



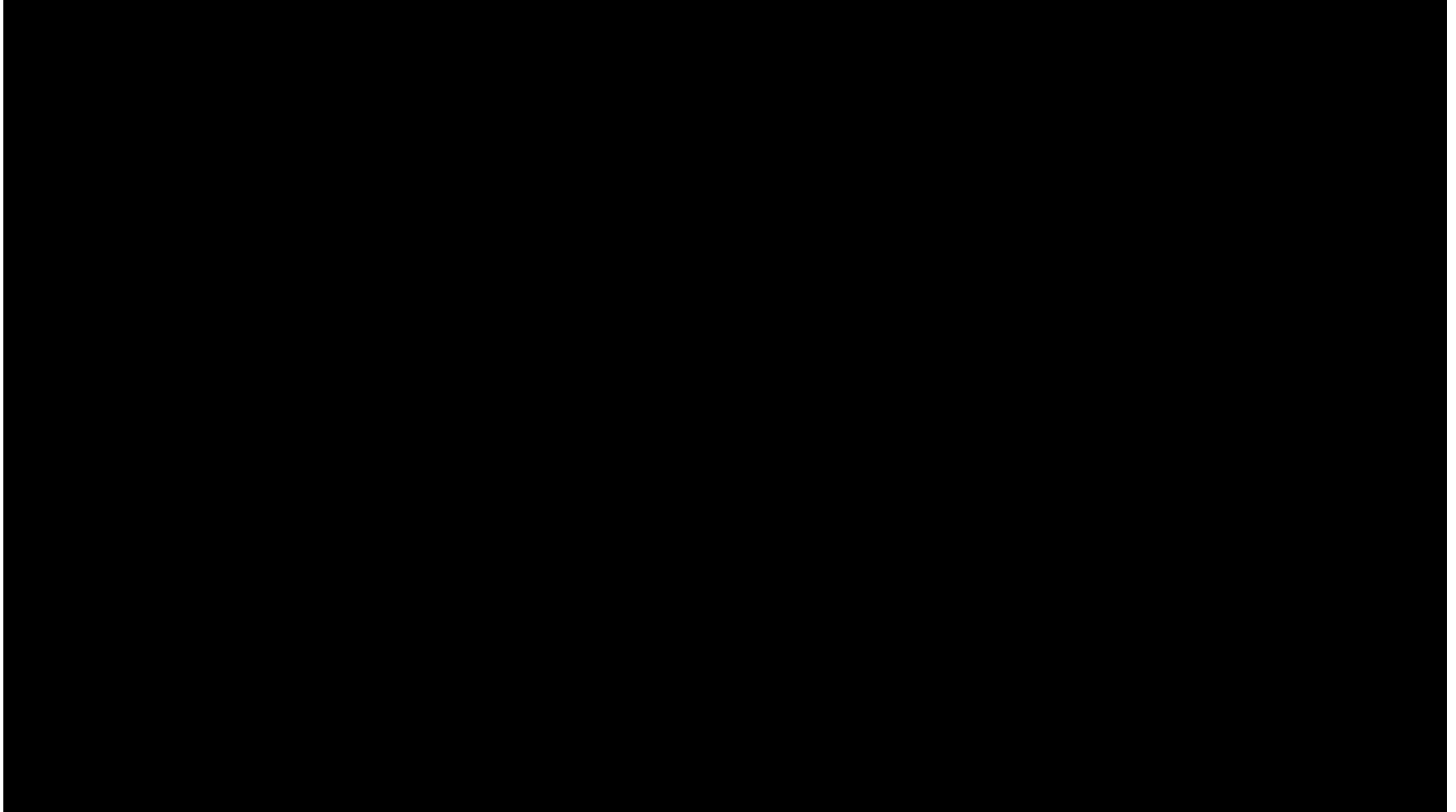
# **A Wetland Management Strategy for Livable Cities and Urban Resilience: Wetland City of Colombo**

**Priyanie Amerasinghe**

International Water Management Institute, Sri Lanka

[p.amerasinghe@cgiar.org](mailto:p.amerasinghe@cgiar.org)

# Video

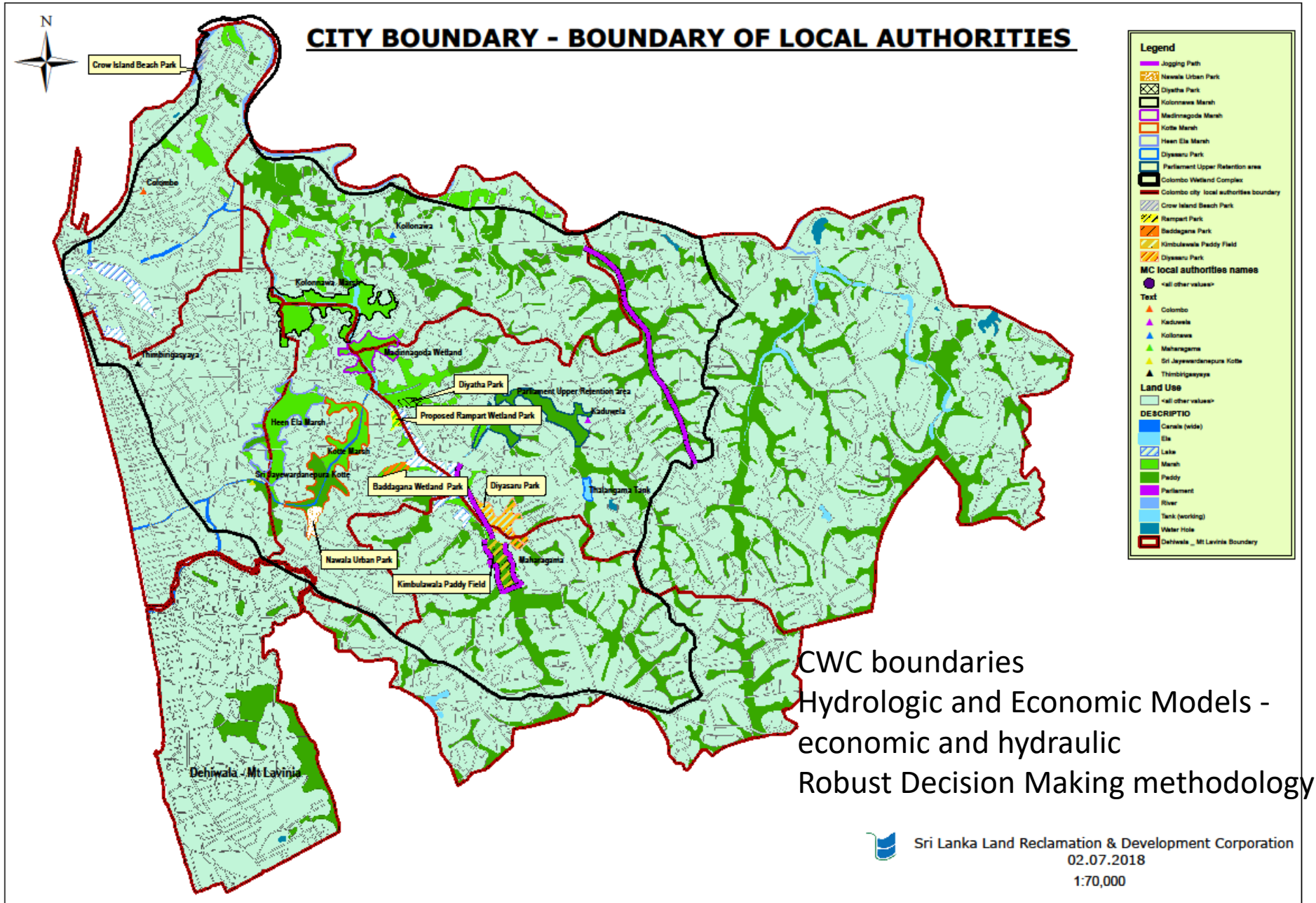




- 
- Colombo is a city built around wetlands
  - Wetlands cover an area of 20 km<sup>2</sup> in the CMR Colombo Wetland Complex (CWC)
  - 90% of benefits within the CMR
  - A Wetland Management Strategy was developed in 2016
  - Ramsar Wetland City Accreditation – 2017 (pending)



# Developing the Wetland Management Strategy



Less Flooding – 39% of flood waters absorbed by natural infrastructure. 1% of the CMR's GDP loss saved. Greater flood protection for 232000 people

Livelihood benefits for the urban poor (60%)



Savings in artificial cooling system  
Reduction in temperature - on average 10 degrees Celsius cooler compared to e.g. parking lots

Treatment of wastewater, irrigation water and food to local communities



A photograph of a bird of prey, possibly a hawk or eagle, perched on a tree branch. The bird has brown and white plumage and is looking to the left. Its wings are partially spread, showing dark feathers on the underside. The background is a dense forest of green trees with some yellowing leaves, suggesting an autumn setting.

Biodiversity – 80 species of birds, 25 species of butterflies, otters, fishing cat

Recreational benefits – wetland parks, nature viewing facilities – USD 13 million Annually

Education – living laboratories for scientists, awareness generation opportunities for urban communities



**Legal protection and zoning has received government support**



# Wetland Management Strategy Based on Evidence

- **Recognise:** Benefits and values derived from the wetlands
- **Prevent:** Further loss and degradation of wetlands must be prevented and all wetlands should be conserved.
- **Restore:** Efforts must be made to restore degraded wetlands
- **Engage:** Participatory approaches must be implemented
- **Govern:** Legal instruments and management institutions must be fit for purpose and integrated



# Institutional arrangements

## Implementation

Relevant institutions are SLLRDC, UDA, CEA, Irrigation and Disaster Management, Wild Life and Conservation

## Governance

The National Wetland Steering Committee





# Thank you

Acknowledgments: Sri Lanka Land  
Reclamation Development Authority  
Urban Development Authority  
Photo Credit: Sanjiv de Silva

