



Agro Environ 2012

1-4 May 2012, Wageningen

Our world is changing at a increasing pace, producing many challenges that did not exist a generation ago. Through Environmental Sustainability of Agricultural Management Systems we have a chance to make changes to our impact and as such partly control environmental change and its societal impacts.

The challenges of increasing food production are daunting. Despite great agricultural advances, millions go hungry or live under threat of famine. Furthermore the impact of pollution and the degradation of natural resources threaten to limit gains in production and imperil sustainable agriculture. However, achieving sustainable agriculture will not be easy. Most of the best agricultural land is already under cultivation and worldwide water availability is falling rapidly. Future increases in production depend mainly on increasing the productivity of existing agricultural land and water resources using innovative ideas. Farmer involvement is the key to sustainable agriculture.

However, farmers will adopt systems that maintain or enhance the natural resource base only if these also provide a living. Given the right incentives and government support, farm families can make significant progress towards managing their land and water sustainably. Therefore, policy, economic and social issues, as well as the productivity of the land and the broader health of the environment, have to be considered when working towards environmental sustainability of agricultural management systems. The 8th edition of the Agro Environ will address the importance of finding the right balance between competitive agricultural production and the sustainable use of our environment.

The International Symposium Agro Environ 2012 is expected to have a broad and scientifically interesting program on: ‘Environmental Sustainability of Agricultural Management Systems in an Ever Changing World’. This gathering will offer a platform where innovative ideas, knowledge, experience and concerns of all people, professionals and institutions involved within the field of innovative agricultural management options, models as tool to understand agro-environmental processes and to support policy development can be presented in a dynamic way

Since 3rd world countries often fail to profit from modern advances in agricultural and environmental management, the Land Degradation and Development Group feels a commitment to share knowledge with young academics from developing countries. In a special session the role of academic training to the development of environmental sustainability of agricultural management systems in 3rd world countries is addressed. This session will be organised in honour of the retirement of prof. dr. ir. Leo Stroosnijder.



Themes

Innovation of models across agro-environmental scales

1

Models are tools for understanding agro-environmental processes like plant production, plant-soil interactions, soil degradation and soil erosion. These models are progressively used in land use planning and assessment of agro-environmental processes. Therefore, it is important that they reflect different spatio-temporal scales and complex process interactions, such as socio-economic driving-forces, soil management practices and geo-ecological processes. However, modelling research still faces the challenge to cover each of the processes affecting agricultural landscapes across spatial and temporal scales. We invite contributions showing innovative tracks for tackling the problems of scale transitions and interdisciplinary model coupling, which help to understand the agro-ecological environment and to provide better tools for spatial planning.

2

Soil as a water resource

Soil is the best medium to store water for humans and plants. Rainfall that reaches the soil surface either infiltrates or flows away as runoff. Infiltrated water remains in the rootable depth of the soil as green water or percolates as blue water to the groundwater. Green water is lost in evaporation or is taken up by plants as transpiration. Land degradation affects these terms of the field water balance and causes a decrease in rainwater use efficiency. We invite papers and posters that show successful mitigation strategies or practices that makes rainfall more profitable and hence contribute to improved food security.

3

Innovative land management for sustainable use

Changes in landscape and climate pose a threat on present agricultural systems, with more variability in precipitation, increase in river peaks and sea level rise. To protect our agricultural areas, it is necessary to adapt our land management systems. In this adaptation process, we are looking for new and innovative strategies that work with nature and contribute to themes like flood prevention, biodiversity, food production by water and nutrient harvesting. We invite papers and posters, which deal with field studies, modelling or theoretical approaches toward integrated innovative land management practices.

4

Sustainable Land Management Policies

Given the need to foster sustainable land management to maintain its various (public) goods and services, there is often a clear rationale for government interventions and policies. These can range from specific national incentives in the form of fertilizer subsidies to general farm income support, as with the Common Agriculture Policy in the EU. In developing countries such support is often embedded in rural development policies that target smallholder farmers. An important issue is the actual impact of such policies on good stewardship of land. We invite papers and posters which deal with the theoretical basis and the impact of sustainable land management policies.

5

Academic training and development

This theme questions how academic training of young academics from 3rd world countries contributes to development in their home countries. Since 1990 about 50 students obtained their PhD at the Land Degradation & Development (LDD) Group of Wageningen University. Many of these alumni now hold important positions in their home country. A number of these alumni will show their experiences in oral presentations while other participants are invited to submit posters showing development 3rd world countries that is triggered by academic training.



Information

Organizing committee

Dr. Saskia M. Visser
Ate Poortinga (Msc)
Marnella van der Tol

Scientific committee

Belgium

Prof dr. D. Gabriels

Mali

Dr. Abdoulay Mando

Niger

Dr. Robert Zougmore

Cyprus

Dr. A Bruggeman

Netherlands

Prof. dr. ir. L. Stroosnijder

Dr. D. Karssenber

USA

Prof dr. D Norton

Dr. D. Flanagan

UK

Dr. L. Fleskens

Venue and housing

Venue

Wageningen; City of Life Sciences,
the Netherlands

Housing

Possibilities will be announced on the website:
www.LDD.WUR.NL/UK

Important dates

15 September 2011: call for abstracts

15 January 2012: Deadline abstract submission

15 January 2012: Deadline early bird registration

Contact Information

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