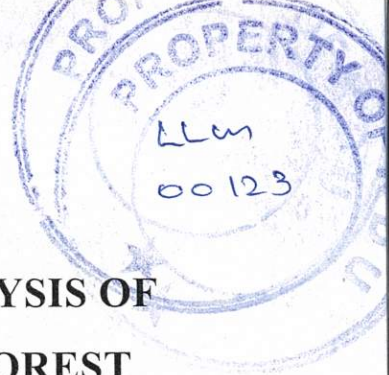


PERMANENT REFERENCE



**SAVING WILPATTU NATIONAL PARK: AN ANALYSIS OF
THE ROLE OF LAW IN THE PROTECTION OF FOREST
RESOURCES IN SRI LANKA**

A Dissertation by

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ABSTRACT

With the global focus on environmental protection, International Environmental Law emerged as a mainstream and a significant discipline, emphasizing the importance of law enforcement in conserving the environment and natural resources. In the Sri Lankan context, a wide range of environmental problems can be identified and the law has been identified as a major catalyst for mitigating those environmental problems. This study was also an independent research aimed at identifying Sri Lanka's environmental legislation and its limitations and the Wilpattu Deforestation, was used as the primary case study of the research. In addition to identifying the existing environmental law provisions in Sri Lanka in line with international environmental laws and principles, the main research problem in the study of the above cases became the investigation of how they have been violated. The qualitative research methodology used for this study. There, the various legal aspects of the case study are identified and analyzed using the phenomenological and the thematic content methods. Referring to the research findings, the background for the Wilpattu Deforestation was created with the end of the war in 2009. Its first illegal activity was the construction of the Mannar-Silawathura road. Since then, lands associated with the Kallaru Reserve, the northern sanctuary of the Wilpattu Forest Reserve, have been acquired on a number of occasions. In the process of deforestation, a significant number of environmental provisions have been violated due to the empowerment of political authority. The major legal provisions that have been violated are the Forest Conservation Ordinance, the Fauna and Flora Ordinance, the Archaeological Ordinance and the National Environment Act. Therefore, this deforestation process can be identified as an environmental crisis in which several environmental provisions were violated at the same time and it is fair to say that the judicial intervention in this regard was a turning point in the history of Sri Lanka regarding environmental conservation. The court's decision was based on the principle that the perpetrator must pay compensation, which can be emphasized as an opportunity to replicate the principles of international environmental law in the local context. However, it can be emphasized that this does not emphasize a common discourse on environmental rights, including the right to life of the resettled people in the acquired forest lands.

Key Words: *International Environmental Law, Judicial Interventions, Polluter Pay Principle Wilpattu Deforestation, Kallaru Forest Reserve*