



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



Call for Proposals

Soil Salinity Mitigation and Adaptation Projects

Introduction

Salinity is a major problem affecting crop production all over the world, with about 20% of cultivated land and 33% of irrigated land being salt-affected and degraded in the world¹. Soil salinity is a multifactorial phenomenon² that can have a natural origin caused by raise of sea level or marine intrusion, and an anthropogenic origin due to agricultural intensification, use of low-quality irrigation water or excessive application of mineral fertilizers. This process can be accentuated by climate change and causes a reduction in crop yields, affecting small farmers and rural communities more acutely, who have less means for its minimization or adaptation. In Eurasia, salt-affected soils occur in most countries and occupy an estimated area of about 242 million hectares³, putting at risk food security and the achievement of the 2030 sustainable agenda in the region.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Lomonosov Moscow State University published a Handbook for saline soil management in 2018, building on the teaching materials and results of the training workshop on innovative methods of amelioration and use of salt-affected soils, held in Kharkiv, Ukraine, in September 2017. This workshop was conducted within the framework of the Implementation Plan of the Eurasian Soil Partnership (EASP), a sub-regional affiliation of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP). The next step in the operationalization of the EASP Implementation Plan is to initiate the Activity 1.4.1. *Support of small projects aimed at mitigation of or adaptation to soil salinity through application of sustainable soil management (SSM) practices.*

The FAO's Global Soil Partnership and the Eurasian Soil Partnership (EASP), in collaboration with the Eurasian Center for Food Security (ECFS), are pleased to announce a call for short-term projects aimed at mitigation of or adaptation to soil salinity through the application of sustainable soil management practices.

The objective of this initiative is to establish pilot projects in the field in Central Asian countries to test the viability and usefulness of different soil management practices for the adaptation or mitigation of soil salinity in a sustainable manner, with a duration not exceeding 18 months.

Applications will be accepted until 31st May 2019.

¹ Almeida-Machado, R.M. and Serralheiro, R.P., 2017. Soil Salinity: Effect on Vegetable Crop Growth. Management Practices to Prevent and Mitigate Soil Salinization. *Horticulturae*, 3, 30.

² FAO and Lomonosov Moscow State University, 2018. Handbook for saline soil management. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, Italy. 132 pp.

³ Khitrov, N.B., Kalinina, N.V., Krylova, E.S., Rukovich, D.I., & Vilchevskaya E.V. 2008. The degree of soil salinity. In A.N. Afonin, S.L. Grin, N.I. Dzyubenko & A.N. Frolov, eds. Agroecological atlas of Russia and neighboring countries: economically important plants, their pests, diseases and weeds.

Thematic areas

Applications should be focused on the following thematic areas:

- ♣ Introduction and testing of new crops adapted to soil salinity;
- ♣ Selection of autochthonous species tolerant to soil salinity for the restoration of degraded areas;
- ♣ Sustainable soil management practices to mitigate secondary salinization and alkalinization;
- ♣ Innovative practices for ameliorating salt-affected soils including agroforestry;
- ♣ Integrated management of water and soil resources in salt-affected areas.

Assessment criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- ♣ Innovation potential;
- ♣ Project design, objectives and measurement of success;
- ♣ Application perspectives and sustainability of impact; and
- ♣ Potential scaling-up of results to other areas or regions.

Gender and regional balance criteria will be considered when evaluating the proposals.

Who can apply?

- Farmers associations, governmental and non-governmental organizations, scientists, soil management specialists, civil society organizations and any other relevant stakeholder within the Eurasian Soil Partnership;
- Other institutions (universities, research centers) with experience in soil salinity mitigation and adaptation (they would have to become a GSP partner prior to applying);
- Only proposal from institutions or individuals from EASP partner countries, namely: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan will be considered.

How to submit your proposal?

To receive full consideration, proposals shall be submitted in English and in accordance with the above guidelines using the template provided.

Proposals shall be submitted in MS Word or Adobe Acrobat format and shall be sent to the GSPSecretariat@fao.org by 31st May 2019 COB.

Budget

The call will support research projects ranging from 10 000 to 20 000 USD in total for a maximum duration of 18 months.

The proposals will be evaluated according to the assessment criteria listed above. Following the assessment process, only successful applicants will be contacted by the Global Soil Partnership Secretariat.

For further information, please contact us via email at GSP-Secretariat@fao.org.