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Global Soil Partnership Plenary Assembly



Eighth session

Virtual, 3-5 June 2020

Report on the financial status of the GSP (GSPPA: VIII/2020/3)

Executive Summary

- Since the last report to the PA on this topic, further efforts have been made in mobilizing resources in support of GSP plans of action and regional implementation plans through the Healthy Soils Multi-partner Platform. Appreciation must be expressed to those resource partners for their financial contribution to the GSP so far, as highlighted below. Clearly, more substantial donor support must materialize to meet growing demands for technical assistance towards Sustainable Soil Management in all regions. There is also the need for more active engagement by partners, especially focal points.
- At the same time, stakeholders and partners have continued to provide in-kind and small financial contributions for specific activities, for instance through organizing meetings, providing training facilities, as well as inputs into key reports, technical guidelines or policy instruments developed under the aegis of the GSP.
- As was done at previous sessions, a financial report is presented in this document on an annual basis, i.e. referring to expenditure in the past year (2019) and the likely available budget for the period 2019 - 2020 and beyond (cf. tables 1 and 2 below).

Suggested action by the GSP Plenary Assembly

The Plenary Assembly may wish to:

- Note the progress made in securing additional resources for implementing a number of GSP-sponsored actions and commend the resource partners who have contributed so far.
- Renew its call to all partners, and especially resource partners, to support the implementation of the Global and Regional Implementation Plans and contribute more funds, making use in particular of the Healthy Soils Multi-partner Platform, and providing in-kind contributions to specific activities in substantially higher volumes.

Financial status of GSP

- 1 The GSP is based on cost-sharing principles, whereby each partner may contribute with different inputs to the implementation of approved work.
- 2 The PA may recall that FAO's contribution from its Regular Budget, as specified in the Terms of Reference approved by the FAO Council, is limited to hosting the GSP Secretariat at FAO headquarters, and only in terms of core support staff. This clearly hampers the capacity and flexibility of the Secretariat in providing support to GSP implementation, especially in terms of technical assistance to countries. This situation is in deep contrast with the growing operational complexity and expansion of GSP-related work at all levels.
- 3 However, as shown in the table below, another important contribution from the Regular Budget came *via* the implementation of a number of TCP projects (FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme) which are of direct relevance to the GSP.
- 4 Since the inception of the GSP and particularly after the establishment of the Healthy Soils Facility and successor Healthy Soils Multi-partner Platform, some progress has been made in mobilizing extra-budgetary resources. A brief recapitulation of contributions and projects is given in the following paragraphs.
- 5 The first significant one was the project endorsed by the European Commission (EC) towards the end of 2013, to the tune of EUR 1 million. This project has been successfully implemented during the 2014-2015 biennium. Further to that initial contribution, the EC has provided additional funding of EUR 1.5 million for the period 2016-2018. A further EUR 1 million project was signed for the period 2019-2021. Overall, the EC has provided EUR 3.5 million to date (USD 3.8 million). All these funds have been instrumental for the GSP establishment phase, the functioning of its various components, mainly the ITPS, core normative tools and publications such as the Status of the World Soil Resources, the Revised World Soil Charter, the World Soil Day, capacity development activities, etc.
- 6 The Russian Federation has provided funding *via* two successive projects over the period 2015-2020 amounting to USD 3 million and it is therefore the second donor to the GSP. This has been of paramount relevance, for instance in facilitating the preparation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management (VGSSM), the establishment of the Glinka World Soil Prize and to execute the implementation plan of the Eurasian Soil Partnership.
- 7 The Swiss Confederation has provided an overall contribution of USD 780 000. An initial contribution was made for the implementation of the International Year of Soils (2015) to the tune of USD 100 000 and a further contribution of USD 30 000 was used for organizing the Global Symposium on Soil Organic Carbon (GSOC17). A direct contribution of USD 650 000 was made to the execution of GSP multi-donor projects. FAO fully appreciates this type of contributions to multi-donor projects as they are very cost effective and this example should be emulated by other donors.
- 8 The Netherlands provided funds to a multi donor project of USD 150 000 which ended in 2018 and renewed its support for an amount of USD 450 000 to another newly opened multi-donor project for the period 2019-2020.
- 9 The Federal Republic of Germany has recently provided USD 1 500 000 for an important new project (2019-2022) which is related to Sustainable Soil Management for nutrition-sensitive agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia. It is to be implemented in Malawi, Burkina Faso and Bangladesh and is mainly focused on improving the micronutrient content of food through SSM.
- 10 Consistent with the call from the Plenary Assembly to diversify resource partners, the private sector may be an important stakeholder in supporting Global Soil Partnership operations. PhosAgro has contributed USD 150 000 to the organization of the Global Symposium on Soil Pollution and the campaign "Be the solution to soil pollution" in 2018. Furthermore, they have contributed USD 1 200 000 for a project focused on GLOSOLAN and the Soil Doctors

programme during 2019-2020. Negotiations over phase II funding is currently taking place. The International Fertilizer Association (IFA) has donated USD 40 000 in support of the GSP work plan in 2018.

- 11 A more recent resource partner, the Republic of Korea provided USD 1 400 000 for a project focused on the development of the Soil Atlas of Asia and National Soil Information Systems in AFACI countries for the period 2020-2023.
- 12 The current picture shows that the budget available for 2019 and 2020 has increased in comparison to 2018, while more contributions are expected to materialize. Due attention has been paid to regular reporting (in both narrative and financial form) to the current donors, stressing the good results achieved and thus demonstrating that further support would be worthwhile.
- 13 It is also important to recognize the small financial and in-kind contributions made by partners in organizing GSP meetings and seconding staff to the Secretariat. The following countries have organized and co-financed GSP meetings: Indonesia, Iceland, Philippines, India, Republic of Korea, Thailand, Moldova and others. The University of Basel seconded an expert to the Secretariat for several months.
- 14 China has provided an Associated Professional officer to the Secretariat for 2017-2019. Another expert was also seconded to the Secretariat for four months during 2019. Negotiation is ongoing of two projects on soil fertility in African countries (Rwanda and Uganda) (overall USD1 million). This is expected to be effective late 2020.
- 15 A more complete account of all financial contributions, including from TCP resources, is given in the following paragraph and tables. It is important to note that a regional TCP for the NENA region is under finalization as well as national TCPs for Liberia and Congo.
- 16 Overview of resources to support GSP work

Previous years (up to 2015): USD 2 878 274

Year 2016: USD 1 950 701

Year 2017: USD 2 759 788

Year 2018: USD 2 442 661

Years 2019: USD 3 649 868

Overall: USD13 681 292

Table 1: Ongoing projects from voluntary contributions and FAO's contribution

Years 2019 and 2020 and available budgets	
Voluntary Contributions (projects)	Budget Available
MTF/GLO/962/PHO (Implementation of Sustainable Soil Management through the Soil Doctors programme and the Global Soil Laboratory Network)	\$1.200.000
GCP/GLO/961/MUL (Support to the promotion of sustainable soil management in the framework of the Global Soil Partnership activities for the 2018-2021 period)	\$750.000
GCP/GLO/853/RUS (Support to promotion of sustainable soil management in framework of Global Soil Partners: Phase II)	\$2.000.000
GCP /GLO/730/GER (Sustainable soil management for nutrition-sensitive agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia period 2018-2021)	\$1.500.000
GCP/GLO/993/EC (Support to FAO for the implementation of the Global Soil Partnership Phase III Period 2019-2021)	\$1.100.000
GCP/GLO/031/ROK (Development of the Soil Atlas of Asia and National Soil Information Systems 2020-2023)	\$1.400.000
GCP /GLO/676/EC (GROW)	\$79.268
Total	\$8.029.268
TCP projects	
TCP/CMB/3602 (National Soil Information and Land Suitability Evaluation System for Cambodia) Implemented	\$281.604
TCP/LES/3602 (Technical support for the establishment of Lesotho Soil Information System) Implemented	\$46.331
TCP/STP/3604 (Appui à l'actualisation des cartes de fertilité des sols dans les zones agricoles périurbaines à Sao Tome et Principe) Implemented	\$430.856
TCP/RLA/3613 (Desarrollo de capacidades en información de suelos para el manejo sostenible de los recursos naturales en los países de América del Sur) Implemented	\$335.307
TCP/TUR/3603 (Strengthening Agricultural Infrastructure Services with the context of Global Soil Partnership) Implemented	\$156.948
TCP/BHU/3703 (Strengthening Soil Laboratory facilities and performance to support evidence-based decision-making) under implementation	\$125.000
TCP/THA/3703 (Strengthening the CESRA network and activities in Asia region for sustainable soil management) under implementation	\$150.000
TCP/TOG/3602 (Support for digital soil mapping and the establishment of a national soil information system in Togo) Implemented	\$281.000
Total	\$1.807.046
Regular Programme	
GSP Secretariat staff	\$460.000
Plenary Assembly of GSP	\$100.000
Total	\$560.000
Overall Budget for 2019 and 2020	\$10.396.314

Table 2: Expenditures 2019

Total spent in Year 2019	
Voluntary Contributions	Expenditures in 2019
GCP/GLO/853/RUS	\$978.643
GCP/GLO/671/MUL	\$52.828
GCP/GLO/961/MUL	\$545.766
GCP/GLO/993/EC	\$506.394
MTF/GLO/962/PHO	\$601.008
GCP /GLO/676/EC	\$43.709
Total	\$2.728.348
TCP projects	
TCP/CMB/3602	\$33.371
TCP/LES/3602	\$172.454
TCP/TUR/3603	\$126.531
TCP/STP/3604	\$113.565
TCP/TOG/3602	\$4.429
TCP/RLA/3613	\$159.170
Total	\$609.520
Regular Programme	
GSP Secretariat staff	\$262.000
Plenary Assembly of GSP and other Regular Programme costs	\$50,000
Total	\$312.000
Overall Expenditures 2019	\$3.649.868