

Breakout session

Enhancing the role of soils in future nutrient supply

Janjo de Haan & Saskia Keesstra



EJP SOIL
European Joint Programme



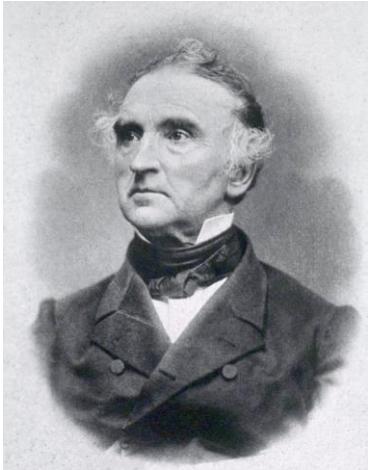
This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 652615.



Program

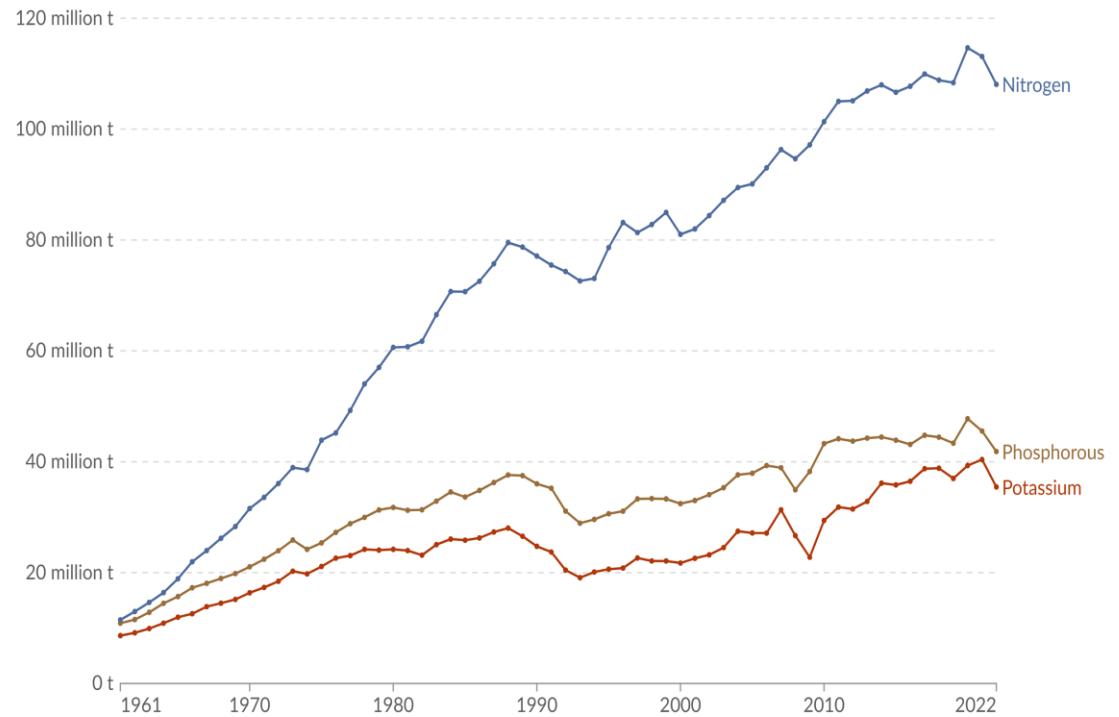
1. Introductory presentation
2. Discussion in groups
3. Plenary recap

History fertilization in agriculture



Fertilizer use by nutrient, World, 1961 to 2022

Fertilizer use in the agricultural sector, which includes use for crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture.



Data source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2025)

OurWorldinData.org/fertilizers | CC BY

Nutrient supply in relation to societal challenges



GHG emissions



Finite resources



Healthy food



Water pollution

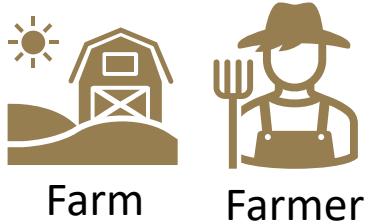


Human health

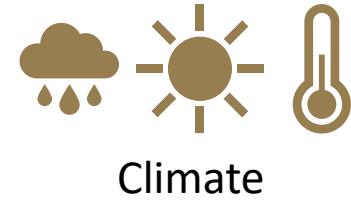


Biodiversity

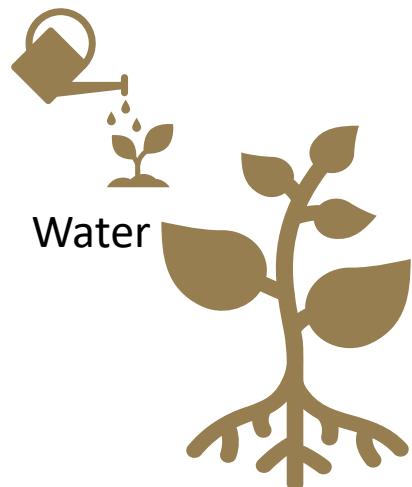
Optimization needed



Farm



Climate



Water



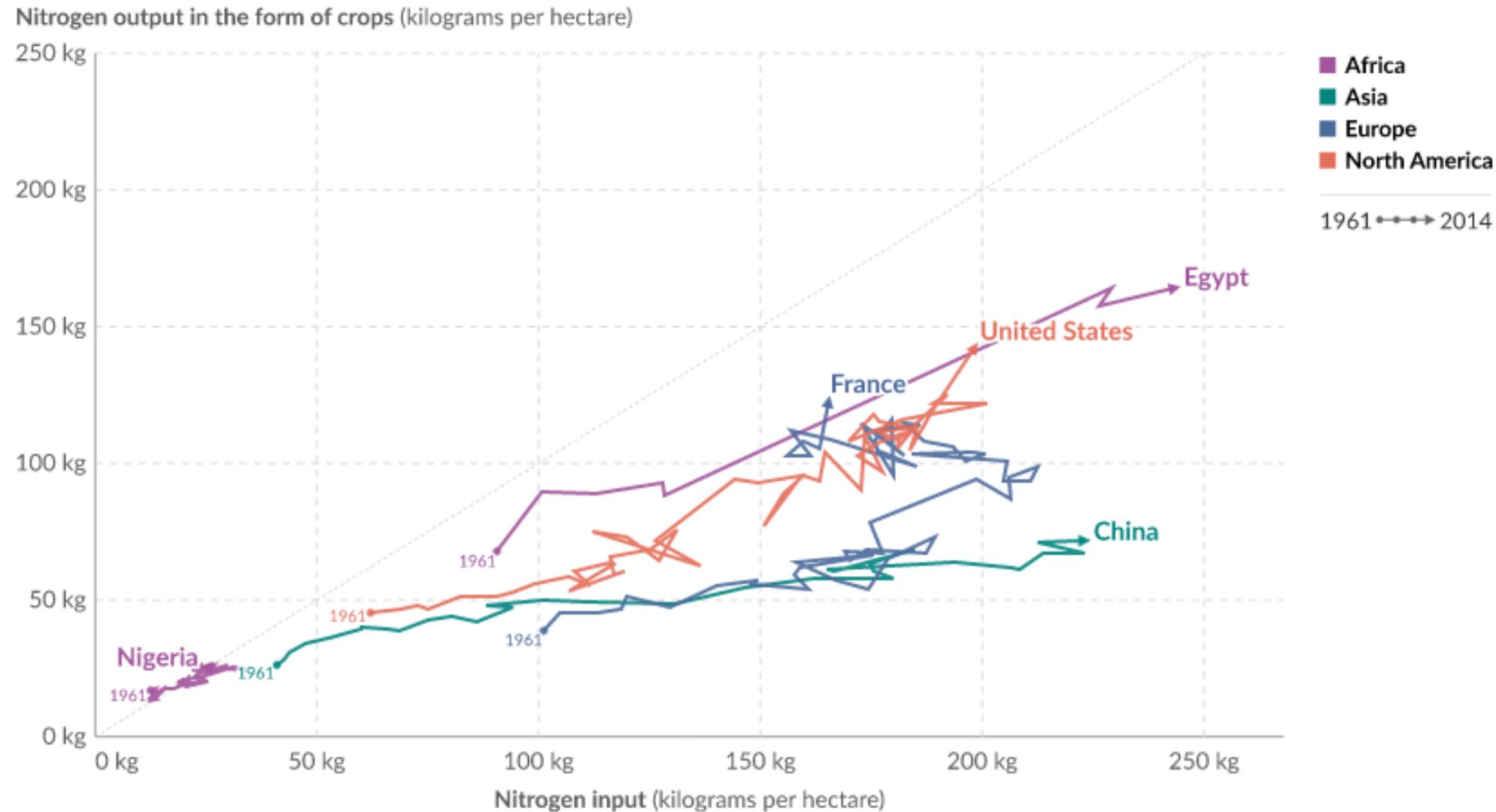
Soil

Crop



→ What are important research questions?

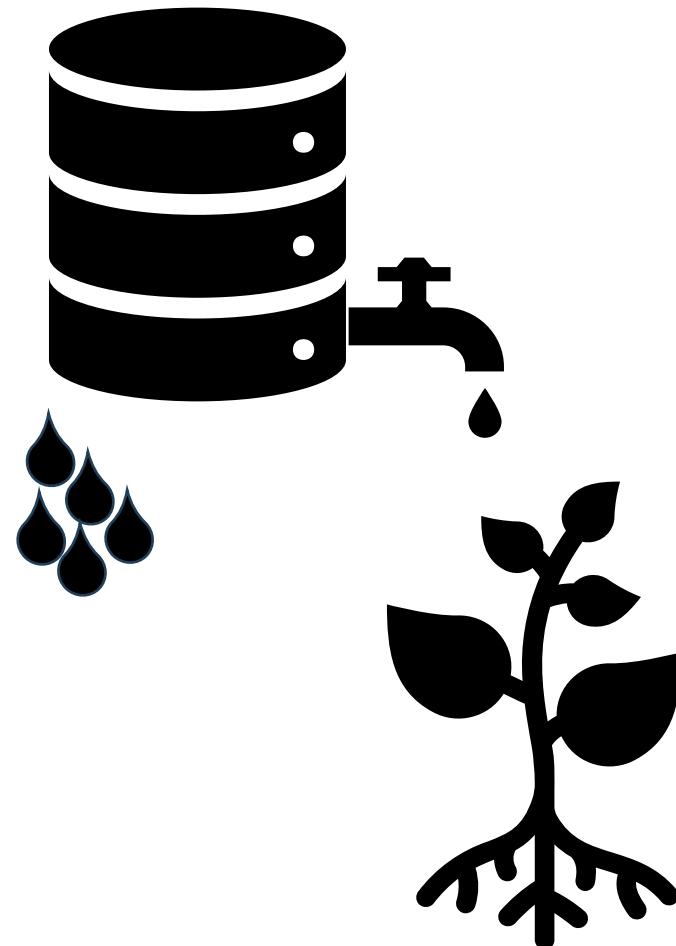
Nitrogen output vs. nitrogen input to agriculture



Data source: Lassaletta, Billen, Grizzetti, Anglade & Garnier (2014). 50 year trends in nitrogen use efficiency of world cropping systems: the relationship between yield and nitrogen input to cropland. *Environmental Research Letters*.

OurWorldinData.org/fertilizers | CC BY

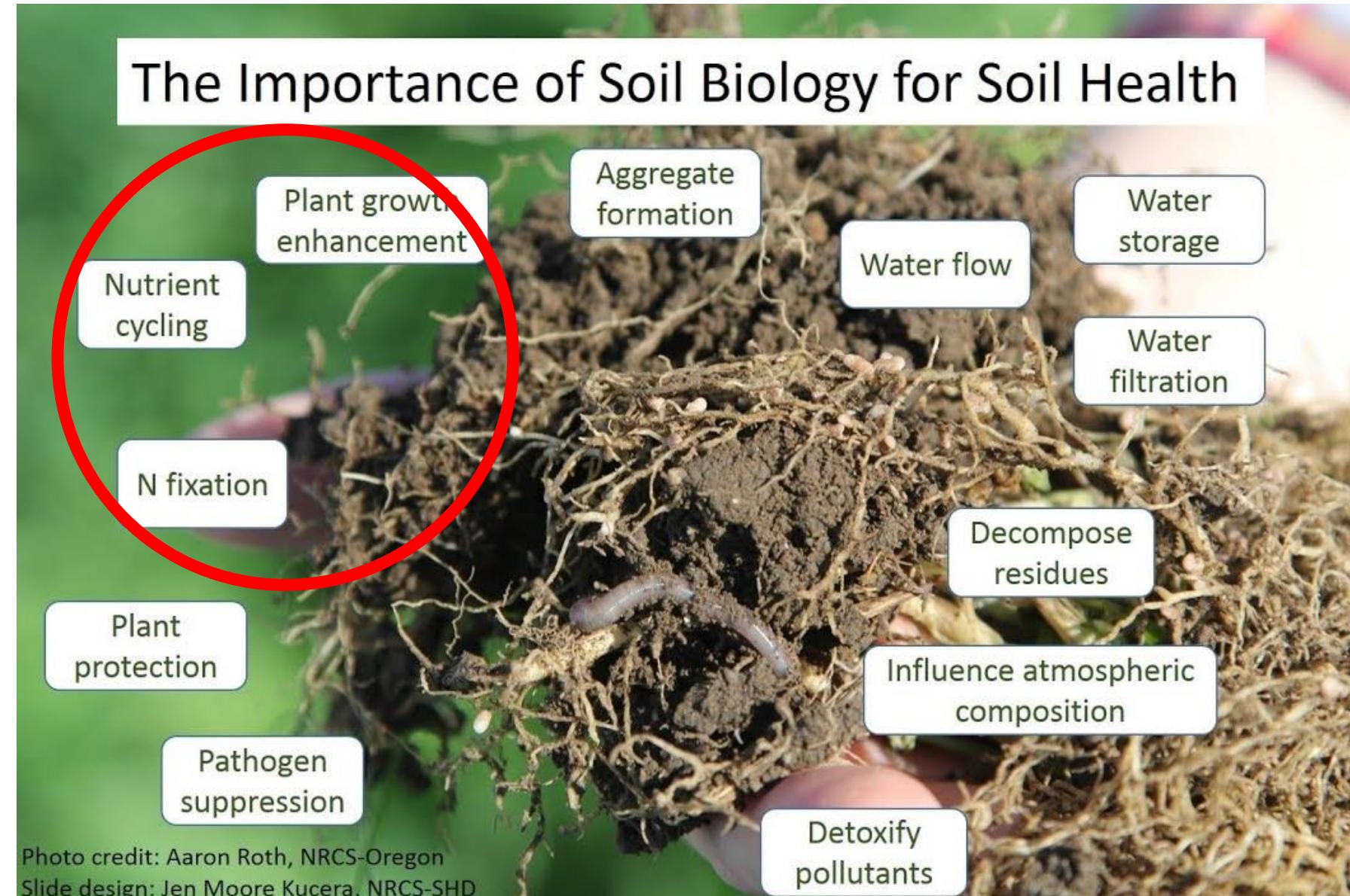
Role of soil in nutrient supply



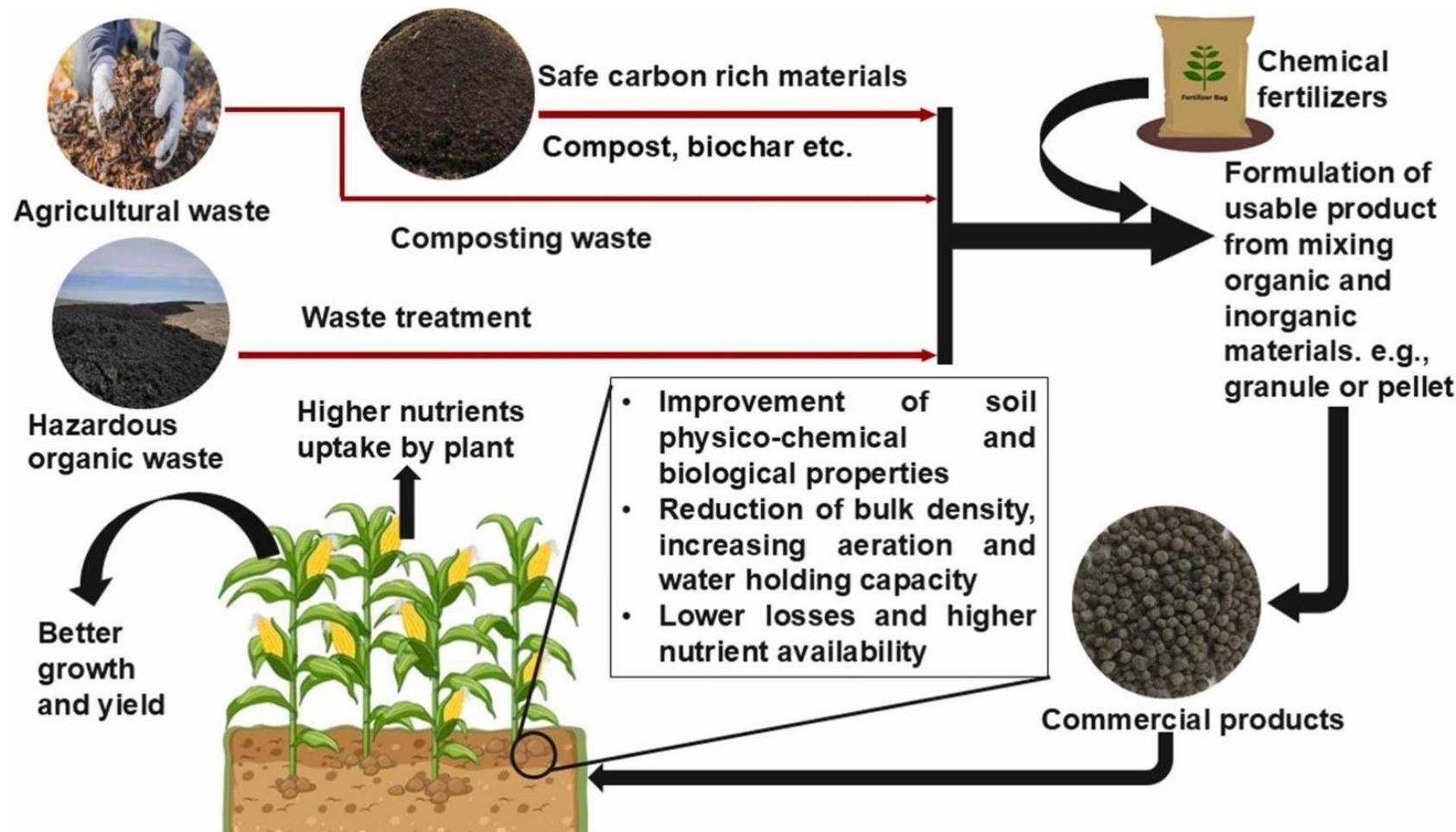
How to improve nutrient supply

1. Role of soil biology in storage and delivery of nutrients
2. Role of organic fertilizers in closing nutrient cycles and improving nutrient availability
3. Role of soil sensing and precision farming techniques in improving nutrient efficiency
4. Role of water management in improving nutrient efficiency
5. Role of other agronomic options in improving nutrient efficiency

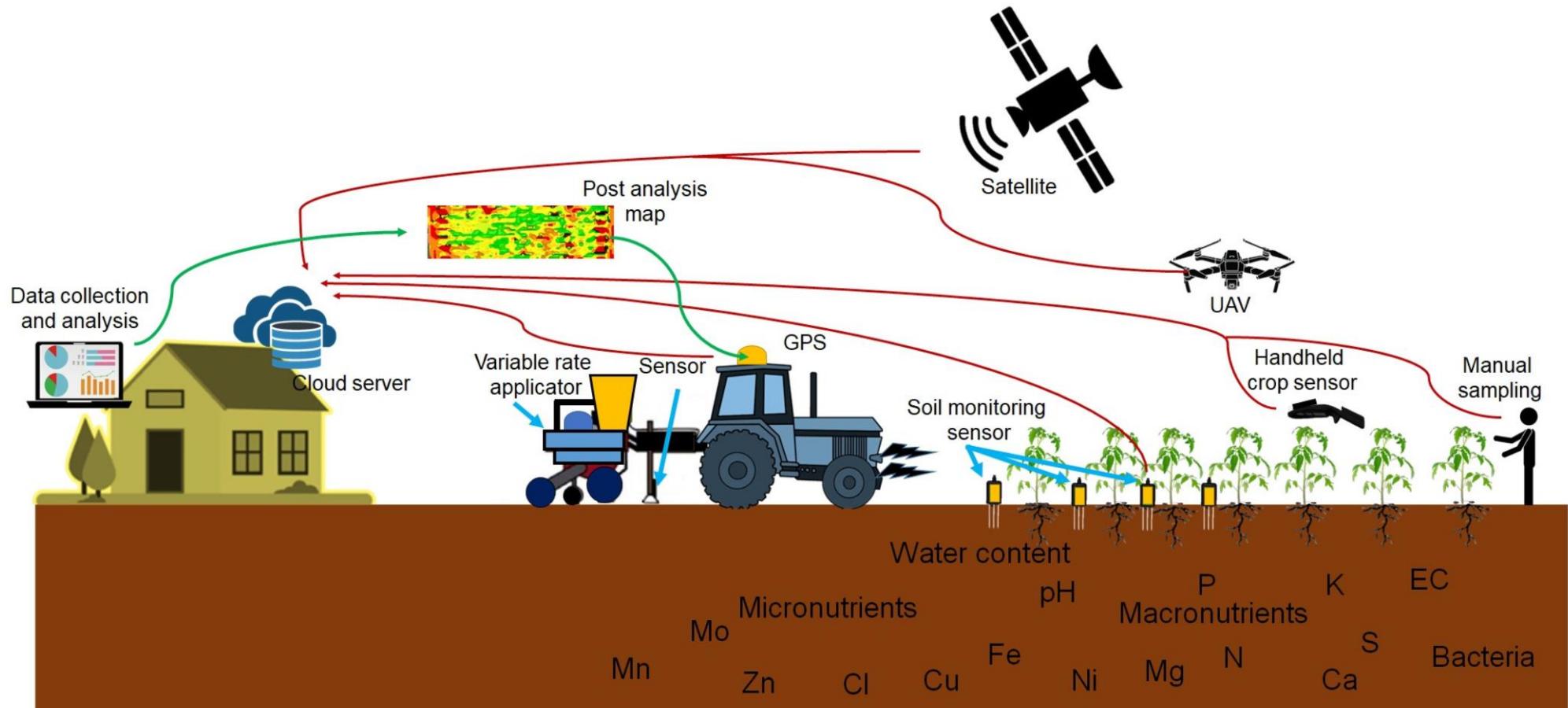
1. Role of soil biology in storage and delivery of nutrients



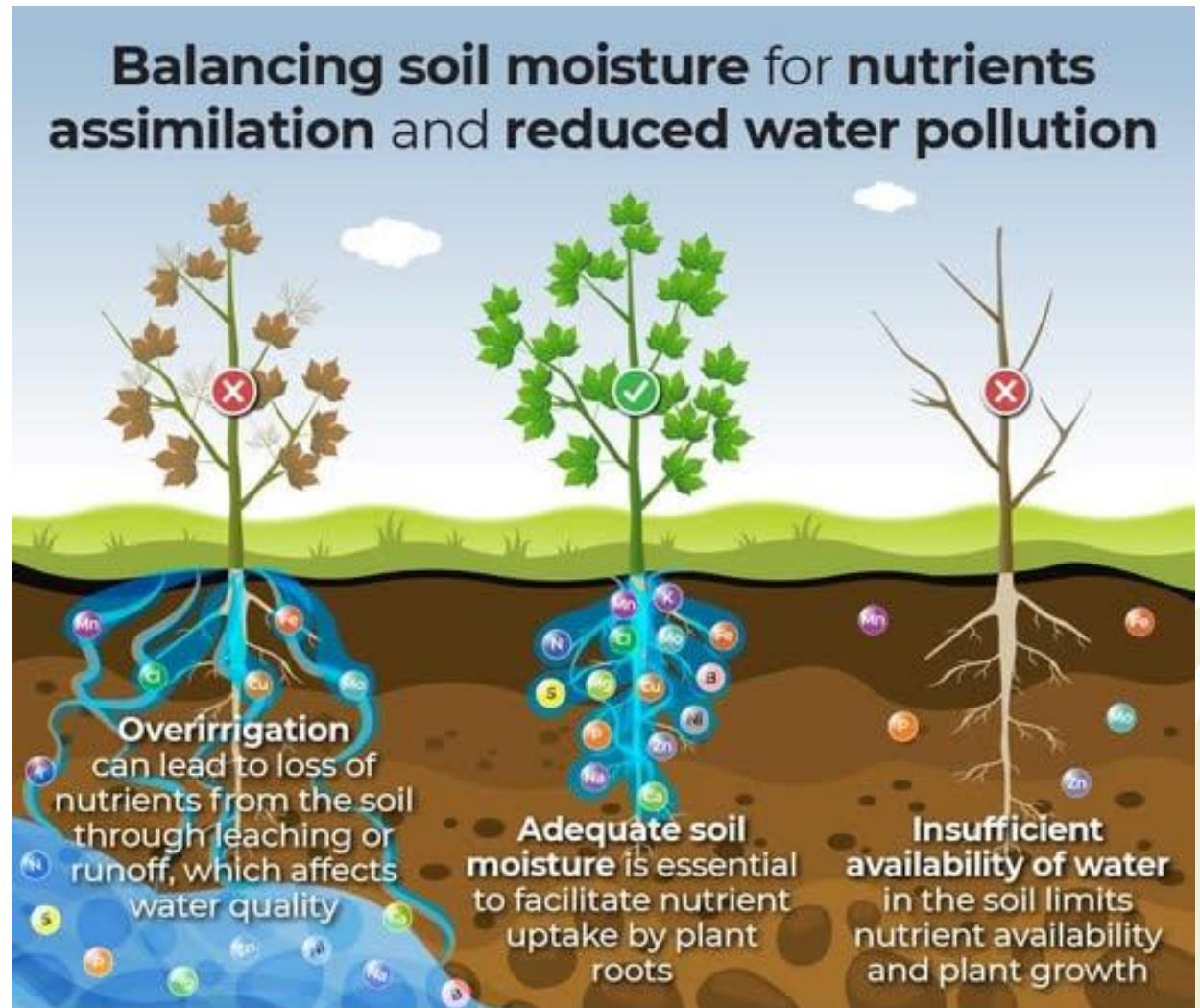
2. Role of organic fertilizers in closing nutrient cycles and improving nutrient availability



3. Role of organic fertilizers in closing nutrient cycles and improving nutrient availability



4. Role of water management in improving nutrient efficiency

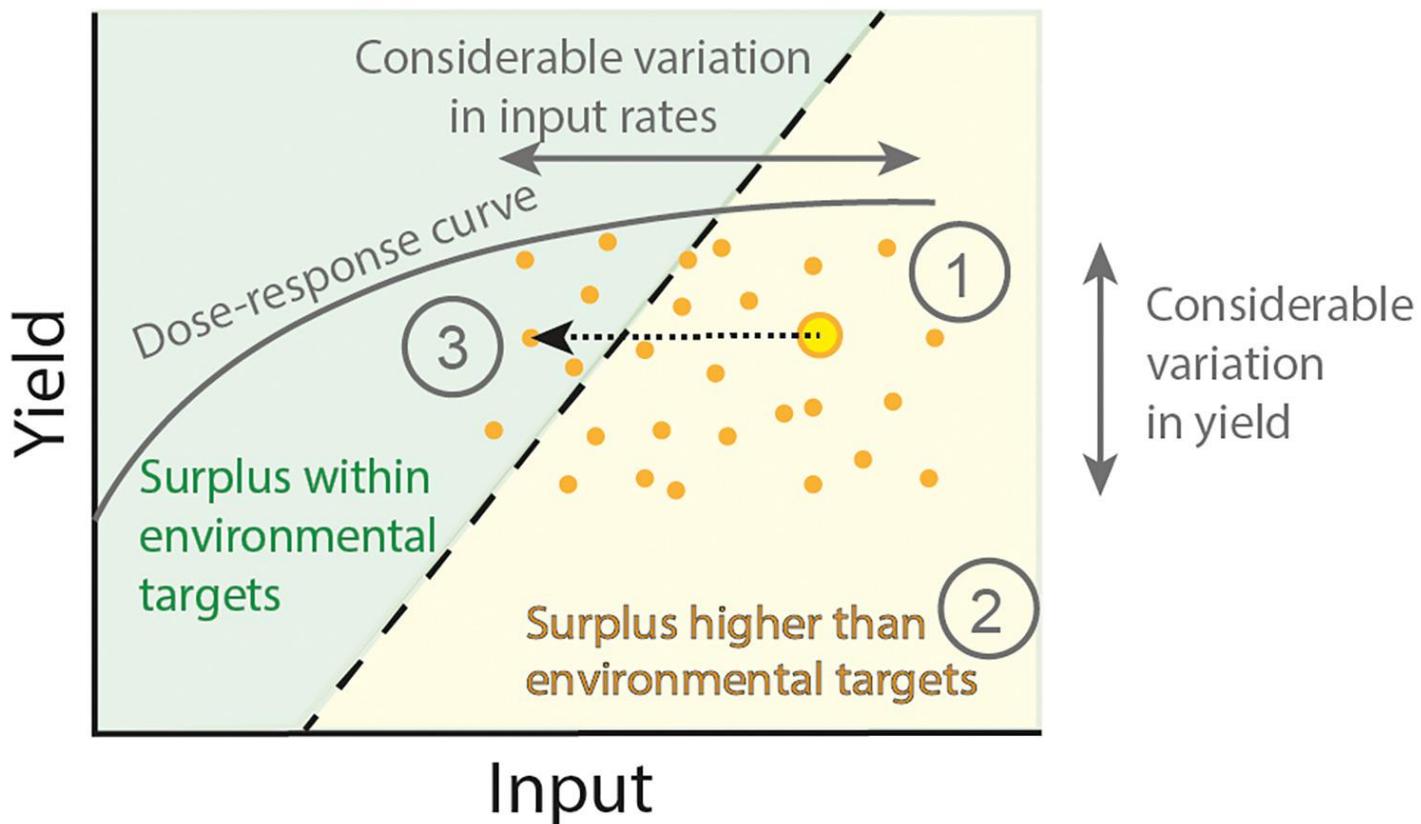


Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



GLOBAL SOIL
PARTNERSHIP

5. Role of other agronomic options in improving nutrient efficiency



Conclusions

- ① Currently, no relation between inputs and yield
- ② Surplus higher than environmental targets
- ③ Scope to reduce inputs and environmental impact, without compromising yield

Discussion groups

Topics

1. Role of soil biology in storage and delivery of nutrients (Anke)
2. Role of organic fertilizers in closing nutrient cycles and improving nutrient availability (Amanda)
3. Role of soil sensing and precision farming techniques in improving nutrient efficiency (Saskia)
4. Role of water management in improving nutrient efficiency (Janjo)
5. Role of other agronomic options in improving nutrient efficiency (Susanne)

Assignment

1. Get to know each other (5 min)
2. List the knowledge demands on the topic on flip chart (20 min)
3. Select the two most important knowledge demands and discuss them in more detail, summarize discussion on flip chart (20 min)
4. Pitch these two knowledge demands short in the plenary recap (2 min)