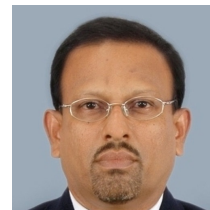


## Message from the Dean of the Faculty



It gives me a great pleasure to write this message to the web magazine 'Soil for Life' launched by the Department of Soil Science, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya. This initiative aims to improve the English language competences of undergraduate students. Faculty has taken different steps to improve proficiency of English of students while they are in the University. This exercise I consider as an opportunity for them to be aware of the latest developments in the field of soil science and learn how to disseminate scientific information in a laymen language. The articles also have synthesized information so that useful for the scientific community as well. The magazine has been designed by an undergraduate student beautifully and meaningfully. While congratulating the students for improving their skills, and I thank the staff members of the Department of Soil Science for their effort in improving essential skills of undergraduates through the ELTA-ELSE development project competitively won by the Department of Soil Science.

*Prof. Gamini Pushpakumara  
Dean/ Faculty of Agriculture  
University of Peradeniya*

## Message from the Head of the Department



In 2015, United Nations declared a World Soil Day (5th December) with the theme "Soil is Life". This was to generate awareness among the public and policymakers on the importance of the limited, nonrenewable and natural resource: the soil. Since then, many programs have been conducted by concerned people to create interest on soil resource which otherwise has been viewed as dirt by the general public. In this context, it is a pleasure to provide this message to the First Volume of the "Soil For Life" online magazine published by the Department of Soil Science, Faculty of Agriculture. Articles in this e-magazine has been written by undergraduates in the "Soil and Environment" majoring module at the Department of Soil Science under the activity on "Smart communication in English" in a ELTA-ELSE development project won by the Department of Soil Science. With the help of academic staff members of the Department and the ELTU of the Faculty of Agriculture, students have demonstrated their ability to present scientific information related to soil science in a way that even a layman can easily understand. These articles will not only help general public and policy makers to understand how a soil could contribute for the sustenance of life on earth, but also will help the writers to improve their English writing skills. I take this opportunity to congratulate all writers for their excellent contributions and encourage them to continue with such activities in the future as well. The commitment shown by all who supported this activity, especially Prof. W.A.U. Vitharana, the activity coordinator and Professor R.M.C.P. Rajapakse, the coordinator of the ELTA-ELSE development project, is also thankfully acknowledged. With this initiation, I wish "Soil and Environment" majoring module students can become excellent soil science communicators in time to come.

*Prof. R.S. Dharmakeerthi  
Head / Department of Soil Science  
Faculty of Agriculture  
University of Peradeniya*