

A PRELIMINARY ORGANIC GEOCHEMICAL STUDY OF THE MUTHURAJAWELA PEAT DEPOSIT

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The Muthurajawela peat deposit which covers an area of about 13 square miles has not hitherto been exploited for any useful purpose. With a view of utilizing this seemingly valuable deposit for possible agricultural use, we have initiated a study and herein we report the preliminary analytical results obtained.

Fifteen peat samples collected from three locations within the deposit upto ten feet depth were analysed for their carbon, nitrogen, sulphur, phosphorus, moisture acid humic acid contents. pH of these samples were also determined. The nitrogen and humic acid content along with the water holding capacity was found to increase proportionately with the carbon content whereas phosphorous content and pH showed no uniform relationship to the carbon contents of the samples studied. The sulphur content was found to decrease with depth, possibly due to hydrogen sulphide escaping from the deeper regions.