Initiatives for the restoration of degraded soils in Latin America

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) **and the** Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE)**, have organized a virtual technical forum to present two initiatives aimed at restoring degraded soils developed by international research organizations: the** Centre International Cooperation in Agricultural Research for Development (CIRAD**, for its acronym in French) and the** World Resources Institute (WRI**, for its acronym in English).**

The degradation contributes to global warming and accelerating climate change, creating more challenges for agricultural production. Also, directly it affects the productivity of the sector, along with other factors such as efficiency in water use and biodiversity.

Therefore, t*o optimize the management of soil affected by agricultural activity in Latin America is essential the preservation and restoration of degraded soils, actions which, while contributing to curb and mitigate the impact of climate change.*

At the meeting where the two initiatives for the restoration of soils were presented, participated the Director of CATIE, Muhammad Ibrahim, who said that t*he countries of Latin America and the*

Caribbean, have the resources and the necessary institutions to become granaries of the world. An achievement that would be conditioned on improved yields, agricultural productivity and to make more efficient and sustainable water and land use.

Meanwhile, the IICA specialist in Innovation, Productivity and Competitiveness, Karen Montiel, said that this event allows to publicize some of the initiatives developed around the world on this subject and manages to raise awareness of the importance of good management of this natural resource to face the ravages of climate change and combat food insecurity in a challenging farming context.

This event is part of a series of virtual forums organized by IICA and CATIE, which is a space to increase knowledge and reflect on soil management in the Latin American context.

The next forum will address the issue of Economics, land degradation, and will be held in September.

Projects for the restoration of soils

The initiative of WRI, presented by his representative, Walter Vergara, *seeks to restore 20 million hectares in Latin America for 2020 by silvopasture, agroforestry, reforestation and the promotion of low carbon sustainable agriculture, among other measures.*

Vergara explained, this initiative was approved in 2014 under the Framework Convention of the United Nations on Climate Change (COP 20) held in Peru.

On the other hand, Florent Maraux CIRAD, presented as an initiative *an international research program which aims to improve the organic matter content and promote carbon sequestration in soils by using agroecological practices, preservation and restoration of soil and strengthening innovation with timely and appropriate public policies.*

Maraux drew attention to *the importance of agriculture, not only to provide food to a Muncial population, but as an essential tool to contribute to the sustainability of the planet.*

Source: IICA