



FUTA NEWS

STAKEHOLDERS MAKE CASE FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT AS FUTA HOSTS WEST AFRICAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

In furtherance of its commitment to raising awareness on how to sustain soil fertility and crop productivity within the realities of climate change the Federal University of Technology, Akure as part of its hosted the Capacity for Food Project training III Regional Conference. The project which is a collaborative activity among the University of Alicante, Spain, Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria, University of Ghana, University of Dschang, Cameroon, Njala University, Sierra Leone and University of Gambia, The Gambia, had the theme “Developing of ISFM training materials: Maximizing stakeholder engagement and Hands-on learning”. The Conference is also within the frame work of activities for European Union (EU) sponsored projects titled “Integrated Soil Fertility Management for Food security: Matching capacities in Anglophone West African Nation HEIs with local needs (FED/2013/320/275)”.

Welcoming participants to the conference, the Dean of the School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology (SAAT) Professor Shedrack Akindele who represented the University Management said that the major goal of the School is to make significant contributions towards attaining food security in Nigeria. In his words “at present we are engaged in maize seed multiplication project as well as massive production of improved varieties of cassava planting stems for distribution to local farmers under the West African Agricultural Productivity Program (WAAPP)”.

The Dean stated that the rapid population growth in Africa has made incessant tillage of the same piece of land over and over inevitable with the result that the soil is degraded and has become less fertile for food

production. While expressing delight at the privilege to host the conference, Professor Akindele was optimistic that the event will facilitate interaction among participants and foster collaboration among partner Institutions.

Delivering a lecture titled “Sustainable land management and climate change: identifying and solving the problems of soil fertility in Africa, guest speaker at the event Dr. Jonathan Adeyemo said that land is the true wealth of sub Saharan Africa and that the region is characterized by a rich diversity of natural ecosystem resources including soil and vegetation adding that soil management is important because although it is common, it is a limited and non-renewable natural resource.

The guest speaker who noted that over 90% of the world food comes from the soil, with agriculture as the only essential industry on earth lamented the obvious degradation of the land as natural disasters and climate change are taking a toll on the soil reducing its biological productivity and economic value. He, thus, proposed the use of sustainable land management practice in order to mitigate the effects of climate change on the soil among which are soil nutrient management, agroforestry and agronomic practices, integrated pest management and soil and water management.

Dr. Adeyemo said the continent’s rapidly expanding population and the pressure on the finite amount of land available for agricultural production, the protection of the soil is imperative for the preservation of the human race and natural resources.

In separate contributions, participants at the conference submitted that concerted efforts to enhance soil quality and health will eventually solve the problem of soil degradation and salvage the continent from imminent hunger and help to achieve a stable and balanced ecosystem which will in turn increase crop diversity and promote high yields.

Participants at the conference include Professor Fritz Oben, (Cameroon), Mr. Tijan Zobe (Gambia), Mrs. Sainey Keife (Gambia), Mr. Stephen Mathia (Sierra Leone), Dr. Thomas Adjadeh (Ghana), Dr. Philip Morunja (Sierra Leone), Dr. Innocent Lawson (Ghana), Mrs. Helen Fangu (Cameroon), Deans, Directors and staff of the University.