



Biochar: Cultivating Innovation at the Intersection of Science, Research, and Technology

29. 4. 2024 from 10:00AM in room D424



Prof. Meththika Suharshini Vithanage

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Prof. Meththika Vithanage stands as a luminary in the realm of Natural Resources, heralding a transformative era in environmental research and academia. As the esteemed Professor and founding director of the Ecosphere Resilience Research Centre at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka, her pioneering vision has propelled her to the forefront of global scholarship. Prof. Vithanage's influence extends far beyond her home institution, as evidenced by her roles as an Adjunct Professor at the Institute of Agriculture, University of Western Australia, and the National Institute of Fundamental Studies, Sri Lanka. Recently appointed as an Eminent Visiting Scientist at the Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences, India, she continues to illuminate pathways for innovative research and collaboration. With a multifaceted academic background spanning water chemistry, environmental remediation, microplastics, and waste biomass conversion, Prof. Vithanage has earned international acclaim for her groundbreaking contributions. Her induction as a Fellow of the National Academy of Sciences in Sri Lanka (NASSL) in 2022 underscores her exceptional scholarship and leadership in the field. Recognized as a Highly Cited Researcher by Clarivate, she epitomizes excellence, ranking within the top 0.1% of highly cited scientists globally. Prof. Vithanage's accolades, including the prestigious Fayzah M. Al-Kharafi award from The World Academy of Science (TWAS) in 2020 and the Most Outstanding Senior Researcher in Physical Sciences award by the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Directors, Sri Lanka, attest to her unwavering commitment to scientific excellence. With a prolific publication record comprising over 250 SCI-indexed journal articles, 60 book chapters, and 10 co-edited books published by esteemed publishers such as Elsevier, Springer, Wiley, and CRC Press, her scholarship continues to shape the landscape of environmental science. Dr. Vithanage's citation record, exceeding 24,000 with an H-index of 76, reflects the profound impact of her research on global discourse and practice. As Chairperson of the Young Scientists Forum and recipient of the Best Young Scientist award from the National Science and Technology Commission, Sri Lanka, she empowered the next generation of scholars to push the boundaries of knowledge and innovation. In addition to her scholarly achievements, Prof. Vithanage is passionate on science popularization, having authored over 100 newspaper articles and 5 books aimed at engaging school children and the general public with the wonders of science. Prof. Vithanage's legacy as one of the foremost authorities on biochar and microplastic research, and her tireless pursuit of excellence, inspire and illuminate the path forward for environmental research worldwide.