated surfaces prepared using average annual rainfall at meteorological observatories. For the analysis, average water volume by watersheds was calculated from 1961 to 2002 (Appendix 01).

Most of the wet zone watersheds show marked decreasing trends in water volume while some of the Dry zone watersheds show slight increases in water volume during the period from 1961 to 2002. Water volume in the watersheds of some of the important perennial streams such as the Kelani Ganga, Walawe Ganga, Kalu Gnaga, Bentara Ganga, Madu Ganga, Gin Ganga in the wet zone shows decreasing trends (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Decreasing Trends of Water Volume in selected watersheds in the Wet Zone

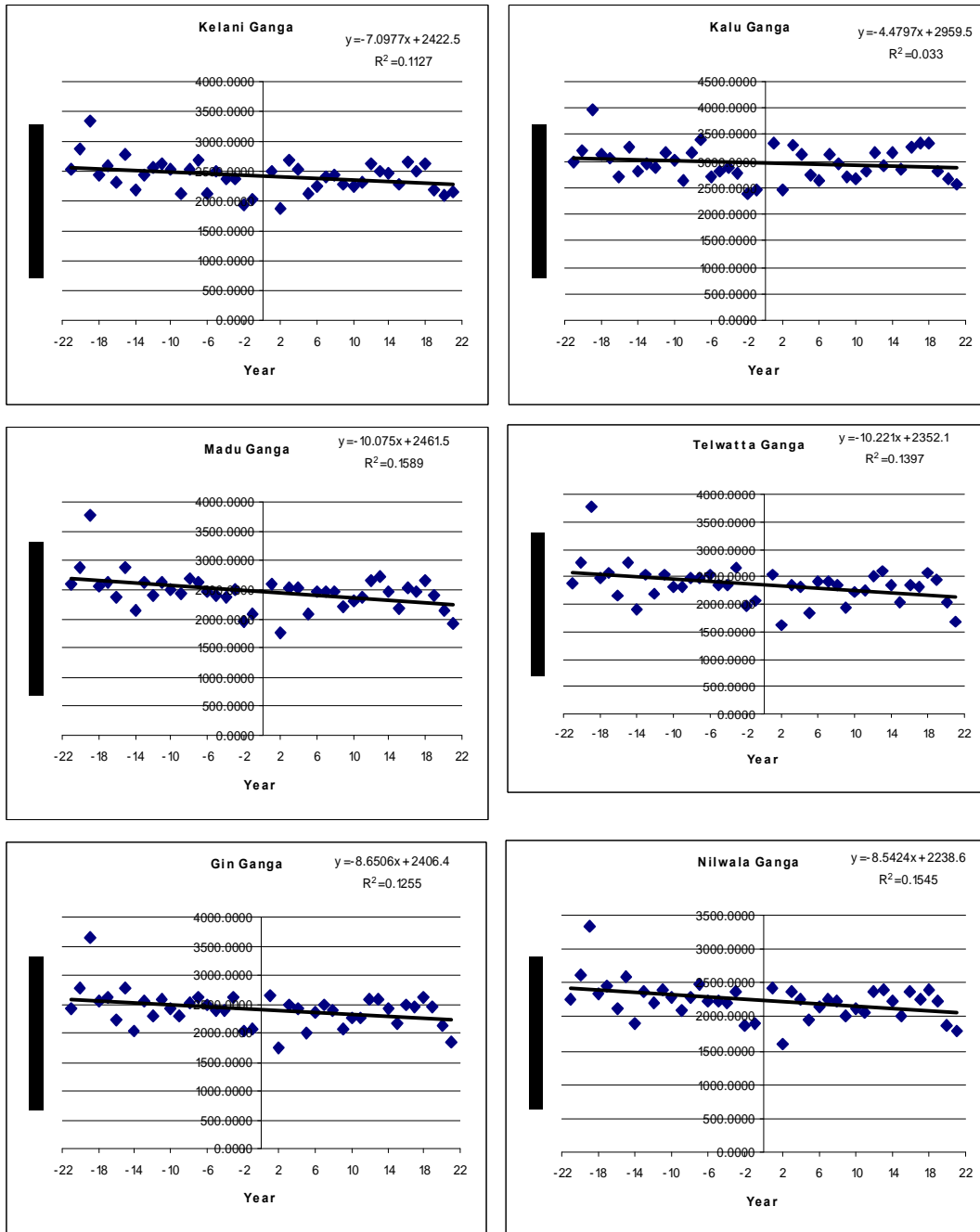


Table 5 shows the first 20 watersheds (in order of decreasing magnitude) with decreasing trends in water volume for last 42 years.

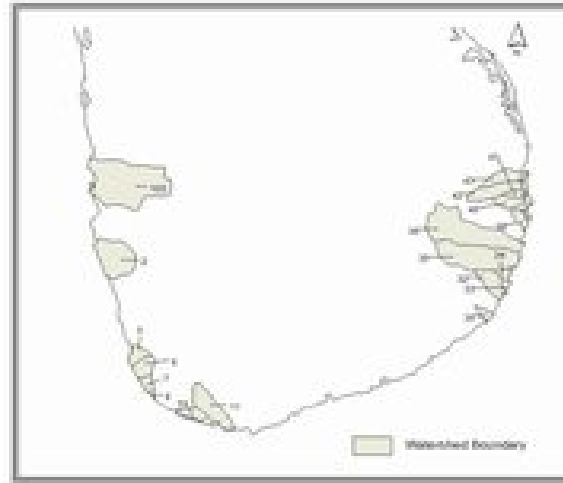
Table 5: Watersheds with decreasing trend of water volume

| No | River Basin | Slope (m) | Intercept (a) | Location |
|----|------------------|-----------|---------------|---------------|
| 1 | Semana Aru | -15.573 | 1692.7 | Southern Area |
| 2 | Bolgoda Ganga | -14.596 | 2561.4 | Southern Area |
| 3 | Tandiadi Aru | -13.935 | 1684.6 | Southern Area |
| 4 | Kangikadichi Aru | -13.078 | 1698.1 | Southern Area |
| 5 | Helawa Ara | -12.933 | 1702.5 | Southern Area |
| 6 | Rufus Kulam | -12.672 | 1700.7 | Southern Area |
| 7 | Girikula Oya | -12.161 | 1707.9 | Southern Area |
| 8 | Heda Oya | -11.945 | 1726.9 | Southern Area |
| 9 | Wila Oya | -11.651 | 1720 | Southern Area |
| 10 | Bagura Oya | -11.513 | 1712.5 | Southern Area |
| 11 | Pannel Oya | -11.336 | 1725.2 | Southern Area |
| 12 | Ambalam Oya | -11.087 | 1729.8 | Southern Area |
| 13 | Koggala Lake | -10.614 | 2306.9 | Southern Area |
| 14 | Ratgama Lake | -10.412 | 2329.1 | Southern Area |
| 15 | Telwatta Ganga | -10.221 | 2352.1 | Southern Area |
| 16 | Madu Ganga | -10.075 | 2461.5 | Southern Area |
| 17 | Polwatta Ganga | -10.047 | 2285.2 | Southern Area |
| 18 | Madampe Lake | -9.9819 | 2408.3 | Southern Area |
| 19 | Attanagalla Oya | -9.693 | 2270.7 | Southern Area |
| 20 | Karambe Ara | -9.4616 | 1706.2 | Southern Area |

Source: Regression Analysis, 2008

As shown in figure 8 all watersheds given in Table 5 located in the Southern Area of the country (Southern area is not the Southern Province. The entire southern part of the country has been considered as the Southern Area).

Figure 8: Spatial pattern of the watersheds with decreasing trend of water volume



See Appendix 1 for names of the watersheds

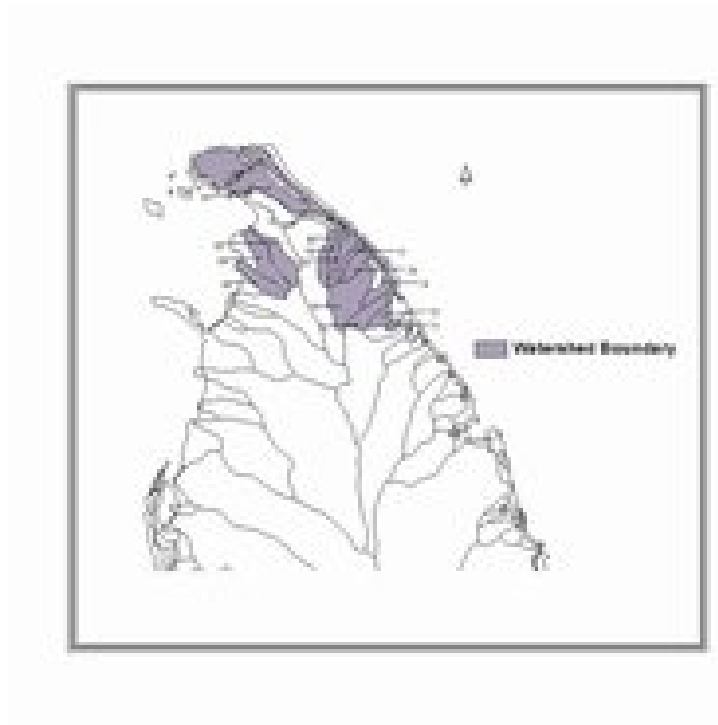
Trends in water volume by watersheds show a significant dichotomous spatial distribution. Most of the Watersheds with increasing water volume are located in the Northern part of the country while those with decreasing water volume are located in the Southern part of the country (Table 6 and Figure 9).

Table 6: Watersheds showing Increasing trend of water volume

| River Basin | Slope (m) | Intercept (a) | Location |
|--------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------|
| Pallavarayan Kaddu | 0.0681 | 1246 | Nothern Area |
| Chavar Aru | 0.6385 | 1368.3 | Nothern Area |
| Per Aru | 0.8475 | 1340.2 | Nothern Area |
| Akkarayan Aru | 0.9092 | 1283.8 | Nothern Area |
| Mandakal Aru | 0.9179 | 1265.8 | Nothern Area |
| Manal Aru | 0.9208 | 1350.5 | Nothern Area |
| Palladi Aru | 0.9341 | 1357.4 | Nothern Area |
| Methali Aru | 1.1059 | 1323.3 | Nothern Area |
| Theravil Aru | 1.3485 | 1330.5 | Nothern Area |
| Maruthapillay Aru | 1.5772 | 1332.4 | Nothern Area |
| Pali Aru | 1.8358 | 1333.2 | Nothern Area |
| Kodalikallu Aru | 2.4748 | 1334.9 | Nothern Area |
| Kalwalappu Aru | 3.2555 | 1281.5 | Nothern Area |
| Piramenthal Aru | 3.8535 | 1293.2 | Nothern Area |

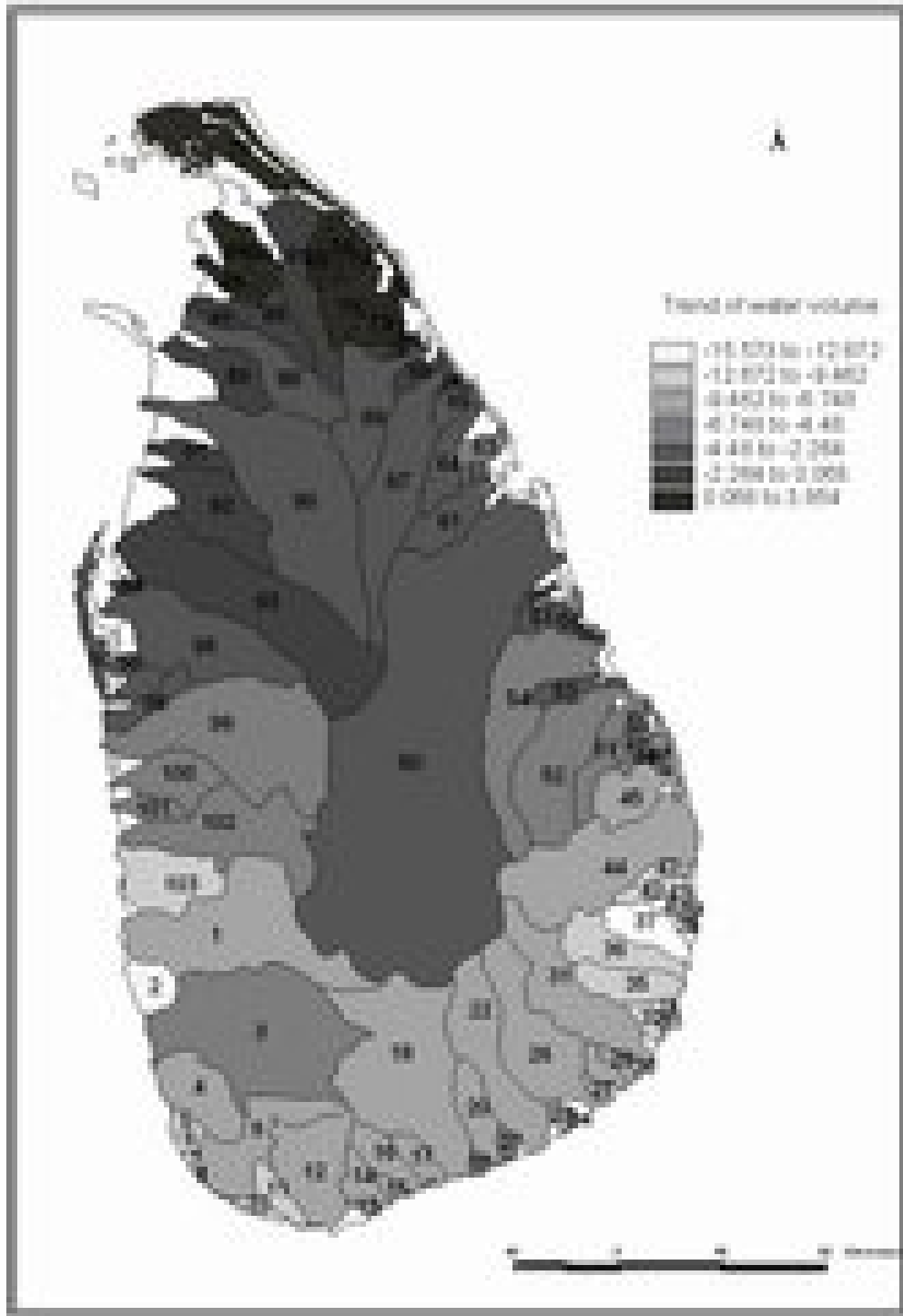
Source: Regression Analysis, 2008

Figure 9: Spatial Pattern of watersheds showing Increasing trend of water volume



See Appendix 1 for names of the watersheds

Figure 10: Changing Pattern of Water Volume by Watersheds



See Appendix 1 for name of the watersheds

5.0 Conclusion

The study finds that although the number of rainy days has decreased except one meteorological station included in the analysis. The total annual rainfall has not decreased in all the stations. This could indicate that the intensity of rainfall events may have increased together with increased durations of dry spells. The apparent increased incidence of flooding, landslides and droughts in the recent past could probably be attributed to such changes in the temporal pattern of rainfall distribution. Further studies are needed to investigate the relationship between the number of rainy days and total rainfall within a season. These studies should also establish the relationship between local rainfall and global drivers of climate variability and change. Such studies could provide invaluable guidance to decision-making in agriculture and water resources management.

Factors driving the dichotomous spatial trend in water volume by watershed identified in the study are not clearly apparent and warrant further study

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ve year Intervals)

| ID | Name of the River Basin | 1961 | 1965 | 1970 | 1975 | 1980 | 1985 | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 |
|----|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 | Kelani River | 2518.6616 | 2588.1848 | 2559.9824 | 2687.0627 | 1943.5697 | 2539.1965 | 2279.5779 | 2483.3101 | 2184.5520 |
| 2 | Bolgoda Ganga | 3018.6997 | 2642.8394 | 2692.8167 | 2599.4023 | 1799.3888 | 2710.4985 | 2506.2983 | 2478.9487 | 2122.9109 |
| 3 | Kalu Ganga | 2999.3755 | 3055.4167 | 2887.2192 | 3406.1982 | 2394.2441 | 3122.3879 | 2689.7805 | 3148.2798 | 2826.0056 |
| 4 | Bentara Ganga | 2742.5142 | 2692.9773 | 2520.7144 | 2739.5168 | 1984.4292 | 2671.9231 | 2334.8589 | 2591.6855 | 2456.4666 |
| 5 | Madu Ganga | 2607.7905 | 2627.1563 | 2415.8354 | 2621.4504 | 1951.8796 | 2539.1335 | 2208.9998 | 2450.9729 | 2396.2358 |
| 6 | Madampe Lake | 2492.5439 | 2600.0081 | 2322.2415 | 2556.4116 | 1966.3612 | 2440.6130 | 2092.8064 | 2400.7944 | 2415.5269 |
| 7 | Telwatta Ganga | 2374.4512 | 2568.8982 | 2206.2588 | 2463.5461 | 1976.9897 | 2325.0874 | 1950.4490 | 2346.6763 | 2446.8870 |
| 8 | Ratgama Lake | 2315.1680 | 2558.3352 | 2141.1348 | 2414.4307 | 1989.8363 | 2264.8057 | 1868.6979 | 2327.5640 | 2477.3748 |
| 9 | Gin Ganga | 2418.7883 | 2614.4678 | 2298.8777 | 2600.8254 | 2019.1910 | 2416.2109 | 2059.9148 | 2433.7432 | 2449.0439 |
| 10 | Koggala Lake | 2283.9277 | 2543.4919 | 2116.3704 | 2394.3784 | 1983.8704 | 2237.0085 | 1843.4320 | 2309.0364 | 2466.8813 |
| 11 | Polwatta Ganga | 2288.1465 | 2517.1599 | 2151.5349 | 2417.5137 | 1945.8234 | 2254.2781 | 1904.1136 | 2284.2085 | 2386.4614 |
| 12 | Nilwala Ganga | 2273.1040 | 2465.3083 | 2206.7163 | 2468.7322 | 1881.2970 | 2272.6858 | 2008.9956 | 2240.5200 | 2234.9746 |
| 13 | Sinimodara Oya | 1967.2925 | 2172.9382 | 1949.7134 | 2184.9497 | 1659.5760 | 1965.3143 | 1825.9810 | 1888.5798 | 1917.8197 |
| 14 | Kirama Oya | 2011.3884 | 2213.7317 | 1996.9557 | 2233.9670 | 1684.9907 | 2014.4196 | 1866.2325 | 1938.3210 | 1949.5481 |
| 15 | Rekawa Oya | 1767.9546 | 1984.8143 | 1782.6045 | 2029.0897 | 1531.9086 | 1781.2703 | 1715.2798 | 1687.0609 | 1733.1620 |
| 16 | Urubokka Oya | 1892.0686 | 2101.5806 | 1905.7810 | 2144.3105 | 1601.7046 | 1906.9261 | 1810.0194 | 1817.6559 | 1829.5776 |
| 17 | Kachchigala | 1541.9922 | 1773.7256 | 1581.5985 | 1848.6709 | 1397.2302 | 1570.0402 | 1575.4266 | 1470.0291 | 1547.5917 |
| 18 | Walawe Ganga | 1974.9607 | 2169.8625 | 2019.3409 | 2119.9385 | 1531.2107 | 1953.0269 | 1881.1002 | 1851.2643 | 1821.2292 |
| 19 | Karagan Oya | 1011.2208 | 1270.1743 | 1067.1179 | 1452.1714 | 1138.7041 | 1076.1040 | 1213.1558 | 988.6245 | 1166.3248 |
| 20 | Malala Oya | 1450.4744 | 1698.1940 | 1516.0378 | 1722.0986 | 1294.7090 | 1457.6619 | 1518.9160 | 1352.2258 | 1449.3160 |
| 21 | Embilikala Oya | 1155.4441 | 1411.7717 | 1214.2499 | 1546.3722 | 1196.1199 | 1206.4830 | 1313.9222 | 1112.3374 | 1265.3652 |
| 22 | Kirindi Oya | 1726.8809 | 1983.2764 | 1817.3313 | 1766.1660 | 1284.0922 | 1631.3710 | 1704.0099 | 1496.7548 | 1567.7931 |
| 23 | Bambawa Ara | 1547.3145 | 1814.9463 | 1628.9474 | 1785.5531 | 1338.8818 | 1526.2601 | 1591.9780 | 1415.6747 | 1530.5166 |
| 24 | Mahasiliwa Oya | 1576.5950 | 1845.2769 | 1659.6212 | 1806.1031 | 1352.7770 | 1544.9713 | 1612.6915 | 1434.2286 | 1553.2251 |
| 26 | Menik Ganga | 1756.6794 | 2131.6431 | 1933.5199 | 1855.8386 | 1354.4335 | 1663.5471 | 1782.7957 | 1549.3770 | 1640.9309 |
| 27 | Katupila Ara | 1715.5199 | 2014.5621 | 1830.1913 | 1886.5481 | 1389.8481 | 1615.4816 | 1721.0154 | 1511.0328 | 1645.8541 |
| 29 | Nabadagas Ara | 1782.2031 | 2102.1538 | 1916.6908 | 1922.1150 | 1408.1987 | 1602.5812 | 1775.8386 | 1503.4933 | 1691.9470 |
| 30 | Karambe Ara | 1793.2025 | 2111.5339 | 1926.0515 | 1934.0631 | 1417.5804 | 1576.7981 | 1782.0482 | 1481.3732 | 1704.4611 |
| 31 | Kumbukkan Oya | 1781.4539 | 2249.2925 | 2029.5856 | 1887.4880 | 1372.2725 | 1638.2166 | 1841.6071 | 1539.5188 | 1679.9183 |
| 32 | Bagura Oya | 1831.3158 | 2178.3633 | 1989.3060 | 1949.1925 | 1422.5835 | 1465.0317 | 1820.2994 | 1383.7206 | 1735.8362 |
| 33 | Girikula Oya | 1836.8978 | 2176.2312 | 1988.1886 | 1957.8529 | 1430.2889 | 1427.3901 | 1819.8378 | 1350.3250 | 1742.8584 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | 4 | 2191.5505 | 2002.1302 | 1958.5547 | 1429.2888 | 1378.2295 | 1827.9070 | 1306.7708 | 1749.5544 |
| 35 | Wila Oya | 1835.6351 | 2224.0466 | 2027.2028 | 1938.7189 | 1410.1763 | 1455.7261 | 1841.8635 | 1376.7111 | 1735.0066 |
| 36 | Heda Oya | 1837.1161 | 2258.9275 | 2054.4207 | 1940.1965 | 1410.5222 | 1435.6376 | 1856.6691 | 1364.8082 | 1737.3894 |
| 38 | Semana Aru | 1868.9537 | 2241.3306 | 2046.9325 | 1972.2859 | 1437.2914 | 1231.4689 | 1851.2943 | 1178.4135 | 1766.4967 |
| 39 | Tandiadi Aru | 1843.8282 | 2223.9858 | 2008.3246 | 1928.8519 | 1413.1417 | 1280.6978 | 1822.5579 | 1218.8654 | 1759.5096 |
| 40 | Kangikadichi Aru | 1840.6511 | 2232.3491 | 2016.6366 | 1926.6018 | 1409.9081 | 1338.3767 | 1827.9200 | 1270.7141 | 1752.3126 |
| 41 | Rufus Kulam | 1839.8917 | 2227.8022 | 2007.9601 | 1920.4725 | 1407.9912 | 1354.6321 | 1820.5140 | 1290.4100 | 1749.1199 |
| 42 | Pannel Oya | 1837.1060 | 2244.1326 | 2029.0391 | 1923.1619 | 1405.7316 | 1447.8464 | 1835.3030 | 1376.9873 | 1736.6649 |
| 43 | Ambalam Oya | 1846.2765 | 2237.8779 | 2035.8901 | 1921.6979 | 1404.6743 | 1467.3226 | 1838.2593 | 1395.9432 | 1727.6222 |
| 44 | Gal Oya | 1803.0927 | 2267.7637 | 2048.2786 | 1895.8191 | 1381.8364 | 1626.2821 | 1850.0314 | 1541.8746 | 1691.5331 |
| 45 | Andella Oya | 1788.2549 | 2194.1394 | 1979.8799 | 1863.2162 | 1369.3806 | 1629.2571 | 1809.4681 | 1548.8754 | 1688.0345 |
| 46 | Tumpun Keni | 1745.9127 | 2143.4407 | 1916.0764 | 1804.0278 | 1329.3513 | 1614.7639 | 1761.6353 | 1536.6447 | 1682.0809 |
| 47 | Namakada Aru | 1738.0610 | 2139.1636 | 1919.5181 | 1802.3657 | 1320.6608 | 1621.9193 | 1756.5660 | 1543.8237 | 1678.1461 |
| 48 | Mandipattu Aru | 1744.1127 | 2144.0828 | 1919.3170 | 1803.5143 | 1327.5270 | 1635.9508 | 1760.8295 | 1556.6765 | 1676.8842 |
| 49 | Pathantoppu Aru | 1740.7633 | 2140.1782 | 1912.0952 | 1793.9478 | 1321.7086 | 1642.7017 | 1753.1080 | 1563.7303 | 1671.6481 |
| 50 | Vett Aru | 1724.4908 | 2130.3501 | 1910.5608 | 1782.4192 | 1301.8074 | 1640.6432 | 1738.7747 | 1563.3763 | 1663.8658 |
| 51 | Unnichchai | 1765.4237 | 2169.7207 | 1949.2853 | 1829.4974 | 1348.2520 | 1668.6019 | 1781.0299 | 1588.3843 | 1675.1593 |
| 52 | Mundeni Aru | 1775.1239 | 2177.6582 | 1962.2404 | 1839.7792 | 1357.0686 | 1708.7179 | 1787.3450 | 1626.4553 | 1670.7532 |
| 53 | Miyangolla Ela | 1724.7616 | 2112.8882 | 1882.9291 | 1728.6823 | 1278.3774 | 1670.1924 | 1707.8746 | 1592.7629 | 1629.4694 |
| 54 | Madura Oya | 1745.3866 | 2136.8320 | 1910.6934 | 1769.1016 | 1313.6011 | 1671.1919 | 1737.0253 | 1620.6498 | 1633.2822 |
| 55 | Puliyampota Aru | 1668.3284 | 2104.1323 | 1835.7466 | 1630.3632 | 1190.5330 | 1508.2318 | 1643.9598 | 1536.7205 | 1588.5271 |
| 56 | Kirimechchi Odai | 1631.6913 | 2083.6682 | 1800.1200 | 1569.5682 | 1144.9016 | 1491.0326 | 1619.4523 | 1497.4360 | 1550.4779 |
| 57 | Bodigolla Aru | 1593.1136 | 2038.9642 | 1751.2278 | 1506.1697 | 1108.1147 | 1486.6132 | 1622.0338 | 1448.7893 | 1504.2487 |
| 59 | Makarachchi Aru | 1546.9124 | 2029.1646 | 1719.3036 | 1432.7096 | 1041.1027 | 1455.1934 | 1595.8000 | 1397.3981 | 1461.0874 |
| 60 | Mahaweli Ganga | 1769.6428 | 2119.0391 | 1930.7104 | 1818.0808 | 1341.3840 | 1779.9634 | 1773.4579 | 1691.7220 | 1634.2351 |
| 61 | Kantalai Aru | 1498.8289 | 2038.8848 | 1662.8558 | 1339.1725 | 966.2249 | 1360.2250 | 1477.1224 | 1329.4706 | 1430.8107 |
| 62 | Palampotta Aru | 1462.2466 | 2246.0276 | 1779.1957 | 1300.4569 | 825.7938 | 1289.8817 | 1428.6852 | 1355.7418 | 1412.4972 |
| 63 | Panna Oya | 1457.0525 | 2259.3752 | 1787.6954 | 1296.3066 | 811.4152 | 1283.6202 | 1423.5558 | 1357.3962 | 1411.0143 |
| 64 | Pankulam Aru | 1464.3632 | 2024.3843 | 1671.2906 | 1328.2656 | 900.9718 | 1350.4564 | 1458.4902 | 1308.8656 | 1429.2715 |
| 65 | Kunchikumban Aru | 1425.5059 | 1904.5894 | 1651.8873 | 1340.3151 | 874.9962 | 1376.8268 | 1464.6078 | 1291.7322 | 1436.9597 |
| 66 | Palakattu Aru | 1397.9639 | 1782.7939 | 1622.3229 | 1352.6422 | 876.9744 | 1404.2728 | 1477.6313 | 1272.7355 | 1443.0820 |
| 67 | Yan Oya | 1489.9845 | 1820.6421 | 1536.6781 | 1345.7296 | 1018.1202 | 1393.9325 | 1475.3751 | 1264.3107 | 1456.1816 |
| 68 | Mee Oya | 1380.5659 | 1622.5842 | 1570.2903 | 1374.2399 | 884.2144 | 1448.2109 | 1493.1859 | 1220.3997 | 1472.8062 |
| 69 | Ma Oya | 1467.0024 | 1632.4048 | 1501.0568 | 1398.8817 | 927.5627 | 1477.4578 | 1480.8116 | 1140.3793 | 1540.3301 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | 6 | 1490.3607 | 1556.4010 | 1383.9216 | 864.8973 | 1472.4772 | 1506.0083 | 1189.1008 | 1487.9740 |
| 71 | Chavar Aru | 1289.2186 | 1443.7186 | 1580.4111 | 1379.9128 | 845.8708 | 1471.8733 | 1508.4840 | 1213.7133 | 1467.9456 |
| 72 | Palladi Aru | 1261.4869 | 1384.4998 | 1581.6279 | 1382.4199 | 833.1288 | 1480.4047 | 1513.6853 | 1198.3439 | 1471.8383 |
| 73 | Manal Aru | 1250.7952 | 1354.9794 | 1578.3157 | 1384.2491 | 827.1796 | 1485.4033 | 1517.5305 | 1183.9871 | 1472.5200 |
| 74 | Kodalikallu Aru | 1151.9609 | 1222.8094 | 1628.0099 | 1382.6239 | 782.1354 | 1495.3110 | 1527.2831 | 1209.9829 | 1441.5583 |
| 75 | Per Aru | 1243.6284 | 1335.0100 | 1566.0896 | 1382.1088 | 823.8836 | 1484.7931 | 1525.6226 | 1174.0200 | 1445.0957 |
| 76 | Pali Aru | 1185.2057 | 1262.8268 | 1596.8052 | 1382.8204 | 798.7245 | 1489.6119 | 1535.9246 | 1200.5060 | 1406.1821 |
| 77 | Maruthapillay Aru | 1210.2821 | 1292.9926 | 1574.4696 | 1383.0365 | 810.7743 | 1485.5706 | 1536.5155 | 1196.7690 | 1397.9532 |
| 78 | Theravil Aru | 1235.1998 | 1321.3304 | 1549.8602 | 1383.2456 | 822.4613 | 1481.3835 | 1536.3384 | 1191.5763 | 1390.1984 |
| 79 | Piramenthal Aru | 1301.6851 | 1319.4634 | 1414.9921 | 1510.8466 | 835.2090 | 1526.2867 | 1520.7458 | 1209.0115 | 1296.9969 |
| 80 | Methali Aru | 1269.1555 | 1355.3689 | 1506.7373 | 1383.2710 | 837.8646 | 1474.0784 | 1535.4904 | 1181.0742 | 1370.3945 |
| 81 | Kanakarayan Aru | 1337.9613 | 1423.6714 | 1464.2579 | 1391.9526 | 862.2971 | 1475.2869 | 1523.9976 | 1148.5887 | 1405.5577 |
| 82 | Kalwalappu Aru | 1309.9093 | 1316.5454 | 1386.1191 | 1448.8342 | 852.9091 | 1474.9336 | 1524.0525 | 1186.1343 | 1268.1653 |
| 83 | Akkarayan Aru | 1303.2635 | 1364.5242 | 1398.6868 | 1365.5608 | 849.0152 | 1445.1665 | 1530.5988 | 1139.9773 | 1277.7775 |
| 84 | Mandakal Aru | 1298.5327 | 1347.9358 | 1366.4448 | 1352.7512 | 844.2632 | 1431.9028 | 1529.2917 | 1124.7183 | 1233.0057 |
| 85 | Pallavarayan Kaddu | 1285.2694 | 1346.7559 | 1330.4476 | 1288.2133 | 832.0790 | 1396.6787 | 1529.6311 | 1096.0708 | 1199.7213 |
| 86 | Pali Aru | 1345.5671 | 1430.6857 | 1382.4532 | 1317.1178 | 857.5652 | 1426.6006 | 1518.3999 | 1097.0271 | 1347.5273 |
| 87 | Chappi Aru | 1246.4873 | 1305.5566 | 1244.0590 | 1182.3107 | 798.3945 | 1330.6685 | 1525.0721 | 1054.6937 | 1132.3497 |
| 88 | Parangi Aru | 1436.0736 | 1510.3365 | 1392.1089 | 1367.4097 | 875.6557 | 1467.8206 | 1494.9366 | 1062.6216 | 1477.2250 |
| 89 | Nay Aru | 1309.2777 | 1378.4994 | 1268.2599 | 1208.1238 | 826.3603 | 1354.0530 | 1501.7843 | 1051.4420 | 1244.0885 |
| 90 | Aruvi Aru | 1510.2728 | 1722.7819 | 1399.5553 | 1269.4126 | 1059.5190 | 1359.0035 | 1416.6490 | 1120.6401 | 1412.7424 |
| 91 | Kal Aru | 1417.7018 | 1539.6003 | 1339.0823 | 1222.1501 | 960.8640 | 1372.9199 | 1466.9255 | 1144.3737 | 1294.9701 |
| 92 | Moderagam Aru | 1522.7716 | 1708.6088 | 1374.3344 | 1173.2131 | 1080.6924 | 1342.4089 | 1397.5529 | 1094.9094 | 1309.3989 |
| 93 | Kala Oya | 1559.6869 | 1819.9474 | 1458.6118 | 1350.7379 | 1230.8805 | 1399.1050 | 1478.1621 | 1389.3417 | 1390.1927 |
| 94 | Moongil Aru | 1479.9646 | 1397.1826 | 1252.3392 | 1152.7858 | 1059.9484 | 1533.5237 | 1414.4353 | 1373.7528 | 1061.0475 |
| 95 | Mi Oya | 1587.9525 | 1675.9950 | 1445.0726 | 1349.7867 | 1204.4822 | 1547.6180 | 1479.4127 | 1447.9139 | 1271.6897 |
| 96 | Madurankuli Aru | 1534.6034 | 1442.5156 | 1312.2900 | 1227.3163 | 1108.5507 | 1597.8798 | 1442.5922 | 1423.4838 | 1084.6775 |
| 97 | Kalagamuna Oya | 1579.5469 | 1518.6792 | 1387.7052 | 1300.0536 | 1144.1132 | 1624.2485 | 1481.9960 | 1455.1487 | 1156.9187 |
| 98 | Rathambala Oya | 1760.1140 | 1767.9117 | 1649.2020 | 1565.1997 | 1300.1316 | 1770.5712 | 1596.4053 | 1600.7726 | 1359.0956 |
| 99 | Deduru Oya | 1925.8749 | 2019.6013 | 1999.5122 | 1876.8995 | 1472.1061 | 1992.8046 | 1624.0385 | 1833.1935 | 1560.2357 |
| 100 | Karambala Oya | 2057.5310 | 2111.3289 | 2115.3181 | 2007.1608 | 1543.1735 | 2100.7083 | 1746.4966 | 1930.7747 | 1640.3491 |
| 101 | Ratmal Oya | 2180.0825 | 2227.6145 | 2218.6772 | 2140.6704 | 1633.2529 | 2178.3179 | 1886.0638 | 2019.1125 | 1743.9999 |
| 102 | Maha Oya | 2114.5342 | 2199.4478 | 2238.8025 | 2167.9067 | 1625.2208 | 2219.2295 | 1819.4260 | 2050.4077 | 1738.6799 |
| 103 | Attanagalla Oya | 2445.6077 | 2456.7156 | 2496.2432 | 2431.6030 | 1814.1195 | 2357.3879 | 2154.7158 | 2262.5713 | 1949.5760 |

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