

# **The Making and the Unmaking of a National Level Physical Planning Policy**

## **The case of The National Physical Plan 2050- Sri Lanka**

by

**Jagath Munasinghe**

Department of Town & Country Planning

University of Moratuwa

Sri Lanka

[jagathnm@uom.lk](mailto:jagathnm@uom.lk)

Figure 2: The Proposed Spatial Structure - 2050



# ශ්‍රී ලංකා ප්‍රජාතාන්ත්‍රික සමාජවාදී ජනරජයේ ගැසට් පත්‍රය

අති විශේෂ

## The Gazette of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

EXTRAORDINARY

අංක 2127/15 - 2019 ජුනි මස 12 වැනි බදාදා - 2019.06.12  
No. 2127/15 - WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 2019

(Published by Authority)

### PART I : SECTION (I) — GENERAL

#### Government Notifications

GAZETTING OF THE UPDATED NATIONAL PHYSICAL PLANNING POLICY AND THE PLAN - 2050 APPROVED BY THE NATIONAL PHYSICAL PLANNING COUNCIL

I, Patali Champika Ranawaka, Minister of Megapolis and Western Development, do hereby publish, the Updated National Physical Planning Policy and Plan - 2050, prepared under the Section 5(a) and (b) of the Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act, No. 49 of 2000, and approved by the National Physical Planning Council as per Section 3 (4a) of the Act on 26.02.2019, for the information of the general public.

PATALI CHAMPIKA RANAWAKA,  
Minister of Megapolis and Western Development.

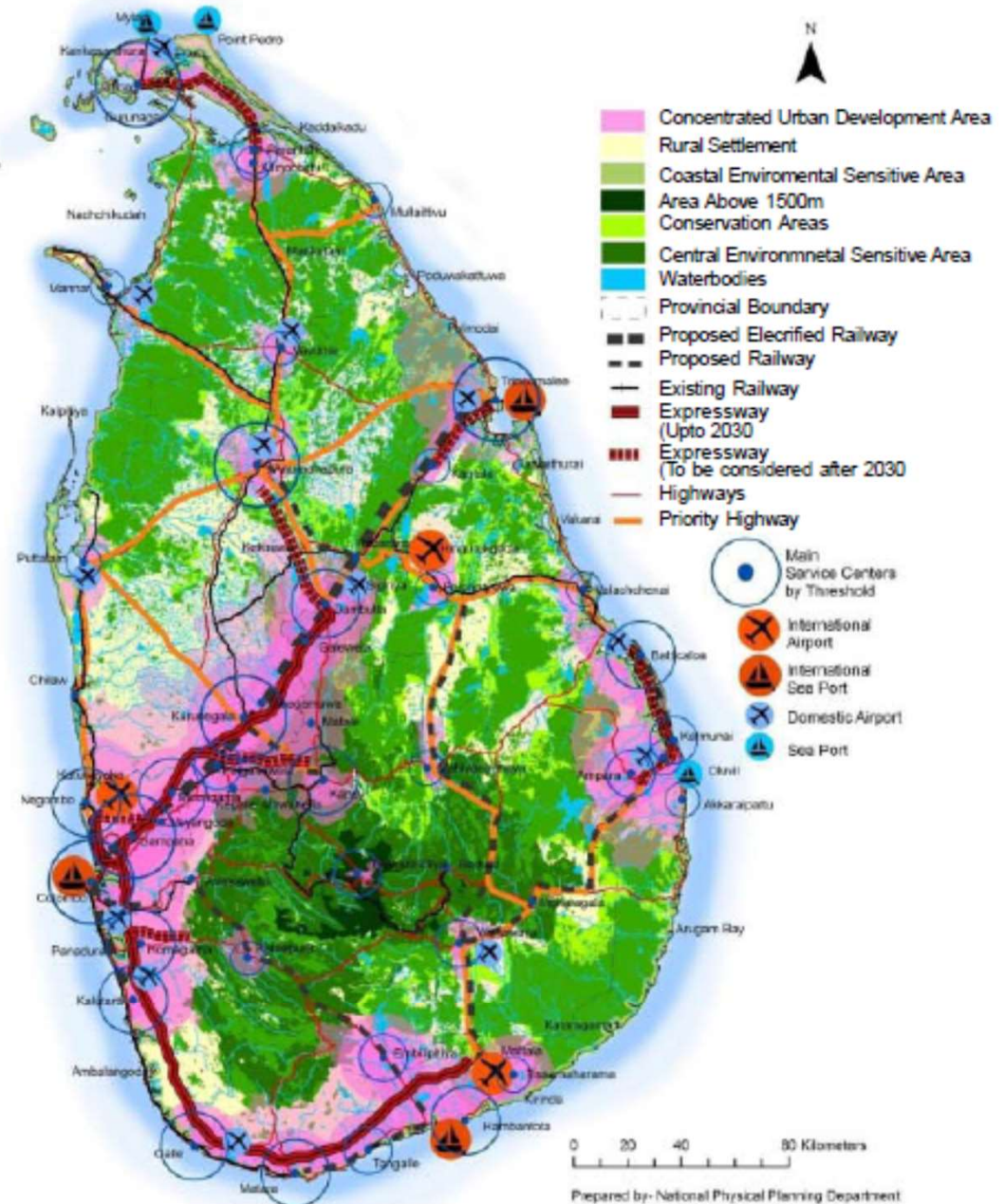
Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development,  
Suhurupaya,  
Battaramulla,  
01st June 2019.

Updated National Physical Planning Policy and Plan - 2050

BASED ON THE NATIONAL PHYSICAL PLANNING POLICY AND PLAN - 2030 APPROVED ON  
03.07.2007 AND 09.11.2011

This document was prepared in accordance with Sections 5A(b) of the Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act, No. 49 of 2000, under powers vested with Director General of National Physical Planning Department, as per

1A- PG 4562—517 (06/2019)  
This Gazette Extraordinary can be downloaded from [www.documents.gov.lk](http://www.documents.gov.lk)



# The making of the National Physical Plan 2050 – Sri Lanka

Legitimate Process	+	Political Process
Facts and Figures	+	Assumptions and Speculations
Scientific Reasoning	+	Legendary Inputs
Consultative effort	+	Hegemonizing Process
Consensus building	+	Contesting ideologies
<b>Learning experience</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>Unlearning event</b>

# The Legitimate Process

## Formulation of the National Physical Plan

June 2016

December 2016

February 2018

May 2018

February 2019

June 2019



# The National Physical Plan 2050

## Guiding Policies

### 1. Conservation of the 'Critical' and the 'Unique'.

Considered the **sensitive settings, water resources** and the **natural ecosystems** for the long sustaining economy and the socio-cultural environment.

### 2. Promotion of the 'Livability' for 'Human'

Considered the environments **most appropriate for human habitation** in terms of climate, availability of resources for basic needs and essential services.

### 3. Optimization of the 'Utility' of the 'Available'.

Considered the **optimum use of the available resources and infrastructure** for future development and in view of the **Sustainable Development Goals**.

### 4. Exploration of 'Potentials' and 'Enhancement' of the use

Considered the Human Resource locations: where populations with various skills and education levels are located

Resource locations: such have potentials for diversified developments.

**Inductive inquiry:**

**‘Urbanization’ versus ‘Urbanizing’**

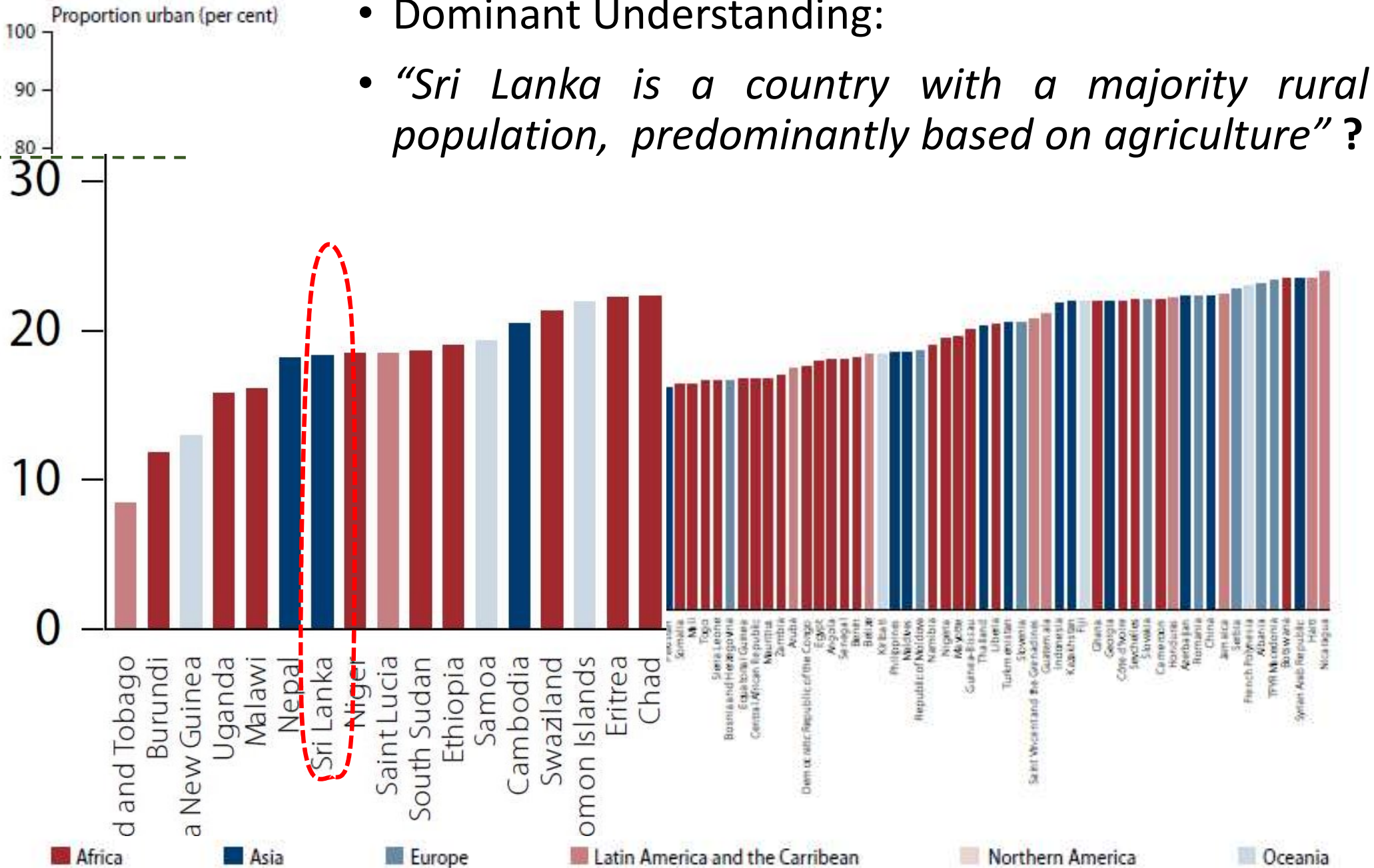
**Understating the ‘Urban’ in Sri Lanka**

Dominant Understanding:

*“Sri Lanka is a country with a majority rural population, predominantly based on agriculture” ?*



Percentage of population residing in urban areas in 2014, selected countries or areas



# How Urban is Sri Lanka?

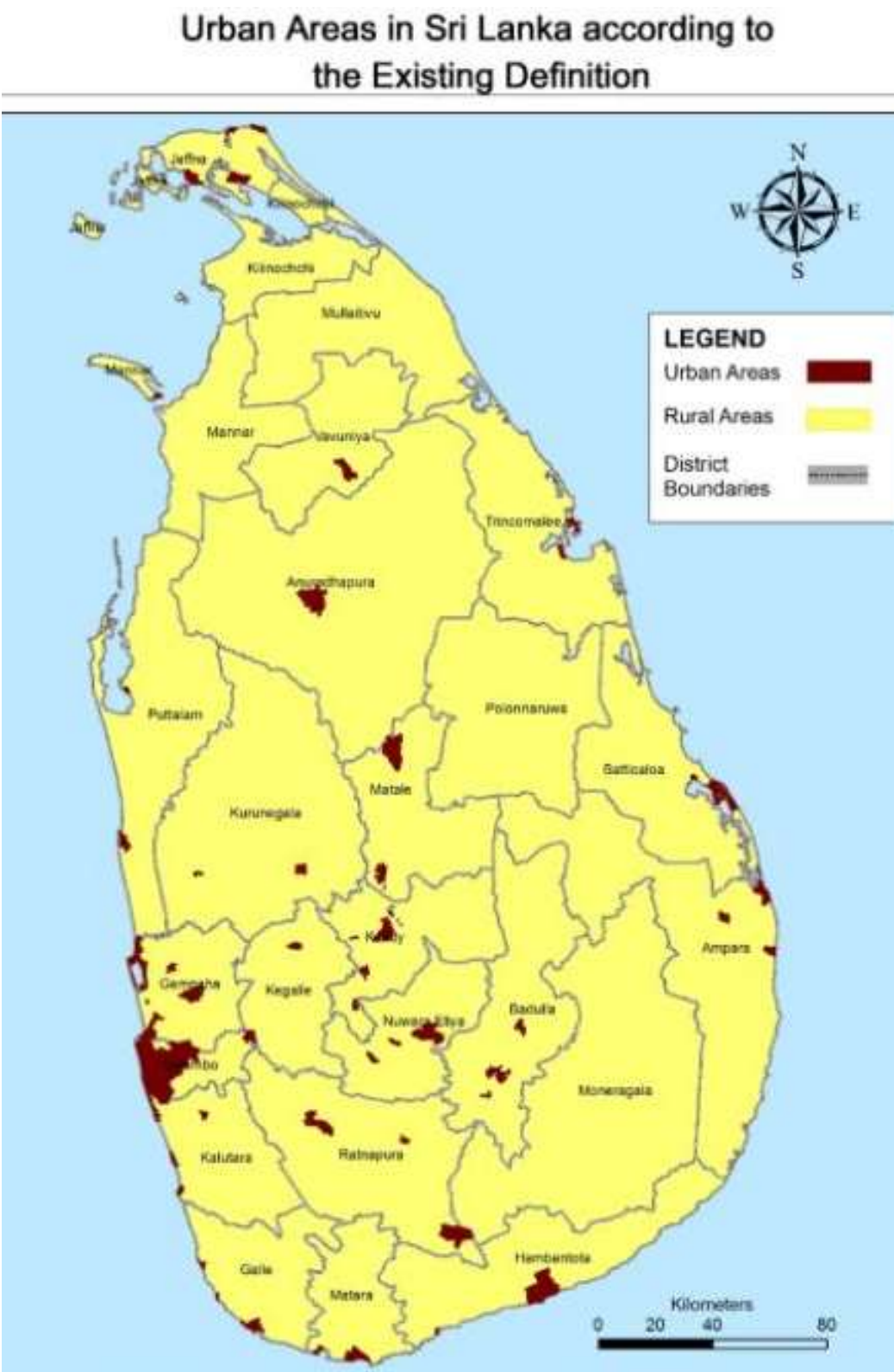
## Census Figures:

### Urban Population in Sri Lanka

Census Year	Percentage Population in the Category		Percentage Residential Land Occupied
	Category	Percentage	Category
1971	3.08	<b>18%</b>	6.0
1981	11.63	<b>23%</b>	7.2
2001	33.50	<b>14.6%</b>	6.3
2012	49.49	<b>18.2%</b>	6.7
Source: Department of Census and Statistics			

## ‘Urbanization’ versus ‘Urbanizing’

## Understating the ‘Urban’ in Sri Lanka





# How Urban is Sri Lanka?

## Census Figures

Urban Population in Sri Lanka

## Issues

### Associated with the Current State of information

- Misleading picture of the level of urbanization of the populations and the society
- Impacts on Urban/Rural Development Policies
- Misappropriation of investments and national, provincial and Institutional budgetary allocation

# A more reflective approach to define 'Urban'

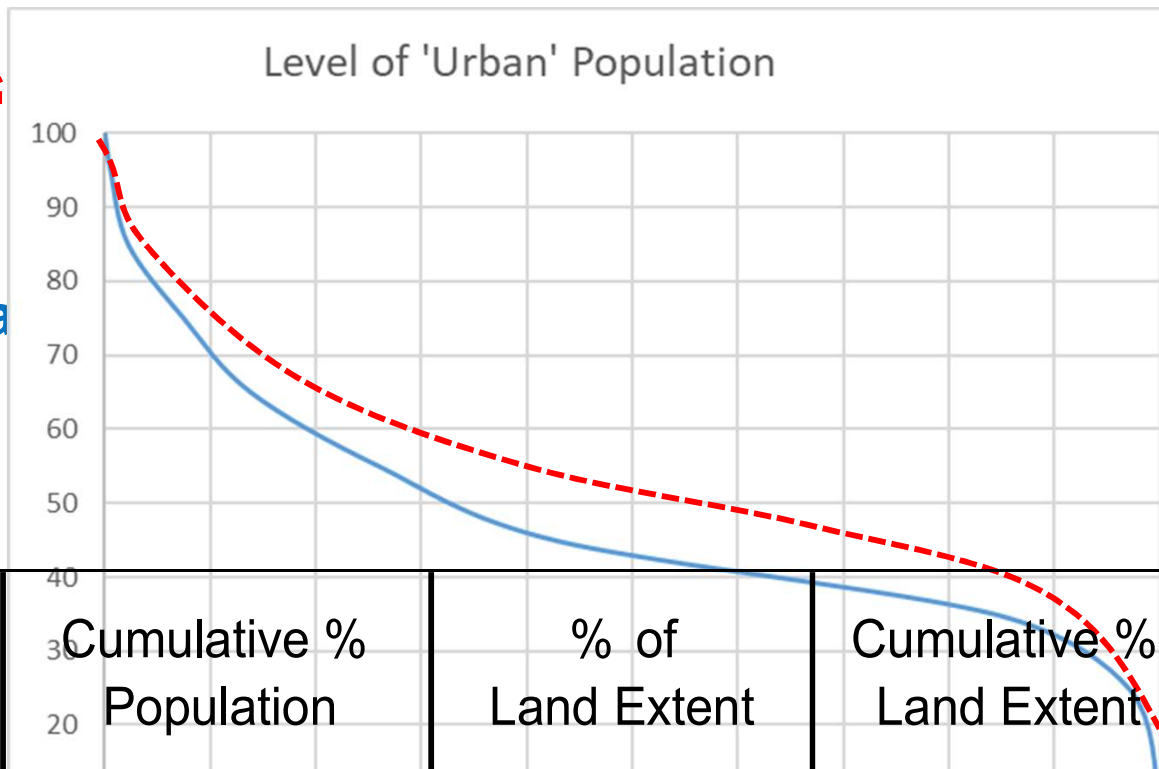
Mandate	Expression	Attributes (Units of Observation)
Access to Urban Facilities	Source of Water for domestic usage	Pipe born Water Supply
	The use of Energy for household activities	Main Grid Electricity for domestic Lighting
		Gas or electricity for Cooking
	Access Roads	Paved, Local Authority maintained Access Roads
	Solid waste Disposal	Local Authority Solid Waste collection and disposal
Aspirations	Education Attainment	Level of Attainment
		Type of Education
		Access to internet

# A more reflective approach to define 'Urban'

Mandate	Expression	Attributes (Units of Observation)
Urban Lifestyle	Livelihood	Main source of HH Income
		Sector of Employment
	Daily Routine	Types of Engagement
	Shelter	Type of Tenure
		Type of House
		Type of Toilet facility
		Type of Bathing facility
	Means of Communication	Types of communication devices
		Proficiency in Second Language

# ‘Urbanization’ and ‘ Analysis of Census Figures

- **Having Access to ‘Urban’ Facilities**
- **Leading ‘Urban’ Lifestyles**
- **Having ‘Urban’ Aspirations**



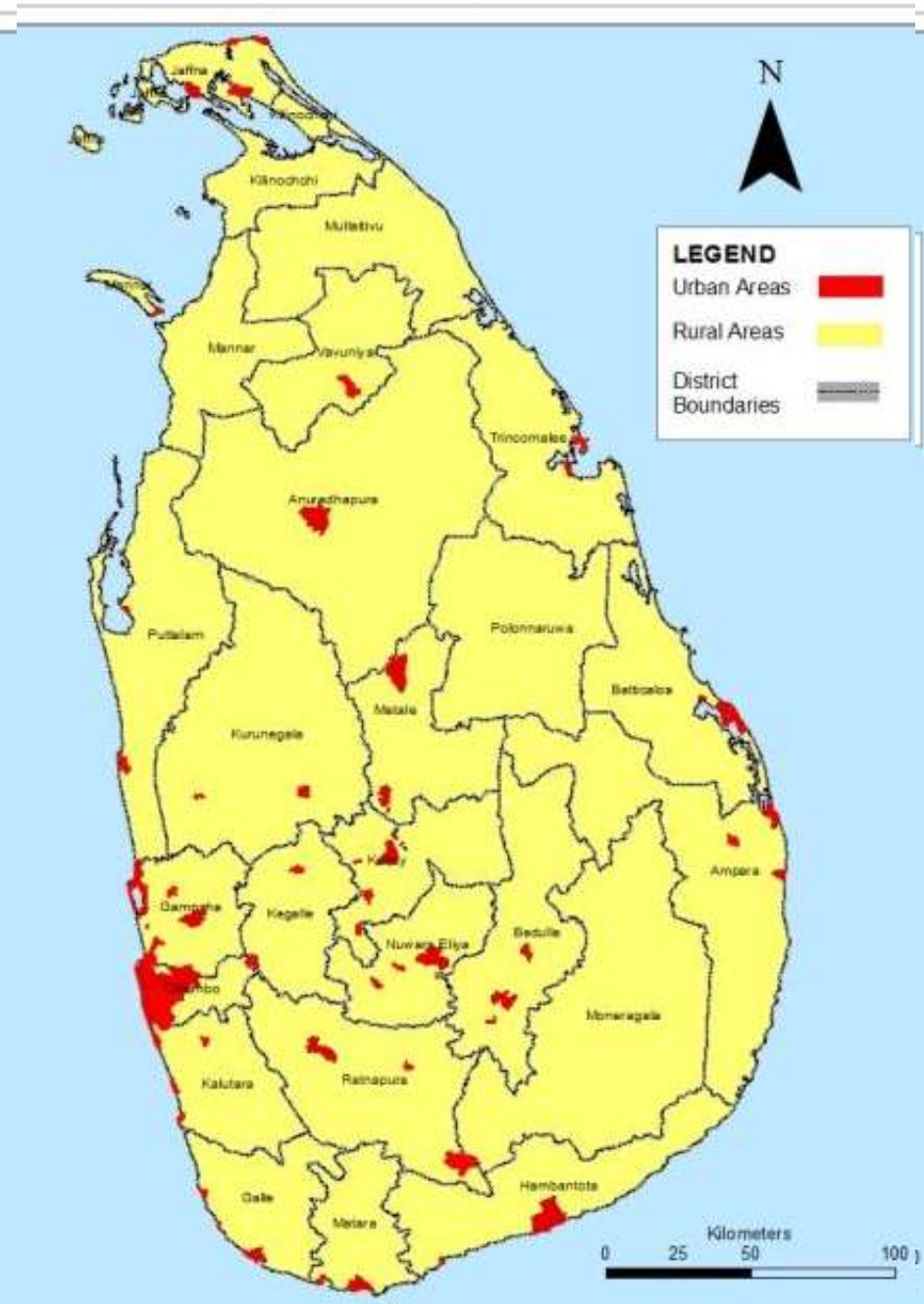
Urbanization level (percentile category)	% of the Total population	Cumulative % Population	% of Land Extent	Cumulative % Land Extent
91-100	0.54	0.54	0.03	0.03
81-90	1.67	2.21	0.1	0.13
71-80	5.28	7.49	0.37	0.5
61-70	6.37	13.86	0.56	1.06
51-60	12.17	26.03	1.86	2.92
41-50	16.71	42.74	5.27	8.19
31-40	41.7	84.44	36.91	45.1
21-30	12.57	97.01	32.87	77.97
11-19.9	2.85	99.86	19.05	97.02
0 -10	0.15	100.01	2.96	99.98

Source: Munasinghe, M, Geeganage, C and de Silva C, 2015.

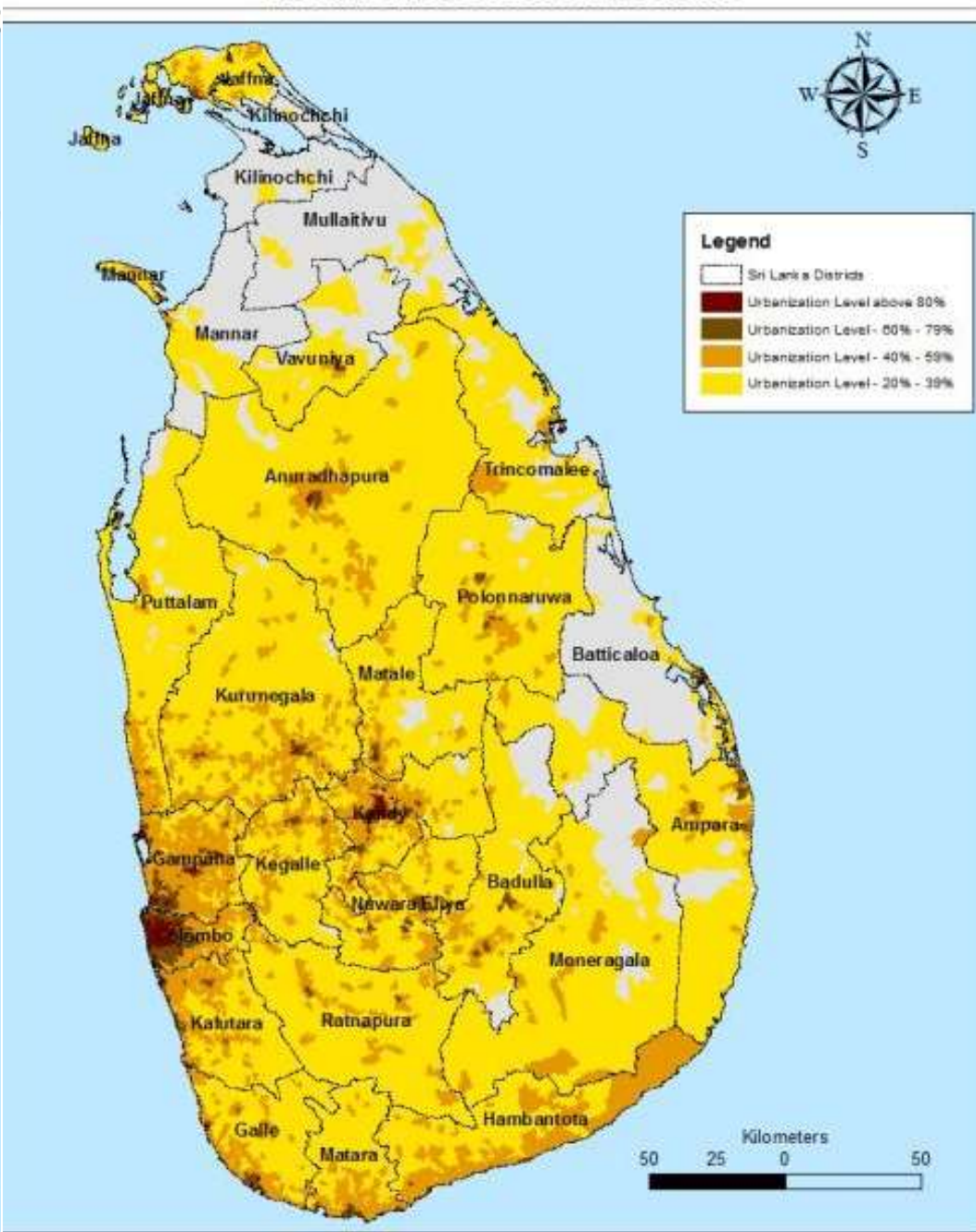
# Urbanization' and 'Urbanizing' of Sri Lanka

Distribution of populations, who are more than 40% 'Urban

Existing Urban Areas in Sri Lanka



the introduced New Framework





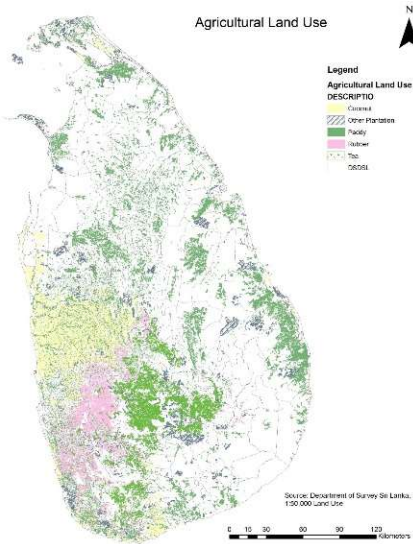
# Policy Implications

## Urbanizing Land use: Inevitable impacts

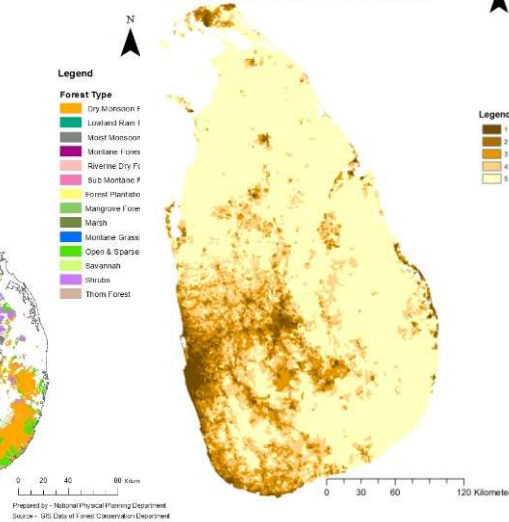
- **Agricultural Land**
  - > Marshes / Waste Lands
  - > Reclamation of Land for residential / other activities
  - > Flash Floods > 'Questions of Environmental Quality'
- **Increased Built up Area**
  - > Decreased ground assimilation > Increased runoff
  - > Imbalance in ground feeding > 'Questions of Livability'
- **Increased discharge / dumping of waste**
  - > Land Pollution > Soil Pollution > 'Questions of Sustainability'
- **Fragmentation**
  - > Soil Erosion > Unproductive Land > 'Questions of Sustainability'
  - > Multiple Ownership > Less Effective Use > 'Unhealthy Land'

# Conservation of the 'Critical' and the 'Unique'. Lands Need to be Conserved (Analysis of the Sensitivity and the Constraints)

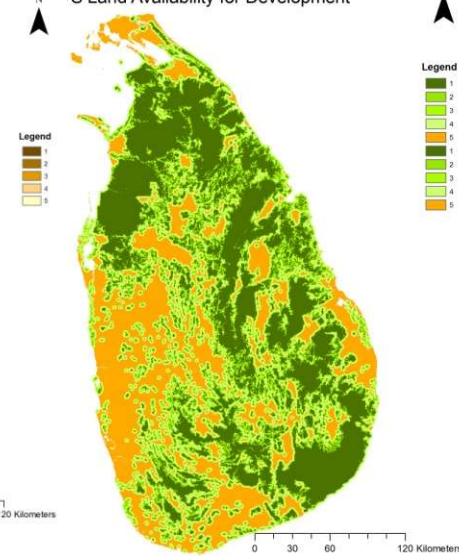
Agricultural Land Use



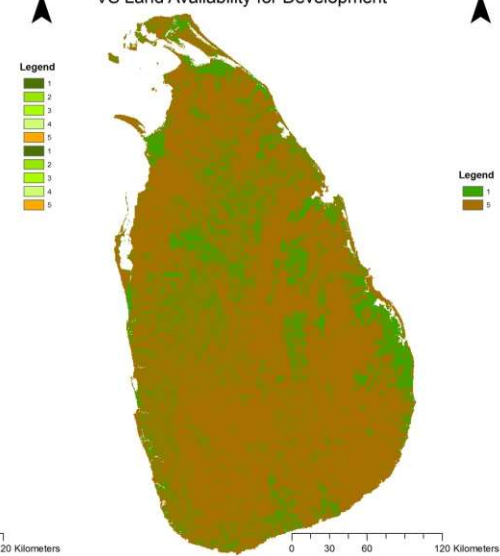
Density Developed Settlements  
VS Land Availability for Development



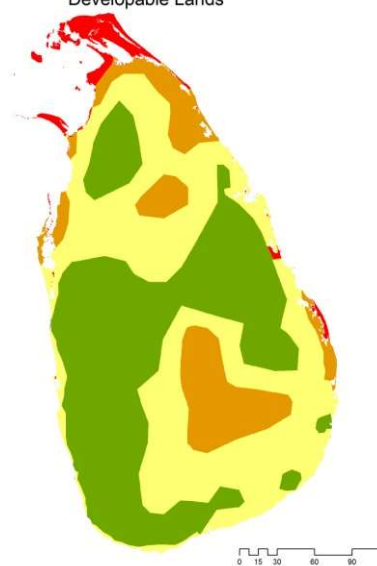
Forest and Wildlife Reserves  
VS Land Availability for Development



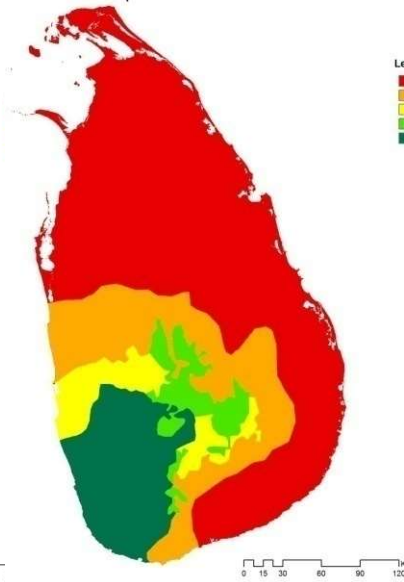
Paddy land Low-lying and Water Bodies  
VS Land Availability for Development



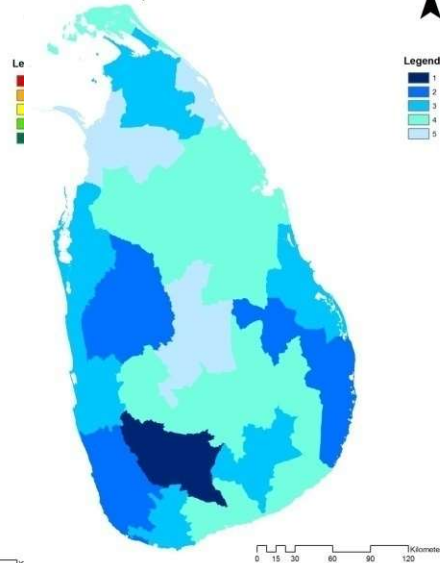
Cyclone effected areas and  
Developable Lands



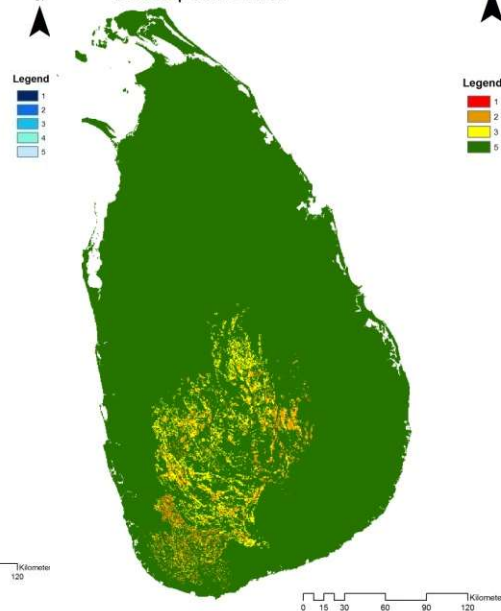
Drought effected areas and  
Developable Lands



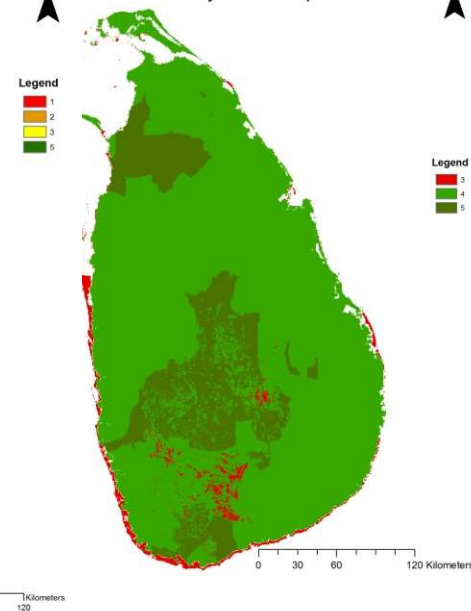
Flood Prone Districts and  
Developable Lands



Landslides Prone areas and  
Developable Lands



Natural Hazards  
Land Availability for Development



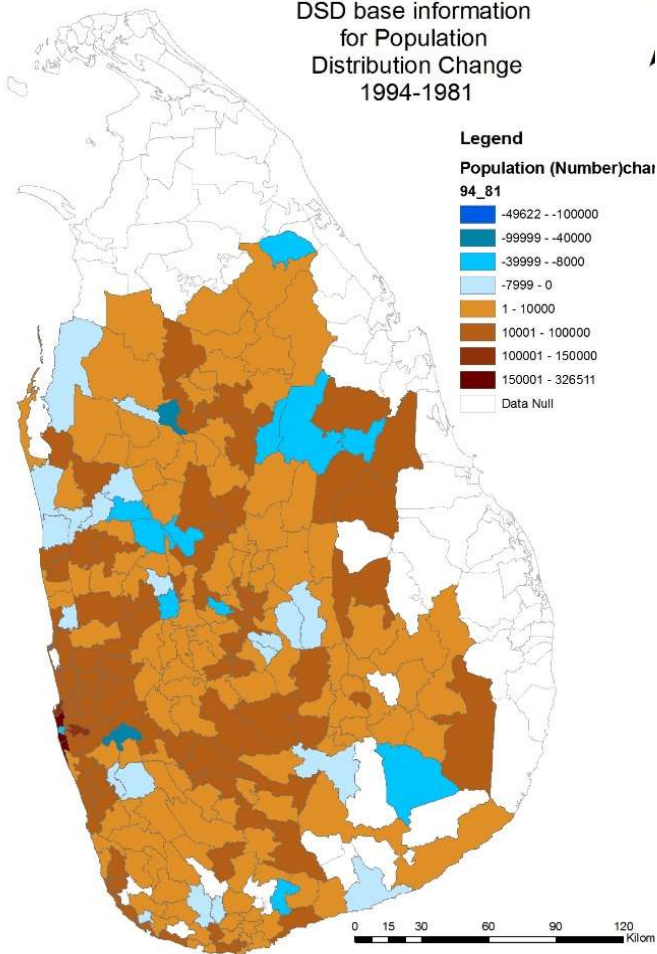


# Population Distribution Pattern Change

## between Different Years (1981-1994, 1994-2001, 2001-2012)

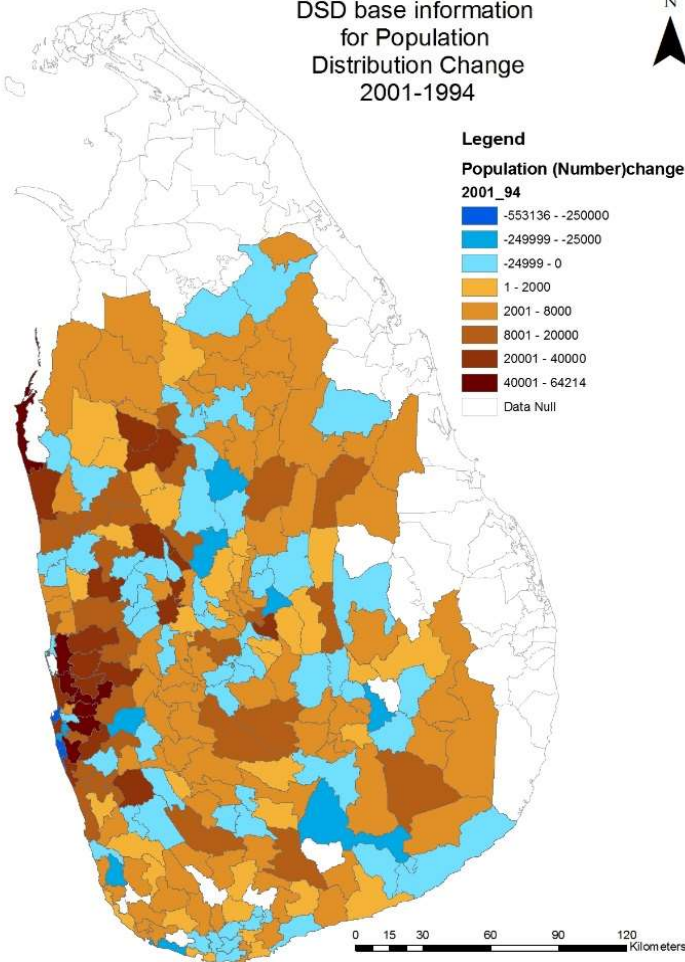
**1981- 1994**

DSD base information  
for Population  
Distribution Change  
1994-1981



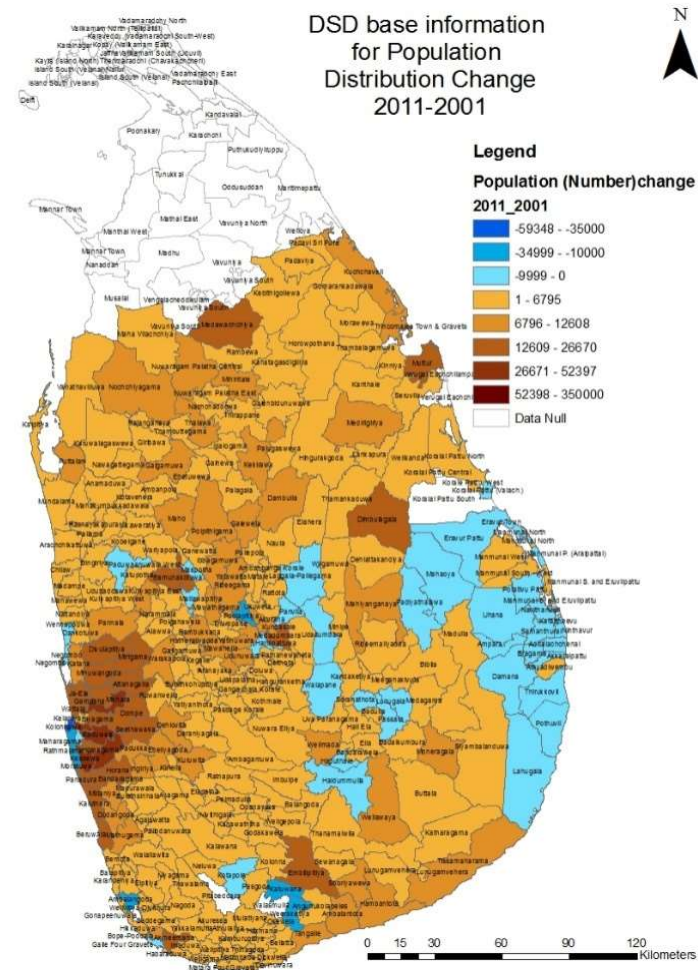
**1994- 2001**

DSD base information  
for Population  
Distribution Change  
2001-1994



**2000-2012**

DSD base information  
for Population  
Distribution Change  
2011-2001

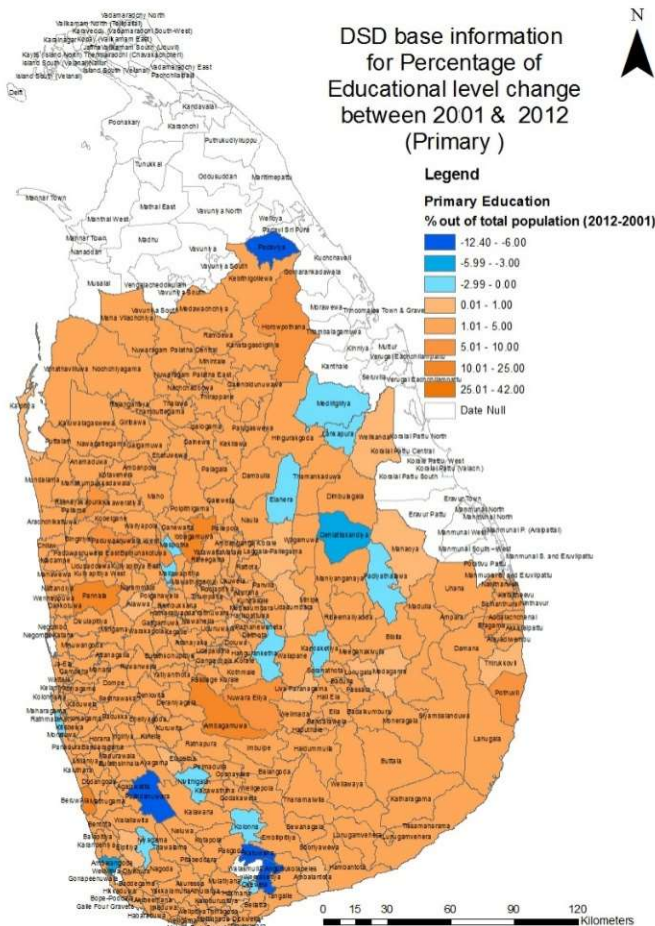




# Education Attainment Change in Different Years (2001-2012)

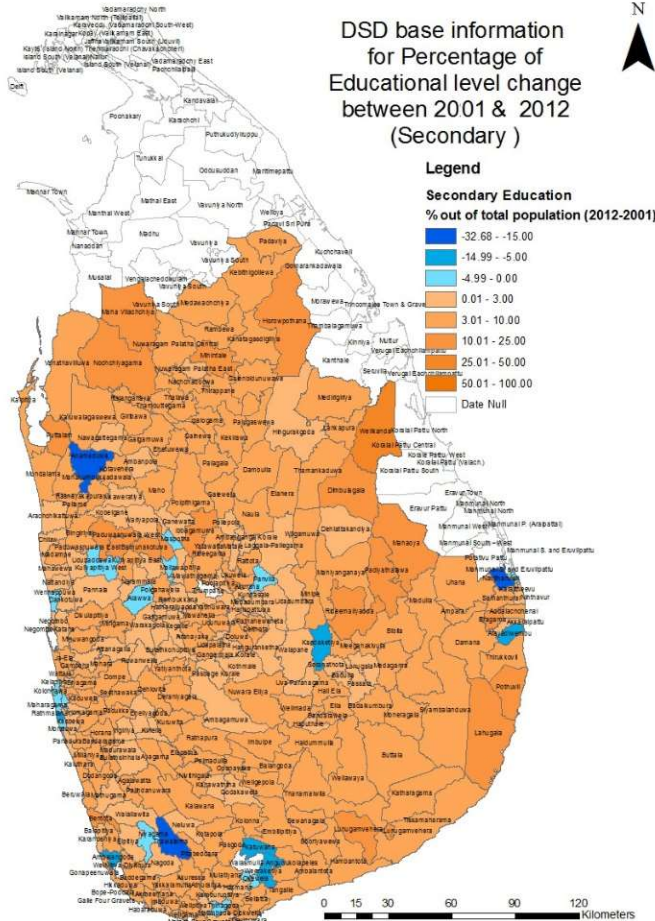
## Primary

DSD base information  
for Percentage of  
Educational level change  
between 2001 & 2012  
(Primary )



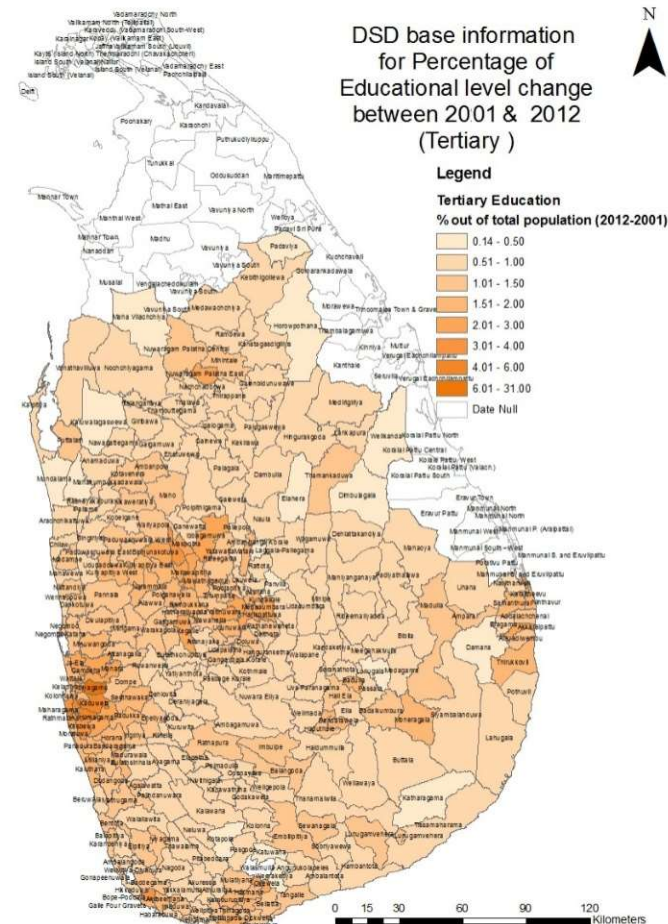
## Secondary

DSD base information  
for Percentage of  
Educational level change  
between 2001 & 2012  
(Secondary )



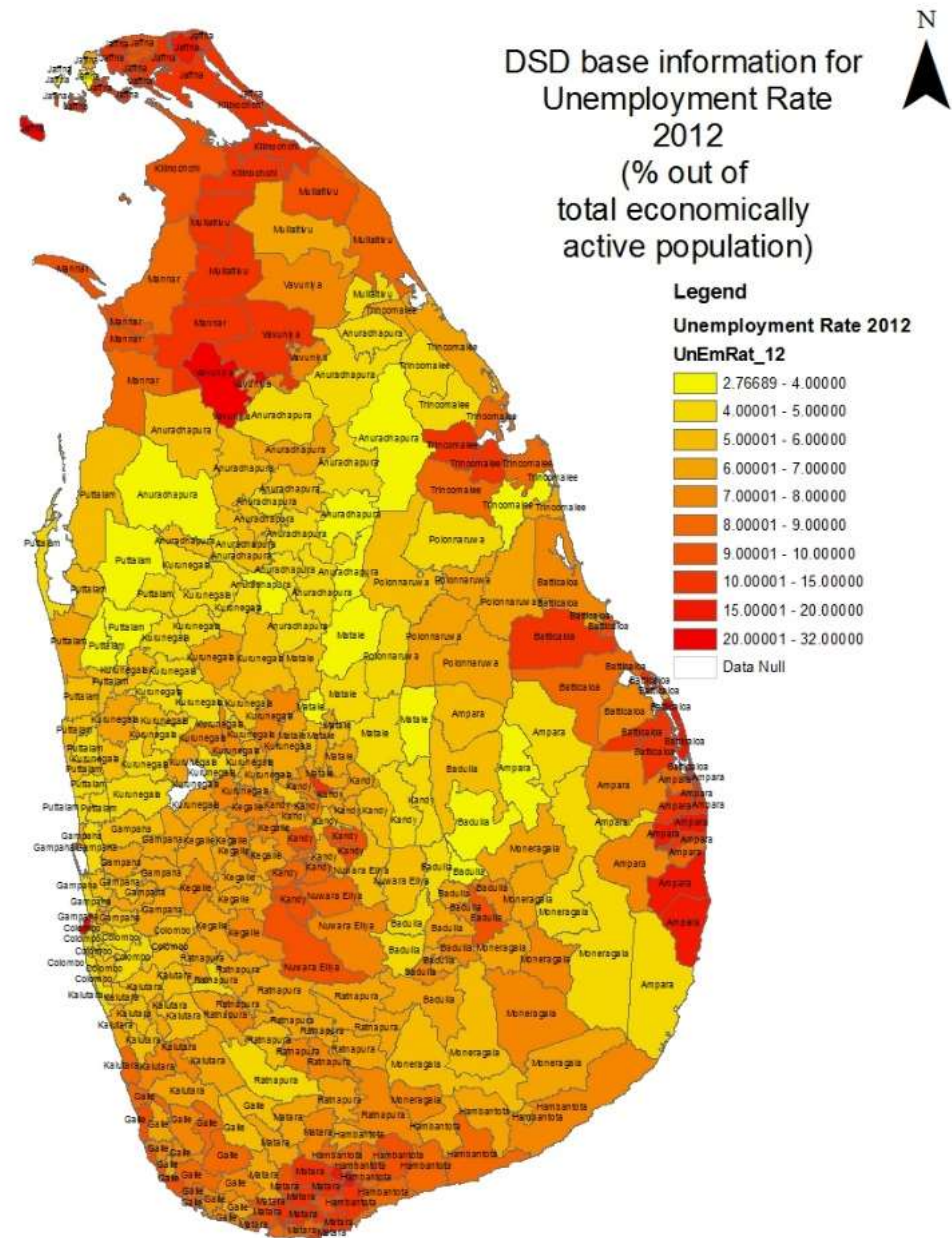
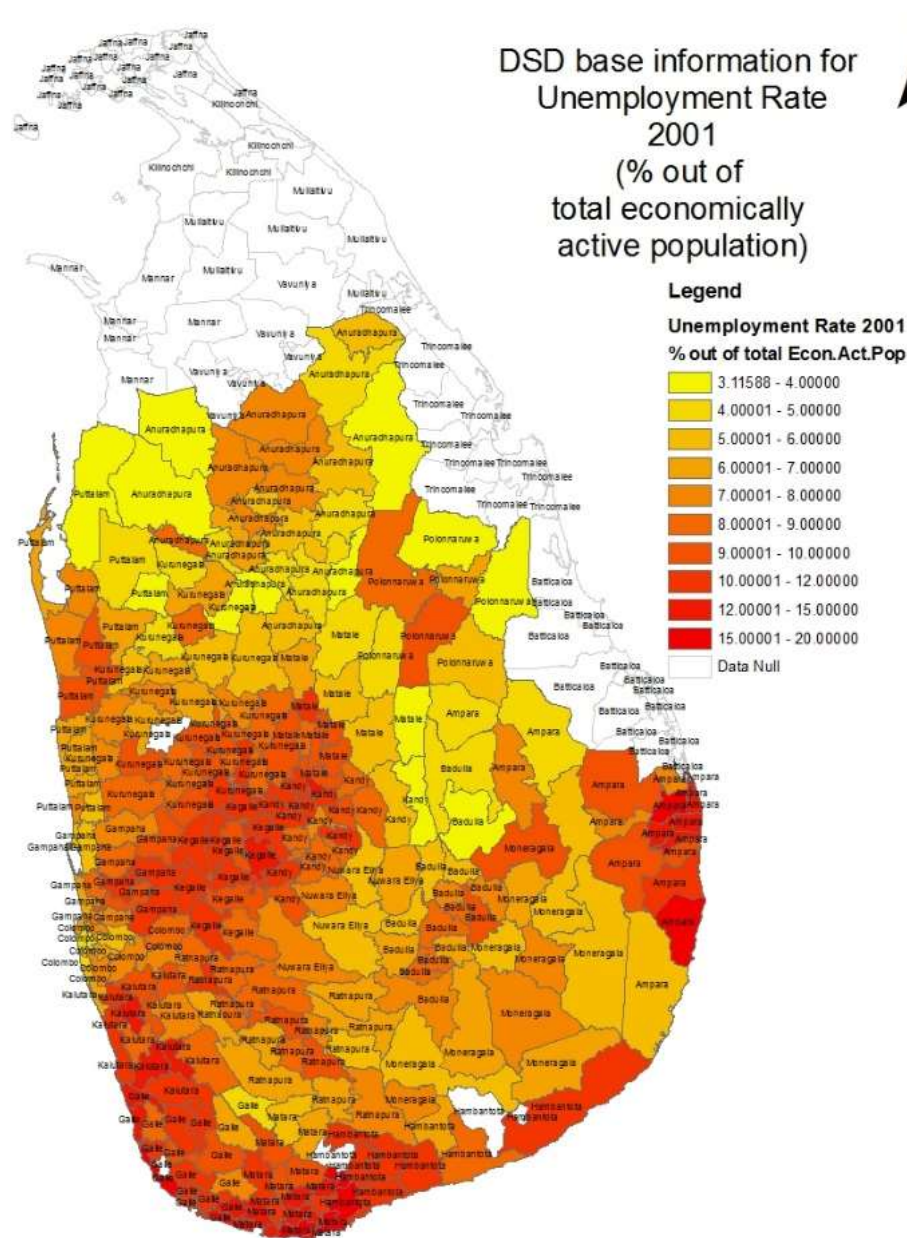
## Tertiary

DSD base information  
for Percentage of  
Educational level change  
between 2001 & 2012  
(Tertiary )





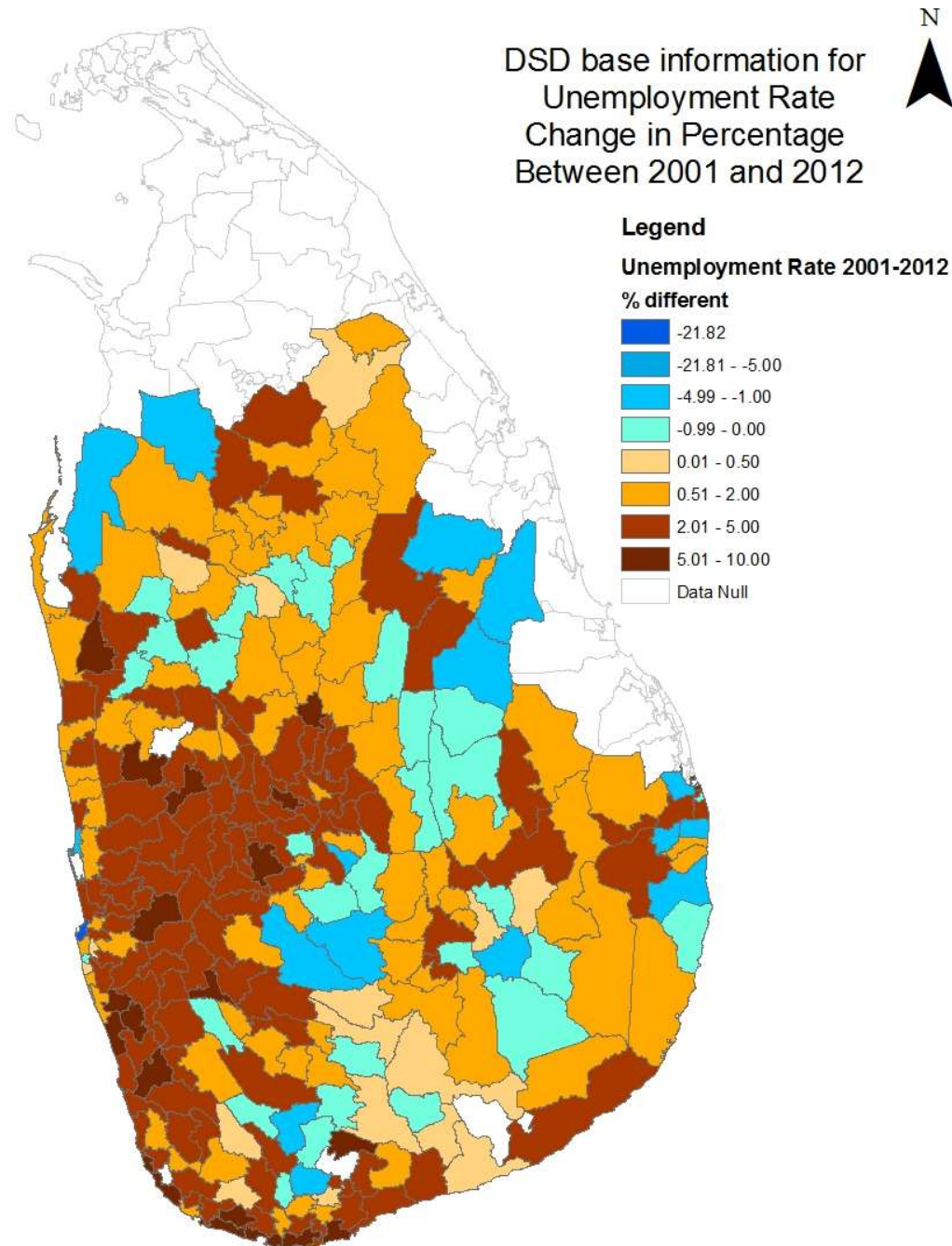
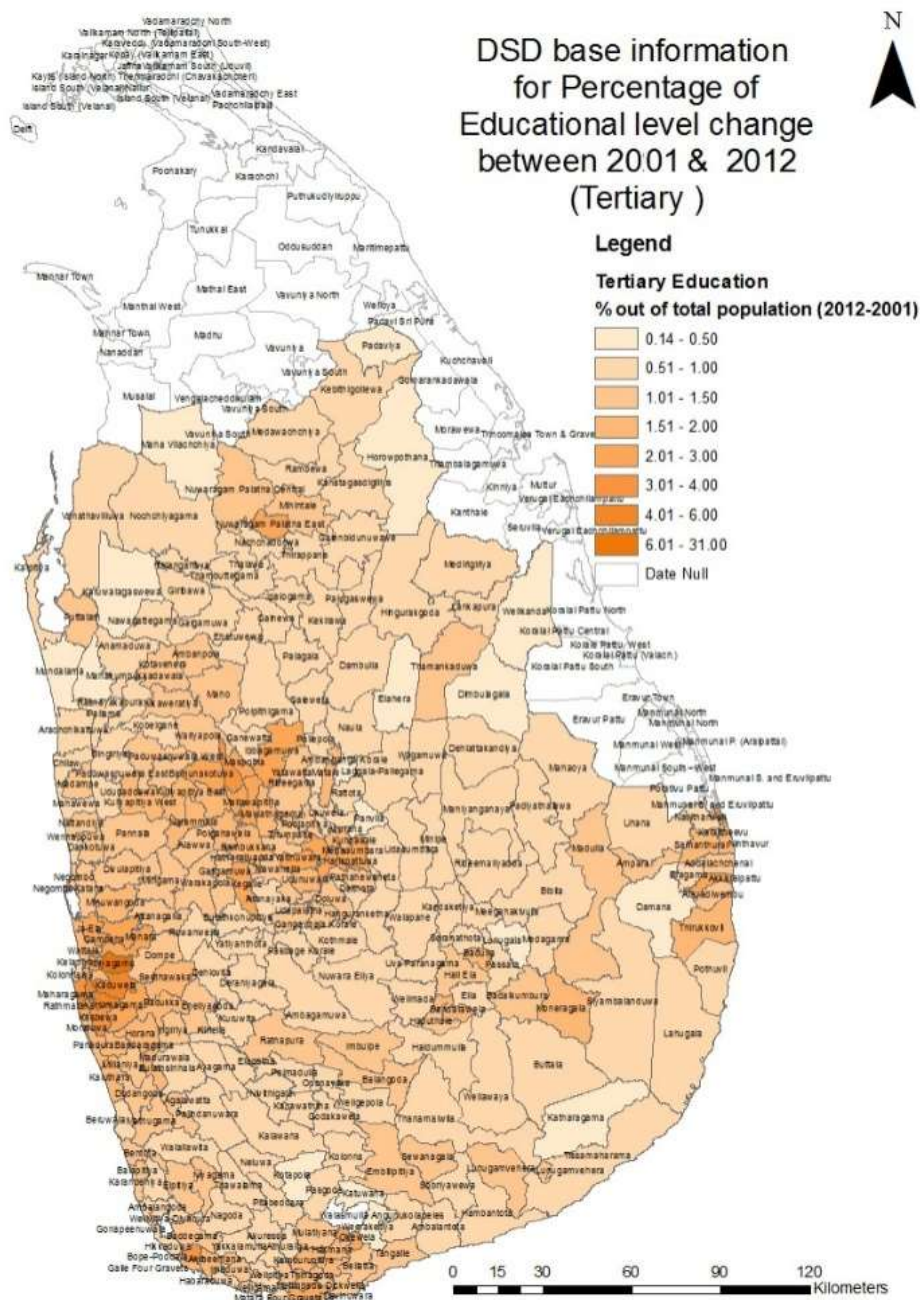
# Unemployment Rate in Different Years: 2001, 2012





# Education Attainment Change : 2001- 2012

# Unemployment Rate Change : 2001- 2012



# Policy Implications

**Population - 20,800,000** (2018 estimated)

Relatively more literate ( 91% - 95%),  
Increasingly 'better educated'

Year	Tertiary	Secondary	Primary
1991	18 - 20 %	38 – 40%	90 – 95%
2001	20 - 25%	45 – 50%	90 – 95%
2011	25 - 30%	50 - 60%	90 - 100%
2021	30 – 40%	60 - 70%	90 - 100%
2030	> 50%	> 70%	100 %

Population characteristics

- Increasing at a decreasing rate (1.0% )
- Literacy rate (>95%)
- Compulsory Secondary Education and Promoted Tertiary Education
- Unemployment rate (4-6%)

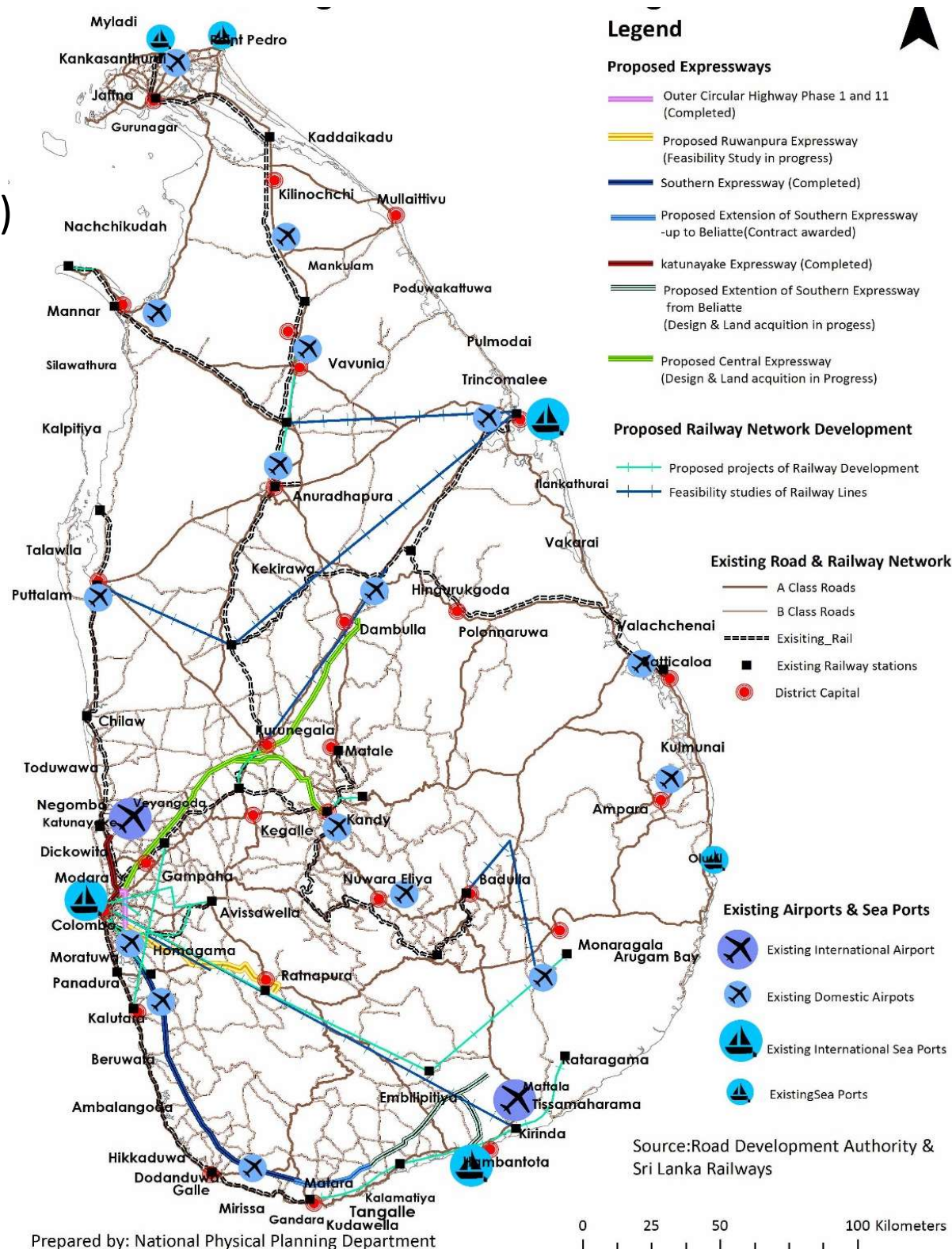
## Implication:

Higher Attainment > Higher Expectations > New Opportunities



# Major Infrastructure Development Projects

## Ongoing and Proposed (2015-2030)

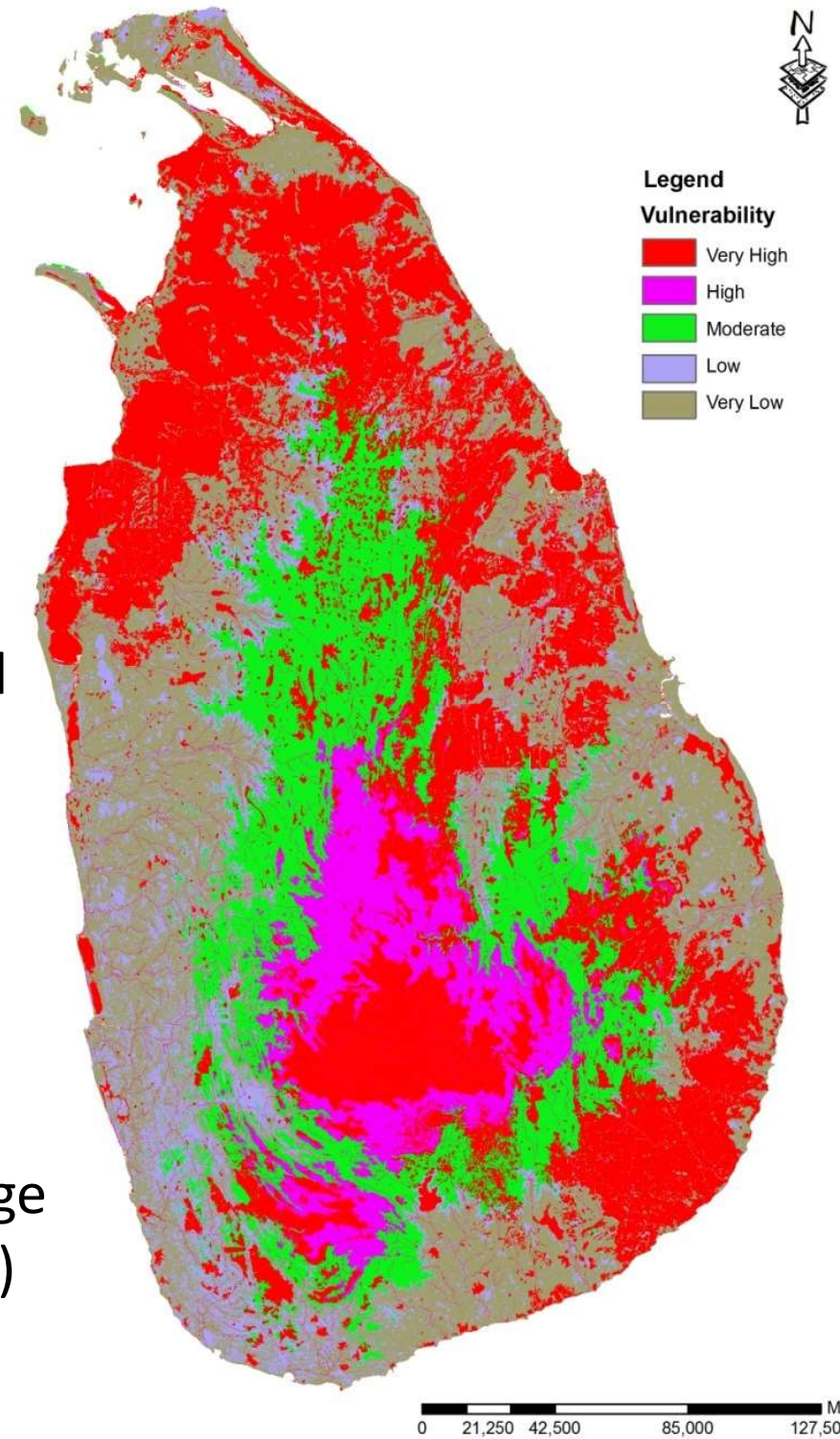


# 1. Conservation of the 'Critical' and the 'Unique'.

## Lands Crucial for Conservation due to Environmental Sensitivity

### Criteria

1. Occupies by Forest Reserves, Conserved Areas, Environmentally Sensitive Areas, Wild Life Reserves, etc.
2. Vulnerable to Landslides, Floods, Cyclones, and other Natural Disasters
3. Exposed to the impacts of climate change (sea level rise, high rainfall, drought etc.)



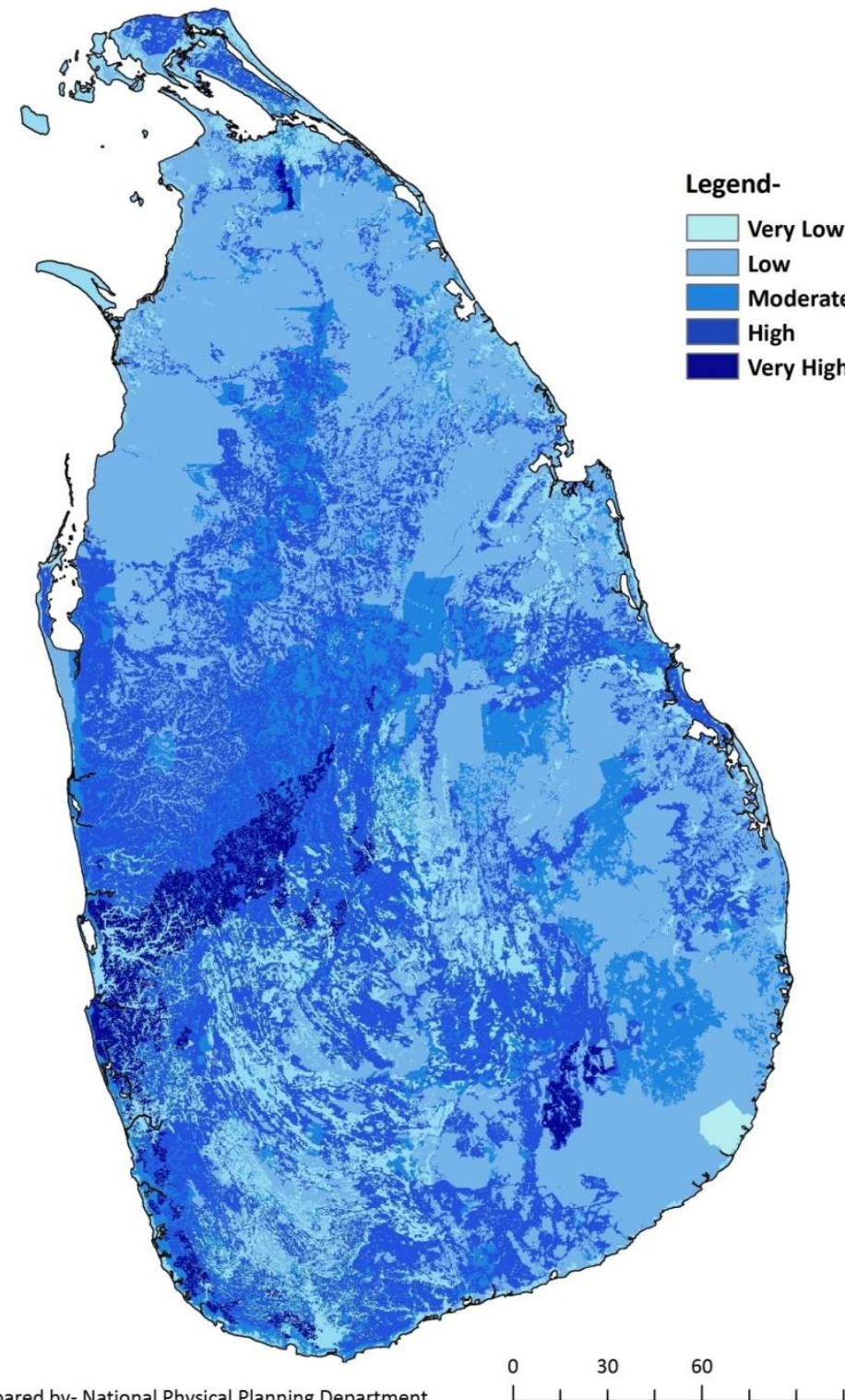


## 2. Promotion of the 'Livability' for 'Human'

### Lands with Livability and Suitable for Human Habitats

#### Criteria

1. Free from disasters
2. Availability of water supply schemes
3. Availability of main road connections
4. Close proximity to main urban centers
5. Availability of lands for development purposes (free from disasters)
6. Healthy temperature
7. Healthy rainfall



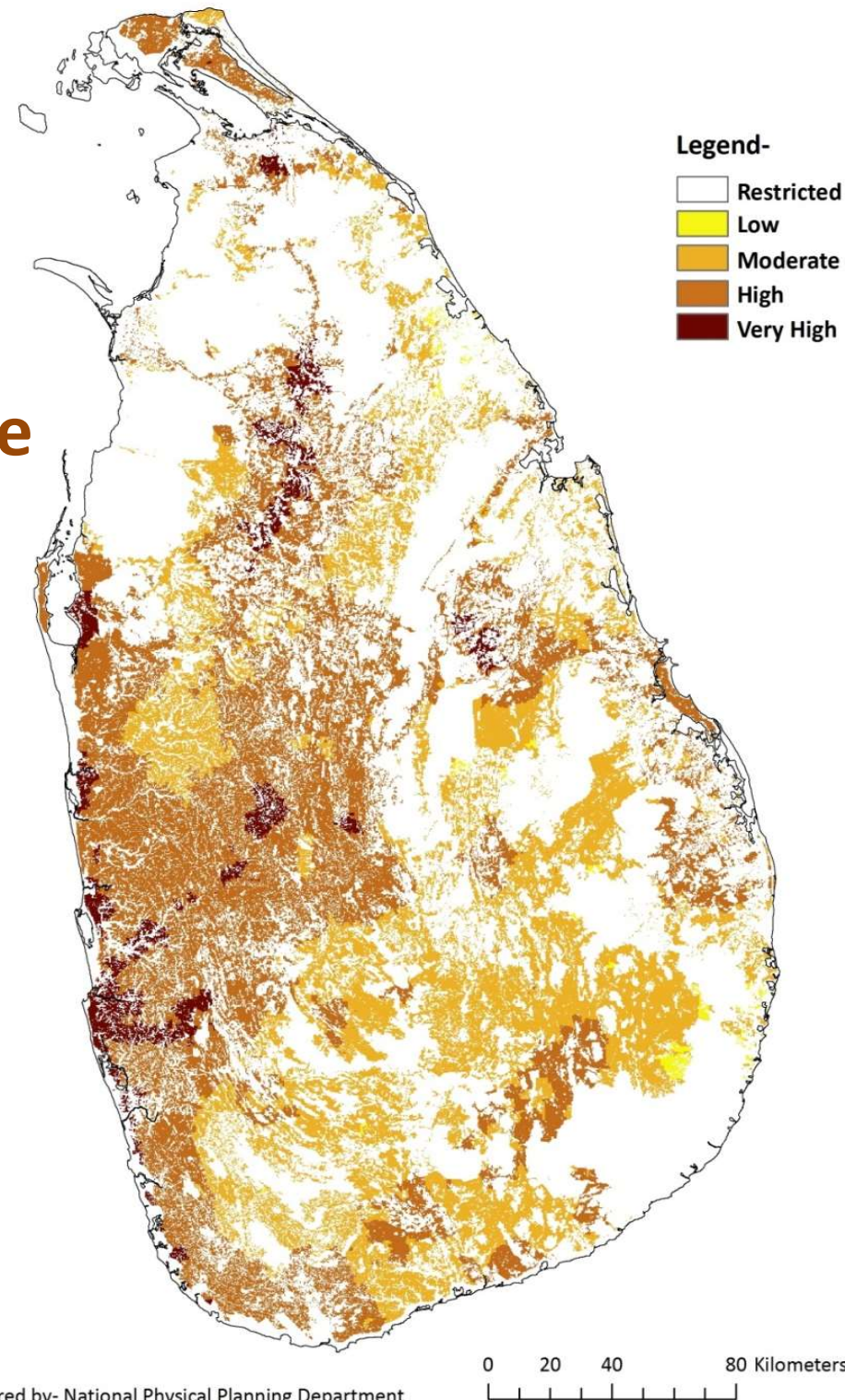


### 3. Optimization of the 'Utility' of the 'Available'.

## Lands Developable for the Best Utility of Land, Infrastructure and Human Resources

### Criteria

1. Free from Major Threats
2. Availability of Water for Developments
3. Proximity to Highways and Main Roads
4. Close proximity to Urban Centers
5. Less of undulating terrains



#### 4. Exploration of 'Potentials' and 'Enhancement' of the use.

**Locations with High Potentials  
for exploration of Possibilities**

**Eco/Nature/Culture Tourism,**

**Agricultural Resources**

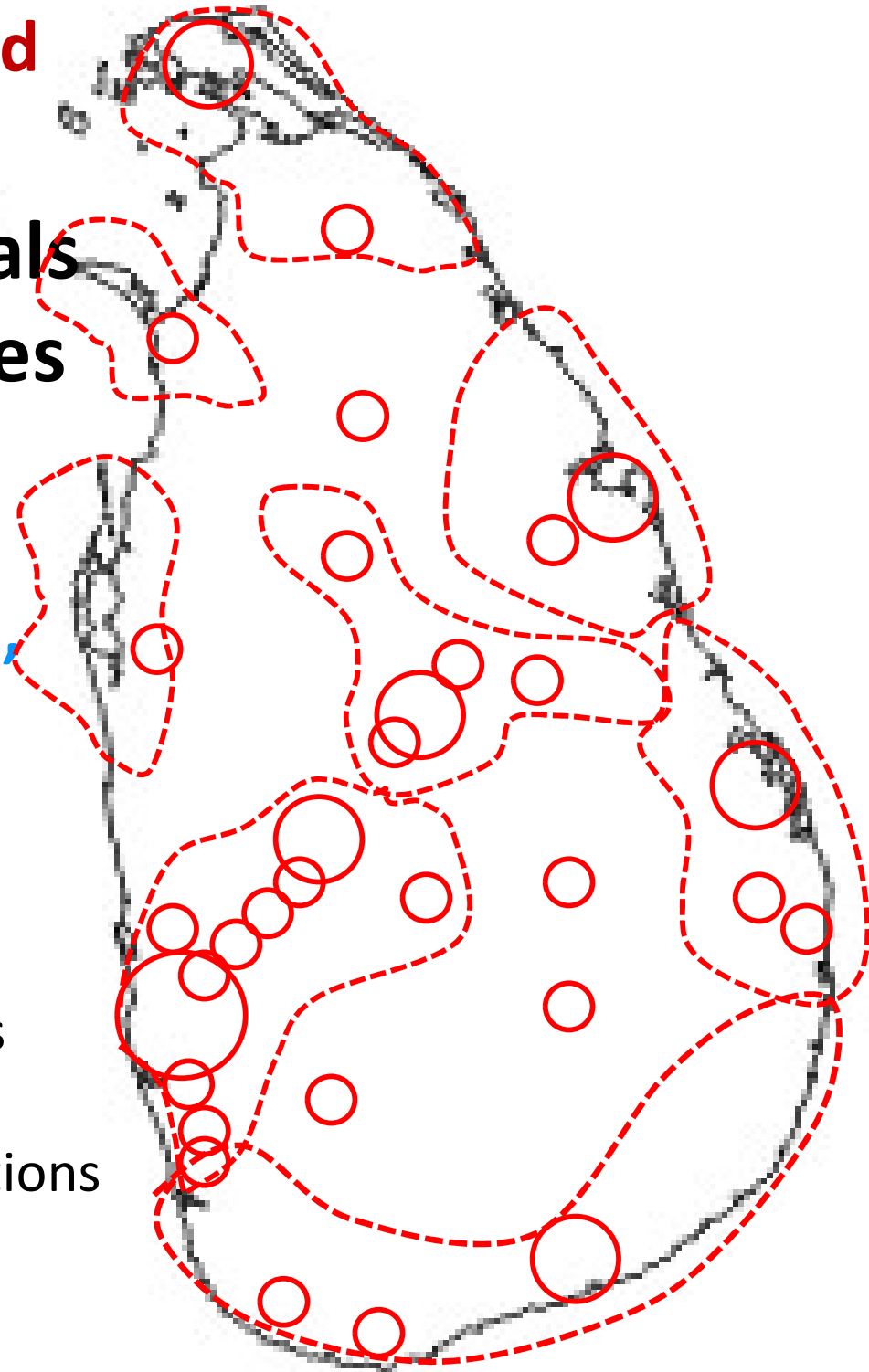
**Fisheries and Aquatic Resources,**

**Mineral Resources**

**Human Resources**

##### **Criteria**

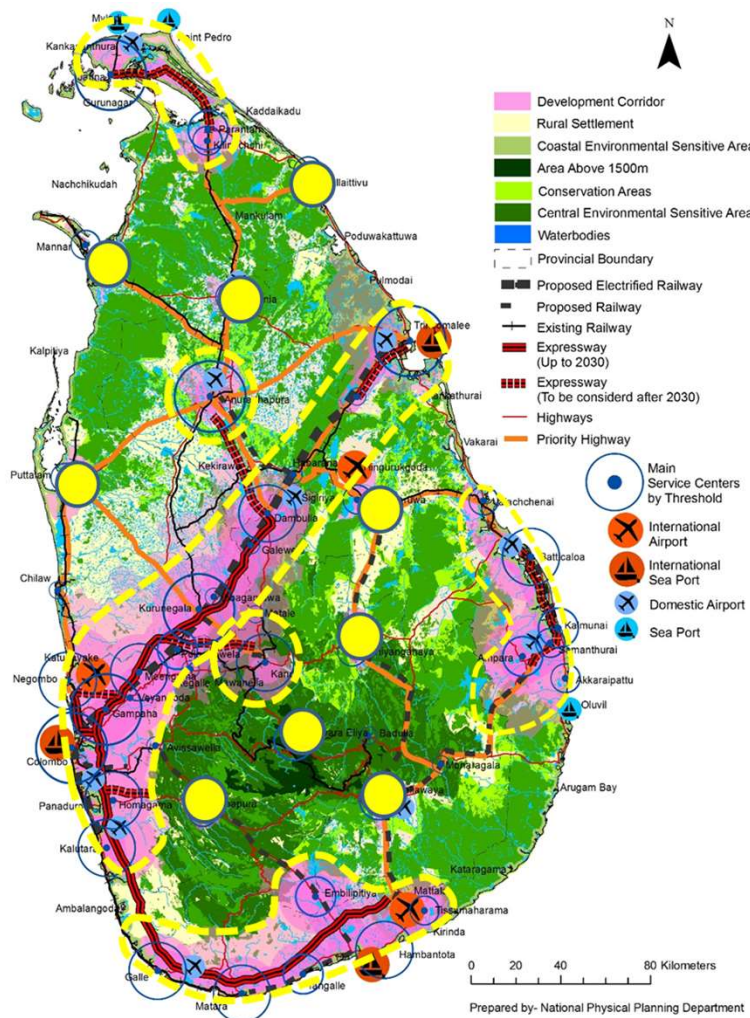
1. Easy access to future potential resources
2. Close proximity to national road connections  
(Expressways, Highways and Railways)



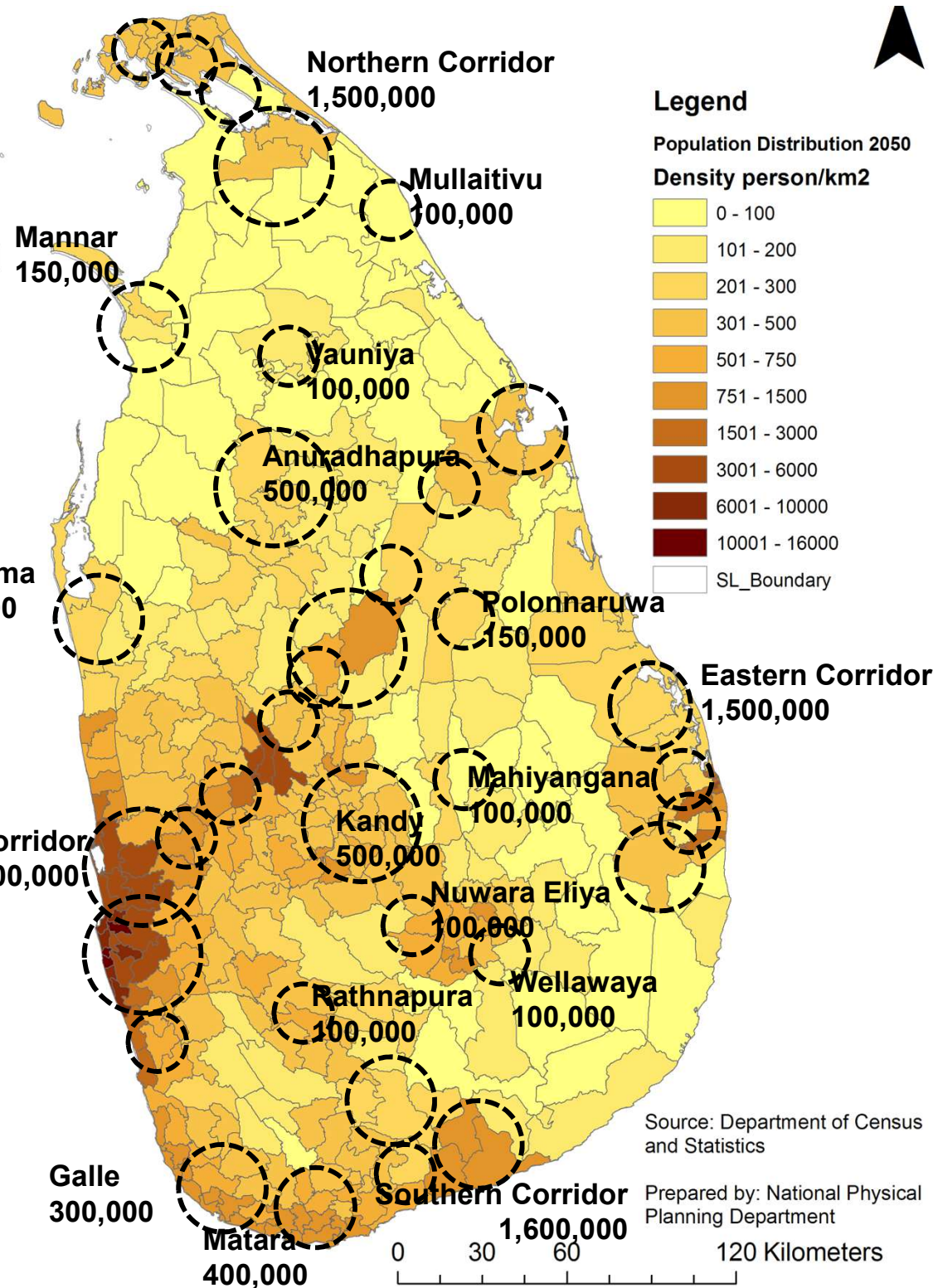


# Policy Strategy

Need to contain urbanization  
(transformation of land uses)  
into appropriate locations



Prepared by: National Physical Planning Department



Source: Department of Census and Statistics

Prepared by: National Physical Planning Department

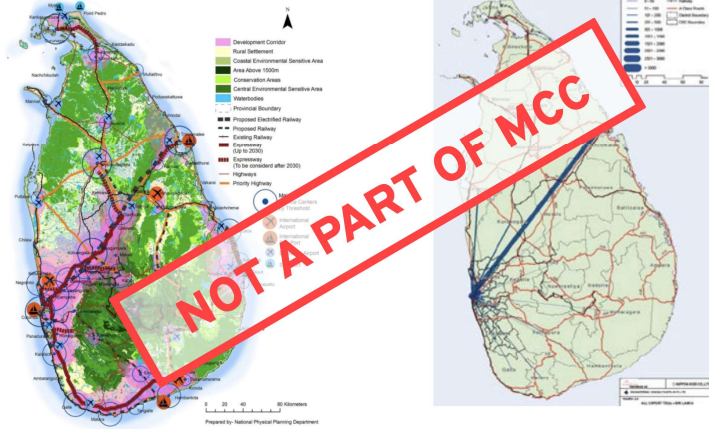
# The **unmaking** of the National Physical Plan 2050

Legitimate Process	+	Political Process
Facts and Figures	+	Assumptions and Speculations
Scientific Reasoning	+	Legendary Inputs
Consultative effort	+	Hegemonizing Process
Consensus building	+	Contesting ideologies
<b>Learning experience</b>	+	<b>Unlearning event</b>



# The impact of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Compact

Figure 5.1.2: The Proposed Spatial Structure - 2050



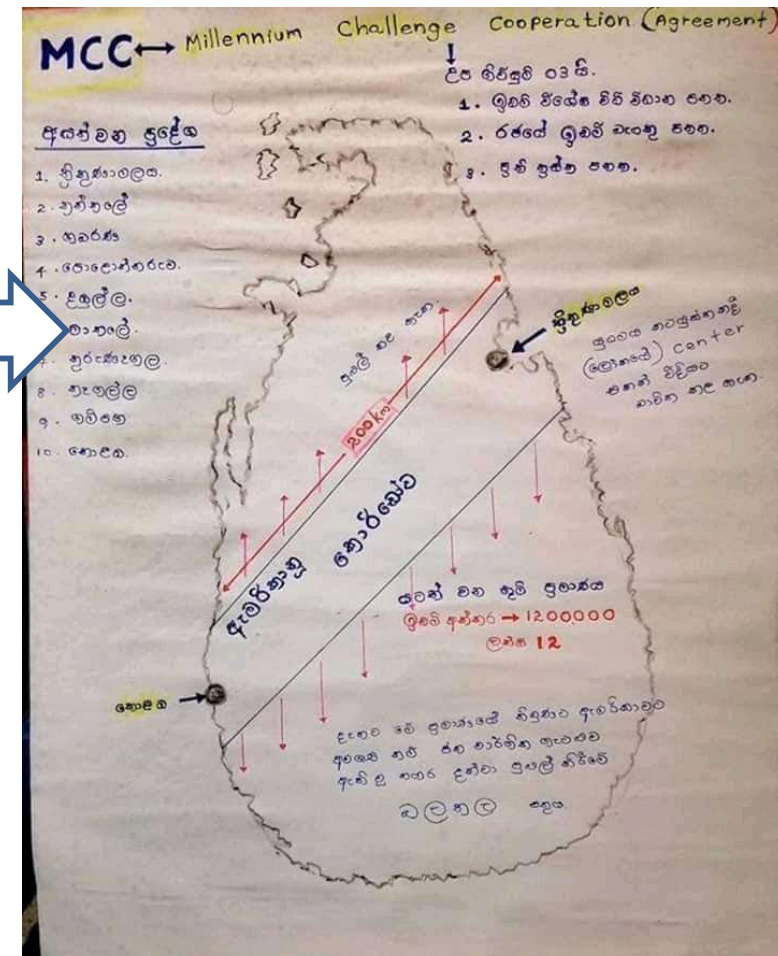
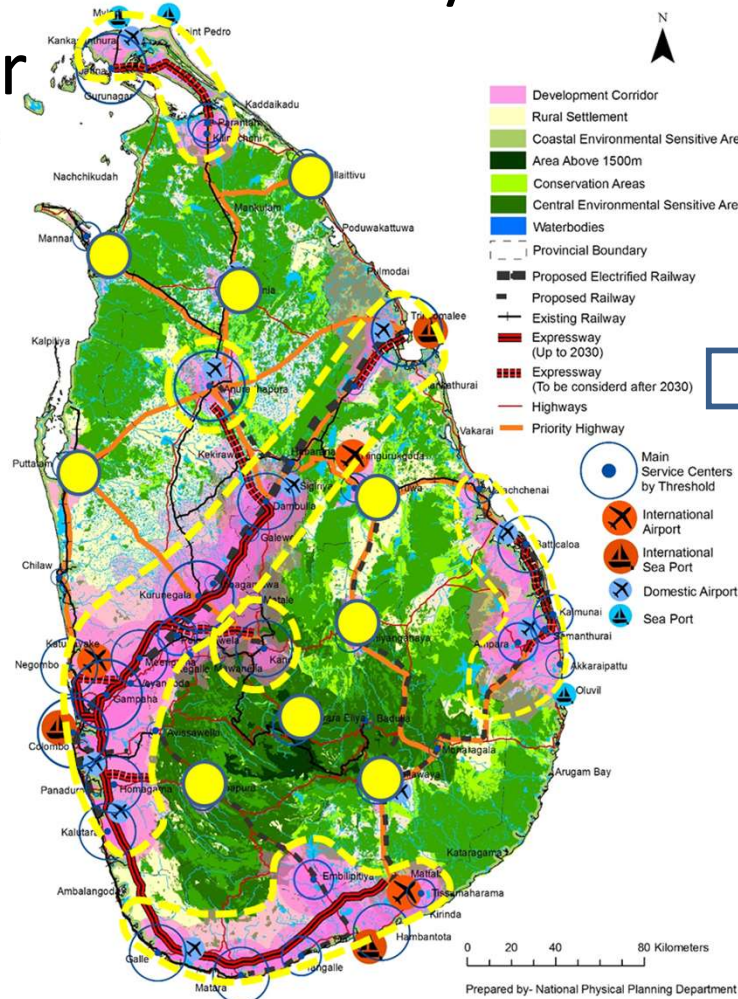
Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=MCC+Sri+Lanka&tbm>



# Propagated Misconceptions/Speculations

## Colombo – Trincomalee ‘Corridor’:

- Divide Sri Lanka in to two parts
- There will be a fence/wall on either side of the corridor





# Manifesto of the New Government :

## Chapter - 7

### New Approach in National Spatial System



*The C shaped Economic corridor is undoubtedly a vital link in our economic planning process, as it entails creating vital market access points for our local and foreign investors. These economic corridors will be developed integrating Colombo port and Katunayake Airport, Hambantota port and Mattala airport, Kankasanthurai port and airport, as these are fundamental and core to making the “agro industrialization” growth strategy a reality as envisioned by our government.*

#### Four Multi-dimensional Commercial Cities

We will develop the main commercial cities of Colombo, Hambantota, Jaffna, and Trincomalee and link them with the airports and ports as an economic corridor that will establish an internal and international network.



#### New Colombo - Commercial and Financial Hub

It is gratifying to see that the Colombo Commercial and Financial Hub which was criticized and vilified is in progress and is now a pride for the country. The new land mass added by this project has given new hope and is now the “New Colombo” of the 21st century. It is now a centre for global commerce, trade finance, and banking. We will expedite the stalled development of this new city and fast track the introduction of legal and financial provisions to make it a commercial and financial centre.

The C Shaped Economic Corridor  
and Four Multi-Dimensional  
Commercial Cities

# **Lessons Learnt:**

.

- **The facts are silent in the darkness of fears.**
- **Purpose gives meaning to the tool.**
- **Conclusions are relative to the intentions.**