

National conference on “Environmental Pollution, Soil Health and Sustainable Agriculture”

National conference on “Environmental Pollution, Soil Health and Sustainable Agriculture” 15-17 January, 2013 was held under the aegis of Indian Network for Soil Contamination Research (INSCR) in association with University of Delhi and Amity University Uttar Pradesh at Amity University Campus, Noida.

In the inaugural ceremony, convener of the conference Prof. Tanu Jindal highlighted the themes of the conference:

- Soil contamination and human health
- Technology for monitoring and prediction of soil contaminants
- Sources of soil contamination
- Improving soil health and agriculture.

She emphasized on the importance of soil health, agriculture and environmental conservation.

Dr. Ashok K. Chauhan, Founder President, Amity University, Noida, presided over the function and conveyed his best wishes for the success of the conference. He said that soil constitutes a vital component of the natural environment and civilizations have developed and declined on the status of soil as healthy soil ensures our own survival. He conveyed that the factors responsible for soil damage would be well recognized and the deliberations at the conference would provide remedies for ameliorating the maladies which afflict our soil.

Prof. H.C. Agarwal, Vice President, INSCR, Advisor, Centre for Science & Environment and highlighted the activity of INSCR for prevention of soil deterioration. The eminent guest of honours Dr. K.C. Gupta, Director, Indian Institute of Toxicology Research, Lucknow, discussed about toxicological impacts of the harmful chemicals causing imbalance of the soil microflora.

Dr. P.B. Rastogi, Director, Impact Assessment in Ministry of Environment & Forest, intimated the initiatives of Ministry on environmental impact assessment in relation to soil conservation.

Dr. Rup Lal, General Secretary, INSCR and Dean, Examinations, Department of Zoology, University of Delhi, discussed about the degradation of persistent toxic Lindane pesticide in soil using genetically modified bacteria. Dr. SV Eswaran, Emeritus Scientist, CSIR, St. Stephan's College, DU, Delhi, also presented his views on human values and environmental ethics. On the occasion, Dr. SS Kukal, Professor, Department of Soil Science, Punjab Agricultural University,

Ludhiana, spoke on the modern technological life style and environmental degradation due to huge energy consumption.

Eighty seven papers were presented in different sessions of three days on major themes. Discussions were made on problems of soil contamination, soil toxicology, soil management, soil microflora, fauna, nutrients and associated habitat which have the potential to influence the soil ecosystem, agriculture, environment and economy.

Soil is the elixir of life and essential for our existence. It is one of the five components of earth, water, fire, air and space. Soil is affected by industrial pollution as well as excessive use of agrochemicals in agricultural practices. Soil is generally assumed as an inexhaustible resource, which is used and overused continually for increasing production. The soil today has virtually become lifeless in many places. The need to take actions to sustain soil and its immediate environment has become a imperative and challenging task in today's environment.

On the day of valedictory ceremony Dr. G.S. Sidhu, Principal Scientist and Head of Regional Centre, National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land use Planning, New Delhi addressed on "Dynamics of Land use and its impact on soil properties in Indo-Gangetic Plain". The summary of the deliberations were made. The participants gave their feedbacks and were delighted to learn and exchange the ideas over the three days period listening to various research deliberations on environmental pollution, soil health and sustainable agriculture. An interactive session was held with all delegates and students and many ideas originated for further research and studies on the conference themes. For sustainable outcomes, action plan was discussed for organizing future collaborative events and projects for improvement of environment, soil and agriculture scenario in India.

Prof. Tanu Jindal in her vote of thanks said that there is need for real green revolution in agriculture using organic farming and integrated pest management for conservation of good health of soil. After all final truth is

"Mitti se aaye hain, mitti mein mil jaana hai..."

Aey musafir zindagi ka yahi ek afsaana hai.."

As rightly said by Wendell Berry

"The soil is the great connector of our lives, the source and destination of all".