

## ELMINA COMMUNIQUÉ

Elmina (Ghana), 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015

We, the representatives of 35 countries from Sub-Saharan Africa participating in the Africa Soil Partnership Consultation workshop held in Elmina, Ghana on 20-22 May 2015, organized by FAO and in accordance to the Terms of Reference of the Global Soil partnership, would like to:

- Appreciate the great potential and diversity of soils in the region and their fundamental value for food security and overall sustainable development.
- Call to attention that soil degradation is a serious process that is affecting the soils in the region through their various forms and processes such as soil organic matter depletion, nutrient imbalance, soil erosion, soil sealing, soil acidification and soil salinization.
- Report that the degradation process is threatening the soil resources in the African region and thus is affecting economic development, particularly agricultural production and associated food and nutrition security, provision of ecosystem services and increased poverty. The situation is being exacerbated by climate change and unsustainable soil management practices that are affecting the most vulnerable people in this region.
- State that the establishment of the Africa Soil Partnership is a unique opportunity to address the current challenges and serve as a platform for promoting sustainable soil resources management in the region.
- Advocate for the following priorities in the region: protection and conservation of good soils, restoration and rehabilitation of degraded soils, promotion of sustainable soil resources management at all levels and in all land use types with focus on nutrient balance, soil conservation measures, and increasing soil organic matter and carbon stocks. Similarly, there is the need to enhance soil information by using state of the art methods of digital soil mapping and advocating for having effective national soil information systems.
- Call to attention that investment on the promotion of sustainable soil management is a pre-condition for achieving sustainable development. Therefore, it is fundamental to increase investments such as budgetary, human resources and equipment to support the execution of actions under the priorities highlighted above.
- Appreciate the contribution of governments, organizations, donors and initiatives in the field of sustainable soil management and call upon them to support, collaborate and/or join the Africa Soil Partnership towards achieving sustainable management of soil resources.

To achieve these goals, the participants agreed to consolidate the Africa Soil Partnership by establishing a Steering Committee that is composed by:

**West Africa:** Mr. Victor Chude, Nigeria (**Chair**); Mr. Igue A. Mouinou, Benin

**East Africa:** Mr. Hami Said, Djibouti; Mr. Vinod B. Lalljee, Mauritius

**Central Africa:** Mr. Michel Naitormbaide, Chad; Mr. Yves Bagafou, Gabon

**Southern Africa:** Ms. Laurinda Nobela, Mozambique; Mr. Chebukani Fanani, Botswana

**Other Partners:** Mr. Martin Yemefack, African Soil Science Society; Mr. E. Jeroen Huising, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture

Also, we agreed to establish working groups for the five GSP Pillars of Action and nominated the following chairs who will ensure that these groups work accordingly:

**Pillar 1 Chair:** Mr. Zakayo Muyaka (Uganda)

**Pillar 2 Chair:** Ms. Botle Mapeshoane (Lesotho)

**Pillar 3 Chair:** Mr. Martin Yemefack (Cameroon)

**Pillar 4 Chair:** Mr. Christian Omuto (Kenya)

**Pillar 5 Chair:** Mr. Vinod B. Lalljee (Mauritius)

The priorities identified will be the foundation for the finalization of the Africa Soil Partnership Implementation Plan for a period of five years. The development of this plan will be facilitated by the Steering Committee with support from the Secretariat and working groups, ensuring a very inclusive process where all partners in the region play an active role.

The latter execution of this implementation plan will directly contribute to achieving food and nutrition security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, provision of various ecosystem services and sustainable economic development.

We commit to make the International Year of Soils 2015 a successful foundation for advocating “healthy soils for healthy life” in the region and especially to continue this momentum beyond 2015.

ELMINA COMMUNIQUÉ

Elmina, 22nd May 2015

Country	Signature
SYRIAN ARABIA	
ILTA	
Uganda	
Gambia	
BO.TSWANA	
MAURITIUS	
Rep-Central African	
LIBERIA	
Malawi	
NIGER	
Equatorial Guinea	
GUINEE/CKay	
D.R. CONGO	
GABON	
RWANDA	
ZAMBIA	
BENIN	
Namibia	
Swaziland	

Country	Signature
LESOTHO	
Burkina Faso	
TANZANIA	
ASSS	
Cameroon	
TCHAD	
Guine-Bissa	
Ethiopia	
Ghana	
Ghana	
TOGO	
CAPE VERDE	
Djibouti	
MOZAMBIQUE	
SENEGAL	
Kenya	
Nigeria	