



The Failure of Legal Frameworks in Mangrove Conservation and the Vital Role of Social Work Intervention: A Comparative Study Focusing on Sri Lanka and the Asian Region

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Mangrove ecosystems play a vital role in climate stability, biodiversity conservation, and the sustainability of coastal livelihoods. However, legal frameworks alone have often failed to ensure their effective protection. The primary objective of this study is to identify the socio-economic factors contributing to the failure of mangrove conservation laws in Sri Lanka and to examine how successful conservation approaches implemented in countries such as Vietnam and Indonesia can inform more effective strategies. This comparative conceptual study analyses the differences between Sri Lanka's predominantly top-down legal enforcement approach and community-based mangrove management models adopted in other Asian countries. The findings indicate that conservation policies in Sri Lanka frequently overlook poverty, livelihood security, and community participation, resulting in conflicts between local communities and regulatory authorities. In contrast, successful international models integrate community participation, sustainable livelihood development, and shared responsibility for environmental protection. The study further highlights the critical role of social workers in promoting community empowerment, facilitating alternative livelihood opportunities, strengthening participatory governance, and advancing social justice within mangrove conservation initiatives. The analysis concludes that sustainable mangrove conservation requires an integrated approach that combines effective legal frameworks with community empowerment and social work interventions rather than relying solely on legal enforcement.

Keywords: *Climate security, Comparative analysis, Mangrove governance, Socio-legal failures, Social work intervention.*