

## **“Soil and Ecological Environment Safety — International Year of Soils (IYS) in China” High-Level Forum Held in Beijing**

The year of 2015 has been acknowledged as the International Year of Soils (IYS) at the 68th UN General Assembly. To promote this global activity, a high-level strategic and decision-making orientated forum on “*Soil and ecological environment safety — IYS in China*”, was held from 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> July in the China Hall of Science and Technology, Beijing. The forum was sponsored by the Chinese Academy of Sciences, China Association for Science and Technology, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Environmental Protection in collaboration with the Soil Science Society of China, Institute of Soil Science of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Association of Agricultural Science Societies, and the Institute of Policy and Management of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. The forum was chaired by Fang Xin, deputy secretary of the Communist Party of China Leading Group of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. The executive vice president of China Association for Science and Technology, Mr. Shang Yong, and the China Coordinator of the UNEP and chairman of the UN commission on climate change and environmental projects, Mr. Zhang Shigang, spoke at the opening ceremony.

Fang emphasized the ecological relevance of soils in supporting the food safety and the development of agriculture, and its critical roles in water and energy conservation and in the protection of biological diversity as well as to the buffering of the climate change. The acknowledgement of the International Year of Soils on the 68th UN general assembly has evoked considerable public attentions to the protection of soil resources. The Chinese Government has been consistently making great efforts on the protection of soil resources. In this May, President Xi Jinping made important instructions and emphasized strict rules are to be established to protect China’s farmland. The objective of this forum is to attract public recognition on the soils.

In the morning session of July 11, 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 sciences, and Shen Renfang, president of Soil Science Society of China and general director of Institute of Soil Science, Chinese Academy of Sciences made plenary lectures on the issues of *Soil Science for Eco-environment Protection, Soil management for Sustainable Agriculture; Soil Pollution Control, Strategies of National-wide Protection of Soil Resources, and Soil Safety*. Officials and experts proceeded extensive discussions during the high-level dialogue of the afternoon section.

The forum recognized the importance of soils and soil sciences in the development of

national economy. It clarified the potential questions in soil safety and achieved bundles of strategic guidelines and instructions on soil protection. This forum is anticipated to uncover a new era of efficient protection of China's soil resources and will also build up a health atmosphere for the construction of 'Beautiful China'.

This forum has attracted broad attentions of media including CCTV NEWS, People's Daily online, Xinhua News and Ifeng News.



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A high-level dialogue from the Forum



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