

3.7.2 Fire

3.7.2.1 Distribution

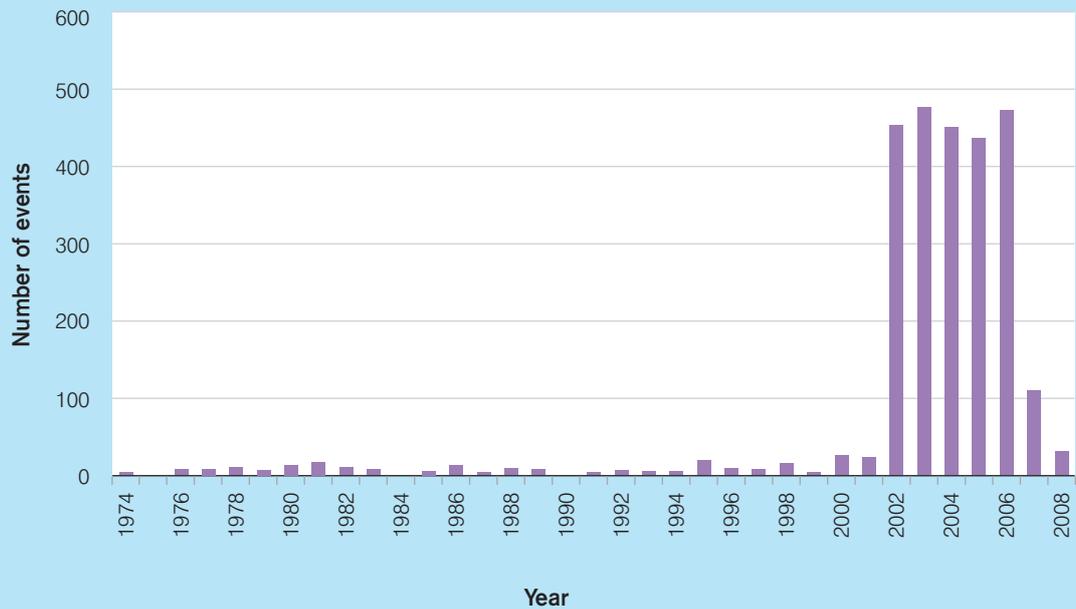
Annual Time Series Distribution

As can be seen from Figure 38 below, initially the occurrence of fires has been relatively low until 2002. However, from 2002–2008 it shows an increase. This is due to the fact that additional data for that period was available from the Colombo Municipal Council area from the CMC Fire Services Department.

Seasonal Distribution

The figure 39 below shows that fire events have been recorded evenly throughout the year, without showing any clear seasonal distribution patterns. However, the highest occurrence can be seen in the months of January and August.

Figure 38 :
Annual Time Series Distribution of Fire



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Figure 39 :
Seasonal Distribution of Fire : 1974 - 2008



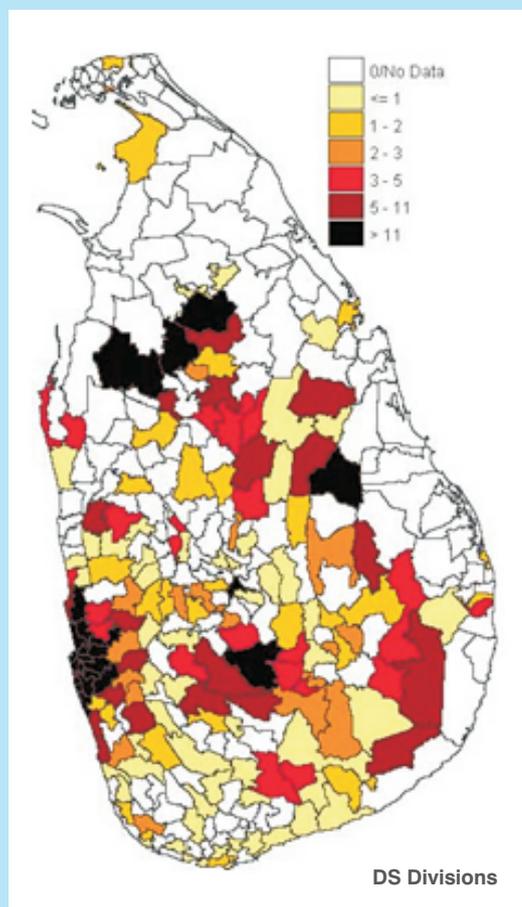
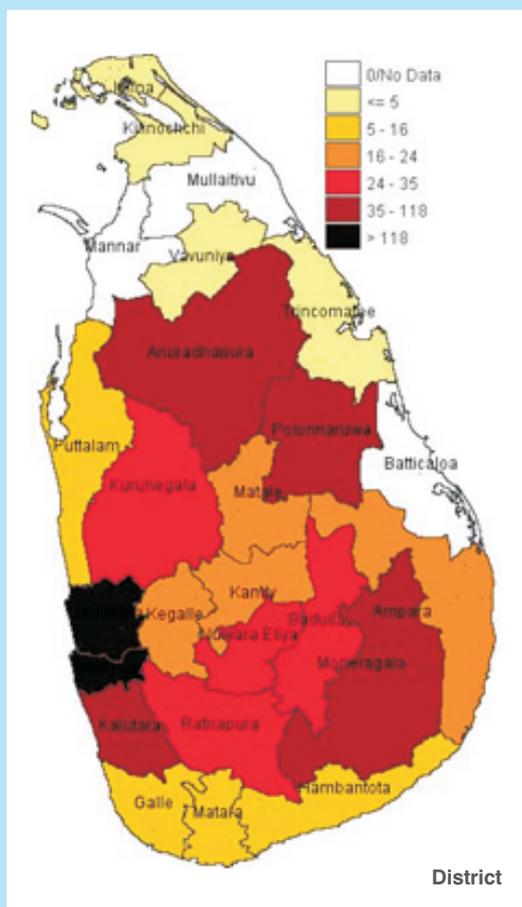
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Spatial Distribution

The district which has the highest occurrence of fires is Colombo (due to additional data availability for that period for the CMC area), followed by Gampaha (Map19). Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Moneragala

and Kalutara also have a high number of occurrences of fire. Districts located in the Northern areas of the island show a lower incidence of fire (due to the unavailability of data).

Map 19 :
Spatial
Distribution
of Fire :
1974 - 2008



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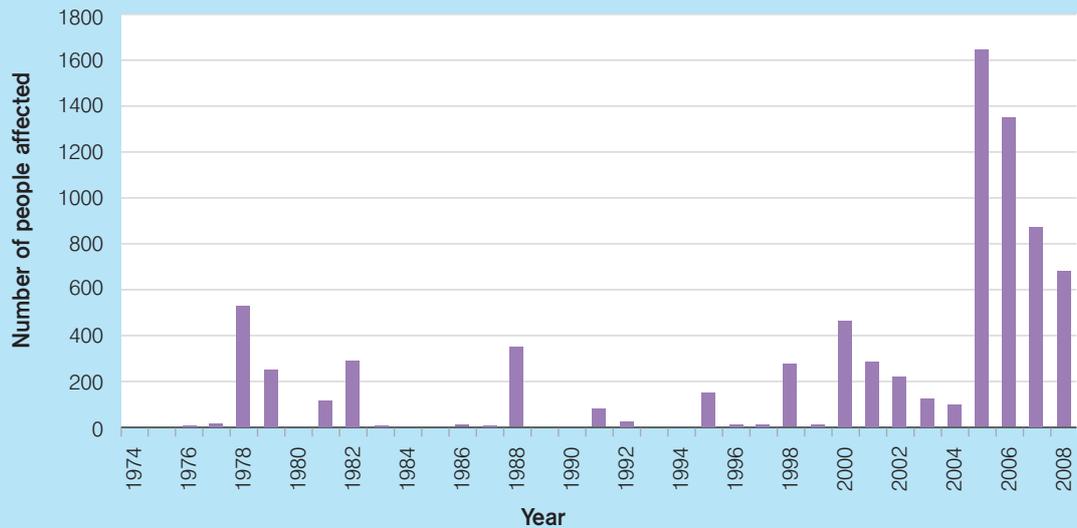
3.7.2.2 Impacts

People Affected (Annual Time Series and Spatial Distribution)

From figure 40 it can be seen that the number of people affected by fire was quite low in the initial years but shows an increase over time due to the availability of additional data records for CMC area.

Spatially, from Map 20 it can be seen that Colombo and Nuwara Eliya have the highest number of people affected, but other districts such as Puttalam, Kegalle, Anuradhapura and Ampara also have a large number of people affected. With respect to DS divisions, the most number of people affected are in the Central Province.

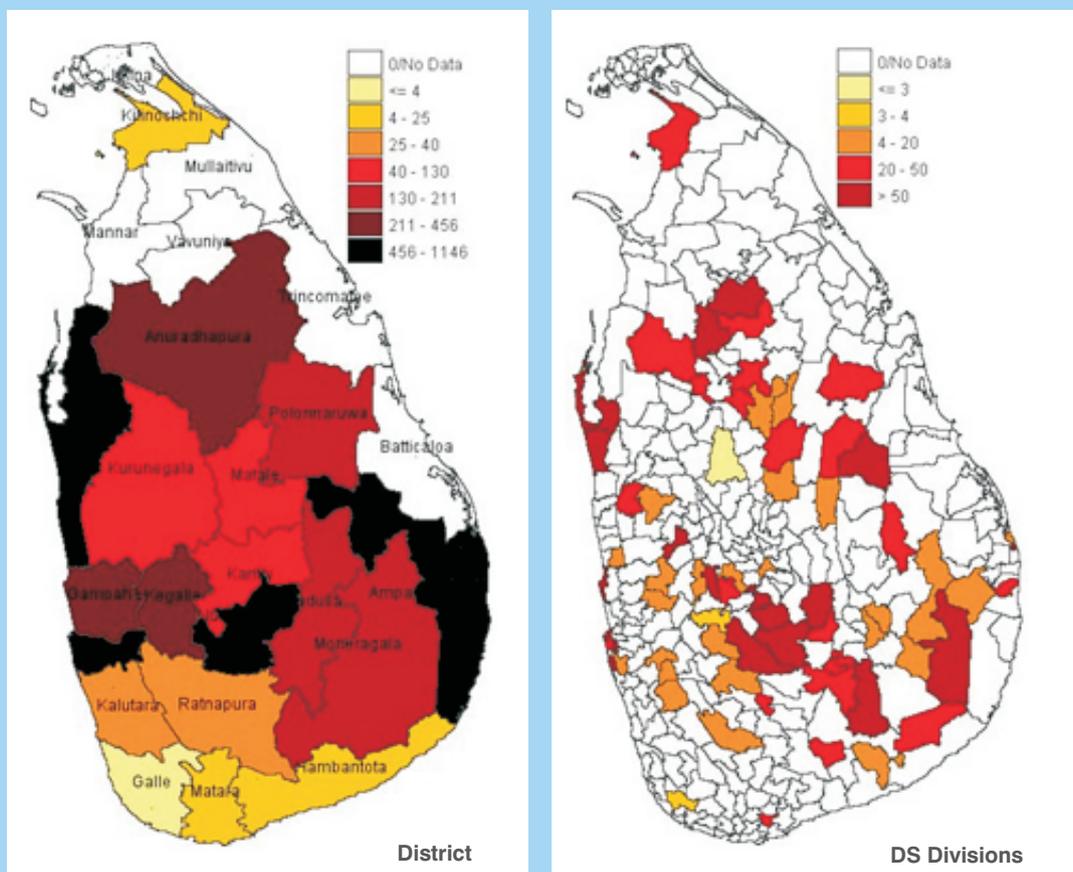
Figure 40 :
People Affected
Due to Fire –
Annual Time
Series
Distribution



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Map 20 :
People Affected
Due to Fire
– Spatial
Distribution:
1974 - 2008



source

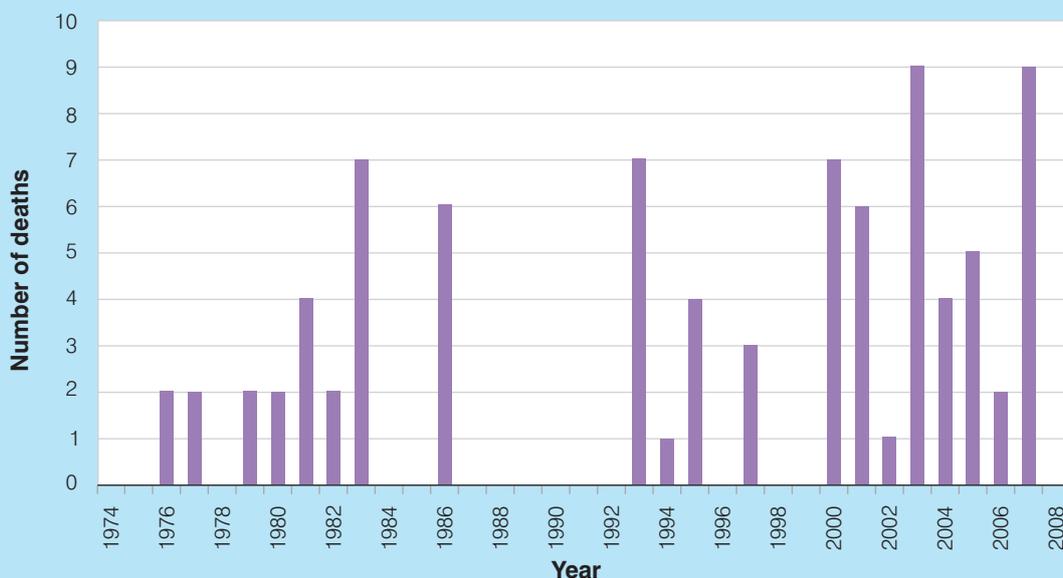
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Loss of life (Annual Time series and Spatial Distribution)

Figure 41 shows that the largest death toll is in 2003 and 2007. No deaths have taken place within the period 1987 – 1992. Spatially (Map 21), most deaths

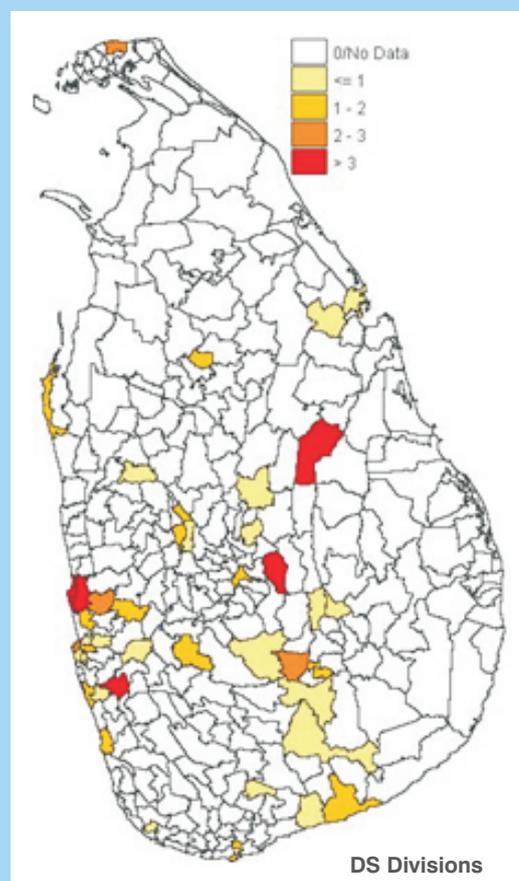
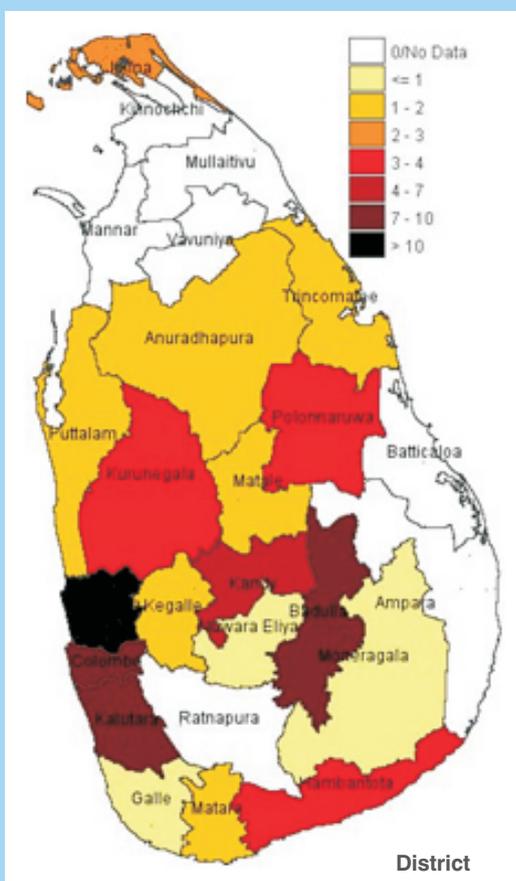
have taken place in Gampaha and Kalutara districts, while other districts too have relatively high death rates. With respect to DS divisions, it is difficult to comment as division wise desegregated data were not available.

Figure 41 :
Loss of Life
Due to Fire –
Annual Time
Series
Distribution



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Map 21 :
Loss of Life
Due to Fire –
Spatial
Distribution:
1974 - 2008



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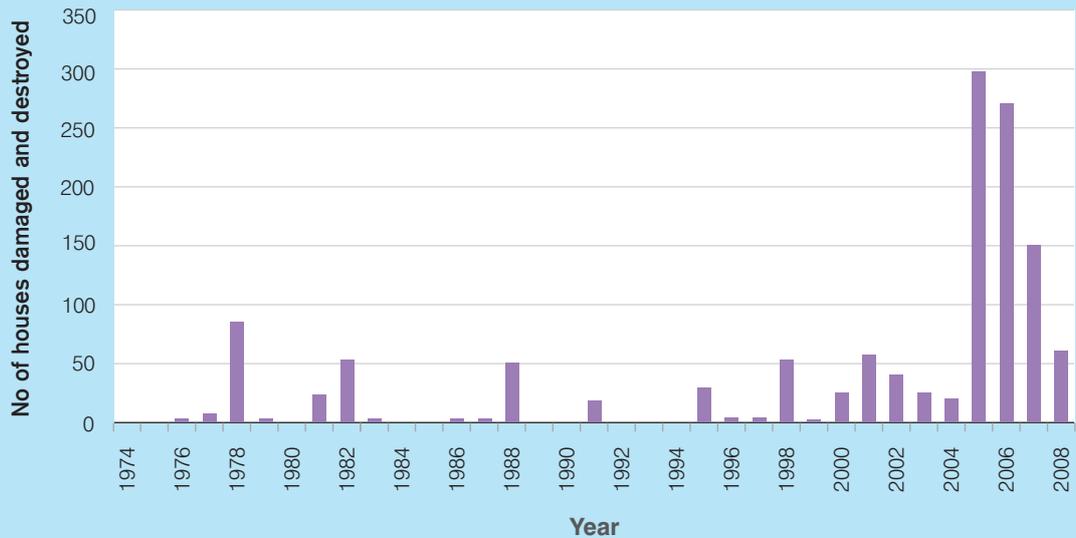
Destroyed and Damaged Houses

(Annual Time Series and Spatial Distribution)

Figure 42 shows that the number of houses damaged was quite low in the initial years, but has increased over time. This may be attributable, once again, to the availability of additional data records in the latter part of the period. Spatially (Map 22),

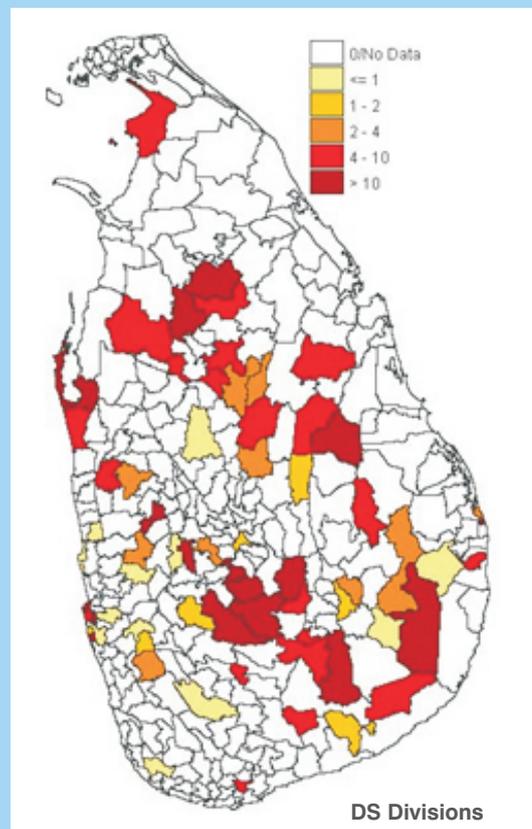
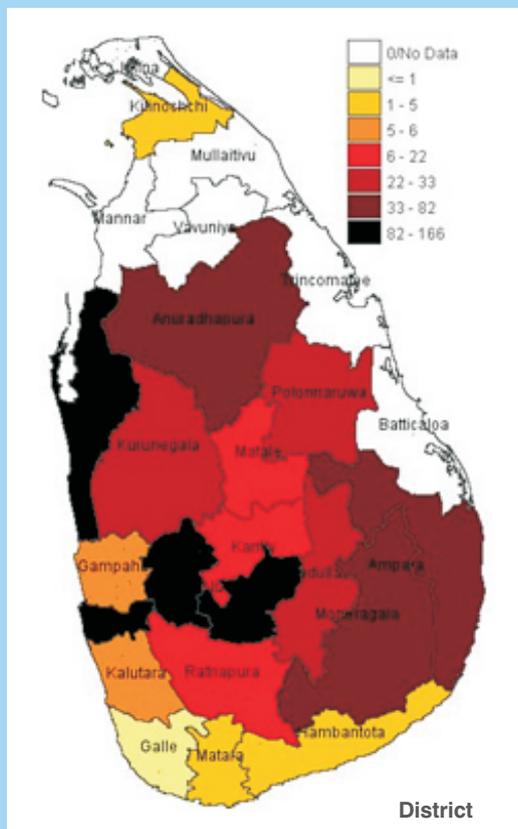
Colombo and Nuwara Eliya have the highest number of houses affected but other districts such as Puttalam, Kegalle, Anuradhapura, Monaragala and Ampara also have a large number of houses damaged. With respect to DS divisions, the most number of houses damaged are in the Central Province.

Figure 42 :
No of Houses
Destroyed and Damaged
Due to Fire –
Annual
Time Series
Distribution



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Map 22 :
No of Houses
Destroyed and
Damaged Due
to Fire – Spatial
Distribution :
1974 - 2008



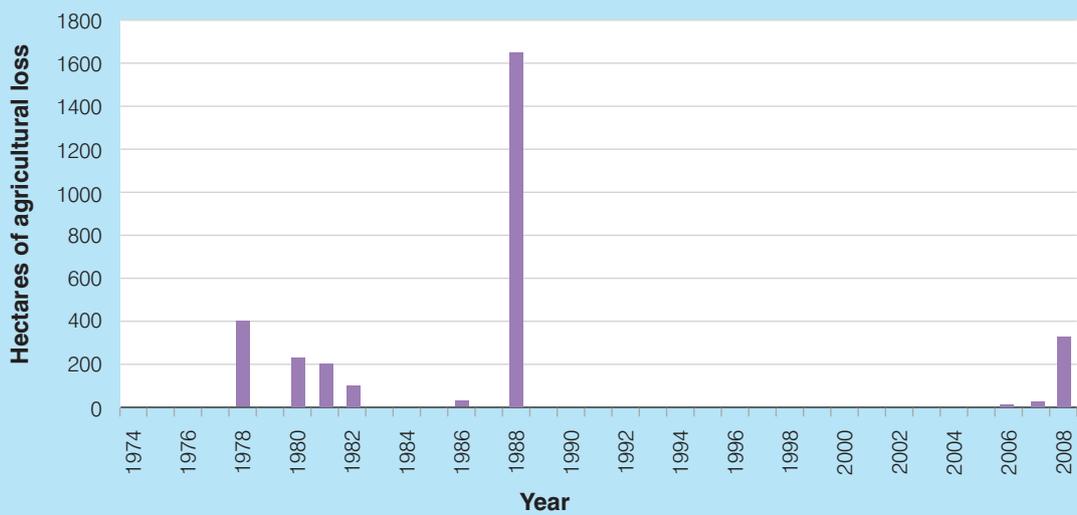
source
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Losses to Agricultural Crops (Annual Time Series and Spatial Distribution)

Over the years, agricultural loss due to fire has been very low (Figure 43). Within the period of 34 years the agricultural loss has been extremely low except in 1978, 1988 and 2008. Particularly, in 1988 the loss has been very high surpassing 1,600 hectares of crop damage.

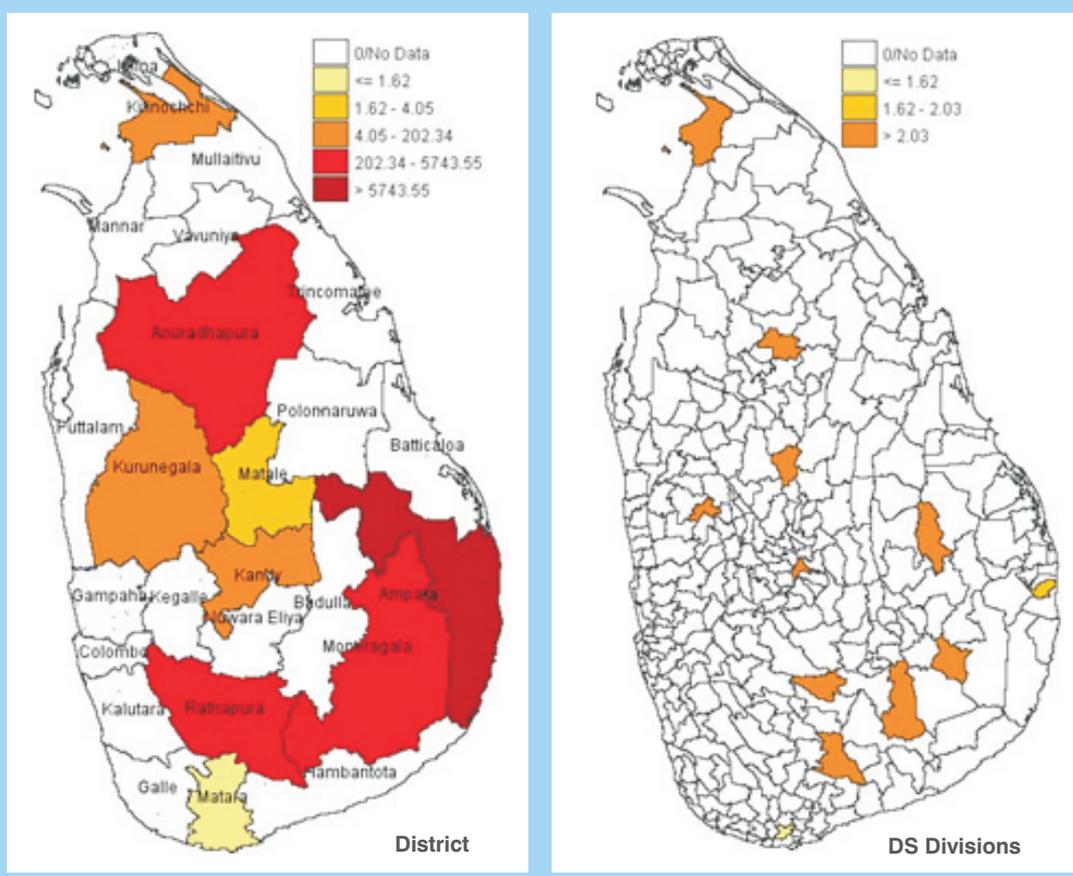
Spatially, losses throughout the island have been quite low (Map 23). Only four districts have crop losses above 202 hectares and these include Moneragala, Anuradhapura, Ampara and Ratnapura. With respect to DS divisions, only a few show agricultural loss due to fire, while a majority shows very low levels and only two DS divisions show high losses.

Figure 43 :
Agricultural Loss Due to Fire (in Hectares) – Annual Time Series Distribution



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Map 23 :
Agricultural Loss Due to Fire (in Hectares) – Spatial Distribution: 1974 -2008



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Box 8 :
Conclusions on
Distribution and
Impacts of Fire
Events

Fire also appears to be an uncommon occurrence, with most occurring within the period 2002- 2007, which is due to the recent availability of records about fire incidents from the fire services department. Further, areas such as Anuradhapura, Ampara, Puttalam and Colombo

appear to be the most affected by fires. With respect to people affected and damage to houses, it appears to take on a similar pattern. However, the occurrence of deaths appears to be fairly consistent and high over the years.