

Interactive comment on “How Alexander von Humboldt’s life story can inspire innovative soil research in developing countries” by Johan Bouma

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I thank Dr. Deckers for his positive review. I am quite happy to read that he - a soil scientist with immense experience working in developing countries, particularly in Africa - supports my opinions in this Forum paper. His comments on African soils are quite relevant and I am happy to adopt them. Integrated nutrient management studies were indeed made on Vertisols and I will add a statement about the importance of volatilisation of N as an important source of N loss. Surface sealing of sandy soils in the Sahel region has major implications for local and regional hydrology as is pointed out in the paper. Indeed, Lixisols occur and this important information will be added. The addi-

C1

tion of silt by harmatan winds from the Sahara is interesting and relevant because the fine silt particles will fill up the spaces between the sand grains creating a very dense structure. As there is very little clay, swelling and shrinkage will not create cracks that could restore infiltration. Thanks for these comments.

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C2