

# Gestione della fertilità degli agroecosistemi ispirata dal dialogo tra pianta, suolo e batteri

*Caffè Scientifico -15 Dicembre 2021*



**Nunzio Fiorentino**

Division of Plant Biology and Crop Production  
Department of Agricultural Sciences  
University of Naples, Federico II



# Study and Research Path

2006

**MSc**  
Agricultural sciences  
and technologies



Soil fertility  
management of organic  
cropping systems



2010

**PhD**  
Modeling and Analysis  
of cropping and forest  
systems



Soil C and N dynamics  
in eco-friendly cropping  
systems



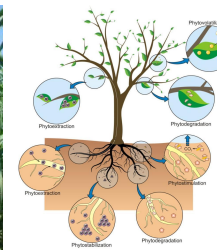
2010-2016

**Post-doc**  
Degraded soils  
Soil-microbes-plant  
Soil GHGs



15N isotope  
tracing - N cycle

Energy-crops and turfgrass  
Phytoremediation  
Soil C and N management



2016 - 2022

**Temporary researcher (A+B)**

**Project FRA -  
UNINA 2020**  
*Agrocannabinomics*

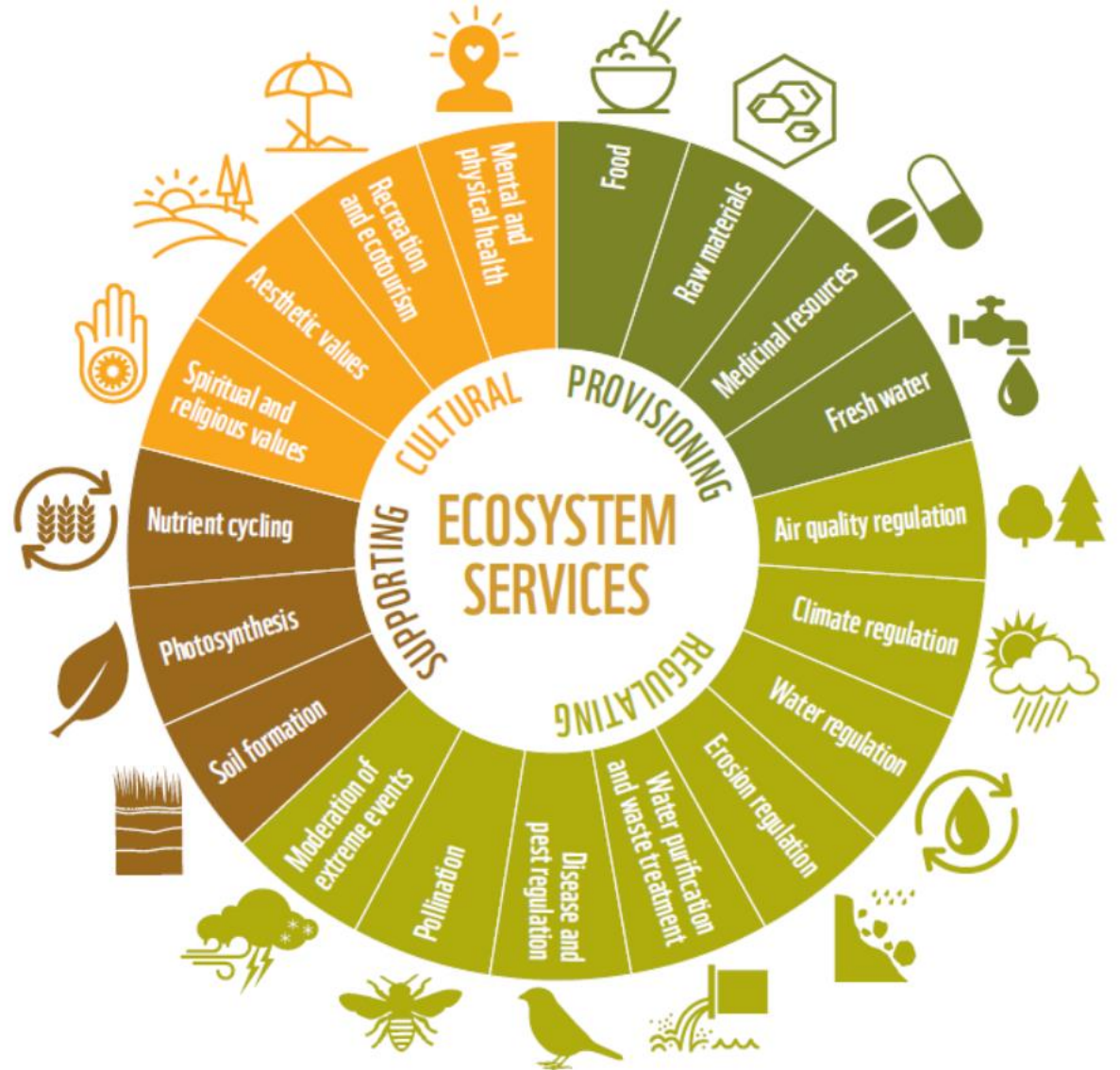
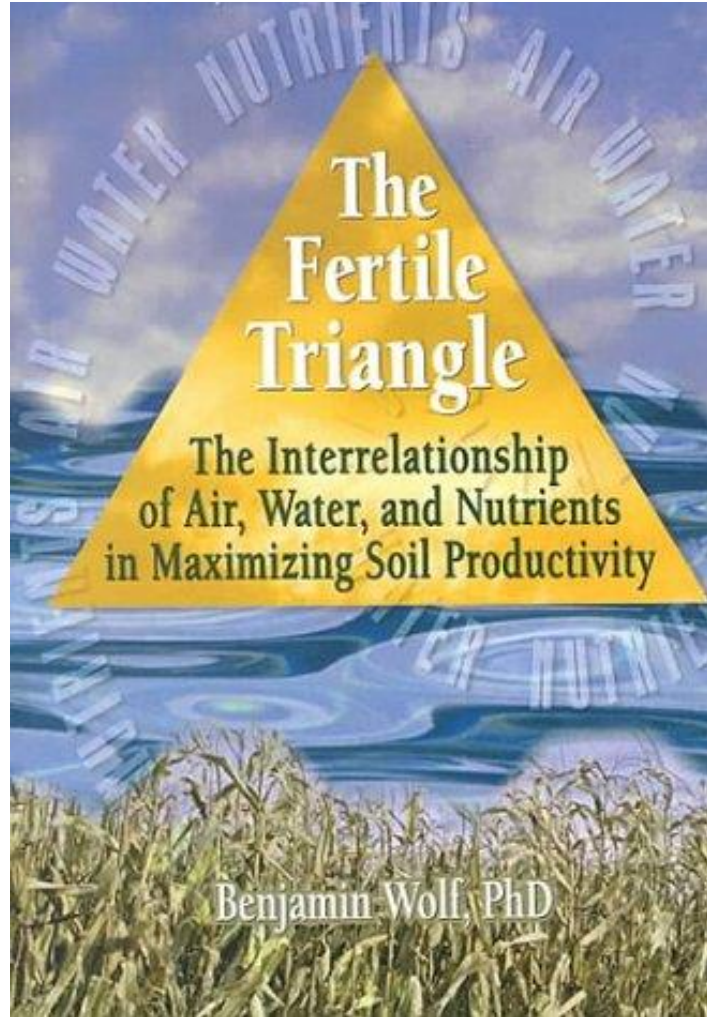


**Project LIFE  
ENV - IT**



**Teachings**  
Agronomy and  
agroecology (SAFA)  
Agronomy (MV)

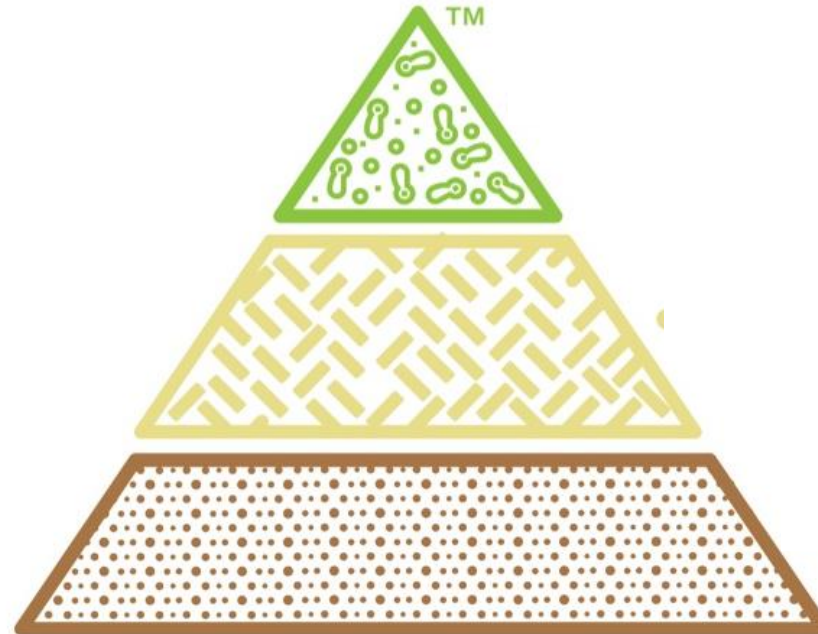
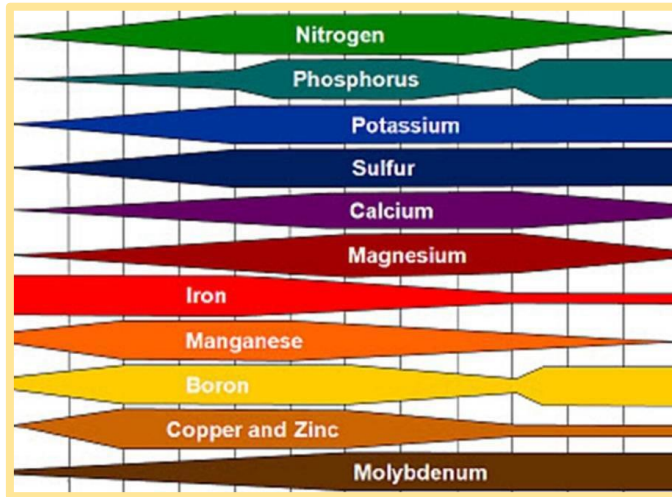
# Soil Fertility and Ecosystem Services



*Adapted from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005.*

# Fertility is strongly correlated to Soil Organic Matter (SOM) content

## Chemical fertility



Soil Health Pyramid™

Modified by <https://www.terraposco.com/soil-health/>

## Biological fertility



## Physical fertility



# AGROECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

## DECREASE SOIL DISTURBANCE

### NO TILLAGE

Mazzoncini et al., 2001

Hernanz et al., 2009



### MINIMUM TILLAGE

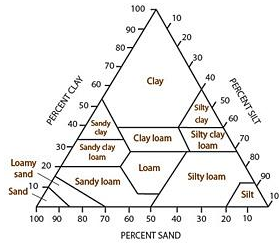
Morris et al., 2010

Fagnano et al., 2004

**OXIGEN REDUCTION**  
Lower mineralization

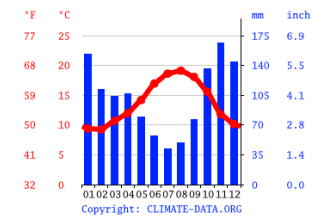


## NATIVE N FERTILITY



Soil texture

**SOM and SON**  
Nutrient content



Temperature  
Moisture

**Biological**  
fertility



## INCREASE C INPUT



### STABILIZED ORGANIC AMENDMENTS

Bertora et al., 2010

Spaccini et al., 2002

Fortuna et al., 2003

**SOM BUILD UP**  
humification



# AGROECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

## DECREASE SOIL DISTURBANCE

### NO TILLAGE

Mazzoncini et al., 2001

Hernanz et al., 2009



### MINIMUM TILLAGE

Morris et al., 2010

Fagnano et al., 2004

Biol Fertil Soils (2016) 52:523–537  
DOI 10.1007/s00374-016-1095-7



ORIGINAL PAPER

## Changes in soil mineral N content and abundances of bacterial communities involved in N reactions under laboratory conditions as predictors of soil N availability to maize under field conditions

Nunzio Fiorentino<sup>1</sup> · Valeria Ventorino<sup>2</sup> · Chiara Bertora<sup>3</sup> · Olimpia Pepe<sup>2</sup> ·  
Moschetti Giancarlo<sup>4</sup> · Carlo Grignani<sup>3</sup> · Massimo Fagnano<sup>1</sup>

Europ. J. Agronomy 45 (2013) 114–123



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European Journal of Agronomy

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/eja](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/eja)



## INCREASE C INPUT



### STABILIZED ORGANIC AMENDMENTS

Bertora et al., 2010

Spaccini et al., 2002

Fortuna et al., 2003

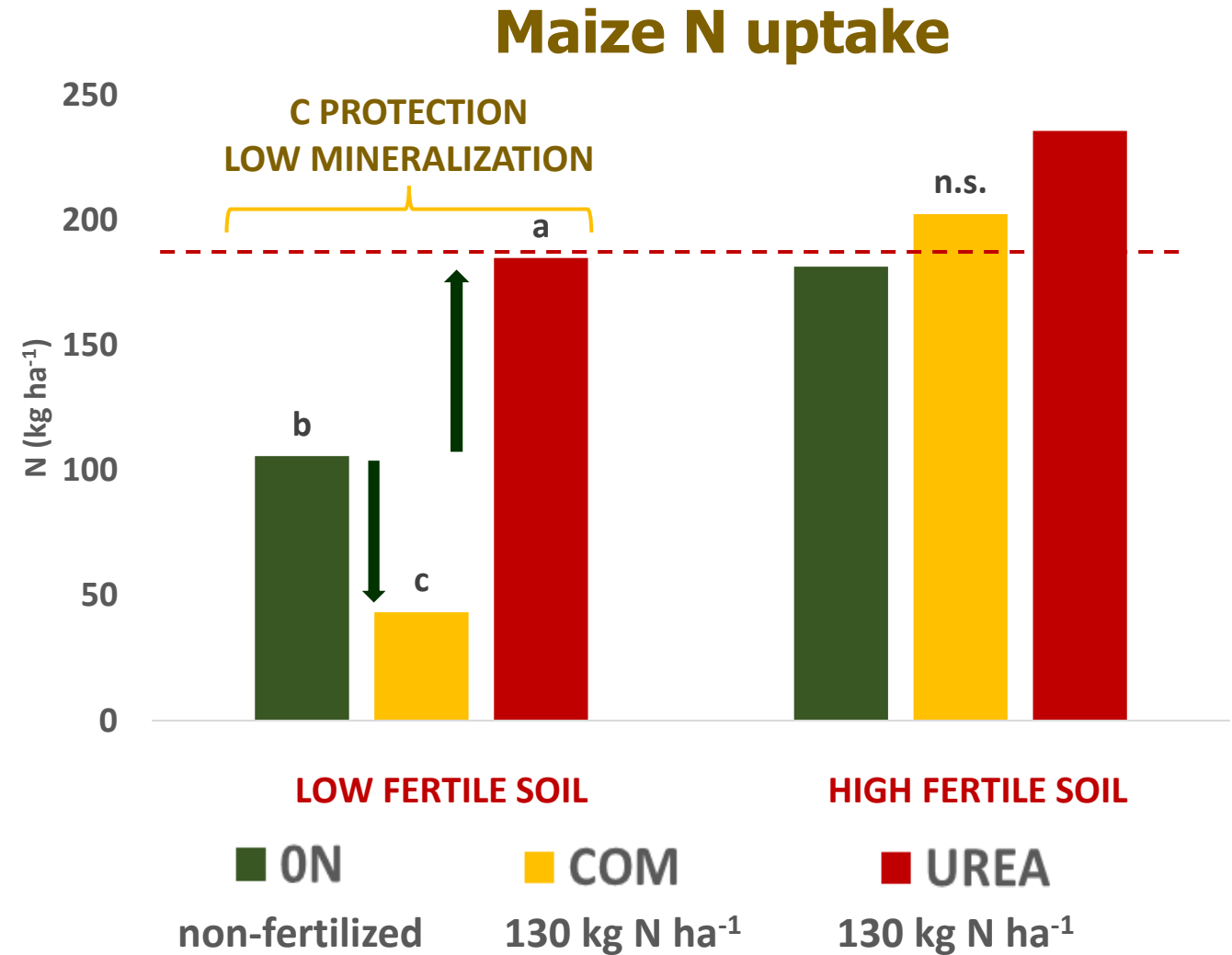
## Short-term crop and soil response to C-friendly strategies in two contrasting environments

Francesco Alluvione<sup>a</sup>, Nunzio Fiorentino<sup>b,\*</sup>, Chiara Bertora<sup>a</sup>, Laura Zavattaro<sup>a</sup>, Massimo Fagnano<sup>b</sup>,  
Fabrizio Quaglietta Chiarandà<sup>b</sup>, Carlo Grignani<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Dipartimento di Agronomia, Selvicoltura e Gestione del Territorio – Università di Torino, Italy

<sup>b</sup> Dipartimento di Ingegneria Agraria e Agronomia del Territorio – Università di Napoli Federico II, Italy

# Plant - bioindicator of soil N availability



# Soil - N mineralization kinetics

## SOIL INCUBATION

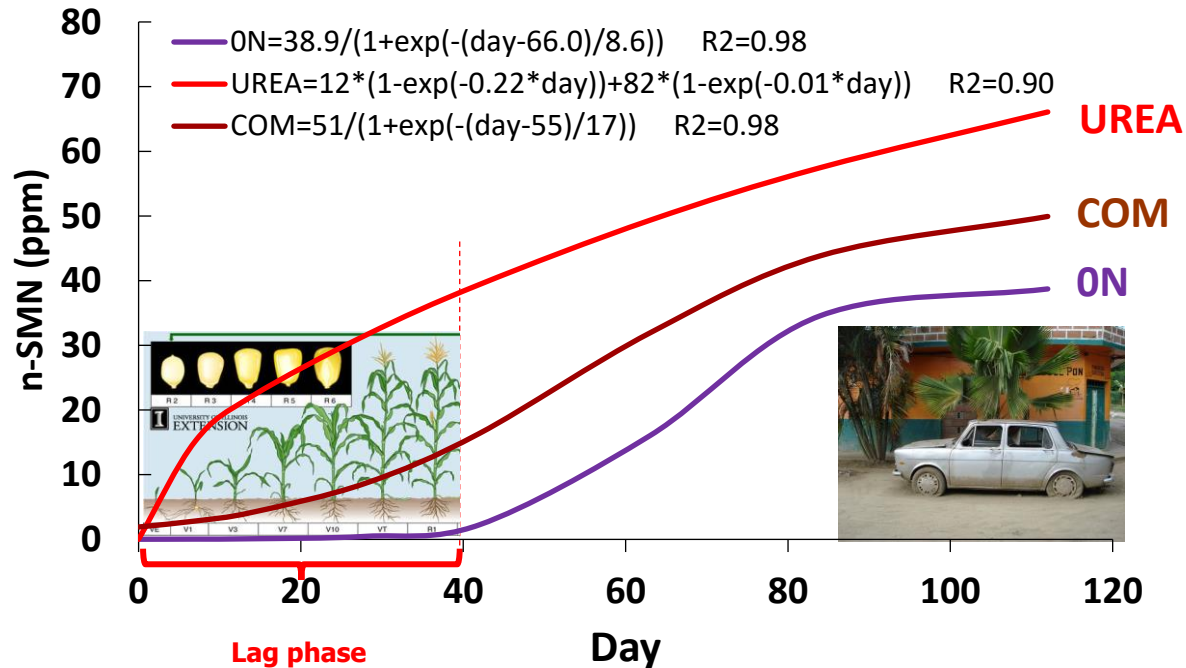
Optimal conditions for N cycling bacteria

T °C = 25 °C

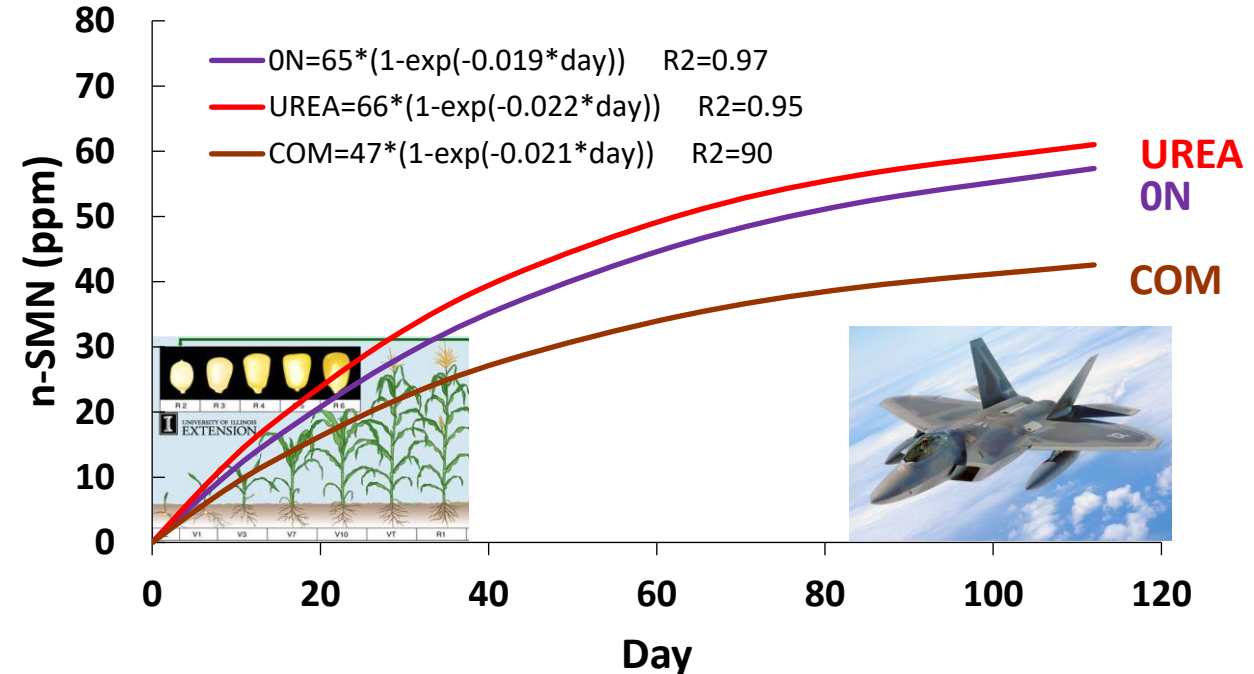
Soil Moisture: field capacity



### Low fertile soil

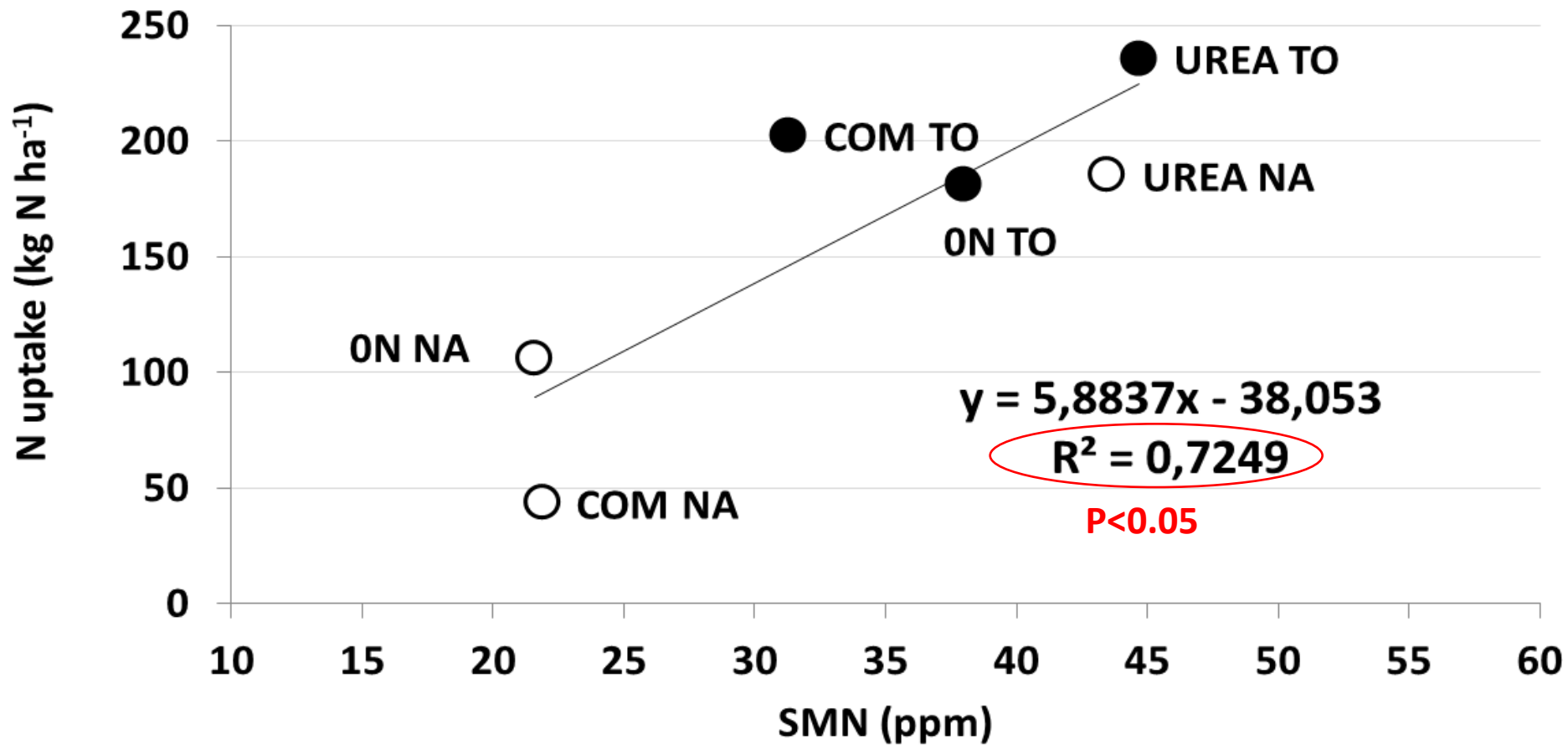


### High fertile soil

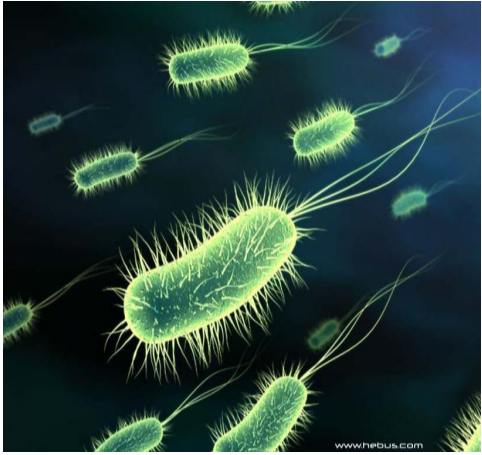




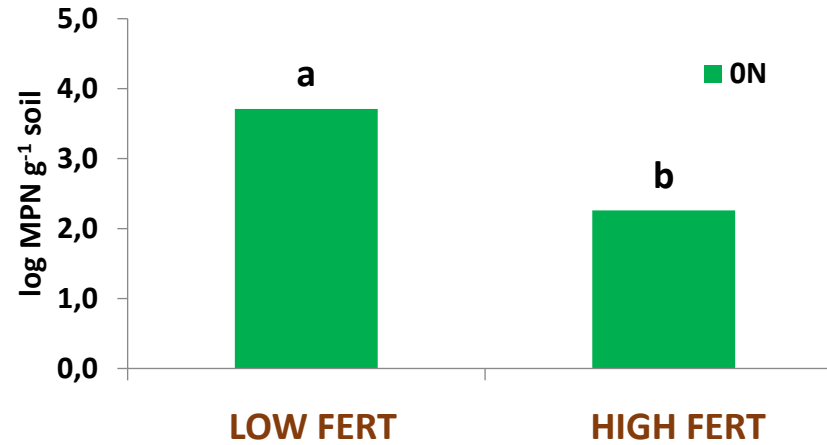
## Average SMN day 42 vs Maize N uptake



# N cycling bacteria – a proxy of N availability



## Free Living N-Fixing Bacteria



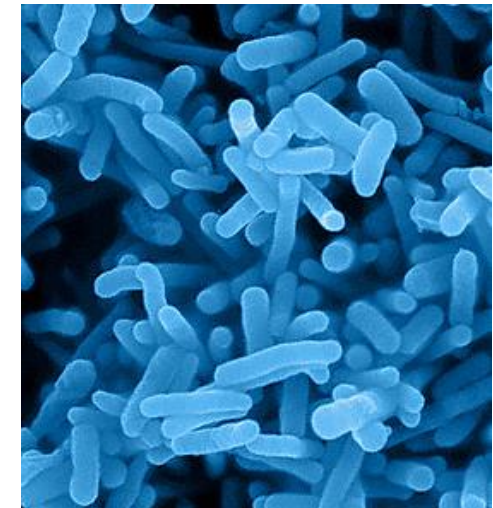
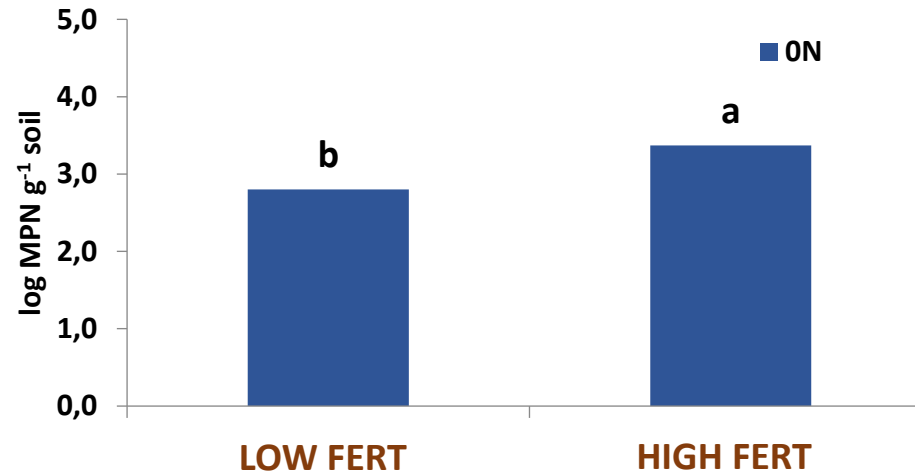
Higher values recorded in low fertile soil

NFB inversely correlated to N availability (Poly et al., 2001; Tan et al., 2003)

## Ammonia oxidizing bacteria

Lower values recorded in soils with low N mineralization rates (lack of O<sub>2</sub>)

Higher C build up



# Short term soil N dynamics in open field

Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment 141 (2011) 100–107



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Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/agee](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/agee)



Environmental and agronomic impact of fertilization with composted organic fraction from municipal solid waste: A case study in the region of Naples, Italy

Massimo Fagnano<sup>a,\*</sup>, Paola Adamo<sup>b</sup>, Mariavittoria Zampella<sup>b</sup>, Nunzio Fiorentino<sup>a</sup>

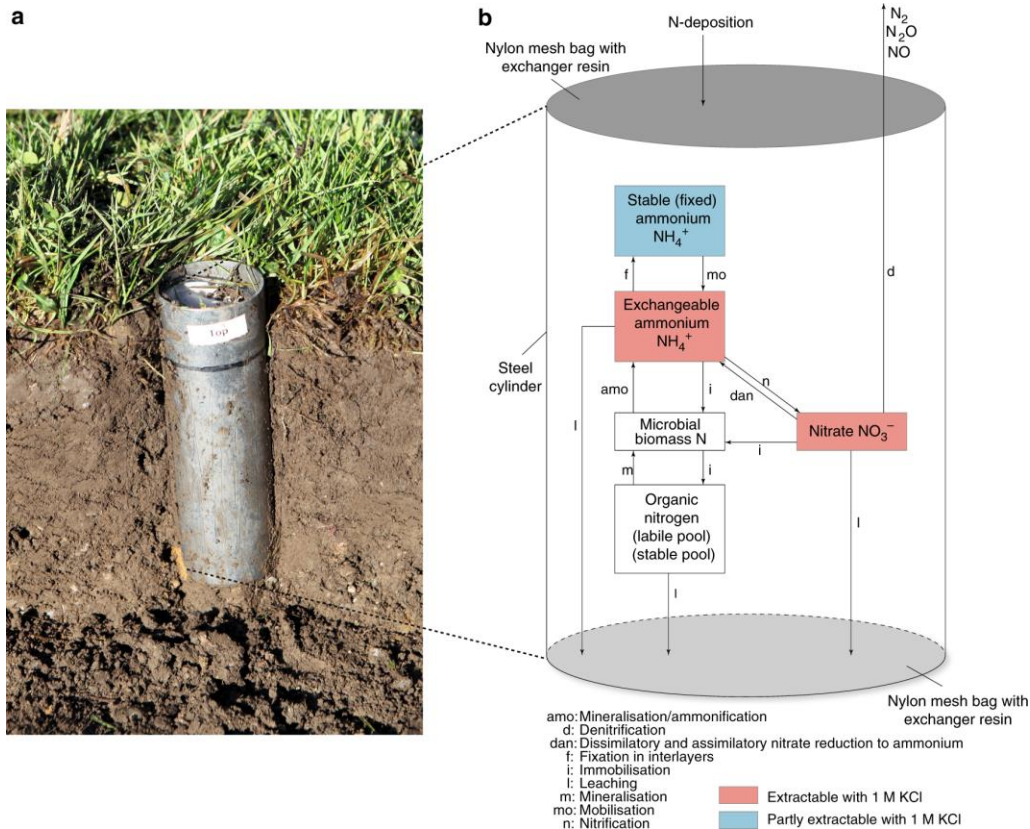
<sup>a</sup> Dipartimento di Ingegneria agraria e Agronomia, Università di Napoli Federico II, Via Università 100, 80055 Portici, Italy

<sup>b</sup> Dipartimento di Scienze del Suolo, della Pianta, dell'Ambiente e delle Produzioni Animali, Università di Napoli Federico II, Via Università 100, 80055 Portici, Italy



# Open field measurement of N availability

## Field incubation approach



## Crop based approach

### N BALANCE EQUATION

$$\text{N inputs} - \text{N uptake} + \text{Soil N at transpl.} - \text{Soil N at harvest} + \text{N mineraliz} \neq 0$$

### SYSTEM N AVAILABILITY

$$\text{N uptake} + \text{Soil N at harvest} - \text{Soil N at transpl.} =$$

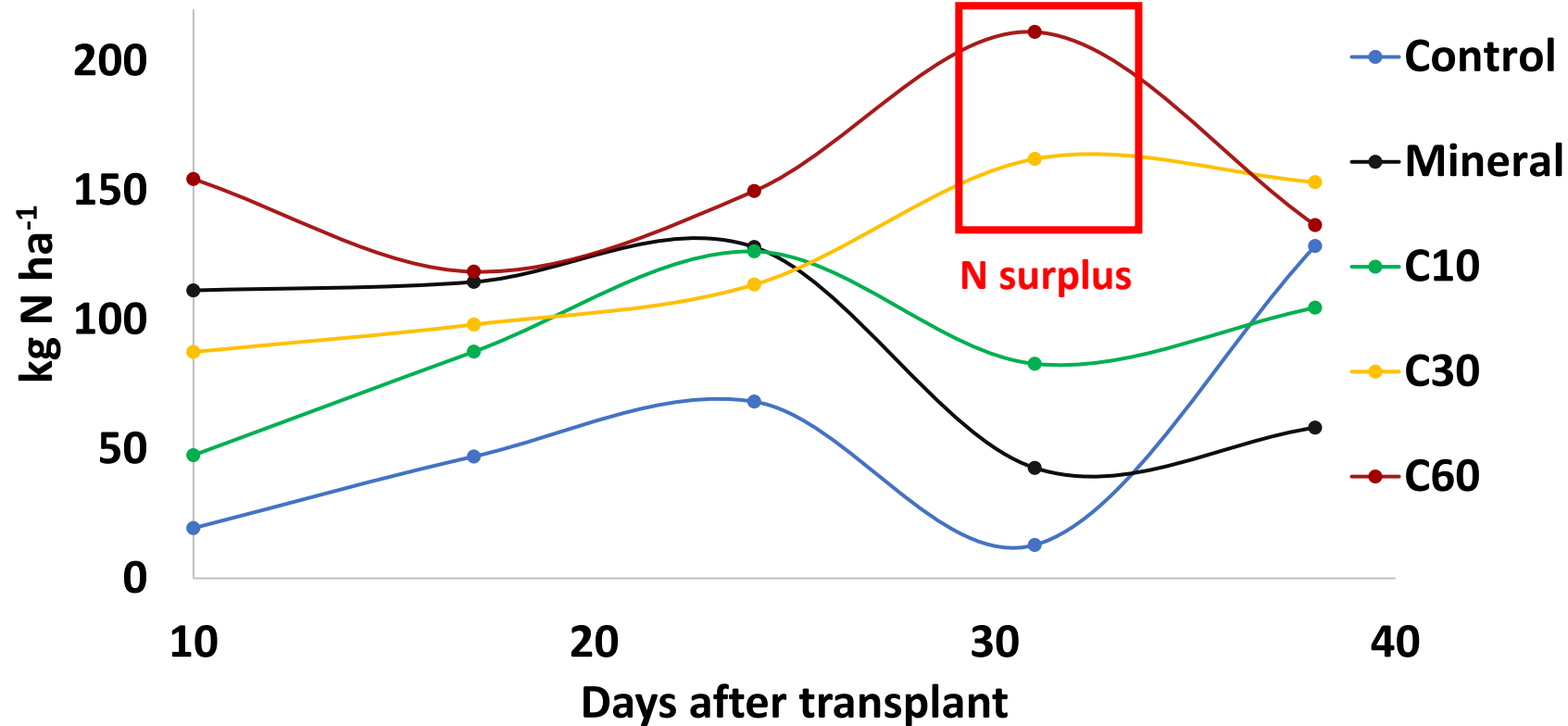
$$\text{N inputs} + \text{N mineraliz}$$

Native  
Mineral N  
(unfertilized soil)

Native + Available  
From fertilizers  
(fertilized soils)

# Short term effects on soil mineral N

## Gross N availability



N balance of the two lettuce cycles.

Treatment	N balance (kg N ha <sup>-1</sup> )
NF	-111.2 c
CF10	-81.1 c
CF30	21.8 b
CF60	153.3 a
MF	10.6 b
Significance	0.01

Potential N losses

# Modification of the plant-soil rhizospheric interactions

## ***Trichoderma*-Based Biostimulants Modulate Rhizosphere Microbial Populations and Improve N Uptake Efficiency, Yield, and Nutritional Quality of Leafy Vegetables**

Nunzio Fiorentino<sup>1,2\*</sup>, Valeria Ventrino<sup>1,3</sup>, Sheridan L. Woo<sup>3,4,5</sup>, Olimpia Pepe<sup>1,3</sup>, Armando De Rosa<sup>1</sup>, Laura Gioia<sup>1</sup>, Ida Romano<sup>1</sup>, Nadia Lombardi<sup>5</sup>, Mauro Napolitano<sup>1</sup>, Giuseppe Colla<sup>6</sup> and Youssef Rouphael<sup>1</sup>





*agronomy*

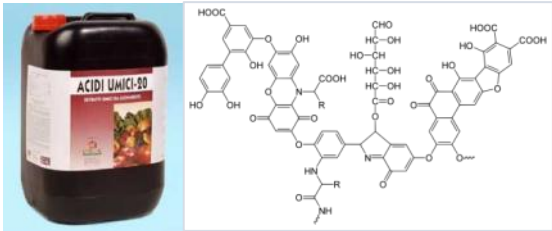


Article

## **Can *Trichoderma*-Based Biostimulants Optimize N Use Efficiency and Stimulate Growth of Leafy Vegetables in Greenhouse Intensive Cropping Systems?**

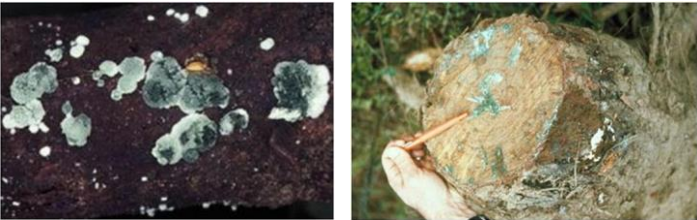
Donato Visconti<sup>1</sup>, Nunzio Fiorentino<sup>1,\*</sup>, Eugenio Cozzolino<sup>2</sup> , Sheridan Lois Woo<sup>3,4</sup>, Massimo Fagnano<sup>1</sup> and Youssef Rouphael<sup>1</sup> 

**Biostimulants (EBIC 2012):** “A plant biostimulant is any substance or microorganism applied to plants with the aim to enhance nutrition efficiency, abiotic stress tolerance and/or crop quality traits, regardless of its nutrients content”



**Trichoderma spp**

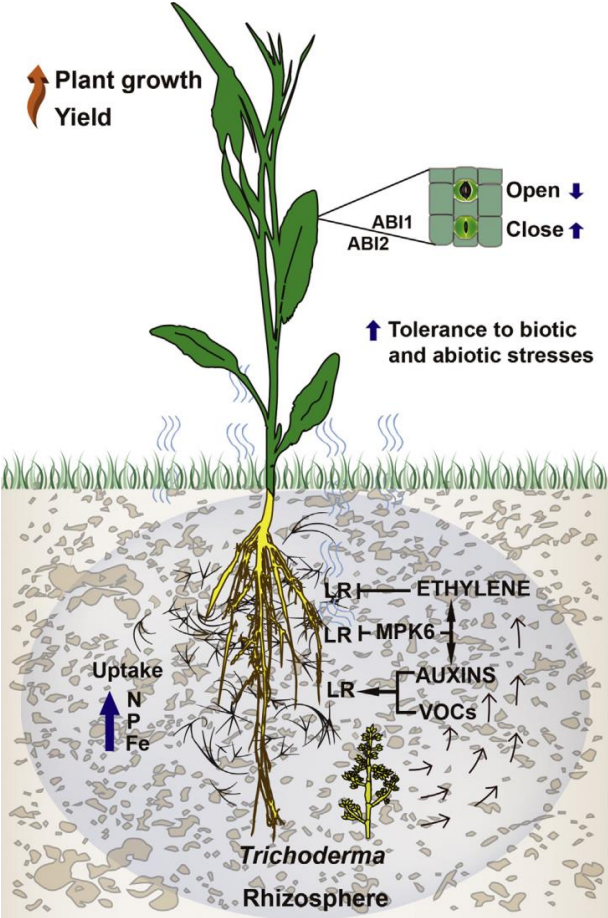
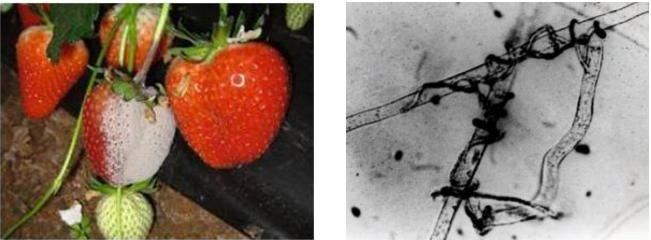
Saprophytic activity



“rizosphere-competent”



Mycoparasitism and biocontrol agents



Lopez-Bucio et al. 2015  
*Scientia Horticulturae*

# Results overview



**Non-fertilized  
Trichoderma**

**Fertilized  
Trichoderma**

Yield		X
NPKCa	X	X
Ascorbic Acid		
Phenols		X
HAA	X	X
FAA		X

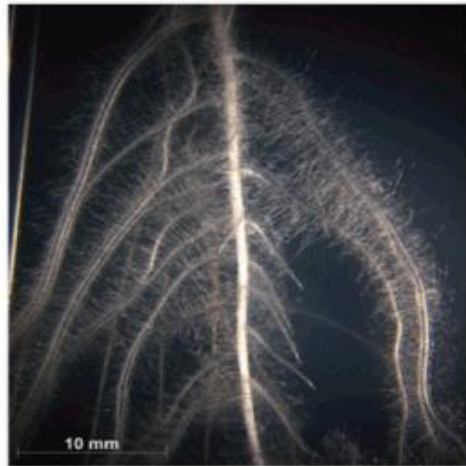


Yield	X	
NPKCa	X	
Ascorbic Acid		X
Phenols		X
HAA		
FAA		



## Species-specific interaction with *Trichoderma*

Rizosphere depends upon  
species/genotype



**Crop cycle length**



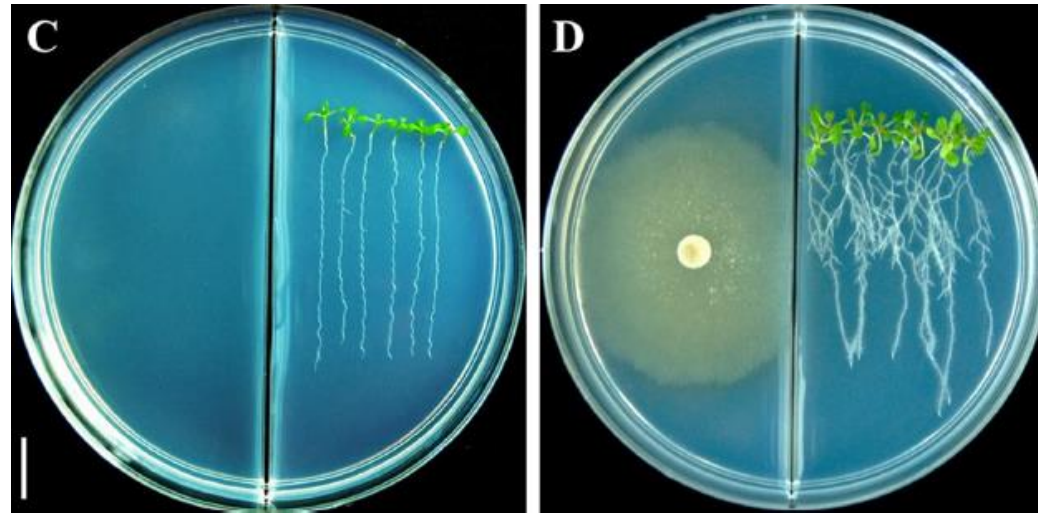
60 days



30 days

## Effective under sub-optimal conditions (low Nutrient availability; drought/saline stress)

- Modification of root architecture (Samoldky et al., 2012)

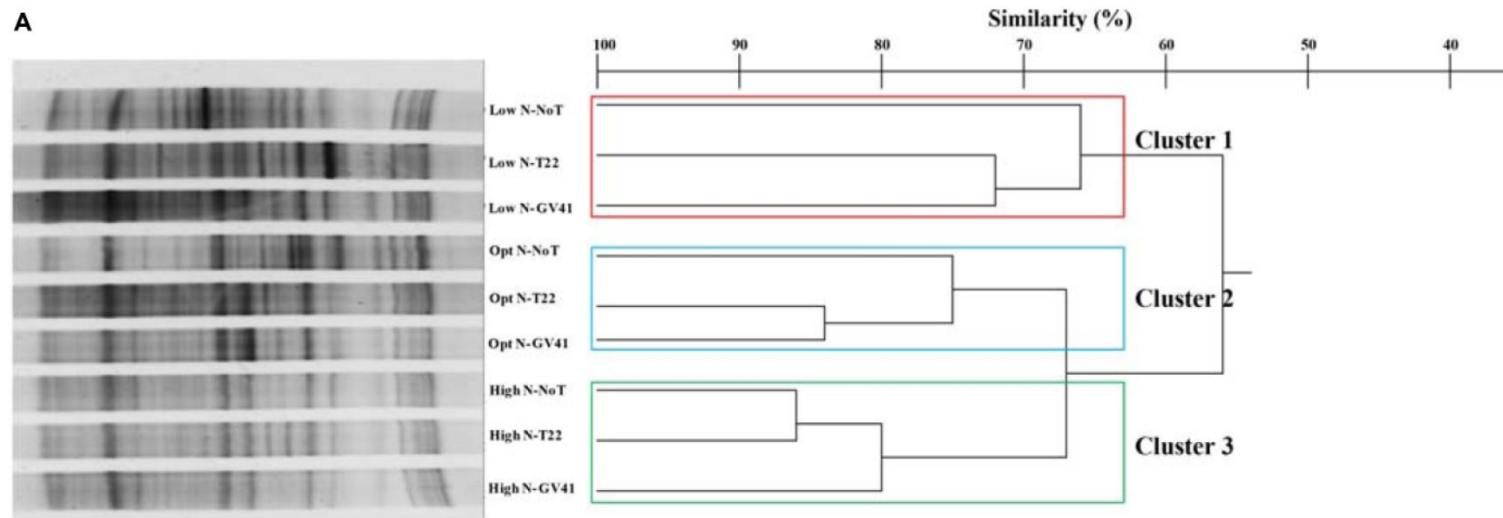
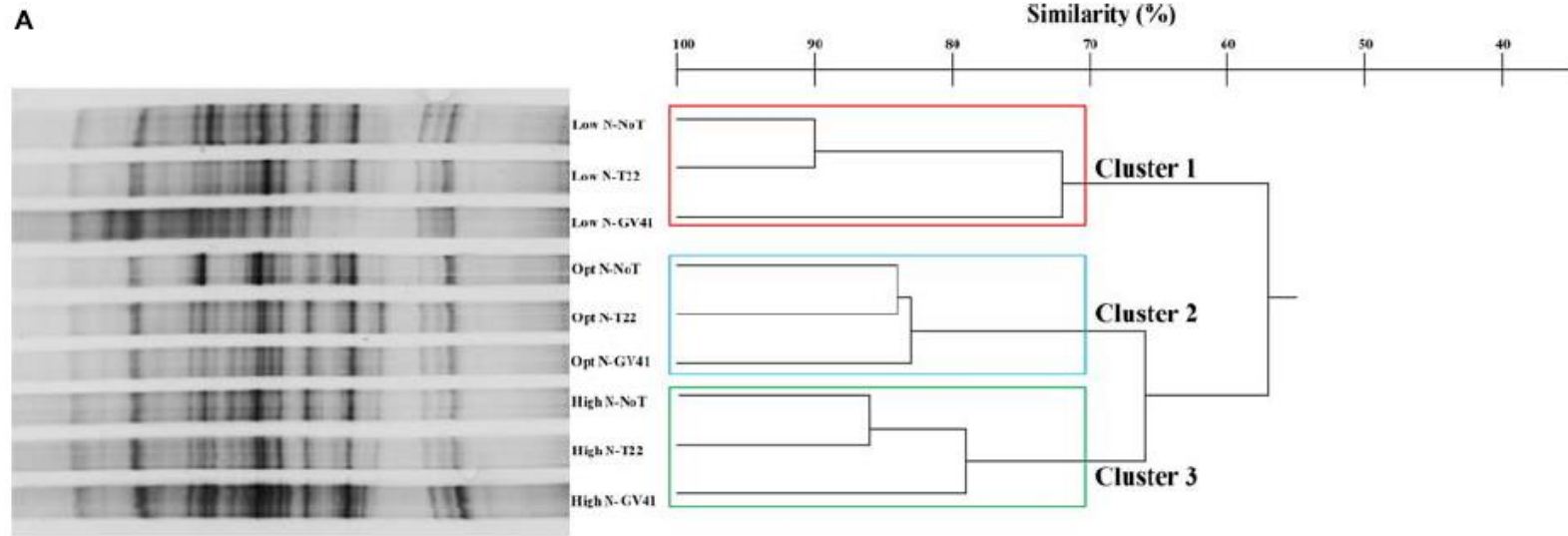


Lopez-Bucio et al. 2015 Scientia Horticulturae

Limited *Trichoderma* effect on nutrient uptake of *Brassicaceae* known as hyper-accumulating species (Santamaria et al., 2002 *J. Plant Nutr*) for  $PO_4$  e Ca.

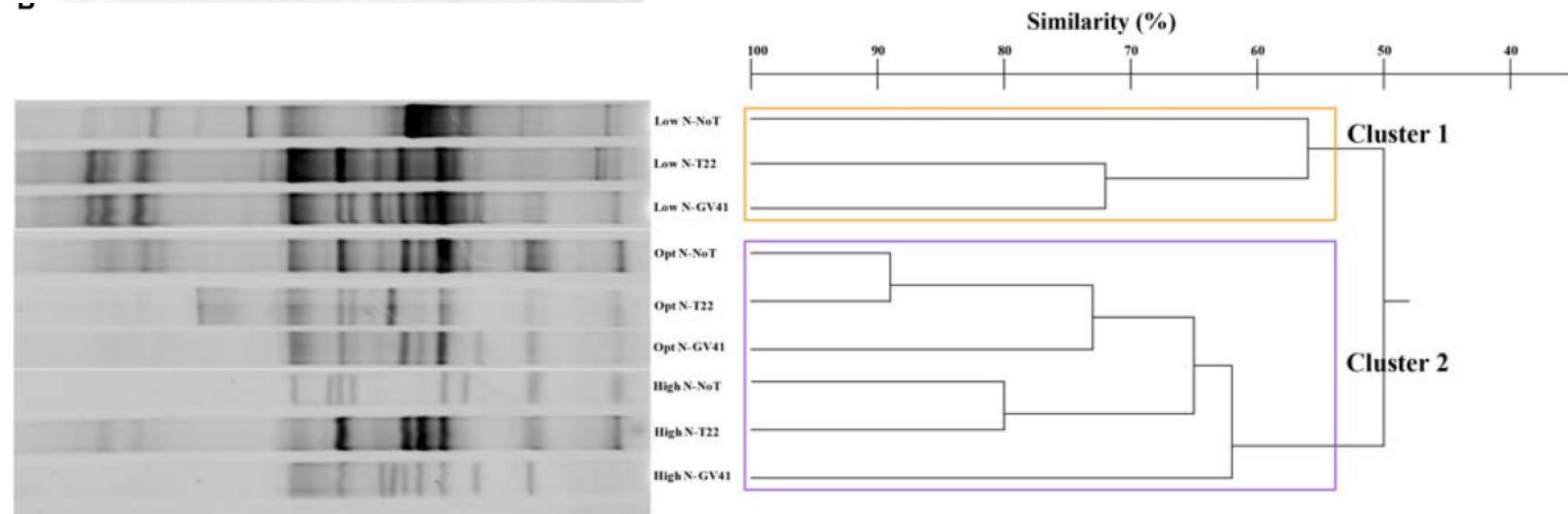
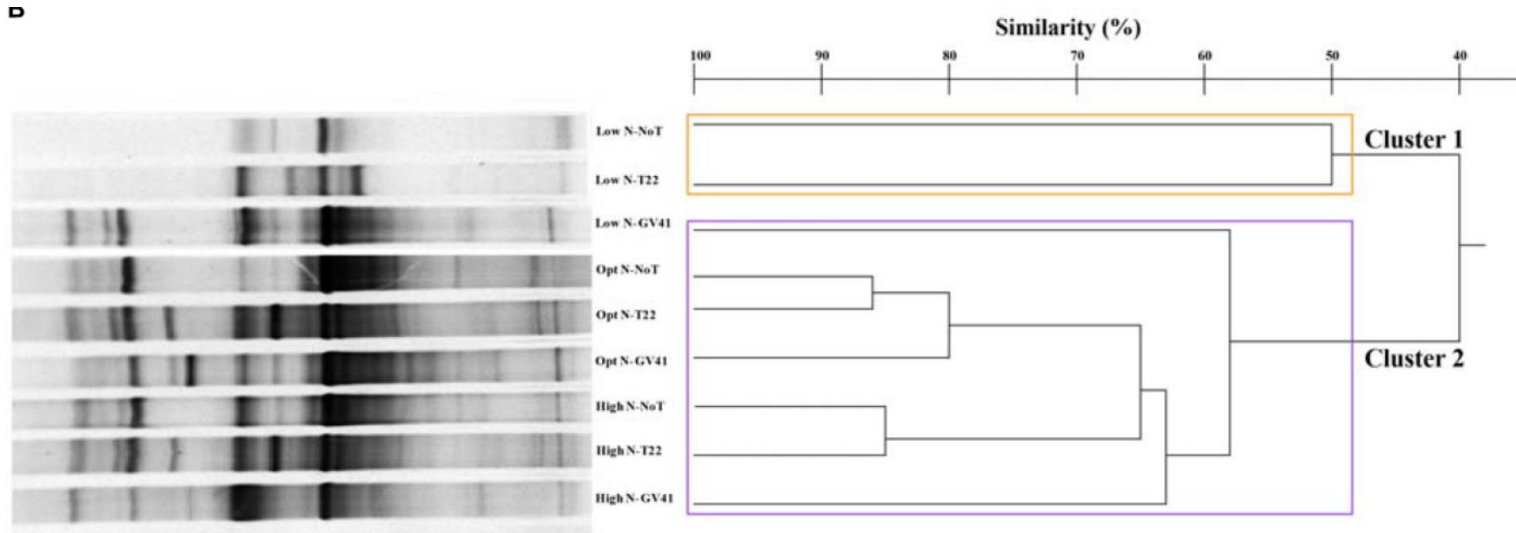
# Implications of Trichoderma-Based Biostimulants for Modulating Soil Microbial Communities

DGGE profiles and dendrogram showing the degree of similarity (%) of the PCR-DGGE profiles of the prokaryotes

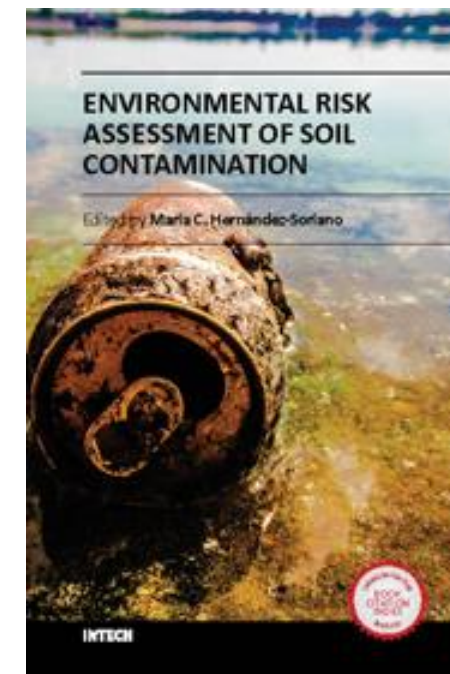
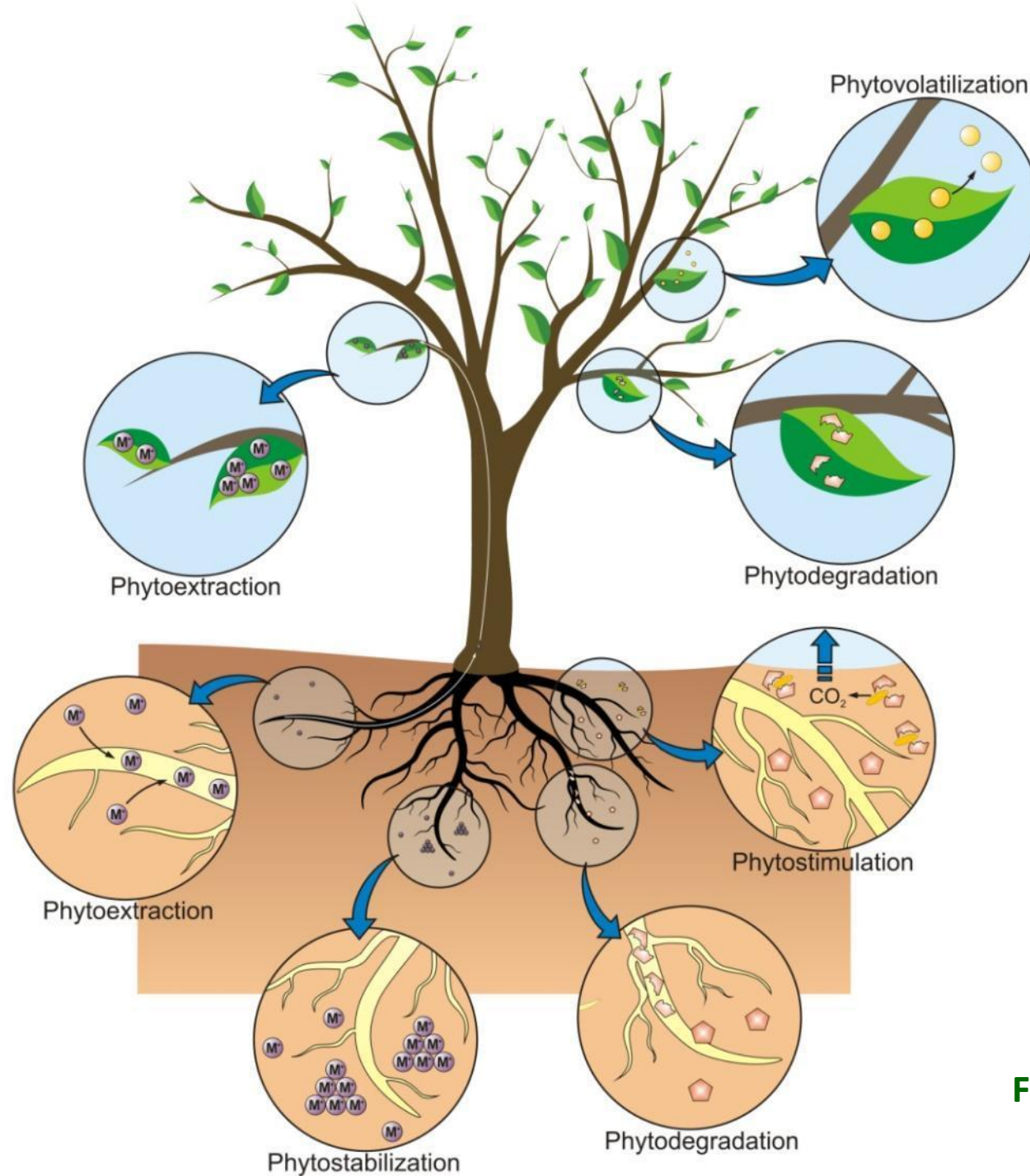


# Implications of Trichoderma-Based Biostimulants for Modulating Soil Microbial Communities

DGGE profiles and dendrogram showing the degree of similarity (%) of the PCR-DGGE profiles of the eukaryotes



# *Phyto* plant *Remedium* remediation



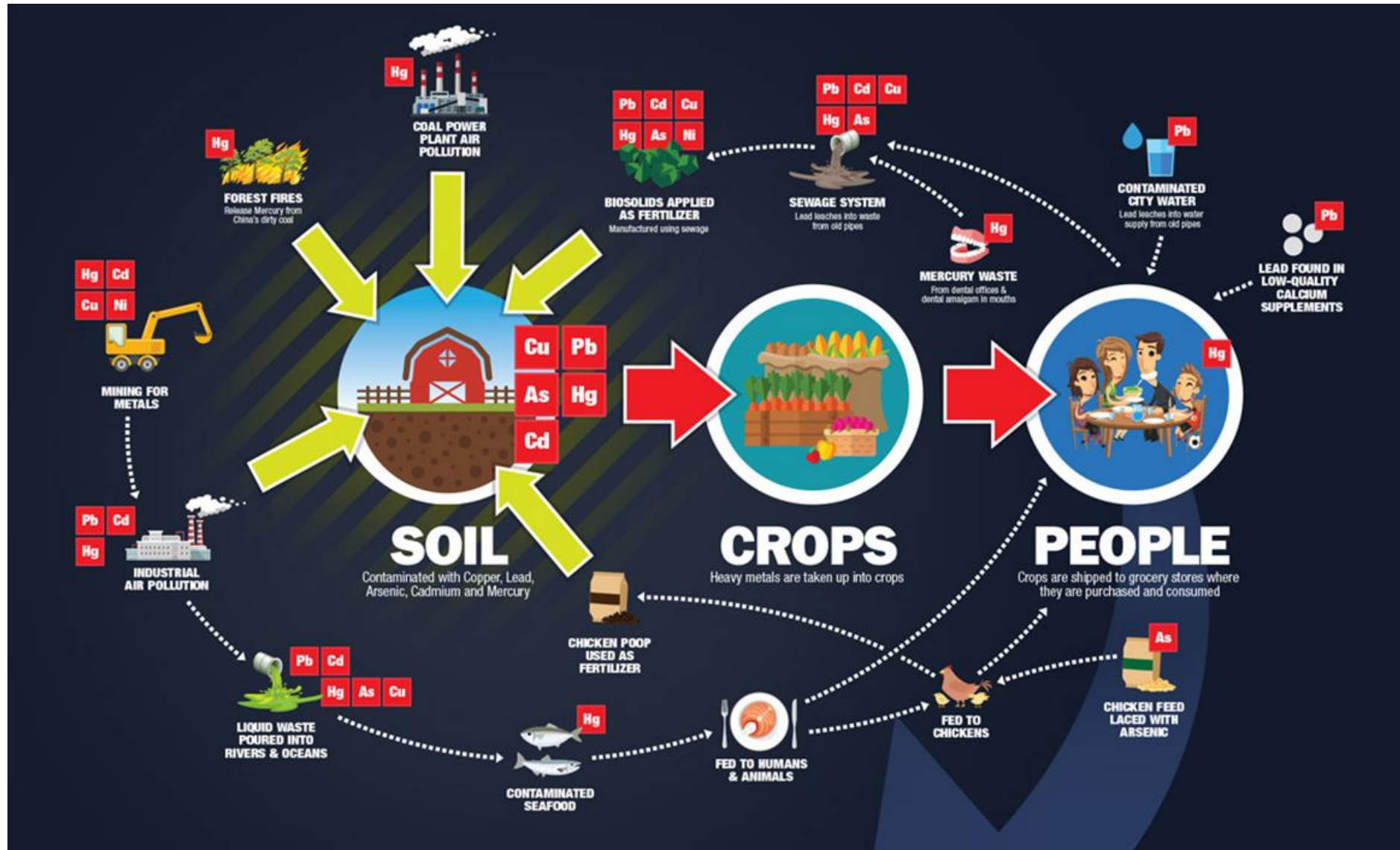
Favas et al 2014 in Environmental Risk  
Assessment of Soil Contamination

# Plant and PTEs interaction

Metal	Essential	Functions in plants (toxicity threshold mg kg <sup>-1</sup> )
As	No	(20)
Cd	No	(5-10)
Co	Yes	Cofactor <b>enzymatic activities</b> ; essential for <b>Rhizobium</b> (60-170)
Cr	No	(1-2)
Cu	Yes	Constituent of enzymes; <b>role in photosynthesis; yield and quality</b> (15-20)
Mn	Yes	Constituent and activator of enzymes; photosynthesis; reproductive phase; <b>resistance biotic and abiotic stress</b> (170-2000)
Ni	Yes	Constituent of enzymes; activation of urease (20-30)
Pb	No	(10-20)
Zn	Yes	Constituent of cell membranes; activation of enzymes; DNA transcription; involved in reproductive phase and in determining yield and quality of crops; resistance against biotic and abiotic stress; legume <b>nodulation and nitrogen fixation</b> (150-200)

*Modified from Vamerali et al Environ Chem Lett (2010) 8:1–17*

# Transfer to food chain



# Assisted phytoextraction of heavy metals: compost and *Trichoderma* effects on giant reed (*Arundo donax* L.) uptake and soil N-cycle microflora

Nunzio Fiorentino, Massimo Fagnano, Paola Adamo, Adriana Impagliazzo, Mauro Mori, Olimpia Pepe, Valeria Ventorino, Astolfo Zoina

*Dipartimento di Agraria, Università di Napoli Federico II, Portici (NA), Italy*



## *Arundo donax*

Biomass crop  
Hypertolerant  
Non-edibile

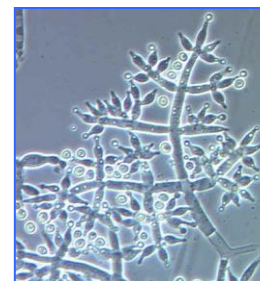
### Acerra (Naples)

Cd (mg kg<sup>-1</sup>)

Measured values	3.4
legal threshold Agric. Soils	2.0

High fertile soil potentially contaminated by Cd  
(source low quality MSW compost)

### *Trichoderma* inoculation



increase  
Giant Reed  
root  
uptake and  
growth

### Compost (10 Mg ha<sup>-1</sup> FW)



increases  
Nitrogen  
and PTEs  
bioavailab  
ility

# Bioindication of Cd availability

Factors	Abg. Biomass	Rhizomes	BAF	BAF'
	(g Cd ha <sup>-1</sup> )		shoots	roots
<b>Inoculation</b>				
NT	52.0 b	6.9 b	<b>1.23</b>	1.00
T	61.1 a	8.7a	<b>1.22</b>	<b>1.14</b>
<b>Fertilization</b>				
NC	48.9 b	7.1	<b>1.14 b</b>	0.95 b
C	64.2 a	3.9	<b>1.32 a</b>	<b>1.19 a</b>



$$\mathbf{BAF_{root}} = \text{PTEs mg kg}^{-1} \text{ roots} / \text{PTEs mg kg}^{-1} \text{ soil}$$

**>1** : suitable for phytostabilization and securing of the site

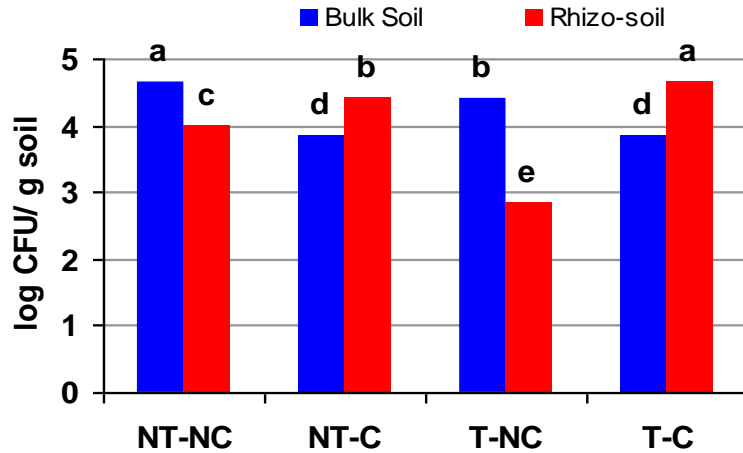
$$\mathbf{BAF_{shoot}} = \text{PTEs mg kg}^{-1} \text{ shoots} / \text{PTEs mg kg}^{-1} \text{ soil}$$

**>1** : suitable for phytoextraction and remediation of the site



# Microbial response to PTEs availability

## Free Living Nitrite Oxidizer Bacteria

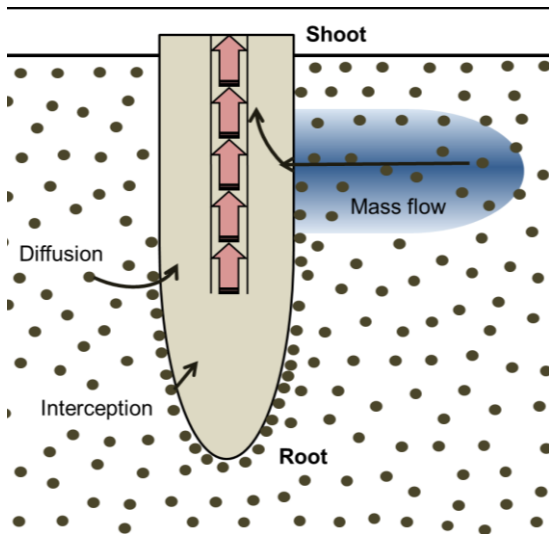


## Free living Nitrite Oxidizers Bacteria (NOB):

- sensitive to heavy metals
- used to monitor the quality of contaminated soils

**Plant effect:** NOB lower in rhizo-soil due to higher PTEs concentration

**Compost effect:** NOB lower in bulk soil when compost was added (PTEs bio-availability was not balanced by *Arundo donax* uptake)



Based on Marschner and Rengel 2012

## Mass flow of PTEs

driven by the transpiration rate of the plants



## Compost amendment

Limits passive PTEs flows  
Promotes active PTEs flows





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Science of the Total Environment

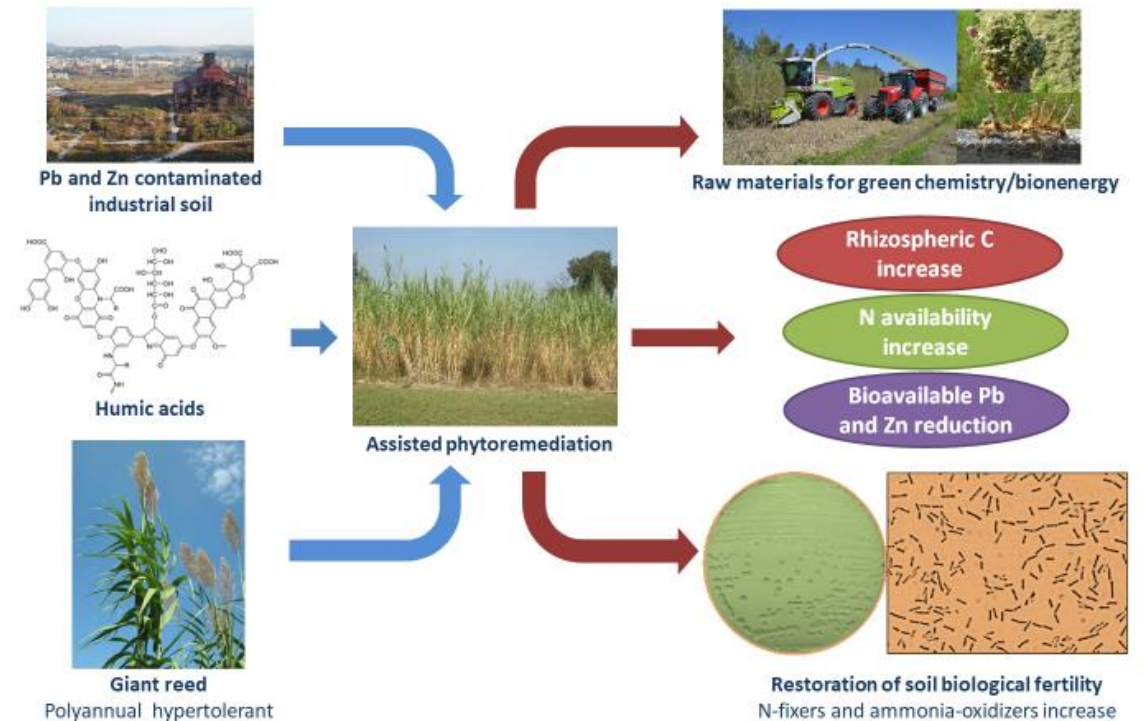
journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/scitotenv](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/scitotenv)



## Giant reed growth and effects on soil biological fertility in assisted phytoremediation of an industrial polluted soil

N. Fiorentino \*, V. Ventorino, C. Rocco, V. Cenvinzo, D. Agrelli, L. Gioia, I. Di Mola, P. Adamo, O. Pepe, M. Fagnano

Department of Agricultural Sciences, University of Naples Federico II, via Università, 100, 8055 Portici, Italy



# ANALYSIS OF NATIVE VEGETATION FOR A DETAILED CHARACTERIZATION OF SOIL CONTAMINATION



Environmental Pollution 252 (2019) 1599–1608



ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Environmental Pollution

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/envpol](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/envpol)



Analysis of native vegetation for detailed characterization of a soil contaminated by tannery waste<sup>☆</sup>

Donato Visconti<sup>a,\*</sup>, Nunzio Fiorentino<sup>a</sup>, Antonio G. Caporale<sup>a</sup>, Adriano Stinca<sup>b</sup>, Paola Adamo<sup>a</sup>, Riccardo Motti<sup>a</sup>, Massimo Fagnano<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Agricultural Sciences, University of Naples Federico II, via Università 100, 80055 Portici, Naples, Italy

<sup>b</sup> Department of Environmental, Biological and Pharmaceutical Sciences and Technologies, University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, via Vivaldi 43, 81100 Caserta, Italy



Italian Journal of Agronomy 2018; volume 13(s1)

Use of the native vascular flora for risk assessment and management of an industrial contaminated soil

Donato Visconti,<sup>1</sup> Nunzio Fiorentino,<sup>1</sup> Adriano Stinca,<sup>2</sup> Ida Di Mola,<sup>1</sup> Massimo Fagnano<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Agricultural Sciences, University of Naples Federico II, Portici (NA); <sup>2</sup>Department of Environmental, Biological and Pharmaceutical Sciences and Technologies, University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, Caserta, Italy

# The study-site:

3,5 ha close to an industrial plant



**Pb (1405-18688 ppm) and Cd (21-99 ppm)** (concentrations above Italian Screening Values and Risk Thresholds)

**Source: battery storage**

## Floristic survey

**Setup of 9 plots representative of vegetation types**

**Identification of species, soil cover and frequency**

**Sampling of plants (shoots and roots) and rhizo-soils for PTE analyses**

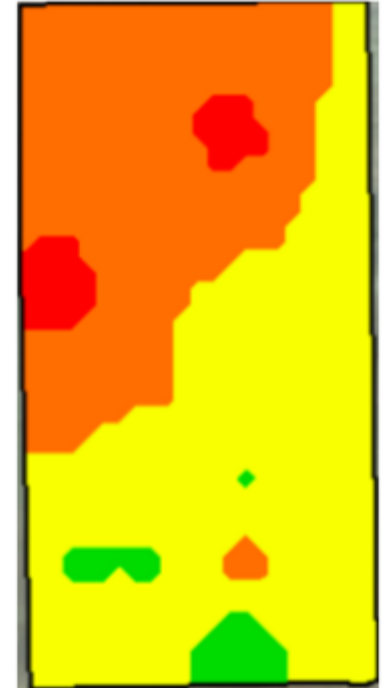


# PTEs effects on plant communities and identification of contaminated areas

	Shannon index	Pielou index	Species number	Poaceae	Fabaceae	Asteraceae	Miscellaneous species	Plant soil cover
ERI	<b>-.84**</b>	<b>-.88**</b>	<b>-.71*</b>	-.47	-.33	-.54	<b>-.68*</b>	.37
Pb (mg Kg <sup>-1</sup> )	<b>-.82**</b>	<b>-.84**</b>	<b>-.68*</b>	-.46	-.30	-.51	<b>-.65*</b>	.37
Zn (mg Kg <sup>-1</sup> )	<b>-.80**</b>	<b>-.79*</b>	<b>-.81**</b>	-.66	-.23	-.59	<b>-.73*</b>	.32
Cd (mg Kg <sup>-1</sup> )	<b>-.85**</b>	<b>-.89**</b>	<b>-.72*</b>	-.47	-.33	-.55	<b>-.69*</b>	.37

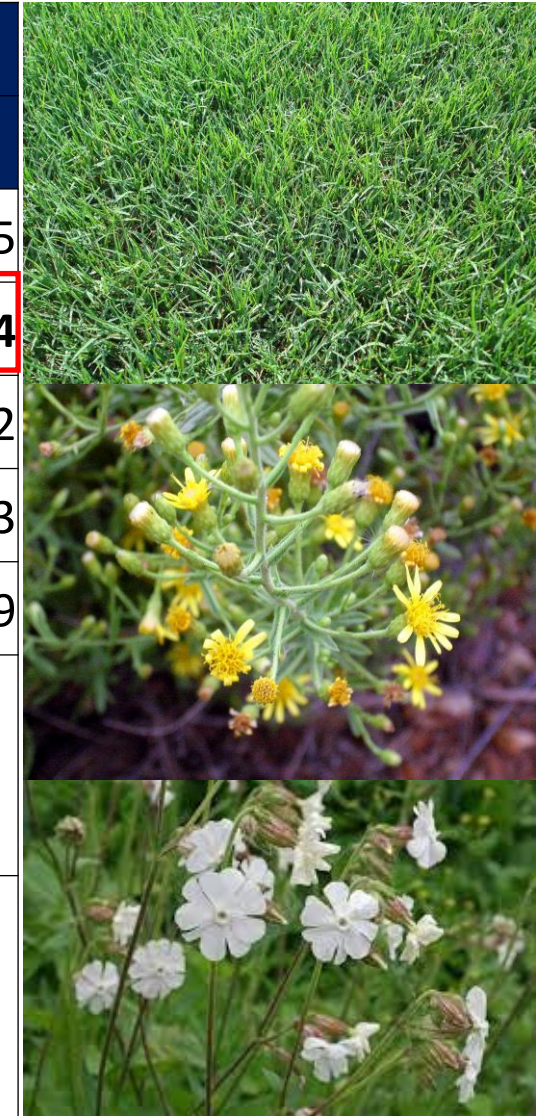
\*\* significant at the 0.01; \* significant at the 0.05

- ERI and PTEs (Cd, Pb and Zn) had the greatest negative effect on plants diversity and number of species



# Indirect risks and PTEs bioindicators

Species	Pb (mg kg <sup>-1</sup> d.w.)			Cd (mg kg <sup>-1</sup> d.w.)			Tl (mg kg <sup>-1</sup> d.w.)		
	Shoots	Roots	Soil	Shoots	Roots	Soil	Shoots	Roots	Soil
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	70	358	1707	1.2	4.9	5.8	0.11	0.45	1.5
<i>Silene latifolia</i>	216	3403	49647	7.7	41.1	175.6	102.54	43.99	9.4
<i>Elymus repens</i>	282	1407	16084	5.2	26.2	59.5	1.00	1.84	5.2
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	323	590	11795	3.7	17.8	50.7	0.28	0.96	2.3
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i>	47	16	609	1.1	0.3	2.5	0.10	0.40	1.9
Thresholds for forage (Reg-UE 1275/13)	34			1.06			---		
Thresholds of hyperaccumulators (Van der Ent et al., 2013)	1000			100			100		



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# Who is next?

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