

9th ESSC CONFERENCE
26–28th of September, 2019
TIRANA, ALBANIA

A delegation from Szent Istvan University attended the 9th European Society for Soil Conservation International Congress held at the Agricultural University of Tirana, Albania, between 26 and 28 September 2019. The theme of the Congress was Soil's Contribution to People: From Food to Life Supporting Services. The delegation was formed by Dr. habil. Csaba Centeri (Figure 1.), Alfréd Szilágyi, and Lyndre Nel (Figure 1.) from the Institute of Nature Conservation and Landscape Management at Szent István University, Gödöllő.

The congress brought together 80 researchers from 26 countries (Albania, Austria, Belgium, China, Czech, Egypt, Ethiopia, Germany, Hungary, Iran, Italy, Israel, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, and United Kingdom). It was arranged by the ESSC organizing committee and host country officials, Camelo Dazzi (ESSC President), Pandi Zdruli (Honorary Chairman of the Organizing Committee), and Fatbardh Sallaku (Chairman of the Organizing Committee).

Four lectures were given on soil conservation, productivity, degradation, and its role in mitigating climate change. Prof. Sybe Schaap (COGEM) spoke on soil productivity, water management, and soil protection. Prof. Edoardo Costantini (ESSC Secretary) presented on soil conservation in vineyards. Prof. Ildefons Pla Sentís (University of Lledia) presented on the impacts of global industrial agriculture on soil ecosystem services. Prof. José Luis Rubio (former ESSC Chairman) lectured on the role of soil in climate change mitigation. With participants gaining insightful information and data on soil resources.

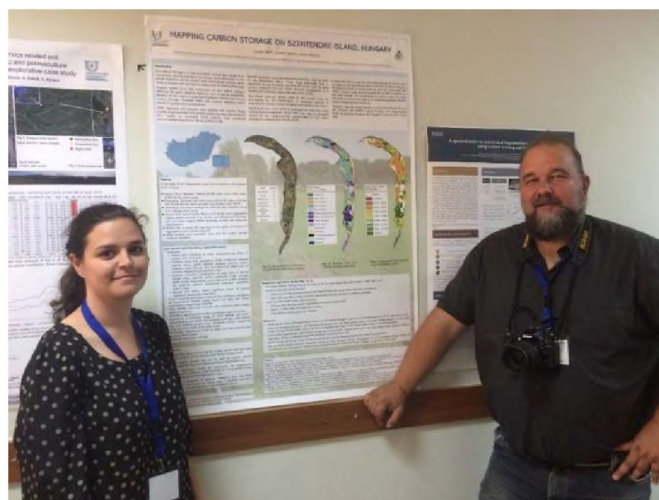


Figure 1. L. Nel (the author) and Cs. Centeri in front of one of the posters at the 9th ESSC Congress, titled “Mapping Carbon Storage on Szentendre Island, Hungary”

1. ábra Nel, L. (a szerző) és Centeri, Cs. a “Mapping Carbon Storage on Szentendre Island, Hungary” című poszterük előtt a 9. ESSC Kongresszuson

A total of 32 oral presentations were presented on research results, practical examples, and policies, to support the role played by soil resources. The Szent István University delegation presented five posters in total. Fifty posters were presented during the Congress within the following categories:

- Management of soil functions and services: monitoring and remediation,
- Soil conservation issues in organic farming, agro-ecology and conservation agriculture,

- Sustainable Land Management in a changing environment: examples from best practices,
- Pedotechniques in large-scale farming and advances in soil survey and soil classification,
- Land Degradation Neutrality and food security,
- Soil contamination across various scales and remediation practices,
- Soil fertility and plant nutrition,
- Soil carbon sequestration to combat and mitigate climate change,
- From research to policies supporting soil ecosystem services,
- National and international efforts to promote data collection and sharing on soil services.

The Congress was ended with a special talk by Prof. Takashi Kosaki, the president of the International Union of Soil Science, on limiting global land degradation and partnerships for soil research collaboration.



Figure 2. The entrance of the Agricultural University of Tirana, Albania, the host institution for the 9th Congress of the European Society for Soil Conservation with the building in the background where the congress was hosted

2. ábra Az Európai Talajvédelmi Társaság 9. Kongresszusának otthont adó Tiranai Agráregyetem (Albánia) bejárata, háttérben a kongresszusnak otthont adó épület

On the last day, we were treated to a scientific and cultural field trip arranged by ESSC. The participants visited a dug-out soil profile at a farm near Tirana. One of the largest privately-owned farms in the country. The farm is 85 hectares large with 12 ha of mixed crop orchard, 6 ha of mixed vegetables, and rotation crops on the rest. The visit was concluded by discussing the soil profile which was a Calcaric Fluvisc Stagnic Cambisol (Clayic, Humic, Protovertic, Protoargic) (see the photos in the Hungarian report from Alfred Szilagyí in this issue) soil needing careful management of its physical and hydrological properties. Afterward, the participants visited the historical town of Kruja, with the Scanderbeg castle museum, and Old Bazaar. A delicious traditional Albanian lunch was taken at a local restaurant before the participants had a last chance of saying goodbye.

It was announced that the next ESSC Congress will be held in Norway in 2020.

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