



A virtual, interactive and dynamic excursion in Google Earth on soil management and conservation (AgroGeovid)

Tom Vanwallegem (1) and Juan Vicente Giráldez (1,2)

(1) University of Cordoba, Department of Agronomy, Área de Hidráulica, Córdoba, Spain (ag2vavat@uco.es), (2) Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, CSIC, Córdoba, Spain

Many courses on natural resources require hands-on practical knowledge and experience that students traditionally could only acquire by expensive and time-consuming field excursions. New technologies and social media however provide an interesting alternative to train students and help them improve their practical knowledge. AgroGeovid is a virtual excursion, based on Google Earth, Youtube, Facebook and Twitter that is aimed at agricultural engineering students, but equally useful for any student interested in soil management and conservation, e.g. geography, geology and environmental resources. Agrogeovid provides the framework for teachers and students to upload geotagged photos, comments and discussions. After the initial startup phase, where the teacher uploaded material on e.g. soil erosion phenomena, soil conservation structures and different soil management strategies under different agronomic systems, students contributed with their own material gathered throughout the academic year. All students decided to contribute via Facebook, in stead of Twitter, which was not known to most of them. The final result was a visual and dynamic tool which students could use to train and perfect skills adopted in the classroom using case-studies and examples from their immediate environment.