

## Soil Health Awareness Week Celebrated at ICAR-IISS, Bhopal on the Occasion of World Soil Day



Soil health awareness week is being celebrated at ICAR-Indian Institute of Soil Science, Bhopal during December 01-07, 2021. This is on the occasion of World Soil Day (WSD) celebrated every year by Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations on December 05. This year's theme of WSD is "Halt Soil Salinization, Boost Soil Productivity". A massive March Past was organized by the institute Scientist, Technical and other staff to spread awareness among the public on the importance of soils in human life and protection of this precious resource. On the occasion Dr Ashok K Patra, Director, told that as per FAO about 9% of the soils of the planet earth are affected by salinity or sodicity. In India there is about 6.73 million hectares of salt affected soils and it is increasing. If this is not corrected this will pose threat on the existence of future generations. He also gave TV and radio talks for mass awareness. On the same day, a farmer-scientist interaction meet was organised at village Khamkheda, Dist Bhopal, (M.P.). The Director of institute, Dr AK Patra, Dr AB Singh, Organizing Secretary, Dr Pradip Dey, Co-Chairman, Dr R Elanchezhian, Convener, Dr AK Vishwakarma Co-Organizing Secretary and scientists of the institute along with staff participated in the program.





On this occasion Sh Ravinder Patil, DGM SBI, and Sanjay Kumar, AGM SBI along with their staff participated in the program. Dr AK Patra emphasized the role of soil for the survival of the human being and requested to create awareness amongst villagers to protect a precious natural resource for the next generation. He reiterated an application of imbalanced and unscientific use of agro-chemicals (including fertilizers) resulted in degradation of soil health and occurrence of multi nutrient deficiencies in soil. The farmers expressed their views and feedback on the various programs undertaken by the institute. On this occasion, soil health cards were distributed to the farmers. During the events, scientists, officials, students and about 200 farmers from nearby villages participated in this awareness program.



An Agricultural Education Day was celebrated on December 03 where more than 100 college students of Bhopal were taught about various aspects of soils including soil salinization. The students were exposed to soil museum and a quiz competition on soil awareness was also organized.







Farmer'-Scientists interaction meet and Field days were organized on December 01 and 02 where more than 200 farmers under the scheme SCSP and Farmers FIRST were given training on conservation agriculture and soil health maintenance practices. The Soil Health Awareness Week would continue till December 07, 2021.

