

Introduction

Many countries in the world, including countries in Asian region such as India and China have made enormous strides in the national development through timely and appropriate interventions of research and development.

A comprehensive plan of action to gainfully utilize knowledge of science and technology in search of solutions to the problems and issues prevailing in Sri Lanka has become an immediate priority today. Recognizing this requirement, the Ministry of Technology and Research in collaboration with the National Science and Technology Commission conducted several brainstorming sessions and discussions with the relevant stakeholders by adopting a participatory methodology and identified Ten Focus Areas on which research and development interventions are immediately needed. Expected outcomes of these interventions are either the enhancement of quality of life of the people or the enhancement of economic development of the country.

The ten focus areas that have been selected for research and development are:

1. Water
2. Food, Nutrition and Agriculture
3. Health
4. Shelter
5. Environment
6. Energy
7. Textile and Apparel
8. Mineral Resources
9. Information Communication Technology and Knowledge Services
10. Basic Sciences, Emerging Technologies and Indigenous Knowledge

It has been agreed that the above ten focus areas are the most important fields as far as the enhancement of the quality of life of the people and the economic development of the country are concerned. It is expected that through S&T interventions in the first five focus areas (1-5) the quality of life of the people can be enhanced. Through S&T interventions in the second five focus areas (6-10) the economic development of the country is expected to be accelerated.

Ten expert groups, each consist of around ten members have been appointed to identify, problems/issues in each focus area and R&D needs to address them under ten given intervention fields namely;

1. Policy Studies
2. Pure & Applied Research
3. Innovation
4. Information and Communication Technologies
5. Nanotechnology
6. Biotechnology
7. Indigenous Knowledge & Intellectual Property Rights
8. Testing, Standardization & Accreditation
9. Capacity Building
10. Popularization.

The ten groups have had 5-7 discussion sessions during the period January 2014 to June 2014. The preliminary report prepared by each group was presented to a wider expert group and incorporating the inputs received at such discussions a working document for each group was prepared to discuss at this conference.

This report has been compiled based on the details given in the ten working documents prepared by the expert groups. The introduction given under each focus area describes the rationale for selecting each focus area. The sub areas selected under each focus area and justifications for selecting them are given in **Table 1**. The issues/problems, research and development needs to solve/address them and the science and technology interventions needed are given in **Table 2**. The time frame for the implementation and key performance indicators for the R&D needs identified under relevant S&T interventions are given in **Table 3**. Only a sample page of Table 3 is included in this report as it is too unwieldy to include the full Table. The comprehensive reports of all ten focus areas including complete Table 3 will be made available in our web site (www.nastec.lk) for your reference.