

Discussion on the 2nd Edition of the Status of the World's Soil Resources Report

November 17 2021

Process to date

Following the Spring 2021 ITPS meeting,
an Editorial Board Executive was formed
(Rosa Poch (Chair, ITPS), David Lobb, and Megan Balks)
supported by the proposed Managing Editor
for the SWSR 2025 report, Dan Pennock.

For this (November 2021) ITPS meeting the Executive has brought forward the following points:

- 1) Discuss and agree on the list of specific risks to soil functions to be addressed in the 2025 SWSR.
- 2) Discuss and finalize regionalization framework for the report.
- 3) Discuss and finalize the composition of full Editorial Board.

1) Selection of Risks to Soil Functions for SWSR 2025

Recommendations of specific risks to soil functions:

Soil Erosion:

Recommendation: Inclusion of soil erosion as a risk to soil functions and inclusion of water, wind, tillage and hillslope mass movement as separate sub-categories.

Soil Organic Carbon Change:

Recommendation: Inclusion of change of soil organic carbon/soil organic matter levels as a risk to soil functions.

Loss of soil organic carbon from organic soils and from mineral wetland soils will be considered as sub-categories under the general heading of soil organic carbon change rather than as separate categories.

Salinization (inc. sodification):

Recommendation: Inclusion of salinization as a risk to soil function.

Sodification will be considered as a sub-category under the general heading of salinization rather than as a separate category.

Contamination/Pollution:

Recommendation: Inclusion of contamination/pollution.

Change in Soil Biodiversity:

Recommendation: Inclusion of change in soil biodiversity.

Urbanization and soil sealing:

Recommendation: Inclusion of urbanization and soil sealing.

Permafrost thawing:

Permafrost thawing causes the loss of soil organic carbon/soil organic matter but also poses risks for infrastructure. Because of the multiple impacts on soil functions, it should be considered as a separate risk category.

Recommendation: Permafrost thawing should be included as a risk to soil functions in the SWSR 2025.

Nutrient Mismanagement:

The term “nutrient imbalance” was used in the SWSR 2015 report but it lead to some confusion as nutrient imbalances can occur naturally. We are suggesting the term “nutrient mismanagement” to emphasize that it is human impacts on nutrient cycles that we are examining.

Recommendation: Inclusion of a general category of nutrient mismanagement with two distinct sub-categories, tentatively called nutrient excess and nutrient mining.

Acidification:

It is unclear to the Editorial Board Executive if soil acidification due to causes other than nutrient mismanagement is a current issue in regions other than the SW Pacific and they seek the input of ITPS members on this issue.

Recommendation: *To be made after input for ITPS members.*

Compaction and physical degradation:

Currently there is insufficient data available for a global assessment of compaction and physical degradation and no consensus on the definition of compaction and physical degradation. Moreover human-induced compaction is often reversible within short time periods.

Recommendation: Compaction will not be included as a category in the regional assessments.

Waterlogging:

Human-induced waterlogging is primarily associated with inadequately drained irrigation programs and ocean encroachment on coastlines; both also typically lead to an increase in salinization and hence are covered through salinization.

Recommendation: Do not include waterlogging as a separate risk in the SWSR 2025. Waterlogging will be included as a risk primarily driven by climate change.

2) Selection of Regionalization System for SWSR 2025 Report

Regionalization used in 2015 SWSR Report

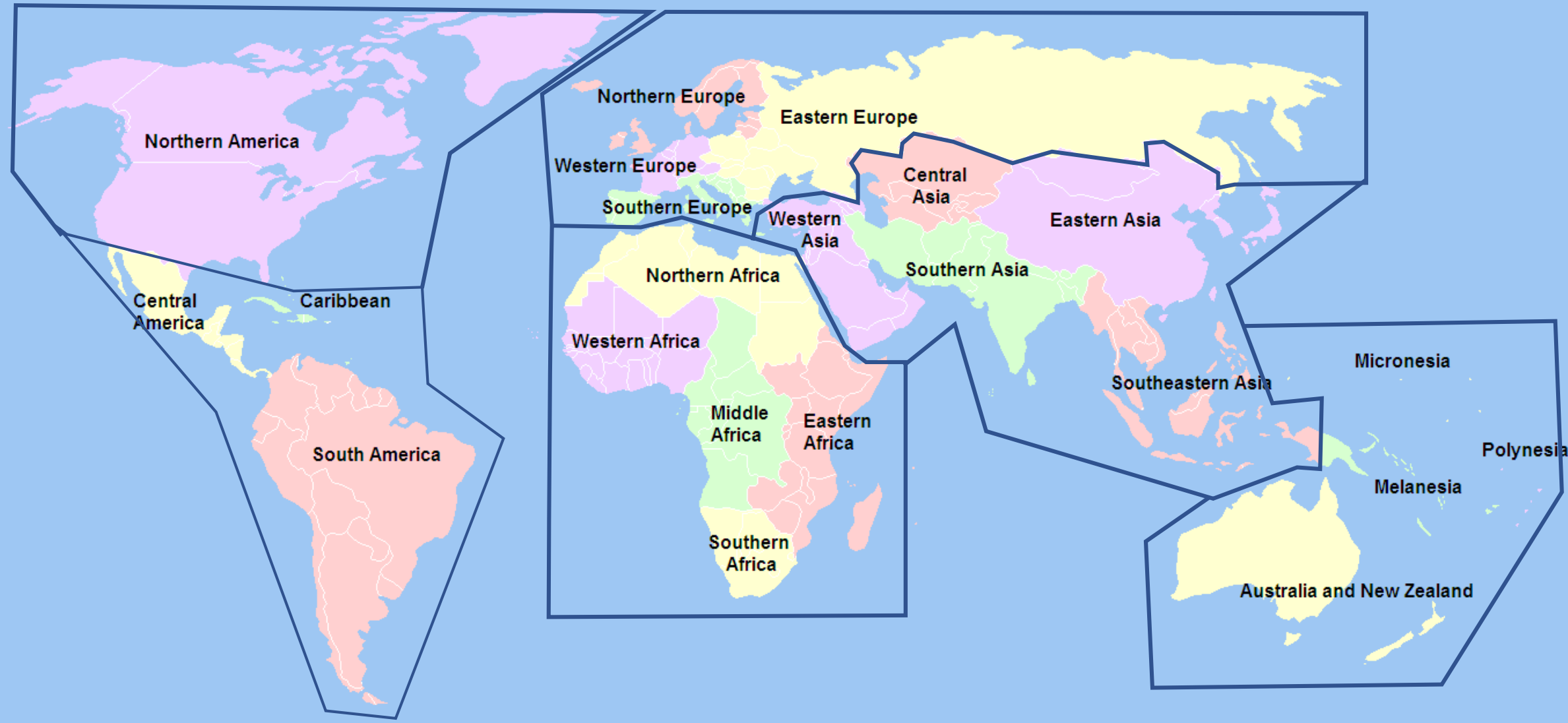
Figure 1
Regions used
for this report.
Member countries
for each region are
presented in the
main report.



Recommendation: That we adopt the UN geoscheme developed by the United Nations Statistics Division for the SWSR 2025 report.

The **United Nations geoscheme** is a system which divides the 249 countries and territories of the world into six regional and 22 subregional groups

The six regions are Africa, Asia, Northern America, Latin American and the Caribbean, Europe and Oceania.



Selection of Regionalization System for SWSR 2025 Report

Recommendation: That we adopt the UN geoscheme developed by the United Nations Statistics Division for the SWSR 2025 report.

We further recommend that the ITPS forms six Expert Review panels, one for each region in the UNSD geoscheme. Each panel then could decide if they want to create separate assessments for the sub-regions of the UN geoscheme.

3) Discuss and finalize the composition of full Editorial Board.

Role of Editorial Board and of the ITPS

Decisions about scope and process made by ITPS

Decisions about editorial content and implementation of processes made by Editorial Board

Discuss and finalize the composition of full Editorial Board.

The 2015 Editorial Board was composed of one ITPS representative from each region supported by the Managing Editor

We propose that the Editorial Board executive would continue to meet weekly and the full Editorial Board would meet once a month