



Rainforest Protectors Trust

www.RainforestProtectorsTrust.org

RainforestProtectorsTrust@gmail.com

65 - 1/1 Hotel Road, Mt. Lavinia

Tel: 0777288814

October 8, 2019

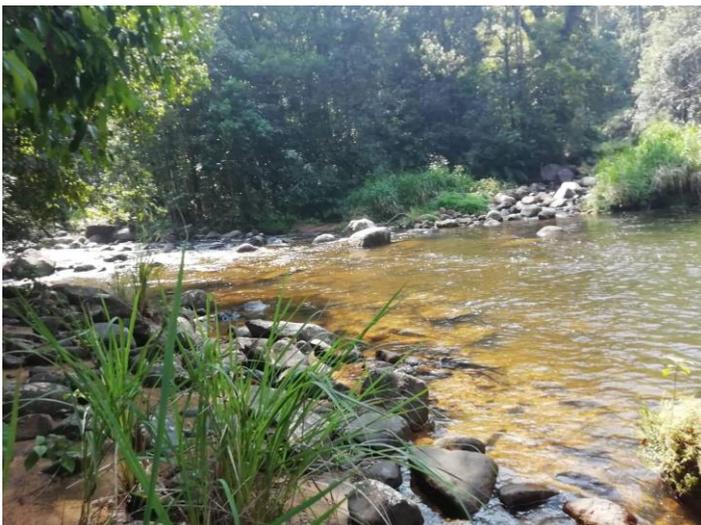
Proposal to Protect 4.5 Acre Private Rainforest in Sinharaja Buffer Zone

Overview:

This proposal is submitted with the objective of permanently protecting a 4.5 acre privately held rainforest land currently on sale in the northern buffer zone of Sinharaja World Heritage Rainforest in Illumbakanda, Kalawana, Ratnapura District. This beautiful land is situated in an area rich in bio-diversity where hundreds of streams flow through the rainforest to connect to the Delgoda river. It consists of large endangered native rainforest trees including "Hora" (*Dipterocarpus Zeylanicus*) and is bordered by a large stream teeming with freshwater species. The area is home to the endangered Sri Lanka Blue Magpie and Red Faced Malkoha, two beautiful birds found nowhere else. Mammals living in the land include porcupine, sambur deer and wild boar. The area is also home to the last two remaining rainforest elephants of Sinharaja. Therefore, it has a high conservation value and protecting this unique habitat will be a step forward towards creating bio-diversity corridors between Sinharaja and nearby fragmented rainforests as well as protecting our catchment areas.

In terms of carbon storage, rainforests store significant amounts of atmospheric carbon compared to other forest types. Various studies have shown Sinharaja forest has the capacity to store 200-300 tons of Carbon per hectare. Therefore, deforesting rainforests emits significant amounts of carbon back to the atmosphere directly causing climate change.

Currently, rainforests in this region are facing increasing pressure from encroaching tea plantations, oil palm plantations, logging and property development threatening the very survival of this beautiful rainforest. Virgin rainforest land such as this property, are decreasing day by day.





Through our experience, we have learnt that conservation of real acres of rainforest such as above from being clear-cut is much more effective in the fight against climate change and destruction of natural habitat. Long-term it is cost effective as well compared with reforestation, since reforestation projects run into many barriers such as long durations (more than 25 years to see results), saplings never making to become mature trees due to extreme weather conditions and continuous battle with invasive species overtaking native saplings.

Future Plans Once Protected:

Once purchased and protected under the Rainforest Protectors Trust, the land will remain in its natural, primary rainforest state. Rainforest Protectors Trust will maintain footpaths/natural trails for visitors to explore the forest.

Benefits to the Sponsor

Sponsor will be allowed to install notice board with description of the land along with their logo and name. Sponsor can also highlight it as a featured project for Public Relations and Corporate Responsibility initiative as well as obtaining Carbon Credits. Team Building activities could be carried out to create and

maintain nature trails, environmental education activities, removal of invasive species and replanting with native species when necessary.

Carbon Sequestration

In terms of carbon storage, rainforests store significant amounts of atmospheric carbon compared to other forest types. Various studies have shown Sinharaja forest has the capacity to store 200-300 tons of Carbon per hectare. Therefore, deforesting rainforests emits significant amounts of carbon back to the atmosphere directly causing climate change.

Carbon sequestration in forest patches surrounding Sinharaja matches if not exceed that of the primary forest due to the diversity and density of flora and rapid regeneration throughout the year. Based on above calculations, this forest patch has the capacity to store a minimum 500 tons of carbon.

Ecosystem Services

- The area contain many water streams including some on this land, which feed to surrounding rivers (Delgoda River and Koskulana River) eventually feeding larger rivers Kukule and Kalu Ganga.
- Ecotourism has been rapidly expanding providing employment/income to villagers and generating foreign exchange for the country.
- Carbon sequestration and climate regulation as explained previously.
- Providing sources of food and rare medicinal plants for the villagers.
- Flood regulation and prevention of extreme weather conditions.
- Providing access to academics for carrying out scientific research on endemic and endangered species.

Benefits of Protecting Real Acres of Forest vs Reforestation

While reforestation is important to regenerate lost areas of forest, protecting real acres of forest is more important and successful due to several reasons.

- Real acres of forests already provide habitat to many endemic and endangered species who will die off due to habitat loss if these lands are cleared. Reforesting cleared areas may only bring back species if there are any left in the surrounding areas.
- Existing forest land especially around Sinharaja contain a high diversity of flora which reforestation cannot match due to unavailability of many of the species in plant nurseries.
- Reforestation takes many years and often majority of the plants die soon after planting as well as later stages as invasive species tend to overtake natives in cleared areas.
- While reforestation seem cost effective initially, long-term the costs add up. To successfully reforest cleared forest areas and difficult terrain such as mountain slopes that are overgrown with invasive species require a lot of hard labour and can only be carried out through paid labourers. A multi-year plan involving labourers and caretakers need to be designed for the project to be successful.

Cost: Rs. 25 Lakhs to purchase the land + approx. Rs. 2 Lakhs for tax, survey fee & lawyer fee

Deeds: Copies of deeds obtained.

Who we are

Rainforest Protectors Trust, is a registered Trust with Land Registry in Sri Lanka with the aim of purchasing and permanently protecting privately held rainforest land on sale within buffer zones of existing protected reserves. The Trust is managed by a board of trustees based on a trust deed that prohibits any ecologically destructive activities within its protected lands. It's conservation arm, Rainforest Protectors of Sri Lanka, a non-profit volunteer based environmental organization, carries out any reforestation activities when needed.

Rainforest Protectors Trust

Mr. Chrishantha De Silva (Chairperson)

Mr. Jayantha Wijesinghe (Coordinator)

Mobile: +94-777288814

Mobile: +94-777771348

Email: RainforestProtectorsTrust@gmail.com

Web: <http://www.RainforestProtectorsTrust.org>