there are some new(ish) methods to speed up R. Some are really easy to use. For example, cmpfun() compiles your R code and makes it run faster. There is more about this on the web, but this website has a good summary:

http://www.noamross.net/blog/2013/4/25/faster-talk.html

For example:
cmpfun() works well .... when you are defining a new function that is mostly numerical manipulation. It doesn't help with functions that call a lot of other R functions, or involve manipulating and translating between data types. It also doesn't work well on already-defined R functions, which have been pre-compiled and are sometimes written in compiled languages like C.