

**RECREATIONAL POTENTIAL
OF THE BELIHULOYA - PAMBAHINNA AREA:**

**A STUDY OF THE RATIONAL ALLOCATION OF
GEOGRAPHICAL RESOURCES FOR
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

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in partial fulfilment of requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts (Geography)**

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July 2000

DECLARATION

The work described in this thesis was carried out by me at the Sri Lanka Sabaragamuwa University, Belihul Oya under the supervision of Professor D.S. Wanasinghe of the Dept. of Geography, University of Sri Jayawardenepura, Nugegoda.

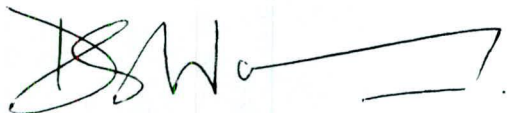
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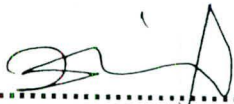
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I hereby certify that the above statement made by the candidate is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and this thesis on "Recreational Potential of the Belihul Oya-Pambahinna Area" is suitable for submission to the University of Sri Jayawardenapura for the purpose of evaluation.



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PREFACE

In May 1993, I was appointed as an Assistant Lecturer at the Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. I have been teaching Recreation Geography throughout to students aspiring for the Bsc degree in Tourism Management.

The university is situated in Belihuloya - Pambahinna, a picturesque place with an ideal climate during most times of the year. Certain areas in the vicinity of Belihuloya - Pambahinna have the potential to turn out to be places of tourist interest though presently they are not fully developed.

My involvement in the teaching of Recreation Geography kept reminding me constantly that the Belihuloya - Pambahinna area and its vicinity can be exploited for recreation vis-a-vis tourism what with its abundance of natural resources. This fleeting but recurring thought was given form and fillip by Dr C.K.M. Deheragoda who suggested that I put my thoughts into writing.

There are many to whom I owe a debt of gratitude for encouraging and assisting me to complete this work. Special thanks are due to Dr C.K.M. Deheragoda for helping me to kickstart and for his kind guidance and to Professor M.M. Karunanayaka and Professor D.S. Wanasinghe for their valuable assistance. I wish to also thank Professor J. Katupotha for helping me to find my way among the initial maze of ideas.

Thanks are also due to Mr. A.F. De Alwis and his assistant Miss Nimali Hapuarachchi for their immense assistance in getting the maps in order. I am grateful to Mr. L.W.S. Kularathna and Mr. Rohana Kandambi for helping me with the translations.

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CHAPTER 01

INTRODUCTION TO RECREATIONAL TOURISM

A normal tourist may journey to 'sightsee' places of cultural and historical interest, religious sites, sports events, places of natural beauty etc. Basically they are involved in *passive* forms of recreational activities while true recreational tourists are *actively* involved in recreational activities. Thus, a recreation-oriented tourist would want to involve himself or herself in activities other than mere sightseeing, which is what a normal tourist would do.

Travelling to be engaged in recreational activities is a part of tourist activity. It is an integral part of modern lifestyle and it is a basic component of individual and social behaviour and aspirations.

It is often difficult to isolate the various activity components of tourism from 'recreational' activities. Tourism in general and recreation related tourism in fact often share the same facilities such as national parks, beaches, inland water bodies, wild life sanctuaries, ancient ruins etc. but recreation is basically an activity concept.

Recreation has become a major national concern in developed countries as a prime source of foreign exchange earnings. Similarly, pristine natural resources and rich anthropogenic resources in the less developed countries are steadily opening out to international recreational markets - especially, for the demand generating markets of Europe and North America.

The geographical resources of the recreation industry consist of natural components such as relief, climate, water, flora and fauna as well as anthropogenic or man-made resources
