

The Institution of Agricultural Engineers

Founded 1938 – Incorporated 1960

IAgrE Award of Merit 2020

Robert “Bob” Evans

CEnv MIAgrE

Dr Bob Evans is a national authority of the highest calibre, working on the extent and severity of soil erosion in the UK, with a career spanning over 50 years. His field-based research on soil erosion causes, extent, severity and control is of major importance. His database on field observations of soil erosion and deposition remains the most extensive evidence of soil erosion rates in the UK. His insights on the factors affecting erosion (e.g. the importance of land use, soil type and land management practices) have made an impact on applied soil science, soil degradation and soil conservation. His work is an exemplar of how agricultural engineering research advances knowledge and understanding, whilst informing farmer practice and Government policy.

He began his studies on soil erosion in the mid 1960s, then joined the Soil Survey of England and Wales in 1968, using remote sensing techniques for mapping soils. In 1971 he wrote a significant paper which initiated UK research on accelerated soil erosion. In the next decade he accumulated unprecedented evidence of accelerated water erosion in England. In the mid-1980s he ran

the national scheme to assess and monitor water erosion in England and Wales. Bob left the Soil Survey in 1986, but has remained very active as researcher and consultant, mostly on topics related to erosion and its impacts and has worked for Government Departments (e.g. MAFF, Defra), the Environment Agency, Natural England, Non-Governmental organisations such as Friends of the Earth and Campaign to Protect Rural England, and businesses such as Unilever.

In 1988, he became a Research Associate in the Geography Department, Cambridge University and from 1992 has been based at what is now Anglia Ruskin University, presently as a Visiting Fellow in the Global Sustainability Institute.

Bob Evans remains an active member of the IAgrE. He has supported local branch activities (especially the SE Midlands branch), as well as national events through regular attendance. He makes valuable contributions to meetings and conferences, and is always willing to support young and new members of the Institution, sharing his invaluable experience and knowledge.

In summary, Bob Evans has had a distinguished career in agricultural engineering. He has rendered outstanding service to IAgrE over a substantial period of years. He has made significant contributions by applying fundamental and applied soil science to many aspects of agricultural engineering. Dr Evans is a worthy recipient of the award.

