**COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FOR CLARIFICATION**

**On Linda Blättler’s presentation of research progress on**

**“ECOSYSTEM SERVICES PROVIDED BY PERMACULTURE”**

**I. PRESENTATION**

**A) Strengths:**

- Your outline and order of presentation is logical and connects smoothly from point to point

- Your presentation is comprehensive and presents a commendable amount of data

- It is clear and informative and presents the reader with a variety of data that together fits well into the scope of your research topic on “ecosystem services provided by permaculture”.

- You have done well to include some visual images that give evidence to the authenticity of some of the data you have collected.

**B) Areas of improvement:**

- Your current data is largely quantitative. Perhaps it will enrich your interdisciplinary aspect if in your next presentation you include some brief descriptions by way of explaining some of your numerical presentations.

- I suppose because you are quite advanced in your research you attempted to present everything in only a few slides. I am at the other end -- only beginning my research, so I felt overwhelmed by so much data. You might want to consider next time focusing on one type of data for presentation and explain it a little more and then only highlight the rest of the data.

**II. COMMENTS ON THE RESEARCH**

1. It is notable that you have made big steps ahead from the last presentation. You have made progress with the collections of samples and tabulating the data you retrieved.

2. Your graphical presentation of some data on “soil aggregate water stability” and “carbon content in the soil” are clear and comprehensive. The data seems to me well processed and ready for analysis and interpretation.

3. Your research is strengthened by the variety of data collected not only from a diverse range of land use patterns (e.g., farm land and forests), but also from places of different climatic conditions – Czech and Belgium.

4. You say that your data collection season was limited but you did data collection anyway. It seems to me your research strength lies not in the amount of data you have collected, but in the quality of data you have so far managed to gather. I see your data will eventually cut across a wide spectrum of disciplines and that is what will make it rich: on the one hand, you will have quantities that will evidently indicate the carbon stock, for instance; and on the other hand, you will have descriptions that will offer a sense of aesthetics and spirituality. And I think based on the data you have already converted to ecosystem services; you are on the right truck.

5. I think you still have time to read more literature in line with you area of research so that it becomes easier to make valid comparisons before you make your conclusions. Further, I suggest that you consult experts on technical detail of processing your data rather than engage in new study to acquire this expertise. This is simply because you may not have time for new study.

6. With regards to research methods, you incline more towards quantitative research and yet you have areas of your research that seem to me more presentable by qualitative methods, e.g., the aspects of cultural ecosystem services. You still could put them into categories and quantify them, but I think exploring the descriptive way of presenting these ecosystem services will widen your scope of interdisciplinary perspective.

**III. QUESTIONS FOR CLARIFICATION**

1. Your data on “carbon content in the soil” (p.8) indicate that vegetable beds have more carbon than edible forest farms. Is that correct? I am curious because I thought forests have a greater capacity for carbon sequestration.

2. Again another question out of curiosity: you say “Lot of time donated to production of data, collection tools, breeding aphids…” (p.11). Was breeding aphids done to test predator control or for some other reason? It seems to me like you are doing a research within a research which of course will require more time to accomplish.

3. Could you please clarify what you mean by “puzzle out data for production”? (p.14)

You have made appreciable progress. All the best with the rest of your research.

**Francis Njuguna Ndung’u**