



# CHAMPIKA ELLAWALA KANKANAMGE

*Asia & the Pacific*

Environmental engineering

Senior Lecturer,  
Dept. of Civil and Environmental Engineering  
University of Ruhuna

Matara, Sri Lanka

Dr. Champika Ellawala Kankanamge works on ecosystem conservation and pollution control. Her current research efforts are focused on controlling invasive macrophytes (aquatic plants) in river ecosystems, by restoring shade and encouraging the natural resistance of native plants to invasive species. By understanding the behavior of aquatic plants in response to changes in environmental conditions, her research will help to control ecosystem degradation. She additionally works on assessing pollution levels in aquatic ecosystems. Specifically, she is studying the levels of heavy metals in edible fish and shellfish in Sri Lanka's Batticaloa lagoon, which serves as the main source of seafood for the local community.

Dr. Ellawala Kankanamge was born in Matara, Sri Lanka. She started her career as an engineer after graduating from the University of Moratuwa with a degree in civil engineering in 2005. Soon after beginning to work as an engineer, she decided to continue her education, and obtained a PhD from Saitama University, Japan in 2011. She joined the University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka as a Senior Lecturer attached to the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering just after the completion of her PhD. Since then, she has served as a teacher and supervisor for many undergraduate and postgraduate students. In 2013, she received the Sri Lankan President's award for scientific publications.

Dr. Ellawala Kankanamge collaborates with the Eastern University in Sri Lanka for her research on the Batticaloa lagoon, in addition to research collaborations with other government institutions. She has conducted research studies in Sri Lanka, Japan and New Zealand. Her research has been published in high-impact journals including the *Journal of Environmental Sciences*, *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, *Flora*, *Aquatic Botany*, *Aquatic Ecology* and *Hydrobiologia*. Results of her studies will contribute to local and global freshwater ecosystem conservation.

“ Receiving this prestigious award proved to me that my efforts were valued and my work has been recognized. It will help me to continue and also to encourage young girls in advancement of their career. ”