



The Abdus Salam
International Centre for Theoretical Physics



15th July, 2011

SM - 11/27: International Workshop on Soil Physical Processes in West Africa

Esteemed Participants,

On behalf of the donors and organizers of SM-11/27, I appreciate you all for your participation at the workshop which has ranked you among the scholars, teachers and students who have participated in an Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) assisted program.

It is my sincere hope that the 10-day workshop was a productive and meaningful experience for you both professionally and, personally as well. One of the highlights of the workshop was to set up a network of scholars, scientists and students interested in the science of Soil Physical Processes in West Africa. This network will offer us the opportunity to keep abreast with your progress and learn about the on-going impact of your experiences as participants /alumni of SM-11/27.

Sjoerd Duiker at Pennsylvania State University (Penn State), University-Park, PA has been kind enough to kick-start the process of setting up a network as he had earlier promised during the workshop; to help facilitate a sustainable network of scientists, scholar and students working or interested in working on soil physical processes in West Africa. To the extent possible, I hope that participants will remain in contact as much as possible to learn ways in which all can continue to see the benefits of continuing research and teachings, resulting from the experiences at the workshop. If you publish or create works derived from your experience at the workshop, you are urged to share it with other members of the network.

Our resource persons at the workshop have kindly agreed to glean time, out of their very busy schedule to write in a journal format (Soil and Tillage Research format), the summary of what they mounted for presentation at the workshop so that the organizers will make effort to produce a proceeding of the workshop. We are planning to make ICTP our first point of call for proceeding development (i.e. asking ICTP to consider publishing the materials as research reports) however; if this fails, SSSN will be glad to do the proceeding.

The workshop was also an important avenue to consider developing a regional based research proposal for possible fund sourcing through the assistance of the Soil Science Society of Nigeria (SSSN): Victor Chude - President of SSSN - has promised to assist with fund sourcing, this shall be pursued. Further, the workshop provided participants with various opportunities for capacity building and researches abroad through the United States' Fulbright Program, the German Alexander von Humboldt Research Program and; the ICTP and TWAS (Academy of Science for Developing Countries) capacity building programs. Your colleagues who were not opportune to attend the workshop may not be aware of the kind of opportunities available and may enjoy learning directly from you.

Let me use this medium to appreciate all our resource persons at the workshop, for their great sacrifice at nurturing capacity building and expanding human intellect by generating the capacity to apply science and technology to development in West Africa. The excellence of the research experiences presented by these resource persons and their enthusiasm provided a valuable addition to the workshop proceedings. Further, you have indeed given the principal investigators of tomorrow the opportunity to discuss their work with you, thus bequeathing to posterity, a powerful tool for the attainment of sustainable human development. I say a big "thanks" to you all.

I commend our donors namely; The National Programme on Agriculture and Food Security (NPAFS), the Abdus Salam Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), Soil Science Society of Nigeria (SSSN), Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Department of Soil Science, ABU and the Institute for Agricultural Research (IAR) at ABU, who have not only made financial contributions to the workshop but have also displayed, by their kind gesture and good will, their faith in indigenous capacity building as a sure foundation for sustainable development.

Once more, I encourage participants (or do I say workshop alumni) to value our association as the most precious; through maintaining contacts and promoting the discipline of Soil Physical Processes in West Africa and, to continue and expand collaboration. Once again, let me express pleasure at having had a part in helping to make your time in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, a reality.

Sincerely,



Joshua Olasekan Ogunwole (Ph.D)
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria- Nigeria.