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Our Ref.:

Your Ref.:

Rome, 2 May 2011

**Global Soil Partnership For Food Security, Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation
Launch
(7-9 September 2011, FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy)**

First Announcement

Dear Madam/Sir,

Following the recommendation of the FAO High-Level External Committee (HLEC) on the Millennium Development Goals to the Director-General in October 2009 and the conclusions from the 22nd Committee on Agriculture (COAG), June 2010, preparatory activities have been initiated to develop a vision statement, strategy and action plan towards the establishment of a Global Soil Partnership (GSP) for Food Security and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (see attached background note).

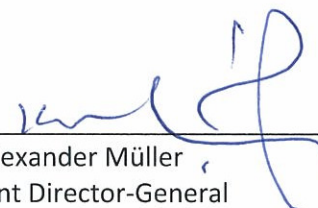
Soils can be considered as non-renewable and most critical resource for food security in an era of climate change in the time frame of human activities. There is increasing degradation of soil resources due to population pressures, inappropriate practices and inadequate governance over this valuable resource. The GSP will aim at facilitating the dialogue and interaction among the various users and stakeholders currently competing for the use of soil resources on a global scale. It will also aim towards collaboration and sharing of responsibilities in order to provide a coherent framework for joint strategies and actions on soils, with a view to enhancing food security and climate change adaptation and mitigation. A number of institutions and countries have already expressed their interest in joining this partnership at an early stage.

In this connection, we are pleased to extend to you a preliminary invitation to the formal launch event of this global partnership, organized by FAO and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission. A final invitation will follow on receipt of your expression of interest to participate, giving full details of the launch event.

We hope you will be able to join our national soil partners, the international collaborators, FAO and the European Commission in this new and challenging initiative and we would appreciate receiving a confirmation of your participation by **30 June 2011**.

Please address your correspondence to: GSP-Secretariat@fao.org.

Yours sincerely,


For Alexander Müller,
Assistant Director-General
Natural Resources Management and
Environment Department
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)


Luca Montanarella
SOIL Action Leader
European Commission
Joint Research Centre (JRC)

(enclosures)