

Evaluation of Traditional Plantation Management Techniques with Respect to Modern Concepts of Plantation Management

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Abstract

The traditional Sri Lankans led a simple yet a sustainable life in harmony with the nature utilising its resources wisely and appropriately. Since the vitality of forest resources were well known, properly designed plantation management techniques were followed by them even in ancient times. The traditionally practiced plantation management techniques are highly significant since most of these methods are more or less similar to the plantation management practices which are used in modern plantations leading to a sustainable management of forest resources. These traditional practices are evaluated on a scientific basis along with the modern concepts of sustainable plantation management to signify the eco consciousness of traditional plantation management techniques. Different traditional plantation management practices were gathered from literary sources such as ancient manuscripts, palm leave books, publications etc. The gathered methods were verified through oral interviews with experienced traditional experts and the verified methods were scientifically evaluated and were compared with the basic plantation management concepts practiced under sustainable plantation management at present. The methods of assessing soil suitability for various plantations, the specific requirements of floral species, ecofriendly land preparation techniques (such as phytoremediation etc.), different seeding or plantation methods (based upon the used floral species), the optimum spaces or gaps that should be maintained between two trees (for different floral species), plant treatment methods, harvesting ages of different species are discussed in detail within the traditional sources which seem to bear the same core concepts as of the modern techniques. Hence the traditional plantation management techniques can be defined as the fundamentals of sustainable forest resources management that have been gradually evolved into modern concepts of plantation management.

Keywords: Plantation management, Sustainable, Literary sources