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This voluminous book deals with two important problems of general importance: 1) Global warming could be substantially slowed down by an increased carbon sequestration in soils. But it could also be considerably enhanced, if soils will continue to be degraded at the present rate. 2) Latin America represents an important part of the world not only because of its area and population, but also because of its tropical rainforests.

In 2004 The Ohio State University, University of São Paulo, and the French Institut de Recherche pour le Développement organized a workshop in Brazil. Its main topics aimed at evaluating the recent soil management and its impact on carbon content in the soils and carbon fluxes in Latin America. This book offers both analyses of the present state as well as recommendations for future rational management of soils in the Latin America countries. The 24 contributions written by 61 authors have been divided into 4 main chapters.

The book starts with an introduction about the editors, list of contributors and a brief preface. The contributions are ordered into four parts. Part I deals with physiography and general background. Its four contributions describe soil ecoregions in Latin America and their carbon sequestration characteristics. The largest Part II with its 14 contributions deals with soil carbon sequestration in the individual biomes in Latin America. They are devoted either to individual states (Argentina, Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela) or geographic and ecological biomes (Amazonian tropical rainforests, tropical Andean hillsides, pampas, etc.). Part III offers an overview of methods suitable for the assessment of the carbon soil pools. The last Part IV contains one contribution summarising recommendations for future research and development. A detailed index containing also references

to tables and figures terminates the book.

I very much appreciate that this book offers valuable and up-to-date evaluation of the soil carbon sequestration from both the general point of view and special features of the appropriate regions.

The term Latin America embraces individual countries from North America (Mexico), Central America (7 countries), Caribbean (20 countries) and South America (13 countries). Anybody interested in carbon fluxes between the soils and atmosphere in any of the mentioned countries should consult this book. However, I would strongly recommend it also to those scholars and researchers who are interested in general aspects of carbon sequestration in the plant biomass and soil, carbon fluxes, crop management, land-use changes, and analytical methods of carbon assessment in the soil. They will find much valuable information and important stimuli in this book.

The editors are well aware of the fact that no considerable progress in increasing the soil carbon sequestration could be achieved if no support is obtained from the governmental bodies and policy makers. Hence, the last chapter also contains summaries on "How governments can encourage soil carbon sequestration" and "Communication among scientists, policymakers, and land managers". No doubts, their recommendations are important by far not only for Latin America.

Briefly, this book represents a valuable contribution in summarizing recent knowledge on soil carbon sequestration. Because of its detailed analyses of Latin America as well as much information of general importance, I recommend it to all those interested or engaged in research or teaching of global carbon cycle, soil carbon sequestration, and crop management.

L. NÁTR (*Praha*)