

China celebrates International Year of Soils (IYS)

-- “Soil and Eco-Environmental Security in China” High-Level Forum Held in Beijing

The year 2015 has been declared the International Year of Soils (IYS) by the 68th UN General Assembly. To positively respond to this global event, a High-level Forum on *“Soil and eco-environmental security — IYS in China”*, was held from 11th to 12th July in China Hall of Science and Technology, Beijing. It was co-hosted by Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), China Association for Science and Technology, Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), and Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) and collaborated with Soil Science Society of China, Institute of Soil Science, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Association of Agricultural Science Societies, Institute of Policy and Management, Chinese Academy of Sciences. The forum was attended and addressed by ministers from CAS, MOA and MEP as well as by the Head of UNEP China Office. More than 150 participants from academic, governmental and industrial circles witnessed the event. The aim of the forum is to arouse public awareness on the importance of soil resources in food security and environmental safety.

It has been noticed that, as addressed by the ministers, the Chinese government attaches great importance to soil protection emphasizing that cultivated land is the most valuable asset of the country, which is closely connected with national food security. The strictest rules should be implemented to protect the cultivated land just like to protect our pandas.

The official speeches were followed by a dialogue among eight eminent representatives from academic, governmental departments and industrial sectors. The legal, socio-economic and technological issues regarding agricultural soil protection and soil remediation were discussed. Audience also participated in the discussion with exchanges of ideas and opinions. More than ten experts from soil,

land and environmental science fields were invited to this forum to share their latest research achievements and experiences.

The successful holding of the forum, which echoes the world-wide serial events on celebrating IYS, further emphasizes the importance of soil and soil science in the development of national economy and ecology at multiple levels.

This forum has attract live broadcast and lasting coverage of more than 40 media including the national agencies such as CCTV News, People's Daily online and Xinhua News.



The forum was chaired by Fang Xin, deputy secretary of the Communist Party of China Leading Group of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, at which Zhang Shigang, the China Coordinator of the UNEP and chairman of the UN commission on climate change and environmental projects, made his speech. Zhang Yaping, Vice president of Chinese Academy of Sciences; Zhang Taolin, vice minister of the Ministry of Agriculture; Li Ganjie, vice minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection; Zhao Qiguo, Academician of soil science; Shen Renfang, president of Soil Science

Society of China and general director of Institute of Soil Science, Chinese Academy of Sciences made plenary lectures.



A high-level dialogue from the Forum



Special Issue on Soil and Eco-environmental Safety