

National Webinar on 'Quality Improvement and Proficiency Testing of Soil Laboratories in India' organized by ICAR-IISS, Bhopal on 31 October 2020

ICAR-Indian Institute of Soil Science (IISS), Bhopal organized a National Webinar on 'Quality Improvement and Proficiency Testing of Soil Laboratories in India: Towards Improving the Quality of Analytical Data and Harmonization of Soil Test Methods' on 31 October 2020. The purpose of this webinar was to apprise the participants about the whole process of Quality Improvement and Proficiency Testing. Around 300 participants representing Agricultural Universities, ICAR institutes, *Krishi Vigyan Kendra*, State Department of Agriculture from all over the country attended the webinar.

During inaugural address, Dr. S.K. Chaudhari, Deputy Director General (NRM), ICAR expressed the strong need of maintaining the quality standards in soil testing. He emphasized on developing uniform protocols of soil testing. He also felt the need of establishing a soil testing network in India for ensuring guidance and quality control system.



In his address, Dr. Anupam Mishra, Vice chancellor, Central Agricultural University, Imphal stated that soil test based fertilizer nutrient recommendations have a major role to play in doubling the farmers' income because they reduce the cost and increase the farmers' productivity. He further stated that the benefits of soil health card scheme of GOI are already evident and emphasized on quality improvement of soil testing laboratories for further strengthening of the programme.

Mrs. Nopmanee Suvannang, Chairperson, Global Soil Laboratory Network (GLOSOLAN) of FAO apprised the participants about the activities of Global Soil Partnership (GSP). She said that

GLOSOLAN has the objectives of improving the quality of labs through regular trainings; harmonization of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the interpretation of data across the laboratories; and it also provides certificates to laboratories on quality testing.

Earlier, Dr Ashok K Patra, Director of ICAR-IISS welcomed all the participants and briefed about the purpose of the National Webinar and expressed the need of creating a National Network of Soil Testing Laboratories in India.

The webinar had a technical session where the speakers dealt on the objectives and process of proficiency testing; internal quality control mechanisms; and steps to be undertaken by a laboratory for obtaining NABL accreditation. In addition, six eminent speakers from different parts of the country expressed their views on the quality improvement and proficiency testing of Indian soil testing laboratories. The speakers expressed that this important programme should also be included in the course curriculum of the students. They opined that the laboratories should be encouraged to go for quality assurance certification.
