

## **Economic Challenges Faced Due to the Entry of Wild Elephants into the Residential Areas: A Study Based on Sammanthurai Divisional Secretariat Area.**

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### **Abstract**

Our ancestors worshiped nature with the thought, if we protect nature, it will keep us alive. But settlements increased and industries progressed the destruction of nature's resource, Forests gained importance. However, the role of elephants in forest formation is essential. But today elephants are world widely considered as an endangered species. According to a study conducted by the national elephant conservation organization, 1299 elephants died between 2001 and 2017. Although elephants have benefited humans in many ways, today the concept of elephant-human conflict has changed. In that regard, the people of the Sammanthurai divisional secretariat located in the Ampara district in the eastern province of Sri Lanka are facing various economic challenges due to the infiltration of wild elephants. Very few studies have been conducted to identify this issue. Such studies, however are often consistent with the social consequences of wild elephant migration. Therefore, the study was conducted in this area to fill the gap. Data were collected using primary and secondary to carry out this study aimed at identifying the economic challenges faced by the local population due to the infiltration of wild elephants into populated areas. Interviews and live observations were used as the primary data and Sammanthurai divisional secretariat annual report, books, magazines and websites as the secondary data. Economic challenges identified in the study area based on statistical analysis include economic impact on the population and crop damage, destruction of fruit trees, damage to houses and property, damage to public buildings, damage to rice mills, effect of labourforce and increase in the cost medicine. These people are facing a setback in education. This study is an important platform for mitigating such challenges and raising awareness among the people.

**Keywords:** Elephant, Economic Challenges, Infiltration