



PROFESSOR DOCTOR HENRYK TERELAK (1937–2015)

Professor Henryk Terelak, a research scientist at the Institute of Soil Science and Plant Cultivation (IUNG) in Puławy, Poland, an excellent soil scientist and expert on soil chemistry and soil protection, passed away on September 30, 2015.

Professor Henryk Terelak was born in 1937 in Rykoszyn (Świętokrzystkie Region). In 1956, he began his studies at the Faculty of Agriculture of the Higher Agricultural School (WSR) in Lublin. In 1961, his master's thesis "The effect of peat amendment on the decomposition of green matter of legumes" was completed at the Faculty of Agricultural Chemistry of the WSR in Lublin. That year, he joined the Soil Science and Soil Cartography Department, Soil Chemistry Faculty at the IUNG. In 1970, his Ph.D. thesis on "Relationship between environmental properties and agricultural capability of soils" was written. 1985 was the year when he was awarded the degree of habilitated doctor – D.Sc. in soil chemistry and fertilisation in recognition of his habilitation thesis "Development of soil indicators on plant supply with potassium according to soil fertilisation with that element". In 1992, the degree of a Professor of agricultural sciences was bestowed on him.

The main scientific achievements of Professor Henryk Terelak concerned the following: i) evaluation of soil properties in relation to soil agricultural use, ii) dynamics and transformation of potassium in soils; iii) reclamation of degraded soils; iv) evaluation of contamination status of Polish agricultural soils, and

vii) impact of fertilisation on mineral elements' content in ground water and their influence on ground water quality.

Professor Henryk Terelak was a very hardworking and prolific researcher. For the posterity He left extensive scientific achievements. He authored and co-authored over 300 scientific publications, releases and original maps, over 50 reports and 15 monographs. Additionally, he published a number of books in the Polish language, e.g. "Ochrona i rekultywacja gleb" (1978); "Właściwości chemiczne gleb uprawnych Polski" (1979), "Zawartość form siarki w glebach mineralnych Polski" (1988); "Pierwiastki śladowe (Cd, Cu, Ni, Pb i Zn) w glebach użytków rolnych Polski" (2000); "Gleboznawstwo ekologiczne" (2002), and a series of four monographs on "Monitoring chemizmu gleb ornych Polski" (1999, 2000, 2008, 2012). Professor Henryk Terelak promoted 3 doctors, reviewed 6 doctoral dissertations, and 9 habilitation procedures, including the publication records throughout his career.

Professor Henryk Terelak combined theoretical knowledge with practical skills gained during international fellowships. In the years 1965-1966, he worked at the US Pennsylvania State University, Department of Soil Chemistry of Agricultural Faculty, and then, between 1975–1976, he took part in an international project setting up large-scale farms in Iran. As a FAO expert and coordinator of "Soil inventory and Fertilisation" Programme, He also spent two years in Laos (1981–1983).

Scientific career of Professor Terelak was linked to the Institute of Soil Science and Plant Cultivation in Puławy. In the years 1983-1993, he held the position of a Deputy Director of the IUNG, and later, between 1993-1998, he was the Head of the Department of Soil Science and Land Protection. His functions included the position of a Deputy Chairman of the Scientific Council of the IUNG (2003–2007), a member of the coordinating team developing scientific programmes for the Institute (1996–2001), as well as the coordinator of a sub-programme under the statutory activities of the IUNG (1996–2001). He participated in many national and international scientific projects and till 2011 He coordinated a very well-known country-wide programme "Monitoring chemizmu gleb ornych Polski". For many years He held lectures on soil science and soil classification for Ph.D. students and participants of studies and courses for soil classifiers. Professor Henryk Terelak was also a member of editorial boards of the following scientific journals: "Pamiętnik Puławski"(1991–2010), "Roczniki Gleboznawcze" (2000–2011) and "Polish Journal of Soil Science" (2003-2011), and scientific committees at numerous conferences and workshops.

Professor Henryk Terelak was additionally a member of numerous national and international committees and societies. He participated in the following: the Committee of Environmental Engineering of Polish Academy of Science (1992–1995), the Committee of Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry of Polish Academy of Science (1992–2010), Lublin Scientific Society (since 1997), and

further, the Committee on Agriculture of Polish Academy of Science, Branch Office in Lublin. Moreover, He was a member of the national team for the cooperation with the European Environment Agency in the EIONET Partnership. He participated in the board appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture for the coordination of a monitoring programme on quality of soils, plants, agricultural products and food. Professor Henryk Terelak was a member of the American Society of Agronomy, the Indian Soil Science Society, the New York Academy of Science, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the International Union of Soil Sciences. Since 1961 until his death, He was a member of a long-standing of the Polish Society of Soil Sciences, and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Polish Society of Soil Sciences, Branch Office in Puławy. For twenty years, He was a member of the Main Board of the Society, a coordinator of the Use of Soils Section, and He was also responsible for the co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture.

Having been the authority in the area of soil sciences and agriculture, He was awarded numerous honours and prizes for his contribution and accomplishments. The Minister of Agriculture bestowed honours on him three times, and the Executive Director of the IUNG in Puławy recognised his work as many as six times. He was also honoured with prizes by the Executive Director of the Institute of Environmental Protection in Warszawa, and the Rector of the Agricultural-Technical Academy in Olsztyn. Among his awards were also the “Golden Badge”, the Jubilee Medal of the 75th Anniversary of Polish Society of Soil Science, the medal “Meritorious for Agriculture” (1975), “Gold Cross of Merit” (1980), and “King’s Cross” (2000).

Professor Henryk Terelak was an outstanding authority in the area of soil science and soil chemistry. The community of society of the Institute of Soil Science and Plant Cultivation, and his colleagues from the Department of Soil Science Erosion and Land Conservation, lost one of the best soil scientists, and a researcher, who was highly recognised and respected. He passed away leaving many good memories behind.

Dr. Bożena Smreczak

*Department of Soil Science, Erosion and Land Conservation
Institute of Soil Science and Plant Cultivation – State Research Institute
Puławy, Poland*