



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

19th Working Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS)

Status of the World's Soil Resources Report 2025

13-15 November 2023
Online meeting

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Managing Editor

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Many things are underway

All is well

A full report will be sent to the ITPS this week

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Progress on Regional Assessments

- Writing is underway on all 23 subregion and threat subsection units.
- To date there are 57 Subregion/Subsection Lead Authors and 115 Contributing Authors involved.
- Authors were secured for China and Eurasia
- The Contributing Authors should have submitted their contributions to the Subregion/Subsection Lead Authors by October 31.
- The Subregion/Subsection Lead Authors will compile these submissions and complete a first draft for area they are responsible for by November 31 and submit it to the editorial team at that time.

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Progress on Review of Literature 2015-2023

- The first drafts of Chapter 3 (Threats to Soil Functions) and Chapter 4 (Direct and Indirect Drivers of Threats to Soil Functions) have been completed and have largely undergone peer review. Megan Balks reports a high acceptance rate for review requests.
- The drafts are being revised in accordance with the comments received.
- The first drafts have been made available to Subregion/Subsection Lead and Contributing Authors of the regional assessment chapters.

Use of Thresholds in the SWSR 2025 Report

- There was a document circulated at the March 2023 ITPS meeting entitled *Concept Note of Thresholds for Threats to Soil Functions*.
- Subsequent discussion by the Working Group and Working Group Executive identified several major problems with the adoption of a threshold-based global assessment process for the 2025 report. Some specific issues identified were:
 - There is a lack of agreed-upon thresholds of concern for soil attributes such as soil organic carbon and pH.

- There is a lack of agreed-upon models for processes such as soil erosion by water, wind and tillage.
- For soil pollution there are many national thresholds in place and there would be considerable concern with the imposition of global thresholds that conflicted with national thresholds.
- Instead of a global threshold-based approach the Lead Authors were asked to estimate the adoption of sustainable management practices in their region or subregion (based ideally on national studies but using expert opinion in the absence of such studies) .

Use of Maps in SWSR 2025 Report

- The use of maps in FAO documents is governed by the rules presented in the document “Maps in FAO documents”.
- The June 2023 edition of the document states that “When inserting a map into a document that isn’t sourced from United Nations Geospatial, it is recommended that the United Nations Geospatial *Guidance for the Publication of Maps* be consulted, particularly when the map covers the borders of China, Egypt, India, Israel, Kenya, Pakistan, Palestine, Serbia, South Sudan and the Sudan, and other areas of sensitivity.” (Page 2).

CONFIDENTIAL

Maps in FAO information products

Supporting *UN 2020 Guidance for the
Publication of Maps*

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3.3. Kenya and South Sudan

The border area of Kenya and South Sudan, in the shape of a triangle, should be coloured as South Sudan (not illustrated).

Figure 1 Borders of Egypt, the Sudan, South Sudan and the Abyei region



Source: UN Geospatial. 2012. *Sudan*. United Nations. Cited 11 October 2022.
www.un.org/geospatial/file/2285/download?token=puayKYRA

Notes: Final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined. Final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined.

3.6. Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh, located east of Bhutan, is coloured as India, indicated by the field attribute (ISOADM) (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Map from UN Geospatial, showing borders of Aksai Chin, Arunachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir



Source: UN Geospatial. 2020. *Guidance for the Publication of Maps: Confidential*. Internal document.
<https://unfao.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/OCCP/EV14FFSHYmZHuXcZzMQvSngBkhpouWGnA97XOe2Svpi5g?e=RyHiY7>

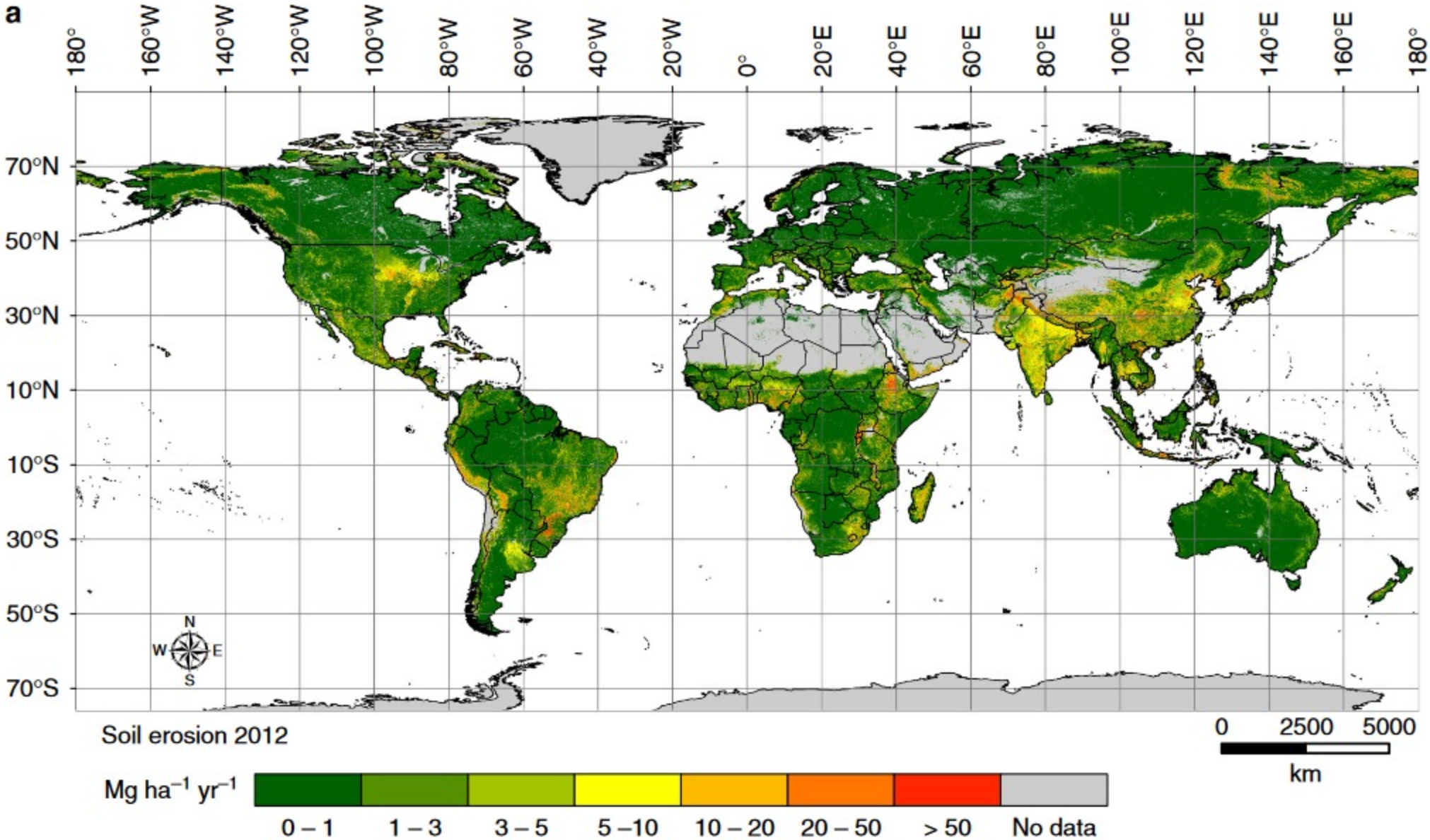
Notes: Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

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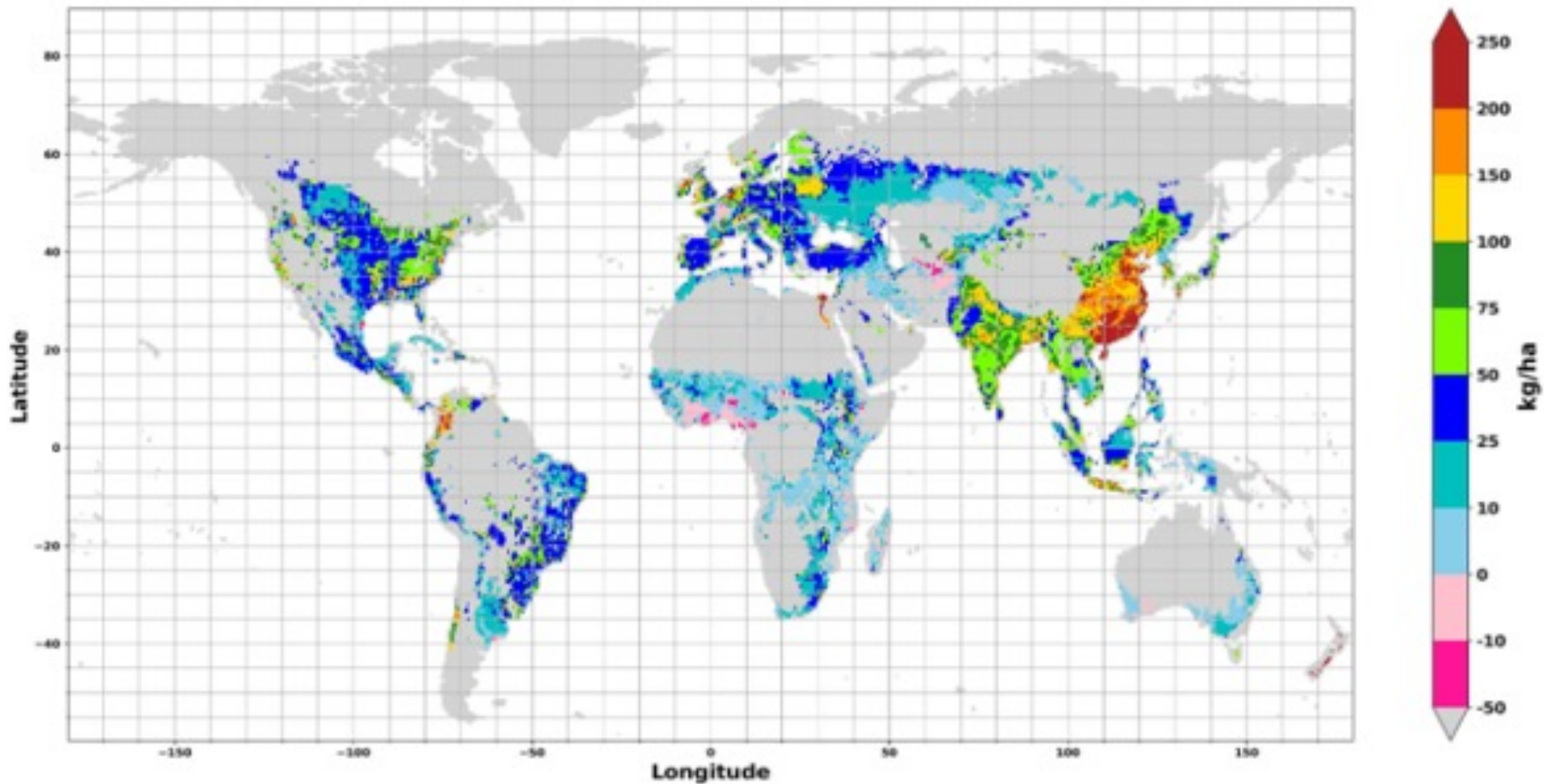


Figure TN2: Annual N surplus (kg/ha) based on the M3 crop map with fertilizer rates from IFA adjusted to FAO cropland values; all values from or corrected to 2010 (from Kaltenegger and Winiwarter, 2020 (Open Access; no national boundaries)).

- Editorial board members have queried whether regional maps for regions or sub-regions that have well-established and stable borders can be used in the report.
- It would be desirable to have a strong statement by the ITPS that maps from non-disputed areas from third-party sources should be included in the SWSR 2025 report and that the editorial and GSP staff should be directed to ensure inclusion of these maps in the report.
- As well, the editorial and GSP staff would be directed to prepare maps without national boundaries for regions with disputed boundaries.

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The Editorial Team thanks

- The members of the SWSRR 2025 Working Group
- Staff of the GSP and of FAO who facilitated work on the regional chapters
- The many reviewers of the literature review chapters
- The approximately 170 authors who are currently working on the Regional Assessments



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