



# **TSUNAMI IMPACT MITIGATION BY COASTAL VEGETATION**

By

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A thesis submitted to University of Moratuwa  
for the Degree in Master of Science

Research supervised

by

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2008

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## Abstract

The Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004 caused widespread damage in the coastal regions of Sri Lanka. The extent of inundation and the associated damage varied significantly with the local near shore wave height, topography and the resistance offered to the overland flow. This study is concerned with the resistance offered by coastal vegetation in reducing the extent of tsunami inundation. Various types of coastal vegetation that survived tsunami inundation were identified by a field survey and literature. Also in the field surveys tree geometries such as stem diameter, height of trees, spacing, number of aerial roots, diameter of aerial roots and arrangement of trees were measured. Average values of these parameters were used to develop model trees in the testing scenarios. As part of the research, physical modeling facility was developed to simulate tsunamis in the laboratory by using dam break phenomena. Concept was, to retain water in between two gates of the flume and sudden release of one gate to simulate tsunami overland flow in the flume. Small scale physical tests were carried out to assess their effectiveness as a tsunami impact mitigation measure and results on the effect of location, extent, spacing and pattern of coastal vegetation in reducing the inundation distance were presented. For the selected spacing and pattern, tests were carried out to assess their contribution to effectiveness as component wise such as stem only, stem with branches, stem with high dense branches, stem with aerial roots and with all components (stem, aerial roots and branches). Inundation distance was measured and analyzed to identify the effectiveness. Large scale testing was done by generating solitary wave in the 2D flume of the Lanka Hydraulic Institute. There wave heights were measured and studied the effect of stem only and stem with branches (by using actual small scale plants). The results evaluate effectiveness of the vegetation in order to reduce damages from the tsunamis and identify the important considerations in designing vegetation as tsunami mitigation measure.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my research supervisors Mr. A.H.R. Ratnasooriya and Dr Saman Samarawickrama, who suggested this research problem and offered the most valuable guidance and encouragement through every phase of this study. My sincere gratitude goes to the Professor S.S.L. Hettiarachchi for giving me this vital opportunity and arranging funds and other necessary things to my research work. I am also grateful for him for the valuable criticism, advice, comments and encouragement given. I also wish to express my appreciation to Mr. Thisara Welhena for the helpful assistance and fruitful discussions on this study.

I am thankful to laboratory staff, Mr. J.M. Gunasekara, Mr. H.V. Kumarasingha, Mr. A.I.A. Jayawardhana & Mr. S.M. Gunatunga for their support in developing the physical model and conducting test series. I wish to thank the management and staff of Lanka Hydraulic Institute (LHI) for their utmost corporation and making available their facilities for some test series. My thanks goes to colleagues Miss D.P.L. Ranasingha, Mr. P.K.C. De Silva and Mr. D.P. Rathnayaka for the support given in conducting test series.

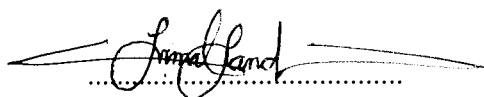
I am thankful to US-AID and National Science Foundation (NSF) for providing financial support, which enable me to pursue my study in the University.

I thank my brother and sister for the encouragement given and standing by me throughout. My warm gratitude is for my parents and grand mother who always stood by me during difficult moments and for nourishing my mind with hope.

*R.P.S.S. Bandara*

## Declaration

This thesis is a report of research carried out in the Department of Civil Engineering, University of Moratuwa, between November 2006 and March 2008. Except where references are made to other work, the contents of this thesis are original and have been carried out by the undersigned. The work has not been submitted in part or whole to any other university. This thesis contains 113 pages.



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