



## *GlobalSoilMap.net* Statement of Principles

### 1. Preamble

*GlobalSoilMap.net* is a collaborative project that relies upon voluntary efforts and contributions by project participants. .

The success of this important project therefore rests on the ability of a wide variety of agencies, organizations, and individuals to work together in a collaborative and constructive manner. In order for this to occur, there must be a basis for mutual trust and respect founded on an agreed-upon set of principles and practices and a formal code of conduct (or ethics?).

- 1.1. This Code of Conduct defines standards with which *GlobalSoilMap.net* participants (hereafter called participants) should comply. It identifies mechanisms to ensure accountability in use of project resources. The Code aims to maintain and enhance standards throughout the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project community, ensuring public confidence in the integrity of individuals and Organisations comprising the participant community and in the quality and effectiveness of *GlobalSoilMap.net* programs.
- 1.2. Organisations which accept this Code aim to build creative and trusting relationships with project colleagues and external stakeholders and to meet program standards which:
  - give priority to the needs and interests of the people they serve;
  - encourage self help and self-reliance among project participants, thus avoiding the creation of dependency;
  - involve participant and partner groups to the maximum extent possible in the design, implementation and evaluation of projects and programs;
  - respect and foster internationally recognised human rights, both socio-economic and civil-political;
  - seek to enhance gender equity; and
  - are based on an understanding of the history and culture of the people served.
- 1.3. All participants are required to meet all legal obligations which are presumed in this Code. These obligations may include corporation laws, rules of incorporation of associations, fundraising and charitable institutions legislation, privacy legislation,



equal employment opportunity principles, occupational health and safety standards, anti discrimination legislation, intellectual property and copyright legislation and other codes of ethics.

## 2. Fundamental Principles

### 2.1. Service and Contribution to the Public Good

- The GlobalSoilMap.net consortium will be formed voluntarily and will be not-for-profit.
- The aim of the project will be to produce the best possible quality of information about spatial variation in soil properties for the entire world and to make this information easily available to all at no cost and with no restrictions on use.

### 2.2. Honesty and Integrity

- Participants must comply with all applicable laws and regulations of the countries, states and the local jurisdictions in which they are based or operate. They must also abide by all applicable international laws, regulations and conventions.
- In all of their activities, and particularly in their communications to the public, participants will accord due respect to the dignity, values, history, religion, and culture of the people with whom they work, consistent with principles of basic human rights.
- The participants will oppose and not be a willing party to wrongdoing, corruption, bribery, or other financial impropriety in any of their activities. They shall take prompt and firm corrective action whenever and wherever wrongdoing is found among their Governing Bodies, paid staff, contractors, volunteers or partner Organisations.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* consortium will have a formally adopted, written code of ethics with which all of its directors or trustees, staff and volunteers are familiar and to which they adhere.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* consortium will adopt and implement policies and procedures to ensure that all conflicts of interest, or the appearance thereof, within the organization and the board are appropriately managed through disclosure, recusal, or other means.
- The participants will have a policy to enable staff to confidentially bring to the attention of their Governing Body evidence of misconduct on the part of anyone associated with the Organisation. All reports must be channelled through the Chief Executive Officer unless it is an issue concerning the Chief Executive Officer which should be taken directly to a member of the Governing Body. Any “whistleblower” policy should specify that the organization will not retaliate against, and will protect the confidentiality of, individuals who make good-faith reports.



### 2.3. Professionalism

- Participants will conduct themselves in ways that do not denigrate other agencies or individuals, or make misleading or false public statements regarding such.
- Participants will be responsible for the integrity of their actions and, insofar as they can be affected, the actions of cooperating institutions and organizations.
- Participants accept that their behaviour is professional only to the extent that they subscribe to and practice ethical behaviour, as described herein.
- Participants will adopt and apply the best possible and most relevant methods and standards and will ensure that all methods used are fully documented, transparent to users and scientifically accepted by means of peer review.
- Participants agree that all methods and procedures will be open, fully described and documented and will be freely available for inspection or use by any other participants or contributors. There will be no hidden, secret or undocumented methods or results.

### 2.4. Trust, Respect and Collaboration

- Participants agree that the success of the project is dependent upon effective collaboration amongst participants, collaborators and stakeholders and that such effective collaboration can only occur within an environment of mutual respect, honesty and trust.
- Participants will operate on the principle of trust and respect for the local agencies or individuals who have produced, or who exercise control over, soil data for any given area or region. These data will not be used without their involvement and permission and will only be used in accordance with their wishes.
- Participants in the GlobalSoilMap.net project will agree to respect and value the opinions and expertise of all contributors and co-operators and will not engage in any activities that would undermine or diminish the efforts of other participants.

### 2.5. Fairness and Equity

- Participants have a responsibility to treat one another and stakeholders in a fundamentally fair and equitable manner.
- Participants will strive to obtain, analyze and record all relevant information without prejudice or bias

### 2.6. Social and Environmental Responsibility

- Participants will adopt policies and procedures to protect and promote the health, safety and well being of all individuals involved in their programs,
- Participants will develop and implement policies and procedures that place a particular emphasis on safeguarding and minimising the risk of abuse of children.
- Participants will seek to enhance gender equity in a manner that is sensitive to the history and culture of the local communities within which they operate.



- Participants will seek to promote social equality in a manner that is sensitive to the history and culture of the local communities within which they operate.
- Participants will develop and implement policies and procedures that exhibit respect for the environment and that minimize or mitigate any adverse affects on the environment connected to project activities.

#### 2.7. Education and Technology Transfer

- Project participants recognize an obligation to provide education and technology transfer to agencies and individuals who participate in the project through the contribution of data, personnel or expertise.
- Project participants believe in, and are committed to, educating resident individuals to improve their abilities to understand, produce, maintain, interpret and use the data and information that the project will generate.
- Project participants acknowledge a duty to train students and the general public to ensure effective use and maintenance of the data produced.
- Data will not simply be taken away from local regions for the benefit of external locations. Local benefits will be ensured by providing the training and technologies needed to retain and make effective local use of any generated information.

#### 2.8. Personal and Financial Accountability

- Project participants will accept responsibility for their actions and be accountable to those who place their trust in them.
- Funds and other resources designated for project purposes will be used only for those purposes and will not be used to promote a particular religious adherence or to support a political party, or to promote a candidate or organisation affiliated to a political party.

### 3. Standards of Practice

#### 3.1. Accuracy and Relevance

- The GlobalSoilMap.net project will establish documented specifications and standards for its final output products that participants must agree to adhere to.
- The GlobalSoilMap.net project will not impose upon any contributor any demands that products must be produced according to any specific methodology or technique. Contributors will be free to select for themselves the methods and procedures they feel are most appropriate to their situations.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project will obtain and record only information that is relevant and appropriate to the prediction of the soil properties identified in the project specifications.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project will strive to accurately record all relevant information.



### 3.2. Confidentiality

- All information provided to the project on a confidential or restricted access basis will be protected in order to foster and maintain a relationship of trust amongst project participants. Such information will only be used or viewed within the constraints imposed by the provider and will not be released or distributed unless authorization to do so is received.
- Data and information collected as a part of specific research projects will not be released, cited or described until such time as the research results have achieved publication and the data have been released for general access by the collector.
- Any confidential information that comes into the possession of project participants by unauthorized means will be immediately returned to the rightful owner with an assurance that no unauthorized copies were made or continue to reside with the recipient.
- All documents or databases that contain confidential information are to be clearly marked “confidential”.
- Outside parties, such as vendors, consultants and other external agencies shall understand and agree to comply with the project’s confidentiality policies before gaining access to institutional data.
- The project shall develop policies and procedures to address the sharing of data and information amongst other institutions and project participants.

### 3.3. Collection of Data

- The collection of all information will be done lawfully, respecting all applicable laws and institutional policies.
- GlobalSoilMap.net recognizes the right of the agencies or organizations that produced any data that may potentially be used in the project to exercise control over how, and indeed if, these data are accessed and used by the project.
- Participants agree that ownership and control of all original data collected for use by the project remain with the agencies that collected it or provided it.
- Participants agree to ensure that all data collected and stored in digital form by the project will be made available for local archiving and use in this digital form.
- Participant researchers will be experts on the reliability of sources (print, electronic, and otherwise), as well as the sources utilized by third parties to gather information on their behalf.
- Participant researchers will not evade or avoid questions about their affiliations or purpose when requesting information in person, over the phone, electronically, or in writing.
- It is recommended that requests for public or privately held information be made on institutional stationary and that these requests clearly identify the requestor.



- Participants should use the usual and customary methods of payment or reimbursement for products or services purchased on behalf of their institutions.
- Participant researchers who are employed full-time for an institution and also perform consulting services should develop clear understandings with their primary employers about the use of the employers financial and human resources.

#### 3.4. Recording and Maintenance of Data

- Participants will store only information relevant and appropriate to project goals and deliverables.
- Participants will establish and implement policies and procedures to protect and preserve important documents and business records.
- Routine file maintenance of duplicate documents will be done on a regular basis and original or unique files will not be routinely purged.
- Unneeded or un-useful documents will be not be preserved and may be shredded or otherwise destroyed. Staff will be responsible for managing electronic files as determined by institutional policy.
- Participant researchers will work with report authors and contactors to insure content is truthful and can be read and understood by the original data providers or stakeholders.
- Original data providers have the right to access, view and review their own paper and electronic files.
- Information from published reports and data sources may be shared without restriction with colleagues and participants from other institutions.
- Participants will use sensible security to protect information stored in hard files.
- Participants will use passwords and other software security measures to limit access to electronic constituent files to the appropriate personnel.
- Special efforts such as file annotation, concealment of phone numbers, etc. will be used to protect the identity of anonymous donors.

#### 3.5. Production of New Data

- GlobalSoilMap.net methods and procedures used to produce any new data will be open, fully described and documented and freely available for inspection or use by any other participants or contributors.
- There will be no hidden, secret or undocumented methods or results.
- All new data produced for or by the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project will be considered to belong in the public domain and will be made available freely and at no cost.
- There will be no constraints on methods that can be used to produce new soil data for the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project but any new data produced must conform to the agreed-upon standards of content and structure.
- New data will only be produced for a given area with the permission and cooperation of the relevant authorities for that geographic region of interest.



### 3.6. Distribution and Use of Data

- Participants will adhere to all applicable laws, as well as to institutional policies, regarding the use and distribution of information assembled for, or produced by, the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project.
- All pre-existing data assembled, or used, by the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project remains the property of the institution or agency for which it was collected and shall not be released or distributed to persons other than those authorized to use it in the performance of their duties within the context of the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project.

### 3.7. Effective Governance

- Participants will make information about their operations, including governance, finances, programs and activities, widely available to the public.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project's governing instrument (constitution, articles of association, rules, bylaws or similar documents) will be consistent with legislative requirements and set forth the Organisation's basic goals and purposes, define membership, governance structure of the Organisation including the frequency of meetings (at least two a year) and the size of a quorum.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project will have a governing body elected/appointed by members from within the membership/supporters. The Governing Body will approve the annual budget and may delegate authority to staff or others but must accept ultimate responsibility for governance over all aspects of the Organisation. There should be clearly defined lines of authority between the Governing Body and management.
- There will be written policies covering appointment, termination and, where applicable, remuneration of members of the Governing Body.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project will have policies restricting the number of paid staff who are voting members of the Governing Body.
- Members of the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project, paid staff, and volunteers will make known to the Governing Body any conflict of interest or any affiliation they might have with an actual or potential supplier of goods and services, recipient of grant funds or Organisation with competing or conflicting objectives.
- Members of the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project and paid staff will absent themselves from discussion and abstain from voting or otherwise participating in the decision on any issue in which there is a conflict of interest.
- Large or otherwise inappropriate gifts to members of the Governing Body or staff for personal use shall be forbidden.
- Due regard will be given to the human rights and personal safety of staff, partners and aid recipients, legal requirements regarding privacy and confidentiality, proprietary information and personnel matters.



- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project will hold an annual general meeting of its members as defined in its governing instrument and which meets the requirements of the legislation under which the Organisation is incorporated. The AGM will receive the annual audited financial statements and appoint an independent auditor for the subsequent year(s).

### 3.8. Personnel and Management Practice

- Participants will adhere to all applicable laws, as well as to institutional policies, regarding the use and distribution of information assembled for, or produced by, the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project will seek to achieve best practice in its personnel policies in response to initiatives in the aid sector and to changes in working and legal environments.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project will have well defined policies and procedures relating to paid staff including expatriate and local staff employed overseas and volunteers working in country or overseas. These policies and procedures will clearly define and protect the rights and safety of personnel assuring fair treatment in all matters.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project's expectations of its employees' and volunteers' professional conduct shall be clearly communicated and consistent with the requirements of the Code of Conduct.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project will be committed to continuous improvement in its management practice including the provision of regular opportunities for employees for training and professional development.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project will have policies and strategies to promote gender equity especially in senior positions in the management and governance of the project.

### 3.9. Financial Oversight

- The Organisation will have internal control procedures which minimise the risk of misuse of funds. Reporting mechanisms which facilitate accountability to members, donors and the general public will be used.
- The Organisation will have adequate procedures for the review and monitoring of income and expenditure.
- Loans to and transactions with Governing Body members shall be publicly disclosed. Loans to staff shall be disclosed to the Governing Body.
- Notwithstanding any other legal requirements, the Organisation must publish in their Annual Report, financial statements prepared in accordance with accepted accounting practices.





- Summary Financial Reports and Full Financial Reports must be audited by at least a qualified accountant. The Auditors statement must accompany the financial report in the Annual Report.
- Where only the Summary Financial Report is published in the Annual Report and not the Full Financial Report, the Annual Report must make reference to the fact that the Full Financial Report is available on request. Any other publications that detail, summarise, or comment on financial performance must also indicate that the Full Financial Report is available on request.

### 3.10. Responsible Fundraising

- Fundraising solicitations will be truthful, will accurately describe the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project's identity, purpose, programs, and needs and will only make claims which the project can fulfil.
- There will be no material omissions or exaggerations of fact, no use of misleading photographs, nor any other communication which would tend to create a false impression or misunderstanding.
- In all fundraising activities initiated or authorised by it, the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project will have policies set up to protect donors' rights to:
  - proper and complete acknowledgement of support, if desired;
  - have their names deleted from mailing lists;
  - have their names deleted from mailing lists the Organisation may intend to share;
  - be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, paid staff or agents of the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project;
  - be informed about the causes for which funds are being raised;
  - get information on the application of their donation; and
  - be able to identify collectors and have documentation confirming the bona fides of the Organisation.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project will be responsible for all fundraising activities outsourced to a third party and will put all such contracts and agreements in writing.
- Donations shall be used as promised or implied in fundraising appeals or as requested by the donor. When funding is invited from the general public for a specific purpose, the *GlobalSoilMap.net* project shall have a plan for handling any excess and shall make this known as part of the appeal.
- The *GlobalSoilMap.net* project shall substantiate; upon request, that its use and application of funds is in accordance with donor intent or request.