



PARTICIPANTS' EVALUATION REPORT

GLOBAL SOIL WEEK 2013 – THE PARTICIPANTS GIVE FEEDBACK



This report summarizes the results of the Participant Evaluation of the Global Soil Week 2013 “Losing Ground?” held in Berlin on October 27 – 31, 2013. The evaluation forms were completed by 93 participants from 33 different countries out of 452 attendees from 71 countries joining the Global Soil Week (GSW). In the following, those GSW participants who took part in the evaluation are referred to as “respondents”.

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1 Overall Satisfaction, Highlights and Motivation

1.1 Overall Satisfaction

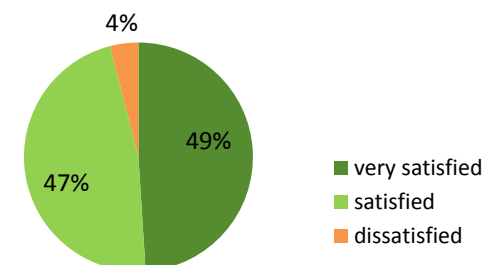
Overall, the Global Soil Week 2013 was perceived as a great success by the participants. 96% of the respondents (participants who took part in the evaluation) were either satisfied (47%) or very satisfied (49%) with the event. Only 4% were dissatisfied (see chart). (Question Q1¹)

The indicated satisfaction with the different program elements shows a positive and more diverse picture. The cumulated results of the various program-related questions show that on average 39% of the respondents perceived the agenda as very satisfying and only 10% were dissatisfied, 51% were satisfied. (dialogue sessions: Q7a, plenary sessions: Q7b/i-Q7d/i, “Deepen the debates” workshops: Q7a/vi, Action Forum: Q8b)

1.2 Highlights of the Global Soil Week

The feedback reveals that particularly the Global Soil Week’s *format* and its approach to *bridge communities* were perceived as unique by the respondents: Every fourth respondent (25%) mentioned the diversity of participants, stakeholders and perspectives as a highlight. Every fifth respondent (20%) said that the event itself or the format of the program was one of his or her highlights. Other highlights that were frequently mentioned include the dialogue sessions, the atmosphere for (informal) exchange, the opportunity to gain new perspectives on soil, the opportunity to get in touch with other communities, the Action Forum, the variety of topics and the motivation and dedication of the participants and contributors. (Q2)

How did you like the Global Soil Week 2013?



Highlights

- ❖ Diversity of participants, stakeholders, perspectives
- ❖ The event itself and its format
- ❖ Dialogue Sessions.
- ❖ Atmosphere for (informal) exchange.
- ❖ Gain new perspectives on soil.
- ❖ Get in touch with other communities.
- ❖ Action Forum.
- ❖ Variety of topics.
- ❖ Motivation and dedication of participants and contributors.

¹ The questionnaire that was handed out to GSW 2013 participants can be found in Annex 1 of this report.

1.3 Motivation to Attend Global Soil Week

The participants were asked why they attended the Global Soil Week. Their motivation can be grouped according to: (with the number of people who mentioned this in Q4)

- gaining *knowledge* and integrating perspectives
 - integrate perspectives 10
 - deepen knowledge 9
 - topics 5
 - good practices 5
 - latest developments in soil science 4
 - latest developments in the Nexus 4
 - interest in new research results 4
 - SDG interest 3
- *networking* and professional interests
 - network / find partners 16
 - professional interest 9
 - shaping policy processes/ develop action 8
 - be at most significant soil conference 3

Why did you attend the Global Soil Week 2013?

Knowledge Integration
& Networking

2 A Multi-Stakeholder *Platform* for Knowledge Exchange and Joint Action

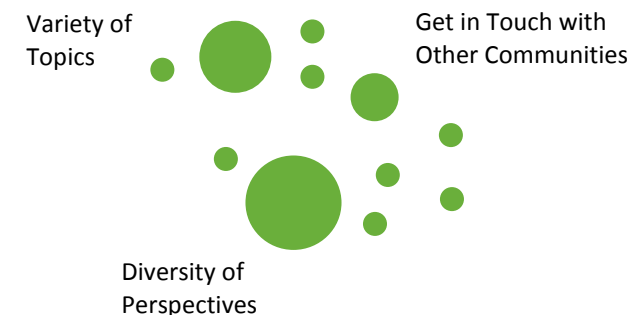
The Global Soil Week aims to bridge different communities through a multi-stakeholder platform. It provides a platform to exchange knowledge and experiences and to co-develop joint options for action among international actors from civil society, government, science, and business.

2.1 Transdisciplinarity: Diversity as a Highlight of the Global Soil Week

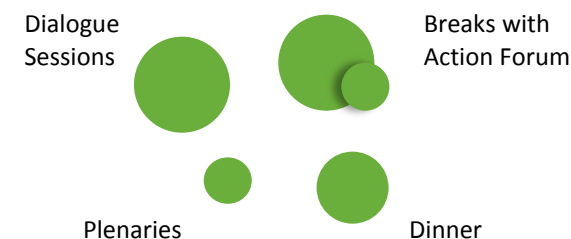
Many respondents perceived the *bridging of communities* as a highlight of the Global Soil Week. (Q2 Q21) Various respondents said that they attended the Global Soil Week in order to benefit from the diversity of perspectives, from the multi-dimensional topics, from the platform for networking and from learning about the latest developments (see Chapter 1.3 “Motivation” for details).

- One quarter of the respondents (25%) perceived the diversity of speakers, participants and perspectives as a highlight. (Q2, Q21) This diversity forms a necessary pre-condition for bridging different communities. 23% of the respondents said that they were very satisfied with the stakeholder representation in their dialogue sessions (61% were satisfied, 16% were dissatisfied). 35% of the respondents perceived the opportunity for controversial discussions as very satisfying. (Q7a) The stakeholder representation was also very satisfying in the plenary sessions as 29% of the respondents stated. (Q7b-d) Some respondents asked for a greater stakeholder representation, particularly of farmers, the private sector and of regions. (Q3, Q21)
- The possibility to gain new perspectives on soil and/or to have a large variety of topics was the personal highlight of 13% of the respondents.
- For 7.5% of the respondents, the highlight was to get in touch with other communities. According to the majority of the respondents, the best opportunity to exchange with people from different communities of knowledge or practice was during the breaks and dialogue sessions. (Q9)

Diversity as a Highlight of the Global Soil Week



The best opportunities to exchange with someone from a different community of knowledge or practice



2.2 Soils in the Nexus

The respondents emphasized the importance of integrating various perspectives when addressing soil-related challenges to sustainability. 81% of the respondents strongly agreed that it is crucial to consider soils in the nexus of water, energy and food security. They point to the fact that soils are key to sustainability: “important to the development agenda”, “the foundation of sustainable agriculture”, “they are part of very complex interactions”, “they are a component of the green economy”, “there is a need for an integrated approach”, “soil needs and provides water, food and energy”, “soil is a *sine qua non* condition for the Nexus”, “address interdependency”.

2.3 Methodologies

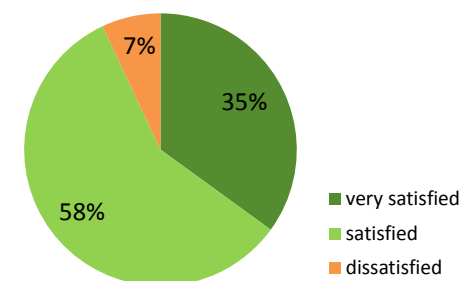
Overall, the feedback shows that the formats of Dialogue and plenary sessions, Open Space and informal Action Forum were well perceived. The evaluation data shows that the dialogue sessions were more popular with the respondents than the plenary sessions. This is in line with the suggestion of 16% of the respondents to include more dialogue sessions and to reduce the time and/or number of Plenaries. The responses also indicate that the participants would welcome longer dialogue sessions with a stronger outcome-orientation, indicator-orientation and inclusion of case studies.

2.3.1 Dialogue Sessions

The 22 dialogue sessions were a central element of the Global Soil Week 2013 schedule. 38% of the respondents said that they were very satisfied with the dialogue sessions they attended, 6% were dissatisfied. The cumulated satisfaction, which includes the relevance of discussed topics, stakeholder representation, controversy in debates, and the openness to dialogue in the sessions, was very positive: 93% were very satisfied or satisfied (see chart). Seven respondents stated that the dialogue sessions were their highlight at the Global Soil Week. However, a similar number of respondents criticized the high number of presentations, too little time for discussion and that some sessions tried to accommodate too many topics. 22% of respondents indicated that they would appreciate more case-orientation. 9% would appreciate if the dialogue sessions paid more attention to desired achievements. (Q2, 3, 7, 12, 21)

**„Consider soils in the
nexus of water, energy and
food security“**

**Cumulated Satisfaction with
Dialogue Sessions**



2.3.2 Plenaries

The answers in the questionnaire indicate that the respondents found it difficult to answer the questions on the plenary sessions (Q7). The feedback indicates that approximately 33% were very satisfied with the Plenaries and 15% were dissatisfied. The comments given in response to other questions (Q3, Q21) reveal that 16% of the respondents wish for less and/or shorter plenary sessions.

2.3.3 Thread Ambassadors

The concept of the Thread Ambassadors who bring the results of the dialogue sessions to the Plenaries was reflected in the following way: One quarter of the respondents were very satisfied (25%), two quarters were satisfied (51%) and one quarter (24%) was dissatisfied with the contribution of the Thread Ambassadors to connecting the Dialogue and plenary sessions.

2.3.4 “Deepen the Debates” Workshops on Thursday

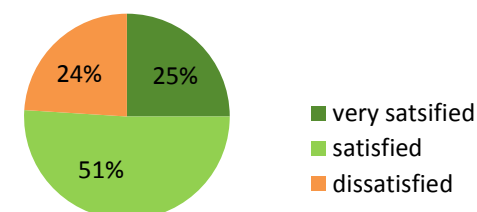
On the last day of the Global Soil Week, the program was organized in a more malleable way to give participants an open space to expand the debates on specific issues and follow-up on the dialogue sessions. 59% of the respondents were very satisfied with the opportunity to have such an open forum in order to get deeper into discussions. Three respondents stated it was their highlight of the Global Soil Week 2013.

2.3.5 Action Forum

About half of the respondents (46%) stated that they attended the Action Forum activities and 84% of these visitors found the new insights inspiring. Four respondents pointed out that the Action Forum was their highlight of the Global Soil Week 2013. Generally, almost all respondents perceived the Action Forum as a very appropriate (45%) or appropriate (52%) approach to illustrate the importance of soils. (Q1, Q5, Q8)

**Dialogue sessions
were more popular
than plenary sessions**

**How did you like having an open space
to deepen the debates on Thursday?**



**The Action Forum
provided new inspiring
insights**

What could be improved for the next Global Soil Week?

2.3.6 Suggestions from the Participants on Format, Focus and Topics

The given numbers indicate the number of people who made the statement in Q3, Q12, Q21.

- Critique & suggestions relevant to the **format**
 - More dialogue sessions, less Plenaries 17
 - Give a good example: Less food during breaks, more vegetarian/organic food, less paper 7
 - Dialogue sessions (mergers): too many pictures and presentations, not enough discussion 6
 - More dynamic formats & challenging discussions 5
- Critique & suggestions relevant to the **focus**
 - More case-orientation, best practices, local examples 24
 - Attention to achievements & what we want to accomplish 10
 - Indicators 5
 - Prioritize topics 5
 - Better bridge science-policy-local level 4
 - Include a field visit 4
 - Management of the Water-Energy-Food Nexus 3
 - Social-ecological view needs to be present in all sessions 1
- Suggestions to include/put more emphasis on certain **topics**
 - Food security 5

- Socio-economics & governance (land rights, reforms, distribution) 4
- Soils in urban context 4
- Sustainable Land Management, land and resource governance 4
- Sustainable food production (realistic perspectives) 4
- Education/communication on soils 3
- Soils in Climate Change 2
- How to make soil management attractive to rural communities 2
- Land reclamation 2
- Agriculture policy 2
- Include soils in the Sustainable Development Goals 2
- Ecosystem functions of soils 2
- (Governance of) land investments 2
- Fertilizers & nutrient management 2
- Define soil health 2
- Spatial planning 1
- Civil society organization engagement 1
- Crop diversity, tillage systems 1
- Salinity and degradation 1
- Economic approach for soils as a commons 1
- Connect soils to change in development aid 1

3 A Process Towards Sustainable Soil and Land Governance

The long-term goal of the Global Soil Week is to create a continuous and transdisciplinary process towards sustainable soil and land governance. This means that processes for knowledge exchange and bridging communities go beyond a recurrent event and also take place in-between the Global Soil Weeks. The facilitation of exchange processes between different communities demands long-term engagement and the setting up of appropriate avenues for this exchange. At the same time, the Global Soil Week aims to inspire follow-up activities.

3.1 Follow-Up Activities to the Global Soil Week 2013

The majority of respondents (86%) plan follow-up activities to the Global Soil Week. 57 respondents specified what their plans are (Q10):

– Communicate (new) knowledge	18
– Take a stake	18
– Partner / network with others	11
– Implement new knowledge on the ground or in the business agenda	9
– Do research	8
– Organize an event	5
– Find a viewpoint on the topics	3
– Did not want to do a follow-up because they did not feel inspired by the Global Soil Week	2

3.2 Commitment/Contribution to the Agenda for Action

One of the main outcomes of the first Global Soil Week in November 2012 was the agreement of the Global Soil Week partners to collaboratively develop an Agenda for Action to join forces and expertise in order to contribute to sustainable soil management and responsible land governance. The final draft

Are you planning
follow-up activities
inspired by the Global Soil
Week?

of this Agenda for Action was shared at the Global Soil Week 2013. The participants of the Global Soil Week 2013 were asked to comment and contribute to this Agenda for Action online, via the feedback form or directly to the convenors.

The majority of the respondents (83%) believe that the draft Agenda for Action reflects the most important thematic fields of sustainable soil and land management. The suggestions to further improve this draft are manifold. The respondents repeatedly suggested including a plan for implementation or concrete indicators to be fulfilled. It was also mentioned that the Agenda for Action was very helpful to understand the overall context of the Global Soil Week. The following list gives an overview of the suggestions (Q11):

- Include a plan of implementation
- Put less emphasis on technical solutions
- Include the fact that there is a challenge in communicating the attractiveness of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and incentives to practice it
- Communicate the contribution of SLM to global societal challenges (use e.g. the Soil Security Concept of the Ecosystem Services Concept)
- Include strategies for public awareness raising
- Mention existing dynamics like SPI/UNCCD
- Include more contributions from China
- As a basis we need to understand how crop scientists and extension services are addressing the issues of 'losing ground'
- Involve a section for other stakeholders and partners
- Elaborate on the role of internationally agreed issues under the UN (SDGs, the Rio conventions, UNCCD)
- Include concrete steps towards 2015
- Refer to ecosystem services more widely, allow more for a multi-sector approach beyond agriculture
- Link land and natural resource governance
- Include farming and consumption as issues

Creating a process towards sustainable soil and land governance: the Agenda for Action

- Elaborate on financial mechanisms for soil protection
- Include social ecological issues, organic growing issues
- Include good practices and how we can support them, make them spread out
- Include more urban issues
- Highlight gender issues

4 Awareness Raising & Outreach

Change towards more sustainable soil development pathways must be driven by society as a whole. Therefore, the Global Soil Week aims to raise public awareness on the importance of soils.

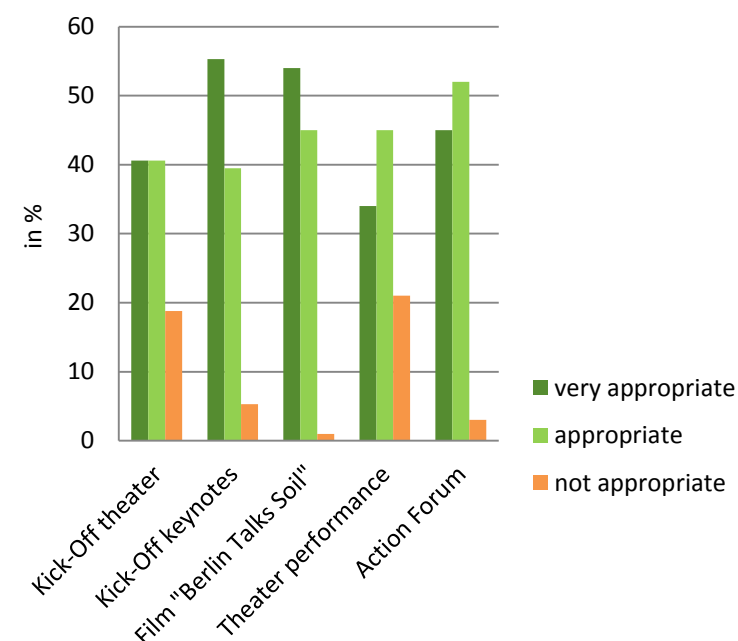
4.1 Illustrating the Importance of Soils

At the Global Soil Week 2013, different elements were chosen to illustrate and discuss the importance of soils for sustainable development and to make soils tangible: kick-off theatre (improvisational theatre), kick-off keynotes, movie “Berlin talks soil”, theatre performance, Action Forum.

The respondents found that all chosen elements performed well in illustrating the importance of soils. The theatre elements during the Kick-off event and the dinner on Tuesday evening were perceived as less appropriate. However, throughout the questionnaire, the respondents stated that they were not aware of the theatre performance at the dinner location because it took place as a public side event at another level of the building. (Q5)

The Action Forum consisted of an artwork exhibition and various activities and café talks that the participants could join during the breaks. Some respondents criticized that they did not recognize this meeting as a program element. However, almost all respondents (97%), who attended the Action Forum, found the insights that they gained inspiring. All of its components were mentioned positively in response to the question what they liked most: the request to bring soil samples, the seed ball action, the soil pigments, the soil perfumes, the art installations as well as the café talks. (Q8)

Were the following elements appropriate to illustrate the importance of soils?

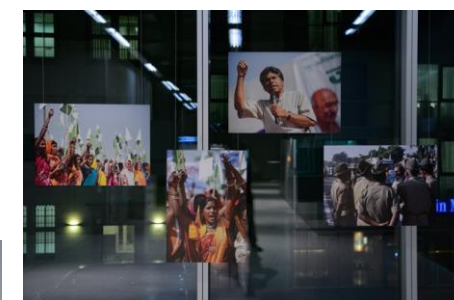


4.2 Raising Public Awareness

In response to the critique of the participants who took part in the evaluation of the Global Soil Week 2012, the efforts for outreach activities were multiplied: Additional staff was allocated for the organization of “Satellite events” with partners and web activities; members of the Global Soil Forum were present at various soil-related events throughout the year 2013; the animation film “Let’s talk about soil” was showed at many different occasions; and information material was displayed and handed-out.

The following Satellite events were organized by the Global Soil Forum together with partners. More than 250 people took part in these events which took place close to the start of the Global Soil Week 2013.

- On the first day of the Global Soil Week, Prof. Klaus Töpfer and Vandana Shiva broke up sealed soil in the heart of Berlin at Potsdamer Platz as a symbolic action against the increasing impervious coverage of soils. This action was, for example, broadcasted in the evening news of the German public broadcaster ZDF.
- The opening of the 3-week exhibition “Soil Speaks” in Berlin, conducted together with the Indian land rights movement Ekta Parishad and the Heinrich Böll Foundation attracted approximately 90 visitors.
- During the Global Soil Week dinner, the theater performance “UnterGrundSzenen” by the “Theaterwerkstatt Spandau” took place in one of Berlin’s nightlife districts at the event location “Umspannwerk Kreuzberg”. It attracted approximately 70 Berliner visitors.
- Furthermore, the local Soil Action Day in Saarbrücken organized by the NGO “Entwicklungspolitisches Netzwerk” and the public meeting of the “Arbeitsgemeinschaft bäuerliche Landwirtschaft” (German association of peasant farmers) in Potsdam initiated lively debates with citizens and farmers on the impacts of our consumption patterns on soil, on local soil management strategies, international policies and land grabbing.



However, these activities were rarely communicated to the participants of the Global Soil Week. This reflects in the numerous suggestions of the respondents to stronger include the public.

To raise public awareness, the respondents suggested (Q3, 21):

- to make the Global Soil Week an example for a sustainably organized event (with regard to food, paper etc.)
- to encourage public participation in the Global Soil Week or in side events
- to invite more students and provide space for their contributions and ideas
- to use Facebook more intensely

The question on how to gain the attention of the youth regarding soil-related issues brought a variety of results. The following approaches were suggested to reach adolescents: (Q13)

- Film /animation
- Get your hands dirty
- Make your own soil project
- Plant your own tree
- School garden project
- Excursions / Stimulate senses (Action Forum as example)
- Food security
- Soils as basis for what we wear and eat
- Poster competition
- Soil experiments
- There is more soil than above
- Exhibition
- Innovative media formats
- How much soil does your breakfast need?
- What does pollution etc. mean for my life?
- Why do we need the dirt under our feet?

**What approach would you
chose to explain the
various dimensions of
sustainable soil & land
management to an
adolescent in your
country?**

4.3 Sources of Information to Stay Up-to-Date

The participants could choose multiple options to indicate which channels they use to stay informed and spread their messages. On average, they chose two options. Email is used as the main communication tool. The respondents use equally often websites, conferences/events, publications and workshops. Newsletters are used less often and more innovative formats of digital communication (blogs, twitter) are only rarely used. Facebook may be an exception, but it was not offered as an option in the list. Some respondents mentioned it in the category “other” (i.e. Facebook, personal communication). (Q14)

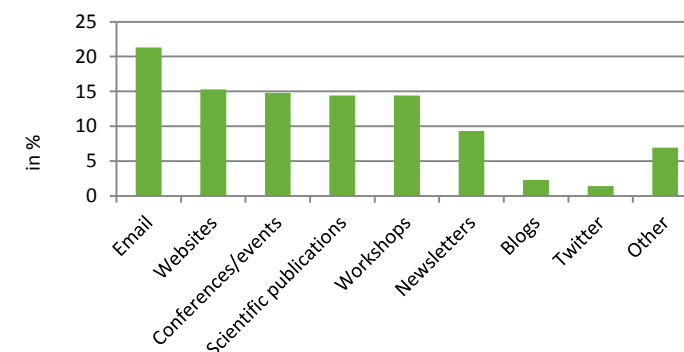
4.4 Awareness of the Global Soil Week

The participants were asked to indicate how they learned about the second Global Soil Week. They could choose multiple options, but most of them chose only one answer. Almost every fourth respondents (23%) attended the previous Global Soil Week in 2012. 16% of the respondents followed the recommendation of one of the Global Soil Week partners. The high response rate to both options indicates a good reputation of the event.

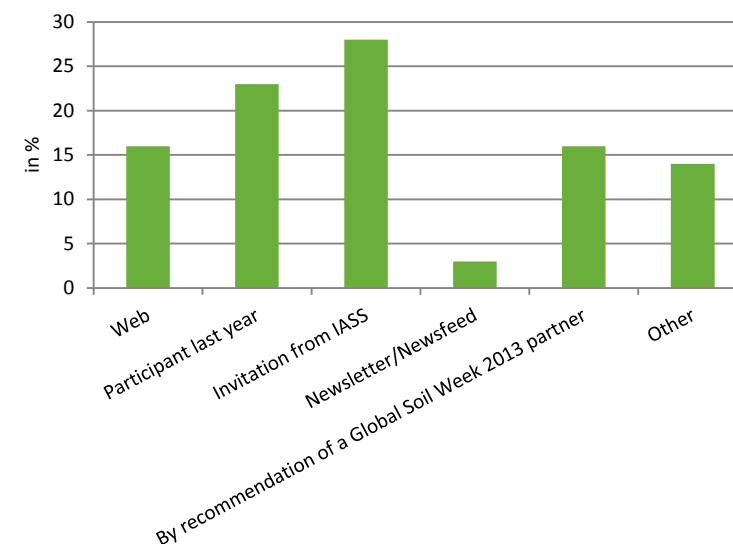
5 Event Management & Logistics

The participants were very satisfied with the event management. The responses on whether they liked certain elements of the event management were genuinely positive: On average, 98% of respondents liked the invitation, registration procedure and information materials (program brochure, program overview, other materials). (Q16)

Which channels do you use most to stay informed and spread your messages?



How did you learn about the Global Soil Week?



6 Participants

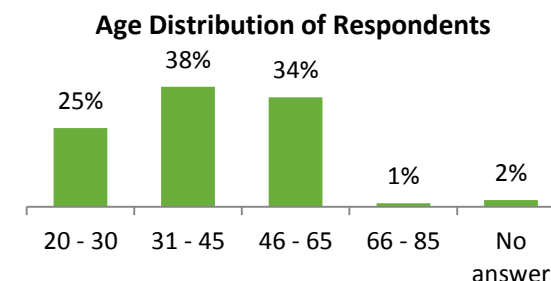
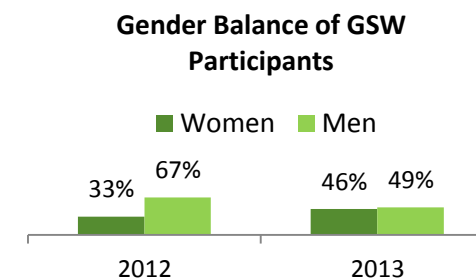
The Global Soil Week 2013 attracted 452 participants from 71 different countries. The following chapters give an overview of gender, age, regional and professional background of all Global Soil Week participants as well as of the respondents.

6.1 Gender and Age

Regarding gender balance, there have generally been more men than women who participate in the Global Soil Week: 62% of the Global Soil Week 2013 participants were men and 38% were women. Compared to the Global Soil Week 2012, there seems to be only a slight change: 67% of the participants were men and 33% of the participants were women.

Regarding the gender balance of the respondents, there was an equal distribution between women (46%) and men (49%), only 4% of the respondents did not answer the question. In comparison to the evaluation in 2012, 33% of the respondents were women and 67% were men.

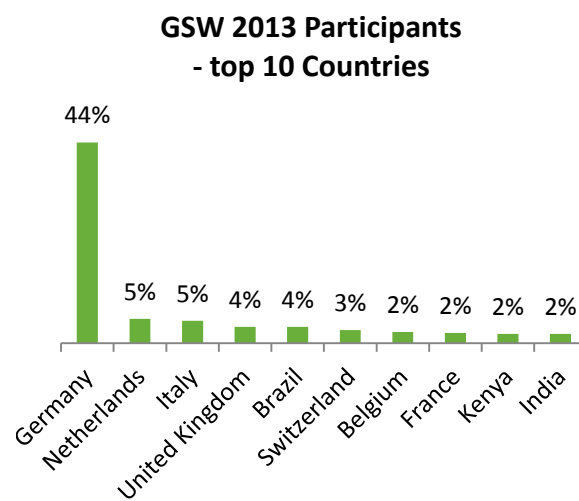
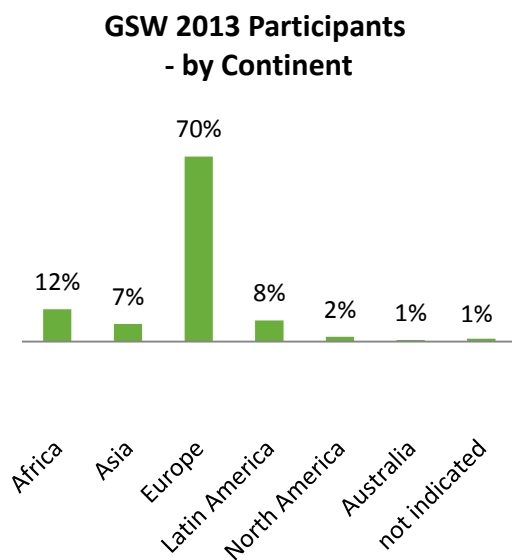
Regarding the age of the respondents, there seems to be a fair balance: about one-third was between 31 and 45 years old, another one-third was over 45 up to 65 years old, and a bit less than a third was under 30 years old (2 people did not answer the question).



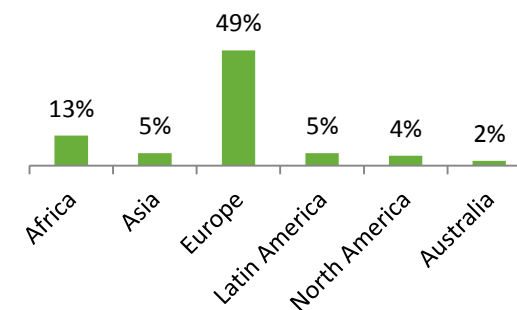
6.2 Regional Background

In total, 452 stakeholders from 71² different countries participated in the Global Soil Week 2013. Most of the participants are based in Europe (70%). This includes participants which currently live in Europe, but come from a different continent.

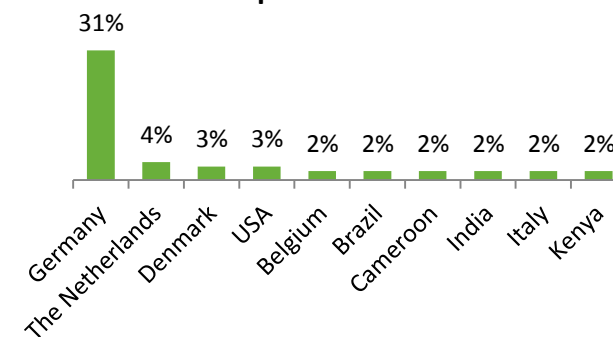
The 93 respondents who completed the evaluation form were from 33 different countries, with a third from Germany.



**Respondents to Evaluation Form
- by Continent**



**Respondents to Evaluation Form
- top 10 Countries**



² Number according to the MCI report of 4.11.2013 including 3 countries which had to be added manually.

The following list gives an overview of these 71 countries:

Country	Number of Participants	Country	Number of Participants	Country	Number of Participants
Argentina	3	Iceland	2	Republic of Korea	1
Australien	4	India	9	Russian Federation	1
Austria	8	Indonesia	1	Senegal	3
Bangladesh	1	Iran	3	Slovakia	2
Belgium	11	Iraq	1	South Africa	5
Benin	1	Israel	1	South Sudan	1
Bolivia	1	Italy	22	Spain	1
Botswana	1	Jordan	2	Sri Lanka	1
Brazil	16	Kenya	9	Sudan	1
Burkina Faso	1	Madagascar	1	Sweden	9
Cameroon	2	Malawi	1	Switzerland	13
Canada	1	Mauritius	1	Tanzania	5
Chile	1	Mexiko	3	Thailand	1
Colombia	8	Morocco	1	Turkey	1
Costa Rica	2	Namibia	4	Uganda	1
Cuba	1	Nepal	1	United Arab Emirates	2
Czech Republic	1	Netherlands	24	United Kingdom	16
Denmark	7	New Zealand	2	USA	7
Dominicanian Rep.	1	Niger	1	Venezuela	1
Ehtiopia	5	Nigeria	3	Yemen	1
Estonia	2	Norway	1	Zimbabwe	1
France	10	Pakistan	1		
Germany	197	Paraguay	1		
Ghana	7	Peru	1		
Guatemala	1	Portugal	1		

6.3 Professional Background

To reveal the diversity of stakeholders at the Global Soil Week 2013, the participants were asked to indicate their professional background. It was possible to give multiple answers. 20 respondents chose multiple categories to describe their professional background. For example, one respondent is a scientist and politician, another one is a policy-maker and organic farmer. All answers were counted separately and referred to a total of 114 answers. A good one-third of the respondents are scientists (37%). Many respondents are stakeholders from NGOs/CSOs (16%), students (13%), or policy-makers (10%). Only a few respondents are stakeholders from international organizations (e.g. UN) (4%) or business (4%). A few also indicated that they are farmers (4%) or artists (4%). (Q17) It has to be noted that the categories of “artist” and “farmer” were always chosen in combination with another category such as student, NGO/CSO, policy-maker or scientist.

Compared to the first Global Soil Week 2012, these numbers indicate a significant higher regional and professional diversity of stakeholders and reflect a successful strengthening of this international multi-stakeholder process for sustainable soil and land management.

