



CURRENT STATUS OF THE EXPORT MARKET OF COCONUT SHELL CHARCOAL AND COCONUT SHELL ACTIVATED CARBON IN SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on identifying the present situation of export market of coconut charcoal and activated carbon. Both primary and secondary data were selected for analysis. Primary data were collected from Coconut Development Authority (CDA) and charcoal and activated carbon producing companies registered under CDA by conducting informal interviews and telephone interviews. Secondary data were gathered from CDA, Sri Lanka Customs, Central Bank, Export Development Authority (EDB). The study based on the export market of coconut shell charcoal and activated carbon. Even though Sri Lanka has enough raw materials to produce both products, most of the shells do not come to the industry level. And also various forms of shells are imported. Higher consumption is another problem when comparing the production. If Sri Lanka produces only coconut charcoal from waste coconut shell 18 times higher amount can be produced than the present exports and around same amount of activated carbon. Producing the same amount or more than the present amount is value than wasting shells. Therefore, preparing the both products is important when comparing the foreign demand. In Sri Lanka around 3/4 of total production were used for the local fresh nut consumption. The balance of about 1/4 of fresh nuts distributes as value added products all over the world. Domestic consumption is nearest to total coconut production since 1986. Export amount of charcoal is around 0.017% and activated carbon is around 0.07% out of all coconut exports. Since 1983 export amount of charcoal has fluctuated and activated carbon has increased. However, export performances of both products are in a bottom level even though Sri Lanka is in a fifth position of top ten coconut producers. Higher amount of activated carbon have been sent to the American continent and more charcoal have been sent to the European countries during past years. According to beliefs of the foreign countries, Sri Lankan coconut shells have higher reputation about quality than other countries due to vary of the topographical and climate condition. In charcoal exports, some amount of charcoal loss to Sri Lanka than producing activated carbon and big value that can be earned from exporting activated carbon is lost. Even though, Sri Lanka has enough raw materials to produce charcoal and activated carbon, they do not come to the production due to higher wastage. Therefore, Sri Lanka imports charcoal. According to statistics of CDA, There are 33 charcoal producing companies and eight activated carbon producing companies that registered CDA. Charcoal and activated carbon producing companies mainly distributed in Kurunegala, Colombo and Puttalam representing coconut triangle. Finally, the study shows that Sri Lanka has a big potential to develop charcoal and activated carbon industry though it has not reached to its fullest capacity.

Keywords: Coconut shell charcoal, Coconut shell activated carbon