



DR. SUMITH PILAPITIYA



Sumith Pilapitiya obtained his entire university education in the US where he obtained his Ph.D in Environmental Sciences from Rutgers University, in New Jersey. He was a Lead Environmental Specialist for the South Asia Environment and Natural Resources Unit of the World Bank. He has worked on environmental and wildlife conservation projects for the World Bank in South and East Asia as well as in Africa. He led a Regional Wildlife Project focusing on conservation of flagship species such as the tiger, elephant, snow leopard and one horned rhino in Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal. More recently, he was the Director General, Department of Wildlife Conservation, a position from which he resigned in June 2016 on matters of principle. He is a Consultant to the World Bank's Global Wildlife Program and other wildlife related programs.

He is South Asia's representative on the Technical Advisory Group of the Monitoring of the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) program and a member of the Asian Elephant Specialist Group. He was the former Chairman of the Presidential Committee appointed to "facilitate, oversee and monitor" the implementation of the National Action Plan for Human Elephant Conflict Mitigation. He has personal research interests in elephant conservation and in addressing the human elephant conflict. He is presently working on elephant social behavior in Minneriya/Kaudulla and Yala National Parks. He has been working on understanding signals, gestures and behavior of elephants, which includes visual and tactile communication of Sri Lankan elephants.