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**(18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> October, 2023)**

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## ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS ON THE BOLGODA ECOSYSTEM: APPROACHES AND ACTIONS

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### ABSTRACT:

Bolgoda is the largest freshwater wetland with two interconnected lakes in Sri Lanka located in the southern boundary of Colombo District and extending to the Kalutara District. Despite Bolgoda having a high ecological, social and economic value, it has been listed by Global Nature Fund as one of the “Threatened Lakes of the Year 2018. Hence, protective, preventive and rectification measures seem essential and an important aspect would be enhancing the awareness of this unique system, especially among the local communities to manage man-made disruptions. We holistically attempted to address the requirement of developing awareness in a two-fold approach: to increase environmental awareness and information sharing. The initiative employed a systematically designed series of activities to share information and develop insights into the Bolgoda region. These activities included guided sessions on information retrieval, promoting evidence-based decision-making and rational thinking, questionnaires on environmental literacy, and seminars. An article for the Bolgoda Plains research magazine, published by the University of Moratuwa, was also produced. Following these activities, a bibliographic reference for the Bolgoda Ecosystem was compiled. This reference links existing scientific publications, regulatory measures, and recent developments to provide a foundation for future research. It is planned to be updated annually to consolidate the relevant knowledge. These self-motivated and self-funded efforts establish a solid foundation for enhancing environmental literacy from a library perspective. This empowers scientists, researchers, and administrators to make informed decisions and contribute to the conservation and management of the Bolgoda Ecosystem, ensuring its long-term sustainability for both the ecosystem itself and the associated communities.

**KEYWORDS:** Bolgoda ecosystem, Environmental awareness, Information retrieval, Information dissemination