



**SDI Review Form 1.6**

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| Journal Name:            | <a href="#">International Journal of Plant &amp; Soil Science</a>                                      |
| Manuscript Number:       | 2014_IJPSS_14410   |
| Title of the Manuscript: | USE OF COAL DERIVED HUMIC ACID AS SOIL CONDITIONER TO IMPROVE SOIL PHYSICAL PROPERTIES AND WHEAT YIELD |
| Type of the Article      | Original Research Article  |

**General guideline for Peer Review process:**

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound.

To know the complete guideline for Peer Review process, reviewers are requested to visit this link:

(<http://www.sciencedomain.org/page.php?id=sdi-general-editorial-policy#Peer-Review-Guideline>)



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**PART 1: Review Comments**

|                                     | Reviewer's comment   | Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)  |
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| <b>Compulsory</b> REVISION comments | <p><b>Abstract:</b> Where was your control site located? It's not mentioned in the abstract though it appears in your materials and methods section. You need to include it here.</p> <p><b>Key Words:</b> Your key words should not appear in the title. You have 3 key words which are also appearing in the title (Humic acid, physical properties and wheat yield). Kindly replace these.</p> <p><b>Language Review:</b> The document has a lot of language issues ranging from poor sentence construction to wrong punctuations especially in the introduction. For example, The sentences in lines 25, 27 (use or strong? Or high?), 31-33 either needs to be rephrased or have punctuation marks which needs correction. In their current form there is a level of ambiguity. Check sentence in lines 37-39 to make sure it's reflecting what you want to put across. It seems to have something not right about it.</p> <p><b>References:</b> Consistency with in-text references needed e.g. Khunga and Manoharan. 2000 is differently cited (lines 54). Some literature used is too old e.g. Nisar and Mir (1989); Villa et al., 1992 are too old.</p> <p><b>Abbreviations:</b> Abbreviations should be explained first time they are used, unless they are universally accepted abbreviations. For example PMAS or RCBD (line 66) should be explained first time used.</p> <p><b>Materials and Methods:</b> It is preferable to present your formulae in standard equation manner rather than in words. You will also need to number the equations</p> <p><b>Results:</b> Table 2-As a standard when your P-value has</p> | <p>There is no <b>control site</b> separately, but we compared two sites having control level in each site.</p> <p><b>Key words</b> changed in the manuscript as suggested.</p> <p>Language is improved and modified as suggested.</p> <p><b>Abbreviations</b> explained as suggested.</p> <p>Materials and methods section improved as suggested.</p> |



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|  | <p>only zeros after the decimal, convert the last zero to a one e.g. 0.0000 is presented as 0.0001. This doesn't change your interpretation but avoids complete zeros which gives an impression of absolute meaning to interpretation.</p> <p>Since Tables 1,3,4,5,6 are interpreted based on percentages rather than absolute values, I suggest you include a column indicating cumulating percentages from 0 (control) to 150 (highest experimental).</p> <p><b>Discussion:</b> Your discussion of the results needs to be improved. For example, Table 7 and Figure 1 presents an interesting opportunity to discuss why continued application of both Lab and Commercial grade Humic Acid above 120 does not result in increased yields. In fact, it seems to reduce the yields. Hence your discussion should answer questions like 'is the 120 an optimum threshold for HA application?' 'What factors were responsible for the reduction in yields when more than 120 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> of HA was applied?'. You might also want to discuss why lab grade HA seems to be more effective than commercial grade HA. Discussing such issues will add critical knowledge to the field as opposed to just presenting your figures.</p> <p><b>Conclusion:</b> Please conclude your work by highlighting the main findings of your study.</p> | <p><b>Table 2</b> corrected as recommended. Converted the last zero to a one in the table 2 as suggested by the reviewer.</p> <p>Interpretation of the all suggested table values has been modified to easily understand the table values.</p> <p>Discussion has been improved as suggested. Humic acid above the 120 kg enhanced the vegetative growth like plant height and biomass of wheat not the grain yield.</p> <p>Conclusion is added.</p> |
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| <b><u>Minor</u></b> REVISION comments   | Since the study is on selected soil types in Pakistan, it would be helpful to give a description of the general physical and textural characteristics of the sampled soils. Extent of these soils in Pakistan would help to determine the reach in terms of importance of the study. If a soil map is available, it would be more helpful to include it in the study. | Table of site characteristics is added. |
| <b><u>Optional/General</u></b> comments | The study has clear practical objectives and the author brings these into focus. While the study is not in itself new, it does present important information contributing a universal problem affecting farmers-soil infertility. The study will definitely be useful in improving crop productivity and eventual food security.                                      |   |