

# SSSSL Newsletter

SOIL SCIENCE SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA

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Volume 16

No. 1

September 2012

## Annual General Meeting 2011/12

The 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual sessions and Annual general meeting of the Soil Science Society was held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2012 at the SRICANSOL Resource Center, Faculty of Agriculture, Peradeniya with the participation of 60 members. The customary Joachim Memorial Lecture was delivered by Dr. Priyantha Weerasinghe, Head, Division of Agricultural Chemistry, HORDI, Gannoruwa. During his lecture entitled "Integrated Plant Nutrient Management - Present experience and Future Challenges", Dr. Weerasinghe shared his research experiences with the audience highlighting the future prospects of IPNS with special reference to Sri Lanka.

The Joachim Memorial Lecture was followed by the technical session. Three members of the soil science society presented their research findings in their areas of expertise. Dr. D.N. Samaraweera, Research officer, Department of Export Agriculture delivered a presentation on 'Adsorption and desorption of Soil Sulphur' highlighting the importance of managing soil S to maintain a favorable soil productivity. Dr. W.S. Dandeniya, Lecturer, University of Peradeniya discussed the recent evolutions of microbiological perspectives of soil nitrogen management during her presentation entitled "Revisiting the Nitrogen Cycle in rice cropping systems". Mrs. P. Loganathan, Senior Lecturer, Vavuniya Campus, University of Jaffna made a presentation on "Effect of Sesbania, Gliricidia and Sunhemp on the productivity of onion and nitrate leaching in Reddish Brown Soil". The technical session ended with a fruitful discussion.

## Felicitations of ESAFS10 Organizing Committee



The tremendous team work of the SSSSL members has been the key to the success of 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the East and South East Asia Federation of Soil Science Societies (ESAFS) held in Sri Lanka. ESAFS10 conference paved the way to take the SSSSL to the international arena and during the presidential address Prof. S.P. Indraratne hailed the efforts of the members who actively contributed towards the conference. As a token of the appreciation, certificates were awarded to Prof. S.P. Indraratne (President ESAFS10), Mrs. Shifaya Maraikar (General Secretary ESAFS10), chairpersons and members of the four ESAFS10 subcommittees. The Director General of Agriculture, Mr. K. N. Mankotte handed over the certificates.

## Field Visit to Kalpitiya

After the Annual General Meeting, members left on a field trip to Kalpitiya. About forty members participated. En-route to Kalpitiya, members explored the soil and landscape changes. The evening out at Kalpitiya Coastal Environmental Centre brought a new experience for the participants. Members had the opportunity to study a Regosol profile at the Regional Agricultural Station (RARS), Kalpitiya.



Dr. H. B. Nayakkorale describes the Regosol profile

Participants also visited farmer fields in Kalpitiya, the St. Anne's shrine at Talawila and coal power plant at Norochcholai. The society is thankful to members Mr. S.B. Ananda Weerawarna (ROIC, RARS, Kalpitiya), Mr. A.H. Kulasiri and Mr. V. P. Neil Perera (Assistant General Managers, CIC Agribusiness (Pvt) Ltd) for making our stay in Kalpitiya both enjoyable and comfortable. The society acknowledges with gratitude the generous sponsorship provided by CIC Agribusiness (Pvt) Ltd, towards the field trip.



Visit to Sri Vijaya coal power plant at Norochcholai

## Upcoming Events

- The midterm technical session : 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012 at SRICANSOL Resource Centre. After, members can join the field trip to Vavuniya
- Awarding ceremony of the AIC international recognition award 2012: 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012 at SRICANSOL Resource Centre

## SSSSL Member wins AIC International Recognition Award 2012



SSSSL is glad to announce that one of its members Ms. Shifaya Maraikar has been awarded the prestigious Agriculture Institute of Canada (AIC) international recognition award 2012. This annual award honors individuals and organization who have made outstanding contribution to the improvement of agriculture in the Developing world.

Ms. Maraikar joined the Department of Agriculture (DOA) in 1973 and served as a soil scientist for almost 35 years. . She has made significant contributions to the field of Soil Science through field and laboratory research and knowledge dissemination.

Ms. Maraikar joined the SSSSL in 1974 and served as the Editor (2002 to 2004), General Secretary (2010 – 2012) and member of Executive Committee several times. Further she served as a member of the Steering Committee of the SRICANSOL 1 and 2 Projects. She extended her services as a Team leader of a sub program of the SRICANSOL 2 Project, she extended her services to develop a Soil Management Information System for the rice-vegetable cropping systems in Neelawala, Marassana, for better land and resource management. Mrs. Maraikar has also made a considerable effort towards the betterment of local civil society through involvements such as Gender Equality Mainstream (GEM) Working Group of the Agriculture Institute of Canada. As general secretary of SSSSL, Ms. Maraikar played an active role in organizing workshops and other activities, serving as the General Secretary for the ESAFS10 conference hosted by SSSSL.

The Award ceremony will be held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012 at the SRICANSOL Resource Centre, Peradeniya. The society congratulates Ms. Maraikar for bringing recognition to the Society by winning this prestigious award.

### SSSSL New Office Bearers: 2012/2013

Following members were elected to the executive committee during the AGM for the year 2012/2013

**President:** Dr. P. Weerasinghe  
**Vice President:** Dr. R.S. Dharmakeerthi  
**General Secretary:** Mr. M.G.T.S. Amarasekara  
**Treasurer:** Mr. Upali Yapa  
**Editor:** Dr. U. W. A. Vitharana  
**Auditor:** Dr. W. M. J. Bandara

#### **Committee Members**

Prof. Srimathi. P. Indraratne  
Ms. Shifaya Maraikar  
Dr. D.N. Samaraweera  
Mr. L.R.M.C. Liyanage  
Dr. I. Wijebandara  
Dr. W.S. Dandeniya  
Mr. A.H. Kulasiri  
Mrs. D.M.P.S. Dissanayake  
Mr. C.K. Wickramasinghe  
Mr. Chamila Perera

## SSSSL participated in the Centenary Exhibition

The SSSSL participated in the national agriculture exhibition and farmer week 2012 held at the Agro Technological Park, Gannowra during 20<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> July to mark the centenary celebrations of the Department of Agriculture. President SSSSL Dr. Priyantha Weerasinghe and Editor Dr. U. W. A. Vitharana, coordinated this activity and the society took this opportunity to disseminate scientific knowledge and gathered by the society. This was a very successful activity which allowed us to expand our audience by selling a large number of the society publications. . Coordinators express their gratitude to the Director General of Agriculture for permitting the society to participate at this event and for providing the necessary facilities. The cooperation of SSSSL members who helped to run the stall is also gratefully acknowledged.



SSSSL bookstall at the Agriculture Exhibition - 2012

### Notices

#### **Request for Research Articles!!!**

The members who wish to publish their research articles in the SSSSL vol.24 are kindly requested to submit their manuscript on or before 30<sup>th</sup> October 2012.

#### **Request for news items!!!**

The society kindly request the members to submit news items for the newsletter Vol 16 No 2 on or before 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

#### **Request for updated member information!!!**

The society is in the process of the SSSSL membership data base. Please provide following information

- Name, membership number
- Affiliation and research interests
- Contact information: email address and mobile telephone number.

Please send your contributions and member information to editor, Dr. U.W.A. Vitharana, email: [uvithara@yahoo.com](mailto:uvithara@yahoo.com)

## SSSSL has become an International Partner for Global Soil Partnership and Asian Soil Partnership



Global Soil Partnership (GSP) for Food Security and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation is a new initiative of FAO. GSP was formally launched on the 7<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> September 2011 with the support of the European Commission.

GSP aims towards the collaboration and sharing of responsibilities with partners (International agencies and projects, soil science societies, National soil research institutes and universities, civil society organizations and private sector) so as to provide a coherent framework for joint strategies and actions for the sustainable and productive use of the soil resources of the world.

Soil scientists from 16 Asian countries/regions along with international/national institutes and others with an interest in advancing the science and technology of soil information in Asia assembled in Nanjing, China, from February 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012, to explore opportunities and applications of the emerging GSP. President SSSSL, Prof. S.P. Indraratne and SSSSL member Prof. R. B. Mapa represented Sri Lanka at this conference.



**Participants of the launch of Global Soil Partnership's Asia Soil Science Network**

The participants agreed to establish the Asian Soil Partnership (ASP) and support the vision and mission of Global Soil Partnership. Through the joint efforts of the representatives, the "Asian Soil Partnership Program Nanjing Communiqué" was drafted and signed in the meeting on February 11, 2012. Many consensus were reached and the following four points were regarded as something to be given priority to:

- share and transfer soil knowledge and new technologies inside and outside the region
- provide soil information related to the sustainable use of soil and land resources for each interested party;
- establish the standard and constantly updated Asian soil information system and support the construction of the global soil information system such as the "GlobalSoilMap.net";
- train a new generation of experts in the soil science and land management fields.

## SSSSL Joins Hands with ASP to Develop Updated Global Digital Soil Map

SSSSL signed an agreement to contribute towards updating the Global Digital Soil Map. This activity is implemented by the Asia Soil Partnership under the Global Soil Partnership action pillar "Strengthening Soil Data and Information". The executive committee of SSSSL nominated the member, Prof. R.B. Mapa as the local coordinator of ASP and also of this activity. President SSSSL, Dr. Priyantha Weerasinghe and Prof. R.B. Mapa signed the relevant agreement on behalf of SSSSL.

## International Symposium on Managing Soils for Food Security and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation



Several SSSSL members participated at the International Symposium on Managing Soils for Food Security and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation held on 23<sup>rd</sup> -27<sup>th</sup>

July, 2012 in Vienna, Austria. This conference was held under the joint FAO/IAEA program on Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture with the objective of communicating existing scientific and technological developments, to identify current gaps in knowledge and to discuss ways in which soils can be better managed to meet the challenge of protecting food security through the dual approach of climate change adaptation and mitigation. Former ESAFS president, Prof. S.P. Indraratne co-chaired the opening session of the conference. SSSSL members Prof. S.P. Indraratne, Dr. S.P. Nissanka and Dr. U.W.A. Vitharana contributed with poster presentations.

## New Members

During last year professionals from different institutions have obtained life membership of the Society. We warmly welcome them to the society and expect their active participation in society activities and to popularize soil science in Sri Lanka. Details of the new members are:

No.	Name	Affiliation
1	Ms. W.M.K.R. Wickramasinghe	Temporary Lecturer, Dept. Soil Science, University of Peradeniya
2	Ms. P.G. Synthya	Research Assistant
3	Mr. V. Kokulan	Temporary Lecturer Dept. Soil Science, University of Peradeniya
4	Ms. P.G.I.A. Karunaratne	Temporary Demonstrator Dept. Soil Science, University of Peradeniya
5	Mr. D.S.N. Samaratunga	Development Assistant
6	Mr. Kamal Mankotte	Former Director General of Agriculture
7	Dr. Chaminda Egodawaththa	Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Agriculture, Rajarata University.

## Publications of the Society

The membership of the SSSSL has made a considerable contribution for the development of new knowledge and also for the popularization of soil science in Sri Lanka. The wealth of publications made by the membership clearly reflects their effort. Now, these publications are available for sale at the SRICANSOL Resource Centre. Please contact the editor SSSSL, Dr. U.W. A. Vithrarana (Tel: 0718386063) for orders. Please note the books will be available for sale at the Midterm Technical Sessions that will be held on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2012.

### Books available for sale

Soils of the dry zone of Sri Lanka (Morphology ,characterization and classification ) Editors: R.B. Mapa et al	Price: Rs. 300/=
Soils of the wet zone of Sri Lanka (Morphology ,characterization and classification ) CD-rom Editors: R.B. Mapa et al.	Price: Rs.200/=
Soils of the wet zone of Sri Lanka (Morphology ,characterization and classification ) Sinhala and Tamil Translations	
Soils of the intermediate zone of Sri Lanka (Morphology ,characterization and classification ) Editors: R.B. Mapa et al.	Price: Rs. 300/=
Soils of the intermediate zone of Sri Lanka (Morphology ,characterization and classification ) Sinhala and Tamil Translations	
Manual of soil sampling and analysis Editors: R.S. Dharmakeerthi et al.	Price: Rs. 400/=
Potassium as a nutrient for rice cultivation in Sri Lanka( A status review) Editors: S. L. Amarasiri et al	Price: Rs. 100/=
Field characterizations of soils (CD) Editors: Varuni M. Jayalath et al	Price: Rs. 100/=
C.R. Panabokke A doyen of soil science Editor: R.S. Dharmakeerthi	Price: Rs. 100/=
Proceedings of the 10 <sup>th</sup> International conference of the East and South East Asia federation of soil science societies (Soil a precious natural resource: Agricultural ecosystems, environmental health and climate change) editor-in-chief: R. S. Dharmakeerthi	Price: Rs. 50/=
Use of phosphorus and potassium fertilizers in Sri Lankan Agriculture Editors: D. Kumaragamage et al.	Price: Rs. 50/=
Journal of the soil science society of Sri Lanka (Vol. 7,8,9,10,11,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22)	Price: Rs. 50/=
Maps of Distribution of benchmark soils in the Wet zone and Intermediate zone of Sri Lanka (Available in English, Sinhala and Tamil languages)	Price: Rs. 100/=
Landslides of Sri Lanka and minimizing ways (Sinhala) Editor: T. Samarasinghe	Price: Rs. 50/=
Soils of Sri Lanka and their distribution (Sinhala) Author: R.B. Mapa	Price: Rs. 50/=
Nutrient requirement and identification of nutrient deficiencies of rice cultivation (Sinhala) Author : W.M. J. Bandara	Price: Rs. 50/=
Protection of soil and water in the dry zone Author: P.B. Dharmasena	Price: Rs. 50/=



“Food on our table, water in our bottle and air in our room can be well connected to the nature’s gift to us that we call soil, and that a compelling case can be made to promote the integrated studies of earth’s *Critical Zone* in order to advance soil science and sharpen its contributions to the society and science at large”

Henry Lin, The future of Soil Science,2006