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Effective coastal vegetative landscaping for the tsunami protection In Sri Lanka

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Coastal vegetation acts as a natural barrier against natural and man made disasters protecting infrastructure and saving lives. A research on coastal vegetation and its responses to Tsunami for last two years was conducted by a team comprising researchers from *Saitama* University, Japan and University of *Peradeniya*. The findings from this research proposes several options for coastal vegetation that can response effectively and reduce the impacts of Tsunami and other natural disasters in future. Accordingly, the team suggested to establish a pilot scale coastal plantation on 26th December 2006 in *Matara Thotamuna* area which was drastically affected at Tsunami in the South Coast of Sri Lanka, and to continue the research on the growth and other issues for a period of 5 years. The growth and development of *Casuarina equisetifolia* and *Pandanus odoratissimus* plants were continuously monitored during the period. The average height and diameter of the *Pandanus* plants were around 92.22cm and 117.11cm, respectively and the average height and diameter of the *Casuarina* plants were 627.5cm and 3.97cm, respectively after 18 months of planting. Dense growths of the plants are evident at present which acts as a wind barrier in the area. It was noticed that the project was more successful and effective through better maintenance and operations and also the support from local authorities and local communities is essential to make this program a success.

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