

# SLAAS NEWS

Newsletter of the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science



Vol. 3 No. 1 January – April 2008



*General President Prof. H. D. Gunawardhana  
at Induction Ceremony*

## General President's Message

The Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science is the only scientific body with a membership of 8000 covering all disciplines of science. It is indeed an Association of valuable human resources. The sustainable development of a country is dependent on this large reservoir of talents. There is a need to gather all our human resources and make them, even in a small way, a part of the sustainable development process of our country. The Theme for 2008 was, therefore, designed to achieve a part of this objective. All scientists would be stakeholders of the theme: **“Science for Sustainable Use of Water Resources”**. The theme is distributed among different disciplines as follows:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Medical, Dental and Veterinary Sciences (Section A)   | - Water for healthy living, WHO, CEA standards  |
| Agricultural Sciences and Forestry (Section B)  | - Water for agriculture, FAO guidelines on irrigation waters, CEA standards, improved methods of irrigation.                              |
| Engineering, Architecture and Surveying (Section C)   | - Water management in the supply and drainage   |
| Life & Earth Sciences (Section D)   | - Groundwater and the availability of water for living beings   |
| Physical Sciences (Physics, Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science) (Section E <sub>1</sub> ) | - Physical behaviour of water, highest density at 4 °C. rainfall and atmospheric moisture effects, location of water resources.           |
| Chemical Sciences (Section E <sub>2</sub> )   | - Structure of the H <sub>2</sub> O molecule and the related chemical properties, chemical analysis of water, purification of water.      |
| Social Sciences (Section F)   | - Worldwide distribution of water resources, water scarcity and related social problems   |
| General Research Committee (GRC)  | - Evaluation of research on water conducted in Sri Lanka  |
| Committee for the Popularization of Science (CPS)   | - Public awareness of quantity and quality of water resources in Sri Lanka  |
| Environment Committee (EC)  | - Solvent, carrier and catalytic aspects of water in the environment, water for recreation, remedial measures to mitigate water pollution |
| Ethic Committee   | - Ethical aspects of the allocation and use of water, Draft ‘Water Policy’  |

It is also planned to utilise our pool of scientific personnel for the benefit of all, ultimately leading to sustainable development. The establishment of a Scientific Application Unit (SLAAS – SAU) is a mechanism to utilise this pool for all beneficial purposes and eventually to achieve sustainable development.

There is a gradual decline of the number of students offering the science stream in secondary education due to a tendency for the best students to select other streams such as Commerce, Arts etc. One reason for the unpopularity of the science stream is the prevailing impression that the basic sciences they learn such as Physics, Chemistry and Biology at the secondary level do not have any applicability to industries or even self-employment. With a view to rectifying this situation, an exhibition on the theme **“Science for Sustainable Development of Technology”** is scheduled from 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> December 2008. The exhibition intends to cover various aspects of the application of basic sciences for the development of technological needs.

## Council Members 2008

Name	Position
Prof. H D Gunawardhana	General President
Prof. Jayantha Wijeyaratna	General President - Elect
Dr. W L Sumathipala	Immediate Past General President
Mr. Karthikeyan Navaratnasamy	General Secretary
Dr. (Mrs.) Manjula Vithanapathirana	General Secretary
Mr. P Sarukkali	Treasurer
Mrs. Nilanthi Bandara	Assistant Treasurer
Dr. Hema Goonatilake	Editor
Dr. Preethi Randeniya	Assistant Editor
Dr. S R D Kalingamudali	Secretary, International Relations
Dr. Locana Gunaratna	Elected Member
Dr. A M Mubarak	Elected Member
Prof. Anura Weerasinghe	Elected Member
Dr. S R D Rosa	Elected Member
Prof. Hemanthi Ranasinghe	Elected Member
Dr. W N Wilson	Elected Member
Mrs. Kantha Lankathilake	Elected Member
Mr. N I N S Nadarasa	Elected Member
Prof. M I Thabrew	President, Section A
Dr. M M M Najim	President, Section B
Dr. Ruwan Weerasekera	President, Section C
Dr. N Saleem	President, Section D
Dr. D N Ranasinghe	President, Section E1
Prof. Namal Priyantha	President, Section E2
Prof. Sudatta Ranasinghe	President, Section F
Prof. Tuley De Silva	Chairman, BOT
Prof. Upul Sonnadara	Chairman, GRC
Dr. J A Liyanage	Chairperson, EC
Prof. G F Rajendran	Chairman, CPS

### *Chinese Delegation Visits SLAAS*

A delegation from the Shanghai Association for Science and Technology visited the SLAAS on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2008. The delegation comprised Mr HU Jia lun, Vice President, Shanghai Association for Science & Technology (SAST), Mr ZHAO Weijian, Director, Science Popularisation Department (SAST), Mr LIU Jian, Director, International Exchanges Department (SAST), Mr SUN Jin Kang, President, Ming Hang Association for Science & Technology (SAST), Mr CHEN Xiao Dong, General Manager, Shanghai Sunny New Technology Development Company, Mr CUI Xiong, General Manager, Shanghai JingXing Storage Equipment Engineering Company.

The SLAAS was represented by Dr. W.L. Sumathipala, Prof. H.D. Gunawardhana, Prof. Jayantha Wijeratne and Mr. Karthikeyan Navaratnasamy. A mutually beneficial discussion took place. The Golden Jubile of the Shanghai Association for Science and Technology is scheduled for early November 2008, and an invitation will be extended to the SLAAS. Young Scientists – six to seven - from Sri Lanka who have excelled in innovation will also be invited for the exchange programme scheduled for March 2009. The names will be recommended by the SLAAS.

## ***South Asia Coordinator of Science and Development Network Visits SLAAS***

Ms T.V. Padma, South Asia Coordinator of Science and Development Network (SciDev.Net) visited SLAAS on 8 April 2008.

She briefed about the London-based SciDev.Net which is one of the world's leading electronic sources of free-access websites supported by *Nature*, *Science* and *TWAS* to report on science and technology news and views in the developing world.

SciDev.Net organises workshops for print media science reporters on how to use web and ICT for effective science reporting and will soon explore the possibility of extending this for electronic media personnel as well.

Dr SRD Kalingamudali, Secretary International Relations

### **Call for Abstracts and Extended Abstracts of Papers for Presentation**

**The deadline for submission: 13<sup>th</sup> June 2008 (Friday) 1600 hours.**

**Three printed hard copies** of both the Extended Abstract and the Abstract must be submitted under registered post / courier / person before the closing date together with one copy each of the Title Page and duly perfected original Declaration Form as instructed. Disks with soft copies and as e-mail attachments will not be accepted due to practical limitations.

**Electronic versions, E-mail, fax etc. are not acceptable in the first submission of abstracts.**

**Documents received after the given date and time due to any reason including postal delays will not be accepted.**

If you hand deliver the submission, you will be issued with a slip with the date stamp on it, at the time of handing over the documents to the SLAAS office.

### ***Membership Subscription Changes***

<u>Category</u>	<u>Subscription</u>
<b>Member</b>	<b><u>Life Member</u></b>
	Entrance Fee : Rs. 500/-
	Member for Life : Rs. 5000/-
	<b><u>Annual Member</u></b>
	Entrance Fee : Rs. 500/-
	Annual Subscription : Rs. 500/-
<b>Corporate Member</b>	Entrance Fee : Rs. 500/-
	Annual Subscription : Rs. 2000/-
<b>Associate Member</b>	Entrance Fee : Rs. 500/-
	Annual Subscription : Rs. 500/-
<b>Student Member</b>	Entrance Fee : Rs. 500/-
	Annual Subscription : Rs. 500/-

**\* Every Life member is issued a Membership Identity Card which costs Rs. 100.00**

## SECTIONAL ACTIVITIES: Jan. – Apr. 2008

### SECTION A

**Public Lecture:** A research update titled "Towards elimination of lymphatic filariasis: the current situation" by : Professor Mirani Weerasooriya, Professor of Parasitology, Head/ Filariasis Research, Training and Service Unit, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna at SLAAS auditorium on 8<sup>th</sup> February.

**A ceremony to felicitate** Prof. Valentine Basnayaka and Prof. Tom. Wikramanayaka organized jointly with The Physiological Society of Sri Lanka at SLAAS auditorium on 4<sup>th</sup> April at 5.00 pm. .

**Guest Lecture** will be on "Nutrition and chronic disease-lipids and beyond" by Prof. Sunethra Atukorala, Professor of Biochemistry, Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo .

### SECTION B



Touchwood representatives addressing the event

#### **Road-side tree plantation programme**

A road side tree planting programme to mark the World Forestry Day in collaboration with the Touchwood Investment Limited and the Colombo Municipal Council in Borella on March 21<sup>st</sup> 2008.

#### **Workshop on micro irrigation**

A training workshop on micro-irrigation in collaboration with the Vidatha Center, Maspotha and Citigardens Pvt. Ltd. for selected farmers at Maspotha in Kurunegala on 3<sup>rd</sup> April at Maspotha Vidatha Center With Dr. MMM Najim, President, Section B. Dr. M.M.M. Najim as resource person.

### SECTION C

**Plans are underway** for a field trip to CHICO (Formerly Ceylon Steel Corporation) in May. Those who are interested please contact President/Secretary Section C SLAAS. There will be a nominal charge.

**A one-day workshop** also in May on "Electric Vehicles" workshop which includes visit to Toyota Lanka (Pvt) Ltd to see a hybrid car. Charge Rs 2,000.00 per person.

### SECTION D

**Seminar/Lecture** in collaboration with BOT & Plant Biotechnology Society of University of Sri Jayewardenepura on 'Biotechnology, its perspectives' by Dr. Nishantha Jayathilaka, Director, Science Technology on 31<sup>st</sup> March at Botany Lecture Theatre, University of Sri Jayewardene Pura, Nugegoda at 4.00-5.00 p.m.

**Seminar/Panel Discussion** in collaboration with SCR, Open University of Sri Lanka on 'Sustainable water treatment for developing countries' on 25<sup>th</sup> February at 3.00 -5.00 p.m.

Auditorium-CRC Block 7, The Open University, Nawala. Speakers: Eng. Dr. J.P. Rajapakse, Senior lecturer, Dept. of Civil Eng. New Guinea and Eng. Mr. V. Thillainathan, Chief Engineer, Research & Development, National Water Supply and Drainage Board, Sri Lanka

## SECTION E1

**Seminar** on Physics for A/L students by Dr. S.R.D. Rosa and Dr. D.D.N.B. Daya at Moratuwa Maha Vidyalaya on 28<sup>th</sup> January with around 820 student participation.

**A half day Seminar** on Physics for A/L students by Dr. S.R.D. Rosa at St. Peter's College on 27<sup>th</sup> February.

**Career guidance talk** on IT for O/L and A/L students, organized jointly by the Computer Society of the UCSC and Mr. W.G.D.M. Wathugala on 19<sup>th</sup> March at Holy Family Convent, Maravila - sponsored by Lions' Club Madampe.

**Seminar** on Physics for A/L students by Dr. S.R.D. Rosa at Sripali Vidyalaya, Horana on 19<sup>th</sup> March.

**SLBC Radio educational program** - Dr. D.N. Ranasinghe participated in the programme 'Internet Sampath Bhavithaya' on 5<sup>th</sup> March at 8.45 a.m. – 9.45 a.m.

## SECTION E2

**Public Lecture** on "The Other Manager in You" (Human Resources Management for Science and Technology Personnel) by Mr. Chandana Wijeyanama, Vice President, Human Resources, Holcim (Lanka) Ltd., in collaboration with National Science Foundation at NSF Auditorium on 25<sup>th</sup> February 25 at 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Workshop** on "Treatment of Industrial Effluents" will be held at University of Kelaniya. Tentative date for the seminar will be April 30<sup>th</sup>. Target groups are academics, junior and senior researchers, industrialists, and those who are concerned with environment- related issues.

**Public awareness programme** on 'Water for Life' to mark the World Water Day, jointly with Rice Research and Development Institute (RRDI, Bathalagoda). This one day event consists of awareness through lectures and practical demonstrations on water quality measurements for different applications. Target groups are mainly A/L science students; agriculturalists and people with impair potable water. This event will be held at RRDI. Tentative date will be 9<sup>th</sup> May 2008.

## SECTION F

**Public lecture** on "Strategic Orientation of Human Resource Managers in South Asia: A Kaleidoscopic Perspective" by Mr. Ajantha Dharmasiri (*Faculty Member / Consultant in HR, Postgraduate Institute of Management, University of Sri Jayawardenepura*) on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2008 at the SLAAS Auditorium.

**Public Lecture** on "Tinkering with Education": The Grade V Scholarship Examination" by Mr. Eric J. de Silva (Former Secretary, Ministry of Education) on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2008 at the SLAAS Auditorium

**Public Lecture** on "Dutch donors and Sri Lankan NGOs " by Dr. Udan Fernando, *Visiting Consultant, PIM* ) on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2008 at SLAAS Auditorium

## General Research Committee

### **SLAAS General Research Committee Awards - 2008**

Applications are invited for the **General Research Committee Awards** from Sri Lankan scientists who have carried out exceptionally high quality/pioneering research in Sri Lanka over a period of time. This award is given for the total research contribution of a scientist rather than for his/her contribution to a single research project.

**Eligibility & Method of Application:**

A member of SLAAS with high quality/pioneering research work carried out in Sri Lanka over a period of time and having quality publications in **peer reviewed journals**.

The application forms and guidelines could be obtained from the SLAAS office, 120/10, Wijerama Mawatha, Colombo 7 or SLAAS website <http://www.slaas.org>.

**Closing date for applications: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2008.**

General Secretaries / SLAAS Telephone +94-11-2688740, +94-11- 2691681

### **SLAAS Postgraduate Research Awards - 2008**

Applications are invited for the **Postgraduate Research Awards** from recent postgraduate degree holders who have carried out a major part of the research in an institution within Sri Lanka. The Awards will be based on the applicant's publications on his/her postgraduate research work.

**Eligibility & Method of Application:**

A member of SLAAS who has completed a Postgraduate degree (M.Sc., M.Phil, Ph.D. etc) within 2 years of June 30, 2008 from a Sri Lankan University/Institution.

The application forms and guidelines could be obtained from the SLAAS office, 120/10, Wijerama Mawatha, Colombo 7 or SLAAS website <http://www.slaas.org>.

**Closing date for applications: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008.**

General Secretaries / SLAAS Telephone +94-11-2688740, +94-11- 2691681

## General Research Committee Symposium on "Water; Research Trends in Sri Lanka"

*Date: July 14, 2008 8.30 a.m. - 4.40 p.m.*

*Venue: Palm Lounge, Galle Face Hotel, Colombo 03*

**Water resources development in Sri Lanka** - Eng. A.D.S. Gunawardena, Ministry of Irrigation and Water Management

**Management of inland waters of Sri Lanka** - Prof. Swarna Piyasiri, Department of Zoology, University of Sri Jayewardenerpura

**Water research in Ruhuna, related to Agriculture** - Prof. K.D.N. Weerasinghe, Department of Agricultural Engineering, University of Ruhuna

**Water quality studies of Kala oya basin in Sri Lanka** - Prof. Sujatha Hewage, Department of Chemistry University of Colombo

**Model calculation of aquatic chemical speciation** - Prof. R. Weerasooriya, Institute of Fundamental Studies

**Three decades of water quality studies in Sri Lanka, contribution to community development** - Dr. Rohana Chandrajith, Department of Geology, University of Peradeniya

**Application of biomarkers in monitoring water pollution in Sri Lanka** - Prof. Asoka Pathiratne, Department of Zoology, University of Kelaniya

**Microbial aspects of drinking water** - Dr. Karven J Cooray, Department of Bacteriology, Medical Research Institute

**NARA research towards maintaining a healthy aquatic environment** - Mr. N. Sureshkumar, National Aquatic Resources Research & Development Agency

**Some highlights of IWMI's research in Sri Lanka** Dr. Sonali Senaratna Sellamuttu, International Water Management Institute

**Strategic planning for post-Tsunami rehabilitation and conservation of the Sri Lankan coast line** - Prof. S.S.L. Hettiarachchi, Department of Civil Engineering, University of Moratuwa

**Lessons learned from mismanagement practices of some coastal water resources in southern Sri Lanka** - Dr. Thilak Priyadharshana, Department of Limnology, University of Ruhuna

Cost for registration is 2000/= (Includes Lunch & Refreshments)

Closing date for registration is May 15, 2008. Brochures with the registration form can be collected at SLAAS, 120/10, Vidya Mandiraya, Vidya Mawatha, Colombo 7. Cheques should be drawn in favour of SLAAS. Telephone: 001-2688740, Fax: 001-261681 email: [slaas@slaas.org](mailto:slaas@slaas.org)  
SLAAS. Telephone: 001-2688740, Fax: 001-2691681 email: [slaas@slaas.org](mailto:slaas@slaas.org)



*Sponsored by National Science Foundation, Sri Lanka*

## Environment Committee

**Seminar on 'Environment Forensics'**, held at the University of Kelaniya, in collaboration with the Chemical Society of the University on 16<sup>th</sup> January. The resource person was Prof. Dulasiri Amarasiriwardena, Prof. of Chemistry, University of Hampshire, USA. Prof. M J S Wijerathne-President elect – SLAAS and the Vice Chancellor of the University of Kelaniya participated in the event.

### **Programme on Wetland Day**

A seminar on 'Wetlands in Sri Lanka' was delivered by Prof. Sarath Kotagama at the University of Kelaniya on Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

### **School Environment Day Programmes**

A series of school environment day programmes in Galle district in collaboration with 'Mihithurula Environment Education and Conservation Centre' in Galle are scheduled for May and June The first program is planned for 2<sup>nd</sup> May at Udugama Maha Vidyalaya.

### **Discussion Series on current issues**

In order to facilitate the information sharing and dialogue among different stakeholders in Disaster Risk Reduction, the Ministry of Disaster Management & Human Rights together with UNDP will sponsor jointly with the Environmental Committee a series of discussions on current issues.. The first programme will be on 'Climate change impacts on the paddy cultivation and adaptation options' with Mr. Shan Wijethunga as facilitator and with a panel of five resource persons on 9<sup>th</sup> May at SLAAS Auditorium.

## Media Resource Service

### **A Seminar in collaboration with Institute of Environmental Professionals (Sri Lanka) on 'Carbon Trading: A Myth or a Reality'**

*Venue: Ceylon Continental Hotel*

*Date: First week of May Time: 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.*

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 5.00 p.m. | Registration of Participants   |
| 5.30 p.m. | Welcome address by Mr. V.K. Nanayakkara, President, Institute of Environmental Professionals   |
| 5.40 p.m. | 'CDM Process, Application and Issues'<br>Dr. Suren Batagoda, Director General/Finance and Public Enterprises<br>Ministry of Finance and Planning |
| 6.10 p.m. | 'International Perspective in CDM Applications, Issues and Way Forward'<br>Mr. Santhosh Jayaram, CDM Expert, DNV                                 |
| 6.35 p.m. | 'Practical Experience in applying for CDM'<br>Mr. Asela Iddagoda, CEO, Geocycle Unit, Holcim Pvt. Ltd.   |
| 7.00 p.m. | Panel Discussion   |
| 7.30 p.m. | End of Seminar and dinner  |

**64<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Sessions: 01<sup>st</sup> - 06<sup>th</sup> December 2008**

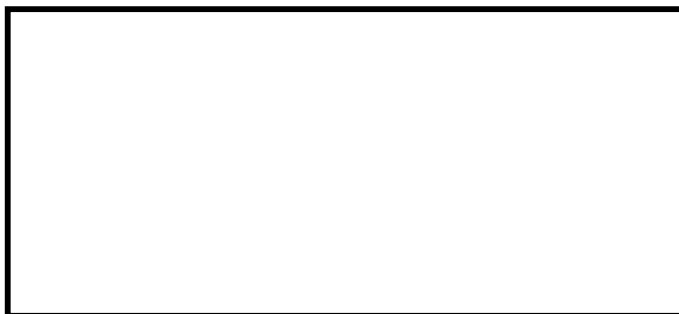
**THEME FOR THE YEAR 2008**  
**“SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE USE OF WATER RESOURCES”**

**Venue:** Faculty of Science, University of Colombo

## **Theme Seminar**

Date: Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008  
Venue: Sri Lanka Foundation Institute

To



**If undelivered, return to:**  
**Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science**  
**120/10 Wijerama Mawatha**  
**Colombo 7**