

**AGU Hydrological Sciences Award 2010**  
**Response by Murugesu Sivapalan**

Thanks Dennis, and thank you, Efi, for your citation and for your tireless efforts at nominating me (repeatedly). I am proud to be here, knowing what this means, and remembering what it took to get here.

I look back over the last 50 years – I think of many people, parents, teachers, friends and colleagues, in many continents, who helped open doors that would otherwise be closed. I think of my high school math teacher who picked me from the crowd and lifted me up. I think of Eric Wood for letting me into Princeton when 15 other places wouldn't. I think of Jorg Imberger who gave me my first academic job, when no one else would, on the basis of a failed interview at another place. The fact I am here is a fluke, really.

There is a famous Tamil saying: “you need a wall to paint a masterpiece”. That's what it feels to have a family like mine. I am grateful to my wife and sons for the love and support that was the backdrop to my success.

Most of all I want to dedicate this award to my students, some of whom are in the audience, who I have been proud to have as both my extra hands as well as my extra brains. They are the ladder upon which I have climbed up. I am grateful to them for sharing in my ideas and for sharing their ideas with me. I am especially delighted to be receiving this award on the same day that Ciaran Harman is receiving the Horton Research Grant: this couldn't have been better scripted.

In my younger days I used to get an earful from my sister, whose affection I cherish, along these lines: “in attempting to walk like the *swan*, the *crow* lost even its natural gait”, which (in simple English) means: “don't pretend to be somebody that you are not”. If there is one thing I can take credit for, it is that I have tried to be my own self, and not to imitate others, and to bend the hydrology that I do to my own personality. This has brought me enormous happiness. So, I am delighted to receive this award, and I thank you all for your support.