



Soil Enrichment Protocol comment, Section 6.4

Hello,

I work with a verification body and have a question regarding the potential for soil sampling plots being gamed by the project owner or farm manager.

When fixed, permanent plots are remeasured every five years, it would be simple for a project owner to dump an extra application of manure or other organic material (even humic material from histosols) on specific plot locations. The hired soil technician, who only visits the sample plots, will be unlikely to detect this, because he/she would only be visiting doctored plots and have no idea what the soils in the rest of the field are like.

This was considered a problem in Australia and a sampling method was created to deal with it. (See the attached de Gruijter article) I have not used this method, but it seems reasonable.

Another possibility to guard against this is to have a qualified verifier or consultant to the verifier look at the soil profiles of a few random plots and some profiles from non-plot areas and see if there are differences in A horizon thickness, or other evidence of added materials.

The reality is that fixed soil plots are an easy cheat in a protocol like this. As a verifier and soil scientist, this makes me uncomfortable.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Richard Scharf
Senior Soil Scientist