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Report of the EURASIAN SOIL PARTNERSHIP PLENARY MEETING

Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

29 February – 2 March 2016

The Eurasian Soil Partnership focal points and representatives of 13 countries from Eurasia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan), as well as representatives of ICARDA, ICBA, CIMMYT, GIZ and the Kyrgyz Soil Science Community participated in the Eurasian Soil Partnership workshop, held in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic from 29 February till 2 March 2016. The workshop was convened under the International Forum on Eurasian Food Security and Nutrition Network and Eurasian Soil Partnership jointly organized by ECFS, FAO, the World Bank and GFAR.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
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| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| CACAARI | Central Asia and the Caucasus Association of Agricultural Research Institutions |
| CAREC | Central Asia Regional Environmental Centre |
| CACILM | Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management |
| CGIAR | Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research |
| COP | Conference of Parties |
| ECFS | Eurasian Center for Food Security |
| EC- IFAS | Executive Committee of International Fund for saving the Aral Sea |
| EASP | Eurasian Soil Partnership |
| ELD | Economics of Land Degradation |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization |
| GEF | Global Environmental Facility |
| GIS | Geographic Information System |
| GIZ | Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit |
| GLADIS | Global Land Degradation Information System |
| GSP | Global Soil Partnership |
| ICAL2 | International Conference on Arid Land Studies |
| ICARDA | International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dryland Areas |
| IFAD | International Fund for Agricultural Development |
| ITPS | Inter-governmental Technical Panel on Soils of the GSP |
| IYS | International Year of Soils |
| LADA | Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands |
| LD | Land Degradation |
| MoA | Ministry of Agriculture |
| MoFAL | Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Livestock of Turkey |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| PoA | Plan of Action |
| RIP | Regional Implementation Plan of EASP |
| RWSR | Report on Status of World Soil Resources |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| SC | Steering Committee |
| SLM | Sustainable Land Management |
| SOTER | Global Soil and Terrain Database |
| SSM | Sustainable Soil Management |
| UNCCD | United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNEP | United Nations Environmental Programme |
| USDA | United States Department of Agriculture |
| UZGIP | Design and Research Institute, Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of Uzbekistan |
| WG | Working Group |
| WOCAT | World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies |
| WSD | World Soil Day (5 December) |
| VGGT | Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Eurasian region is located in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Caucasus and includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The Eurasian region is diverse in terms of its climatic conditions, soils, flora, fauna, land use and human activities. Soil degradation is driven by complex variables, including climatic factors, economic factors, institutional and national policies. Soil degradation and problem soils are a serious process that is affecting the soils in the region through various processes, in particular: salinization, erosion, soil organic matter, nutrient and biodiversity depletion, and soil compaction.

The Eurasian Soil Partnership focal points and representatives of 13 countries from Eurasia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan), as well as representatives of ICARDA, ICBA, CIMMYT, GIZ and the Kyrgyz Soil Science Community participated in the Eurasian Soil Partnership workshop, held in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic from 29 February till 2 March 2016. The workshop was convened under the International Forum on Eurasian Food Security and Nutrition Network and Eurasian Soil Partnership jointly organized by ECFS, FAO, the World Bank and GFAR.

The workshop was organized around plenary presentations (in particular on Major Activities of ECFS and its international partners on food security and sustainable soil management (2013-2015)) and plenary discussions for ECFS collaborative research and educational programs, network activities and future directions. Further discussions held on parallel sessions for Barriers preventing Sustainable Soil Management (SSM) application and recommended SSM practices, Identification of appropriate sustainable soil management practices and systems at regional and national levels and Adoption of Final Documents.

Under the moderation of Chair of Dr. Hukmatullo Ahmadov, the Challenges of GSP, the outcomes of the EASP activities in 2014-2015, the Introduction to the Implementation Plan for EASP and Assessments of the barriers and shortcomings preventing the adoption of SSM practices at the national level by Eurasian region countries was discussed and was adopted to be included in Bishkek COMMUNIQUÉ as the Summary of barriers to sustainable soil management in Eurasia and possible ways of overcoming them.

Under the moderation of Vice-Chair Dr Gulchekhira Khasankhanova, the working plan 2016-2017 was discussed at an open discussion and was adopted to be included in Bishkek COMMUNIQUÉ as the Workplan 2016-2017.

Finally, under the moderation of GSP Executive Secretary Ronald Vargas, the work of the Eurasian Soil Partnership focal points and representatives of 13 countries from Eurasia was summarized via the Bishkek COMMUNIQUÉ (please see Annex 1) which was accompanied with a “Workplan 2016-2017” (please see Annex 2) and “Summary of barriers to sustainable soil management in Eurasia and possible ways of overcoming

them” (please see Annex 3). The text of the Bishkek COMMUNIQUÉ adopted and signed by all Focal Points was presented on the Concluding Panel Discussion of International Forum on Eurasian Food Security and Nutrition Network and Eurasian Soil Partnership.

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This report was jointly prepared by the Eurasian Centre for Food Security (ECFS), serving as the Secretariat of EASP, and the FAO Global Soil Partnership Secretariat (GSP). The report was compiled by Alexey SOROKIN (ECFS) and Maria KONYUSHKOVA (ECFS) and edited by Pavel KRASILNIKOV (ECFS) and Ronald VARGAS (FAO).

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Bank are gratefully acknowledged as co-organizer of this workshop.

Introduction

The Global Soil Partnership (GSP) is a major international initiative with a vision ‘to improve global governance of the limited soil resources of the planet in order to guarantee healthy and productive soils for a food secure world, as well as sustain other essential ecosystem services’. The Regional Soil Partnerships are to assist the GSP to move into concrete field action at regional, national and local levels through ‘Implementation Plans’.

The Eurasian Center for Food Security (ECFS) acts as a hub for agro-policy, agronomics, and agribusiness knowledge management, contributing to the improvement of food security in the Eurasian region. In cooperation with FAO’s Global Soil Partnership, ECFS launched the Eurasian Soil Partnership (EASP), which is dedicated to examining soil management issues in the Eurasian region. One of the major goals of the Center and the EASP is to create a dynamic network of agricultural researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to exchange knowledge and promote effective practices in managing food insecurity in the Eurasian region.

The launch of the Eurasian Sub-regional soil partnership took place in Moscow, Russian Federation, on November 20th, 2013 with the participation of representatives from national soil institutions, universities, NGOs and regional institutions from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The venue was an opportunity to discuss about the main issues and priorities for the region regarding soil resources. Notably, soil salinity was identified as the main hazard to healthy soils in the region and a common view towards its reversal was identified. The Moscow communiqué (in Russian and English) was prepared by the participants and agreed to establish the Eurasian Soil Partnership as a chapter of the European Soil Partnership. The Secretariat is based in Moscow, Russian Federation at the Eurasian Center for Food Security.

The first Plenary Meeting of the Eurasian Soil Partnership (EASP) was held in conjunction with the International Conference on Arid Land Studies (ICAL2) in

Samarkand, Uzbekistan, from 10-11 September 2014. It focused on the adoption of the Plans of Action for each of the five Pillars of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) and regional priorities. The Eurasian Center for Food Security (ECFS) chaired the Plenary Meeting. At that meeting, it has been agreed that the main objective of the entire strategy of EASP should be introduction of sustainable soil management (SSM) practices, especially in the areas affected by soil salinity, e.g. implementation of Pillar 1. The implementation of other Pillars should be aimed at realization of Pillar 1. Thus, SSM introduction should be the core activity in the Implementation Plan of Action for EASP.

During the Eurasian Soil Science Federation Conference in Antalya, Turkey, 13-17 October 2014, members of the Working Group 1 proposed a Plan of Action and paved the way towards a draft regional implementation plan for sustainable soil management and restoration to reverse the alarming soil degradation trends (including soil salinization) in Eurasia.

The second Plenary Meeting of the Eurasian Soil Partnership (EASP) was held in Izmir, Turkey, from 16–18 June 2015 for finalizing a five-year rolling sub-regional 'Implementation Plan'. The "Izmir Communiqué" (in Russian) was adopted and signed by all participants highlighting commitments for promoting wide uptake of sustainable soil management and restoration of degraded soils in the region. Now the Eurasian Soil Partnership represents 12 countries from Eurasia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan with Turkmenistan still inactive), and partners from ICARDA, ICBA and others.

During the Third Workshop of the European Soil Partnership (ESP), 08-09 March 2016, FAO HQ, Rome, Italy Mr. Pavel Krasilnikov (EASP Secretariat) provided a progress report of the Eurasian Soil Partnership activities. The EASP Implementation Plan was endorsed in November 2015 and since then, various activities have been executed. The financial contribution by the Russian Federation is supporting the execution of some activities of this plan, though more resources are needed for full implementation.

The present Third Plenary Meeting of the EASP reports summarizes the proceedings of the Eurasian Soil Partnership workshop and intends to provide a useful reference document that will feed into the process of implementation of Workplan 2016-2017 and the possible ways for overcoming of barriers to sustainable soil management in Eurasia.

WORKSHOP ARRANGEMENTS

Venue and participation

The workshop was convened under the International Forum on Eurasian Food Security and Nutrition Network and Eurasian Soil Partnership jointly organized by ECFS, FAO, the World Bank and GFAR, and took place at Hotel Hyatt Regency Bishkek, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. It was attended by 44 participants: the Eurasian Soil Partnership focal points and representatives of 13 countries from Eurasia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan,

Turkmenistan, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan), as well as representatives of ICARDA, ICBA, CIMMYT, GIZ and the Kyrgyz Soil Science Community. The list of participants can be found in Annex 4.

Workshop objectives

The objectives of the Eurasian Soil Partnership workshop include the following:

- to review the challenges of GSP,
- to raise awareness and share information on the outcomes of the EASP activities in 2014-2015,
- to introduce the Implementation Plan for EASP and
- to review and assess the barriers and shortcomings preventing the adoption of SSM practices at the national level by Eurasian region countries
- to discuss and adopt the working plan 2016-2017
- to discuss and adopt Bishkek COMMUNIQUÉ

Workshop methodology and Process

The workshop took place over two working days. The meeting was structured around one plenary session, four parallel sessions and one concluding panel discussion:

- Plenary session on Major Activities of ECFS and its international partners on food security and sustainable soil management (2013-2015)
- Parallel sessions on Eurasian Soil Partnership:
 - Session 2.1: Barriers preventing Sustainable Soil Management (SSM) application and recommended SSM practices
 - Session 2.2: Identification of appropriate sustainable soil management practices and systems at regional and national levels
 - Session 2.3: Regional View and the Way Forward: breaking the barriers
 - Session 2.4: Adoption of Final Document
- Concluding Panel Discussion on Regional Food Security, Agriculture, Nutrition, and Natural Resource Management

The key points from presentations and further discussion are recorded in the report, with copies of the presentations available at ECFS website. A copy of the programme is available in Annex 5.

Plenary session on Major Activities of ECFS and its international partners on food security and sustainable soil management (2013-2015)

There were five presentations introducing the ECFS collaborative research and educational programs, network activities and future directions, which was followed by complementary presentations from international partners, including the World Bank, FAO, IFPRI and ICARDA.

Dr. Aleksander Makeev, e-learning and knowledge management department ECFS, introduced the ECFS collaborative research and educational programs, network activities and future directions ([0.2 Makeev ECFS collaborative research](#)). He provides a

presentation on the history of ECFS, its objectives and activities, target groups and target countries, gave an overview of circumstances that were considered on developing the Eurasian Food Security Network. Reporter provides the information on implemented joint research programmes, main research areas, outcomes and outputs. Dr. Makeev report about e-learning center (<http://edu.ecfs.msu.ru>) and developed learning courses. He drew the audience's attention to the past and ongoing e-consultation. Reporter recalled that ECFS provides expert support to initiative of Russian government in the frameworks of international organizations (e.g. G20, SCO, BRICS etc.)

Artavazd Hakobyan, agriculture economist working in the Agriculture Global Practice of the World Bank on behalf of co-organizer of the Forum warmly welcomed participants and visitors.

Ronald Vargas Rojas, a Soils and Land Management Officer at FAO and Global Soil Partnership Secretariat stressed the importance of Healthy soils: a pre-requisite for food security ([0.2 Ronald Soils EASP](#)). He explains that soils deliver ecosystem services that enable life on Earth. Other point was that soil is a strategic resource to ensure food security. There was dubbed the slogan – “Healthy soils for a healthy life”. Mr. Vargas told in a few words about the Status of the World’s Soil Resources report that was published by FAO by the end of the International Year of Soil 2015 and report about objects and ongoing activities Beyond 2015, which are eligible under the framework of SDGs. Finally yet importantly part of his report was devoted to the objects of Eurasian Soil Partnership.

Kamiljon Akramov, Research Fellow and Leader of the Central Asia Program at IFPRI introduced the IFPRI’s Research, Capacity Strengthening and Network Building Experience in Central Asia ([0.2 Kamiljon IFPRI’s Research](#)). He recall about prior research activities and collaboration with ECFS and other partners in in Central Asia. Mr. Akramov started with Agricultural Policy and Food Security in Central Asia project (Central Asia Program) funded by Russian Government (2013), after moved to other areas, such as Economy-wide modeling, Climate change and its impact on agriculture and food security, Agriculture-nutrition linkages and value chains (Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan), Agriculture-nutrition linkages in Tajikistan, Emerging issues in agriculture and food security in Central Asia and Capacity Strengthening.

Kamil H. Shideed, ICARDA’s Assistant Director General for International Cooperation and Communications introduced the History of Collaboration and Achievements of ICARDA in Central Asia and the Caucasus ([0.2 Shideed ICARDA-final reduced Final](#)). The highlighted the Strategic goals for CGIAR system level outcomes by 2030 and told that ICARDA is involved in nine CRPs covering seven research themes (Production Systems, Policies and Markets, Commodities, Nutrition and Health, Natural Resource Management, Climate Change, Genetic Resources). Mr. Shideed report about Russian Federation Support to CGIAR Collaborative Research and Capacity Building in CA Region within the Framework of ECFS (2013-2016). Finally, the reporter congratulated the audience with International Year of Pulses 2016.

Parallel sessions on Eurasian Soil Partnership

Session 2.1: Barriers preventing Sustainable Soil Management (SSM) application and recommended SSM practices

Hukmatullo Ahmadov, EASP Chair, opened the parallel session on EASP, welcomed the Focal Points, members of WGs, Secretariat and other participants. After that, he passed the floor to the first reporter.

Pavel Krasilnikov, ECFS, EASP Secretariat, in the first presentation introduced the Eurasian Soil Partnership Advances 2014-2015 ([2.1 Krasilnikov Eurasian Soil Partnership 2014-2015 ENG](#)). Speaker in a few words recalled the history of EASP, basic documents (Terms of Reference for the subregional partnership, which have been developed basing on the ToRs of the GSP), leadership, and moved to activities (e.g. e-consultations and meeting of Focal Points). In the second presentation introduced the Eurasian Soil Partnership Implementation Plan ([2.1 Krasilnikov Implementation Plan Bishkek ENG](#)), which was developed in November 2015. The regional implementation plans (RIP) for the Regional Soil Partnerships (RSP) were built in harmony with the Plans of Action (PoA) for the five Global Soil Partnership (GSP) pillars in a way to enhance synergies among pillars. The RIP was developed following the guidelines suggested by GSP secretariat and considering the specific challenges, gaps and opportunities in the Eurasian region. The development of the RIP of activities followed the recommendations provided by the soil experts participating in the RSP five working groups formed during the second Plenary Meeting of the Eurasian Soil Partnership (EASP) (Izmir, 16–18 June 2015) and the focal point nominated for each of the Eurasian countries. The “Izmir Communiqué” (in English) was adopted and signed by all participants highlighting commitments for promoting wide uptake of sustainable soil management and restoration of degraded soils in the region. Implementation Plan the activities of EASP in the closest years will be focused on (by Pillars):

- For Pillar 1: “Promote sustainable management of soil resources and improved global governance for soil protection and sustainable productivity”, the RIP proposes to assess the barriers and shortcomings preventing the adoption of SSM practices at the national and regional level, then prepare the report on the barriers preventing SSM application and the recommended SSM practices at regional and national levels. The RIP also proposes to identify the appropriate sustainable soil management practices and systems at regional and national levels using existing databases, than the results of the assessment on the barriers preventing SSM application and the recommended SSM practices at regional and national levels will be disseminated. The RIP will support the actions towards political, legislative and institutional structures reflect awareness and dialog on the integrative system approach and SSM technologies, and capacity enhance for assessment and monitoring, planning and implementation. The RIP will also support the small projects aimed at mitigation of or adaptation to soil salinity through application of SSM practices and in summarizing the outcomes of the small projects on SSM application in saline lands.

- For Pillar 2: “Encourage investment, technical cooperation, policy, education, awareness and extension in soils”, the RIP calls to promote informing politicians and decision makers on the activities of the Eurasian Soil Partnership and about the activities related to the International Year of Soils (IYS). The RIP also calls to enhance training specialist to collect, analyze and map available data, providing training for the individuals, farmers (women) and members of water use associations, government staffs. The RIP also suggests the capacity development on sustainable soil management, soil conservation/ restoration and soil information management (e.g. continuous professional development of young experts). The RIP will be supporting the establishment of a Consultation Service on Soil Management for Central Asia and the establishment of a series of annual publications "Eurasian Soil partnership Reports".
- For Pillar 3: “Promote targeted soil research and development focusing on identified gaps, priorities and synergies among economic/productive, environmental and social dimensions”, the RIP addressed key messages to increase access to innovation for Sustainable Soil Management, promoting and supporting of soil salinity studies and encouraging the Research on the Economics of Land Degradation (ELD).
- For Pillar 4: “Enhance the quality and availability of soil data and information: collection, analysis, validation, reporting, monitoring, integration with other disciplines” the RIP adopts the designing and introducing National soil-geographical databases based on a unified methodology and software (SOTER-type) and Soil monitoring system. On the bases of that system, the RIP adopts the development of a Unified EASP Database on stationary field experiments on saline and sodic soils. These activities will lead to capacity development on database use, soil monitoring and digital soil mapping, to development and creation of national soil reference information resources with open Internet access and joint Eurasian Soil Portal.
- For Pillar 5: “Harmonization of methods, measurements and indicators for the sustainable management and protection of soil resources”, the EASP involved in the harmonization of the terminology, standards, and protocols across the world and the GSP harmonization principles introduced to the EASP Partners. The RIP adopts a harmonization of terminology, soil classification, methods, indicators and procedures for saline and sodic soils on the Eurasian scale and the development of a system of intergovernmental standards for saline and sodic soils, including the development of standards samples of these soils.

After that, the floor was passed to the speakers who have prepared the presentations on assessments of the barriers and shortcomings preventing the adoption of SSM practices at the national level by countries.

Samvel Saakyan, Ministry of Agriculture Republic of Armenia, introduced the report on the Problems of Increase of Efficient Use of Arable Land, and The Ways of Its Solution in the Republic of Armenia ([2.1 Sahakyan Armenia-en](#)). The speaker proposed the activities for increasing the efficient use of arable land: 1) It is necessary to continue

realizing the governmental support programs given to the land users for purpose of increasing the income of the farmers, to expand the list of beneficiaries and forms of assistance, to improve enforcement mechanisms; 2) By purpose of consolidation and efficient use of land, the government should facilitate the formation of cooperatives; in particular, under affordable conditions ensure the farmers with agricultural machinery, fertilizer, diesel fuel, high quality seeds, etc; 3) By purpose of engaging the unsecured irrigation water into agricultural use, it is necessary for the government to support those land users who have applied progressive methods of irrigation (drip irrigation, sprinkler irrigation, etc.); 4) By purpose of extending the area of irrigated lands, it is necessary to carry out work in the directions of construction of reservoirs, rehabilitation of irrigation systems, replacing the mechanical methods of irrigation to gravity irrigation; 5) To expand the capabilities and role of Advisory services in the development of agriculture, agricultural business entities to provide professional assistance; 6) By purpose of assisting the realization of agricultural products, it is necessary to stimulate the development of processing enterprises and refrigerating farms, for increasing the volume of procurement to provide loans on affordable terms; 7) To carry out activities for exporting the agricultural products; 8) To ensure by appropriate means those banks and credit institutions that provide leasing agricultural technics. To set the lease interest rate twice below the market; 9) On the base of the signed contracts, the enterprises of processing industry it is necessary to provide short term loans that will provide the necessary working capital and will enable to increase the production volumes; 10) To postpone the payment for the water necessary for irrigation of agricultural soils until the end of the year (to the end of harvest and its implementation), providing water-supply companies with necessary working means.

Seymur Safarli, Ministry of Agriculture of Azerbaijan Republic, introduced the report entitled Sustainable soil management in Azerbaijan ([2.1 Safarli Azerbaijan-en](#)). Speaker highlighted the main problems and status of the soils in Azerbaijan and explained the main limitation for the use of sustainable management of soil resources: 1) On small farms with 1-2 ha of land, the introduction of new advanced irrigation systems (drip and sprinkler irrigation) and alternative technologies become ineffective with agronomic and economic point of view; 2) Lack of knowledge and skills for the development of new technologies (because of the limitations mentioned above, local residents suffer from a lack of information about new technologies to apply to their activities); 3) The weak link between science, education and implementation; 4) Despite good networking advisory centers in the regions (7 Regional Agricultural Information, consultation centers) a low level of human resource capacity hinder the expansion of advisory services for the application of SIRM; 5) In recent years, the government has stepped up efforts to land consolidation, but, unfortunately, did not have any significant success. Law on Cooperatives is ready, but has not approved by the government yet.

Seymur Safarli, Ministry of Agriculture of Azerbaijan, outlined the main strategic directions and priorities in the country, which response for efficient use of natural resources: 1) Research in improving soil fertility, the development of measures to combat erosion and salinity, as well as the effective management of ground water; 2) Efficient use of water and land resources in a changing climate; 3) Strengthening

institutional capacity for water resource management, and modernization of irrigation systems management (support for water management associations, public and private services, technical and administrative modernization); 4) Improved agricultural technologies, the introduction of innovative, resource-saving and environmental technologies in practice; 5) Land consolidation; 6) Recovery and increase the efficiency of the use of pastures, and

Andrey Chernysh, Deputy Director for Research of the Institute of Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry National academy of science of Belarus, introduced the report entitled Soil and land resources of Belarus and the problem of their rational use ([2.1 Chernysh\(english\) Belarus](#)). Speaker showed the framework of System of adaptive land management at different levels of territorial organization, outlined the main rounds of on-farm cadastral valuation of land (previous and current) and showed the set of thematic maps of land in Belarus.

Ekaterine Sanadze, Head of Division, PhD in Agriculture, Amelioration and Land Management Department Soil Management Division Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia, introduced the report ([2.1 Sanadze Georgia en](#)) on the vision of the Agriculture Development Strategy of Georgia: 1) To create an environment that will increase competitiveness in agro food sector; 2) To promote stable growth of high quality Agricultural production; 3) To ensure food safety and security; 4) To eliminate rural poverty through sustainable development of Agriculture and rural areas. Speaker stressed the *Technical & Capacity constraints* that hinder the wide distribution of SSM practices, which are: 1) Lack of Soil informational system; 2) Lack of monitoring system for soil conservation;

Legal, financial and normative standards: 3) Unsatisfactory legislative base on rational use of soils; 4) Lack of soil management and action plans; 5) Limited availability of financial resources for wider SLM adaptation; 6) Gaps related to deficiency of methodological basis (soil salinity, land degradation assessment, mitigation of climate change);

Knowledge, Awareness and Technological transfer: 7) Lack of knowledge of soil management, soil mapping, cartography; 8) Lack of specialists in direction of the genetic soil science; 9) Lack of awareness associated with soil importance in the private sector as well as in the civil society; 10) Insufficient exchange of experiences & data;

Communication and integration of science into decision-making: 11) Lack of research SLM partnership program on adaptation of SSM innovations; 12) lack of technologies to enhance flexible response and wider scaling up.

Abdula Saparov, Institute of Soil Science and Agrochemistry, Kazakhstan took the floor first and reported the Barriers preventing Sustainable Soil Management (SSM) application and recommended SSM practices in Kazakhstan. Speaker made the brief overview of land resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, specified the main problems and current condition of soil, including the agrochemical conditions of the lands.

Erbolai Bazilzhanov, State Institution «Republican scientific-methodical center of agrochemical service», continued the first speaker introducing the current status of the

implementation and adaptation of SMS practices in Kazakhstan ([2.1 Kazakhstan-en](#)): 1) Implementation of the provisions of the Land Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan; 2) Implementation of measures of public and industry programs aimed at improving land management; 3) Regulation of land relations; 4) Ensuring the rational use of land, soil conservation and protection of land resources; 5) The implementation of innovative projects of territory organization, improving the culture of agriculture, implementation of anti-erosion and other environmental measures; 6) The creation of mechanisms of economic encourage the sustainable use of agricultural land, conservation and restoration of soil fertility; 7) Development schemes and projects for the development of land with investment attractiveness; 8) Drafting agroformations farm organization of the territory based on landscape-ecological approach, the introduction and development of zonal moisture resource-saving farming systems and research-based crop rotations; 9) Development of technical projects to improve the use of irrigated lands, to combat salinity, wind and water erosion. Mr. Bazilzhanov Erbolai also provides the recommendations for adaptation SMS practices at national and regional level: 1) A significant amount of work on the study of the state of lands, carrying soil, geo-botanical surveys, grading and other soil surveys; 2) Increase the volume of annual surveys to standard indicators, to create a national database of soils and vegetation, primarily for agricultural land; 3) To analyze the condition and use of land through the use of modern information and geoinformation technologies, to predict the development of negative processes and to develop measures to prevent the disposal of agricultural land out of circulation; 4) Meet the needs of the State, including enforcement authorities, businesses and individuals with reliable information on the quality status and the actual use of land in a timely manner to carry out bid for the land and cadastral works; 5) To strengthen state control over the use and protection of land resources, implementation of land laws, the correctness of the land register, the implementation of measures for the rational use and protection of land especially in the regions.

Ernek Baibagyshov, Kyrgyz Soil Science Community, Kyrgyzstan, on behalf of host of the Forum welcomed the participants and gratefully acknowledged the organizers of the workshop. Speaker made the brief overview of soil and land resources of the Kyrgyz Republic, specified the main problems and current condition of soil, including the agrochemical conditions of the lands.

Mihail Suvac, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, Moldova, Focal Point EASP, briefly introduced the soil and land resources and the Barriers preventing Sustainable Soil Management (SSM) application and recommended SSM practices in Moldova.

Valeria Arefieva, Ministry of Agriculture, Russia, Alternate Focal Point, introduced a barriers preventing sustainable soil management (SSM) application and recommended SSM practices in the Russia Federation ([2.1 AREFEVA engl Barriers preventing SSM](#)). Speaker performed the key goals of the state agricultural development program and regulating markets of agricultural products, raw materials and foods for 2013 –2020 period and the value of financing support. Mrs Arefieva articulated the Main tasks on establishing the effective system of Sustainable Soil Management in the Russian Federation and the further extended recovering of soil fertility: 1) Improvement of

control and land monitoring system, usage of agrarian technologies, technical assessment of amelioration systems, etc; 2) Development of information and telecommunication system of agro-industrial complex in the Russian Federation, establishing the system for the remote monitoring of the agricultural lands; 3) Implementing the measures on involving the degrade agricultural lands in productive turnover and their effective usage; 4) Providing the legal, methodic and administrative regulation of the measures on recovering the soil fertility; 5) Development of unified conception and system of recovering the soil fertility with the aim of saturating the service market of agricultural producers with accessible, widely adopted, innovative technologies for recovering the erode and polluted lands; 6) Establishing and introduction in practice of land management the measures on increasing the responsibility and concernment the agricultural producers to use the technologies on preventing the land degradation and the further extended recovering of soil fertility. Speaker assessed the barriers preventing sustainable soil management application: first, it is lack of mechanism on governmental encouragement of agricultural producers for effective land usage and adaptation of advanced technologies for recovering soil fertility; second, it is not appropriate governmental regulation in effective usage of land funds and reclaimed lands; third, it is break by the land owners the regulations on preventing the negative impact on the lands; fourth, it is deficiency of the technologies, widely adopted in production conditions, on the service market; generally they have been tested only at the level of scientific researches and only in some cases were used in production conditions.

Alanazar Abirov, Ministry of Agriculture, Tajikistan, Focal Point, introduced the brief overview on soil and land resources in Tajikistan ([2.1 Абиров Таджикистан](#)) and move to main factors negatively effecting the SSM: 1) administrative control on agricultural producers; 2) failure in functioning of payment and bank system; 3) the lack of logistic and marketing network; 4) the underdevelopment of mechanisms of financial-credit support and risk insurance for “dehkan” (farmers) households; 4) weak mechanisms of co-financing support; 5) increasing debt of households to various organizations and local budget in most cases without the participation and guarantees of government; 6) slow implementation of reforms in various departments, aimed at raising the efficiency of economic management (water, road, etc.); 7) insufficient awareness of employees of “dehkan” (farmer) households on the land reform; 8) methods and ways of organization and production management, work incentives change slowly. Speaker provided the ideas to overcome these barriers: 1) to make changes and amendments to the procedures and institutional mechanisms for the transfer of land; 2) to ensure maximum access of “dehkan” (farmers) to land resources; 3) to create a favorable conditions for the development of private entities to provide services to ensure the production, etc.

Hakki Emrah Erdogan, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, Turkey, Focal Point, ([2.1 Hakki Soils TR](#)) introduced the SSM/SLM Constrains as: 1) Growing land, water constrains; 2) Drought frequency –deficit of Soil Water Balance; 3) Population Grown-Urbanization; 4) Persistent conflicts and abandonment in rural areas; 5) Land ownership and fragmentation. Speaker proposed: 1) Awareness to politicians , policy advisors and decision makers; 2) Build up equal reasonability to implement IPoAs; 3)

Establish a platform to exchange of knowledge and experiences; 4) Finance for development SSM practices (Resource mobilization).

Muhammet Durikov, National Institute of Deserts, Turkmenistan, Focal Point, briefly introduced the soil and land resources and the Barriers preventing Sustainable Soil Management (SSM) application and recommended SSM practices in Turkmenistan.

Svyatoslav Baliuk, Director National Scientific Center «Institute for Soil Science and Agrochemistry Research named after O.N. Sokolovsky», National Academy of Agrarian Sciences of Ukraine, introduced a report entitled Assessment of the barriers and shortcomings preventing the adoption of SSM practices at the national level in Ukraine ([2.1 Baliuk engl Ukraine](#)). Speaker briefly told about soil and land resources, drivers of soil degradation (including the degree and areas). Dr. Baliuk provide the framework of SSM/SLM system applied in Ukraine. Speaker elaborated on technologies of amelioration of solonetzic soils. At the end of the report the main limitations for broad implementation of practices for SSM/SLM in Ukraine was mentioned: 1) *Legislation* - Imperfect legal framework for resource mobilization and the development of incentive mechanisms. It should be the adoption of the Law on soil and its fertility, the National Programme for the protection of soil, creating soil protection service. 2) *Financial* - Disadvantages of targeted funding for a broad implementation of practices for sustainable land management. The lack of financial support for irrigation and land reclamation. 3) *Normative* - The need for harmonization and improvement of methods of diagnosis, classification and agroecologicalsoil typology. 4) *Informational* - Revision, updating and digitization of cartographic materials, bringing them into line with the requirements of FAO, WRB; Inventory of reclamation lands, the definition of quality and perspectives of different areas of use; Implementation of common databases and information systems; The re-examination of soil monitoring and soil. 5) *Organizational* - Insufficient contribution of science to the planning, management, decision-making; Lack of awareness of the public and the private sector; Insufficient development of technology transfer mechanisms for stakeholders. The speaker emphasized the role of international organizations in rising the awareness of SSM/SLM among decision-makers and proposed to use Ukrainian experience in SSM/SLM for knowledge transfer in Eurasian region (i.e. to create in Ukraine international demonstration and training center for new technologies of the effective use of saline irrigated lands etc.).

Gulchehra Khasankhanova, UZGIP, Uzbekistan, EASP Vice-Chair, introduced a brief overview of soil and land resources in Uzbekistan, SSM/SLM policy and activities until 2030 ([2.1 uzbek-R eng](#)), acknowledge the role of CACILM as an initiative of CAC on SLM funded by WB, ADB, UNDP, FAO, IFAD, ICARDA and GIZ etc. The barriers preventing scaling up of SSM practices are: 1) institutional capacity and coordination; 2) knowledge, awareness and transfer of technologies; 3) science, production, decision-making, interrelations. Speaker suggested the recommendations on scaling up of SSM practices: 1) Strengthening of inter-sectoral coordination and interrelations, with creation of a network of soil institutes at the national and subnational levels; 2) Strengthening of capacity of research soil institutes and other organizations connected with SSM/UUZR; 3) Improvement of soils classification and mapping, assessment of salinization and

degradation of soils with use of GIS/DM of technologies for integration into regional and global networks of knowledge; 4) Improvement of standard and legal base on mobilization of resources and development of funding mechanisms and stimulations for local land users; 5) Creation/strengthening of extension/advisory and information services for -farmers, WUA, experts and persons making decisions at various levels with special attention to women and other vulnerable groups; 6) Development of information and communication technologies and methods of education, trainings, standards and tools for data exchange and knowledge; management ; 7) Development of on-line interactive system of training on scaling up of the practices for rational use of soils; 8) Improvement of institutional, regulatory and legal base for creation of the enable environment in support of improved access and transfer, scaling up and application of SSM/SLM of technologies; 9) Mobilization of internal and external sources of financing for research efforts and innovations on SSM/SLM; 10) Strengthening of communication of the scientific institutions for improvement of introduction of scientific results and different experience concerning SSM into real practice production.

Session 2.2: Identification of appropriate sustainable soil management practices and systems at regional and national levels

Gulchehra Khasankhanova, UZGIP, Uzbekistan, EASP Vice-Chair, opened the second part of the parallel session on EASP and Open discussion on the working plan 2016-2017. Mrs. Khasankhanova presented an agenda on the second session (2.2 Session Agenda):

- Open discussion on the working plan 2016-2017
- Forming an ad-hoc Working Group (WG) for developing a synthesis review

After that, Vice-Chair goes to the first point – the work plan 2016-2017 and the priority activities:

- Capacity Building on SSM scaling up
- Consultation Service on SSM
- Resource Mobilization on SSM

The floor was passed to the first speaker **Pavel Krasilnikov, ECFS, EASP Secretariat**, who introduced the draft version of the Work plan 2016-2017.

Q & A:

The first questions was about development of Consultative service (“Soil Doctor”).

Ronald Vargas Rojas, a Soils and Land Management Officer at FAO and Global Soil Partnership Secretariat took the floor and explained that the Land Development Department of Thailand (LDD) launched the project “Volunteer Soil Doctors” to integrate farmers into the consulting activities for sustainable land management. LDD conducts training workshops for the Soil Doctors, thereby enabling them to spread good practices and experiences to all provinces of Thailand. Farmers and local people are

encouraged to participate in soil resource maintenance and implementation (<http://www.ddd.go.th/ddd/en/en-US/soil-doctor-volunteer/>). The objects of Soil Doctors are:

- to carry out public relation activities in making announcements, delivering messages to farmers, inviting farmers to participate in observation, study tours, workshops, and others.
- to be service center for information and technology transfer, especially through demonstration farms.
- to give basic recommendations and answers to possible questions they may receive from farmers.
- to distribute to farmers some specific agricultural materials such as lime, fertilizer, seeds, etc.
- to inform farmers about the type and cropping suitability of the lands they own, so farmers may practice sustainable agriculture effectively.
- to help farmers prepare their farm plans and execute them, especially in relation to soil improvement and conservation.
- to act as messengers who receive and present feedback, needs, problems and queries from farmers to the institutions for consideration.

The second question was about creation of Eurasian Soil Commission.

Pavel Krasilnikov, ECFS, EASP Secretariat took the floor and explained that it might be a premature proposal that carries implications to which our decision makers are not committed to. Therefore, shall require our decision makers and other international organizations and resource partners to support the full implementation of the activities of this already established partnership.

Current opinion was supported by all participants and focal points and recorded in the communiqué.

The third question was about the dates and place of the next EASP Plenary Meeting.

Gulchehra Khasankhanova, UZGIP, Uzbekistan, EASP Vice-Chair took the floor and explained that base on terms of reference the meeting should be annually, so the next meeting will be organized the next year (2017). The place will be announced in due course.

Current opinion was supported by all participants and focal points and recorded in the communiqué.

The fourth question was about administrative bodies of the EASP and the possibility of enlargement of the body.

Pavel Krasilnikov, ECFS, EASP Secretariat took the floor and explained that base on terms of reference it is not possible at that moment. We would vote for the new composition of administrative bodies of the EASP in due course.

The fifth question was about the places of future workshops and meetings proposed in workplan 2016-2017.

Several member of national delegations proposed their countries and opportunities of local research and business centers as the meeting places (e.g. Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Georgia, Belarus etc.). Nominated places were written in the Workplan 2016-2017 after a detailed discussion. Specific locations will be announced later in due course.

The sixth question was about the possibility of establishment of the position of a second Vice-Chair of EASP in order to provide extra assistance to the Chair.

Pavel Krasilnikov, ECFS, EASP Secretariat took the floor and suggested postponing the decision on this topic until the next year, when the current Chair and Vice-Chair should be re-elected. Also it has been noted that the election of a second Vice-Chair would require introducing corrections in the ToR of the EASP that would require some additional time for their preparation.

The reviewed draft of the Workplan 2016-2017 was sent to **EASP Secretariat officers** for revision and preparation for the procedure of adoption.

After that, **Gulchehra Khasankhanova, EASP Vice-Chair** goes to the second point - forming an ad-hoc Working Group (WG) for developing a synthesis review. The WG was made up of the members of the partnership, focal points and officers of the Secretariat of the EASP (Konyushkova M., Khasankhanova G., Erdogan H., Arefieva V., Bazilzhanov E., Sanadze E., Toderich K., Ahmadov H.). The working group was adopted by consensus.

Session 2.3: Regional View and the Way Forward: breaking the barriers

Alexey Sorokin, ECFS, EASP Secretariat, opened the third part of the parallel session on EASP and Open discussion on Regional View and the Way Forward: breaking the barriers. Agenda on the third session was:

- Report of the WG on the outcomes of their work on identification of the barriers for the application of SSM practices
- Open discussion, facilitated by the ECFS

After that, the moderator passed the floor to the first speaker **Arefieva Valeria, Ministry of Agriculture, Russia, Atern. Focal Point**, who introduced the Report of the WG on the outcomes of their work on identification of the barriers for the application of SSM practices in English (2.3 draft Barriers and overcoming) and in Russian (2.3 draft Барьеры на пути к устойчивому землепользованию и возможные пути их преодоления).

The report was presented and the participants proceeded to the discussion.

It was suggested to include the column - The level of decision-making (e.g. legislative bodies, ministries, municipal authorities, research institutions, agrarian universities, agrarian faculties etc.). The proposal was adopted by consensus.

Session 2.4: Adoption of Final Document

Ronald Vargas Rojas, a Soils and Land Management Officer at FAO and Global Soil Partnership Secretariat, opened the fourth part of the parallel session on EASP and Adoption of Final Document. Mr. Vargas started with introduction of the vision on Workplan 2016-2017 and related activities ([2.4 Ronald EASP Activities](#)). Speaker told that with the financial support of the Russian Federation and the European Commission, financial resources are available for implementing the following activities of the EASP Implementation Plan: 1) Organization and participation of/in Plenary meetings and regional workshops. 2) Capacity development on sustainable soil management, soil conservation/restoration and soil information management. 3) Support to the establishment of a Consultation Service on Soil Management for Central Asia. 4) Support to soil salinity research projects. 5) Support to the activities of the Secretariat of the Eurasian Soil Partnership. Speaker continued with the role of the Eurasian Centre for Food Security, briefly highlight Voluntary Guidelines on Sustainable Soil Management and welcomed the audience to participate in this process as they have a tremendous opportunity to shape future normative soil activities. Finally, Ronald Vargas recalled the Flow of Communication from GSP Secretariat to Focal Points.

After that, the moderator passed the floor to the second speaker **Gulchehra Khasankhanova, UZGIP, Uzbekistan, EASP Vice-Chair** to present the final synthesis report on the existing barriers for the introduction of sustainable soil management practices and the ways for overcoming these barriers. The Report was introduced and was adopted by consensus (please see Annex 3).

After that, the moderator passed the floor to the third speaker **Pavel Krasilnikov, ECFS, EASP Secretariat** to present the final version of the working plan 2016-2017. The Workplan 2016-2017 was introduced and was adopted by consensus (please see Annex 2).

Finally, **Pavel Krasilnikov, ECFS, EASP Secretariat** introduced the draft of Bishkek COMMUNIQUÉ, which was discussed by audience. All the suggestions were integrated in the final text of Bishkek COMMUNIQUÉ by **Ronald Vargas Rojas, a Soils and Land Management Officer at FAO and Global Soil Partnership Secretariat**. The Bishkek COMMUNIQUÉ was introduced and was adopted by consensus (please see Annex 1). It was printed and signed by all Focal Points.

Concluding Panel Discussion on Regional Food Security, Agriculture, Nutrition, and Natural Resource Management

Pavel Krasilnikov, ECFS, EASP Secretariat, gratefully acknowledged all co-organizer of this workshop and the participants of Parallel sessions on Eurasian Soil Partnership. Dr. Krasilnikov presented the final outcomes of EASP workshop and read the text of approved Bishkek COMMUNIQUÉ on EASP networks.

Bishkek COMMUNIQUÉ

February 29- March 2, 2016 Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

We, the Eurasian Soil Partnership focal points and representatives of 13 countries from Eurasia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan), as well as representatives of ICARDA, ICBA, CIMMYT, GIZ and the Kyrgyz Soil Science Community participated in the Eurasian Soil Partnership workshop, held in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic from 29 February till 2 March 2016. The workshop was convened under the International Forum on Eurasian Food Security and Nutrition Network and Eurasian Soil Partnership jointly organized by ECFS, FAO, the World Bank and GFAR. As active partners of the Eurasian Soil Partnership, we would like to summarize our work via this communiqué to be shared with stakeholders of EASP and GSP partners.

Recognizing that Sustainable Soil Management constitute a feasible vehicle for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, especially related to food security and nutrition, climate change adaptation and mitigation, achieving land degradation neutrality targets and the provision of overall ecosystem services.

Highlighting that soil degradation (in its various forms, especially soil salinity, soil erosion, loss of soil organic carbon) in the region is a serious issue that prevents the full delivery of ecosystem services of soils affecting food production, rural development, climate change adaptation and mitigation and overall development.

We commit to the full execution of the Eurasian Soil Partnership Implementation Plan with a horizon of five years in partnership with different partners and stakeholders, and developing synergies with similar initiatives such as the CACILM2.

We, the participants of this third workshop of the Eurasian Soil Partnership, hereby:

- Fully commit to implement the activities of the workplan 2016-2017 that is presented in Annex I;
- Present the identified barriers and shortcomings that prevent the full implementation of sustainable soil management in the region (a summary in Annex 2 and to be fully available as a separate publication) and commit to overcome those that are already addressed in the Regional Implementation Plan. However, we request our decision makers to address those of more institutional nature;

- Agree with the need to strengthen the Eurasian Soil Partnership, but we considered that the establishment of a Eurasian Soil Commission is a premature proposal that carries implications to which our decision makers are not committed to. Therefore, we require our decision makers and other international organizations and resource partners to support the full implementation of the activities of this already established partnership;
- Finally, we hereby commit to organize and participate at the next EASP Plenary Meeting in 2017 on dates to be decided as progress demands.

Bishkek Communiqué (Bishkek, 29.02 – 02.03.2016)

| Country | Function | Signature |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Armenia | | |
| Azerbaijan | | |
| Belarus | | |
| Georgia | | |
| Kazakhstan | | |
| Kyrgyzstan | | |
| Moldova | | |
| Russian Federation | | |
| Tajikistan | | |
| Turkmenistan | | |
| Turkey | | |
| Ukraine | | |
| Uzbekistan | | |

Annex 2: EASP Workplan 2016-2017

| Components | Outcomes | Activities | Dates |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Pillar 1: Promote sustainable management of soil resources for soil protection, conservation and sustainable productivity</i> | | | |
| 1.1 Barriers preventing SSM application are assessed and appropriate sustainable soil management practices and systems are identified | 1.1.1. | On-line consultation | 01-02/2016 |
| | 1.1.2 | Open discussion (Bishkek meeting) | 02-03/2016 |
| | 1.1.3 | Approval of the recommendations (Bishkek meeting) | |
| | 1.1.4 | Publication of the report | 04/2016 |
| 1.2. The SSM is included in sectorial policy, regulative and institutional bodies. | 1.2.1. (1.2.2.) | Communication with governing bodies Mass-media Contacts with NGOs | 2016-2017 (continuous) |
| 1.3. Best Practices up-scaled at regional and national level | Not scheduled for the current year | | |
| 1.4. Support of small projects of implementation of SSM practices | Not scheduled for the current year | | |
| <i>Pillar 2. Encourage investment, technical cooperation, policy, education awareness and extension in soils</i> | | | |
| 2.1. Key messages to promote informing politicians and decision makers on the activities of the Eurasian Soil Partnership | 2.1.1. | Communication with governing bodies Mass-media | 2016-2017 (continuous) |
| | 2.1.2. | Contacts with NGOs | |
| | 2.1.3. (2.1.4.) | | |
| 2.2. The knowledge and skills of stakeholders at all levels enhanced. | 2.2.1. 2.2.2. | Development of distant learning courses | 2017 |
| 2.3. Capacity development on sustainable soil management, soil conservation / restoration, soil information management and extension services promoted. | 2.3.1. | Capacity building courses on soil information management (Kazakhstan) | 05/2016 |
| | 2.3.2. | Capacity building on salinity management (Ukraine) Capacity building on DSM (Tbilisi) | 09/2016 TBD |
| | 2.3.3. | Consultative service development (“Soil Doctor”), | TBD |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | 2.3.4. | AIT, Thailand | |
| 2.4. Legacy and recent research results published | 2.4.1. 2.4.2. 2.4.3 | Publication of the 1 st volume of the “Eurasian Soil Partnership Report” (Food Security and Land Resources of CAC) Publication of the 2nd volume of the “Eurasian Soil Partnership Report” (Salinity management, a practical manual) | 05/2016 09/2016 |
| <i>Pillar 3. Promote targeted soil research and development focusing on identified gaps and priorities and synergies with related productive, environmental and social development actions</i> | | | |
| 3.1. The productivity of agricultural systems through sustainable land and soil management enhanced | 3.1.1. 3.1.2. (3.1.3.) | Establishment of the Eurasian Innovation Platform for SSM (kick-off meeting) Small grants for soil salinity studies distributed | TBD 03/2016-03/2017 |
| 3.2. Research on the Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) encouraged | 3.2.1. (3.2.2.) (3.2.3.) | Extension of the ELD activities in the frames of the MSU Lab of Economics of Land Degradation | 2016/2017 (continuous) |
| <i>Pillar 4. Enhance the quantity and quality of soil data and information: data collection (generation), analysis, validation, reporting, monitoring and integration with other disciplines</i> | | | |
| 4.1. National soil-geographical databases designed and introduced to different stakeholders and soil monitoring system established. | 4.1.1. 4.1.2. (4.1.3.) (4.1.4.) | E-consultation on the platform for the database, software and sharing of data Meeting for the agreement on the platform etc. (Kazakhstan?) Survey of the needs for soil information | 04-05/2016 05/2016 |
| 4.2. The Protocol for surface | 4.2.1. | Protocol agreement (kick-off | 05/2016 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| and remote soil monitoring and Manual for field sampling, laboratory analyses, sources and methods of processing remote sensing data, place and form of storage of data established and adopted | 4.2.2. (4.2.3.) | meeting, Kazakhstan) Manual text agreed, prepared and published | TBD |
| 4.3. National soil reference information resources with open Internet access and joint Eurasian Soil Portal supported | 4.3.1. | Develop the structure of the Eurasian Soil Portal | 10/2016 |
| | 4.3.2. | Upload information and support of the Portal | 2016-2017 (continuous) |
| | 4.3.3. | Set up Eurasian Soil Portal for national and regional public awareness and training | |
| <i>Pillar 5. Harmonization of methods, measurements and indicators for the sustainable management and protection of soil resources</i> | | | |
| 5.1. The GSP harmonization principles introduced to the EASP Partners | 5.1.1. | Participation of EASP focal points and experts in international harmonization meetings | 2016-2017 (continuous) |
| | 5.1.2. | Joint meeting on soil information management and harmonization (Kazakhstan) | 05/2016 |
| 5.2. Terminology, soil classification, methods, indicators and procedures for saline and sodic soils on the Eurasian scale harmonized | 5.2.1. | Organization and functioning of working groups | 05/2016 |
| | (5.2.2.) | Organization of workshops? | 2017 |
| | (5.2.3.) | Development of conversion tables? | (to be specified) |
| 5.3. A system of intergovernmental standards for saline and sodic soils, including the development of standards samples of these soils harmonized across Eurasian region | 5.3.1. | Development of a Technical Committee of the EASP on standardization of saline and sodic soils | 09/2016 |
| | 5.3.2. | Harmonization of the use of existing national standards on the intergovernmental level | 2017 |
| | (5.3.3.) | Development and approval of new standards on saline and sodic soils | (to be specified) |

Annex 3. Summary of barriers to sustainable soil management in Eurasia and possible ways of overcoming them

| Aspects | Barriers* | Ways of overcoming | The level of decision-making |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Legal | 1.1. Limitations of legislation basis for resource mobilization and encouraging mechanisms | Development of the Law on soil usage and soil fertility; National program and strategy for soil protection; establishment of soil protection service | Legislative bodies, the Ministries |
| | | Unified admissions for agricultural producers to get the governmental support independently on forms of ownership | Ministries |
| | | Equal access to financial and production resources for women – owners of small farms | Ministries |
| 2. Financial | 2.1. Low/insufficient level of investments and/or low/insufficient attention from governmental sector to the wide adaptation of SLM/SSM practices | One of the possible forms of state support for the introduction of modern agricultural technologies can be the high-priority access for the most effective farmers to get governmental financial support and tax exemptions subsidizing farmers who applies modern resource-saving technologies | Ministries |
| | | Providing the governmental subsidies to compensate for the costs of agrarian producers on measures on soil fertility recovering and decreasing the bank rate | Ministries |
| | | Encouraging the agricultural producers to the rational use of natural resources: - differentiated rent payment depending on the level of soil fertility and environmental risks; - priority rights for the purchasing agricultural land and getting the government financial support. | Municipal authorities |
| | | Encouraging farmers to use advanced irrigation techniques and technologies for the preventing irrigation erosion and repeated salinization. | |

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| | 2.2. Insufficient financing of the private sector | Attracting financial resources to the private sector | Municipal authorities |
| 3. Legislative regulations, normatives | 3.1. The need in harmonization and improvement of the methods of diagnostics, classification and agroecological typization of soils | The creation of the unified data bases and information systems, the digitizing of maps, bringing them into line with the requirements of FAO and WRB | Research institutions |
| 4. Scientific and information | 4.1. Unsatisfactory or unsettled unified state register and cadaster of agricultural land categories | Inventory and monitoring of the categories of agricultural land, the determination of their quality and prospects of various directions of use; assessment of salinity and land degradation, impact analysis and risk mitigation of climate change, the prevention of threats to biodiversity loss | Research institutions Ministries |
| | 4.2. The of scientific evidence of efficiency of resource saving technologies, taking into account local soil and landscape conditions | Conducting experiments and observations in different soil and landscape conditions | Research institutions |
| | 4.3. Lack / insufficiency of personnel capacity and low participation of young personnel | Organization of trainings for young personnel | Agrarian universities, agrarian faculties |
| 5. Organizational | 5.1. Fragmented pattern (disunity) of agricultural lands | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of the current state of land fragmentation ; study of the views of stakeholders on effective use of agricultural land; preparation of a national land consolidation strategy or plan as well as improving the institutional capacity in this direction - Facilitating the process of formation of cooperatives, in particular, to improve access and provision of agricultural machinery, fertilizers, | Legislative bodies, the Ministries, Research institutions |

| | | | |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | diesel fuel, high-quality seeds and etc. | |
| | 5.2. The absence of institution on coordination of extension service | Establishing and strengthening of special departments at the ministries to facilitate coordination of rural advisory services (RAS). This institution should have a real opportunity to support and develop RASs and could mobilize resources and funds. | Ministries |
| | 5.3. Lack of awareness of the public and the private sector. | Publication of successful technologies, organization of exhibitions and sales of local products produced with the use of resource-saving technologies. | Research institutions Ministry |
| | 5.4. Insufficient development of technology testing and mechanisms of its transfer to stakeholder. | Creating a State Commission (in the structure of line ministries) for testing and implementation of land use management technologies in extensive production areas | Ministries |
| | 5.5. The problem with the sale of agricultural production | Stimulating the development of the processing industry and refrigeration units, increase of agricultural export | Ministries |

* In the countries of the Eurasian region, the various combinations of barriers are represented.

Annex 4. Participants of the plenary session of the Eurasian Soil Partnership

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Annex 5. Agenda of the International Forum on Eurasian Food Security and Nutrition Network and Eurasian Soil Partnership (February 29 – March 2, 2016 Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic)

| Day 1 (February 29, Monday) | | | |
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| 08:30 - 09:00 | Registration | | |
| 09:00 - 09:45 | <p>Official Opening Session Chair: Dr. Sergey Shoba, Director of Eurasian Center for Food Security at Lomonosov Moscow State University Welcoming remarks by: a) Representative of the Kyrgyz Government (<i>Bekboev Turdunazir, the Minister of Agriculture and Melioration</i>) b) Representative of GFAR (<i>Harry Palmier</i>), FAO (<i>Dorji Kinlay</i>), IFPRI (<i>Shenggen Fan</i>), World Bank (<i>Jean-Michel Happi</i>)</p> | | |
| 9:45 -10:45 | <p>Plenary session 1. Food Security for All: Agriculture and Nutrition – A global and regional perspective Presentation of Keynote Speaker: <i>Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition, Dr. Shenggen Fan</i>, Director General, IFPRI (40 minutes) Q and A (20 min)</p> | | |
| 10:45 -11:00 | Coffee break | | |
| 11:00 - 12:30 | <p>Plenary session 2. Major Activities of ECFS and its international partners on food security and sustainable soil management (2013-2015) Moderator: Dr. Pavel Krasilnikov ECFS collaborative research and educational programs, network activities and future directions, Alexander Makeev (ECFS, 25 minutes) Complementary presentations from international partners, including the World Bank (Artavazd Hakobyan), FAO (Ronald Vargas), IFPRI (Kamiljon Akramov), and ICARDA (Kamel Shideed) - 10 minutes each Panel discussion (25 minutes)</p> | | |
| 12:30 - 14:00 | Lunch | | |
| | <p>1. Parallel sessions on Eurasian Food Security and Nutrition 2. Parallel sessions on Eurasian Soil Partnership</p> | | |
| 14:00 - 16:00 | <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Session 1.1: Transformation of agricultural research and innovations to address challenges of food and nutrition security in the CAC region Moderator: Dr. Alisher Tashmatov (CACAARI) a) Overview of research priorities and challenges related to agricultural development and food security in the CAC region (Botir Dosov) b) Brief overview of the national needs and priorities: Acad. Guram Aleksidze (Georgia) Prof. Rysbek Nurgaziev (Kyrgyzstan) Prof. Yagub Guliev (Azerbaijan) Dr. Irina Tseretely (Armenia) Prof. Gayni Sarbasova (Kazakhstan) c) Perspectives of other regional and national stakeholders Farmers’ organizations, <i>Azizbek Sharipov (Tajikistan)</i> Extension and rural advisory services, <i>Vulgar Babaev (Azerbaijan)</i></p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Session 2.1: Barriers preventing Sustainable Soil Management (SSM) application and recommended SSM practices Moderator: Hukmatullo Ahmadov (EASP Chair) a) Challenges of GSP: Ronald Vargas, GSP Executive Secretary b) Presentation of the outcomes of the EASP activities in 2014-2015: Gulchekhra Khasankhanova, EASP Vice-Chair c) Introduction to the Implementation Plan for EASP: Pavel Krasilnikov, EASP Executive Secretary d) Assessments of the barriers and shortcomings preventing the adoption of SSM practices at the national level by countries: Republic of Armenia Republic of Azerbaijan Republic of Belarus Georgia Republic of Kazakhstan Kyrgyz Republic</p> </td> </tr> </table> | <p>Session 1.1: Transformation of agricultural research and innovations to address challenges of food and nutrition security in the CAC region Moderator: Dr. Alisher Tashmatov (CACAARI) a) Overview of research priorities and challenges related to agricultural development and food security in the CAC region (Botir Dosov) b) Brief overview of the national needs and priorities: Acad. Guram Aleksidze (Georgia) Prof. Rysbek Nurgaziev (Kyrgyzstan) Prof. Yagub Guliev (Azerbaijan) Dr. Irina Tseretely (Armenia) Prof. Gayni Sarbasova (Kazakhstan) c) Perspectives of other regional and national stakeholders Farmers’ organizations, <i>Azizbek Sharipov (Tajikistan)</i> Extension and rural advisory services, <i>Vulgar Babaev (Azerbaijan)</i></p> | <p>Session 2.1: Barriers preventing Sustainable Soil Management (SSM) application and recommended SSM practices Moderator: Hukmatullo Ahmadov (EASP Chair) a) Challenges of GSP: Ronald Vargas, GSP Executive Secretary b) Presentation of the outcomes of the EASP activities in 2014-2015: Gulchekhra Khasankhanova, EASP Vice-Chair c) Introduction to the Implementation Plan for EASP: Pavel Krasilnikov, EASP Executive Secretary d) Assessments of the barriers and shortcomings preventing the adoption of SSM practices at the national level by countries: Republic of Armenia Republic of Azerbaijan Republic of Belarus Georgia Republic of Kazakhstan Kyrgyz Republic</p> |
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| | <p>Women and agricultural innovations, <i>Gayane Sarkisyan (Armenia)</i></p> <p>Youth and agricultural research and innovations, <i>Rustam Ibragimov (Uzbekistan)</i></p> <p>Role of NGOs in promoting agricultural innovations and food security, <i>Shaibek Karasartov (Kyrgyzstan)</i></p> <p>Private sector: role and needs in agricultural innovations, <i>Manshuk Jeksembekova (Kazakhstan)</i></p> <p>Agrarian Universities, <i>Rysbek Nurgaziev (Kyrgyzstan)</i></p> | |
| 16:00 – 16:15 | Coffee break | |
| 16:15 – 17:45 | <p>Session 1.2: Investment in Global and Regional Food Security Initiatives</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Suresh Babu (IFPRI)</p> <p>Presentations from International organizations: the role in mobilizing investments in national systems</p> <p>Eurasian Development Bank: Artak Azizyan</p> <p>FAO: The International Year of Pulses (IYP) 2016 and potential for contribution to sustainable food security and nutrition, <i>Eleonora Dupouy</i></p> <p>IFPRI: Investment on data, information and analytical tools in Central Asia, <i>Jarilkasin Ilyasov</i></p> | <p>Session 2.1: Barriers preventing SSM application and recommended SSM practices (cont.)</p> <p>e) Assessments of the barriers and shortcomings preventing the adoption of SSM practices at the national level (cont.)</p> <p>Republic of Moldova</p> <p>Russian Federation</p> <p>Tajikistan</p> <p>Republic of Turkey</p> <p>Turkmenistan</p> <p>Ukraine</p> <p>Republic of Uzbekistan</p> <p>Discussion</p> |
| 17:45 – 18:30 | <p>Panel Discussion: Identifying what common solutions work best in the region</p> <p>Moderator: Artavazd Hakobyan, World Bank</p> | <p>Session 2.2: Identification of appropriate sustainable soil management practices and systems at regional and national levels</p> <p>Moderator: Gulchekhra Khasankhanova (EASP Vice-Chair)</p> <p>Open discussion on the working plan 2016-2017</p> <p>Forming an ad-hoc Working Group (WG) for developing a synthesis review</p> |
| 19:00 – 21:00 | Wrap up of Day 1 and outline for Day 2. Reception | |
| Day 2 (March 1, Tuesday) | | |
| 9:00 – 10:30 | <p>Plenary session 3: Role of international organizations in promoting agricultural research, food and nutrition security in the Central Asia and Caucasus</p> <p>Moderator: Dr. Kamel Shideed (ICARDA)</p> <p>Food Security in the Eurasian Economic Union, <i>Roman Romashkin, Deputy Head of Agricultural Policy Department at the Eurasian Economic commission</i></p> <p>ICARDA new strategy for the CAC region, <i>Dr. Richard Thomas, CRP DS Director</i></p> <p>Role of IFPRI and CGIAR Research Programs on Policies, Institutions, and Markets (PIM) and Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH) in promoting research and capacity strengthening in the region, <i>Dr. Kamiljon Akramov, Research Fellow and Leader of Central Asia Program, IFPRI, Washington, DC, USA</i></p> <p>WFP Social Protection and Its Linkages to Food and Nutrition Insecurity: Food and</p> | |

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| | <p>Nutrition Security, School Feeding, and Productive Safety Nets, <i>Ms. Pascale Micheau, Country Director and Representative of the United Nations World Food Programme Armenia Country Office (15 min)</i></p> <p>Panel Discussion, 30 minutes</p> | |
| 10:30 – 10:45 | Coffee break | |
| 10:45 – 12:30 | <p>Session 1.3: Food Security and nutrition-sensitive agriculture Moderator: Dr. Kamiljon Akramov (IFPRI) Presentation Opportunities for nutrition-sensitive agriculture and social protection, <i>Boitshepo (Bibi) Giyose, Senior Nutrition Officer, Nutrition Division, FAO</i> Presentation: <i>Armen Harutyunyan, Deputy Minister of Agriculture (10 min)</i> Panel discussion with nutrition experts and professionals <i>Professor Shamil Tazhibayev, Deputy Director of Kazakh Academy of Nutrition</i> <i>Professor Tursun Mamyrbayeva, Deputy Director of National Mother and Child Health Center, Ministry of Health of Kyrgyzstan</i> <i>Professor Khotambeg Khairov, Director of National Nutrition Center, Ministry of Health of Tajikistan</i> <i>Professor Anatoliy Khudaiberganov, Chief Dietician and Chief Specialist on Food Hygiene, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan</i></p> | <p>Session 2.3: Regional View and the Way Forward: breaking the barriers Moderator: Alexey Sorokin, EASP Secretariat Report of the WG on the outcomes of their work on identification of the barriers for the application of SSM practices Business game and brainstorming exercise to find the way to break the barriers using DPSIR methodology (WG) <i>Facilitated by the ECFS and WB staff</i> WG leaders present the outcomes of the brainstorming activity Open discussion, facilitated by the ECFS</p> |
| 12:30 – 14:00 | Lunch | |
| 14:00 – 16:30 | <p>Session 1.4: Expansion Strategies for the Eurasian FSNN: Next steps and Implementation Arrangements Moderator: Dr. Alexander Makeev (ECFS) Presentation IFPRI on Networks (20 min) Presentation: FSN Forum policy dialogues: contributing to food security and nutrition policy processes at country and regional level, <i>FAO, Rome, Italy (10 min)</i> Presentation: Expansion Strategies for the Eurasian FSNN based on the results of online consultation (January-February 2016), <i>Alexey Belugin, ECFS (10 min)</i> Open discussion: Next Steps: Identifying country and region specific</p> | <p>Session 2.4: Adoption of Final Document Moderator: Ronald Vargas (FAO) Presentation of the final synthesis report on the existing barriers for the introduction of sustainable soil management practices and the ways for overcoming these barriers (Gulchekhra Khasankhanova) The adoption of the working plan for 2016-2017 Final discussion and adoption by consensus The discussion of the perspectives for Eurasian Soil Commission in FAOSEC Next steps</p> |

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| | <p>areas for collaboration and opportunities for network growth (e-platforms, regional networks, roles of international organizations, country's focal points)</p> <p>Outlining ideas on how to strengthen and expand the existing network based on the Focus countries' needs and changing geopolitical situation</p> <p>Developing operational framework for expansion of FSNN and nomination of focal points in each focus country</p> | |
| 16:30 – 17:30 | <p>Concluding Panel Discussion on Regional Food Security, Agriculture, Nutrition, and Natural Resource Management</p> <p>Presentation of final outcomes of the two pillars of the meeting: reports of the Chairs of FSNN and EASP and Implementation arrangements to strengthen and expand FSNN and EASP networks (Makeev, Krasilnikov)</p> <p>Concluding remarks by organizer (FAO, IFPRI, WB, ECFS)</p> | |
| 19:00 – 20:00 | Dinner | |
| Day 3 (March 2, Wednesday) | | |
| 9:00 – 14:00 Field trips (Lunch on the farm) | | |
| <p>Field trip - optional half-day program</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chui, s. Lesnoy: Cooperation in Agricultural sector development, soil and water-saving technologies, including drip irrigation and greenhouse technologies. 2. Issyk-Ata district, Art. Ivanovka: sustainable water resources management; land and water-saving irrigation technologies, irrigation water accounting knowledge sharing. | | |

Annex 6. EASP - Working Groups

EASP CHAIR

H. Ahmadov (Tajikistan)

EASP VICE-CHAIR

G. Khasankhanova (Uzbekistan)

SECRETARIAT (GSP)

R. Vargas (FAO Headquarters)

E. Toprak (FAOSEC)

SECRETARIAT (EASP)

P. Krasilnikov

M. Konyushkova

A. Sorokin

PILLAR 1

CHAIR:

Hakki E. Erdogan (Turkey)

MEMBERS:

K. Toderich (Uzbekistan, ICBA)

I. Kurganova (Russian Federation)

G.Khasankhanova (Uzbekistan)

D. Akimaliev (Kyrgystan)

G. Nekushoeva (Tajikistan)

B.Suleimenov (Kazakhstan)

V.Androkhanov (Siberia-Russia)

I. Beernaerts (FAOSEC, GSP Secretariat)

PILLAR 2

CHAIR:

I. Savin (Russia)

MEMBERS:

A. Tashmatov (CACAARI)

B. Dosov (CACAARI)

D.Kahraman (Turkey)

G. Kust (Russia)

H. Ahmadov (Tajikistan)

L. Gafurova (Uzbekistan)

PILLAR 3

CHAIR:

Svyatoslav Baliuk (Ukraine)

MEMBERS:

J.Turok (ICARDA)

E.Pankova (Russia),

S. Ismail (ICBA)

V. Chiriliuc (Moldova)

M. Mzhalilova (Uzbekistan)

B. Sonmez (Turkey)

A. Baghadasaryan (Armenia)

PILLAR 4

CHAIR:

R. Kuziev (Uzbekistan)

MEMBERS:

A.Charnysh (Belarus),

I. Savin (Russia),

A. Sorokin (ECFS)

M. Sahin (Turkey)

B.Suleimenov (Kazakhstan)

V. Chiriliuc (Moldova)

S. Baliuk (Ukraine)

PILLAR 5

CHAIR:

H. Ahmadov (Tajikistan)

MEMBERS:

M. Konyushkova (ECFS),

G. Nekushoeva (Tajikistan)

Haki E. Erdogan (Turkey)

S. Baliuk (Ukraine)

A.Charnysh (Belarus)

R. Kuziev (Uzbekistan)