

CIAT brings the African perspective to the 20th World Congress of Soil Science June 27, 2014 by Juliet Braslow

Issues affecting soil are global, and the world is now listening more than ever as today's food security and environmental challenges call for a need to better manage this vital, global resource. Leading soil experts met this month to share and discuss their cutting-edge science, and CIAT was right there to be sure that African and eco-efficiency issues were included. About two thousand soil experts from all over the globe converged on the Korean volcanic island of Jeju for one of the biggest soil events of the year, the World Congress of Soil Science. This scientific conference covers a broad range of soil-related topics, allowing scientists to share their most recent and interesting findings with their global peers. CIAT brought the African perspective to the discussion with a session on African Eco-Efficient Solutions to Food Insecurity and Climate Change. The nearly full house learned more about how soil science expertise can be applied to develop potential solutions to food production constraints, climate change impacts, and soil and land degradation in Africa. Presentations/topics included: eco-efficiency of integrated soil fertility management; an ecosystem services lens to bring a landscape scale perspective to land degradation problems; research aimed at reversing and mitigating land degradation through refocused investment by donors and governments; and, adoption of site-specific, equity-sensitive strategies. The discussion revolved around African solutions aimed at reversing land degradation, increasing sustainable intensification and making agriculture climate smart. "This session allowed us to share and discuss some of the important pieces of the puzzle to CIAT's eco-efficiency work" Rolf Sommer. View CIAT presentations from: Rolf Sommer, Senior Soil Scientist, on Eco-efficiency of integrated soil fertility management in Western Kenya Justine Cordingley, Postdoctoral Scientist, on Using an ecosystems approach for securing water and land resources in the Upper Tana Basin, Kenya Lulseged Desta, Soil Scientist, on Soil health in Southern Africa and implication on sustainable intensification: how much is the gap? Job Kihara, Agronomist, on Predicting crop yield and response to nutrients from soil spectra: example from sub-Saharan Africa Linking soil health to human health by CIAT Board member Charles Rice Other presentations during the CIAT- led session included: Approaches to buffer crop productivity under variable soil fertility and climatic conditions in sub-Saharan Africa by Shamie Zingore of IPNI (International Plant Nutrition Institute) Beyond vs. within the farm gate: nutrient and organic matter solutions to resource-constrained agriculture in Africa by Johannes Lehmann from Cornell University Helaina Black of the James Hutton institute spoke on Soils, ecosystem services and poverty alleviation? A case study from sub-Saharan Africa Richard Dick of Ohio State University presented Delivery of Hydrologic and Microbial Services by Indigenous Shrub Rhizospheres to Agroecosystems under a Changing Climate. Many of these presentations, including CIATs, will be published in a special edition of Nutrient Cycling in Agroecosystems Journal. - See more at:

<http://ciatblogs.cgiar.org/soils/ciat-brings-the-african-perspective-to-the-20th-world-congress-of-soil-science/#sthash.18GHy26V.dpuf>