



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**



Call for Proposals for Small Research Projects under the Eurasian Soil Partnership

Introduction

The Global Soil Partnership, in collaboration with the Eurasian Soil Partnership (EASP) Secretariat, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Eurasian Center for Food Security, is pleased to announce a call for short term small research projects (SRPs). The call is open to scientists and soil management specialists collaborating with civil society organizations and smallholder farmers (especially women) in the agricultural and water sectors. The aim of this initiative is to facilitate targeted research and partnerships between scientists and local/national beneficiaries that would form a stable basis for long-term collaborative engagement to scale up the implementation sustainable soil management (SSM) practices. The call focuses on short term, small, targeted research projects focusing on soil salinity. Applications will be accepted from 28th April to 31st May 2016.

Thematic areas

Applications should be focused on the following thematic areas:

- Assessment of soil salinity;
- Innovations for soil salinity management;
- Practices and methods for the restoration of saline soils;
- Guidelines and training modules for soil salinity management;
- Economic assessment of ecosystem services provided by soils in saline ecosystems; and
- Environmental impact assessment of SSM practices on soil ecosystem services in salt-affected landscapes.

Assessment criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Scientific excellence and technical merit;
- Innovation potential;
- Capacity and competencies of the project team;
- Project design, objectives and measurement of research impacts;
- Application perspectives and sustainability of impact;
- Targeted research (addressing practical issues from users); and
- Potential use of the research outputs.

Who can apply?

- GSP partners with long-standing experience in soil salinity in the region;

- Other institutions (universities, research centres) with experience in soil salinity (they would have to become a GSP partner prior to applying).
- Each research team should have at least one student/postdoctoral researcher and at least one female principal scientist/investigator who will make substantive contributions to the SRP outputs.

How to submit your proposal?

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

- Individual proposals must be submitted under 1 thematic area only. More than one proposal by the same team or group may be submitted under different thematic areas.
- The geographical scope of the SRP is limited to the partner countries of the Eurasian Soil Partnership, namely: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Russian Federation.
- Proposals shall be submitted in MS Word or Adobe Acrobat format and shall be sent to the GSP-Secretariat@fao.org by 31st May 2016 COB.

Budget

The call will support research projects ranging from 8000 to 15000 USD in total for a maximum duration of 12 months. The proposals will be assessed according to the assessment criteria listed above. Following the assessment process, only successful applicants will be contacted by the Global Soil Partnership Secretariat.

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

Proposal template

<p style="text-align: center;">Please complete all sections in the proposal form as clearly as possible. Proposals must be written in English using font 11pt Calibri and single line spacing.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">I. Basic Information Title Thematic area Project Duration (Max 12 months) EASP Country National Institution</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">II. PROPOSAL</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">1. Introduction</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2. Research Problem (Maximum of 1,500 characters, including spaces) <i>The problem should be stated clearly and objectively and related directly to the thematic area.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3. Project Objectives (Maximum of 1,500 characters, including spaces) <i>The objectives should be specific, relevant for development, and clearly stated.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">4. Proposed methods and materials needed (Maximum of 5,000 characters, including spaces) <i>Projects should have an appropriate design to address the objectives, including concrete steps and activities. Both overall design and specific methods, as well as necessary materials should be described.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">5. Expected Results (Maximum of 2,000 characters, including spaces) <i>Expected results should be measurable and achievable within the indicated timeframe.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">6. Potential Impact (Maximum of 1,000 characters, including spaces) <i>The potential development impacts should be clearly stated and must be compatible with the expected results.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">7. Budget (Maximum of 2,000 characters, including spaces) <i>Please ensure that the budget is appropriate. If the budget is unrealistic, either exaggerated or insufficient to reach the objectives, it will be scored 0. If the budget is realistic and balanced, it will be scored 4. Any deficiencies in budget planning will reduce the score.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">8. Scientific excellence and technical merit (Maximum of 2,000 characters, including spaces) <i>Scientific excellence and consistency of the proposal are essential for its consideration for support. All proposals shall be compliant with the Global Soil Partnership Pillars and EASP priorities, and should go beyond standard research projects that result only in a formal report.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">9. Innovation Potential (Maximum of 2,000 characters, including spaces) <i>Proposals should explain how they differ from existing approaches. Innovation is an important differentiating element for the GSP/EASP. The proposals are expected to show approaches on new technologies, new products or services using existing technology, and new processes, including, amongst others, new mechanisms to deliver products or services.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">10. Capacity and competencies of the team (Maximum of 2,000 characters, including spaces) <i>The proposed team should reflect the competencies and experience required to achieve the project objectives in the one-year period. The participation of students of various levels and post-docs will be considered as an advantage.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">11. Project design, objectives and measurement of research impacts (Maximum of 2,000 characters, including spaces) <i>The project should have an appropriate design to address the research objectives including concrete steps and activities. The objectives and methodology must be clear and the results measurable with an indication on the potential impact on improving food security of the region. The expected results should be achievable within the one-year timeframe.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">12. Application perspectives and sustainability of impact (Maximum of 2,000 characters, including spaces)</p>

Projects should clearly indicate how the results and development impacts will be sustainable after the end of the project initiated by the EASP/GSP. This should include the nature of sustainability, i.e. financially or organizationally.

13. Targeted research (addressing practical issues from users) (Maximum of 2,000 characters, including spaces)

The project should demonstrate and disseminate new and alternative approaches to sustainable soil management at the local level, such as researching the impacts of existing and tested agro-technologies on productive functions of salt affected arable lands, an opportunity for carbon fixing, and its acceptability for large-scale introduction.

14. Potential of use of the research outputs. (Maximum of 2,000 characters, including spaces)

The proposal should outline the opportunities for scaling up, i.e. if a project can be expanded within a geographic area to benefit more people in the project area, or by replicating the project in additional areas, i.e. its adoption by other research groups.

15. Key Bibliography (Maximum of 500 characters, including spaces)

Bibliography should be complete, updated and appropriate.

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