



## Brazilian Soil Science Society: brief history, achievements and challenges for the near future

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The Brazilian Soil Science Society (SBCS) is one of the oldest scientific societies in Brazil. It was created in October 1947 during the 1st Brazilian Meeting of Soil Science held at the headquarters of the Agricultural Chemistry Institute of Rio de Janeiro, at present the Soils Institute of the Brazilian Agricultural Research Centre. Its origin lies within the Interamerican Conference of Agriculture, Caracas, 1945, the 2nd Pan American Congress of Mining and Geology, Petropolis, Rio de Janeiro, 1946 and the 5th Brazilian Congress of Chemistry, Porto Alegre, 1947. Its first president was Álvaro Barcelos Fagundes, who was the only Brazilian participant at the 1st International Congress of Soil Science and Transcontinental Excursion held in United States of America, in 1927. At that time he was engaged in research work at the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, at the Rutgers University where he did a doctorate under the guidance of Professor Selman Waksman. The society started with 47 members and presently has nearly 900 members. In its first phase the Brazilian Soil Science Society was housed at the Agricultural Chemistry Institute in Rio de Janeiro and its main activity was the biannual Brazilian Congress of Soil Science. In 1975 its headquarters moved to the Agronomic Institute of Campinas with the creation of its executive board and the start of publication of the Brazilian Journal of Soil Science (1977) as well as the society bulletin (1976). In 1997 its executive office moved to the Soils Department at the Federal University of Viçosa. Nowadays it has a structure similar to the one from the IUSS: the society is organized in four divisions (Soil in space and time, Soils properties and processes, Soil use and management and Soil, environment and society) which encompass 14 technical commissions and eight State or Regional nuclei. The Brazilian Congresses of Soil Science happen without interruption since 1947. The first one had had 72 participants that presented 28 papers. The last one, in Uberlandia, Minas Gerais had 3000 participants with 66 conferences and keynotes and more than 4000 papers presented. The next will happen in August 2013 in Florianopolis, Santa Catarina and is also limited to 3000 participants. Beside the national soil science meetings, in its 65 years, the Society also promoted 26 editions of the Brazilian Meeting of Management and Conservation of Soil and Water, 23 editions of the Brazilian Meeting of Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition, 6 editions of the Brazilian Meeting of Fertility and Soil Biology and six editions the Brazilian Symposium on Soil Education, and co-sponsored the ten editions of the Soil Classification and Correlation Meeting. In the last years it is also increasing the number of regional meetings organized by the regional nuclei. In 2011, during the Brazilian Congress of Soil Science, a new Board of Directors (known as the Council) was elected. Since then the Society is setting up a modernization process in its structures and external relations through a renewed statute and new by-laws. The Council, composed by 20 members, is developing an agenda and strategic planning for the next years that reinforces that the Society should aim to: (a) become more influent in Brazilian environmental public policies, (b) reach leadership in public soil awareness in a continental-sized country like Brazil and (c) interact more actively with other scientific societies due to the transdisciplinary nature of Soil Science, and work hard to go out of the agronomical box. At present, the society is busy with the organization of the 21st World Congress of Soil Science to happen in 2018, for the first time in Brazil. Preceding it the Society is organizing a wide range of activities and events to celebrate and call public attention to Soils, in special on the occasion of the International Year of Soils, in 2017.