

**Faculty Talk: Insightful Seminar Series**  
**Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries, and Nutrition**  
**Wayamba University of Sri Lanka**

**Topic**

**Human Elephant Conflict in and around Maduruoya National Park, Sri Lanka**

**Overview**

The *Asian elephant* (*Elephas maximus*) is the largest terrestrial megaherbivore in Sri Lanka, with a distribution that spans nearly the entire island, excluding five districts. The 2024 national census estimated the country's elephant population at 7,462 individuals. Within this population, Maduru Oya National Park—an isolated protected area covering parts of Polonnaruwa, Badulla, Monaragala, and Ampara districts—supports approximately 1,573 wild elephants. Significantly, five reservoirs constructed under the Mahaweli Project during the 1980s occupy 16% of the park's total area. The surrounding landscape is heavily dominated by agriculture, creating conditions for intense Human–Elephant Conflict (HEC). Between 2019 and 2023, 101 elephant deaths and 14 human fatalities were recorded within a 5 km buffer zone around the park. The primary causes of elephant mortality included improvised explosive devices (“Hakka Patas”), gunshot wounds, and electrocution. Addressing this conflict requires a strategic balance in resource sharing, as the ongoing competition directly threatens the livelihoods, safety, and food security of both human and elephant populations.

**Speaker**

**Mrs. Chandani Wilson (SLSS), Deputy Director (Research and Training), Department of Wildlife conservation, Colombo, Sri Lanka**



**Ms. Chandani Wilson** received her BSc (Honours) degree from University of Sri Jayewardenepura and a Postgraduate Diploma in Wildlife Management from the Wildlife Institute of India. She earned her MSc in Forestry and Environmental Management from University of Sri Jayewardenepura and is currently pursuing her PhD at Wayamba University of Sri Lanka.

She has authored numerous articles in magazines on wildlife conservation and has been actively engaged in research within the field. With 28 years of experience at the Department of Wildlife Conservation, Ms. Wilson has contributed extensively to conservation initiatives. She also served as the former Director of the Biodiversity Secretariat at the Ministry of Environment. Since joining the Department of Wildlife Conservation in 1998, she has played a key

role in various programs both in Sri Lanka and abroad, demonstrating her commitment to advancing wildlife conservation efforts.

**Moderator**

**Prof. W.A. Harindra Champa, Chairperson, Research Development and Publication Committee, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka.**

**Date & Time**

**11:30 AM – 12.00 noon on 06<sup>th</sup> Maay 2026**

**Venue**

**Aquaculture & Fisheries Lecture Room, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition**

**Contact**

**For inquiries, please contact Prof. W.A. Harindra Champa, Chairman, RDPC, FLFN, WUSL.  
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**Organized by: Research, Development and Publication Committee**  
**Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries, and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka**