

JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST

REPORT ON EXPEDITION/PROJECT/CONFERENCE

Expedition/Project/Conference Title: 18th World Congress in Soil Science

Travel Dates: 7th of July until 16th of July

Location: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

Group Member(s): PhD student in Institute of Atmospheric and Environmental Science

Aims: To expand to my knowledge at current work in the broad field of soil science. Attending the conference also provided me with a very important opportunity to present my research work to a wider international audience, allowing new contacts with other researchers and groups to be formed.

OUTCOME (not less than 300 words):-

With financial support from the James Rennie Bequest I was able to attend the 18th World Congress in Soil Science, 8-15th July, Philadelphia, in USA. The 18th World Congress of Soil Science (WCSS) brought in Philadelphia professional and scholars devoted to the development of Soil Science from all over the world for a period of seven days. Soil scientists convened to share scientific results, new knowledge, appreciate technological advancement in soil science and share views on pertinent issues pertaining to the future of the discipline. The meeting had a wide range of sessions covering topics such as Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition; Soil Chemistry, Soil Management. I presented a poster, based on some of my MSc work, as part of the Biologically Intensive Agriculture: an Approach to Combating Hunger for the Poor.

The conference proved to be of great worth, allowing me to exhibit my work and attend many presentations on related subjects. I have understood more deeply with the concept of the frontiers of soil science today, both global priorities in soil science both in general and in some specific areas, such as rhizosphere research, soil organic matter stabilization and carbon sequestration, soil microbial ecology and the studies in interfaces becomes more promising. Even more impressing, some new research area such as hydopedology, emerges and new technologies have been developed and applied to the soil science research, especially in the rhizosphere research and soil-related environmental issues.

Multi-disciplinary research is becoming the trend in soil science research. For solve the environmental problems, it becomes unavoidable to bring scientists in the different fields to work together. Even for the research in production aspects, soil scientists have to work and integrate ourselves with agronomists, plant breeders, food scientists, economists, as well as the soil scientists in different research areas in order to have a sustainable agricultural development. The congress provided a good opportunity for people to learn what the soil scientists in the areas other than ours have been doing so that it become easier for us to find out the partners in other area. It also clearly demonstrates that we could get to have much broader knowledge with the congress of this kind than with other conferences, seminars or workshops on some specific topics or area. The conference allowed me to find out about other techniques and data sets, previously unknown to me, which are applicable to my studies.