

## **African Researcher André Bationo Recognized for His Work on Soil Fertility Restoration and Balanced Fertilization**



**Paris: 12 March 2009** – The International Fertilizer Industry Association (IFA) announces the winner of its [2009 IFA International Crop Nutrition Award](#): Dr André Bationo is the Director of the West Africa program of the [Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa \(AGRA\)](#), based in Accra, Ghana, and Senior Program Officer of AGRA’s Soil Health Program. This award recognizes his contribution to soil fertility research and development in Sub-Saharan Africa and, in particular, his efforts to promote research in the field of efficient, balanced and environment-friendly fertilization.

André Bationo’s research has shown that nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) are the most limiting nutrients in the Sudano-Sahelian zone of Africa and that fertilizer use efficiency in this region can be improved through proper placement and combination with organic inputs. Technologies on the use of rock phosphate crop residues and cattle manure have also resulted in improved crop yield, soil fertility and reduced cost of production among smallholder farmers in the Sudano-Sahelian zone. He has contributed to about 300 scientific publications. In collaboration with researchers at the [International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics \(ICRISAT\)](#), the [International Center for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development \(IFDC\)](#) and universities, André Bationo pioneered the development of the fertilizer microdose technology in West Africa to reduce the risk of crop failure. Farmers adopting this technology have been able to record yield increases of 50 to 100 per cent. In Niger, for example, 5,000 farm households in twenty pilot sites adopted fertilizer microdosing in just three years. The technology has subsequently been adopted in Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal and many more other African countries.

In an effort to link farmers to markets, André Bationo’s research has also encouraged the adoption of the Inventory Credit System (ICS) and a revolving fund to remove the barriers to the adoption of soil fertility restoration technologies. The combination of the appropriate localized soil fertility improvement technologies, post-harvest credit and storage of grain as collateral (“warrantage”), enabling farmers to sell crops later in the season for higher prices and higher profits, has helped farmers in Niger produce 50 per cent more food, increase their farm incomes while protecting their natural resources.

André Bationo has integrated both on-station and on-farm research using participatory approaches to ensure that new technologies suit the socio-economic and biophysical conditions in which farmers live and work. His most recent focus has been on Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM), in particular on the development and refinement of soil fertility improvement technologies

involving the use of inorganic fertilizers, animal manures, grain legumes, agroforestry options, integrated nutrient management options, and soil, water and nutrient conservation.

Dr Bationo is the 18<sup>th</sup> recipient of the Award, but the first African and first Francophone. He was nominated by [Industries Chimiques du Sénégal](#) (ICS). He graduated from Laval University in Canada with a PhD in Soil Chemistry and has then been involved in research and programme management for the past 25 years. His last two positions were at the [Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility Institute of the International Center for Tropical Agriculture \(TSBF-CIAT\)](#) in Nairobi, Kenya as Coordinator of the African Network for Soil Biology and Fertility (AfNet), and previously at IFDC in Niamey, Niger working in joint IFDC-ICRISAT research projects.

The International Fertilizer Industry Association (IFA) grants every year the IFA International Crop Nutrition Award for research that has led to significant advances in crop nutrition and that has been communicated successfully to the farmer in the form of practical recommendations.

Dr. Bationo will receive the Award at the IFA Annual Conference on Tuesday, 26 May in Shanghai, China.

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[The International Fertilizer Industry Association \(IFA\)](#) is a not-for-profit trade association representing the global fertilizer industry. IFA member companies represent all activities related to the production and distribution of every type of fertilizer, their raw materials and intermediates. IFA's membership also includes organizations involved in agronomic research and training. IFA has some 525 members in about 85 countries. The global fertilizer industry produces some 170 million tons of fertilizer nutrients annually. These are used in every corner of the globe to support sustainable agricultural production and food security. [www.fertilizer.org](http://www.fertilizer.org)

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