



**ENVIRONMENTAL
FOUNDATION
(GUARANTEE) LIMITED**

Comments on Environmental Impact Assessment Report for Matara Stage IV Water Supply Project, Matara

13/06/2017

REGISTERED POST

13.06.2017

Director General
Central Environmental Authority,
104, Denzil Kobbekaduwa Mawatha,
Battaramulla.

Dear Sir,

Environmental Impact Assessment Report for Matara Stage IV Water Supply Project, Matara

In response to website notification appearing on the Central Environmental Authority website for the mentioned project, Environmental Foundation (Guarantee) Limited (EFL) hereby forwards comments on the Environmental Impact Assessment.

A general note on the EIA:

After evaluating the EIA it is recommended to follow the three gated barrier design so it will facilitate movements of crocodiles, other aquatic fauna, also possibly boats and canoes. It is necessary to consider the facilitation of the movement of Saltwater crocodiles through the barrier as ongoing studies carried out by our organization indicate that the crocodiles in the Nilwala river migrate back and forth upstream and downstream. The vegetation in the vicinity of the proposed barrier are key nesting areas of the nationally endangered Saltwater crocodile. Therefore, construction activities must be conducted in a careful manner, while maintaining activities that is less damaging to the riverine vegetation where crocodile nesting takes place.

It is necessary to clarify here that Saltwater crocodiles do not require saltwater to survive and their presence upstream has nothing do with the intrusion of salt water but river depth, propagation sites (Samarasinghe 2014; Letnic and Connors 2006). Therefore, the salinity barrier will not hinder the population of crocodiles upstream and they will continue to thrive regardless of this. However, this project altogether will become the answer to reduce the human-crocodile conflict in the Nilwala River: that is by providing an alternative water source to villagers living close to the river who are dependent on the river (Samarasinghe 2014). This was identified in 15.2 under long-term solutions to counter the conflict between humans and crocodiles in the Nilwala River (Samarasinghe 2014). Therefore, it's encouraged that this project is carried out but in a sustainable manner following the EIA recommendations on various impacts.

Literature cited:

Letnic M & Connors G 2006 Changes in the distribution and abundance of saltwater crocodiles (*Crocodylus porosus*) in the upstream, freshwater reaches of rivers in the Northern Territory, Australia. *Wildlife Research* 33: 529–538.

Samarasinghe, D.J.S. (2014). The Human-Crocodile Conflict in Nilwala River, Matara (Phase 1). YZA Publications, Dehiwala, Sri Lanka, 86pp



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