



**Working Group Meeting of the Eurasia Soil Partnership  
Implementation Plan for Pillar 1 “Promoting sustainable soil management”**

**Date: 16 October 2014**

**Venue: Antalya, Turkey**

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**Meeting Report**

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## 1. Acknowledgements

The report was prepared by Sevinc Madenoglu and edited by Ines Beernaerts from the FAO Sub-regional Office for Central Asia. Special thanks are also addressed to the Organizing Committee of the 9th International Soil Science Congress on "The Soul of Soil and Civilization" and H. Emrah Erdogan, Chair of Working Group for Pillar 1, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock of Turkey, for supporting the organization of this meeting.

## 2. List of Acronyms

EASP	Eurasian Soil Partnership
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
FSN	Food Security and Nutrition Forum
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GLADIS	Global Land Degradation Information System
GSP	Global Soil Partnership
ICAL	International Conference on Arid Land Studies
ICBA	International Centre for Biosaline Agriculture
ITPS	Inter-governmental Technical Panel on Soils of the GSP
LADA	Land Degradation Assessment in Dryland
MoFAL	Ministry of Agriculture
PIF	Project Information Form
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SSM	Sustainable Soil Management
WSD	World Soil Day
WOCAT	World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies)

## 3. Introduction

The Global Soil Partnership (GSP) was formally established by members of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) during its Council in December 2012. The Council recognized soil as an essential natural resource, which is often overlooked and has not received adequate attention in recent years, despite the fact that production of food, fiber, fodder, and fuel critically depends on healthy soils. The Mandate of the GSP is to improve governance of the limited soil resources of the planet in order to guarantee agriculturally productive soils for a food secure world, and support other essential ecosystem services, in accordance with the sovereign right of each State over its natural resources.

On November 20, 2013 in Moscow (Russian Federation), within the framework of the international conference "Eurasian network on food security and Eurasian Soil Partnership", Eurasian partners of the Global Soil Partnership met to launch the sub-regional Eurasian Soil Partnership (**EASP**) in the framework of the Global Soil Partnership supported by FAO.

In order to achieve its mandate, the GSP addresses the five pillars of action to be implemented in collaboration with its regional soil partnerships. The Plans of Action for each pillar were formulated in an open and participatory format, strictly following the Guidelines for the development of Plans of Action of the GSP Pillars as presented in the Rules of Procedure. Pillar 1 is strongly linked with Pillars 2 and 5 regarding activities for its implementation, and strongly relies on Pillars 3 and 4 for the generation of technical information that will be used in its activities. Pillar 1 is therefore the overarching Pillar upon which the other four Pillars will contribute in order to provide the context and activities for sustainable soil management implementation and promotion.

The first Plenary Meeting and Steering Committee Meeting of the Eurasian Soil Partnership (EASP,) held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan from 10th September till 11th September 2014, in the framework of the International Conference on Arid Land Studies (ICAL2) on 'Food Security and Innovations in Arid and Semi-arid Agro-ecosystems', had for main objectives to introduce the endorsed Plans of Action for each of the five Pillars of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP), agree on the regional priorities, outline the process for finalizing the formulation of the EASP Implementation Plan, formalize the partnership and agree on the expected outputs for each of the five pillars with initial discussion about specific activities (e.g. celebration of World Soil Day and the International Year of Soils 2015).

Following the first Plenary Meeting and Steering Committee Meeting of the Eurasian Soil Partnership, the FAO Sub-regional office for Central Asia has jointly organized the Working Group Meeting of the Eurasia Soil Partnership - Implementation Plan of Action for Pillar 1 with EASP Secretariat, the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock (MoFAL) and ICBA in Antalya on 16 October 2014. The working group meeting took a place into the framework of 9th International Soil Science Congress on "The Soul of Soil and Civilization".

#### **4. Working Group Meeting of the Eurasia Soil Partnership - Implementation Plan of Action for Pillar 1**

The Eurasia Soil Partnership - Implementation Plan of Action for Pillar 1 has been developed and discussed during the meeting with the participants. The draft Implementation Plan of Action for Pillar 1 has been shared with the participants for further comments and finalization.

The working group meeting was held with the participation of 6 experts, including Ines BEERNAERTS Water Management and Irrigation Officer and Sevinc MADENOGLU JTO (Land and Water Res.) from FAOSEC, Pavel Krasilnikov (EASP Secretary), Kristina Toderich (ICBA expert), Gulchekhra Kasankhanova (Vice-Chair of EASP), H. Emrah Erdogan (Chair of Working Group for Pillar 1, MoFAL of Turkey). In addition, 12 participants from the 9th International Soil Science Congress participated in the meeting and shared ideas about Pillar 1 actions (Promote sustainable management of soil resources for soil protection, conservation and sustainable productivity).

During the first part of the meeting, Ines Beernaerts presented the development process of the EASP implementation plan and Pavel Krasilnikov (EASP secretariat and ECFS) provided a review of key soil issues and recommendations for Eurasia (e.g. outcome of e-consultation)

Then, the draft implementation plan framework (outcome, components and outputs) was reviewed and finalized, in a participatory manner with all participants and key activities were planned for Pillar

1 of EASP.

## 5. Development Process of EASP Implementation Plan

Ines Beernaerts, (FAO Sub Regional Office for Central Asia) briefed the participant on the development process of EASP plan. She mentioned that soils, which are an essential component of land resources, are under pressure for feeding the growing population of the world by 2050, meeting increased demand for water, fiber and forage and sustain ecosystem services. To address the challenges ahead, FAO launched the GSP (Global Soil Partnership) in September 2011 with the support of the European Commission. It is composed of partners, guided by the ITPS, facilitated by the GSP Secretariat (Rome) and implemented through the Regional Soil Partnership. The RSPs are to assist the GSP to move into concrete field action at regional, national and local levels. Ms. Beernaerts recalled the key events leading to the EASP implementation plan, including review of regional status and national status on SSM and key issues during the launch workshop (in November in Moscow) (where are starting from?), review and adaptation of regional priorities during the plenary meeting of EASP (in September in Samarkand) (Where are we going to?), the formalization of the partnership during the Steering Committee meeting (in September in Samarkand) (with whom?). ITPS developed a Soils Brief as contribution to the “Sustainable Development Goals and the Post 2015 process”. In this context, FAO proposed a target related to soil: “By 2030, 30 per cent increase in area of land in agriculture and forestry under sustainable management ensuring restoration of degraded soils, conservation of biodiversity, and increasing provision of productive, ecological and socio-cultural services” and an indicator related to soil “ area of land/soils under sustainable management”<sup>1</sup>.

The first version of **“Status of World Soil Reports”** is to be prepared by ITPS with soil scientists invited from all regions in the world. Regional chapters on the status of soil resources will be an added value to this report. EASP is invited to contribute to the production of the regional chapter for the second version. The first version will be launched on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2015 as the main product of IYS.

In addition, Ms. Beernaerts indicated that the celebration of World Soil Day 2014 will be celebrated on December 5 and the International Year of Soils 2015 will be launched on the same day. Finally, the expectations of the meeting have been expressed as follows;

- To finalize the formulation of the Implementation Plan (Pillar 1) with concrete activities (including timeframe, responsibilities and funding)
- To initiate the design of a joint multi-country project proposal including ‘Scaling up of integrated landscape management in salt affected agricultural production systems to maintain natural resources and agro-ecosystem services in support of the food security and livelihoods’ under GEF 6 and propose a road map for its finalization / submission
- To plan activities for World Soil Day (5 December 2015) and the International Year of Soils 2015.

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<sup>1</sup> Sources: GLADIS, LADA-WOCAT mapping tool and forthcoming Soils Statistics and Information (ITPS World Soil Resources Report, 2015 = baseline

## **6. Review of key soil issues and recommendations for Eurasia (e.g. outcome of e-consultation)**

Pavel Krasilnikov gave an overview of recommendations on key soil issues for Eurasia through online consultations managed by the Eurasian Center for Food Security (ECFS). The FSN Forum is a global online platform for knowledge sharing on food security and nutrition. The aims of the ECFS are; better and more informed food security governance processes at global, national and regional level, increased understanding and recognition of Food and Nutrition Security as part of the global policy agenda, incorporation of a wider number of stakeholders views into food security governance and drafting processes, support of innovative thinking and multidisciplinary approaches. E consultation 'Towards a Eurasian Soil Partnership for food security and sustainable development' was launched on 26.08 2014 by the Eurasian Center for Food Security (ECFS) for a period of three weeks, in collaboration with FAO's Global Soil Partnership (GSP), FAO's Global Forum for Food Security and Nutrition (FSN Forum) and the World Bank. A total of 68 experts from different countries contributed to the topic. . The consultation focused on; a) healthy soils greatly contribute to the sustainable production of nutritious food, b) food security in Eurasia region is closely connected to the status of soil health c) the soil-water-energy nexus should be considered when designing any intervention. Soil should be part of an interdisciplinary setting under the food security and sustainable development agenda, d) a regional trans-boundary mechanism that allows interaction and partnership towards the sustainable management of soils is required.

During the launching of the Eurasian chapter of the Global Soil Partnership on November 20 2013 in Moscow, it was decided that an implementation plan will be prepared with the contribution of each working group. Most of the participants joined the first Pillar (Promote sustainable management of soil resources for their protection, conservation and sustainable productivity) because it is perceived that the first pillar is a base for the other pillars. The aim of the first pillar is to promote sustainable soil management and the focus is on concrete field action to mitigate soil salinization. The other important dimensions are scaling up technology and building upon best available science. All methods are well documented in the area but they are not widely applied. Which strategy should we promote to upscale best practices and mainstream them into available policies, programs and instruments framework? The other discussions were related to the other pillars. World Bank will organize an online discussion on the "economics of degradation" .

## **7. Introduction of Pillar 1 and outline of Implementation Plan**

Hakkı Emrah Erdogan presented an overview about the background of GSP, EASP and Pillar 1 and the outline of implementation plan. He also gave information on main approach of EASP including 5 recommendations which are proposed through the plan of action.

## **8. Plenary: Review and finalization of Draft Implementation Plan framework (outcome, components and outputs)**

Ines Beernaerts facilitated the review of the draft implementation plan framework by participants. Ms. Beernaerts also gave an overview of tools for designing the implementation plan using a results-based approach and facilitated the review and finalization of the draft implementation plan framework (outcome, outputs and activities) in a participatory manner with all participants.

### **9. Road map for finalization of GEF PIF ‘Salinity management’ (e.g. situation analysis, funding, etc.)**

**Gulchekhra Khasankhanova (Co-Chair of EASP)** presented the structure and scope of a multi-country project proposal ‘Scaling up of integrated landscape management in salt affected agricultural production systems to maintain natural resources and agro-ecosystem services in support of the food security and livelihoods’ under GEF 6 focal area strategy (land degradation). She has also proposed a road map for its finalization and she highlighted that UNCCD focal points have recently expressed their willingness to have FAO acting as implementing agency for a larger multi-country GEF project, i.e. the second phase of the Central Asian Countries Initiative on Land Management (CACILM2).

### **10. ICBA research results and future strategy for up scaling and mainstreaming soil salinity management practices and systems**

Kristina Toderich (ICBA) gave a review of ICBA research results on soil salinity management. In addition, she mentioned about mission of ICBA and its role for Central Asia, briefed about problems and challenges related to soil and the status of soil salinity, land degradation and water quality deterioration. Besides, she presented adoption of biosaline technologies in marginal lands towards food security and environmental stability under changing climate, promotion & up-and out scaling of best practices at community/or village level and Agro-pastoral systems.

During the following discussion, Ms. Khasankhanova specified that, biosaline technology is very suitable but the scale of application should be clearly defined. All studies have been carried out mostly at all level. Ms. Toderich informed that biosaline technology can be used everywhere and it is applicable for all levels. In addition, we have to consider various land users (e.g. land pasture user, farmers etc. ). Under the project scope, we should consider the technologies which are already demonstrated for upscaling and mainstreaming.

### **Conclusion**

Six experts from Turkey, Russia and Uzbekistan have participated in the meeting. In addition 12 participants from 9th International Soil Science Congress on "The Soul of Soil and Civilization" have actively attended the meeting.

The outcome of the meeting is a draft Implementation Plan for Pillar 1, developed in a participatory manner with all participants, with concrete field action for promoting sustainable management of soil resources for soil protection, conservation and sustainable productivity. In addition, a multi-country project proposal ‘Scaling up of integrated landscape management in salt affected agricultural production systems to maintain natural resources and agro-ecosystem services in support of the food security and livelihoods’ under GEF 6 was presented and discussed.

The draft implementation plan of Pillar 1 will be sent to the experts by Emrah Erdogan (MoFAL) who is responsible person of Pillar 1 and recommendations and comments will be provided to finalize it via e mail by experts as soon as possible. Then, the final implementation plan will be submitted to the EASP Secretariat.

## Annex 1: Agenda of the Workshop

### Agenda

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#### EURASIAN SOIL PARTNERSHIP

#### WORKING GROUP MEETING OF IMPLEMENTATION PLAN OF ACTION FOR PILAR

16 OCTOBER 2014 , ANTALYA, TURKEY

09:00 - 09:15	Ines Beernaerts (FAO-SEC)	Development process of EASP implementation plan
09:15 - 09:30	Pavel Krasilnikov (ECFS)	Review of key soil issues and recommendations for Eurasia (e.g. outcome of e-consultation).
09:30 – 09:45	Hakkı Emrah Erdogan	Introduction of Pillar 1 and outline of Implementation Plan
09:45 – 10:30	Plenary (Facilitator: Ines Beernaerts)	Review and finalization of Draft Implementation Plan framework (outcome, components and outputs)
10:30 – 10:45	<i>Café Break</i>	
10:45 – 12:30	Working Groups	Planning of Implementation activities
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Lunch</i>	
13:30 – 15:00	Working Groups	Planning of Implementation activities
15:00 - 15:15	<i>Café Break</i>	
15:15 – 15:30	Gulchekhra Khasankhanova	Presentation of GEF PIF ‘Salinity management’
15:30 – 15:45	Kristina Toderich	Presentation of ICBA research results and future strategy for upscaling and mainstreaming soil salinity management practices and systems
15:45 – 17:45	(Facilitator: Ines Beernaerts)	Participatory design of logical framework
17:45 – 18:15	Gulchekhra Khasankhanova	Road map for finalization of GEF PIF ‘Salinity management’ (e.g. situation analysis, funding, etc.)
18:15 – 18:30	Pavel Krasilnikov	Conclusion

## Annex 2: List of Participants

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