

Honorary doctorate at Dresden University, Germany, for IUSS President Elect Rattan Lal



Professor Rattan Lal after receiving the Honorary Doctorate certificate from the Rector, Hans Müller-Steinhagen (right), and the Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Sciences, Karl-Heinz Feger (second right). To the right of the new honoree doctor stand Dr. David M. Malone, Rector of the United Nations University, and Professor Klaus Töpfer.
Photo: Gerlach

At an emotional ceremony on September 23, 2015, Prof. Rattan Lal (Ohio State University) was awarded an Honorary Doctorate degree at Technische Universität Dresden (TUD, Dresden University of Technology) by the Rector, Professor Hans Müller-Steinhagen, and the Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Sciences, Professor Karl-Heinz Feger. TUD is one of 11 universities in Germany recently identified as an »excellence university«.

“With the granting of this honorary doctorate, our university honors one of the world’s most famous and globally engaged soil scientists. His research topics and spheres of activities go far beyond soil science. Of global importance are Dr. Lal’s seminal and often cited publications on the potential for carbon storage in soils connected with global change, food security in a world with growing human population, as well sustainable and integrated management of soil and water resources. Moreover, we honor a person not only of high international standing, but also with a unique and charismatic personality”, said Feger, who also heads TUD’s »Institute of Soil Science and Site Ecology«.

The laudation was held by Professor Klaus Töpfer, the former German Federal Minister for the Environment and former Executive Director of the Environmental Program of the United Nations (UNEP). Töpfer emphasized Dr. Lal’s academic merits, but also his special role in the dialogue between politics and science on the topic of sustainability. During his roughly four decades of professional activity, Lal has worked at institutions in nearly all continents. Therefore, he is a true »world citizen«. For his outstanding achievements, he has received several honorary doctorate degrees and other awards worldwide. Professor Lal has headed a number of different panels and scientific societies, including serving as president of the »Soil Science Society of America« and the »World Association of Soil and Water Conservation«. Moreover, he has contributed substantially to the »Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)« as well as to the »UN Millennium Assessment«. In Germany, Professor

Lal was appointed, by Klaus Töpfer, as a science advisor for the »Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS)« in Potsdam. In this position he has been actively engaged in the »Global Soil Week«, a worldwide recognized platform which was held this year for the 3rd time in Berlin.

Dresden in particular has benefited from engagement with the Ohio State professor. *“Rattan Lal has contributed significantly to the establishment of a close partnership between the TUD and the United Nations University (UNU), which has been based in Dresden since 2012 with its »Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and Resources (UNU-FLORES)«.* Dr. Lal provided crucial impetus for the constitution of a joint doctoral program with TUD, and was one of the architects of the international »Dresden Nexus Conference« series”, the two Rectors, Hans Müller-Steinhagen (TUD) and David M. Malone (UNU, Tokyo) jointly affirmed.

Carsten Brackhage

More information under:

http://tu-dresden.de/uw/index_html/document_view?set_language=en