

CALL FOR PAPERS



SHIV NADAR UNIVERSITY

International Conference on

# India's Soils : Science - Policy - Practice Interfaces for Sustainable Futures

February 26 - 28, 2017

Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi

In order to address the pressing problems that India's soils are facing, the DST Centre for Policy Research at IIT Delhi, the Revitalising Rainfed Agriculture (RRA) Network and Shiv Nadar University, are planning an **International Conference on Soils** designed as a "trialogue" between scientists, policy makers and practitioners to be held at IIT Delhi from February 26 - 28, 2017.

The conference brings together **three powerful actors in soil health management** in India: scientists with knowledge within the formal domain of the sciences; policy makers with experience of designing policies, programmes, and choosing between policy instruments; and practitioners with their deep understanding of location-specific, yet highly diverse practices, that may or may not be codified, but are knowledge intensive. This conference is meant to enable a conversation between these groups to arrive at a **technologically, economically, and politically robust, and ecologically informed** understanding of soils and soil problems, and ways to address them.

The overall purpose is to develop scientifically valid, politically plausible and practically feasible solutions, placing special emphasis on marginal, small and medium farmers, and make these available to diverse actors and stakeholders such as the Union government of India, state governments, farmers' and women's movements, industry, and health and nutrition coalitions.

The conference has three objectives:

- To put together available knowledge on India's soils, their status, distribution and key problem areas, as understood by policy makers, the sciences, and other local knowledge systems.
- To enable a knowledge-policy-practice synthesis that can ensure that some of the high priority soil problems are clearly defined and understood.
- To facilitate integrated efforts between the three sets of actors to enable appropriate actions and investments for healthy, sustainable soil systems.

For details of themes and key arguments in the knowledge-policy and knowledge-practice interface, please visit <http://hss.iitd.ac.in/news>

## THEMATIC SESSIONS

The conference will consist of the following thematic sessions

1

Soil Structure, Erosion and Conservation

2

Soil Health Management and Soil Husbandry

3

Soil Moisture Management and its Role in Managing Droughts

4

Soil - Plant - Livestock Complex

5

Gender Relationships and Soil Health Management

6

Land Use, Agro-ecosystems and Conservation of Biodiversity

7

Pollution and Problem Soils

In each session, policy makers, practitioners, and researchers will be invited to discuss the **relationship between the way policy decisions are made (and programmes designed), and the knowledge inputs that go into the policy-making process**. Knowledge inputs, or policy intelligence, includes evidence from the formal sciences, both natural sciences and social sciences, as well as informal knowledge from the world of practice. Participants will also be asked to reflect upon the relationship between formal and non-formal sources of knowledge production. Papers will be expected to discuss either the **knowledge-policy interface** or the **knowledge-practice interface**, or both, as applied to the theme.

The knowledge-policy interface reflects upon the current processes of knowledge generation and dissemination related to soils (forms of policy intelligence), and the policy responses emanating from this. **What forms of**

**knowledge inputs are brought into the policy-making process, and thus, receive legitimacy?** What mechanisms can enable non-formal knowledge to be acknowledged and legitimately used in policy design?

The knowledge-practice interface would highlight **diverse, location-specific practices that use and sustain healthy soils**, present examples of scalable successes and experiences from practice, and reflect on the ways in which the learning from these is used for policy-making and further research. In what ways can the formal sciences acknowledge the importance of, learn from, respond to and support practices that are working to enhance the health of soils?

The conference is designed to lead to a series of short-term and medium-term changes in our policies, scientific research and knowledge intensive practices to conserve and nurture our soils for a sustainable future.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

The organizers hereby invite policy makers, scientists, and practitioners to submit an abstract that outlines your contribution in any of the conference themes. Specific mention must be made about the focus on the knowledge-policy issues or knowledge-practice issues within the theme that the paper addresses. Abstracts must be submitted through email ([soilsconference2017@gmail.com](mailto:soilsconference2017@gmail.com)) on or before 5pm Indian Standard Time on **January 25, 2017**.

The abstracts will be reviewed and successful submissions will be notified on or **before February 5, 2017**.