



**Global Soil Forum**

Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies e.V.

*First*

**GLOBAL  
SOIL  
WEEK** | **SOILS  
FOR  
LIFE**

Berlin, 18-22 November 2012

[www.globalsoilweek.org](http://www.globalsoilweek.org)

## **Participants Evaluation Report**

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# 1 Evaluation report summary

This report summarizes the results of the participants evaluation of the Global Soil Week 2012 "Soils for Life" held in Berlin on 18-22 November 2012, which was attended by over 400 participants from 65 different countries. The evaluation forms were completed by 79 participants from 25 different countries.

Overall, the Global Soil Week 2012 was perceived as a great success by the participants. 96% of the participants<sup>1</sup>, categorizing themselves as either being satisfied or very satisfied with the event. Additionally, all participants who completed the evaluation form expressed their great satisfaction regarding with the overall organization of the event.

This summary section analyzes the results of the participant evaluation regarding Global Soil Week's success at being a successful transdisciplinary event and process. The overarching goal of establishing a transdisciplinary process can be broken down into three success criteria: (i) knowledge exchange/transfer, (ii) process creation, and (iii) public outreach. The following summary will be structured according to these three criteria.

## (i) Knowledge exchange/transfer

92% of the participants agreed that joint processes like the Global Soil Week contribute to transformations towards sustainable soil and land management.

**Regional representation:** Many participants mentioned having the opportunity to exchange ideas and information with people from 65 countries from all over the world as one of the highlights of the Global Soil Week. Participants nevertheless noted that about half of the Global Soil Week participants were from Germany and requested that the hosts seek to address this imbalance by integrating more regional and international perspective in sessions, panels and in other prominent positions.

**Representation of societal actor groups:** The majority, 58%, of those who took part in the evaluation were scientists. The second largest group with 14% was policy-makers. Only 9% were from civil society organizations and 2% from the private sector. The participants thus rightly called for a better representation of the private sector (economists, agribusiness etc.), of civil society (farmer associations, local communities) and of politicians from both national and local governments.

Some participants stated that they would like to see more participants with: (1) practical experience (2) researchers from developing countries and (3) greater dialogue between social and soil scientists.

From our perspective, we certainly felt that the Global Soil Week sessions and panels could benefit from a more balanced representation of different societal groups and this is certainly something we will be paying close attention to.

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<sup>1</sup> In the following, the basis for the percentages given is the total number of participants who took part in the evaluation.

Several participants nevertheless stated that they felt that the Global Soil Week was a great opportunity to foster the exchange and cooperation between scientists, politicians and practitioners coming from different backgrounds.

**Gender and age balance:** The participants called for a better gender balance and more involvement of young people. Only 33% of the participants, who completed the evaluation form, were women and 60% of the participants who completed the form were 45 years old.

## **(ii) Process creation**

**Formats:** 92% of the participants were (very) satisfied with the process and formats of the sessions they attended. They appreciated the interactive style of most of the sessions (which varied from Dialogue session formats, discussions, World Cafés, breakout groups etc.), which were intended to foster the exchange between the participants. Another pleasing outcome was the fact that (83%) of the participants who responded found that there was enough time for discussion and networking. The Marketplace of Ideas was regarded as informative and interesting by 85% of the participants. Furthermore, a number of participants noted that they had appreciated the opportunity to be involved in the organization of the sessions.

**Topics:** 92% of the participants stated that the topic of their concern regarding sustainable soil and land management was covered during the Global Soil Week. The participants mentioned a broad variety of topics as being particularly interesting to them; the following topics appeared to be especially popular: Economics of Land Degradation, Global Soil Policy, Raising Soil Awareness, Sustainable Land Management, Ecosystem Services of Soils, Urbanization, Soil Contamination, Soil and Water Nexus, and Soil Security.

Several participants also expressed their frustration at the lack of controversial topics and debates between stakeholders with conflicting interests (e.g. actors from the business and agricultural sector, grass-root organizations, NGOs).

**Knowledge to Action:** Many participants pointed out that there is now a need to develop concrete strategies for taking action and recommended the following: (1) fostering transdisciplinary exchanges (2) carrying the outcomes of the Global Soil Week further and (3) creating an outreach strategy to policy-makers and the public.

## **(iii) Public outreach**

For many participants, the highlight of the Global Soil Week was its role as a platform for raising soil awareness and drawing attention to important issues relating to soils and land management. Most participants found that the media, including press, web broadcast, and videos, was a crucial communication element for non-scientific communities.

They suggested that the outreach could be further extended through campaigns in schools. Participants also stated that they found that it is essential to raise awareness on the close relationship between soils and human daily lives, which they felt was clearly illustrated and achieved through the "Cook it Green!" event.

Several participants, suggested improvements in terms of public outreach should be made, for example, by making the Global Soil Week a public event and by involving more policy-makers and civil society representatives.

## 2 Results of participant evaluation

At the end of the first Global Soil Week (GSW) held in Berlin on 18-22 November 2012 an evaluation form was handed out to the participants in order to obtain feedback on all relevant aspects of the event.

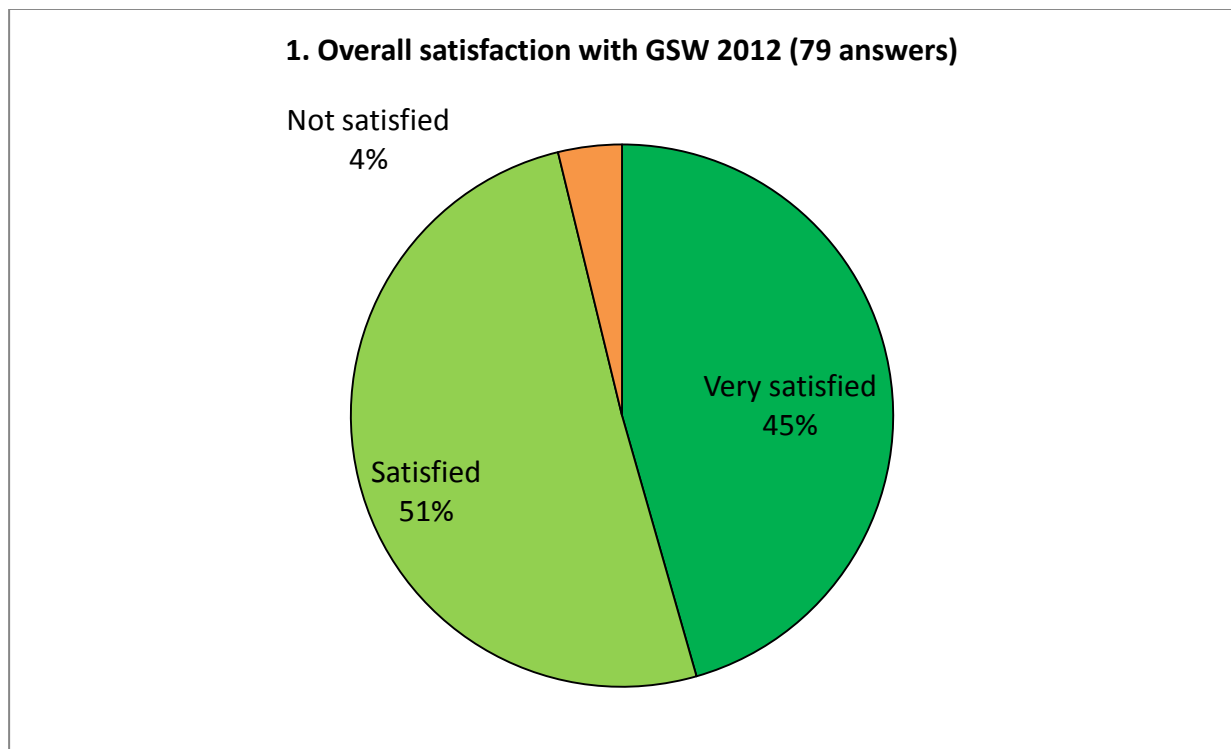
A total of 79 participants returned the evaluation form. (A copy of the evaluation form can be found on pages 16-18.)

The following pages contain a summary of the qualitative answers (section 2) and quantitative answers (section 3) given anonymously by the participants.

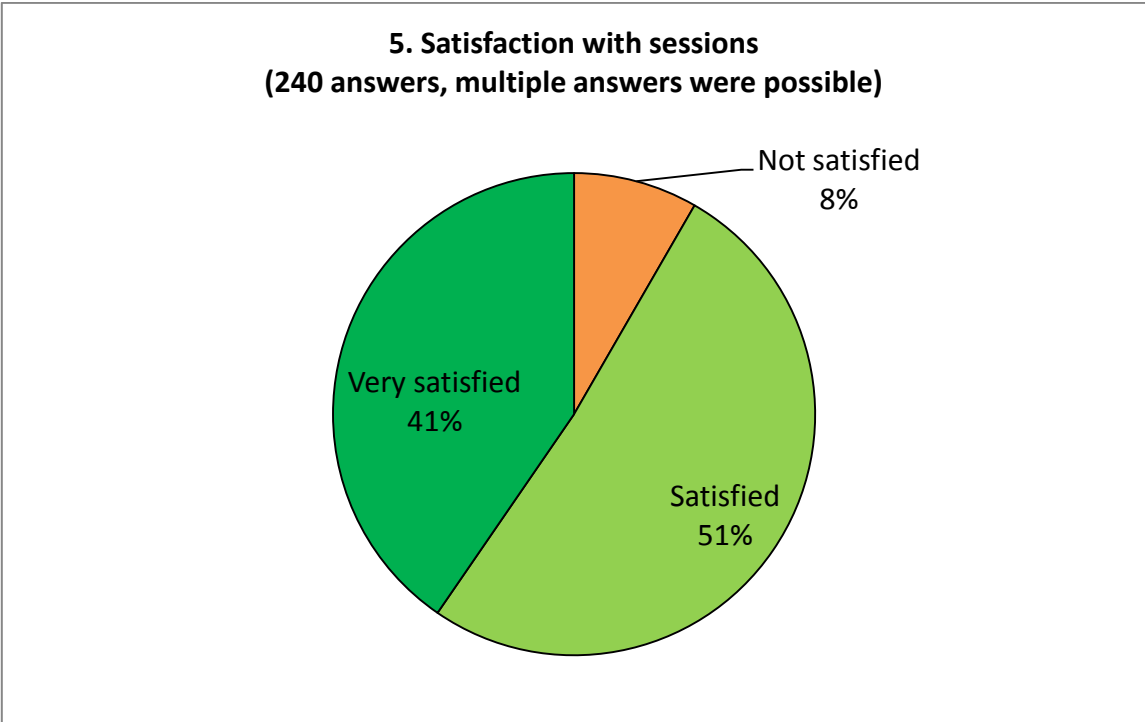
This evaluation serves as a basis for the analysis of the Global Soil Week 2012 and to draw on the lessons learned. Further suggestions for improvements and positive feedback by participants and other relevant stakeholders will be considered when organizing the Global Soil Week 2013.

### 2.1 Summary of quantitative answers

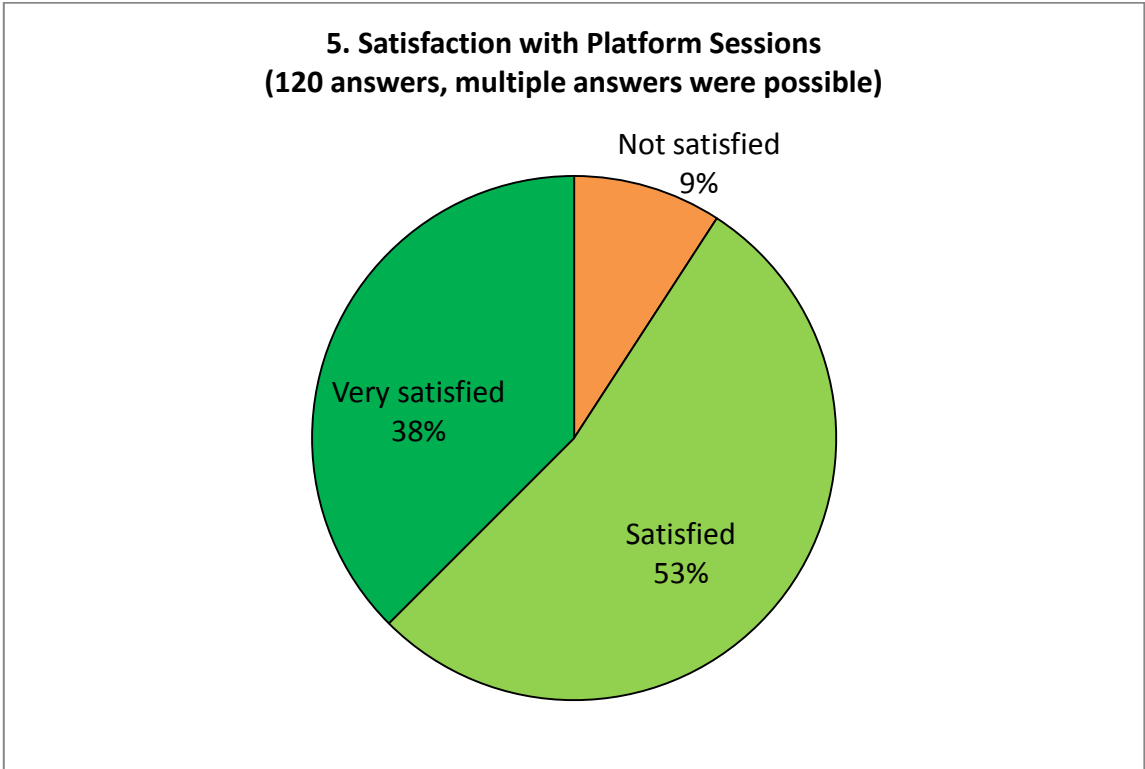
The following graphs are based on the quantitative questions of the evaluation form (No. 1, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17). They show the answers of the participants in percentage of the total number of answers given per question.



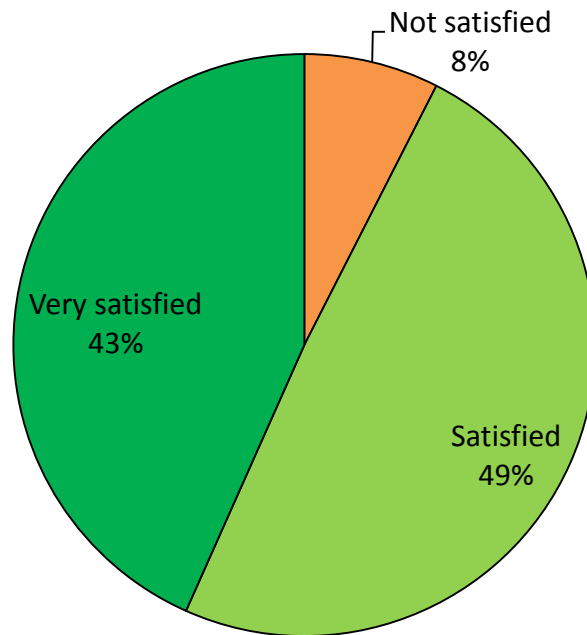
Question 5 of the evaluation form asked the participants to indicate their satisfaction with the sessions they attended. Since the numbers of responses given for the individual sessions was very low, it is seemed to be more appropriate to illustrate the aggregated answers to question 5 instead of the answers for each individual session.



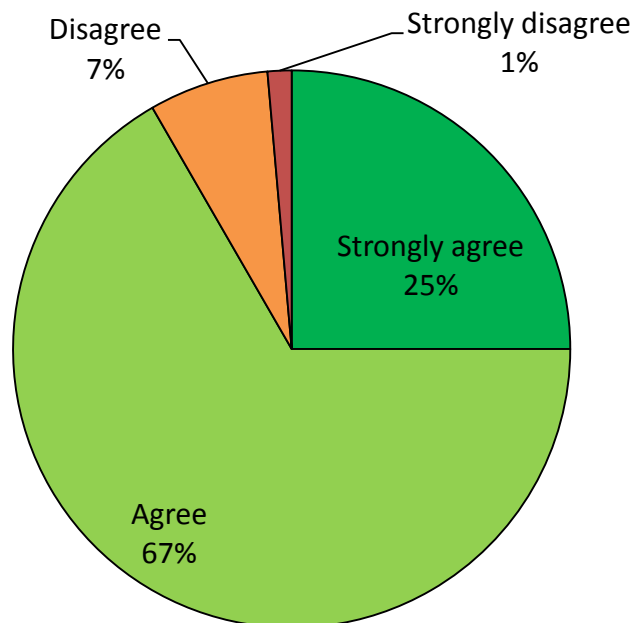
The following two graphs illustrate the participants' satisfaction with the Platform Sessions as well as the Dialogue Sessions.



**5. Satisfaction with Dialogue Sessions  
(120 answers, multiple answers were possible)**

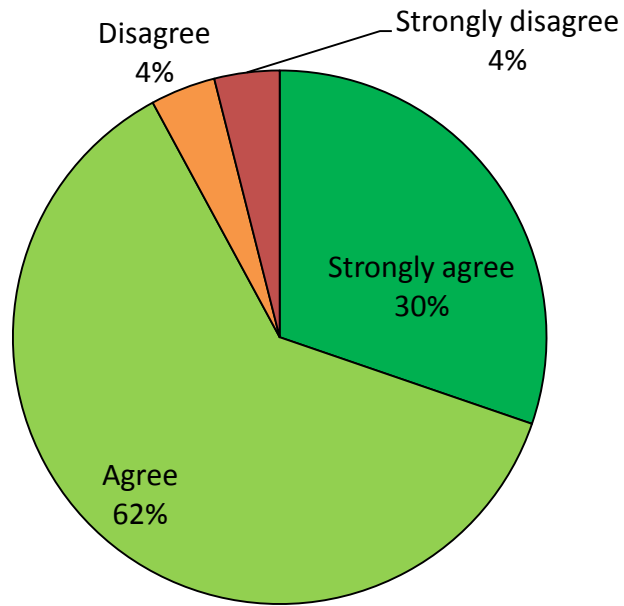


**6. GSW covered the topic of my concern regarding sustainable soil & land management (72 answers)**

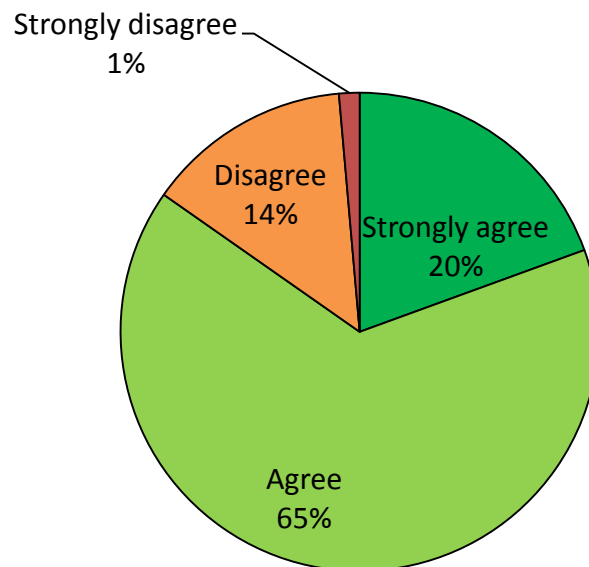




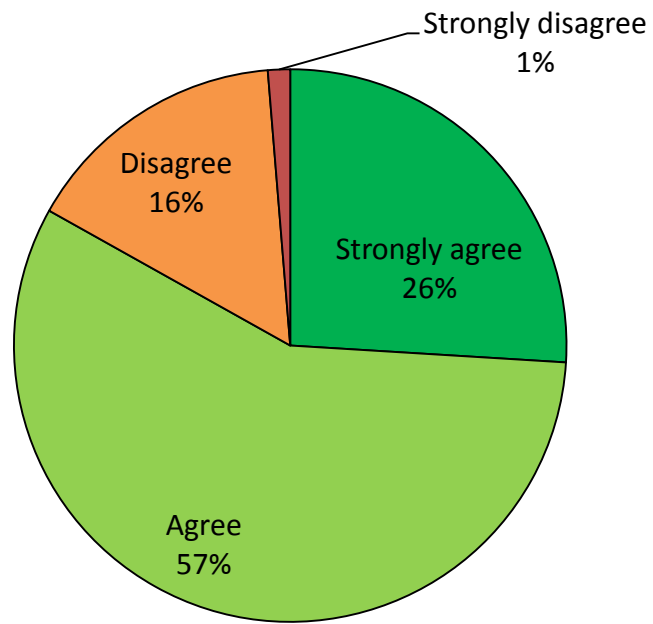
**9. Joint processes like GSW contribute to transformation towards sustainable soil & land management (76 answers)**



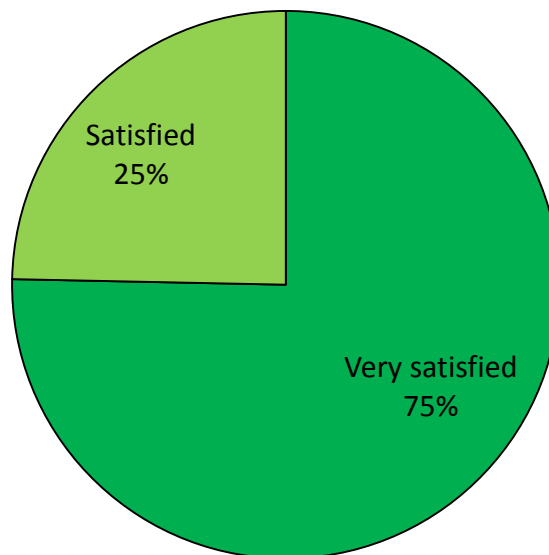
**11. The Marketplace of Ideas was informative & interesting (72 answers)**



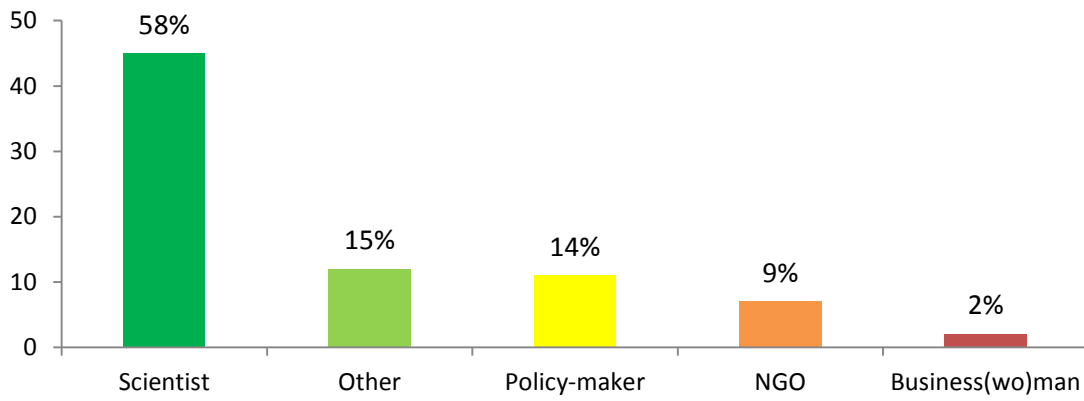
**12. There was enough time for discussion and networking during the GSW (77 answers)**



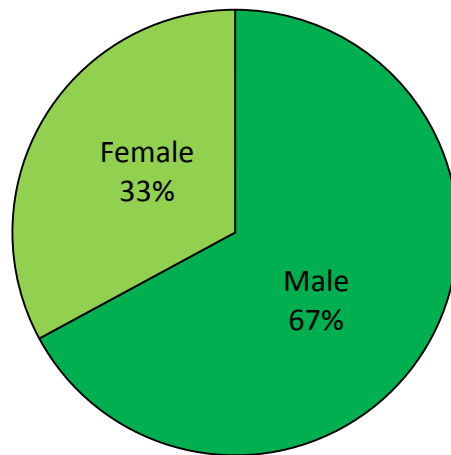
**13. Satisfaction with the organizational arrangements of GSW (77 answers)**



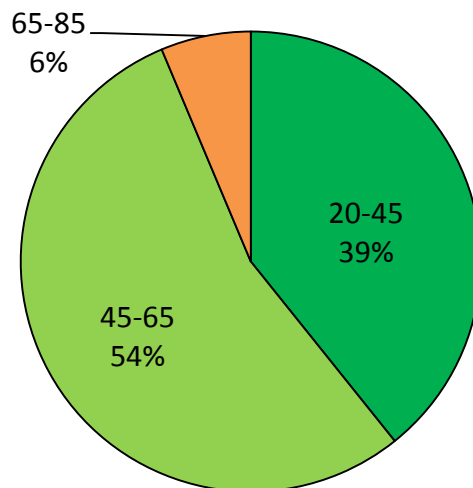
**14. Profession of evaluation participants (77 answers)**



**15. Gender of evaluation participants (76 answers)**



**16. Age range of evaluatoin participants (79 answers)**



## 17. Home country of evaluation participants

<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>
Germany	16
Italy	11
UK	6
Netherlands	3
Zimbabwe	2
Brazil	2
Pakistan	1
Australia	1
Thailand	1
China	1
Nigeria	1
USA	1
Peru	1
Sweden	1
Dominican Republic	1
Turkey	1
South Africa	1
Paraguay	1
Ecuador	1
Qatar	1
Belgium	1
Uzbekistan	1
Spain	1
Canada	1
France	1
<b>Total number of participants who indicated their nationality</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Total number of countries</b>	<b>25</b>

## 2.2 Summary of qualitative answers

The following tables contain the summaries of the qualitative answers given by the participants who filled out the evaluation form (Questions No. 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 18 in the evaluation form). The numbers in brackets behind the answers indicate the number of mentions. They are sorted in descending order.

<b>2. Highlights of the Global Soil Week</b>	<b>3. What was missing or could be improved next time?</b>
Exchange between participants from many different countries/backgrounds, networking, dedicated participants, atmosphere (21)	Diverse/controversial points of view, invitation of various stakeholders (politicians, planners, economists, private sector, agribusiness were underrepresented) (20)
Drawing attention to importance of soils and related problems, the GSW itself as platform for raising soil awareness (17)	Agricultural sector, farmers, farmer associations were underrepresented (14)
Transdisciplinary exchange and cooperation of practitioners, politicians and scientists, improving science-policy interface (12)	Young people / young scientists (10)
Chance for active participation in discussions at the sessions (8)	Public outreach/participation, education, GSW should be open to the public (8)
Global Land and Soil Degradation Dialogue Session (4)	More international perspectives (Latin America, Africa, Asia, North America under-represented) (7)
Keynote speakers (4)	More time for dialogue, discussions and complex soil threats (5)
Case studies, information from practitioners (3)	Strategies for taking action, how to transform soil knowledge to a coordinating science (5)
Sustainable Land Management Dialogue Session (3)	Under-representation of women (4)
Dynamic Knowledge Panel (3)	Civilsociety (3)
Cook it Green! Cooking Event (3)	Interaction between soil-environment-political "reality" (2)
Film: Let's talk about soils! (2)	More detailed and practical examples of best practices (2)
Agenda for Action closing event (2)	Biofuel debate (1)
Grounded Film Festival (2)	List of participants (1)
Diversity of discussed topics (2)	Short description of movies in paper programme (1)
Payments for Ecosystem Services Platform Session (2)	Impact of mining on land degradation (1)
Soil museum stand (1)	Simultaneous translation in working groups (1)
Greenbelt Movements Platform Session (1)	Social economics (1)
Venue (1)	Dynamic knowledge panel could be organized better (1)
Markets for Soil Organic Dialogue Session (1)	Agreeing on an outcome instead of a formulated paper (1)
Platform Sessions (1)	The soil information topic was badly treated (1)
8-hour Dialogue Sessions (1)	A scientific introduction on soils for non-scientists and scientists from other fields (1)

Natural Resource Governance Dialogue Session (1)	The question of "modeling" as a full session, empirical/physical scaling local to global (1)
	Linking between organization plan with government in other countries to decrease the knowledge gap (1)

<b>6. Global Soil Week covered the topic of my concern regarding sustainable soil and land management</b>	
<b>(i) Topics that responded the most</b>	<b>(ii) Topics that were missing</b>
(Economics of) land & soil degradation /desertification (14)	Outreach to practitioners (farmers/land owners) – Integration of their perspectives and knowledge at local scale (7)
Soil policy topics (9)	Concrete strategies to translate knowledge into action (policy implementation, improvement of situation) (6)
Raising soil awareness/Education (8)	Linking realities with science and policy arenas/ outreach to public (5)
Ecosystem services of soils (6)	Soil pollution (e.g. diffuse, nanoparticles) (4)
Sustainable land management (5)	Soil science/research (e.g. evaluation of soil functions, soil types & conservation, soil restoration, physical modeling, soil information) (4)
Urbanization (5)	Alternative and confronting topics (e.g. over-production, eco-farming, internalization of negative external costs) (3)
Soil contamination (5)	Social economics (e.g. impediments to close yield gap), intercultural differences (3)
Soil & water nexus (5)	Soil protection policy, development goals in soil research and education (strategy definitions) (3)
Managing/markets for soil organic carbon (4)	Pro-poor aspects (2)
Land tenure/land grabbing (3)	Role of (soil) science/ Research trends (3)
Soil & energy nexus (3)	Role of other industries in soil degradation (e.g. mining) (2)
Transdisciplinary approach (3)	Management of highly organic soils in cold climates (1)
Soil security (2)	Gender (1)
Land/soil governance issues (2)	Earth system science perspective (1)
Greenbelt movements (2)	Mapping and monitoring soil degradation (1)
Nutrient management (Food or pollution) (2)	Management of uncertainties (1)
Implementation / case studies of conservation agriculture (2)	
Voluntary guidelines (1)	

<b>4. What could be improved?</b>	<b>7. Which topic will you follow-up with after the first Global Soil Week?</b>
More time and opportunity for discussions, better interaction (11)	Sustainable Land and Soil Management (9)
Better balance of gender and regional background of panel members (8)	Soil policy (target settings, instruments) (9)
Representation/perspectives of farmer organizations worldwide and key regions (China, oil exporting countries), outreach to user communities and their participation in developing GSW topics (8)	Urbanization (Soil sealing, Sustainable urbanization) (8)
More involvement of young people (4)	Raising soil awareness, education (8)
Podium discussions between stakeholders representing conflicting interests (business, grass root organizations...), dialogue between social and soil sciences (4)	(Economics of) land and soil degradation (8)
Invite more people with practical experience and researchers from developing countries, provide funds for them (4)	Soil water nexus (6)
Development of concrete results (strategies how to move on) (4)	Soil security (protection, conservation) (6)
Focus on selected (fewer) topics (3)	Soil pollution, contamination (6)
Better issue paper, quality control of papers, interactive outcome paper - based on results of workshops (3)	Ecosystem services (5)
Less speakers, speaking time (3)	Soil carbon markets (4)
Make people think out of the box, bring new ideas to the table (3)	Global governance (3)
Involve politicians and decision makers (2)	Knowledge on soil management of small scale farmers (3)
More workshops (2)	Food security (3)
More scientific presentations (2)	Land grabbing (3)
Watching time schedules (2)	Land tenure rights (2)
Agenda for action prior to GSW (2)	Soil nutrients aspects (2)
Reduce number of parallel sessions (2)	Map, archive soil data, soil information (2)
Aspects of sustainability: no tropical fruits should be included in the menu, discussions should be held in a venue that reflects and connects to nature(1)	International research cooperation (2)
Some more presentations (1)	Voluntary guidelines (1)
Preliminary discussions via e-conferences (1)	Holding actors accountable (1)

Include networks and initiatives that really think out of the box (e.g. The more and better, the great transition initiative) in the panels; the marketplace of ideas may be less marketing and more ideas, keynotes by people working in ecological agricultures/ agroecology; A marketplace about soils for public access, as well as the film session; there are more, but time is short.. (1)

<b>8. Which applied method/format helped you to include your perspectives?</b>	<b>10. Crucial elements to communicate the importance of soils in a non-scientific way</b>	<b>18. What else do you want to tell us?</b>
Interactive approach (especially World Cafe, Break out groups, organizing session) (18)	Media (e.g. press, web broadcast, photos, videos) (13)	Compliments for organization of GSW and Thanks for invitations to GSW (31)
Dialogue Sessions (14)	Raising awareness to close relationship of soil/land to human lives (e.g. food security) and its vulnerability/finiteness (11)	Strategies for outreach to policy makers and public are needed now (5)
Discussion (9)	Education campaigns in communities, schools (e.g. soil museum) (7)	Better regional balance in panels and other prominent positions needed (especially African scientists, provide more funding) (5)
Presentation (4)	Video "Let's talk about soil" (6)	Better gender balance in panels and other prominent positions needed (5)
Platform Session (3)	Participants naming GSW formats (e.g. Dialogue Sessions, Platform Session) (6)	Young people underrepresented (provide funds for them) (4)
Analyt. Approach/ data analysis (2)	Connection of soils to food and cooking: Cook it Green! (6)	More internationalization (e.g. GSW in Latin America) (3)
Informal events (Coffee Break, Dinner) (2)	Use of simple language, easy messages, examples (5)	Compliments for Cook it Green! and Sarah Wiener (2)
Case Studies (2)	Bring together diverse stakeholders (5)	Involvement/invitation of other groups (land owner, industry & business, green associations, NGOs, farmers) (2)
Feedback possibility (1)	Evoke emotions, catchy awareness raising (3)	Zero land degradation is a mistake (1)



Panel discussion (1)	Relevance of soil in relation to daily lives (e.g. implications of soil degradation on local scale) (3)	Please no more anti-feministic jokes (1)
Parallel workshops (1)	Participants naming GSW topics (e.g. land degradation, land grabbing) (4)	Closer links to with IUSS & national soil science society (1)
	Film festival (2)	Importance of international cooperation, role of universities (1)
	Interactive communication (2)	

### 3 Evaluation Form



Berlin, 18-22 November 2012

#### **Your feedback**

**Dear Participant,**

*The Global Soil Forum of the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) is grateful for your active participation in the first Global Soil Week 2012. The Global Soil Week is an on-going process emerging from partnership. Therefore we kindly invite you to become part of this endeavour and shape the process by giving us your feedback. Please take a moment and complete the feedback form. The feedback form is of course anonymous and the data will be confidential.*

*Many thanks!*

*Your Global Soil Week Team*

**1. Please indicate your overall satisfaction with the Global Soil Week 2012.**

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Dissatisfied

**2. What was for you the highlight of the Global Soil Week 2012?**

**3. What was missing at the Global Soil Week 2012 and should be included next time?**

**4. What could be improved?**

**5. How did you like the sessions you attended?**

<b>Sessions</b>	<b>Title</b> <i>(Please insert session title)</i>	<b>Very satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>
Platform Mon. afternoon				
Platform Tue. morning				
Dialogue Tue. afternoon				
Dialogue Wed. morning				

**6. The Global Soil Week covered the topic of my particular concern regarding sustainable soil and land management.**

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

(i) Which topic responded to your concerns the most?

(ii) Which topic did you miss?

**7. Which topic will you follow up after the Global Soil Week 2012?**

**8. Which applied method/format helped you to include your perspectives into the Global Soil Week?**

**9. Joint processes such as the Global Soil Week contribute to transformations towards sustainable soil and land management.**

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

**10. Which elements do you think were crucial to communicate the importance of soils in a non-scientific way?**

**11.The Marketplace of Ideas was informative and interesting.**

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

**12.There was enough time for discussions and networking during the Global Soil Week.**

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

**13.Please indicate your satisfaction with the organizational arrangements of the Global Soil Week**

Very satisfied  Satisfied  Dissatisfied

**14.I am a...**

Scientist  Policy-maker  Representative of NGO/civil society organization  
 Artist  Businessman/woman  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**15.I am...**  Female  Male

**16.I am between ...**  20-45 years old  45-65 years old  65-85 years old

**17.I come from...** \_\_\_\_\_(country)

**18.What else do you want to tell us?**

**Thank you very much for your time to take part in this evaluation!**

**We are looking forward to welcoming you to the next Global Soil Week!**