

**A report on
International conference on Environmental Health and Resilience – 2026
(ICEHR2026)**

The Department of Zoology, Faculty of Science, University of Jaffna (UoJ), Sri Lanka and the Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC) of the Scott Christian College (Autonomous), Nagercoil, India jointly organized 'the *International Conference on Environmental Health and Resilience – 2026 (ICEHR 2026)*' in collaboration with Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India; Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), Tirupattur, Tamil Nadu, India; and Azenra Global, Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu, India from 9– 12 February 2026. The first day of the conference was conducted at the University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka and Day 2 to 4 conducted in hybrid mode such as field sessions in Sri Lanka and online sessions including keynote addresses and abstract presentations from India.

The inaugural session took place at the Hoover Auditorium, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna, on Monday, 09 February 2026, from 8.00 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. The inaugural session was graced by the presence of Prof. S. Srisatkunarajah (Vice Chancellor, UoJ); Rt. Rev. Dr. V. Pathmathayalan (Bishop of the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India); Prof. P. Ravirajan (Dean, Faculty of Science, UoJ); Prof. Sevvandijeyacody – the Guest of honour (Wayamba University of Sri Lanka); keynote speakers Dr. S. Wijeyamohan (University of Vavuniya), Dr. N. Richard Kennedy (Horticulture Research Station, India), and Prof. S. Kalidas (Department of Animal Science, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, India); Prof. D. Daniel Lawrence (Department of Physics, Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), India); Mr. Godwin Raja (CEO, Azenra Global, India); Mrs. P. Sivakumar (Head, Department of Zoology, UoJ); former Vice-Chancellors Prof. S. Mohanadas and Prof. N. Shanmugalingan; representatives from government institutions such as Central Environmental Authority, Forest Department, Coastal Conservation Department, NAQDA, Northern Provincial Department of Agriculture, Northern Department of Agriculture, foreign and local delegates from various universities and institutions, academics from the University of Vavuniya, Ocean University, and the academics and students of the UoJ. A total number of about 250 participants attended the event of which about 70 from foreign institutions.

The inaugural ceremony commenced at 8.30 a.m., following registration from 8.00 a.m., and began with the traditional lighting of the oil lamp. Prof. Thulasitha. W. Shanthakumar (Conference Chair ICEHR2026 - Sri Lanka, Department of Zoology, UoJ) delivered the welcome address followed by an introductory note by Dr. M. P. Jeyasekhar (Conference Chair ICEHR2026 - India & Associate Professor of Zoology, HRDC coordinator and Bursar, Scott Christian College (Autonomous), India) and an inaugural address by Prof. S. N. Surendran (Scientific Advisor ICEHR2026, Senior Professor and Chair of the Department of Zoology, UOJ), who highlighted the interdisciplinary integration of the conference focus areas.

The Dean, Faculty of Science, UoJ, Prof. P. Ravirajan emphasized the importance of addressing climate change through collaborative research initiatives. The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. S. Srisatkunarajah underscored the multidisciplinary nature of environmental health studies and appreciated the collaborative efforts of the Department of Zoology and partnering institutions.

The Bishop Rt. Rev. Dr. V. Pathmathayalan conveyed his blessings and best wishes for the success of the conference.

Prof. Rajendramani Gnanaeswaran (Advisory committee ICEHR2026- Sri Lanka, Department of Zoology, UoJ) introduced the guest of honour Prof. Sevvandi Jeyacody to the house. Prof. Sevvandi delivered her address, highlighting the importance of environmental sustainability and coastal vegetation in building resilience to climate change. Members of the head table were felicitated by the organizing committee.

Afterwards, the conference proceeding was officially released. The Vice Chancellor Prof. S. Srisatkunarajah received the first copy of the proceedings from the Conference Chair Dr. M. P. Jeyasekhar. At this conference, out of 111 abstracts submitted, 103 were accepted for publication following a rigorous double-blind review process.

Following the tea break, Dr. S. Wijeyamohan (Department of Bio-Science, University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka) delivered a keynote address on 'The Land That Protected Us: A Reflection on Development and Environmental Health in the North'; followed by Dr. N. Richard Kennedy (Horticulture Research Station, India) delivered an address on 'Multi-disciplinary approach in strengthening the environmental health and resilience; and Prof. S. Kalidas (Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, India) on 'Micro-plastic Pollution and Environmental Resilience: From emerging risk to global Biological Solutions'. The session concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Dr. A. S. Arthiyani (Conference secretary ICEHR2026 – Sri Lanka & Senior Lecturer, Department of Zoology, UoJ) followed by the conference Lunch at the hall next to the Hoover Auditorium, Faculty of Medicine, UoJ.

The scientific sessions were held across multiple venues from 2.00 pm to 4.15 pm within the Faculty of Science, including the Natural Science Block Lecture Hall I (1B), B2 Lecture hall (Department of Botany), Board Room of the Faculty of Science, P3 Lecture hall (Department of Physics), Social Welfare Centre and Z1 Lecture hall & the Special Laboratory of the Department of Zoology.

The technical sessions were organized into six disciplinary tracks, each led by designated chairpersons:

Environmental Health and Resilience	- Dr. Subajini Sivakanthan
Biological Sciences	- Prof. G. Mihunthan & - Mrs. P. Sivakumar
Health Sciences and Nutrition	- Prof. S. Kannathasan
Engineering, Technology and Management	- Prof. M. Thanishaichelvan
Physical and Chemical Sciences	- Prof. Sutharsini Ubenthiran
Social Sciences and Language & Literature	- Prof. Nalina Gnanavelrajah

The panel discussion on environmental health and resilience conducted simultaneously at the Library Auditorium of the University of Jaffna from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. The panel discussion featured subject experts from diverse fields representing academic institutions, government agencies, and the private sectors.

The valedictory session commenced at 4.20 p.m. at the Library Auditorium of the University of Jaffna. Prof. N. Pratheeparajah, (Professor in Geography – Climatology expert, Department of Geography, University of Jaffna) graced the event as guest of honour. Dr. D. Daniel Lawrence (Joint Organizing Chair-ICEHR2026, Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), India) delivered the welcome address. After that, Prof. N. Pratheeparajah delivered the valedictory address. The feedback session commenced with the note of Prof. T. Eswaramohan followed by participants who pointed out the strengths and areas to be improved. Subsequently, certificate awarding ceremony was conducted by Ms. R. Nithyagowry (Registration convener ICEHR2026- Sri Lanka, UoJ) and Dr. C. V. BrigetAnitha (Joint Organizing Secretary ICEHR2026, Scott Christian College, India). The best presenters for each scientific session were awarded with certificate and mementos as follows:

Environmental Health and Resilience	- Kajendralingam Kayavarnan, University of Jaffna.
Biological Sciences	- Ms. Vasuki Kirupanathan, University of Jaffna
Health Sciences and Nutrition	- Madhurahini Raveendran, University of Jaffna
Engineering, Technology and Management	- Deepak, D, Manipal Institute of Technology, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal- India
Physical and Chemical Sciences	- Senthilkumar Muthuswamy, School of Arts and Natural Sciences, Joy University, Thirunelvely, India.
Social Sciences and Language	- Stephan Kirubalini, University of Jaffna
Literature	- Sweetlyn Moses, Womens' Christian College, Chennai, India

Then, the conference report was submitted by Dr. Sharmila Juliet (Joint Conference Secretary ICEHR2026 – India); followed by the conference minutes was presented by Dr. Abyerami Sivaruban (Publication Convenor ICEHR2026- Sri Lanka, Department of Zoology, UOJ) and the concluding remarks were delivered by Mr. S. Godwin Raja (Organizing partner, CEO of Azenra Global, India). The valedictory session concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Dr. G. Anish S. Georshia (Joint Organizing Secretary ICEHR2026, Scott Christian College, India), marking the formal closure of the conference proceedings.

Day - 2

Day-2 programme was conducted at the Palmyrah Research Institute (PRI), Kaithady, Jaffna from 9.00 am to 11.00 am. About 70 participants from India and the University of Jaffna attended the session at PRI. Mr. Srivijendran, the Deputy Manager, PRI, and Ms. M. Subajini, Research Manager, PRI delivered the presentations about the PRI, importance of Palmyrah palm and the products, research & developmental activities. Prof. S. Mohanadas, the Chairperson of the PRI research division, Mr. Raveendran, Chairman of the Palmyrah Development Board and Dr. Suthakar, from PRI and Dr. Richard Kennady of the Horticulture Research Institute, Nargarcoil, India lead the discussion session. The importance of Palmyrah for the Environmental Health and Resilience in different aspects was discussed.

The parallel on-line session was commenced at 10.00 am hosted from Scott Christian College (Autonomous), India with the abstract presentations followed by a keynote address by Dr. M. Chithirai PonSelvan, Research Director and Head, School of Science and Engineering Curtin University, Dubai.

Further, as part of the conference, an interactive session for honours degree students of the Department of Zoology, UOJ with a research scholar in Ornithology Ms. Trizha Mondal from Central University of South Bihar, India was conducted from 4.30 pm to 5.30 pm at the Department of Zoology. Ms. Trisha delivered a talk on '*Guardians of the sky: Understanding Birds through Ornithology*' followed by a discussion with students and academic staff of the Department.

Day 3 and 4.

Day 3 was conducted at Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage in which Mr. Mihiran Medawala, The deputy director of the Elephant Orphanage, Pinnawala delivered an address. Simultaneously, on-line session of abstract presentations conducted from India.

Day 4 – the last day session was conducted at the National Museum, Colombo in the morning from 10.00 am to 11.15 am. Mrs. Sanuja Kasthuriarachchi, Director General of the National Museum, Colombo delivered an address about the museum and its services. The online session commenced at 8.00 – 9.30 pm in which a keynote address delivered by Dr. S. Shobana, Senior Scientist and Head, Diabetes Food Technology Madras Diabetes Research Foundation, India. Participants from India and Sri Lanka attended the online sessions. The conference was officially concluded with the vote of thanks by Dr. Sweetlyn Moses, Associate Professor and Head Department of English, Women's Christian College (Autonomous), India and the concluding remarks by Dr. S. Godwin Wesley, Principal Scientist, Scott Christian College (Autonomous), India.

The financial support to organize this conference was mainly given by the co-organizers Scott Christian College (Autonomous) India and the collaborators.

Sgd.

Prof. Thulasitha W. Shanthakumar
Conference Chair ICEHR2026 – Sri Lanka
Department of Zoology.

Sgd.

Dr. A. S. Arthiyan,
Conference Secretary ICEHR2026 – Sri Lanka
Department of Zoology

Photo Gallery

Day-1

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Day-2



Session at Palmyrah Research Institute, Kaithady, Jaffna, Sri Lanka



Interactive session between Ms. M. Trisha and honours degree students of the Dept. of Zoology, UoJ