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**Type of Presentation:** Poster

**Title:** A Collaboration of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) & Scientific Research in Mali, West Africa

**Abstract:** This presentation examines the importance of both experiential, traditional based knowledge and a scientific base of knowledge by looking at the benefits of a tree species in Mali, West Africa and how it is beneficial to the soil. The researcher examines two sides of the knowledge based approaches; 1. The positivistic, empirical science as studied in the researcher's time in Peace Corps training, and, 2. The experiential knowledge gathered and passed on by local farmers in rural West Africa. Without the factual knowledge that has been discovered by soil conservationists like Radwanski and Wickens, we would not know the specific type of nutrients that this tree puts into the soil, which are higher levels of carbon, nitrogen, and phosphorus. Secondly, without the testimony of farmers in Mali, West Africa planting these trees next to their millet fields for many generations, there would not be the practical knowledge needed to prove this finding true. In conclusion, it is necessary to have both sides of this coin to have strong justification to prove or disprove a claim by using the scientific method and an experiential base of knowledge. These two sources of knowledge can be looked at as complimentary in this case study.

