

International Conference of Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (ICSUSL) 2015 

19th and 20th November 2015

Berjaya Hotel Colombo, Sri Lanka

The International Conference of Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka is a key event of the university's efforts in disseminating knowledge to a wider community. As the fifth biennial international conference hosted by Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, this year's effort is distinctive as it provides a forum for researchers and scientists to present their research outputs and share experiences in issues that are timely and relevant both from research and policy perspectives. Firstly, it helps to endorse the objective of bringing together researchers, practitioners, policymakers and all other interested personnel. Secondly, it attempts to identify policy issues related to its theme and to elaborate on them. Thirdly, it will provide opportunity to strengthen the research capacity among participants. It will also help to build a network of researchers and policymakers to sustain a healthy dialogue. Researchers and policymakers are invited to bring the most current knowledge to be shared with a wider audience.

Theme of ICSUSL 2015: Challenges beyond Food Security

Feeding ever increasing world population to satiety has become the most daunting task of the century in the aftermath of ever increasing demand for food, shrinking the extent of arable lands, decreasing potential food production from natural resources, global warming, pollution, and consequences of human interventions. Hence, food security is of prime concern in most part of the globe for centuries.

In the process of achieving food security, overwhelming evidences of food borne illnesses and hazards accumulate, raising the unanswered question "Are we consuming safe food?" Ever since these occurrences of food borne illnesses surfaced, attention of the scientific community is evenly, if not more, focused on food safety than food security. Understanding the significance of both of them in the context of "Providing safe food for everybody" the theme of our conference surfaced as "Challenges beyond food security". This conference is therefore focused on one of the most attended areas of the research arena both at national and international context. This theme was sub-divided into 13 thematic areas for the convenience of interested authors to submit their extended abstracts and listed below.

- Food safety challenges
- Food, environment and public health
- Biodiversity and ecosystem services for food base
- Post harvest handling and food preservation
- Quality standards and food management systems
- Nutrition and food security
- Food production, distribution, accessibility and utilization
- Agricultural systems and genetic diversity to underpin food security
- Climate change and food systems
- Food culture, social values and mass media
- Policy directions for food security and safety
- Geo-Spatial applications for food and agriculture

Collaborative researchers both at the national and international level helped us in many ways, including defining the thematic areas, advising on various technical needs, popularizing the conference in international arena, submitting abstracts, being reviewers and guest editors and accepting our invitations to render their service at the conference. In the process of making this event a successful international conference, eight foreign scientists agreed to deliver invited presentations.

Abstract Submission and Reviewing Process

Extended abstracts were invited from all interested researchers from the above thematic areas. Web-based publicity was given into different circles of food science and related organizations around the world. National universities and research stations were also informed both by web-based and printed means. Authors were directed to the conference website for abstract guidelines and submission procedure. Only the electronic submissions to the conference management system or by email were accepted for further processing. ELSEVIER *Procedia Food Science* template was made available for authors for making it easier to adhere to the given guidelines.

Total of 142 extended abstracts were submitted to the conference management system by various authors, including affiliations from many international universities, research stations, national research stations and universities.

Submitted extended abstracts were subjected to electronically facilitated double-blind reviewing system. Collaborative scientists, both international and national, supported this in various ways. Scientific committee of ICSUSL 2015 was responsible for defining the thematic areas of the received abstracts and allocating them for minimum two reviewers per each abstract. Priority in reviewing was given to collaborative international and national scientists while an alternative third reviewer was appointed to facilitate the process. Received reviewer comments were communicated to authors in due course and if not rejected by reviewers, they were given conditional acceptance and a grazing period for adjusting their work to the suggestions made by reviewers. This process was monitored by the editorial board of ICSUSL, whereby thematic area specialists collectively decided on the adequacy or inadequacy of addressing reviewers comments. When further improvements were needed, authors were communicated to do so until the desired outcome was evident. After completion of this process authors were notified on the acceptance or rejection of their extended abstract for the conference. Only the presented abstracts were made available for publishing with ELSEVIER *Procedia Food Science*, which came down to the number of extended abstracts to 62. Guest editors, together with the editorial board fine-tuned the whole process of making these abstract into the present format.

Conference Program

19th November 2015

- **14.00 hrs – 18.00 hrs Pre-conference discussion on Chronic Kidney Disease of uncertain etiology (CKDu)**

“CKDu: causes, consequences and remedies – a way forward”

Rationale: CKDu has received a growing concern in medical circles ever since it was reported decades ago in Sri Lanka. At its present ugly look, CKDu seems untamed, leaving several thousands of patients struggling for their lives and even more numbers undetected. A concerted and multifaceted effort has inevitably become “the need of the day” for the catastrophic effect of CKDu, focusing on identifying causes and preventive measures, evaluating consequences and finding remedies. Understanding the fact that researchers sitting on argumentative facts would not be the best approach for affected patients and their families, we here brought about various facts and ideologies into a common platform to produce a seed effort for the said purpose, hoping it to be germinated in time, with the inputs of the participants.

Participants and the outcome

Eminent researchers from the universities, medical and other institutes, industrial scientists, policymakers, WHO and FAO representatives and many other interested stakeholders participated into the discussion. It was highlighted that there are many hypotheses for the root-causes to CKDu and still many of them did not go beyond the level of hypothesis. Initiating multidisciplinary research was urged from all stakeholders to counter this obstacle, while appreciating the dialog created in the discussion. Despite different viewpoints on the already completed research and

outcomes, everybody agrees to work on a common platform keeping their leads as such. The discussion was concluded highlighting the need of collaborative efforts from all interested groups.

- **18.00 hrs – 21.00 hrs Inauguration ceremony, cultural performances and conference dinner**

Prof. Mieke Uyttendaele delivered the keynote speech on “Challenges in food safety as part of food security: lessons learnt on food safety in a globalized world”

- **Scientific sessions – 20th November 2015**

8.00 – 9.00 hrs	Registration
9.00 - 9.30 hrs	Key note Speech – Prof. K.K.D.S. Ranaweera: Challenges of food safety and security
9.30 – 10.00 hrs	Tea
10.00 – 12.30 hrs	Technical sessions (4 parallel sessions)
12.30 – 13.30 hrs	Lunch
13.30 - 16.30 hrs	Technical sessions (4 parallel sessions)
16.30 hrs	Closing and evening tea

After delivering their respective invited speeches, following resource persons chaired each of the eight sessions. Each session was followed by a posted discussion.

Speaker	Title of the speech
Prof. Peter Bossier	Microbial community management in aquaculture
Prof. Iddya Karunasagar	International risk assessments leading to the development of food safety standards
Dr. Jogeir Toppe	The risks and benefits of fish consumption
Prof. Indrani Karunasagar	The new challenges of food security- need for forging interdisciplinary collaboration
Prof. Liesbeth Jacxsens	The use of risk ranking to set priorities in tackling food safety issues
Dr. Finbarr Horgan	Applying ecological engineering for sustainable and resilient rice production systems
Dr. Patrick O’Relley	Complexity in small holder agriculture and its implications for food policy interventions
Prof. Chandrani Liyanage	Nutritional Security in Sri Lanka

- **Post-conference Discussion “Future Directions for Aquaculture in Sri Lanka” – 20th November 2015 – 18.00 hrs onwards**

Rationale: Fisheries and aquaculture industry in Sri Lanka are facing multiple challenges for their sustainability in the context of business and expansion. Hence, present problems of the industry need to be addressed with a far-sighted vision, for which, a forum of technical expertise and industry experiences should come together. Objective of this discussion was to combine the ideas of national and international experts to cater the needs arising from the industry.

Participants and the outcome

Fishery and aquaculture industry stakeholders were invited to take part in this discussion, together with policymaking influentials. National and international experts from research stations and universities participated in helping the industry for sustainable solutions. Problems faced by the industry, mainly focusing on disease control and product quality improvements in seafood production and processing were discussed in detail and the need of further collaboration with the industry was highlighted.

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Dr. Chaminda Niroshan Walpita

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- Prof. Dr.ir. Liesbeth Jacxsens. Ghent University, Belgium.
- Prof. Harold Corke. University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.
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- Prof Sayed Azam Ali. Crops for the Future, The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus, Malaysia.
- Dr. Sean Mayes. Crops for the Future, Associate Professor, Crop Genetics at the University of Nottingham, United Kingdom.
- Prof. Sue Walker. Agrometeorology and Ecophysiology, Crops for the Future.
- Prof Peter Williams. Glyndŵr University, United Kingdom.
- Dr. Saman Seneweera. University of Southern Queensland, Australia.

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- Prof. K.K.D.S. Ranaweera. University of Sri Jayawardanapura, Sri Lanka
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- Dr. Terrence Madhujith. University of Peradeniya.
- Dr. Renuka Silva. Wayamba University of Sri Lanka.
- Prof. Udith K Jayasinghe-Mudalige. Wayamba University of Sri Lanka.
- Dr. C.K.Beneragama. University of Peradeniya.

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