

SCIENCE

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES



From Muddy Waters to Super Oysters: A Hong Kong Story of Innovation

 **November 5, 2026
(Thursday)**

 **6:15 – 7:15 pm (HKT)**

 **MWT6, Meng Wah
Complex, HKU**



Speaker

Professor Vengatesen Thiyagarajan (RAJAN)

Affiliations: The University of Hong Kong

- ▶ Director of Hong Kong Oyster Hatchery and Innovation Research Unit
- ▶ Professor of School of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Science
- ▶ Member of Swire Institute of Marine Science

Abstract

For centuries, Hong Kong's native oyster, an endemic and historically important species, has been farmed as a tasty, nutritious white-meat delicacy in the muddy waters of Deep Bay and along the South China coast. This century, our Hong Kong oysters have tolerated rapid industrial growth along coastal areas and associated coastal habitat changes, including climate change, pollution and eutrophication, but at the huge expense of their deserved economic value. Our collaboration with growers and industry produced a major breakthrough: a multiple stress-resilient and climate-change-tolerant super strain, HKU's Super Oyster. Today, growers have started earning more and looking forward to year-round harvests in salty coastal waters, thanks to a non-reproductive triploid oyster. In response, government and industry have joined forces to chart a sustainable farming path amid climate change. Come witness "HKU's Super Oyster", a climate-crushing, carbon-sucking, heritage-saving local delicacy, born in Deep Bay and bred by HKU scientists.

Biography

Rajan leads a research team at Hong Kong's first Oyster Hatchery & Innovation Research Unit (HKO-HIRU). He is a Professor of Biological Sciences, focusing on marine, aquaculture and food science. He is also Assistant Dean for Experiential Learning in the Faculty of Science. At HKO-HIRU, Rajan is pushing the boundaries of aquaculture technology—using genomic selection markers (SNP chips) and machine learning-assisted digital tools to make genomic breeding more accurate and, ultimately, to develop oyster strains that can tolerate climate change. His current focus is translational research for sustainable oyster aquaculture in China. Rajan is also a Founding Member of the Oyster Aquaculture Alliance for One Health and advises local and mainland governments on oyster aquaculture as part of the blue economy.

Details and
Registration



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