Desert cultivation and its contribution to the greening of the world

The speech gives a simple review of the possibilities of using waste bio-mass for agroforestry in arid and semi-arid areas. In these areas, there are two key factors: Water and soil carbon content. Atmospheric humidity is a valuable source of water which puts less stress on groundwater and surface water assets. The natural organic fiber could be used to enrich the soil carbon content. Such agricultural methods have been successfully practiced in the Sahel area using locally produced agricultural waste and leaves from the trees. Large quantities of organic fiber waste are presently burned in Europe. As an alternative to burning, there are three benefits of using organic fibers to enhance soil carbon content in deserts. Burning of organic carbon which releases CO$_2$ to the atmosphere while placing it as a soil layer which preserves the carbon in the ground, the new vegetation in the barren lands collects CO$_2$ from the air and the layer of soil with a higher carbon content will also collect and preserve more water from dew fall and mist. As an example, organic textile waste could be of special interest as the recycling processes are underdeveloped in Europe and at 5% of the fibers are so worn that they do not even qualify for other recycling processes. There are of course, lots of difficulties needed to be solved before this is implemented. Hence, agroforestry in these areas would also contribute to living conditions of the population, but it also conflicts with the current activities in the area.

Biography

Bo G Eriksson has retired from the University of Gothenburg. He has done his PhD in Sociology from the University of Gothenburg where he has held a position as Lecturer and taught at several University departments. His main research has been as a member of the Interdisciplinary team H-70 studying Ageing Longitudinally.

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