

Editor's Preface

The 15th International Congress of Soil Science was held in Acapulco, Mexico, from 10 to 16 July, 1994. The congresses of the International Society of Soil Science, organized every four years, are the main scientific events in the life of the Society, presenting and reviewing the achievements and the actual problems of soil science and related subjects. Another aim of the Congresses is to elect officers as well as to compile the scientific programme of the Society for the inter-congress periods.

The President of the 15th International Congress of Soil Science was Prof. Dr. A. AGUILAR Santelises (Universidad Autonoma de Chapingo, Mexico) and the Vice-President was Prof. Dr. R. NUNEZ Escobar (Colegio de Post-graduados, Montecillo, Chapingo, Mexico), who had been nominated by the host country, according to the rules of the Society.

"Soil utilization in harmony with Nature" - the motto of the Congress, expresses the significance of the interrelation between soil science and the environment. The Congress Programme reflected a clear intention to outline what both production and nature conservation require of soil science.

The Programme consisted of:

1. State-of-the-art lectures. Eleven plenary lectures were delivered, covering both the theoretical and practical aspects of soil science, including soil physical, chemical, biological and microbiological subjects as well as soil fertility, soil reclamation, soil degradation and other environmental problems.

2. Forty-two Symposia, including

- (a) Commission and Sub-commission symposia,

- (b) Interdisciplinary symposia.

Symposia (a) embraced the conventional topics of soil science from soil physics to soil mineralogy, including several problems of salinization, rehabilitation and different anthropogenic effects on soils.

Symposia (b), which represented more than half of all the symposia, dealt with a wide range of interdisciplinary subjects, including methodological problems, environmental problems, education, biodiversity, soil problems of sewage and sludge disposal as well as utilization, and such international projects as the world reference bases, and last but not least, soil science and the challenges of Agenda-21 of UNCED.

3. Three Workshops on special subjects were also organized in a way similar to the symposia.

4. More than one thousand posters were exhibited during the Congress. The posters displayed a global picture of recent investigations, achievements and practical applications in nearly every branch of soil science. Poster authors represented nearly all the countries from which participants attended the Congress. According to the List of Participants, nearly 2000 persons represented more than 80 countries and international organizations.

5. Pre- and Post- Congress excursions were organized not only in the territory of Mexico but also in other countries of North America, in Cuba and Venezuela.

The proceedings of the Congress were published in 18 volumes and were distributed among the participants. The full text of plenary lectures and symposia presentations were published, however only short summaries of poster presentations have appeared in the Transactions.

Hungarian soil scientists contributed a state-of-the-art lecture, symposia and poster presentations to the 15th International Congress of Soil Science.

In order to make available the material of the Hungarian contributions, the Editorial Board of *Agrokémia és Talajtan* decided to publish a special issue containing the full papers of all Hungarian contributors who had submitted their manuscripts to the Editorial Office, independently of whether they were fully or partly presented, arrived in time or late to the Organizing Committee.

We hope that with this issue we shall not only present the contributions of Hungarian soil scientists to the Congress, but also give an overview on the state and recent achievements of soil science in Hungary.

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Editor-in-Chief