



# Strategic Plan

**Palmyrah Development Board**  
**Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure**  
**(2026–2030)**



## Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Background.....	1
3. Vision, Mission, and Overall Goals .....	2
3.1 Vision .....	2
3.2 Mission.....	2
3.3 Overall Goals .....	2
4. Major Activities .....	2
5. Problem Statement .....	2
6. Objectives .....	3
6.1. Strategic Objectives .....	3
6.2. Specific Objectives .....	3
7. SWOT Analysis .....	3
7.1. Strength.....	3
7.2. Weakness.....	4
7.3. Opportunities.....	4
7.4. Threads.....	4
8. Project Approach.....	5
8.1. Strategic Area 1 .....	5
8.1.1. Strategies.....	5
8.1.2. Key Actions.....	5
8.2. Strategic Area 2.....	6
8.2.1. Strategies.....	6
8.2.2. Key Actions.....	6
8.3. Strategic Area 3.....	6
8.3.1. Strategies.....	6
8.3.2. Key Actions.....	7
8.4. Strategic Area 5.....	7
8.4.1. Strategies.....	7
8.4.2. Key Actions.....	7
8.5. Strategic Area 6.....	8

8.5.1.	Strategies.....	8
8.5.2.	Key Actions.....	8
8.6.	Strategic Area 7.....	8
8.6.1.	Strategies.....	8
8.6.2.	Key Actions.....	8
8.7.	Strategic Area 8.....	9
8.7.1.	Strategies.....	9
8.7.2.	Key Actions.....	9
9.	Detailed Action Plan .....	10
10.	Stakeholder Involvement .....	13
11.	Monitoring Indicators .....	13
12.	Sustainability Plan .....	13
13.	Conclusion .....	13

## **1. Introduction**

The Palmyrah Development Board (PDB) was established in 1978 under the Gazette Notification dated 18th August 1978, in accordance with Amendment No. 24 of 1975 to the Sri Lanka Coconut Development Act No. 46 of 1971. It is the mandated institution responsible for developing and promoting the Palmyrah industry. The Palmyrah palm (*Borassus flabellifer* L.) is widely distributed across the dry regions of the Northern and Eastern Provinces, with smaller concentrations in the Southern Province. Commonly known as the “Tree of Life,” it provides food, shelter, and income-generating opportunities for rural communities. Approximately 25,000 families are directly dependent on the Palmyrah industry, while a further 40,000 families benefit indirectly through related activities.

Although the availability of nearly 10 million Palmyrah trees, only a small percentage is currently used for economic purposes, indicating significant untapped potential for value addition and income generation. This underscores the need for a comprehensive, strategic approach to developing the sector. This strategic plan (2026–2030) aims to strengthen the Palmyrah value chain through improvements in cultivation, processing, value addition, and market development.

## **2. Background**

Palmyrah is a culturally significant and ecologically resilient tree crop found predominantly in the dry and semi-arid regions of Sri Lanka. It provides numerous edible products such as jaggery, treacle, fruit pulp, odiyala flour, toddy, sprouts, and confectioneries, as well as non-edible products including fibre, leaf handicrafts, charcoal, and timber. However, despite its huge potential, the industry is characterized by underutilization, low modernization, weak market linkages, insufficient planting material, and limited value addition.

Given its adaptability to climate change, low water requirements, and importance to rural communities, strengthening the Palmyrah sector will contribute to food security, livelihood development, and environmental sustainability.

### **3. Vision, Mission, and Overall Goals**

#### **3.1 Vision**

Develop the Palmyrah sector as a dynamic sector for livelihood development.

#### **3.2 Mission**

Develop, promote, popularize, and regulate the sustainable Palmyrah industry to be a significant contributor to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country.

#### **3.3 Overall Goals**

To strengthen the Palmyrah industry through improved cultivation, processing, value addition, marketing, research, and institutional development.

### **4. Major Activities**

- Protection, Restoration & Development of Palmyrah plantations through enhancement of model farms
- Conducting handicraft, Sap and Pulp training programmes for the empowerment of youths (Technology dissemination)
- Facilitation and promotion of the production of Palmyrah value-added products
- Promote marketing and popularize Palmyrah products, operating through sales outlets called “KATPAHAM.”
- Conducting research relating to the Palmyrah sector and technology dissemination to the Palmyrah-based enterprises with the view to enhancing the quality and productivity.

### **5. Problem Statement**

The Palmyrah industry faces multiple challenges, including:

- Lack of high-quality planting material and inefficient propagation methods
- Limited adoption of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)
- Poor post-harvest handling leading to quality deterioration
- Limited product diversification and limited value addition
- Inadequate packaging and branding

- Weak market linkages and limited exposure to modern processing
- Insufficient research, development, and investment

These constraints limit the sector's ability to contribute effectively to food and nutrition security and rural economic development.

## **6. Objectives**

### **6.1. Strategic Objectives**

Overall Objective:

To develop and promote Palmyrah-based edible and non-edible products through improved production, processing, and value addition, thereby enhancing national income and economic sustainability.

### **6.2. Specific Objectives**

1. Strengthen planting material production systems and promote good agricultural practices (GAP).
2. Improve efficiency in post-harvest handling and processing technologies.
3. Enhance value addition, packaging, food safety systems, and market development.
4. Improve livelihood opportunities for smallholder farmers, women, and rural communities.
5. Establish effective stakeholder coordination mechanisms for sustainable sector development.

## **7. SWOT Analysis**

### **7.1. Strength**

1. Government institution supported by a cabinet ministry.
2. Only National Institution for Palmyrah Development.
3. The Palmyrah palm, a hardy plant naturally found in Sri Lanka, is the major source for raw material to the Palmyra industry.
4. Clear Mandatory act and schedules.

5. Trained and experience work force
6. Palmyra research institute, a research institute comes under PDB supports for the technical improvement acquired international recognize through ISO certification.

### **7.2. Weakness**

1. Low profit margin because service to Palmyrah depending families.
2. Insufficient of technically fully qualified personals.
3. Delay in anticipated flow of funds for seasonal purchasing of seasonal palmyrah products
4. Lack of performance appraisal system for staff and incentives are not being offered based on performance –high labor cost
5. Formal procedural Diligences (binding with government procedures and formalities)

### **7.3. Opportunities**

1. Existing National and International market for diversified Palmyrah Products.
2. Making Palmyrah products, this is a component of food item being the 1st priority in the list of the national economy.
3. Distinctive products, organic and eco-friendly in nature.
4. Involvement of individuals co-operatives, producer societies and exporters in Palmyra production activities.

### **7.4. Threads**

1. Extensive use of the palm for shelter causes wanton felling of Palmyra trees.
2. Plenty of resources yet to be exploiting.
3. Continues decrease in number of tappers/artisans who are engaged in Palmyrah industry due the social barrier.
4. Market competition by substitute products.

## **8. Project Approach**

The strategic plan focuses on three major development streams: upstream development (cultivation), midstream development (processing and technology), and downstream development (value addition and marketing) within the Palmyrah value chain.

Key features of the approach include:

- Strengthening cultivation through improved planting material and agronomic practices.
- Enhancing processing efficiency using modern technologies.
- Promoting value-added product development and market integration
- Ensuring active participation of farmers, processors, cooperatives, research institutions, and government agencies

This participatory model ensures sustainability, inclusiveness, and long-term sectoral growth.

### **8.1. Strategic Area 1**

Strengthening Palmyrah Cultivation (Upstream Development)

#### **8.1.1. Strategies**

- Improve planting material production systems
- Promote Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)
- Expand Palmyrah plantations
- Reduce tree felling
- Develop model farms
- Establish growers' associations
- Conduct national resource surveys

#### **8.1.2. Key Actions**

- Establish scientifically managed nurseries
- Identify mother trees with good characteristics
- Produce high-quality planting materials
- Conduct a national survey on Palmyrah population
- Plant 1 million Palmyrah seeds in selected districts
- Develop 5 new Palmyrah model farms

- Promote intercropping systems
- Conduct awareness programs to reduce tree cutting
- Introduce Palmyrah planting in elephant-conflict areas

## **8.2. Strategic Area 2**

Improving Processing and Post-Harvest Technologies (Midstream Development)

### **8.2.1. Strategies**

- Improve harvesting and storage technologies
- Reduce post-harvest losses
- Establish processing centers
- Strengthen technology transfer
- Develop skilled labour in the Palmyrah sector

### **8.2.2. Key Actions**

- Rehabilitate existing production centres
- Introduce improved sap collection systems
- Develop fruit pulp extraction technologies
- Establish storage facilities for flour, jaggery, and pulp
- Introduce preservation techniques
- Conduct training programs for farmers and processors
- Establish Palmyrah production villages
- Promote research on waste utilization
- Organize awareness seminars on post-harvest handling

## **8.3. Strategic Area 3**

Value Addition and Market Development (Downstream Development)

### **8.3.1. Strategies**

- Develop value-added Palmyrah products
- Improve product quality and packaging
- Strengthen marketing systems

- Expand sales outlets
- Promote export opportunities
- Strengthen coordination with the private sector

### **8.3.2. Key Actions**

- Conduct regular market surveys
- Establish new Palmyrah sales outlets
- Renovate existing sales centres
- Introduce modern packaging technologies
- Develop new food and non-food products
- Promote Palmyrah products through media campaigns
- Develop marketing strategies for local and export markets
- Establish website and digital information systems
- Strengthen cooperation between PDB and the private sector

## **8.4. Strategic Area 4**

### Capacity Building and Institutional Development

#### **8.4.1. Strategies**

- Strengthen farmer organizations and cooperatives
- Develop the skills of youth and women
- Improve extension services
- Strengthen stakeholder coordination

#### **8.4.2. Key Actions**

- Conduct training programs for farmers and processors
- Organize entrepreneurship development programs
- Support women-based Palmyrah enterprises
- Strengthen Palm Development Cooperative Societies
- Conduct awareness programs for youth participation

## **8.5. Strategic Area 5**

Livelihood Development and Social Empowerment

### **8.5.1. Strategies**

- Improve rural employment opportunities
- Support women's and youth's participation
- Increase income generation activities

### **8.5.2. Key Actions**

- Establish community-level processing units
- Provide financial assistance schemes
- Introduce insurance programs for producers
- Promote small-scale Palmyrah enterprises
- Support cooperative-based production systems

## **8.6. Strategic Area 6**

Policy Support and Digital Development

### **8.6.1. Strategies**

- Strengthen policy coordination
- Develop industry database systems
- Improve monitoring and evaluation

### **8.6.2. Key Actions**

- Develop a national Palmyrah database
- Digitize cultivation mapping systems
- Strengthen coordination with ministries
- Develop pricing and quality standards
- Establish monitoring systems for industry progress

## **8.7. Strategic Area 7**

Strengthen the role of the Palmyrah Research Institute as the national centre of excellence for applied palmyrah research, quality assurance, and technology transfer, with the aim of ensuring that palmyrah-based products are safe, high quality, and competitive in both domestic and international markets.

### **8.7.1. Strategies**

- Implement a focused applied research programme:
- Enhance quality control and assurance systems:
- Establish an Industry–Business–Linkage (IBL) Cell:
- Promote the development of palmyrah-based SMEs:
- Strengthen strategic partnerships for technology transfer:

### **8.7.2. Key Actions**

- Undertake research on product development, post-harvest management, processing technologies, packaging, preservation methods, and nutritional and medicinal characterization of palmyrah products, with emphasis on industrial and export applications.
- Upgrade laboratory facilities to achieve ISO accreditation and develop GMP and food safety training programmes for processors and SMEs to ensure compliance with national and international quality standards.
- Create an IBL Cell to facilitate commercialization of research outputs, manage intellectual property and licensing activities, and coordinate technology dissemination with cooperatives and private-sector stakeholders.
- Provide technical guidance, access to pilot-scale processing and testing facilities, and support for branding and packaging to strengthen SMEs engaged in the production of innovative and export-quality palmyrah products.
- Develop collaborations with universities, standards agencies, export promotion institutions, and development partners to co-develop technologies, harmonize quality standards, and enhance industrial adoption of research innovations.

### 9. Detailed Action Plan

(A) No	(B) Strategies	(C) Actions	(D) Outcomes/ Impacts	(E) Sub Actions	(F) Overall Output / Key Outputs of the activity / Project / Program	(H) Timeline					(I) Responsibility	(J) Total Estimated Cost (RsMn)
						2026 (Mn)	2027 (Mn)	2028 (Mn)	2029 (Mn)	2030 (Mn)		
1	Promote empowerment of low-income earners	Establish training, technical assistance, and financial assistance for low-income families to initiate income generation and livelihood projects	Empowerment and capacity development through technology transfer training	Project	90 nos. of Providing Training Programs for 14,210 Trainers, 125 Tappers,	12.0	11.0	9.5	7.5	7.4	Extension Manager, Development Manager	47.4
2			Increase production and improve the quality of the palm product	Project	800 sets, 20 Groups, New production, 800 safety kits, 400 Productions &, 24 production centers, 02 Arrack products, and a store facility of Palmyrah Development Board	40.0	35.0	30.0	20.0	17.5	Production Manager, Research Manager	142.5

3	Facilitate the contribution of the State-Owned Enterprise for economic growth	Provide the public with access to comprehensive information on the operations of SOEs to ensure transparency.	Improvement of existing production centers of Palmyrah Development Board	Project	21 Production Centers, Infrastructure improvements (Repair, fittings and fixings, constructions, Purchasing of production equipment)	12.0	10.0	7.5	5.0	3.6	Production Manager	38.1
4			Developing the e-billing for payment	Project	Developing and Online system for ISO, developing e-billing for payment	10.0	6.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	Admin Manager	22.0
5			Service and repair of existing production equipment	Project	45 Equipment Service & Repair	1.5	1.2	0.8	0.5	0.5	Production Manager	4.5
6			Establishment of proper storage facilities for seasonal palmyrah products (odiyal, panaddu, jaggery)	Project	03 Increased keeping quality of palmyrah products	5.0	4.0	2.5	1.5	1.0	Production Manager	14.0
7			Increase sales and export of palm products	Project	20 Establishment of New Katpaham Centers and 02 centers balance work, 10 Franchise Unit National Level Exhibition, and 05 Exporters meetings and purchasing delivery vehicle	15.0	13.0	10.0	7.0	6.0	Marketing Manager	51.0

8			Institutional asset development	Project	Purchasing Vehicle and 24 Office equipment, 12 nos. of AC, 04 nos. District offices renovate, and Purchasing of Projector Conference hall facility, Completion of PTI building, Construction of 02 nos. of Parking sheds	30.0	35.0	35.0	35.0	30.0	Admin Manager	165.0
9	Facilitate the contribution of State Owned Enterprises for economic growth	Promote R&D in SOEs to explore new opportunities in economic trends, potentials, and developments prevailing at national and international levels.	Strengthening R&D Palmyrah Development Board	Project	25 Research, 80 Trainings, Purchasing 03 nos. Laboratory items, Establishment of 04 Mobile quality controller units, Conducting training, Purchasing of Chemicals, 05 Laptops & Repairing AC, and 20 Maintenance of electronic devices	5.0	4.0	3.0	2.5	3.1	Research Manager	17.6
10	Ensure high productivity and efficiency in agricultural systems	Direct farmers to systematically cultivate commercial crops like coconut, rubber, and cinnamon in unconventional areas	Increase in planting materials of Palmyrah seedlings	Project	1,000 nos. of Mother Plants Identified, Purchasing of 920,000 nos. seeds, 04 Model Farms,	4.0	3.0	2.0	1.5	1.0	Development Manager	11.5

## 10. Stakeholder Involvement

The successful implementation of this strategic plan requires the active participation and coordination of key stakeholders:

### Main Stakeholders:

- Palmyrah Development Board (Principal Institution)
- Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure
- Palm Development Cooperative Societies
- Women's Development Societies
- Universities and Research Institutions
- Private Sector Processors and Exporters
- Local Government Authorities

## 11. Monitoring Indicators

The following indicators will be used to monitor the progress and performance of the strategic plan:

- Increase in planting material production
- Growth in processed product output
- Increase in farmer income
- Reduction in post-harvest losses
- Number of SMEs adopting HACCP/GMP standards

## 12. Sustainability Plan

Sustainability of the Palmyrah sector will be ensured through the following measures:

- Strengthening Palm Development Cooperative Societies
- Conducting continuous training and capacity-building programs
- Promoting market diversification strategies
- Establishing long-term partnerships with private sector exporters

## 13. Conclusion

This strategic plan provides a comprehensive framework for the sustainable development of the Palmyrah sector in Sri Lanka. By focusing on cultivation, processing, value addition, and market expansion, the plan aims to enhance rural livelihoods, create employment opportunities, and increase the economic contribution of the Palmyrah industry. Effective implementation, stakeholder collaboration, and continuous monitoring will ensure the long-term success of the sector.



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