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Implications of human settlement patterns on human elephant conflict in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

According to IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group (AfESG), the broad definition of Human elephant conflict (HEC) is "Any human-elephant interaction which results in negative effects on human social, economic or cultural life, on elephant conservation or on the environment".

Connection between human & elephant in Sri Lanka is ancient. Elephants are the largest mammal in the forest and they need large area & diversified environment. Because of the increasing population density & human settlements the elephant habitats are rapidly decreasing. This causes to crop raiding by elephants. Because of this increasing crop damage novel methods to protect crops have been decided. But most of these methods are viable only in the short term & tend to fail in the long run. Currently in Sri Lanka Human Elephant Conflict (HEC) causes deaths to around 160 elephant and 50 of human annually. Now days it a major problem in Dry zone in Sri Lanka. Also it's a problem for wildlife managers, local communities and Elephants.

There is a trend for human settlements expand even in elephant habitats. This research is supposed to spatially identify "Effects of different human settlement patterns on Human Elephant Conflict in Sri Lanka". Also it's intended to find out different settlement patterns which cause to increase this problem.

Key Words: Elephant movement pattern, different human settlement patterns