



## First announcement

**The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is organizing a technical workshop in the framework of the Global Soil Partnership on:**

### **"Managing Living Soils"**

**Dates:** 5<sup>th</sup> to 7th December 2012 (3 days)

**Venue:** FAO HQ (Austria Room, C237), Rome, Italy

**Partners:** The workshop is jointly organized with the Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA) and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC/EC)

#### **Background**

FAO, with the support of the European Commission, launched the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) in FAO headquarters in September 2011 to raise awareness of decision makers on the vital role of soil resources for achieving food security, adapting to and mitigating climate change and guaranteeing provision of environmental services. The Vision of the GSP is 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 GSP will address five main pillars of action:

1. Promote sustainable management of soil resources;
2. Encourage investment, technical cooperation, policy, education awareness and extension in soils.
3. Promote targeted soil research and development focusing on identified gaps and priorities.
4. Enhance the quantity and quality of soil data and information;
5. Harmonization of methods, measurements and indicators for sustainable soil management.

Since its endorsement by the FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG) at its 23rd session on 24th May 2012, the Global Soil Partnership has started a process to develop plan of actions for the different pillars. This process is inclusive and, where relevant, initiated through a consultation workshop in which stakeholders from the different regions and GSP partners discuss the arising issues, concerns and priorities regarding each pillar. In turn, a regionally balanced working group is established for developing the draft plan of action for the concerned pillar that is then submitted for consideration and feedback from a wider audience.

#### **Objective of the Technical Workshop on Managing Living Soils**

The objective will be to review the state of the art in regard to soil management across the world and within each region, drawing on participants knowledge of the status and trends in specific countries and contexts, practical experiences and case studies, including relevant processes or mechanisms that can be built on or scaled up to support sustainable soil management. Technical, institutional, financial and policy issues and constraints and opportunities will be discussed as the

basis for identifying priorities and future actions for a proposed Plan of Action for Pillar 1 of the Global Soil Partnership on Promoting sustainable management of soil resources worldwide.

### **Target Audience**

The target audience constitutes the global community engaged in soil management for different land uses including representatives of governments, academic and research fora and development partners from each region, as well as civil society organisations and private sector bodies. Concerned partners and funding mechanisms working on sustainable soil management will be invited, such as: CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC, OECD, IPBES, GSBI, GSF, CGIAR, and ongoing processes such as AGRA.

The timing of the event, starting with the celebrations of the **World Soil Day** -5 December at 13.00h - is hoped to help obtain media attention to raise awareness on the importance of sustainable soil management for food security, climate change adaptation and mitigation and the provision of other ecosystem services.

### **Programme Structure:**

#### **5<sup>th</sup> December 2012: Status, Challenges and Priorities of Soil Management Worldwide**

- Keynote speakers on challenges and opportunities for sustainable soil management
- Aims and Objectives of the workshop
- Brief presentations on a limited number of contributed papers (state of the art and communities of practice by thematic or geographic area)
- World Soil Day celebrations

#### **6<sup>th</sup> December 2012: Addressing current challenges on soil management through the GSP**

- Overview of ongoing global/regional SSM programmes and links with the GSP
- Background paper and suggestions for developing the SSM Plan of Action (scope; priorities; strengthening communities of practice and inter-linkages for synergy and impact)
- Plenary discussions
- Working /Drafting groups

#### **7<sup>th</sup> December 2012: The way forward for successfully promoting sustainable soil management (prioritisation and preparation of a draft joint plan of action).**

- Plenary Discussions (technical, institutional, financial and policy dimensions including synergies among agriculture and the environmental conventions; etc.)
- Working /Drafting groups
- Conclusions and recommendations and closing session

Discussions will take into account results of previous discussions at the workshop on Soil Data and Information for Sustainable Soil Management - GSP Pillar 4 (Rome, Feb. 2012) and the joint FAO/IAEA symposium on Soil Management for Food Security and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (Vienna, Aug. 2012) that focused on Pillar 3 on targeted soil research and development.

### **Acceptance of Papers**

This workshop is aimed primarily as a stakeholder/partner consultation process for the development of the Plan of Action for the GSP Pillar on sustainable soil management (rather than as a scientific event for sharing progress and advances). Nonetheless, a limited number of relevant papers will be accepted, after review by a committee that will be established for this purpose, to encourage due involvement of the scientific and research community.