



EURASIAN SOIL PARTNERSHIP

Eurasian Soil Partnership Workshop

16-18 June 2015, Izmir, Turkey

Background Note and Provisional Agenda

The Global Soil Partnership (GSP) is a major international initiative with a vision 'to improve global governance of the limited soil resources of the planet in order to guarantee healthy and productive soils for a food secure world, as well as sustain other essential ecosystem services'. The Regional Soil Partnerships are to assist the GSP to move into concrete field action at regional, national and local levels through 'Implementation Plans'.

Launch of the Eurasia Soil Partnership (November 2014, Moscow) - The Eurasian chapter of the Global Soil Partnership was successfully launched on 20th November 2013 in Moscow, Russia (see. <http://www.fao.org/europe/sec/sec/12news/en/>) with a final 'communiqué' appointing the Eurasian Center for Food Security¹ as the Secretariat. The launch workshop was a first step to support the development of a dynamic community of practice of soil specialists and practitioners and identify key soil issues / research needs in each country.

GSP Plans of Action for Pillars 1, 2, 4 and 5 were endorsed during the second Plenary Assembly Meeting on 24th July 2014 in Rome, Italy. The Plenary urged for the imminent development of Implementation Plans at regional level and further implementation of actions.

First Plenary Meeting and Steering Committee Meeting of the Eurasian Soil Partnership (Samarkand, September 2014). 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'. The meetings had as 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

¹ ECFS was established by the Government of the Russian Federation as a concrete follow-up to the L' Aquila Food Security Initiative for catalyzing agricultural development in the region

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. There were also initial discussion on specific activities such as celebration of World Soil Day and the International Year of Soils 2015.

Meeting of Working Group 1 (October 2014, Antalya). During the forthcoming Eurasian Soil Science Federation Conference in Antalya, Turkey, 13-17 October 2014, members of the Working Group 1 proposed a Plan of Action and paved the way towards a draft regional implementation plan for sustainable soil management and restoration to reverse the alarming soil degradation trends (including soil salinization) in Eurasia.

Objectives

The objectives of the Eurasian Soil Partnership Workshop in June 2015 are:

- 1) to raise awareness and share information on action taken or planned by member Countries and regional partners in celebrating the International Year of Soil 2015;
- 2) to review the priorities in the region for ensuring the sustainable soil management, protection and restoration - by building on experiences and lessons learned and through an active and dynamic network of champions and stakeholders under the umbrella of the Eurasian Soil Partnership;
- 3) to renew the Eurasian Soil Partnership (EASP) by updating the steering committee members, including lead roles and members of each working group; and
- 4) to review and validate the EASP Implementation Plan and discuss and agree on the way forward (next steps).

Expected outputs

The following outputs are expected:

- 1) Sub-regional Plan of Activities for the IYS2015 reported (to be uploaded on the IYS website)
- 2) Eurasian Soil Partnership (regional) Implementation Plan reviewed, validated, and supported by prospective programmes and investment (opportunities identified);
- 3) Eurasian Soil Partnership institutional framework renewed (including steering committee and working groups) and ownership / buy in mobilised.
- 4) Workshop proceedings and press release drafted (English and Russian).

Participants (maximum 30 participants)

One participant from each country: 1) the national Focal Points to the Global Soil Partnership. In addition, the Eurasian members of the GSP Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS), research organizations, CSOs and other regional members will also be invited.

Background documentation

Background documents (English) are available on the GSP website <http://www.fao.org/globalsoilpartnership/en/> , including mandate and rule of procedures (<http://www.fao.org/globalsoilpartnership/mandate-rules-of-procedure/en/>) and the five pillars of action (<http://www.fao.org/globalsoilpartnership/the-5-pillars-of-action/en/>).

Language

Simultaneous interpretation between English and Russian will be provided for the presentations and discussions for the entire duration of the workshop.

Structure of the Workshop and Provisional Agenda

The three-day regional workshop will be organized as follows:

Day 1 will provide an update on the status of the Global Soil Partnership, the Eurasia Soil Partnership and the International Year of Soils 2015. It will also enable the participatory review of the draft EASP Implementation Plan.

Day 2 will focus on the finalization of the EASP Implementation Plan (including prospective programmes and investment to move into action). It will establish procedures and renew the steering committee of the Eurasia Soil Partnership, including members and key partners of the working groups for each pillar.

Day 3 will ensure validation of the final EASP Implementation Plan and define way forward. It will also provide an opportunity to join a field trip organized by the host country.