

MSc Degree in Environmental Science

The Present Status of Environmental Impact Mitigation Measures proposed by
the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in the Mattala Airport - Legal
Perspective?

A dissertation submitted

by

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ABSTRACT

The 21st century has witnessed the global community come together in technological advances, knowledge sharing and increased resources sharing which justified in a common goal, a global community. On the road to this global community and global markets, expansion of new ports, landing bases and air bases were of paramount importance. Sri Lanka being located in the most geopolitically and strategically vital point in the Indian Ocean was subjected to much talk and influences by global key market players for expansion of its ports and air bases. As such, coupled with local political motives, the then Si Lankan government was seeking to expand its air bases, Mattala being selected as an option based purely on political motive.

Mattala, situated in the southern part of the country, was not much of a tourist attraction, hence was not a tourist dense area. Yet, it was one of the places of highest ecological value to the country with a large number of rare and endemic species of flora and fauna which were and still are being ruined with this new airport project. This area would have attracted the attention of ecologists and environmentalist to be preserved as a sanctuary in future. The significance of me having selected the Mattala airport project in terms of environmental concerns is that this project now stands as a white elephant and a scorching demon which had caused irreparable damage to our wild life in the county, which has caused grave consequences of environmental nature and also economical and cultural deterioration in very near future.

The objective of my study is to highlight the non-applicability of environmental laws and principles in the project and to show consequences of the same, in order to thrust upon measures to prevail future occurrences of malpractices of this nature concerning the environment.

My research was mainly based on literature review and personal interviews on selected samples. No case studies could be included since this was the first attempt by a government