

ASP- Extraordinary/22/Report



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



Report of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Asian Soil Partnership

Online meeting, 2 and 3 August 2022

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Partnership**

Online meeting, 2-3 August 2022

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Rome, 2022

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1. Introduction

As agreed at the seventh meeting of the Asian Soil Partnership (ASP) in March 2022 (report available [here](#)), an extraordinary meeting of the ASP was organized on 2 and 3 August 2022 (agenda available in Annex I and List of participants available in Annex II). The meeting aimed to align the structure and work plan of the ASP to the new Action Framework 2022-2030 of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP), which was endorsed at the [10th GSP Plenary Assembly](#) in June 2022.

Compared to previous ASP meetings, the extraordinary session was opened to national focal points and to GSP partners and members of the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS) from the Asian region. In order to welcome GSP partners and ITPS members to the Partnership, Ms. Lucrezia Caon (ASP coordinator at the GSP Secretariat) gave a short presentation on what the GSP is and what are the main activities, initiatives and programmes it implements in Asia.

2. The new GSP Action Framework 2022-2030

Ms. Caon introduced participants to the new GSP Action Framework 2022-2030, which is available in Annex I of the GSP Plenary Assembly document number 2 ([here](#)). The GSP proposed for its members and partners to endorse a new action framework because:

- Progress in executing the global implementation plan (GIP) of the 5 Pillars of Action has not been the same for all pillars;
- Funding to implement the pillar GIPs did not materialize as planned, and implementation was therefore slow;
- Changes and new priorities have been introduced over the years according to the outcomes of global symposia and emerging issues;
- The pillar structure and their implementation plans have proven to be useful for the instalment of the GSP Framework and general objectives but have limited the execution of activities and the mobilization of resources;
- The pillars address cross-cutting issues that allow progress towards the ambition of the GSP;
- The current pillar organizational structure can be seen as an obstacle to engaging stakeholders less familiar with UN structures, procedures, and language, who considered the GSP structure to be overly formal and rigid;
- To focus on addressing the global societal and environmental challenges by improving soil health and mitigating soil threats by scaling up global SSM;
- To acknowledge and build on the key achievements and results of the GSP over the last ten years;
- To recognize the role of the many existing international commitments and initiatives, which partially recognize the role of soils in addressing global challenges but whose implementation is still rudimentary; and
- To further develop the GSP towards a flexible action-oriented or outcomes-oriented approach.

In the new GSP Action Framework 2022-2030 (see figure 1), Pillars of Action have been replaced by Action Areas linked to concrete actions, initiatives and programmes. In this regard, the new action framework is made up by clear actions and targets focused on addressing the different global challenges – from food insecurity, climate change, pollution, land degradation and the loss of biodiversity – through the improvement and enhancement of soil health. Robust indicators will be developed and agreed with GSP members and partners to allow for the implementation of such activities to be monitored so that objectives can be achieved. GSP members and partners will also be supported to build their capacities to report progress based on indicators when needed.

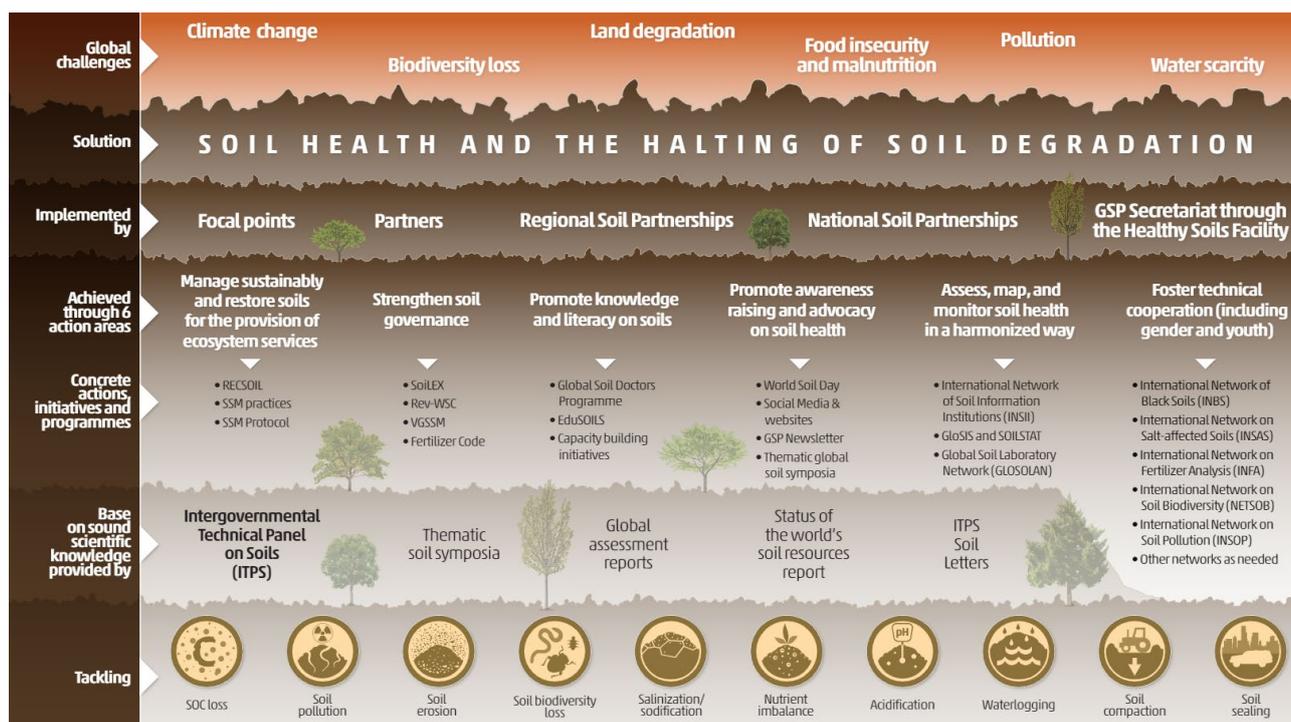


Figure 1. GSP Action Framework 2022-2030

The development and collection of quantifiable information on the impact of the GSP on the status and trends of soil health and on people's lives, as well as on the capacity of countries to collect data and information to assess and monitor soils, will:

- Provide a real measure of the impact of the GSP on sustainable soil management and soil governance;
- Facilitate Resource Mobilization efforts;
- Increase ownership;
- Multiply the reach of the Partnership's activities; and
- Allow for a more comprehensive assessment and monitoring of soil health and its' contribution to all global environmental challenges thanks to the development and adoption of targets and indicators in line with international agreements.

Detailed information on targets and indicators is available in Annex I of the GSP Plenary Assembly document number 2 ([here](#)). The key performance indicators will be further developed by a dedicated technical working group and with the support of the ITPS and all GSP technical Networks, and that the GSP will leverage those targets and indicators defined by the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development that are relevant to monitor soil health and for which countries are already generating information.

The Action Framework also proposes the development of a Soil Health Index (SHI), as a composite index including the indicators endorsed in the SSM Protocol to provide a proxy on the soil health status at global level. The Global Soil Information System (GloSIS), and the Global Soil Health and Soil Biodiversity Observatory (GLOSOB), will be the main global data platforms to provide soil data and statistics for data driven indicators (3 and 5) sets, whereas SoilSTAT provides official national soil statistics for agreed indicators, following existing UN standards.

The new GSP Action Framework 2022-2030 will not change the financing of the GSP.

3. ASP governance

Because of the disappearance of the Pillars of Action and the introduction of Action Areas, the entrance into force of the new GSP Action Framework 2022-2030 imposes some changes to the governance of the ASP.

Several proposals were discussed during the meeting and ultimately explored through an online survey. The main results of the online survey are herewith reported. The majority of the ASP focal points, partners and ITPS members that responded to the survey suggested:

- To nominate an **alternate ASP Chair** and to elect an **ASP vice-Chair** to take action in case the ASP Chair is shown to be little responsive to partnership requests;
- **NOT** to establish an **ASP Steering Committee**;
- To elect a **coordinator for the implementation of awareness raising activities**; and
- To elect **Action Areas' Chairs**.

Because of the need for all Regional Soil Partnerships to move in the same direction, a final decision on the new ASP governance was not made at the meeting. Indeed, regional inputs collected through the online survey will be brought to the attention of the GSP at an inter-regional meeting that will be organized as soon as all Regional Soil Partnerships have expressed an opinion on how to respond to the new GSP Action Framework.

To note that the ITPS members from the region asked for information on how they could further support the ASP in addition to representing it in the ITPS.

4. Urgent activities

The meeting represented a good opportunity to remind or inform countries, partners and the ITPS members from Asia on urgent activities that require their attention.

- **Data management and mapping activities.** Mr. Yusuf Yigini (GSP Secretariat) introduced participants to the Global Soil Nutrient and Soil Nutrient Budget Map (GSNmap) that will provide soil nutrient as well as soil nutrient budget maps to optimize the sustainable management of soil nutrients. The map will be produced using a two-phase approach (see Figure 2).

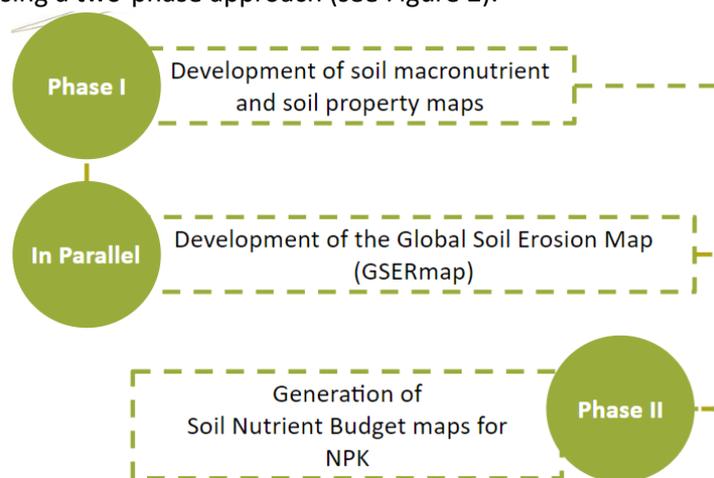


Figure 2. GSNmap - two phase approach

As done for other GSP global maps, countries will be provided with technical specifications and country guidelines, and a capacity building programme will be established. All countries were kindly asked to submit the name of the national experts who will work on this map at <https://forms.gle/PADLtfB3nqEApifU9>.

A reminder to submit the name of the experts to work on the global soil erosion map was also made. Countries can proceed at the following link <https://forms.gle/fe7VcQPPvWVMhHYi7>.

- **The Global Soil Doctors Programme in the Soils4Nutrition project in Bangladesh.** Ms. Silvia Pioli (GSP Secretariat) informed participants on the outcomes of the Soils4Nutrition project in Bangladesh that links to the implementation of the Global Soil Doctors Programme in the country. The project was successful in publishing national policy briefs, technical guidelines and in implementing the Soil Doctors Programme by training 10 national trainers and 450 farmers, and by identifying 15 Soil Doctors that trained their farming communities.
- **Center of Excellence for Soil Research in Asia (CESRA).** Mr. Pitayakon Limtong, national focal point for Thailand presented on behalf of Mr. Charlie Navanugraha, CESRA Director. Mr. Limtong introduced participants to CESRA in terms of activities and added value for the region. At present, 19 institutes from nine countries (Bhutan, India, LAO PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Viet Nam and Thailand) joined CESRA but many others are welcome to join it. In this regard, he invited participants to spread the voice on the Center and to motivate research institutions in their countries to register in it. This is extremely important and urgently needed because a meeting for CESRA members only will take place in Thailand on the third week of September at the purpose of reviewing the governance and work plan of the Center.

5. ASP work plan

Mr. Filippo Benedetti (GSP Secretariat) led the discussion over the alignment of the ASP work plan agreed at the seventh ASP meeting to the new GSP Action Framework 2022-2030, see table 1.

Table 1. ASP work plan adapted to the new GSP Action Framework 2022-2030

Pillar	Activities in the ASP work plan 2022-23	Current status	New action areas according to the new GSP Action Framework
1	RECSOIL	Under implementation in the Philippines. Other interested countries are encouraged to contact Ms. Natalia Rodriguez Eugenio for further information at natalia.rodriguezeugenio@fao.org	Manage sustainably and restore soils for the provision of ecosystem services
2	Soil Atlas	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-launch at the 22nd World Congress of Soil Science (August 2022) • In-person workshop in Vietnam on digital soil mapping and data management (12-16 September 2022) • Official launch (December 2022) 	Promote knowledge and literacy on soils
2	Policy brief	After discussion with internal FAO Style reviewers, there is need to review the text	Strengthen soil governance/ Promote awareness raising and advocacy on soil health
2	Global Soil Doctors Programme	Implemented in Bangladesh, Thailand, Philippines. Contact the Soil Doctors programme coordinators (Silvia.Pioli@fao.org ,	Promote knowledge and literacy on soils

		carolina.oliverasanchez@fao.org) to get more information about the possibility of implementing the programme in more Asian countries	
2	Webinar soil governance	Implemented	Strengthen soil governance
3	Database on soil research and development	Not feasible under the new GSP action framework	NA
4	Digital soil mapping and INSII	Follow up with country representatives	Assess, map and monitor soil health in a harmonized way
5	Asian Soil Laboratory Network (SEALNET)	SEALNET work plan ongoing. Proposal on the identification of a Center of Excellence for Regional Laboratories (CERLAB) to be implemented under the umbrella of CESRA?	Assess, map and monitor soil health in a harmonized way

6. Conclusions and way forward

Taking advantage of the launch of an online survey, participants were asked for an opinion on how to improve the agenda of the ASP meetings. Respondents asked the ASP coordinators to include the following items in the agenda of the next ASP meeting (in order of preference):

1. Presentations on innovative/high impact actions on sustainable soil management (from partners or specific countries);
2. With an equal score:
 - Network specific presentations (GLOSOLAN, INFA, INSAS, INSOP, NETSOB, INBS, INSII, etc.);
 - Invite external speakers, including donors to provide lectures on e.g. innovative techniques on SSM, financial resource mobilization, etc.;
 - Individual country reports (as done until now). Each country to present on what they have been doing on soil during the year;
3. Presentations on specific GSP project findings (e.g. the implementation of the Soils for Nutrition project and the Global Soil Doctors in Bangladesh);
4. More time for discussion.

The next ASP meeting will be organized as soon as the chairs of the Regional Soil Partnerships meet with the GSP Secretariat and agree on a coordinated way to implement the new GSP Action Framework 2022-2030.

Annex I. Agenda



Food and Agriculture
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Extraordinary Session

Asian Soil Partnership Meeting

2 and 3 August 2022

from 8AM to 10AM CEST (Rome time)

Virtual meeting

2 August 2022	
8:00 – 8:30	Welcome presentation [for GSP partners especially] <i>Ms. Lucrezia Caon, GSP Secretariat</i>
8:30 – 9:15	Item 1. The new GSP Action Framework <i>TBC, GSP Secretariat</i>
9:15 – 10:00	Item 2. New ASP governance <i>Mr. Filippo Benedetti, GSP Secretariat</i>
3 August 2022	
8:00 – 9:40	Item 3. Urgent activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data management and mapping activities, <i>Mr. Yusuf Yigini, GSP Secretariat</i>• The Global Soil Doctors programme in the Soils4Nutrition project in Bangladesh, <i>Ms. Silvia Pioli, GSP Secretariat</i>• Center of Excellence on Soil Research in Asia (CESRA), <i>Charlie Navanugraha, CESRA Director</i>
9:40 – 10:00	Item 4: ASP work plan 2022-2023 <i>Mr. Filippo Benedetti, GSP Secretariat</i>
10:00	Closure of the meeting

Annex II. List of participants

Ms. Lucrezia Caon, Global Soil Partnership, FAO

Ms. Silvia Pioli, Global Soil Partnership, FAO

Mr. Yusuf Yigini, Global Soil Partnership, FAO

Mr. Filippo Benedetti, Global Soil Partnership, FAO

First Name	Last Name	Role at the GSP	Institution	Country
A. F. M. Manzurul	Hoque	Focal point	Soil Resource Development Institute	Bangladesh
Tashi	Wangdi	Focal point	National Soil Services Centre, Ministry of Agriculture & Forests	Bhutan
Vang	Seng	Focal point	GDA/MAFF	Cambodia
Khazana	Ibrahim	Focal point	Department of Agriculture	Malaysia
Enkhtuya	Bazarradnaa	Focal point	Institute of Plant and Agricultural Sciences, MULS	Mongolia
Gina	Nilo	Focal point	Bureau of Soils and Water Management	Philippines
Pitayakon	Limtong	Focal point	LDD/SFST	Thailand
Jalal	Shoaib	Partner	SRDI	Bangladesh
Mirza	Hasanuzzaman	Partner	Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University	Bangladesh
Muhamma d	Ariful Haque	Partner	Kamfist Universe Engineering	Bangladesh
Md. Masud	Alam	Partner	Development Organization of Coastal Area's People (DOCAP)	Bangladesh
Md. Mahbub	Alam	Partner	Society for Human Improvement, Empowerment and Lasting Development (SHIELD)	Bangladesh
Dharmesh	Verma	Partner	AgriNet Solutions	India
Chiranjeev	Kumawat	Partner	Sri Karan Narendra Agriculture University, Jobner, India	India
Subash Mani	Singh	Partner	Mani Trust	India
Sreenivas	Ch	Partner	Acharya N G Ranga Agricultural University	India
Jegan	Sekar	Partner	M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation	India
Pawan	Kumar	Partner	PORI	India
Swami	Balakrishnan	Partner	IIBA	India
Shabir	Bangroo	Partner	Sher-e-kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology of Kashmir	India
Ajay	Bhardwaj	Partner	Central Soil Salinity Research Institute	India
Pradeep	Mahapatra	Partner	UDYAMA	India
The	Foundation	Partner	The Green Foundation	India
Sreenivas	Ch	Partner	ANGRAU	India

Surendra	U	Partner	Centre for Water Resources Development and Management	India
Golda	Edwin	Partner	APSCC	India
Sudeep	Sharma	Partner	VAAGDHARA	India
V Jeyanny	Vijayanathan	Partner	Forest Research Institute Malaysia	Malaysia
Shree Prasad	Vista	Partner	National Soil Science Research Center	Nepal
Adnan	Bajwa	Partner	Fatima Fertilizer Company Limited	Pakistan
Asghar	Khan	Partner	Islamia Collge Peshawar	Pakistan
Munir	Zia	Partner	Fauji Fertilizer Company (FFC) Ltd.	Pakistan
Lanie	Francisco	Partner	Bokashi Pinoy	Philippines
Arvie	Loberiano	Partner	Department of Agriculture	Philippines
Lanie	Francisco	Partner	Bokashi Pinoy	Philippines
Bergil	Bernaldo	Partner	BSWM	Philippines
Kreeyaporn	Devahastin	Partner	Land Development Department	Thailand
Charlie	Navanugraha	Partner	Center of Excellence for Soil Research in Asia	Thailand
Saengrawee	Khanpijit	Partner	Land Development Department	Thailand
Nopmanee	Suvannang	Partner	Land Development Department	Thailand
Prapa	Taranet	Partner	Land Development Department	Thailand