

## Story of the Month

### Urban Wetlands Programme of SLWP



In order to reinforce the urban wetlands programme, SLWP working hand in hand with [‘Biodiversity Sri Lanka’](#)<sup>1</sup> funded by Sampath Bank and launched a one year project in October 2015, targeting the Bolgoda wetland - the largest natural fresh water lake in Sri Lanka. The activities include;

- A consultative workshop with stakeholders
- Three Workshops aimed at school children and the community
- A biodiversity assessment - data analysis and recommendations
- Development of a vulnerability index and mapping

#### **Biodiversity assessment**

Six sites have been identified for the assessment and an Inception Report was submitted in January 2016.

#### **Consultative Workshop on Conserving Bolgoda Wetland**

The workshop was held on 29 February at Yellow River Auditorium, International Water Management Institute (IWMI) in Colombo. Participants included the main state

Sri Lanka Water Partnership (SLWP) is working on urban wetlands since 2009 as a sequel to follow up on its floods programme. Partnered with the Universities of Moratuwa and Colombo, SLWP initiated several interventions and studies in the urban wetlands of *Kollonnawa*, *Heen-Ela* and *Bolgoda* in close collaboration with the Central Environment Authority (CEA), Sri Lanka Land Reclamation and Development Corporation (SLLRDC), Urban Development Authority (UDA) and other respective local authorities. Work has involved institutional capacity building and creating awareness among stakeholders and community on the need to control rapid environmental degradation in *Bolgoda* and other urban wetlands. Several programmes to mark World Water Day have also being held for school children aligned with the programme.

<sup>1</sup> Biodiversity Sri Lanka (BSL) is a tool to foster dialogue between the private sector and conservation agencies. The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce has joined together with IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) and Dilmah Conservation to launch the Platform aimed at providing valuable services to Sri Lankan businesses invested in sustainable development and conserving the natural resources of our country.

stakeholders from CEA, SLLRDC, UDA, Department of Irrigation, *Kesbewa* Divisional Secretariat and local authorities - the *Kesbewa Pradeshiya Sabhawa* and *Panadura* Urban Council. Several Community Based Organisations from *Bolgoda* and community leaders were also present among the 48 participants. Resource persons included Prof Deepthi Wickremasinghe (Team Leader) from the University of Colombo; Prof Champa Navaratne, University of Ruhuna and Ms Priyangani Gunathilaka, Deputy Director CEA. Following the interactive discussion the participants came up with practical suggestions to conserve *Bolgoda* Wetland.



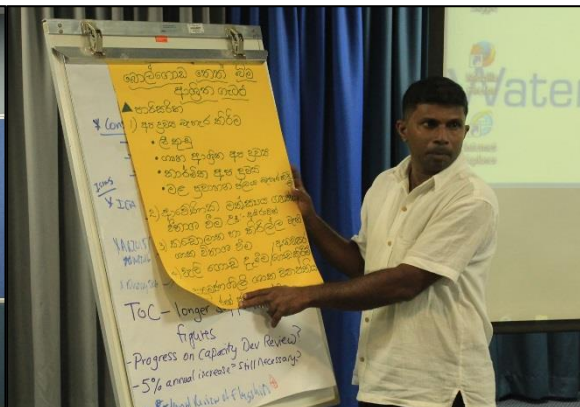
Ms Badra Kamaladasa, Chair, SLWP



Prof Deepthi Wickremasinghe, University of Colombo



A student from France



A participant from the Kesbewa Divisional Secretariat



Group discussions



A presentation conducted by a participant