

The community's role in floodplain management

Floodplains are lowland areas adjacent to lakes, wetlands and rivers that retain water during a flood. Of course the ability of the floodplain to carryout and store floodwater should be preserved and protected in order to protect human life and property from flood damage. Year in and year out flooding is the leading cause of property loss from natural disasters in Sri Lanka. Flooding is a natural phenomenon. Since times of settlement, little regard needs to be given to the purpose and function of floodplains. Homes, businesses and even whole communities have been built in floodplain areas. The development of these flood plains has resulted in continual and frequently, severe social and economical loss. Despite considerable expenditure on flood control works, annual damages due to flooding are continually on the rise. The community can participate with the government to identify the flood hazard areas. The community must ensure that the dumping of construction materials and methods used, to minimize the flooding. Floodplain management measures refer to an overall community program of corrective and preventive measures of reducing future flood damage.