

Minutes of the June 2017 - ESP Steering Committee meeting

Swiss Permanent Representation to FAO

22 June 2017, 14:00 – 17:45

By Marc Van Liedekerke, 29 June 2017; reviewed by Elena Havlicek, 30 June 2017; contributions from ESP-SC members, 6 July 2017.

Participants:

Baritz Rainer (GSP Secretariat)
Benedetti Anna (ESP FP Italy; invited by Chair)
Costantini Edoardo (Pillar 4 WG Chair)
Dazzi Carmelo (vice-Chair)
Geissen Violette (Pillar 1 WG Chair)
Hartmann Christian (IRD France; invited by Chair)
Havlicek Elena (Chair)
Masson Josiane (representative European Commission – DG ENV)
Montanarella Luca (Representative ITPS)
Ritsema Coen (Pillar 3 WG Chair)
Van Liedekerke Marc (ESP Secretariat)

Excused:

- Arwyn Jones (Pillar 2 WG Chair),
- Erdogan Hakki (vice-Chair + Pillar 5 WG Chair)
- Pavel Krasilnikov (representative Eurasian sub-regional soil partnership (EASP))

Background:

The Steering Committee of the European Soil Partnership (ESP-SC) was set up by the ESP Plenary Assembly (March 2016) when the ESP Terms of Reference were adopted. Since then, this ESP-SC developed an ESP Implementation Plan 2017-2020, which was proposed and adopted in the ESP Plenary meeting of 10-12 May 2017. This ESP-SC meeting is organized to develop the first steps towards implementing the plan.

The agenda covered the following topics:

1. Short review of the final version of the IP
2. Prioritization of the actions for the 5 pillars (ESP plenary mandate)
3. Re-establishment of the 5 pillars WG: current state
4. ESP contribution to the GSP activities (GSOCTMap, SWSR, etc.)
5. Global ESP activities (conferences, promotional material, etc.)
6. Planning and milestones

1. Short review of the final version of the IP

All participants agreed on the validity of this final version.

During the review, Luca Montanarella raised the point whether the Eurasian Soil Partnership is still sub-regional or became regional; Rainer Baritz explained that (for GSP) EASP has developed formally from a sub-regional partnership (of 13 countries) to a regional partnership in itself. This should be reflected on the FAO and ESDAC websites. In relation to this, the status of Turkey is unclear: at the

one hand, Turkey holds the vice-chair and ESP Pillar-5 WG Chair; at the other hand, Turkey is part of the EASP. **This needs to be clarified.**

NOTE: *in a sequence of emails between ESP-SC members and the GSP secretariat subsequent to the meeting, this confusion was clarified: the EASP was and remains a sub-regional soil partnership; the countries belonging to the EASP are also members of the ESP and are welcome to contribute and operate both within EASP and (non-EASP) ESP.*

2. Prioritization of the actions for the 5 pillars (ESP plenary mandate)

Pillar-1: Violette Geissen identified as priorities the activities and outcomes under point 1 of the IP, but observed that it will be quite difficult to realize if there is no specific engagement from persons. Elena Havlicek recommended to prepare very concrete questions/actions-to-achieve, that could be addressed directly to Focal Points and which would allow to bring the ESP into contact with people closely related to soil. Anna Benedetti advised, based on her experiences, that it would be more efficient to directly contact such people. Elena proposed to send the very concrete questions to soil science related societies. Josiane Masson suggested deploying a wiki-tool, accessible to everybody, to engage directly interested parties. **Marc Van Liedekerke will look into this possibility to offer such a tool through ESDAC.**

Pillar-2: Arwyn Jones provided pre-meeting written input: the JRC and the ENSA network are planning a soil awareness and education workshop in Bratislava in September and the further implementation issues of these aspects of Pillar 2 will be at the forefront. As mentioned at the ESP plenary meeting in Rome, Pillar 2 is a sort of 'safety net' for a range of elements that deserve specific coordinated focus. From the EU's perspective, he proposes that the policy aspects are led by the EU Expert Group, which is managed by DG ENV. **DG ENV (Josiane Masson) could consider to circulate some summary of the meetings to non-EU countries.** Regarding the extension, the University of Gloucester in the UK was asked whether they would like to take the lead in this as they have contacts with national extension services and the private sector through ongoing activities.

Pillar-3: Coen Ritsema sees as first priority a review of soil research in Europe and a proposal to set the soil research agenda. This will be achieved in cooperation with the INSPIRATION project, and in consultation with ESP partners, relevant people from the European Academy of Sciences (???) and various other stakeholders. The output will be a synthesized report, by spring 2018. The action will be initiated by Coen and gradually involve Pillar 3 working group members and other ESP partners.

Pillar-4: as newly appointed Pillar-4 WG leader, Edoardo Costantini, before prioritizing, would need to familiarize himself with the envisaged activities as described in the IP, and a network of contributors should be established first. He raised the problem of reliability/quality of data, when referring to different scales (global/ more local). Luca Montanarella mentioned that at GSP level, data policies have been discussed and adopted at the 5th GSP Plenary, and ESP should follow these. A discussion was launched on the contribution of ESP to the GSP GSOC map. Montanarella suggested, in order having a first priority and a possibly quick result that ESP Pillar-4 should take on board the coordination of the European contribution to this GSP product. **It was decided that Costantini will look into this together with JRC, EEA and GSP.**

Pillar-5: in the absence of the WG Chair (Hakki Erdogan), Rainer Baritz posed that the situation is similar to Pillar-4, and first a network would need to be established. He also mentioned the changed

conditions under which the Pillar-4 actions should evolve, as a new GSP Pillar-5 implementation plan had been established.

3. Re-establishment of the 5 pillars WG: current state

As decided in the recent ESP Plenary Meeting, the ESP Secretariat is centralizing a call for expression of interest among ESP partners to provide names of persons that could contribute to the various ESP working groups. This process was launched on 9 June 2017 by an invitation letter sent to all ESP partners, with initial deadline 30th of June. The response so far has been very limited and **will be repeated regularly in order to get more people on board**. The question was raised whether persons/organizations that are not a formal ESP (and thus GSP) partner, could register as member of a Pillar working group. **This would need to be clarified by the GSP Secretariat.**

4. ESP contribution to the GSP activities (GSOCMap, SWSR, etc.)

Montanarella suggested creating an ESP-based SOC map (as part of Pillar-4) for the European region (on the basis of national contributions to the GSOC map) in order to have a concrete prioritization and output. In a second instance it could be seen how to use this product to complement/integrate with the GSP GSOC map. This suggestion was supported by all.

5. Global ESP activities (conferences, promotional material, etc.)

It was suggested to put the list of conferences relevant to ESP and attended by ESP SC members also on a wiki. **The Secretariat will look into it.**

Promotional material + leaflets: Elena Havlicek will take care of this

It was again suggested to promote ESP during various events, e.g. one in relation to the Estonian European Presidency (second half 2017) and the UNCCD COP13 Conference (September 2017)

It would be useful to know from European countries if they organize events in relation to the World Soil Day (5 December).

Carmelo Dazzi suggested that it would be good if the ESP-SC could elaborate a kind of **who-is-who in relation to ESP**. This idea was well accepted.

It was also recalled that Carmelo Dazzi proposed to elaborate an amended definition of 'soil' that adds elements of economy and society (resource limited in space and time), for future use by ESP (e.g. for the promotional material).

6. Planning and milestones

A recap of the state of Action Points of last ESP-SC meeting (February 2017) was made:

Action Points from previous ESP-SC meeting, 2+3 February 2017

	Description	Who
1	Add anyone interested in ESP to the mailing list. OK. Continuously done.	Marc VL
2	When a new ESP member is added, the ESP-secretariat will ask which role he/she wants to play in the ESP OK. (Not applicable yet)	Marc VL
3	Creation of a list of major soil-related conferences/events and indicate who will attend what. List-of-events: Many events can be taken from the FAO GSP website and from EUGRIS website. Partially done. Look into the possibility for using a wiki.	Marc VL with help of SC members
4	Hold information sessions at major soil-related events OK. Continuously done.	ESP-SC members
5	Create of a web space in ESDAC only accessible by ESP SC (e.g. to put draft versions of common documents) OK. Done.	Marc VL
6	Development of an ESP Facebook page and ESP logo, based on GSP logo OK. Done.	Klara Janouskova
7	WG2: as part of Pillar 2: make website ESP more attractive Still to be done.	Arwyn Jones, Marc VL
8	Development of a rationale to attract more people to ESP ('why is it good for you to join the ESP'); this rationale would be used for a leaflet that should be distributed in all kinds of soil-related events. Still to be done.	Elena Havlicek, with help of all ESP-SC
9	Try to have some soil conferences 'branded' as ESP related. Still to be done.	ESP-SC all
10	The organization of a meeting of soil-networks: (planned already for August 2017 in Wageningen). This meeting was cancelled. Maybe look into the possibility to organize a similar meeting elsewhere. A discussion took place on the need for such a meeting; according to Montanarella, it should be done by a project such as INSPIRATION. Josiane Masson mentioned that DG ENV could have some budget to organize such meeting. According to Baritz, such a meeting would be useful to find out which ESP tasks have been achieved already and make sure network activities are integrated with Pillar work. Josiane opined that these networks should register as a partner.	Luca Montanarella and Saskia Keesstra (WUR)

11	<p>Compilation of a list of soil-related EU projects in FP7 and Horizon2020</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Coen Ritsema
12	<p>Add the Links4Soils project activities to the various Pillar activities, as Links4Soils covers all aspects. The Links4Soils project can be seen as implementing the existing European IP.</p> <p>Not explicitly done, but there is room for promoting the Links4Soils activities when Pillar-activities will be started.</p>	All WG leaders when revising their Pillar IP
13	<p>SWSR2020: Inform ESP-SC on the modalities for developing the State of World Soil Resources report for 2020 (SWSR2020). Based on this information, someone from the ESP-SC should take the leadership for follow-up and development of the European chapter of the report.</p> <p>Done by Luca Montanarella and Ronald Vargas during the 2017 ESP Plenary</p>	Pavel Krasilnikov
14	<p>SWSR2020: Invite national focal points of the ESP for future contribution to the SWSR2020.</p> <p>Done by Luca Montanarella during the 2017 ESP Plenary</p>	Elena Havlicek
15	<p>Propose a text to send to the European Research Council, in name of the ESP and possibly European soil science societies.</p> <p>Not yet.</p>	Carmelo Dazzi
16	<p>Global Soil Organic Carbon map initiative of FAO: ESP to be involved in the European component: have this initiative as an item in the next ESP-plenary; preparation of a text to be sent to ESP national focal points to raise awareness about it and invite them to contribute. Outcome should be that countries commit to implement the GSOC.</p> <p>Done during the 2017 ESP Plenary</p>	Elena/Marc/Rainer
17	<p>ESP-Plenary: presentation about EASP in the ESP Plenary (10 to 15')</p> <p>Done by Hakki Erdogan</p>	Hakki Erdogan
18	<p>ESP-plenary: short introductory presentation of where we are with the ESP.</p> <p>Done by Elena Havlicek</p>	Elena Havlicek
19	<p>ESP Plenary: make the ESP national focal points aware of the development of the new version of the Soil atlas of Europe, and try to engage them.</p> <p>Done by Luca Montanarella</p>	Arwyn Jones
20	<p>IP: collect updates to the ESP IP from all ESP-SC members, but mainly from the working groups chairs, and finalize the IP for sending out to all ESP members.</p> <p>IP for each Pillar:</p>	Marc VL and ESP-SC

	It is desirable to add estimates of the resources needed for each activity; to be provided by WG Chairs for each activity. Resources should be expressed as person-days and/or financial. Done by ESP-SC	
21	IP: change the term Deliverables in the term Output (on p6) Done	Marc VL
22	Communication: organize an ESP content based meeting Not done yet; postponed.	Violette Geissen
23	Communication: organize an ESP related workshop in relation to the World Soil Day 2017 Will be done	Josiane Masson
24	Communication: elaboration of an amended definition of 'soil' that adds elements of economy and society (resource limited in space and time), for future use by ESP Not yet; will be done before the end of August	Carmelo Dazzi
25	Communication: Attract new members to the ESP: approach the various soil networks: make a proposal on how to do this. Not yet	Carmelo Dazzi

New action points from this meeting

	Description	Who
26	Adapt ESDAC ESP website to reflect the status of EASP; clarify the status of Turkey.	Marc VL
27	Investigate the possible development of an ESP based GSOC.	Edoardo Costantini with JRC, EEA and GSP.
28	Investigate the possible set-up and use of wikis for accomplishing some of the activities that require distributed written input.	Marc Van Liedekerke, together with Violette Geissen and Josiane Masson.
29	Possible circulation of EU Expert Group meeting minutes to non-EU countries	Josiane Masson
30	Clarification whether non-ESP partners can participate in ESP working groups	GSP-secretariat
31	Invite on a regular basis organizations/persons to contribute to Working Groups	ESP Secretariat
32	Promotional material + leaflets: Elena Havlicek will take care of this	Elena Havlicek to take the initiative

33	Elaboration of a who-is-who in relation to ESP	Carmelo Dazzi to take the initiative.

Next ESP-SC meeting: ideally January/February 2018; well ahead of the ESP Plenary that normally would be organized during March 2018.