



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

GLOBAL SOIL PARTNERSHIP

12th Plenary Assembly

03-05 June 2024

PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON SOIL HEALTH

Lifeng Li, NSL Director, OiC GSP Secretary

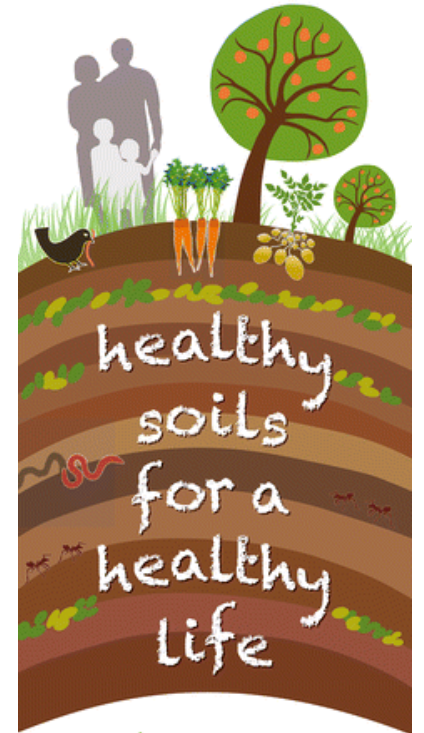


Where does this proposal come from?

- Building on the successful achievements of the International Year of Soils (2015) and the outstanding achievements over the past 11 years since the establishment of the GSP, the Government of Thailand proposed to work towards a proposal for a United Nations Decade on Soil Health at the 11th Plenary Assembly of the GSP.
- Several members supported this proposal, and the Plenary Assembly requested the Secretariat to provide information on the background and process for its establishment.
- The Secretariat has consulted relevant divisions and offices to clarify the procedure.

Background

- ✓ 2013 - UNGA declared 2015 as International Year on Soils (IYS) and 5 December as World Soil Day (WSD) – both have been successful in raising awareness.
- ✓ IYS - more than 900 events hosted in over 90 countries.
- ✓ WSD – ever-growing celebration, +10 000 events in 180 countries in 2023



Background

- ✓ IUSS proclaimed the International Decade of Soils 2015-2024
- ✓ The 14th Berlin Agriculture Ministers' Conference Communiqué 2022: *Sustainable Land Use: Food Security Starts with the Soil* during the 2022 Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) – 68 signatory countries
- ✓ Recognition of the role of soils in the three Rio Conventions, e.g. soil biodiversity by CBD CoP15
- ✓ Endorsement of the GSP Action Framework 2022-2030

Background

- ✓ Emergence of several initiatives focused on soils:
 - 4 per 1 000 initiative (2015)
 - Coalition of Action for Soil Health (CA4SH) (2021)
 - Soil Carbon Internacional Research Consortium (2023)
 - Soil for Society Network (2023)
 - Soil Initiative for Africa (2024)
 - Private sector-led initiatives: Moët-Hennessy (Living Soils Forum), World Economic Forum (Technologies for Soil Health)

Policies governing United Nations decades

- UN designates days, weeks, years, and decades to mark particular events or topics to raise awareness and promote actions.
- FAO does not have a concrete policy for proposing decades, but the *FAO Policy on Proclamation and Implementation of International Years* would apply by analogy.
- FAO policy states that international years will not be proclaimed unless full financing (which in principle should be based on voluntary contributions) and all organizational arrangements are confirmed.
- Since 1995, a total of 38 international days, years or decades have been held or are being proposed with FAO as the leading organization.

Process to be followed and other considerations

1. Should the Plenary Assembly wish to encourage its Members to promote the proclamation of a UN Decade on Soil Health:
 - a) Consider the time needed to prepare a sound proposal for the Decade (2031–2040) would be feasible and constitute the follow-up to the GSP Action Framework 2022-2030;
 - b) support of a champion country or countries advocating for the promulgation of the Decade in different international fora, e.g. UNGA, FAO COAG, Council, and Conference, and inform FAO DG.
 - c) Establish a group of “Friends of Soils” countries to advocate for it at relevant fora and processes;
 - d) Develop concrete actions at the international and national levels;
 - e) Full financing must be ensured for the entire implementation period of the Decade;

Process to be followed and other considerations

2. Partnership would be essential, GSP partners could take a leading role in facilitation and implementation of the Decade;
3. Effective coordination of the activities with other UN organizations and bodies concerned;
4. In the case of the UN Decade on Soil Health being established, endorsed by the UN General Assembly and its implementation entrusted to FAO, Members could use the already well-established capacity in the GSP Secretariat to coordinate the implementation of the Decade, including functions of secretariat, communication, and fundraising, among others.

Process to be followed and other considerations

5. The Plenary Assembly plays the role of an Advisory Committee.
6. Collaborates with existing platforms.



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THANK YOU

