Public Summary of the Estate Crop Management: Lalan Agri Division, 2023

1 Introduction

Lalan Agri Division (LAD) management is committed to the implementation of Sustainable Forest Management principles and practices because the management trusts that the company's long-term survival depends on forestry operations that are economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and socially acceptable. Therefore, LAD strives to conduct forest management operations in conformity with the laws and regulations of the government of Sri Lanka and relevant international agencies. In addition, the management has adopted the standards included in the FSC-STD-LKA-01-2021 standards.

The present FSC manual was prepared as a supplementary document for the forest management plan (FMP) of 2024-2028. Different chapters of this manual illustrate the estates, management procedures, contribution to the well-being of employees, stakeholders, and society, and aspects of biodiversity conservation and the preservation of nature while earning significant incomes.

At present, LAD manages 8,733.76 ha of land in 15 different Estates under five Groups, viz., Mahaoya, Miyanawita, Sapumalkande, and Udabage of Deraniyagala area and Pitiyakande of Mawathagama area. Miyanawita and Dabar Estates are managed by LAD as a project with Bogawanthalawa Tea Estates PLC, which was by an agreement reached between the two companies on 10th October 2012. LAD considers all those estates as a single Forest Management Unit.

The vision of the LAD is to conduct long-term sustainable forest management operations in line with the Principles and Criteria published by the FSC to be motivated by the desire to have the FSC certification. In accordance with this vision, LAD does not manage any plantation established on any form of natural forest after 1994.

Key activities conducted since 2018

LAD Management newly conducted numerous activities in the estates for the betterment of the estates, community and the workers since the implementation of the last FSC Manual in 2018. Among them, the key activities are given below.

i. Conductance of social welfare projects, funded by the Fair Rubber Organization, with a steadfast commitment to aligning LAD efforts with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Over the course of the journey, since 2018, the management successfully completed 76 projects, spending to Rs 43 million towards these impactful initiatives.
ii. Increase of conservation areas to 885.35 ha, increasing the percentage above 10%.
iii. Identification of two new High Conservation Value Sites (a) A cave in Eila Estate, and (b) A forest with an endangered Dragonfly (*Macromia flinti*) in Dabar Estate.
iv. Incorporation of prevention of bribery and corruption policy.
vi. Assessment of core labour requirements.
vii. Construction of a Cinnamon Leaf Oil Extraction Plant and incorporation to the FSC-scope.
viii. Construction of a state-of-art Cinnamon Processing Center which will be completed in this year.
ix. Introduction of Durian cultivation for the commercial use.
x. Implementation of specific treatment plans to control the circular leaf spot disease in rubber fields.

2 Compliance with laws and FSC principles and criteria

All Lalan Agri Division (LAD) forest management activities have been designed in compliance with the company's forest management objectives formulated based on the FSC Principles and Criteria. The management actions implemented to achieve those objectives comply with the relevant laws of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, regulations formulated by the Sri Lanka Forest Department, Department of Wildlife Conservation, Central Environmental Authority, Forest Stewardship Council, Plantation Management and Monitoring Division of Ministry of Plantations Industries and other relevant international agencies. In addition, LAD management adheres with the relevant international laws and conventions, i.e., International

Labour Organisation Conventions 87 and 98, International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora Convention, International Tropical Timber Organisation, and Convention on Biological Diversity.

3 Forest management goals

The long-term management goals listed below are planned for the estates to be supported by carefully compiled forest management objectives. This is reinforced by the commitment of LAD to Responsible Forest Management (RFM), proper maintenance of the environmental and forest conditions within the forest area, and improvement in the socio-economic conditions of the workers and the local communities in the area.

4 Forest management objectives

LAD management compiled the following objectives to ensure the sustainable management of estates in the long-run.

i. To ensure efficient latex production through improved planting of selected, recommended clones, and tapping systems as per the guidelines of Rubber Research Institute while harvesting timber, fuelwood, coconut, oil palm and cinnamon on an annual sustained yield basis depending on the guidelines given by the relevant authorities and FSC standards.

ii. To ensure the diversification with suitable other crops, mainly where the existing crops do not perform well, or to enhance the economic values by maximum utilising the lands. These approaches are carried out considering biological diversity conservation and social stability.

iii. To protect the lands against degradation due to soil erosion, floods, landslides, and other effects of ecological imbalance.

iv. To obtain periodic revenue from timber production on a sustained yield basis while providing habitat for fauna and flora.

v. To contribute to the growth of the local and national economies by developing forest management actions and forest-based industries and creating income generation and employment opportunities.

vi. To meet the people's basic needs for fuelwood, fodder, timber, and other forest products and to contribute to food production through an effective interaction between forestry and farming practices.

vii. To improve the water quality and to increase soil productivity.

viii. To increase wood production from plantation forests to meet domestic and export demands as raw materials, reducing reliance on natural forest extraction.

ix. To minimise the environmental damage that can be caused due to forest management activities, especially during the harvesting periods.

x. To conserve the natural forests, High Conservation Value Forests (HCV sites) and other culturally, religiously, historically, and socially valuable lands located inside the estates.

xi. To enhance the natural regeneration and restoration of the degraded lands located within estates.

xii. To provide benefits to society by allowing the collection of certain NTFPs, such as greens, fuelwood, etc., to the dwellers in the surrounding of the estates.

xiii. To protect the estates from illegal activities and other damages with the association of different stakeholders.

5 Policies used by the LAD

i. Chemical and oil – Record keeping
ii. Health and safety
iii. Common practices
iv. Publicly available information
v. Contracts for contractors
vi. Dead wood
vii. Monitoring and evaluation
viii. Sensitive sites
ix. Waste management
x. Wildlife
xi. Protected forest
xii. Latex tracking
xiii. Wood tracking
xiv. Trade union and social issues
xv. Illegal issues and guarding the forest
xvi. NTFP
xvii. Diversification
xviii. Planting, felling and post-felling site management
xix. Management of manufacturing facilities
xx. Sale of FSC™ (FSC-C101709) certified products to external buyers
xxi. Controlling of rodents in oil palm fields
xxii. Forest management
xxiii. Prevention and management of Covid pandemic
xxiv. Management of PESTA leaf disease
xxv. Use of genetically modified organisms and integrated pest management
xxvi. Use of FSC ™ (FSC-C101709) trademarks
xxvii. Bribery and corruption prevention policy
xxviii. Policy on core labour requirements

6 Estates managed by LAD

Lalan Agri Division (LAD) is a subsidiary of Lalan Rubbers Pvt. Ltd. It manages 8,733.76 ha of lands in both Deraniyagala (Kegalle district) and Mawathagama (Kurunegala district). Altogether, 15 estates are managed by LAD, which are clustered into five Groups, namely, Mahaoya, Sapumalkande, Udabage, Miyanawita (Deraniyagala) and Pitiyakande (Mawathagama). Under the crop diversification policy of LAD management, several crops, viz. Rubber, Tea, Coconut, Cinnamon, Oil palm, Durian, and timber species are maintained in the estates under the guidelines published by the Rubber Research Institute, Rubber Development Board, Department of Forest Conservation, Coconut Research Institute, Department of Export Agriculture, Cinnamon Research Institute. In addition, expert knowledge will be used whenever necessary to manage those crops.

All regional plantation companies of Sri Lanka and LAD, use exotic species, especially timber crops, in the estates. Those species have been selected due to high commercial values, faster growth rates, and high adaptability to regional conditions. Those crops have been recommended by the Sri Lanka Forest Department, Department of Agriculture or Export Development Board. The management also ensures the control of further spread of those exotic species beyond the areas where they have been grown using a strict monitoring system.

Natural regeneration and succession

LAD encourages the growth of native species in all conservation and high conservation value sites and non-commercial lands. Further information about using relevant species is given in the Biological Assessment and Forest Management Plan.

LAD manages over 10% of estate lands as conservation areas. Natural regeneration of native species and natural succession is encouraged in such sites. Commercial management activities, such as the uprooting of trees, soil excavation, chemical spray, etc., are not conducted in those sites. The biological assessments are conducted in those sites at regular intervals. Moreover, the results of those assessments and surveys are monitored and evaluated to obtain information on the present situation. LAD management assures that it does not convert any natural forest or conservation/ high conservation value site for crop cultivation or any other use. However, the commercial timber/fuelwood plantations are maintained throughout using suitable species.

7 Forest protection

Protection ensures a healthy growth and safe working environment in managing forest plantations. Therefore, with internal protection measures, LAD continuously strives to work with the government, neighbouring communities, and own employees to protect the estate premises, plantations, and other resources from illegal activities and other potential damages. Further, LAD management has identified the important areas of biodiversity and habitats of Rare, Threatened, and Endangered (RTE) species. Effective protection measures have been taken by declaring them as conservation areas or HCV sites.

Protection of biodiversity and RTE species

The five-year biodiversity survey conducted by a team of experts identified the sites of biological values, and the presence of RTE species and their habitats. The management ensures to protect them by using specific management actions with the participation of estate workers and relevant stakeholders. A comprehensive biodiversity assessment was conducted during 2021/22, yielding significant findings and conservation priorities. The assessment highlighted the need to safeguard specific habitats, notably including the preservation of the Macromia flinti Dragonfly in Dabar, the conservation of Eila cave, and the protection of Udapola Stream. In addition, total area spanning 239.17 hectares has been identified for conservation in addition to the previously conserved 646.18 Ha. These proactive measures aim to not only preserve these crucial habitats but also promote the overall well-being of the ecosystem and its various species.

8 Biological diversity

A detailed study was conducted by t a team of experts in 2022 to identify the status of biological diversity, the presence of RTE species, conservation areas, and HCV sites in LAD estates. That survey also identified the key ecological indicators to monitor the biodiversity status at regular intervals. RTE species were identified in accordance with the recently published IUCN Red Data Book. Trainings are also given to the staff and workers to identify the important species present in the estates. Findings are incorporated into the annual planning as guided by the forest management plans. Details of these assessments are available in the Biological Assessment Report. All workers, watchers and field officers have been instructed to immediately report the sighting of any

important animal present in the LAD estate fields. That information, along with the name of the animal and the location are maintained in "Monitoring of Conservation Areas" at the office of each estate.

9 Buffer zones and wildlife corridors

Buffer zones are established on the ground using live plant species such as Bamboo, Kumbuk, Dan, Domba, Mee etc. at regular distances or using paint on existing tree stems and those are also marked on the maps. Any environmentally harmful activity such as road construction, operation of heavy machinery, waste disposal, chemical use, uproot of large trees etc. are prohibited in the buffer zones. The environment quality of the buffer zones will be further improved by planting suitable native species whenever possible. Field Officers, Supervisors, Workers and Contractors should be thoroughly aware of the buffer zones and the activities that are banned in those areas.

Buffer zones are established with the distance of 10 m from the boarder of the HCV, if any other regulation is not present on the same matter. agrochemical use, large tree up-root (HCV buffer zones), heavy machinery operations, waste disposal, constructions, soil damage or loosening, lighting fire, any other harmful activity identified by the estate management, and construction of new roads.

Control of invasive species

Most of the species grown in LAD estates are exotic. However, their use is recommended by the relevant authorities and those species are well-adopted to the regional landscapes without showing invasiveness. However, a few invasive plant species are present in the estates which have been spread from the surrounding lands. *Alstonia macrophylla* (hawari nuga/ ginikuru/ yakada maran) and *Dillenia suffruticosa* (diyapara) are the main invasive species identified in the LAD lands. Those are controlled and monitored by the field staff under the supervision of the executive species. Estate Management will strictly control the regeneration and spread of the invasive species by using a well-structured approach. Such species are already established in the conservation areas and other areas in large scale are not eradicated due to the impossibility, especially due to the restrictions in using agro-chemicals, fire, large scale machinery and the due to the prevailing legal systems. However, further spread of those species in such areas will strictly be controlled. In

addition all estates workers have been given instructions to uproot/ remove the invasive species at young stage once such species are encountered. Invasive species control records are analysed by the Estate Manager/ Assistant Manager/ Forestry Officer/ FSC Coordinator and kept in the Group Office or Estate Office to incorporate in the next year plan.

10 Sensitive sites/ locations

Sensitive sites can be located inside the estates in small, medium or large scale. The potential sensitive sites are given below.

i. Waterways and natural springs
ii. Important habitats
iii. Important trees (religious, cultural, social, service)
iv. Caves
v. Corridors
vi. Marshes
vii. High slopes
viii. Landslide prone areas

Those areas are identified, mapped (whenever possible), recorded and awareness is given to the field offices, watchers and workers. If possible, the villagers are also informed.

11 Conservation areas

LAD estates are managed prioritizing environmental preservation and to be compatible with the landscape of the area. Therefore, the company maintains conservation areas of over 10% of the total land extent. Conservation areas have been identified as samples of the region's existing natural ecosystems. Those are managed to retain and/ or restore their natural states. Those conservation areas are given in Table 1, which have been marked on the ground and in maps of the estates. Sign boards are established to demarcate those areas, and officers of the Department of Wildlife Conservation and Forest Department have been informed about the presence of those important areas. The community and the workers have also been informed at stakeholder meetings and muster meetings, respectively.

Table 1: Presence of conservation areas in LAD estates.

Group	Total extent, ha	Conservation area, ha	Line gardens, ha (excluded from scope)	Oil palm, ha (partial certification)	Extent in FSC Scope, ha
Mahaoya	2,006.00	228.73	16.43	173.09	1,816.48
Miyanawita	972.51	291.71	NA	NA	776.03
Pitiyakande	1,727.20	158.53	1.65	NA	1,725.55
Sapumalkande	2,042.80	120.28	287.72	299.85	1,455.23
Udabage	1,985.25	86.10	97.92	133.78	1,753.55
Total	**8,733.76**	**885.35**	**403.72**	**606.72**	**7,518.98**

12 High conservation value sites

LAD identifies the high conservation value (HCV) sites via biodiversity surveys and stakeholder meetings confirming the presence of such values. Once identified, those will be demarcated on the maps. The estate workers, villagers, and other stakeholders are then informed via muster and stakeholder meetings. Sign boards are also placed to make the public aware of the high conservation values. If necessary, special security plans are implemented in those areas. Records are maintained in the estate office. The details of HCV sites in the LAD estates are given in the HCV assessment reports.

Wherever possible, LAD manages its HCV sites by promoting natural regeneration and strictly controlling the spread of invasive species, including in the buffer zones. Those sites are demarcated on the ground by natural boundaries and fence posts. Entry restrictions are imposed by constructing gates if required. Signposts are used to indicate the presence of HCV sites. Officers of the Police, Department of Wildlife Conservation, and Department of Forest Conservation are informed about the presence of HCV sites and their importance and, thereby, requesting to take action to protect those areas further. Watcher patrols are increased in vulnerable sites by the Estate Manager, and the Assistant Manager also frequently visits the HCV sites to identify the threats.

13 Actions taken to minimise health and safety risks

Estate Managers makes the workers aware of the health and safety procedures at the muster meetings and factory meetings. The minutes of those meetings are recorded and kept at the estate

office. In addition, an Emergency Action Plan is displayed at the offices and factories of estate so that the workers can be aware of the actions to be taken at an emergency situation.

14 Recognition of user rights within estate and forest management

Typical indigenous people known as "Vedda People" do not live within or in the region where LAD estates are located. However, the management of LAD respects the rights of the local community. Therefore, the management implements the forest management procedures following the guidelines from relevant institutes such as the Rubber Research Institute, Coconut Research Institute, Forest Department, Department of Export Agriculture, and other appropriate parties. Therefore, the knowledge of the local community is not used in commercial forest plantation management. However, their knowledge is utilized in identifying the high conservation values and for the management of non-commercial lands.

15 Social benefits

The management of LAD is aware of the fact that forest management should provide benefits not only to the staff and workers but also to the society or the local community. All estates of LAD provide employment opportunities, contractor opportunities, houses, etc., to the workers and villagers. In addition, LAD has taken actions to provide benefits to society as listed in Table 2.

Table 2: Benefits provided to the society.

Group	Estate	Division	Benefits/ services provided
Mahaoya	Densworth	Densworth	Conservation forest area HCV – Pattini Amma Gala Children Development Centre Fuelwood collection area Cemetery 2 new housing schemes Kovil
	Mahaoya	Mahaoya	3 Kovils Water catchment area/ tube well 3 play grounds Medical Centre Cemetery Gotukola harvesting

			Fuelwood collection area New housing scheme
		Ernan	2 Kovils Children Development Centre Fuel wood collection area Cemetery Play ground Conservation forest area
		Glassel	Temple Water catchment area Fuelwood collection area
	Woodend	Woodend	Fuelwood collection area Children Development Centre Donating coconuts for Panawala Temple festival Play ground
		Yogama	Water catchment area Water supply to village and estate residents HCV – Vihara Gala Children Development Centre Fuelwood collection area Kovil
		Udayogama	Fuelwood collection area
		Rangegama	Water catchment area Play ground Children development centre Fuel wood collection area
		Talapitiya	Provide new housing scheme for estate workers Fuelwood collection area
		Nugahena	HCV site Donating coconuts for Nugahena Temple and Kovil Fuelwood collection area Kithul tapping
	Dabar	Dabar	Kovil

Miyanawita			Well and drinking water supply Cemetery Play ground
		Keerihena	Kovil Drinking water Cemetery Play ground
		Panakura	Kovil Well and drinking water Cemetery Play ground
	Miyanawita	Western	Well and drinking water Dispensary Kovil Workers Housing Co-operative Society Cemetery Play ground
		Eastern	Kovil Drinking water Child Development Centre Play ground Cemetery Temple
		Kosgahakande	Child Development Centre Kovil Well and drinking water Conservation area Cemetery
		Asamanakande	Kovil Well and drinking water Child Development Centre Church Cemetery
Sapumalkande	Sapumalkande	Sap Upper	Conservation area Gotukola harvesting Kovil Fuelwood collection area Cemetery

		Walpola	Drinking water Cemetery Fuelwood collection area School Kovil Play ground
		Clunes Lower	Fuelwood collection area Drinking water Gotukola harvesting School Kovil
		Clunes Upper	Drinking water Fuelwood collection area Gotukola harvesting
		Galahitikande	Conservation area Drinking water Fuelwood collection Hospital Cemetery
	Illuktenna	Illuktenna	Conservation forest Fuelwood collection area Cemetery Drinking water Play ground Child Development Centre Kovil
		Udahenkande	Gotukola harvesting Fuelwood collection area Cemetery Drinking water Temple School
	Reucastle	Digala Lower	Conservation area Gotukola harvesting Fuelwood collection area Cemetery Drinking water Play ground Child Development Centre
		Digala Upper	Conservation area

			Gotukola harvesting Fuelwood collection area Cemetery Drinking water Child Development Centre
		Deloluwa	School Temple Fuelwood collection area Cemetery Child Development Centre
		Reucastle	Conservation area Gotukola harvesting Fuelwood Cemetery Drinking water Play ground School
		Nahelma	High Conservation Area Well and water tank Kovil Fuelwood Child Development Centre Medicinal plant collection area Conservation area
Udabage	Eila	Eila	Drinking water Bathing places Play ground Fuelwood
		Malhasna	Drinking water Conservation area Fuelwood Temple
		Avington	Drinking water Temple Play ground Fuelwood
	Udabage	Upper	Drinking water Conservation area Fuelwood

			Roads
		Lower	Drinking water Play ground Bathing places Cemetery Fuelwood
		Middle	Drinking water Cemetery Play ground Three-wheel parking area Pre-school facility for village children Land allocated for a school Fuelwood
		Riverside	Drinking water Fuelwood Play ground Roads
	Udapola	Udapola	Drinking water Cemetery Bathing places Land allocated for School Land allocated for village expansion Land allocated for a power station Fuelwood
		Yatapola	Drinking water Play ground Fuelwood
		Manikkande	Drinking water Water scheme for villages Volley ball court Fuelwood School
		Mawatenne	Drinking water Conservation area Play ground Fuelwood

Pitiyakande	Pitiyakande	Pitiyakande	Gotukola harvesting Conservation area Supply of water bowser Giving Coconuts and husks Supply of tents, sound system and cooking utensils for village functions Fuelwood Cemetery area Play ground Giving sport items Supply of slasher machine with tractor Supply of grass cutter machine Supply of workers to police station, temple and school for cleaning of the premises Kovil Child Development Center Medicinal plants collection Dispensary Well and tank Estate worker housing cooperative society Supply of rain coats Training facilities
		Bridstowe	Gotukola harvesting Conservation area Supply of water bowser Giving coconut husks Giving coconut Giving tents, sound system and cooking items for village functions Fuelwood Cemetery Kovil Medicinal plants collection Water well and tank Supply of rain coats
		Pilessa	Gotukola harvesting Conservation area Supply of water bowser Giving coconut husks Giving coconuts Giving tents, sound system and cooking items for village functions Fuelwood Supply of rain coats

			Cemetery area Supply of grass cutter machine Medicinal plants collections Water well and tank Kovil
	Muwankande	Muwankande Upper	Gotukola harvesting High Conservation Area Supply of water bowser Giving coconut husks Giving coconuts Supply of tents, sound system and cooking items for village functions Fuelwood Estate Worker Housing Cooperative Society Supply of rain coats Cemetery Giving sport items Supply of slasher machine with tractor Supply of grass cutter machine Supply of workers to police station, temple and school to clean premises Child Development Center Medicinal plants collections Dispensary Water well and tank Training facilities
		Muwankande Lower	Gotukola harvesting Supply of rain coats Supply of water bowser Giving coconut husks Giving coconuts Giving tents, sound system and cooking items For village functions Fuel wood Cemetery Playground Giving sport items Grass cutter machine Medicinal plants collections Kovil Water well and tank
			Gotukola harvesting Conservation area Supply of water bowser

		Moratenne	Giving coconut husks Kovil Supply of rain coats Giving coconuts Supply of tents, sound system and cooking items for village functions Fuelwood Cemetery Playground Giving sport items Child Development Center Medicinal plants collection Water well and tank
	Nottinghill	Nottinghill	Gotukola harvesting Conservation area Supply of water bowser Giving coconut husks Giving coconuts Supply of tents, sound system and cooking items for village functions Fuelwood Estate Worker Housing Cooperative Society Supply of rain coats Play ground Giving sport items Supply of slasher machine with tractor Supply of grass cutter machine Supply of workers to police station, temple and school to clean premises Child Development Center Medicinal plants collection Dispensary Water well and tank Training facilities Kovil
		Bayswater	Gotukola harvesting Conservation area Supply of water bowser Giving coconut husks Giving coconuts Supply of tents, sound system and cooking items for village functions Supply of rain coats Fuelwood Cemetery

			Play ground Medicinal plants collection Water well and tank
Pitiyakande		Dee Ella	Gotukola harvesting Conservation area Giving water bowser Giving husks Giving coconut Supply of tents, sound system and cooking items for village functions Fuel wood Supply of rain coats Cemetery Giving sport items Medicinal plants collection Water well and tank
	Keppetigala	Keppetigala	Gotukola harvesting Conservation area Supply of water bowser Giving coconuts Supply of tents, sound system and cooking items for village functions Fuelwood Cemetery Estate Worker Housing Cooperative Society Supply of rain coats Play ground Giving sport items Supply of slasher machine with tractor Supply of grass cutter machine Supply of workers to police station, temple and school to clean premises Child Development Center Medicinal plants collection Dispensary Water well and tank Training facilities Kovil
			Gotukola harvesting Conservation area Supply of water bowser Supply of rain coats Giving coconut husks

		Galagama	Giving coconuts Supply of tents, sound system and cooking items for village functions Fuelwood Cemetery Giving sport items Medicinal plants collection Water well and tank Kovil
		Marlabe	Gotukola harvesting Conservation area Supply of water bowser Giving Coconuts and husks Supply of tents, sound system and cooking items for village functions Fuelwood Supply of rain coats Cemetery area Giving sport items Medicinal plants collection Water well and tank Kovil

16 Use of monitoring and evaluation results

The monitoring records collected on the above areas are analyzed at regular intervals by an expert, Forestry Manager, FSC Coordinator, or a nominee of each estate. Significant results are incorporated into the next management/ annual plan to minimize the negative impacts and to enhance the positive impacts.

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