

Maha Oya River Basin (Middle Reach)

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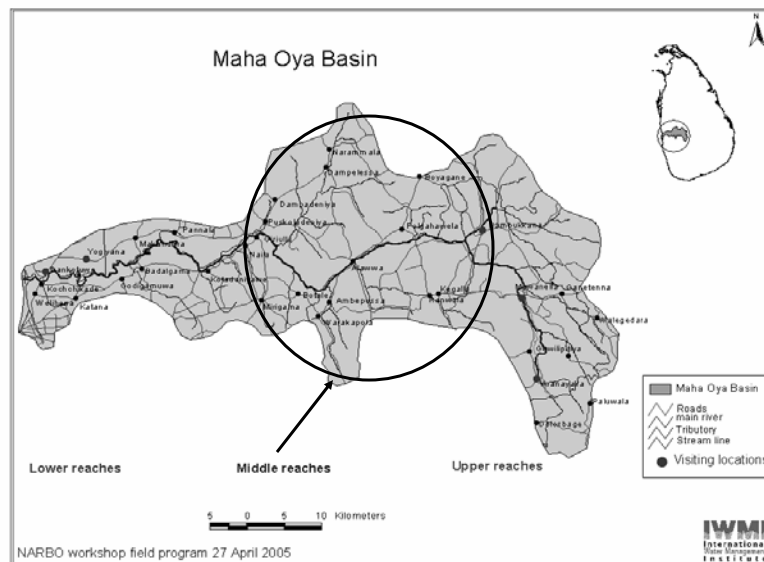
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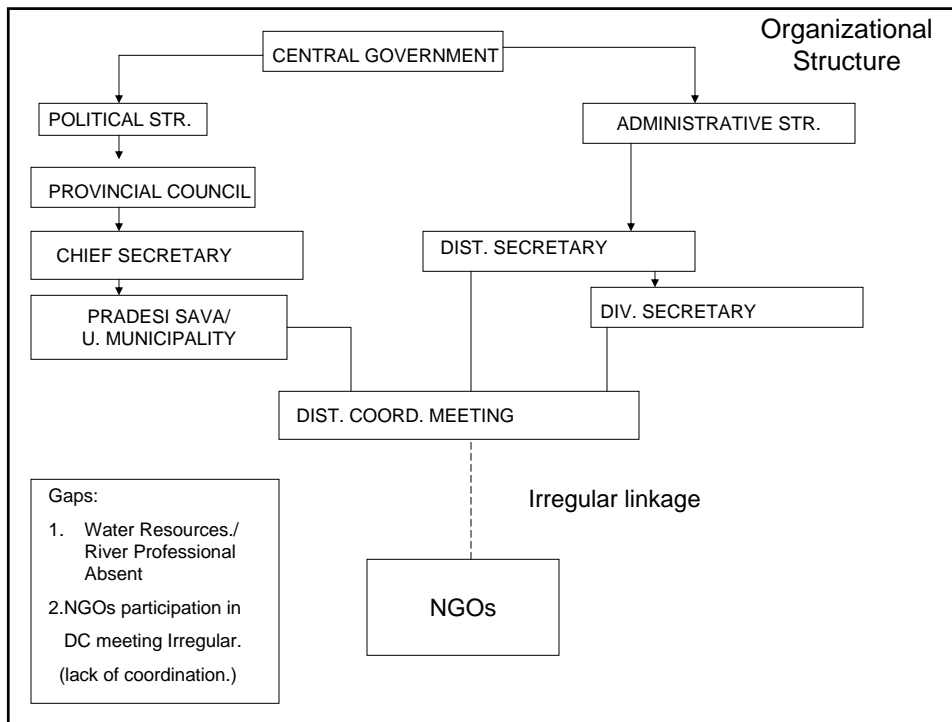
Overview of Study Area



Sites Visited

Kegalle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Executive Secretary, Shrama Shakti-Foundation (CBO)
Karadagastenna	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sand mining
Pinnawala	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elephant bathing
Rambukkana Pradesiya Sawa	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting with Chairman and members, Environmental officers
Hiriwadunna intake	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drinking water supply scheme
Pinnawala	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Solid waste disposal
Mawanella	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meeting with Divisional secretariat members

ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS



Issue: Improper management of Sand Mining

Environmental issues observed:

- River bed lowering resulting to low water table which affects water wells and agriculture (as stated by the sand miners)
- River bank erosion (direct observation)
- Sand miners aware of the environmental problem created but have no alternative for livelihood

Organizations involved

- Pradesiya Sawa was responsible for issuing permits but recently it is taken by central government (district / divisional secretariat)
- No NGOs or Sand Miners Union exists
- Permits are issued to contractors/agencies and they employ (uncontrolled) labours

Participation and Coordination

- No/less representation of local institutions
- No coordination between district/division and Pradesiya Sawa in issuing permits
- No monitoring mechanism except some police actions

Issue: Water pollution due to elephant bathing

Environmental issues observed:

- Bathing of more than 70 elephants 2 hours twice daily (direct observation)
- During low flow, water pollution occurs (as per the guide)
- Skin disease due to water pollution (as per member, Pradesiya Sawa of Rambukkanna)
- Water is polluted more due to industrial pollution than elephant bathing (as per environmental officer, Pradesiya Sawa of Rambukkanna)
- Water quality is not monitored to provide scientific evidence of skin diseases (as per medical officer, Division Secretariat)

Organizations involved

- Provincial Government, Central Government
- Ceylon Tourism Board, Hotel Association of Ceylon
- Pressure groups like Shrama Shakti Foundation / Lanka Jalani

Participation and Coordination

- Less participation of local stakeholders
- Major decisions taken by the central government
- Good coordination between government and tourist board and less coordination with local communities

Issue: Solid Waste Disposal on River Banks

Environmental issues observed:

- Small amount of construction waste dumped on the road side

Organizations involved

- Responsibility is mandated to Pradesiya Sawa, however, due to the lack of budget it could not be implemented
- Pradesiya Sawa members claim that this issue is the responsibility of Health Department
- No NGO is working in this sector

Participation and Coordination

- No observations made

Issue: Quality of Water

Environmental issues observed:

- Water from river is treated for drinking purpose (as per divisional secretariat members)
- The quality of tap water is not good so people prefer wells for drinking purpose (as per the environmental officer, Pradesiya Sawa of Rambukkanna)
- No scientific data available for the quality of water

Organizations involved

- Hiriwaduwa water purification plant
- Council

Participation and Coordination

- Do not have monitoring mechanism
- No coordination between health and environment department

THANK YOU