

ITPS-II/14/Report

Report of the Second Session of the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils

Rome, Italy, 7 - 11 April 2014



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

**REPORT OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE
INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL PANEL ON SOILS**

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I. Opening of the session

- The second working session of the Intergovernmental Panel for Soil of the Global Soil Partnership was held at the FAO Headquarters (Rome) from the 7th to the 11th of April 2014.
- Mr Moujahed Achouri (Director Land and Water Division, FAO) welcomed ITPS members. He outlined the new FAO strategy and the importance of the Global Soil Partnership. Mr Achouri highlighted the significance of ITPS activities relating to the World Soil Charter, GSP Pillars of Action, Status of World Soils Resources Report, and Sustainable Development Goals.

II. Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable and election of Rapporteur

- Dr Luca Montanarella (Chair) called upon the panel for any additional agenda items or requests for modification of the proposed draft agenda. Only one additional agenda item related to the status of the Regional Soil Partnerships was requested and inserted in the final adopted agenda and timetable for the session.
- The Chair introduced members who have not participated in the first session and took the opportunity to introduce Dr Jon Hempel who has been nominated to replace Dr Cheryl Palm in the North American region. The Chair noted that observers would be present for particular sessions at the meeting and highlighted the role of the Chairs of the GSP Pillar Working Groups. The list of participants is provided in Annex I.
- Dr Neil McKenzie, Dr Jon Hempel and Dr Abdullah AlShankiti agreed to be rapporteurs for the session.

III. Item 3: Review and endorsement (as appropriate) of four Plans of Action for Pillars 1, 2, 3 and 5 respectively

- Mr Ronald Vargas outlined the rules and procedures relating to the Pillars of Action. He highlighted the practical challenges of forming the committees and preparing the reports in the short time available. Mr Vargas thanked all committees and especially the chairs for their hard work. He clarified that the committees were free to use a format different to Pillar Four.
- The Chair highlighted the challenges ahead in preparing the Plans and emphasised the need to be clear on what is expected from the GSP partners. Panel members identified issues common to each of the four draft plans under consideration.
- Members agreed that the draft plans should have common introductions and there is scope to shorten the reports by providing a single introduction. Panel members supported the preparation of a more integrated document but Mr Vargas noted that the pillar plans need to be submitted to the GSP Plenary as stand-alone documents.
- The meeting discussed various format options for the plans including the executive summary, a short-form of the plan and the longer version as tabled. It was later resolved to present the long-form of the report with an executive summary.

Pillar 1 Plan of Action

Ms Liesl Wiese (Agricultural Research Council, South Africa, Chair of the Working Group) presented the Pillar One Plan and noted the challenges faced by the committee in framing the plan (e.g. target audience, balancing global and regional priorities). The Chair thanked Ms Wiese and the Working Group for their substantial piece of work. The main points that emerged from the ITPS discussion were as follows:

- The recommendations need to be sharpened by distinguishing between *principles* and *recommendations for actions*. Several can be combined (e.g. 5, 6 and 7). The scale of application also requires clarification throughout (i.e. local, national, international) and recommendations should be at a similar level of importance and generalization. More attention to timeframes and dates would be helpful.
- The role of policy is not clear but it affects many aspects of soil management in most regions (e.g. tenure, property rights, land use controls, incentives, insurance) and affects the appropriate modes for intervention. Several recommendations were identified that require more specification of these modes (e.g. legislation, use of incentives, market-based mechanisms)
- Barriers to adoption need particular attention. An analysis of these barriers is required with a focus on economics, risk and institutional factors.
- A broader treatment of fertility is required that extends beyond nutrients to include soil physical and biological aspects.
- Clear definitions are required (e.g. sustainable soil management) and references to 'soil health' and 'soil quality' need to be rephrased within the conceptual frame of soil function and ecosystem services. The former concepts have not proven to be useful because of measurement difficulties. The definition of soil functions should follow the European Soil Directive and be defined in the Glossary.
- Recommendation 13 on monitoring needs to emphasize that new systems of monitoring will be required.
- Some claims are overstatements (e.g. '...ticking time-bomb of pesticides') and not scientific. They need to be removed.
- The section on pesticides needs to take a broader view of soil as a sink (e.g. waste disposal, other contaminants).
- The role of the regional soil partnerships should be clearly defined.
- The definition of Integrated Nutrient Management requires modification with more focus on environmental impact.
- The plan should avoid endorsement of particular styles of farming. Similarly, references to trademarks, brands or specific projects should be avoided (e.g. WOCAT is mentioned but other similar activities are not).
- Non-agricultural land use requires more attention along with a more explicit definition of the key actors. The importance of soil management in extractive industries is one example (e.g. land restoration)
- More consideration of nutrient recycling and flows between sectors is required (e.g. utilization of nutrients recovered from waste streams).
- Several panel members forwarded detailed editorial comments to the Pillar One Chair.
- The draft recommendations may disenfranchise a significant number of GSP partners. The draft plan focuses unduly on agricultural productivity. It also needs to be set within a landscape context rather than focus on a single system and use.

- Reordering of the priorities and sections was suggested to improve the overall flow of the document.

The Panel requested Ms Wiese to review the comments and present a revised version to the Panel on Thursday 10th April. The ITPS coordinators for this Pillar (Dr Dan Pennock and Dr Kazuyuki Yagi) participated in preparation of the revised report. Ms Wiese presented final corrections made overnight. The two ITPS leads for the Pillar, Dr Kazuyuki Yagi and Dr Dan Pennock, summarized the process of review and supported adoption of the Plan of Action for Pillar One. They noted that the glossary will be updated subsequently to ensure it is consistent across all pillars but the process is yet to be determined.

Summary outcomes:

- a) The ITPS endorsed the [Pillar One Plan of Action \(See Annex II\)](#).

Pillar 2 Plan of Action

Dr Arwyn Jones (JRC, Ispra, Italy, Chair of the Working Group) presented the Draft Plan of Action for Pillar Two. The Chair and members of the panel thanked the Working Group for their significant contribution and good work.

The ITPS members responsible for the pillar outlined the many dimensions involved in Pillar Two and noted some of the competing priorities (e.g. promotion, education, extension, farmer training, policy development). Some aspects required further development including recommendations on policy. Framing the importance of soils requires a much broader societal context. They noted that the draft has too many recommendations and several can be combined – there should be no more than twenty. Recommendations that are beyond the influence of the GSP should be omitted (e.g. curriculum setting and research assessment).

Panel members discussed options for improving the attractiveness of soil-related careers. Particular focus on the application of new technologies to soil science was one way of challenging old-fashioned views of the discipline. All agreed that the International Year of Soils is a great opportunity to improve the standing of soil-related careers. The most significant comments on the draft were as follows:

- The cultural aspects of soils need to be explicitly considered (e.g. history, literature, philosophy, ethnopedology).
- Technical cooperation and awareness are critical and policy makers need solutions rather than general statements of problems.
- The strong European focus of the draft has to be addressed.
- The section on education focuses on teaching and should have a broader emphasis on the generation of knowledge. UNESCO may be able to assist.
- The GSP needs to focus on the gaps that have not been addressed by other agencies and actors.
- The pillar and its activities need to have a clear business case that is supported by an economic and investment analysis. Furthermore, it needs to be clear what would happen if we do not act (the counterfactual) and focus on benefits. The draft is directed more to soil scientists rather than broader beneficiaries but the quality of the case has to rest on the benefits that will be generated.

- There needs to be a clear focus on the urban community and outreach to audiences that don't understand soil issues at present.
- A recommendation is needed for countries to consider appointing a Soil Advocate or equivalent that is similar to the Australian example.

Panel members provided Dr Jones with detailed comments and a revised draft was scheduled for tabling later in the week. The pillar was subsequently reviewed on Friday 11th April.

Dr Pavel Krasilnikov outlined the latest proposed changes to the draft that had been circulated. The Chair thanked Dr Krasilnikov and the committee for their work and asked if the panel was ready to approve the version presented on the screen with the minor corrections noted during the discussion. Members agreed.

Summary outcomes:

- a) The ITPS endorsed the [Pillar Two Plan of Action \(See Annex III\)](#).

Pillar 3 Plan of Action

Dr Aracely Castro (CIAT, Colombia, Chair of the Working Group) presented the Draft Plan of Action for Pillar Three. The Chair and members of the panel thanked the Working Group for their significant contribution and work. Dr Castro outlined the challenging timetable and process associated with this Pillar. Her presentation and the subsequent discussions identified the following key issues:

- The membership of this committee is not representative and all regions have to be involved.
- The current critique of soil research is narrow in its focus. Many countries do have soil research integrated within broader inter-disciplinary programs and several have strong mission-directed research set within broader strategic frameworks.
- Likewise, many countries have research activities that involve stakeholders within a participatory framework. It would be better to highlight these positive approaches rather than focus on the less effective modes of research highlighted in the draft document.
- The pillar needs to focus on engagement and the fostering of links between scientists and end-users
- The GSP is about much more than agriculture and this needs to be reflected in the Pillar Plan
- There needs to be more emphasis on research relating to climate change
- The role of regional partnerships requires emphasis particularly in the identification of research priorities
- There needs to be substantial engagement with the International Union of Soil Sciences in the development of this pillar.
- There was agreement that the report requires restructuring and simplification to provide a basis for developing a better plan.
- The pillar plan requires input from a broad range of research leaders as well as individual scientists to ensure clear context.
- The proposed compilation of research gaps is not supported and many countries have a well organized system for determining research priorities.
- It was confirmed that the Pillar Plan is addressing research and development, not research for development, which has a more restricted scope. The Pillar must address the full global context.

The Panel agreed that a general overview was required. Various options for preparing a revised document were considered and the broader issue of communication between sessions within the ITPS was explored (e.g. eForums, teleconferences, video-conferences). The forthcoming World Congress of Soil Science was the last opportunity for a meeting of the ITPS sub-group on this Pillar. However, it is important that this sub-committee does not write the Plan because its role is to provide coordination and independent review. It was resolved to consider a draft of the revised shortened version by Friday 11th April.

Dr Aracely Castro presented a proposed framework for developing the Plan of Action. The diagram was summarized as a one-page document and distributed to the ITPS ([See Annex IV](#)).

Summary outcomes:

- a) Preparation of the Pillar Plan will be overseen by a new sub-group of the ITPS. The members are Dr Helaina Black (Chair), Dr Martin Yemefack, Dr David Espinosa Victoria, Dr Miguel Taboada, Dr Maria de Lourdes Mendonca Santos, Dr Neil McKenzie, Prof Dr Milkha Singh Aulakh, Dr Kazuyuki Yagi, Dr Suk Young Hong, Dr Dominique Arrouays, Mr Jon Hempel and Dr Sobocká Jaroslava.
- b) The Chair asked all ITPS members (particularly the sub-committee) to nominate new members of the Pillar Working Group by the end of next week (there must be regional balance). This Working Group shall be in place by the 25th of April and it will be responsible for drafting the new Plan of Action.
- c) The new Working Group will prepare and circulate to all ITPS members a draft of its revised plan of action prior to the World Congress (end of May). The new ITPS sub-committee will consider this draft and is delegated to make the final decision – in a meeting to be organized by the GSP Secretariat at the World Soil Congress – on whether the revised Pillar Plan should be submitted to the GSP Plenary.

Pillar 5 Plan of Action

Dr Rainer Baritz (BGR, Germany, Chair of the Working Group) presented the Draft Plan of Action for Pillar Five. The Chair and members of the panel thanked the Working Group for their significant contribution and good work. The ITPS members responsible for the Pillar outlined their response to the Draft Plan of Action and this was followed by an open discussion. The issues and suggested changes were as follows:

- Clarification of who would undertake the various activities outlined in the recommendations is needed. While it was recognized that many details would be outlined in the subsequent implementation plan, panel members noted the scale and significance of the required work programs.
- A significant number of recommendations are principles rather than actions (e.g. Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 7, 14, 15, 16)
- Several recommendations are not clear (e.g. Recommendation 16)
- The importance of expert knowledge held by pedologists was noted.
- More focus on electronic acquisition of data in the field is needed.
- The Universal Soil Classification is supported but the draft has too much focus on classification. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 could be merged.

- The scope of the Pillar requires careful definition and the relationship with Pillar 4 has to be explicit. Definitions and recommendations on ‘information’ and ‘indicators’ require clarification.
- The ITPS is an intergovernmental body and the GSP is a coordinating body – the draft needs to reflect this and ensure the various standardization mechanisms noted in the plan fit under this umbrella (i.e. the GSP plays a key role in coordination and the ITPS can standardize because it is an intergovernmental agency).
- A range of detailed editorial comments were noted and forwarded to the Pillar Chair to improve the clarity of the text and reduce the degree of repetition.
- The need to develop a comprehensive system of measurement was supported. This includes field and laboratory handbooks (including soil physical and biological methods), reference materials, reference laboratories and soil archives.
- Clarification was required on whether the handbooks on methods would be published under the auspices of the GSP and whether they would eventually be formally endorsed by the ITPS.
- The draft recommendation on the Universal Soil Classification was not clear enough for members to understand what they were endorsing (e.g. is the new system an extension of an existing system (e.g. WRB or Soil Taxonomy) or is it based on a new numerical taxonomic analysis?). The current status of the WRB was discussed and it was noted that the intention is for the Universal Soil Classification to replace the WRB within the next decade.
- There needs to be support for the preparation of a comprehensive set of pedotransfer functions.

Dr Baritz thanked the panel members for their constructive comments and agreed to distribute a revised version to panel members by Thursday evening for final consideration on Friday morning.

On Friday morning, Dr Rainer Baritz indicated that a significant revision had been completed. He thanked his working group members around the world for their assistance with the revision. He also thanked Dr Martin Yemefack and Dr Neil McKenzie for their contributions. The Pillar Plan of Action now has fewer recommendations and is shorter. Dr Yemefack confirmed his support for the Plan in its revised form. Panel members identified a minor correction and queried the timing of the plan’s implementation. The Chair confirmed that this will be addressed in the Implementation Plan. A request for the glossary to include explanations of acronyms was supported by members.

Summary outcomes:

- a) The ITPS endorsed the [Pillar Five Plan of Action \(See Annex V\)](#).

IV. Item 4: Progress review about Soils and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Post-2015 agenda

- Dr Michael Clark (FAO Post-2015 Secretariat) provided an update on the status of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and post-2015 agenda. He noted the good progress made since his presentation to ITPS 1 in July 2013. Dr Clark outlined the thematic focus of the SDGs and indicated while soils are not mentioned directly, there are two references to land degradation. The first is in relation to food security, and second in relation to biodiversity and natural resources. He noted that targets and indicators associated with sub-areas under each goal are yet to be formulated. Dr Clark outlined how the ITPS can assist with the SDG process.

- In closing, Dr Clark sought clarification on the reasons for the recent G8 interest in soils. Panel members responded by noting that the G8 was particularly interested in the loss of productive soils and the connection to food-price volatility and poverty.
- Dr Maria de Lourdes Mendonca Santos (Chair of the ITPS Soils SDG working group) provided a summary of the SDG Brief prepared by the ITPS. Prior to the presentation, Mr Ronald Vargas clarified the role of the Rome-Based Agencies (RBAs) in the SDG negotiations. The RBAs have an official document online but it does not at present include targets and indicators.
- After the presentation, the Chair stated his support for the preparation of a single paragraph on the importance of soils for Dr Clark. Mr Vargas also noted the need to develop to develop indicators that support the proposed SDG as requested by Dr Mendonca.

Summary outcomes:

- a) ITPS panel members agreed to prepare a simple half-page brief on soils that can be used by 'champions' during their negotiations.
- b) If required by the GSP Plenary Assembly, ITPS will be available to further work on targets and indicators to support this process.

V. Item 5: Report on the state and way forward of the “Status of World Soil Resources Report”

- The Chair provided a summary of progress to date and referred members to the minutes of the [Editorial Board's first meeting in April \(See Annex VI\)](#). He noted the actions between that meeting and today and highlighted matters requiring immediate resolution by the ITPS. The Secretariat informed the meeting that the Managing Editor has been appointed and welcomed the appointee, Dr Freddy Nachtergaele.
- Dr Nachtergaele provided an update on progress, made suggestions for minor changes in the table of contents and raised some questions on the practical implications of the tight timeframe in which the report needs to be produced. Dr Neil McKenzie also tabled a short discussion paper outlining options for the regional assessment chapters in the SWSR. He noted that the suggestion for case studies proposed by Dr Nachtergaele may provide a resolution to several of the problems facing the regional assessment process. The subsequent discussion noted the following issues and actions:
 - Members of the Editorial Panel noted that the overall structure for the report had already been agreed and that we should not revisit these (in particular, the current framework based on ecosystem services and soil functions had been selected and should be maintained but aspects of the DPSIR framework which are embedded in the actual table of contents could be refined). Likewise, some methods of analysis (e.g. GLADIS) had already been rejected as being inappropriate.
 - The spatial framework for the regional assessment was considered and it was agreed that a generalized framework such as Agro-Ecological Zones is probably sufficient for the report. New digital grid-products were not viewed as being central to the report.
 - The Managing Editor confirmed that the WRB and Soil Taxonomy would be used in the report where required.

- Panel members queried whether significant support was available to assist with the regional assessments, especially for the larger and more complex regions with diverse languages (e.g. Asia, Africa).
- It was agreed that a common template and graphical style for the regional assessments needs to be prepared in the coming weeks to achieve a more effective and coordinated outcome. The Chair confirmed that this was the responsibility of the Regional Coordinating Authors.
- Panel members noted the need for outlooks and forecasts to be included in the Report and it was recognized that some of this is included in the Synthesis Report.
- The Chair of the ITPS has oversight of the regional- and gender-balance for all authors.

Summary outcomes:

- a) It was confirmed that the Scientific Report will be based on contributions from the broader scientific community. However, preparation of the Synthesis Report is the Editorial Panel's responsibility.
- b) Most of the Coordinating Lead Authors have accepted their invitations. Dr Johan Bouma was unable to accept and Dr David Robinson was proposed as an alternative.
- c) The Coordinating Lead Authors and Regional Coordinating Authors will prepare the list of prospective authors. In the case of the Regional Coordinating Authors, the ITPS member responsible for Regional Coordination will also be involved in the preparation of the relevant lists. All authors have to be endorsed by the Chair of the ITPS.
- d) The Regional Coordinating Authors and the Managing Editor will prepare a common template and graphical style for the regional assessments for consideration by the Editorial Board by April 30th 2014.
- e) Panel members were informed that the terms of reference for the Regional Coordinating Authors will be available before the 18th of April. Contracts will be prepared where required.
- f) All ITPS members are encouraged to identify potential contributors to any section of the Report. Suggestions are to be sent to the Managing Editor and Chair of the ITPS by the 18th April 2014.
- g) The Chair encouraged everyone to be involved and highlighted the status and significance of this flagship publication from the ITPS. He thanked everyone for their excellent contributions to date.

VI. Item 6: Report on the status and way forward of the World Soil Charter

- Dr Dan Pennock (chair of the World Soil Charter working group) reminded members of the Panel about why the ITPS had decided to redraft the original World Soil Charter. It was clearly a document of its time with a strong focus on land use planning and land evaluation. Land use controls are now not in vogue in many areas.
- The tabled document had more information than will be submitted to the Plenary. The final paper will include a Preamble, Principles and Guidelines for Action. In contrast to the Pillar Plans, the document is 'owned' by the ITPS. It will be submitted to the GSP Plenary, and then

hopefully to COAG, the FAO Council, and finally, the FAO Conference. Key features of the revision are as follows:

- The principles are factual statements that guide subsequent actions by actors.
 - The text and concepts are consistent with the Status of the World's Soil Resources Report and the Sustainable Development Goal proposed by the ITPS. The new text draws on recent key references. Concepts such as soil health and soil quality have been superseded by the more widely understood framework of ecosystem services.
 - Principle 9 is directly from the original Charter but most others are significantly updated.
 - Actions were initially grouped under two categories (governments and international agencies). The actions of individuals were considered but viewed to be beyond the influence of the GSP.
- The Chair thanked Dr Pennock and the drafting group for their excellent work. The Panel then considered the draft document and made the following observations and suggestions for change:
- The reference to SoilSTAT should be replaced with a more generic reference to international monitoring because SoilSTAT is yet to be established.
 - References to research, development and education are required.
 - The order of the principles needs to be checked to ensure a more logical progression (perhaps 1, 7, 8, 2, 3, 4, 5 6, 9).
 - There needs to be a clear message that 'prevention of soil degradation is better than a cure'.
 - The distinction between 'soil degradation' and 'threats to soil function' was queried but the use of the concepts was deemed useful in different contexts.
 - The draft does not address the users of soils in a direct way. It needs to resonate with all users and the message must be that poor use of soil is a threat to civilization.
 - Principle 9 is too vague in its draft from ('certain socio-economic structures'). It needs to have a more direct reference to soil functions and the provision of ecosystem services (e.g. clean water, habitat, climate regulation).
 - A direct statement on the implications of the loss of fertile soils is required – this should link to both the economic and humanitarian consequences.
 - Specific reference to contamination of soils is required.
 - A statement is needed that empowers actors who are responsible for achieving more sustainable systems of land use. The Panel considered the various controls for achieving this and noted that care is needed to avoid implying support for inflexible top-down planning.
 - The importance of tenure, property rights and incentives for good soil management were discussed. The FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Land Tenure were noted as one significant pathway¹.
 - The term 'protocols' should be deleted from the list of actions by government.
 - It was agreed that the wording should be more adventurous in relation to the role of governments. The Charter should encourage governments to *promote* sustainable soil management (examples include policy, legislation, R&D, education, extension agencies). It should be more prescriptive in relation to the development of soil legislation.

¹ <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i2801e/i2801e.pdf>

- The suggestions for change were noted by Dr Pennock and he agreed to distribute a revised version to panel members by Thursday evening for final consideration on Friday morning.
- Dr Dan Pennock introduced the document and highlighted the latest round of changes:
 - The sections outlining actions for individuals and businesses were questioned. A solution was proposed to combine these sections and it was supported by panel members.
 - The reference in the section on actions by international agencies to ‘modelling’ was changed to ‘earth observation’ to ensure it included measurement and modelling.

Summary outcomes:

- a) After a short discussion on the use of the expression ‘critical limits’ (preamble), panel members agreed that the proposed wording was acceptable. The ITPS endorsed the revised [World Soil Charter \(See Annex VII\)](#).

VII. Item 7: Presentation on the status of collaboration between ITPS and IPBES, IPCC and the SPI of UNCCD

- The Chair introduced the Agenda Item by noting that the ITPS is an intergovernmental body with a broader role beyond the FAO. It is required to provide support for other organizations including the IPCC, IPBES and the UNCCD. Mr Vargas noted activities underway to establish links with these bodies and he highlighted the importance of the IPCC in particular.
- A report was provided by Mr Frederic Castell (FAO) on activities associated with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). The meeting agreed that close engagement between the ITPS and IPBES is essential and would be mutually beneficial, especially in relation to the IPBES assessment of land degradation and restoration due in 2017. A call for experts to contribute to this assessment is open until May. Experts will be appointed on merit and not on their organizational affiliation. Panel members sought clarification on whether the ITPS members should nominate. It was confirmed that they are free to apply but they will need to gain the support of their host government.
- Ms. Anna Luise (Italian Scientific and Technical Correspondent to UNCCD) provided a summary of the activities of the UNCCD. The GSP has been aiming to respond and connect to the UNCCD on all levels. However, effective mechanisms for collaboration are yet to be formally established.

Summary outcomes:

- a) The Chair confirmed that the ITPS would make every effort to support the IPCC, IPBES and the UNCCD.
- b) It was agreed that a regular formal briefing mechanism is required between the ITPS and IPBES. The differentiation in the assessment between soil and land degradation has not been resolved yet. It was noted that IPBES has a strong interest in soils and that soils and land degradation are being viewed as a high priority.

- c) The GSP has been aiming to respond and connect to the UNCCD on all levels. However, effective mechanisms for collaboration are yet to be formally established. The Chair indicated that this coordination activity should continue.

VIII. Item 8: Report on the preparations for the International Year of Soils 2015

- The GSP Secretariat updated the ITPS on preparations for the International Year of Soils in 2015. Panel members warmly welcomed the excellent progress and they requested the GSP Secretariat to explore options for strengthening the scientific programs associated with the International Year of Soils with particular focus on the GSP Regional Partnerships as a mechanism for delivery.
- The logo was discussed and most members thought it was very effective. Guidelines on the use of the logo are needed as soon as possible. Universal use of the logo, particularly by national societies, was viewed positively. The need to engage with national soil science societies at the World Congress was highlighted.
- Panel members supported the steps being taken to ensure communication channels are used at international, national and more local levels. The engagement with all stakeholder groups is fundamental and these need to include farmer associations, business, educationalists and community leaders.
- The ITPS noted that the International Year should not rely just on the voluntary societies and that commitments from national governments are required – this matter will be raised at the GSP Plenary. Panel members resolved to promote the International Year of Soils through their respective national soil science societies and the IUSS. A proposal for Soil Ambassadors was welcomed and it was emphasized that regional balance is essential.

Summary outcomes:

- a) The GSP Secretariat explores options for strengthening the scientific programs associated with the International Year of Soils with particular focus on the GSP Regional Partnerships as a mechanism for delivery.
- b) Several members noted that the many proposed activities would require commitments from national governments and it should not rely just on the voluntary societies. It was agreed that this matter needs to be raised at the GSP Plenary.
- c) ITPS members are to promote the International Year of Soils through their respective national soil science societies and the IUSS.
- d) ITPS members are to provide the GSP Secretariat with options for 'key messages' along with any other supporting material that could help the IYS organizers by the 9th of May 2014.

IX. Item 9: Report on the status of Regional Soil Partnerships

- The GSP Secretariat provided an update on the status of the GSP Regional Partnerships. Most of Regional Soil Partnerships have been launched and the immediate challenge is to implement activities at the regional level via the Pillars Plans of Action. Guidelines for Regional Soil Partnerships will be presented at the upcoming GSP Plenary Assembly.
- Representatives from the SW Pacific informed the meeting that planning for the SW Pacific Regional Partnership was underway. The launch is planned for October 2014 at Massey University, Auckland, New Zealand. The launch is going to have an associated workshop that will focus on the preparation of the regional assessment for the State of the World's Soil Resources Report, and the planning of activities in the region for the International Year of Soils.
- The non-engagement of several countries in their most appropriate regional partnership was raised. Members requested that each country, its regional affiliations and mechanisms for contacting each regional partnership are placed on the GSP website before the World Congress of Soil Science.

Summary outcomes:

- a) The ITPS asked the GSP Secretariat to publicize (via the GSP website) the regional affiliations of countries and mechanisms for contacting each regional partnership.
- b) The Chair confirmed that the regional partnerships are essential for the implementation of each Pillar Plan of Action.

X. Item 10: ITPS representation at the next GSP Plenary Assembly

- The GSP Plenary will be held at FAO Headquarters from 22nd to 24th July 2014. The draft agenda will be published on the 22nd April 2014. The Plenary will consider outputs from the working sessions of the ITPS along with a range of institutional and procedural issues (e.g. amendments to Rules of Procedure, nomination of focal points, etc).
- The Chair indicated that he cannot be present at the GSP Plenary Assembly. It was confirmed that chairs of the pillar working groups need to attend for their respective agenda items.
- Panel members identified a range of procedural matters relating to the ITPS and that need to be considered at the upcoming GSP Plenary Assembly. These relate to:
 - The appointment of an official ITPS vice-chair.
 - Options for the ITPS to take decisions out-of-session (e.g. via extraordinary meetings as per the option for the GSP Plenary), and the establishment of procedures for dealing with day-to-day operational matters.
 - The Chair highlighted the need for a stricter control on the tabling of documents prior to ITPS and GSP to avoid the peak load that occurred with this meeting of the ITPS.

Summary outcomes:

- a) The ITPS agreed that Dr Neil McKenzie will act as the Chair's representative at the Plenary Assembly.
- b) The ITPS will present to the Plenary Assembly several proposed changes to procedural matters that will improve the effectiveness of this panel.

XI. Date and venue of next meeting

- The dates for meetings of the ITPS and GSP Plenary have not been set for 2015. However, normally the GSP Plenary Assembly takes place between June and July 2015 and the ITPS session therefore needs to be one or two months before (i.e. March or April).
- The Chair confirmed that the ITPS Sub-Committee for Pillar Three will meet at the World Congress of Soil Science in Korea and that the next meeting of the Editorial Panel for the State of the World's Soil Resources Report will be in December 2014 to coincide with the World Soil Day (5th December).

XII. Closure of the meeting

In closing, Mr Moujahed Achouri (FAO) thanked everyone for their excellent contributions and noted the support that the ITPS has from the FAO leadership. The Chair concluded that the meeting has been very successful and he proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Ronald Vargas, Ms Manuela Ravina da Silva, Ms Sally Bunning of the GSP Secretariat, the chairs of the Pillar Working Groups and all ITPS members before closing the meeting.

ANNEX I: List of Participants

ITPS Members

Africa

Prof. Dr. Victor Chude - Nigeria
Dr. Martin Yemefack – Cameroon

Near East

Prof. Dr. Seyed Kazem Alavi Panah – Iran
Prof. Dr. Elsiddig Ahmed El Mustafa ElSheikh – Sudan
Dr. Abdullah Alshankiti – Saudi Arabia

Latin America and Caribbean

Dr. Julio Alegre - Peru
Dr. David Espinosa Victoria - Mexico
Dr. Miguel Taboada - Argentina
Dr. Maria de Lourdes Mendonca Santos -Brazil

North America

Prof. Daniel Pennock - Canada
Dr. Jon Hempel – United States of America

South West Pacific

Dr. Marta Camps Arbestain - New Zealand
Dr. Neil McKenzie - Australia

Observers

Dr. Aracely Castro, CIAT, Colombia
Dr. Rainer Baritz, BGR, Germany
Ms. Liesl Wiese, ARC, South Africa
Dr. Arwyn Jones, JRC, Italy
Anne Luise, ISPRA, Italy

Asia

Prof. Dr. Milkha Singh Aulakh – India
Prof. Dr. Gan Lin Zhang – China
Dr. Kazuyuki Yagi – Japan
Dr. Suk Young Hong – Republic of Korea

Europe

Dr. Helaina Black - United Kingdom
Dr. Pavel Krasilnikov – Russia
Dr. Sobocká Jaroslava - Slovak Republic
Dr. Luca Montanarella - Italy
Dr. Dominique Arrouays – France

Apologies

Dr. Mohamed Badraoui – Morocco
Dr. Isaurinda Dos Santos Baptista Costa - Cape Verde
Prof. Dr. Tekalign Mamo - Ethiopia
Dr. Carlos Roberto Henríquez - Costa Rica
Dr. Pisoot Vijarnsorn – Thailand

ANNEX II: Pillar One Plan of Action

Pillar One Plan of Action

ANNEX III: Pillar Two Plan of Action

Pillar Two Plan of Action

ANNEX IV: Framework for the Pillar 3 Plan of Action

[Framework for Pillar Three Plan of Action](#)

ANNEX V: Pillar Five Plan of Action

[Pillar Five Plan of Action](#)

ANNEX VI: Minutes of the SWSR Editorial Board

[Minutes of the SWSR Editorial Board](#)

ANNEX VII: World Soil Charter

[World Soil Charter](#)