

47th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE WEED SCIENCE SOCIETY OF NIGERIA (WSSN) 2019: CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUE

The 47th Annual Conference of the Weed Science Society of Nigeria (WSSN) took place at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Oyo State from 3rd – 7th November, 2019. The theme of the conference was “Weed Research Finding and Farmers’ Productivity: Bridging the Gap”.

The opening ceremony of the conference was kicked off with the welcome address by President of WSSN, Professor M. G. M. Kolo. The launching of the Nigerian Journal of Weed Science Volume 32 was done by the special dignitaries attending the conference. Dr. L. D. Busari, Executive Director, Sugar Research Council of Nigeria and Dr. U. E. Udensi [representing Mr. Godwin Atser of International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)] gave the keynote addresses which highlighted the need to embrace precision agriculture technology in weed control efforts on farmers’ field, and negative impact of improper use of paraquat on both farmers’ field and our environment, respectively. The journal reviewer, Prof. S. T. O. Lagoke noted that, over the years, the WSSN has not been consulted by Government on policy regulations relating to importation of herbicides and their safe use in Nigerian agriculture.

The technical sessions comprised Weed Biology and Ecology, Management of Parasitic Weeds/Host Plants, Weed Management and Weed Utilization. Thirty (30) papers were presented during the technical sessions, while 22 papers (all Postgraduate) were presented during the WSSN Students’ Competition.

The conference made the following observations:

1. Locally-modified motorized weeders are now available for weed management in cassava;
2. There is no synergy between Weed Scientists and Extension Workers, Farmers, Agro-chemical companies as well as Government Agencies, for agricultural renaissance;
3. Dearth of development and formulation of indigenous herbicides adaptable to the traditional Nigerian cropping systems;

4. Dearth of biological checklists, field guides and manuals of weeds of Nigerian agriculture, forestry and landscapes; and
5. Unregulated influx of herbicides into the country.

Recommendations:

1. Government should fund the research and development of locally-modified weeders and indigenous herbicides.
2. There should be concerted efforts at all levels to enhance weed research and extension services to smallholder farmers.
3. Government should support relevant reputable experts to develop comprehensive database on the biology of Nigerian weeds, particularly the noxious species.
4. Training of extension workers and farmers on safe use of herbicides.
5. Regulation of influx of sub-standard herbicides into the country.
6. Government should ban the importation and use of paraquat in Nigeria.
7. Resuscitation of the National Advisory Committee on Weed Control (NACWC).

Communique Committee

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