

WOJCIECH ZGŁOBICKI

Faculty of Earth Sciences and Spatial Management, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University

Professor Jean Poesen
Geographer and geomorphologist

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Professor Jean Poesen, born in the Congo on 26 April 1954, earned his Master of Physical Geography from the Catholic University Leuven (KU Leuven), Belgium, in 1976. In 1983, he was awarded a PhD by the same university based on his thesis entitled *Rainfall erosion mechanisms and soil erodibility*. For his PhD thesis, Professor Poesen received the WWF Scientific Prize in 1984 as well as the “Dr. J. Savat” Scientific Prize in 1985. In 1984, he commenced work at the Department of Geography at KU Leuven. In recognition of his scientific, teaching and organisational achievements, he became a full professor at KU Leuven in 2000. Since May 2000, Professor Poesen has been Head of the Division of Geography (Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences).

On 16 February 2009, Professor Poesen was awarded Doctor of Science (Dr. Sc.) in Soil Science and Geomorphology by the School of Applied Sciences, University of Wolverhampton, the United Kingdom, for proven record of internationally recognized scholarship based on 208 research papers published in the period 1977–2007. This “higher doctorate” was awarded in recognition of his substantial contribution to the development of international science.

Throughout his academic career, Professor Poesen has been an active university teacher who has instilled in his students the desire for hard work and fair competition. His teaching work consists of lectures, classes and seminars in the field of hillslope geomorphology and soil conservation, soil erosion and fluvial geomorphology, geomorphology of desert and semi-desert areas, geography of developing countries. He has been a promoter of 46 PhD dissertations and currently supervises seven dissertations in progress.

Professor Poesen has worked as a visiting professor at the following universities: Federal University of Technology (Owerri, Nigeria), Purdue University (West Lafayette, Indiana, USA), Bar-Ilan University (Tel Aviv, Israel), University of Barcelona (Barcelona, Spain), University of Cuenca (Cuenca, Ecuador), University of Mekelle (Mekelle, Ethiopia). In May 2003, he was Guest Lecturer on soil erosion processes, soil and water conservation at the Institute for Water Education (UNESCO-IHE), Delft, The Netherlands.

Professor Poesen has been deeply involved in research on topics of fundamental scientific and practical significance. His wide-ranging research interests include: geomorphology, soil erosion, sediment dynamics, soil degradation, hillslope hydrology, desertification processes, erosion control, soil and water conservation, impact of environmental change on soil erosion processes, experimental geomorphological techniques, geography of developing countries. The Professor has been involved in the implementation of 113 research projects. A large proportion of the projects have been implemented during his 204 study visits to 47 countries on five continents.

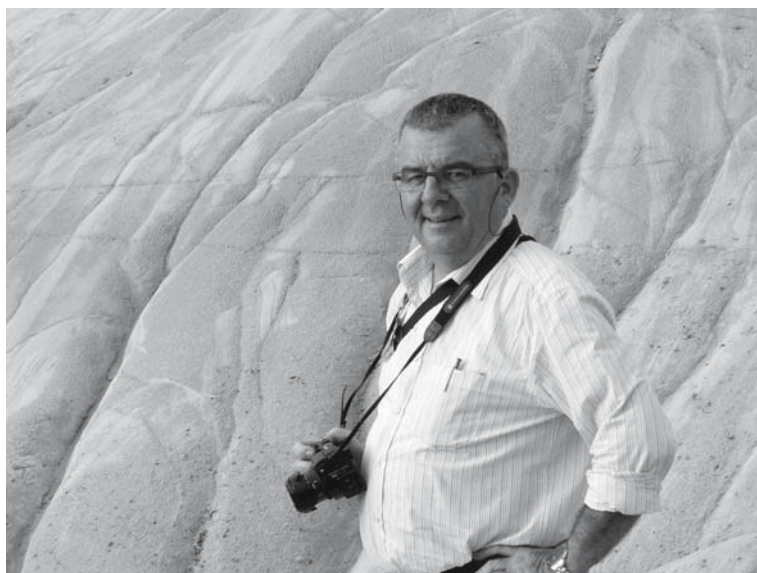


Fig. 1. Professor Poesen in Canada (2012)

Professor Poesen currently participates, as principal investigator, in the implementation of a research project funded by the National Science Centre (Opus IV), concerning the evolution of closed depressions in the Lublin region (implementation period 2013–2016). The project is being implemented at the Faculty of Earth Sciences and Spatial Management headed by Dr. Kołodyńska-Gawrysiak (Department of Geology and Lithosphere Conservation).



Fig. 2. Professor Poesen in the closed depression (E Poland, 2013)

Professor Poesen has participated in numerous conferences, congresses and symposia as an invited speaker, keynote speaker, plenary speaker or chair. He has been the organiser or co-organiser of more than 20 international conferences. Furthermore, he initiated the first symposium on gully erosion (Leuven 2000). Since then, such international conferences have already been held six times, and Professor Poesen is undoubtedly an informal leader of the community of gully erosion researchers.

In the period 1989–2007, Professor Poesen held the post of Joint Editor at “Catena” journal. He was also editor of “Catena” special issues (1997–2007), and since 2007 he has been member of the Editorial Board (review editor). He has been member of editorial boards of other international journals: “Soil Technology” (review editor, 1988–1995), “Earth Surface Processes and Landforms” (2008–2013), “Cuadernos de Investigacion Geografica” (2011–). Professor Poesen has received numerous prestigious scientific awards and nominations:

a) Wiley Award received from the British Geomorphological Research Group for the best publication in the journal “Earth Surface Processes and Landforms” in 1994

- b) Associate Member (1997) and Working Member (2007), Royal Academy for Overseas Sciences, Class of Technical Sciences (Belgium)
- c) Associated member, Royal Academy of Belgium for Sciences and Arts, Class of Natural Sciences (2000)
- d) Key researcher of the ICG (Centre for Geo-Ecological Research) – network of 100 researchers representing 5 Dutch and Belgian universities
- e) Honorary Professor of the University of Iași (Romania, May 2013)

Professor Poesen has an impressive body of publications. He has authored or co-authored more than 700 scientific publications, out of which over 380 are papers indexed by Journal Citation Reports. He has also been editor of 30 books, special issues and field trip guides. Professor Poesen is among the world's top experts in the field of Geosciences. Since 2003, he has been listed among the Essential Science Indicators Scientists (provided by Thompson Reuters), ranking the top 1% scientists in the world based on the number of cited SCI publications in a ten-year period. Professor Poesen was ranked 12 on the list of highly cited authors in Geosciences, based on total citations for the period 1996–2007 (1,290 citations of 104 papers). According to the Web of Science (10.2013), Professor Poesen's publications received 10,100 citations (8,140 without self-citations), which means an average of 26 citations per publication, resulting in the h-index of 52.

Professor Poesen is a member of numerous prestigious international organizations: World Association of Soil and Water Conservation, International Association of Geomorphologists, Belgian Association of Geomorphologists (vice-president, president), International Geographical Union, Soil and Water Conservation Society, European Society for Soil Conservation (founding member), European Geophysical Society, British Geomorphological Research Group, Belgian Society of Soil Science. The Professor has been an expert and consultant for international programmes: United Nations Environment Programme, Environment Agency of Japan, UNESCO (UNESCO FRIEND-NILE). On December 12, 2009, Jean Poesen was appointed member of the Class of Sciences of The Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts (KVAB: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten).