



INDUSTRY CAPABILITY REPORT



SRI LANKAN RUBBER PRODUCTS SECTOR

Prepared by:
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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. TYPES OF PLAYERS	3
3. KEY PRODUCTS AND VARIETIES	3
4. SPECIALTIES ASSOCIATED WITH PRODUCTS	3
5. GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND KNOWN CLUSTERS IF ANY	3
6. SIZE IN TERMS OF PRODUCTION (VALUE/QUANTITY).....	4
7. KEY PLAYERS IN THE SECTOR	4
8. NUMBER OF PEOPLE EMPLOYED IN THE SECTOR.....	5
9. TOTAL INVESTMENT IN THE SECTOR IN LAST FIVE YEARS	5
10. GOVERNMENT POLICY AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE IN THE SECTOR.....	5
11. R&D AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT FACILITIES AVAILABLE	5
12. AVAILABILITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND SKILLED LABOUR	5
13. TOTAL EXPORTS OF PRODUCTS IN SELECTED CATEGORIES OF THE SECTOR.....	5
14. EXPORTS (VALUE IN US\$'Mn)	5
15. GROWTH IN LAST 5 YEARS IN EXPORTS AND MAIN IMPORTING COUNTRIES.....	6
16. POTENTIAL FOR EXPANSION IN THE SECTOR	6
17. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE SECTOR.....	6

1. INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka pioneered Asian Rubber industry in 1876 with planting of rubber trees in Henerathgoda Botanical Gardens- Colombo. Rubber Product manufacturing pioneered by tire re-trading began in the 1950s and expanded rapidly after free trade policies and investment promotion zones were introduced in the late 1970. In last two decades privately owned and operated Sri Lanka industries have entered global markets for value added rubber products.

Sri Lanka pride itself in manufacturing a number of value added rubber products by processing raw rubber. These range from extrusion products like rubber bands, beadings, latex products such as medical, industrial and household gloves, industrial products like hoses, auto parts, industrial components, tyres, tubes, automotive tyres and general rubber products like floor mats, carpets, sports goods, footwear, hot water bottles and related components.

The rubber products exports show a 0.89% growth in 2016 when compared to 2015. Rubber and Rubber Products consist of around 6.9% of the total annual export value and the average growth rate is approximately 0.89%. Major markets for Manufactured Rubber products are USA, Germany, Italy, Belgium, & UK.

2. TYPES OF PLAYERS

There are manufacturers and exporters of rubber products under the large scale category as well as small & medium scale category. Most of the export oriented rubber factories are large and medium scale and they are scattered mainly in western province.

3. KEY PRODUCTS AND VARIETIES

Rubber products exported from Sri Lanka is currently dominated by solid tyres, which is 14 % of the global market demand.

Other products are pneumatic tyres , latex gloves, rubber flooring, mats, automatic components, sealing rings, rubber bands, straps, hoses and hot water bottles for the export market.

4. SPECIALTIES ASSOCIATED WITH PRODUCTS

The main types of rubber produced in Sri Lanka are Ribbed Smoked Sheets, Latex Crepe, Sole Crepe and Centre figured Latex .For its unique properties, Sri Lanka's natural Rubber has a high demand in the world market.

Currently Sri Lanka is the only manufacturer of the best quality Latex crepe rubber in the world and also the largest exporter of same. Latex Crepe is the highest quality natural rubber and generally considered as the Rolls Royce of rubber and fetches a premium price over all other types and grades. This is the purest form of natural rubber and is ideal for manufacturing products that come into contact with food items, in pharmaceutical applications and in light colored articles.

5. GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND KNOWN CLUSTERS IF ANY

Most of the Rubber Products manufacturing firms are situated in the South West of the country.

The following associations support the rubber products sector by addressing the sector related issues through coordination with the government institutions.

- Sri Lanka Association of Manufacturers and Exporters of Rubber Products (SLAMERP)
- Sri Lanka Society of Rubber Industry (SRI)
- The Colombo Rubber Traders' Association (CRTA)
- The Planters' Association of Ceylon (PA)
- Sri Lanka Association of Small & Medium Rubber Products Manufactures.

6. SIZE IN TERMS OF PRODUCTION (VALUE/QUANTITY)

Sri Lanka's total production of natural rubber in the year 2016 was 66,560 MTs. In 2016 rubber finished products industry earned an export income of US\$ 768 Mn which is 0.89 % growth over the previous year. Sri Lanka is the leading solid tyre exporter in the world currently recording a 14% of the world demand. Sri Lanka also well-known for latex based gloves in the global market.

7. KEY PLAYERS IN THE SECTOR

- Camso Loadstar (Pvt) Ltd.
- Trelleborg Lanka (Pvt) Ltd
- Ansell Lanka (Pvt) Ltd
- EU-RETEC (Pvt) Ltd
- Lalan Rubber (Pvt) Ltd
- Industrial Clothing Pvt Ltd
- Samson Rubber Products (Pvt) Ltd
- Dipped Products PLC
- Global Rubber Industries (Pvt) Ltd

8. NUMBER OF PEOPLE EMPLOYED IN THE SECTOR

The industry provides direct and indirect employment opportunities to over 300,000 persons.

9. TOTAL INVESTMENT IN THE SECTOR IN LAST FIVE YEARS

Foreign direct investments and joint ventures are successful operations in Sri Lanka, which assists in the expansion and development of the sector. There are around 50 companies registered under the Board of Investment (BOI) projects for rubber product manufacturing sector.

10. GOVERNMENT POLICY AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE IN THE SECTOR

The government support is extended through several institutions for development and promotion of the Rubber & Rubber Products industry. Government Agencies include Ministry of Plantation Industries, Rubber Development Department, Rubber Research Institute of Sri Lanka, Ministry of Industry and Commerce; Industrial Development Board Export Development Board etc. are involved in the development of the sector by implementing different strategies.

11. R&D AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT FACILITIES AVAILABLE

Rubber Research Institute of Sri Lanka (RRISL) is the major government agency which conducts Research and Development for increasing raw rubber productions and the development of manufactured rubber products. Other than RRISL several universities and Sri Lanka Institute of Nano Technology are engaged in R & D projects with Private sector involvement.

12. AVAILABILITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND SKILLED LABOUR

Sri Lanka has veteran rubber technologists and trained workforce. Plastic and Rubber Institute of Sri Lanka is the only institution which conducts graduate, diploma and certificate programmes for Rubber sector related workforce.

13. TOTAL EXPORTS OF PRODUCTS IN SELECTED CATEGORIES OF THE SECTOR

The products within the rubber sector are categorized in the following table.

14. EXPORTS (VALUE IN US\$ Mn)

Product Sub Categories	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Pneumatic & Retreated Rubber Tyres & Tubes	541	555	568	471	479
Industrial & Surgical Gloves of Rubber	176	195	176	165	176
Gaskets, Washers, Seals etc. of Hard Rubber	77	80	96	91	88
Rubber Plates, Sheets Rods of Vulcanized or Unhardened Rubber	60	55	48	33	22
Other Rubber Products	3	3	3	2	2
Total :	857	887	889	761	768

(Sri Lanka Custom)

15. GROWTH IN LAST 5 YEARS IN EXPORTS AND MAIN IMPORTING COUNTRIES

Rubber Products (US\$ Mn)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Avg. Growth
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	
Total :	857	887	889	761	768	-3.73

0.89% growth in the year 2016

China is the major importer of Rubber Products.

16. POTENTIAL FOR EXPANSION IN THE SECTOR

- The availability of uninterrupted raw rubber to manufacture rubber products
- Availability of trainable skilled workforce helps to meet the needs of the international markets.
- Development of Infrastructure
- Government policies to attract foreign direct investments.

17. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE SECTOR

Strength	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established Industry in Sri Lanka as well as world wide • Availability of Natural Rubber • Trained workforce in the products industry. • Incentives to attract foreign investment • Availability of labour force • Compliance with labour standards and ethical practices • Rubber is environmental friendly raw material • Government support to develop and promote the sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate raw material and the price fluctuations • Insufficient Research and Development • High cost of testing and certifications • High cost of machinery and technology transfer • High cost of energy • High Cost of production

Prepared by:

Mr. Susantha Premaratha - Assistant Director, EDB, Sri Lanka

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