

**ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE  
Soil Protection Working Group  
FOR THE PERIOD 2021-2022  
(BETWEEN THE XVI AND XVII MEETINGS OF THE ALPINE  
CONFERENCE)**

## **1. Overview of the mandate given by the XVI Alpine Conference**

Summary of the objectives according to the 2021-2022 mandate or work programme

- Data harmonisation and monitoring: Support the process to establish a network between the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC), the Alpine Convention, Alpine Countries and Regions, as well as other relevant bodies which coordinate and harmonize data collection, management, and evaluation in the course of the LUCAS Soil surveys.
- Intensify exchange and awareness raising on soil protection.
- Develop a long-term action plan for the implementation of provisions and declarations on soil protection in the specific context of the Alpine region (LTAP). In this context attention will be paid to the interaction of qualitative and quantitative aspects of soil protection and the effects of climate change.

The Soil Protection Working Group was chaired by Austria.

## **2. Meetings**

Summary of the meetings held (date, place, main topics and milestones)

The Soil Protection Working Group met eight times, including two technical meetings, during the mandate period. In these meetings, all topics foreseen by the mandate were tackled.

- 14 December 2020, online: 1<sup>st</sup> soil protection technical meeting on LUCAS Soil 2022: statements from the Alps on improving the LUCAS soil sampling with focus on representativity of the Alpine area (location of sampling sites, sampling methods, topics, cooperation with other soil monitoring schemes), one main result being 440 additional soil sampling sites within the AC perimeter during the LUCAS soil survey 2022 and a significantly improved distribution also on high elevation (118 sites above 1.500 m).

- 17 March 2021, online: agreement on the mandate implementation and work plan, data harmonization and monitoring (review of last mandate and 1<sup>st</sup> technical WG meeting and its results, presentation by the EU about LUCAS Soil), exchange (Alpine Soil Partnership, European Land and Soil Alliance and EU Soil Observatory), implementation pathways of the Alpine Climate Target System, LTAP first steps (discussion on the process, structure and core topics), awareness-raising (ideas for events, if the sanitary situation would allow it, agreement on translation of the FAO's "Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management").
- 16 June 2021, online: soil function maps (example soil function maps and evaluation in Austria, exchange on situation in Alpine States and Regions, first ideas for exchange and joint workshop with WG Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development), data harmonization and monitoring (needs for LUCAS soil 2022 and news from the EU regarding soil protection, JRC IACS data sharing initiative for soil), LTAP (agreement on the structure, topics, and involvement of other bodies), exchange (AlpSP, WG Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development, AlpPlan network, PLANET), awareness-raising and updates (Alpine Soil Newsletter, MAP, Alpine Soil Film Tour, further events, FAO Guidelines, Eurosoil).
- 6 September 2021, online: 2<sup>nd</sup> soil protection technical meeting on LUCAS Soil 2022: discussions and preparation for further qualitative improvements for soil sampling in mountainous areas during the LUCAS soil survey 2022 as hints from the Alps for taking soil samples in Alpine/mountainous terrain during the seminar for LUCAS coordinators in February 2022.
- 2/3 November 2021, online (after having been planned in Bolzano/Bozen including a joint session with the WG SPSD): exchange and awareness-raising (updates regarding all activities mentioned for the previous meeting and the German soil of the year), data harmonization and monitoring (update LUCAS soil and presentation of the project LUCASSA), LTAP (distribution of the chapters between the WG members), joint session with the Working Group Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development to discuss the topic soil functions and spatial planning regarding which the two groups then jointly organised the public workshop in Munich in March 2022.
- 12 January 2022, online: focus topic LTAP of with the foreseen content for the thematical chapters were presented and discussed by the members.
- 10 March 2022, online: the draft LTAP was discussed, development of the new mandate for the Working Group, updates (WS soil functions and spatial planning, MAP, AlpSP, LUCAS Soil 2022, WG timeline).
- 4 May 2022, online: LTAP (discussion of the proposed actions and agreement on the final version of the LTAP including a written process), content presentations and

discussions (sampling soils in mountain terrains, Alpine peatlands), updates (WS soil functions and spatial planning, new mandate).

### 3. Activities carried out

Synthetic description of further activities carried out (including outreach and communication activities)

- Two expert meetings for improving the Alpine representativity in the European survey LUCAS soil (see above).
- The long-term action plan for the implementation of provisions and declarations on soil protection in the specific context of the Alpine region (LTAP) has been developed through a collaborative process of the whole Working Group. Additionally, two consultation processes were undertaken during which the other TWB of the Alpine Convention, Observer organisations of the Convention, EUSALP AG6, the Alpine Soil Partnership, the European Land and Soil Alliance and the networks Oppla and PLANET were given the opportunity to hand in feedback, firstly about the topics and secondly regarding the completed draft of the LTAP.
- The workshop “Soil functions and spatial planning in the Alps” was organized in Munich/DE on 29-30 March 2022 together with the Working Group Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development. A joint meeting of both WGs took place to exchange about the topic of soil function maps in spatial planning and envisaged content for the workshop in Munich prior to the event.
- Two editions in 2021 and one edition so far in 2022 of the “Alpine Soil Newsletter” were developed and published in cooperation with the Alpine Soil Partnership.
- The FAO “Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management” in German and Slovenian languages, including a preface from the Alps were translated and are in the process of being published.

### 4. Outputs and results

Description of the main outputs and results achieved

- Data harmonisation and monitoring: Alpine representativity within the European soil survey LUCAS soil 2022 was improved: 440 additional soil sampling sites within the AC perimeter during the LUCAS soil survey 2022 and a significantly improved distribution also on high elevation (118 sites above 1.500 m), furthermore

inputs for qualitative improvements for soil sampling in mountainous areas were given in a written way and presented to coordinators of the survey.

- The LTAP was developed (see above and attached).
- The workshop “Soil functions and spatial planning in the Alps” with the Working Group Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development and joint a meeting of both WGs took place (see above and documentation attached).
- Three editions of the “Alpine Soil Newsletter” were published (see above).
- FAO “Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management” were translated into German and Slovenian languages (see above).

## 5. Cooperation

Description of cooperation developed with other Alpine Convention bodies and further relevant partners and processes, and of the resulting benefits

- Exchanges with and presentations by the Working Group:  
2021: Austrian Soil Forum in Mai, EUSALP AG6 meeting in July, Geneva EUROSIL 2021 in August, Austrian national Committee on the Alpine Convention in September, first European Soil Observatory Stakeholder Forum in October, Annual Meeting of the Alpine Soil Partnership Austrian National Committee on the Alpine Convention and the Austrian national EUSALP Coordination Committee in December.  
2022: Awareness raising event about the Alpine Convention in Lower Austria and seminar for LUCAS soil coordinators in February, workshop of CIPRA Austria about the Protocol Soil Conservation in May.
- The collaboration with the Alpine Soil Partnership (AlpSP) was continued actively by mutually participating in meetings as well as through joint activities such as the newly established “Alpine Soil Newsletter” and further activities.
- In cooperation with the FAO and the AlpSP the FAO “Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management” have been translated and will be published in the two previously missing Alpine languages German and Slovenian.
- The workshop “Soil functions and spatial planning in the Alps” with the Working Group Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development and a joint meeting of both WGs took place (see above and attached).
- Two consultation phases with other bodies and external networks were undertaken during the establishment of the LTAP (see details above).

- In addition to the above-mentioned cooperation partners updates or presentations were also given during WG meetings from the following partners: ELSA, ACB (including the regular presence of the soil implementation pathway caretaker), the AlpPlan network and PLANET and from the project “Alpine peatlands and climate protection”.

## 6. Attachments

List of the documents attached to this report, such as papers proposed for approval by the XVII Alpine Conference (thematic reports, guidelines, statements etc.) and supporting documents (workshop proceedings, survey reports, communication materials etc.). *Please kindly provide a PDF file of each attachment. Do not include the minutes of regular meetings!*

- Summary of statements from the Alps and summary from the Soil Protection Technical Working Group meetings regarding the LUCAS Soil survey 2022.
- Long-term action plan for the implementation of provisions and declarations on soil protection in the specific context of the Alpine region (LTAP)
- Workshop documentation: Soil functions and spatial planning in the Alps, Munich/DE, 29-30 March 2022 (which was jointly organized with the WG Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development).
- Three editions of the "Alpine Soil Newsletter".