



**GlobalSoilMap.net  
Consortium Agreement**

**No. 1**

**between**

**Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (in Australia),  
Earth Institute at Columbia University (in USA),  
Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária (in Brazil),  
International Union of Soil Sciences (in UK),  
Institute of Soil Science, Chinese Academy of Sciences (in China),  
Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (in France),  
ISRIC - World Soil Information (in Netherlands),  
European Union, European Commission, Joint Research Centre (in Italy), (JRC.REF No. 31703)  
Natural Resource Conservation Service, US Department of Agriculture (in USA),  
The University of Sydney (in Australia),**

**and**

**Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility Institute of Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (in Kenya & Colombia)**

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, represented for the purpose of signing this agreement by Neil McKenzie, Chief CSIRO Land and Water Division, duly entitled to sign,

On the one part,

The Earth Institute at Columbia University, represented for the purpose of signing this agreement by Mario R. Reyes, Director of Sponsored Projects Administration Morningside Operations, duly entitled to sign,

On the other part,

The Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária, represented for the purpose of signing this agreement by Dr Pedro Arraes, Director-President of Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária, hereinafter referred to as 'EMBRAPA', duly entitled to sign,

On the other part,

The International Union of Soil Sciences, represented for the purpose of signing this agreement by Prof Stephen Nortcliff, IUSS Secretary General of The University of Reading, duly entitled to sign,

On the other part,

The Institute of Soil Science, Chinese Academy of Sciences, represented for the purpose of signing this agreement by Dr Renfang Shen, (*function*) of Institute of Soil Science, Chinese Academy of Sciences, PR China, duly entitled to sign,

On the other part,

The Institut de Recherche pour le Developpement, represented for the purpose of signing this agreement by Dr Pierre Soler, Chef du département "Milieux et Environnement", duly entitled to sign,

On the other part,

The ISRIC - World Soil Information, represented for the purpose of signing this agreement by Dr Prem Bindraban, Director of ISRIC - World Soil Information, hereinafter referred to as 'ISRIC', duly entitled to sign,

On the other part,

The European Union, represented by the European Commission, Joint Research Centre, represented for the purpose of signing this agreement by Prof Leendert Hordijk, Director of the Institute for Environment and Sustainability (IES) of the Joint Research Centre, hereinafter referred to as 'JRC', duly entitled to sign,

On the other part,

The Natural Resource Conservation Service, US Department of Agriculture, represented for the purpose of signing this agreement by Eloris Speight, Deputy Chief for Management National Resource Conservation Service, US Department of Agriculture, USA, duly entitled to sign,

On the other part,

The University of Sydney, Australia, represented for the purpose of signing this agreement by Prof John Hearne, Deputy Vice Chancellor (International), duly entitled to sign,

On the other part,

And

The Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility Institute of Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical, represented for the purpose of signing this agreement by Dr Sanginga Nteranya, Director CIAT-TSBF, duly entitled to sign,

Hereafter referred to individually as 'the Consortium' or collectively as 'the Consortia'

## **Preamble**

Soil information is a prerequisite for informed decisions on most aspects of land use and management. A comprehensive and efficient system is needed for mapping and monitoring the condition of the world's soil resources. At present, many governments, industries, communities and individual land managers make decisions without appropriate information. This leads to inefficiencies and environmental degradation. A major problem has been the difficulty of accessing useful soil information in a readily understood form. Climate change, looming problems of food security and increasing water scarcity have added urgency to every aspect of natural resource management because the consequences for the world

are profound. In response to this challenge the consortium institutions agree to contribute to the formation of the *GlobalSoilMap.net* Consortium.

This Consortium Agreement is intended to provide an overall framework for the parties' exploration of collaborative functions and activities, and does not establish any legal obligation or commitment (other than each party agreeing to be named as a founding member of the Consortium). If Specific activities are to be implemented, they should be subject to formal and binding separate agreements between the relevant parties (such as an official consortium agreement or project agreements), to be negotiated in good faith. The Consortium Agreement carries no financial commitment on any party and does not oblige any party to work exclusively with the other. No organization is the agent of the other. Nothing herein shall be deemed to constitute a legal partnership or joint venture between the parties unless a supplementary agreement so specifies. Membership of the Consortium consists of the undersigned institutions, but is open to additional ones who subscribe to the mission of the Consortium.

This Agreement is not governed by international or domestic law and does not constitute, nor is it intended to be a legally binding arrangement or contract. It does not create any legally binding or enforceable obligations, express or implied. It serves only as a record of each party's separate intention pending execution of specific agreements governing the undertaking of activities as contemplated by this document. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Consortium Agreement, each party retains its autonomy to conduct research independently of this Agreement. Each party's rights, title and interest in its intellectual property and confidential information remains unaffected by the existence of this Consortium Agreement. Nothing in this Agreement is to be treated as creating a partnership, agency, trust, joint venture or otherwise.

## Functions

- Develop a global soil information system that provides open access to scientifically sound evidence and designed to be fully compatible with emerging systems for Earth observation and forecasting. The technical specifications are attached as an addendum to this Agreement.
- Collaborate for scientific exchange with all partners on digital soil mapping technical aspects, procedures and methodologies relating to the production of soil information
- Provide predictions of soil functional properties at a fine resolution for the entire terrestrial world. Meet contemporary and future data needs for quantitative analysis of natural resource problems.
- Make digital soil map data available online after agreements have been reached on data models, exchange schemas and custodianship.
- Promote a coordinated international network of soil archives with particular emphasis on baseline data necessary for the detection of environmental change.
- Provide guidelines and methods to enable open access to the best available soil information in a globally consistent form
- Facilitate arrangements for efficient online delivery of soil information into the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS)
- Provide a forum for assessing regional and global demand for improved soil information and release statements on the adequacy of the information base
- Advocate more effective incorporation of soil information into decision making at all scales to ensure more sustainable use of soil and land resources.

## Governance

*GlobalSoilMap.net* will have three levels of governance– (i) the Nodes, (ii) Consortium Executive, and the (iii) Scientific panel.

ISRIC – World Soil Information acts as the Consortium Executive and as secretariat for the Consortium; it has several functions relating to funding and operation, including:

- Coordinate scientific activities and promote and stimulate all *GlobalSoilMap.net* activities
- Achieve consensus on membership to each Node (e.g. nations, large organisations and universities)
- Encourage members of the Consortium to seek mutually beneficial opportunities for funding of projects that support the Consortium's goal
- ISRIC can be contacted, for follow-up of/correspondence on the agreement, at the following:

Address: Akkermaalsbos 12, 6708 WB Wageningen

Museum: Duivendaal 9, 6701 AR Wageningen

Post: PO Box 353, 6700 AJ Wageningen, The Netherlands

Phone: +31 (0)317 483 735

Fax: +31 (0)317 471 700

E-mail: [soil.isric@wur.nl](mailto:soil.isric@wur.nl)

The nodes form the core of the Consortium. Each node has a lead agency that is responsible for coordinating the *GlobalSoilMap.net* activities for the countries that are part of the node; this includes:

- Leadership in its broadest sense
- Convening all scientific and non-technical activities and providing digital infrastructure with data serving coordination and data centre function
- Maintain the necessary computing and spatial data infrastructure to ensure online serving of data and information from the Regional Node into the global system
- Stimulating of digital soil mapping activities including quality assurance, training and communication with soil and other organisations in the node
- Fund-raising activities for the node but also for individual soil and other centres
- Promoting a network of contributing agencies to each component of the global soil information system. Most such agencies will be national soil organisations.

The scientific panel will provide strategic advice to the Consortium Executive and the individual nodes. The scientific panel deals with all scientific issues and meets once or twice per year. The panel includes members working on the methodology for the establishment of the map, its derivatives and cyber infrastructure.

The terms of this Consortium Agreement will be reviewed by the Nodes and the Consortium Executive no later than December 2013.

This agreement will become effective as of the date of approval and will continue in effect for a period of 5 years which is currently the amount of time permitted under the statutory limitations. An extension of time will not be permitted. This agreement may be cancelled, renegotiated, amended, or modified by a written amendment through an exchange of correspondence or a new agreement between authorized officials of the signatory parties

## Annex

The following annex shall form an integral part of the present Agreement:

Annex A: Specific Provisions related to USDA, NRCS Authority

## Undersigned by:

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Dr Neil McKenzie  
Chief CSIRO Land and Water Division  
For: Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Australia

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Mario R. Reyes  
Sponsored Projects Administration  
For: Earth Institute, Columbia University, USA

.....  
Dr Pedro Arraes  
Direcot-president EMBRAPA  
For: Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária, Brazil

.....  
Prof Stephen Nortcliff  
The University of Reading, UK  
For: International Union of Soil Sciences, UK

.....  
Dr Renfang Shen  
Institute of Soil Science, Chinese Academy of Sciences, PR China  
For: Institute of Soil Science, Chinese Academy of Sciences, PR China

.....  
Dr Pierre Soler  
Chef du département "Milieux et Environnement"  
For: Institut de Recherche pour le Développement, France

.....  
Dr Prem Bindraban  
Director  
For: ISRIC - World Soil Information, Netherlands

.....  
Prof Leendert Hordijk  
Director IES  
For: Joint Research Centre, European Commission, Italy

.....  
Eloris Speight  
Deputy Chief for Management National Resource Conservation Service  
For: Natural Resource Conservation Service, US Department of Agriculture, USA

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Prof John Hearne  
Deputy Vice Chancellor (International)  
For: The University of Sydney, Australia

.....  
Dr Sanginga Nteranya  
Director TSBF-CIAT  
For: Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility Institute of Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical,  
Kenya/Colombia

## Annex A: Specific Provisions related to USDA, NRCS Authority

### USDA, NRCS Authority to Enter into this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Public Law 74-46, The Soil Conservation Act, dated April 27, 1935. The authority for soil surveys was made explicit in this Act. This Act directed the Secretary of Agriculture to coordinate and direct activities to provide for the protection of land resources against soil erosion and for other purposes. The Act also authorized the conduct of surveys, investigations, and research related to soil erosion. It also directed the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), now called the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The legal authority for the soil survey program of the United States Department of Agriculture was further clarified by this Act.

Public Law 89-560, Soil Surveys for Resource Planning and Development dated September 7, 1966.

### Benefit

That soil surveys are needed by "States and other public agencies in connection with community planning and resource development for protecting and improving the quality of the environment, meeting recreational needs, conserving land and water resources, providing for multiple uses of such resources, and controlling and reducing pollution from sediment and other pollutants in areas of rapidly changing uses."

The Secretary of Agriculture "shall make a reasonable effort to assure that the contributions of any State or other public agency under any cooperative agreement which may be entered into between the Secretary and such State or other public agency with respect to a soil survey shall be a substantial portion of the cost of such soil survey."

### Provisions

Employees of NRCS shall participate in efforts under this agreement solely as representatives of the United States. To this end, they shall not participate as directors, officers, employees or otherwise serve or hold themselves out as representatives. They also shall not assist with efforts to lobby Congress, or to raise money through fundraising efforts. Further, NRCS employees shall report to their immediate supervisor any negotiations concerning future employment and shall refrain from participation in efforts regarding such parties until approved by the agency.