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STRENGTHENING AGRICULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES WITH THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL SOIL PARTNERSHIP

November 2019

SDGs:



Countries:

Turkey

Project Codes:

TCP/TUR/3603

FAO Contribution

USD 163 000

Duration:

1 September 2017 - 31 December 2019

Contact Info:

FAO Representation in Turkey

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Implementing Partner

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF).

Beneficiaries

Government staff from the MAF and its Directorate General of Agrarian Reform (DGAR) and other relevant Directorates General (DGs); Universities; Research institutions; Agricultural foundations; NGOs.

Country Programming Framework (CPF) Outputs

Country Outcome 1.1: Food security and accessibility for agricultural products ensured.

Output 1.1.1: Agricultural infrastructure services strengthened.



BACKGROUND

Soil is an important resource and a vital part of the natural environment. The ever-increasing global population and subsequent rise in the need for food and land puts pressure on soil around the world and can lead to degradation and damage. Because of this, it is critical that soil be managed properly and sustainably. In December 2012, the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) was established with the aim of developing connections and cooperation between all parties involved in soil use and management, ranging from farmers to government officials.

The GSP focuses on guaranteeing soil for agricultural production to promote food security, on supporting ecosystem services, on improving governance and on fostering the sustainable management of soils. Five pillars of action were laid out to fulfil its mandate. They are (i) soil management, (ii) awareness raising, (iii) research, (iv) information and data and (v) harmonization.

In recent years, governmental institutions in Turkey have established soil information systems according to their individual needs and responsibilities. These systems include different scales, formats and information, and they are not harmonized. Consequently, the systems are individually operated and do not provide synchronized support for policy development and implementation. For example, MAF DGAR established a comprehensive and inclusive soil information system as a tool to support decision-making among users (from high-level policy makers to small-scale family farmers). This system also contains information on land parcels (including current land use) and provides open-access services to all citizens by way of a government web portal. In this system, landowners have free access to soil information on their parcels and policy makers

and practitioners can easily analyse the current situation and trends in soil use at parcel level. The MAF Directorate General of Desertification also has a soil web portal, which publishes project outcomes on a national map of soil erosion. Owing to this lack of harmonization, there is a need to strengthen collaboration between ministerial departments, research institutions, academia, NGOs and farmer associations in Turkey so that soil governance can be managed collaboratively and sustainably.

It is in this context that Turkey sought this Technical Cooperation Programme with FAO to develop a National Action Plan for Sustainable Soil Management (NAP). The project outcome was to be achieved by establishing a core group of government staff members to develop their capacities relating to the 5 pillars of action of the GSP, by establishing connections between relevant institutions, and by developing a draft of the NAP itself.

IMPACT

The development of the NAP in Turkey will support the governance of soil through an improvement in the soil information system and relevant data sharing policies, which will ease and regulate the flow of data between the various governmental bodies and institutions that are involved in soil management. This is expected to improve national soil management services within the framework of the GSP.





ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS

The project was implemented successfully overall, with all of the Outputs being achieved. The first goal of the project was to raise awareness among and build the capacities of relevant government actors on soil information and data management in alignment with the pillars of the GSP. An inception workshop brought together various stakeholders, including government staff, research institutes and universities, farmer organizations and NGOs to discuss the objectives of the project, as well as implementation strategies. Two consultation meetings on soil management and policies and soil data management and governance were also held as part of the inception meeting. These were followed by needs-based training sessions, which included sessions on a global action plan for the 5 pillars of the GSP, global and regional implementation plans, soil data policy, and soil data management. The MAF were tasked with nominating staff members from relevant DGs for the training sessions, which were organized by an international consultant (IC) and a national consultant (NC), supported by the national project coordinator.

The second Output facilitated the establishment of a core group made up of the trained staff members from the MAF. In coordination with the core group, the IC and the NC reviewed the existing soil information and management system, and then the NC and the core group worked together to draft a national strategy and roadmap, which was to be incorporated into the NAP.

The final Output saw the development of the NAP. This began with a review of the status of soil management policies by the IC, the NC and the core group. After the review, the consultants presented reports to stakeholders and formulated recommendations for the NAP, which was then drafted. The draft was finalized, and has been submitted to the government for consideration in the development of a National Agriculture and Forestry Strategy for 2019 - 2023.

The NAP seeks to mitigate threats to healthy soil and to build a joint legal framework to sustain soil health and ecosystem services, which are crucial to economic activity and the well-being of current and future generations. It includes six regulatory, institutional and operational targets: (i) strengthening soil polices and legislation to ensure they include regulations for the sustainable management of soil, (ii) establishing a national institutional structure and mechanism to oversee all actions and activities related to soil policy development and implementation, (iii) continuously developing institutional and individual capacities and raising awareness to support the sustainable management of soils, (iv) establishing a national sustainable soil management framework to develop and implement soil conservation, management and monitoring plans, (v) establishing and developing the centralized Turkish Soil Information System (TSIS) in line with the Global Soil Information System (GLOSIS) for evidence-based decision-making and monitoring, and (vi) determining and including soil research and development priorities into national research master plans. In order to achieve these targets, the NAP provides a clear roadmap, as well as 19 follow-up actions and 56 activities.

IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK PLAN

The project required two no-cost extensions owing to a reorganization in the state structure and the implementing partner: the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock (MFAL) and the Ministry of Forest and Water Affairs (MFWA) were combined into the new Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF). The MAF's internal reorganization slowed down the progress of project.

Considering the MAF's request in relation to the new ministerial structure, Activity 2.3, which called for the drafting of a National Strategy and Roadmap of soil information management and soil data governance, was not prepared as a separate document but was instead incorporated into the NAP under the section on soil information.

FOLLOW-UP FOR GOVERNMENT ATTENTION

The NAP is expected to be a useful document for developing effective strategies, policies and practices to support sustainable soil management over the next five years. Decision-makers, researchers, academics, NGOs and other soil stakeholders should work together to utilize it in order to improve soil governance in Turkey in the context of the GSP.

SUSTAINABILITY

1. Capacity development

A priority of Turkey's eleventh national development strategy was ensuring the sustainable use of soil resources for food security and the soil information system. Target four of the National Agriculture and Forest Strategy for 2019-2023 (Sustainable Management of Soil and Water Resources) also addresses sustainable soil management. Apart from these, legislation number 3 483 on soil protection and land use is the most relevant policy tool that will support the implementation of the NAP.

The existing national strategy documents and legislation underpin the MAF DGAR, which is the institution responsible for the implementation of overall soil policies. The NAP provided a recommendation for the institutional structure to consolidate the effort with other governmental bodies under the DGAR. In this sense, the establishment of The National Soil Partnership was settled on as a target to strengthen the collaboration between relevant institutions in the implementation of the NAP.

2. Gender equality

Gender balance was taken into consideration during project activities, and all trainings and workshops were well balanced for equitable decision-making. The project outcomes are accessible for women and men, and the NAP is expected to provide access to income and land, as well as other productive resources, goods, services and markets in an equitable way.

3. Environmental sustainability

Soil is an essential environmental resource and its governance and management are crucial to mainstreaming environmental sustainability. Therefore, the development of soil specific policies was important to sustainable natural resource management in Turkey. In this sense, The NAP aims to provide the most efficient and appropriate use of soil resources in Turkey by strengthening the basis of soil management and related information systems. At the same time, the NAP seeks to contribute to Turkey's policies under international agreements such as the Global Soil Partnership, the United Nations (UN) Convention to Combat Desertification, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

4. Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA) – in particular Right to Food and Decent Work

Food security and the linkage between the human right to adequate food and soil management have not been addressed adequately, even though they are a key element of the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" and are also important for (export) production and processing in Turkey. The development of the NAP underlines the fact that the realization of the human right to adequate food depends on sustainable soil management and soil-use patterns. During the development of the NAP, a participatory approach was conducted in a transparent way by engaging all relevant stakeholders in the decision-making process.

5. Technological sustainability

Evidence-based decisions are central to the achievement of sustainable soil management. These decisions should be made based on a sufficient amount of high-quality soil data and information. For this reason, GLOSIS is being established as a country-driven approach to enhance the quantity and quality of soil data information. This is based on the premise that the improvement of soil information at the global level is dependent on the improvement of soil information at the local level. Therefore, GLOSIS will primarily use soil data from country soil information systems through a collaborative network using a distributed design. In this context, the NAP provided a national soil data policy regarding the establishment of a TSIS and data sharing within this system. The governmental staff members were trained on topics in line with GSP policies to enhance the quantity and quality of soil data and information, including data collection and generation, analysis, validation, reporting, monitoring and integration with other disciplines, harmonization of methods and measurements, and indicators for the sustainable management and protection of soil resources.

6. Economic sustainability

According to the National Strategy Document for 2019-2023, the government plans to mobilize 1 billion USD over the course of five years to achieve the targets for soil and water management.



DOCUMENTS AND OUTREACH PRODUCTS

Documents

- ❑ Küresel Toprak Paydaşlığı ve Türkiye Toprak Bilgi Sistemi. E. Akca, G. Erpul, S. Keskin, G. Kursun and S. Madneoglu. 2019. 106 pp.
- ❑ National Action Plan for Sustainable Soil Management in Turkey. E. Akca, H. E. Erdogan, G. Erpul, Q. Peng and L. Wiese. 2019. 32 pp.
- ❑ Turkish Version of Voluntary Guidance of Sustainable Soil Management. Edited by H. E. Erdogan and T. Topcu. 2019. 25 pp.

Outreach Products

- ❑ Strengthening Agricultural Infrastructure Services With The Context Of Global Soil Partnership project leaflet. May 2019. 1 p.
- ❑ Strengthening Agricultural Infrastructure Services With The Context Of Global Soil Partnership project brochure. May 2019. 1 p.



ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS - LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Expected Impact	Improved national soil management services within the context of Global Soil Partnership		
Outcome	Capacity of the national institutes developed and a Soil Data Governance Strategy and Action Plan drafted		
	Indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trainings are conducted on soil management and soil data governance. - Core group established to conduct problem analysis and participate in the development of a draft NAP. - Draft Soil Data Governance Strategy developed¹. 	
	Baseline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - N/A - N/A - N/A 	
	End Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 25 governmental staff. - One core group consisting of at least ten people from relevant institutions. - Draft NAP for sustainable soil management in Turkey. 	
	Comments and follow-up action to be taken	A core group was established to conduct a problem analysis and to participate in the drafting of an NAP to be developed, reviewed and finalized. Twenty-five staff members MAF attended the trainings.	
Output 1	Capacity of relevant institutions developed and awareness raised on soil information and data management in the context of the GSP		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Trainings are conducted on soil management and soil data governance.	25 national staff from the MAF.	Yes
Baseline	N/A		
Comments	The target of 25 staff members from the MAF was reached. An inception workshop was organized with a wide range of participants including the different DGs, research institutes, universities, a farmers' organization, government chambers and NGOs to discuss the project objectives and implementation modalities. Government staff were trained based on their needs. These short sessions included training on soil data policy in line with Pillars 4 and 5 of the GSP.		
Activity 1.1	Selection of staff for training and organize a training assessment		
	Achieved	Yes	
Activity 1.2	Conduct trainings of MFAL and MFWA staff on soil data governance, soil management and relevant policy development		
	Achieved	Yes	
Activity 1.3	Organize consultation meetings on soil management and policies, soil data management and governance in line with Pillar 4 and 5 of the GSP		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	Two consultation workshops were organized during the inception meeting: one on soil management and policies, and the second on soil data management and governance.	

¹ This document was incorporated into the NAP. See the Implementation of Work Plan section for details.

Output 2	National Strategy and Roadmap on soil information management and Soil Data Governance drafted		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Core group established to conduct problem analysis and participate in the development of a draft NAP	One core group consisting of at least 10 people from relevant institutions	Yes
Baseline	N/A		
Comments	Government staff and representatives from stakeholder groups were trained as resource staff on the development of the NAP. The short training addressed The 5 Pillars of the GSP, global and regional activities, and soil management and relevant policies.		
Activity 2.1	Establish a core group/working group on soil information management		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	A core group was established, consisting of the trained staff of the MAF.	
Activity 2.2	Review existing status of soil information and data management system		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The IC and the NC, in coordination with the core group, reviewed the existing status of the soil information/management system.	
Activity 2.3	Draft a National Strategy and Roadmap of soil information management and soil data governance		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The NC, with support from the core group, developed a draft of the National Strategy and Roadmap, which was incorporated into the NAP.	

Output 3	Developed a draft National Action Plan in the context of the GSP		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Draft National Action Plan developed.	Draft NAP For Sustainable Soil Management In Turkey.	Yes
Baseline	N/A		
Comments			
Activity 3.1	Review existing status of soil management and relevant policies		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The IC and the NC, in coordination with the core group, reviewed the existing status of soil management policies in the country.	
Activity 3.2	Organize stakeholders consultation meetings		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The IC and the NC presented their reports and formulated recommendations for the National Strategy and Roadmap, which was included in the NAP. The NAP is foreseen as a document showing the activities and a roadmap for developing effective strategies, policies and practices to support sustainable soil management. This can be achieved in a five-year period, for decision-makers, researchers, academics, NGOs and other soil stakeholders, and it has been presented to relevant actors.	
Activity 3.3	Develop a draft National Action Plan in the context of the GSP		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The IC and the NC developed a draft NAP as a strategy and policy development document within the scope of a technical cooperation programme between the Republic of Turkey's MAF and FAO's Turkey Country Office. The DGAR, ensuring close collaboration with national and international experts and all relevant stakeholders, administered the NAP development process. The objective of the NAP, which addresses threats to healthy soils, is to build a joint legal framework for sustaining soil health and ecosystems, on which our economic activities and well-being firmly depends for future generations.	
Activity 3.4	Organize validation workshop		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The IC and the NC presented the draft NAP at a workshop, which a broad range of participants from relevant institutions attended. They also moderated the discussions. The meetings were organized as two, one-day validation workshops, with 50 participants each on the National Strategy and Roadmap of soil information management, and soil data governance and the draft NAP.	
Activity 3.5	Finalize the draft National Action Plan and submit to the government		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The NAP is foreseen as a document which will lay out the activities required for developing effective strategies, as well as policies and practices to support sustainable soil management. It is believed that these guidelines can be enacted within a five-year period. The NAP has been submitted to the government and will be considered in the development of the new National Agriculture and Forestry Strategy for 2019-2023.	

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