

# Acrisols

(from Latin *acer*, very acid).



Soils having a subsurface horizon with a distinctly higher clay content (argic horizon) than the overlying horizon. They have a low nutrient retention and a low base saturation (total amount of Ca, Mg, K and Na with respect to the cation exchange capacity).

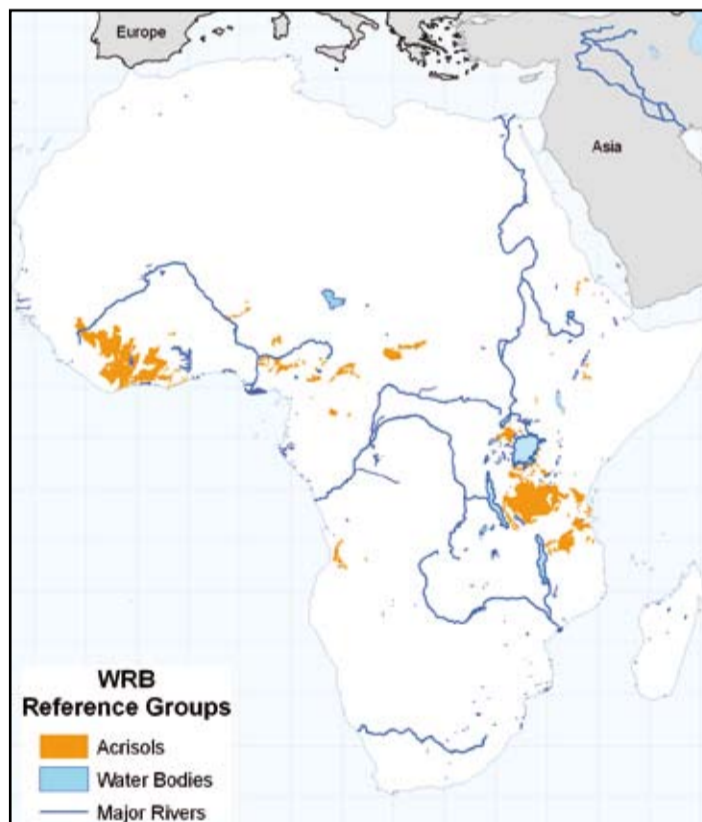
The photograph shows the upper, yellowish coloured part has lost clay that has been leached down and redeposited in the lower, reddish coloured part. The round pale spots are filled animal burrows (krotovinas). Acrisols are fairly susceptible to erosion and compaction due to their poorly developed soil structure. Many Acrisols become hard when dry, which makes cultivation difficult with conventional African farm implements like the hoe.

Acrisols occur dominantly in the wetter parts of the tropics and subtropics as well as the warm temperate regions in relatively young landscapes.

# July 2010



Because of the low inherent fertility of Acrisols, many African farmers use slash-and-burn techniques to release nutrients from the vegetation and to counteract weeds. This practice is only sustainable when fallow periods are sufficiently long.



Location of areas where Acrisols are the dominant soil. Acrisols cover around 3% of Africa.

**Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday      Sunday**

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| 26 ☺ | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |      |     |