

F-04 : RESOURCE USE CHARACTERISTICS IN PADDY FARMING IN THE DRY ZONE vis-a-vis WET ZONE : ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

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A study was conducted to compare resource use characteristics in paddy farming in a dry zone (Polonnaruwa) and wet zone (Kandy) location. Data for the study covered a period of 8 years (1979 to 1987). Resources considered in the analysis were : labour, fertilizer, agro-chemicals, seed paddy and draught power. The level of use was assessed in terms of the physical quantum (e.g. fertilizer and labour) used and the cost incurred (e.g. agro- chemicals and draught power).

The main findings are : (a) decline in the rate of application of fertilizers and the application levels which are different from the recommendations; (b) stable level of labour inputs over the study period; (c) cost regime of agro-chemicals characterized by a cyclical pattern of high followed by low cost per unit area across the seasons examined and (d) an increasing trend in farm power costs. The real wage rate was found to be stable throughout the 8 years examined. Study showed that irrigation had helped to reduce the seasonal variation in the actual level of use of five resources considered. Seasonal variation in paddy yields was also low in areas under irrigation.

The above findings will have several implications on the profitability of paddy production, sustainability in yields and ecological condition under which paddy farming takes place and, the quality of life of the people involved in paddy farming. The importance of continuous monitoring of resource use characteristics and the quality of life different locations of paddy farming, stressed.