

# Declaration of Intent\*

## in support of the International Initiative



In the continuity of the Paris Climate Agreement signed at COP 21 in 2015 (Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) and the global movement for soil health, we, governments, representatives of farmers and agricultural sectors, international organizations, scientific and technical research institutes, local government authorities, development banks, foundations, private businesses and non-governmental organizations confirm our willingness to work for the transition towards a productive and highly resilient agriculture based on appropriate soil management, which is essential for soil health, as emphasized in the World Soil Charter.

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*\* This two-page declaration of intent was put up for signature in December 2015 when the Initiative was created. As such it is also referred to as the "Paris Declaration".*

We,

- emphasize the need to ensure food security, to adapt agriculture to climate change and to ensure the availability of food in quantity and quality, the sustainable management of natural resources, economic and social development and the safeguarding of material heritage,
- note that over 33% of the world's soil are threatened by soil degradation and that climate change is accelerating this process; an increase in soil carbon stock through an increase of soil organic matter could reverse this process and promote adaptation to climate change with multiple co-benefits,
- recognize the role that forests, agroforestry and integration of trees in landscapes play in the build-up and conservation of soil carbon stocks,
- wish to make maximum use of the potential of agriculture to ensure food security by adapting to climate change while at the same time contributing to limitation of greenhouse gases concentration in the atmosphere, as a complement to the necessary efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions globally and generally throughout the economy,
- Recall that maintaining carbon-rich soils and restoring and improving degraded agricultural soils are essential to develop our ability to feed an estimated 9.5 billion people by 2050. Healthy soils are needed for food production and the provision of other essential ecosystem services,
- Recall that farming practices, soil health management systems and landscape development that enhance soil carbon, such as agroecology for example, contribute to the preservation of natural resources and biodiversity,

- acknowledge that increasing, or maintaining according to the prevailing conditions, the carbon content of agricultural soils is a major challenge for agricultural and sustainable development policies,
- emphasize the need for robust monitoring and assessment systems based on scientific evidence and the need for appropriate investments in research in order to properly guide our actions,
- wish to mobilize to facilitate the participation of farmers and ranchers, rural communities and all stakeholders in soil management to fully participate in this dynamic and to implement farming and landscape practices suited to local conditions and national issues with the aim of conserving or increasing the carbon content of soils,
- Recall the importance of funding and funds distribution programs to support adoption of these new practices and the mobilization of stakeholders at all levels, seeking an efficient use of existing financial mechanisms in the areas of development, climate and combating land degradation,
- Recall the necessity of protecting existing legitimate land rights, including informal rights, and their holders, in coherence with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (CFS 2012) and the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS 2014),
- remain convinced that action and commitment of all stakeholders in the agricultural and land-management sectors will enable the promotion of implementation of adapted policies and the channeling of appropriate funding towards the various components of this initiative.

We fully support the "4 per 1000: Soils for Food Security and Climate" initiative.

We recognize, in regard to our respective missions and mandates, the need:

- to strengthen our public policies, our tools and our actions to foster sustainable and inclusive agricultural and rural development that provides for the implementation of practices that maintain or enhance carbon stocks in agricultural soils,
- to encourage the launch and continuation of research programs in order to improve knowledge of soil carbon storage, to assess the performance of farming practices and methods of restoring degraded lands with regard to carbon storage,
- to support a participatory approach to build innovative solutions and their adoption for the benefit of farmers and the general population, particularly through training and education programs, and
- to share our projects, actions, experiences and results in this area, in particular research results, through a common platform and to organize regular meetings for discussion and stock-taking with the support of a scientific and technical committee.

We commit to support a formal governance structures (described in the following pages) based on an inclusive and transparent process that guarantees the equitable and fair participation of the different stakeholders and takes into consideration the need to collaborate with other existing relevant initiatives by seeking for synergies with them on the issue of soil health, wherever possible.

Name of Signatory:

Signatory's position:

Country or organization of signatory:

Done at:

on:

Signature:

# Annex\*\* on the creation and operation of the Consortium “4 per 1000: Soils for Food Security and Climate”

## Preamble

1. The international Initiative "4 per 1000: Soils for Food Security and Climate" (hereinafter referred to as "the Initiative") was launched on December 1, 2015 at Le Bourget on the occasion of the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
2. The Initiative seeks to address the following three issues:
  - Improvement of food security by enhancing soil fertility and combating land degradation
  - Adaptation of agriculture to climate change
  - Mitigation of climate change.
3. The aim of the Initiative is to improve levels of organic matter content and foster carbon sequestration in soils, through the implementation of farming methods appropriate to, and reflecting local conditions, including criteria relating to environmental, social and economic issues, thereby contributing to the preservation of rich soils and the restoration of vulnerable, desertified soils, while respecting existing legitimate land tenure rights, including informal rights, and their holders, consistent with the Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (Committee on Food Security, 2012) and the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS, 2014).
4. The Initiative reflects a common will to strengthen existing synergies and points of coherence between the three Rio Conventions, the Sustainable Development Goals adopted on 25 September 2015, the Committee on World Food Security and the Global Soil Partnership, and in line with the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).
5. The recognition of the Initiative as one of the 6 initiatives of the agricultural component of the Lima - Paris Agenda for Action testifies to the priority assigned to the setting of ambitious targets for the climate and food security. Its inclusion encourages a continuation of the mobilization of state and non-state partners for the implementation and follow-up of programs generating practical impacts in terms of both adaptation and mitigation.
6. By signing the Declaration of Intent in support of the Initiative presented on December 1, 2015 in Paris (hereinafter "the Paris Declaration"), over 160 organizations committed "to put in place a formal governance structure through an inclusive and transparent process guaranteeing equitable and fair participation of various stakeholders and taking into consideration the need to collaborate with existing relevant initiatives by seeking synergies with them on the soil health issues, wherever possible. "
7. This document reflects this common political will.

## Goals of the Initiative

8. The goals of the Initiative are defined by the Paris Declaration.
9. To achieve those goals, the partners of the Initiative will endeavor to collaborate in order to:
  - create a multi-actor platform that will strengthen exchanges, partnerships and the capitalization of experiences between actors around the implementation of concrete actions. The collaborative work will focus in particular on:
    - information sharing,
    - the exchange of good practices,
    - the design of projects or policies,
    - promotion or funding of actions.

The community will be structured around an electronic discussion space (internet forum) and thematic or regional meetings of the Initiative.

- develop a system for collective expertise on projects based on a set of reference criteria compliant with the principles and objectives of the Initiative;
- define and implement a system aimed at facilitating project funding, based on the previous actions.
- build an international research and scientific cooperation program on the "4 per 1000", to be deployed in four parallel directions:
  - spatialized knowledge of the mechanisms and potential for organic carbon sequestration in soils,
  - the definition and co-construction at different scales of agronomic and forestry strategies aimed at the Initiative's objectives,
  - the development and evaluation of incentives to encourage the transition to these practices,
  - the design and implementation of straightforward methods for monitoring changes in soil carbon content.

Although this program can be carried out within the framework of the Initiative, it may be steered in accordance with provisions specific to those doing the research and may involve organizations that are not part of the Initiative.

- create a digital resource center on the themes and topics of the Initiative. This digital resource center will make available to the public scientific data and results, training resources, good practice guides, etc.

Execution of the above actions will prioritize the search for synergies with the existing initiatives and programs.

## Constitution of a Consortium

10. The organizations signatory to this Declaration of Intent shall form a "4 per 1000: Soils for Food Security and Climate" Consortium (hereinafter referred to as "the Consortium") in order to implement the actions specific to the Initiative with the support of the Executive Secretariat. The members of the Consortium will endeavor to foster and strengthen collaborations among themselves and with other interested organizations for the implementation of actions that meet the goals of the Initiative.
11. The Consortium is a voluntary cooperative organization and does not create any rights or legally binding obligations between its members or with regard to any other organization. The Consortium is not an entity with legal personality.

## Consortium membership

12. The following may become Consortium members: national governments, regional and international public-sector organizations, local government or community bodies, scientific and technical bodies, research and educational institutions, professional agricultural organizations, development banks and funds, civil society organizations and other nonprofit bodies, always provided that they adhere and contribute to the Initiative's principles and goals as defined in the Paris Declaration.
13. The members of the Consortium shall be the organizations defined in paragraph 12 above that are signatories of the present document or which have formally notified to the Secretariat their application to become Consortium members.
14. Consortium members shall notify a single contact point to the Executive Secretariat. The list of Consortium members will be regularly updated by the Executive Secretariat.
15. Taking as a basis paragraphs 12 and 13, the Consortium shall validate by consensus the membership of the organizations that request it. The Executive Secretariat shall notify accession to the Consortium or the rejection of the application. By way of derogation, members who signed the declaration of intent before the date of the first meeting of the Consortium (November 17, 2016) shall be automatically deemed to enjoy membership as founding members.
16. The participation of each member in the activities of the Consortium is voluntary and each member can determine at its level the nature and degree of its involvement. Members may indicate to the Executive Secretariat the actions they wish to carry out in favor of the goals of the Initiative and how they wish to be involved in the activities of the Consortium.
17. Members may leave the Consortium at any time, if they so wish, simply by sending a written notification to the

Executive Secretariat.

18. Members may be excluded from the Consortium if their activities run counter to the goals of the Initiative as defined in the Paris Declaration, or where conflicts of interest arise between their activities and those goals. Such exclusion shall be adopted by consensus of the other members of the Consortium.

## Governance of the Consortium

### Decisions of the Consortium

19. The Consortium shall take, in response to proposals from the Executive Secretariat, decisions concerning the general framework and orientations of the Initiative and all decisions necessary to its satisfactory operation. Decisions shall be taken on the basis of a consensus of the members present as defined in paragraphs 12 et seq. The minimum number of votes that must be present or represented (the quorum) shall be defined in bylaws.
20. Where the above consensus is not achieved, it shall be possible to apply ad hoc decisions making arrangements.
21. The Consortium may meet in colleges. Where applicable, the bylaws shall determine the organizational and operational arrangements for such colleges.
22. The Consortium may notably adopt:
- the annual work program of the Initiative;
  - an annual overview of the Initiative's progress;
  - the annual operating budget, in response to a proposal from the Executive Secretariat;
  - the set of reference criteria for project evaluation, in response to a proposal from the Scientific and Technical Committee;
  - the list of new members of the Consortium and partners of the Forum.
23. In addition, the Consortium may determine:
- the implementation of additional actions to those foreseen in the present declaration of intent;
  - changes in the governance of the Consortium and the adoption of additional procedures.
24. The Consortium will meet at the initiative of the Executive Secretariat at least once a year.
25. Subject to the agreement of the Presidency of the Consortium, the Executive Secretariat may ballot the members of the Consortium by electronic means.

### Presidency of the Consortium

26. The presidency of the Consortium (from January 1, 2021) will be held by a group of 3 personalities appointed by consensus from among the members of the Consortium, whose functions will follow each other in the manner of a noria between the incoming vice-president, the president and the outgoing vice-president.
27. The mandate will be of 3 times 2 years in order to ensure continuity of action and relative stability of the presidency.
28. On December 31, 2020, the incumbent Vice President shall become President, the incumbent President shall become the outgoing Vice President, and the newly appointed Vice President shall assume her/his mandate at the Presidency as the incoming Vice President.
29. The President of the Consortium shall preside over the meetings of the members of the Consortium. The president may be assisted by the vice-presidents, who may substitute for her/him when necessary.

### Bureau of the Consortium

30. At the request of the Consortium at its 4th meeting, a bureau has been created to provide the Initiative with a body to support and advise the work of the Presidency and the Executive Secretariat, within the framework of the operational program of the initiative between meetings of the Consortium.
31. The missions of the Bureau will be to manage processes with the Executive Secretariat (examination of applications for membership as a partner or member of the Initiative, elaboration and implementation of the procedure for the

renewal of the members of the Scientific and Technical Committee), to participate in the strategic reflections for the Initiative by preparing supporting documents, to contribute to the preparation of the roadmap and the annual work program, to animate the colleges of the partners and the members of the Initiative particularly between two meetings of the Consortium, to support the Executive Secretariat, and possibly the Scientific and Technical Committee, in the search for partnerships at the level of the actions (programs, projects), at the scientific level and at the financial level for the functioning of the Initiative and for the actions/projects and scientific activities and to carry out any action that the Consortium will wish to entrust to it.

32. The Bureau will be composed of 13 members, of whom 8 are titular and 5 are substitutes, including the President or a Vice-President of the Consortium, the President or a Vice-President of the STC, the Executive Secretary or his representative, as well as 1, or in some cases 2, member(s) per college of the Consortium + 1 substitute, trying to respect a balanced regional distribution. The members of the Bureau are elected for a term of 2 years and may not serve more than two consecutive terms.
33. The meetings of the Bureau will be convened and chaired by the President (or the Vice-President) and will generally be held by electronic means such as videoconferences and between sessions of the Consortium. The agendas of the meetings of the Bureau will be prepared by the Executive Secretariat.

## **The Forum of Partners of the Initiative (hereinafter referred to as the “Forum”)**

34. The Forum shall be the body in which partnerships and strengthened collaborative actions are built up between Consortium members and other partners of the Initiative. It shall be consulted on the general framework for the Initiative, its orientations and its operation, in addition to any other issue considered relevant by Consortium members.
35. The following may become members of the Forum: national governments, regional and international public-sector organizations, local government or community bodies, scientific and technical bodies, research and educational institutions, professional agricultural organizations, civil society organizations, foundations and private companies, always provided that they express their willingness to share the Initiative’s principles and goals as defined in the Paris Declaration.
36. Organizations that are signatories of the Paris Declaration will be welcome as partners of the Forum. All other organizations meeting the conditions defined in the preceding paragraph may apply to the Secretariat to participate in the Forum. A list of new Forum partners shall be submitted to the members of the Consortium for their decision.
37. Partners may leave the Forum at any time, if they so wish, simply by sending a written notification to the Executive Secretariat.
38. The Forum may comprise five colleges in order to elicit and to reinforce discussion and collaboration:
- National governments, local government bodies, international and regional organizations and development banks ;
  - Research and educational bodies ;
  - Organisations of agricultural producers ;
  - Civil society organizations and non-profit organizations ;
  - Commercial or for-profit organizations.

The Executive Secretariat shall notify the partners of the Forum, their college to which they belong.

39. A “group of financing bodies” may be set up in order to facilitate coordination between potential funding bodies, in particular for communication to project promoters. This group of financing bodies may be consulted on any issue concerning the funding of projects for the Initiative. The following may be members of this group: national governments, regional and international public-sector organizations, local government or community bodies, financial institutions, in addition to any other member able to contribute to the funding of the Initiative.
40. The President of the Consortium shall chair the meetings of the Forum. The President may be assisted by one of the vice-presidents of the Consortium, who may substitute for her or him if necessary.
41. The Forum shall be convened at the initiative of the executive Secretariat at least once annually and may be consulted by electronic means. The Forum may also be organized as a digital community (Internet Forum).

## **Scientific and Technical Committee (hereinafter referred to the “STC”)**

42. The STC will provide scientific and technical support to the Consortium members.

43. Specifically, the STC shall be able to:

- propose to the members of the Consortium, on the basis of the orientations defined by the Consortium, a set of reference criteria for the evaluation of projects and actions founded on the principles and goals of the Initiative as defined in the Paris Declaration, as well as on the Sustainable Development Goals ;
- formulate opinions or advice on projects, actions or programs, at the request of the Executive Secretariat;
- formulate proposals on the orientations of the international research and scientific cooperation program and on any transversal issue submitted by the Executive Secretariat;
- contribute to the resource center in conjunction with the Executive Secretariat, and, upon referral by the Executive Secretariat, to validate the posting of documents online.

44. The Committee will be composed of a maximum of 14 scientists, internationally recognized for their scientific or technical expertise on topics relevant to the “4 per 1000” Initiative. The members of the STC shall have expertise in the following disciplinary fields: soil sciences, carbon and organic matter cycle, agronomy, livestock farming, forestry, economics, political science and sociology, with the following areas of application: adaptation to climate change, food security and sustainable development in its various economic, social and environmental aspects. The composition of the STC shall assign a significant role to expertise in the field. It shall be balanced between the various regions of the world and will ensure parity between men and women.

STC members shall be appointed by decision of the members of the Consortium for a term of two years, renewable twice at the most, on the proposal of the Bureau after analysis of the candidacies by the Executive Secretariat and consultation of the college of research and educational bodies.

45. The STC will carry out its assigned tasks by means of physical and virtual meetings, with the support of the Executive Secretariat. The members of the STC may designate from among themselves a Chair and one or more Vice-Chairs of the STC. The Chair and Vice-Chair(s) of the STC may participate in meetings of the Consortium members and in meetings of the Forum.

46. Declarations of interest shall be produced by the members of the STC and filed with the Executive Secretariat. They shall be updated at least once a year.

47. The STC may consult and/or invite any expert or stakeholder it deems useful for its work.

## **Consortium, Forum and STC bylaws**

48. Bylaws shall specify the rules relating to the Consortium, the Forum and the STC. They will be adopted by the members of the Consortium on the proposal of the Executive Secretariat, after the opinion of the relevant body. The bylaws relating to the CST will specify in particular the rules relating to the declarations of interest of the STC members as well as the procedure for drawing up the advice or opinions of the STC.

## **The Executive Secretariat**

49. The Initiative’s Executive Secretariat shall seek to ensure the implementation of the actions conducted under the Initiative and shall provide support to the Consortium members, the Forum and the STC.

50. More specifically, the Executive Secretariat will:

- prepare, convene and organize meetings of the Consortium members, the Forum and the Committee;
- ensure the consistency between the different components of the Initiative;
- monitor the activities of the Initiative and report on the latter to the Consortium and the Forum;
- foster communication between the members of the Initiative, notably by organizing thematic and/or regional workshops, electronic consultations and leading internet discussion forum;
- facilitate the connection between funders and project promoters;
- promote the Initiative, the goals it pursues and the actions of its members;
- maintain, drive and provide content for the Initiative website, including the resource center;
- prepare the annual budget to be submitted for approval by the members of the Consortium;
- implement the budget approved by the members of the Consortium and produce an annual report on the resources, notably financial, mobilized for the various activities, and the origin of those resources.

51. The human, financial and material resources of the Executive Secretariat may be provided by the members of the Consortium on a voluntary basis. The staff made available to it by the members shall continue to be paid by them.
52. The hosting entity of the Executive Secretariat will be approved by the members of the Consortium.
53. The Executive Secretariat shall assess the declarations of interest and propose to the President and members of the Consortium any relevant measures to prevent possible conflicts of interest.

## Funding

54. There shall be no mandatory registration fees for Consortium membership.
55. Any member of the Consortium may, at its discretion and in compliance with its own rules, make a contribution to the Consortium in the form of funding or the provision of staff or material resources in order to support the operation of the Consortium and the activities of the Initiative, including facilitating the participation of all members in the various meetings.
56. In the interest of transparency, efficiency and sound management of resources, contributions shall be notified to the Executive Secretariat, which shall submit a report to the Consortium members on an annual basis.

## First meeting and review clause

57. The first meeting of the Consortium and Forum members occurred on November 17, 2016 (i.e., within the original timeframe of 12 months after September 23, 2016).
58. On December 10, 2020, i.e. 48 months after their first meeting (November 17, 2016), the members of the Consortium took stock of the implementation of this declaration of intent and decided to adapt its terms to take into account the developments validated since that date.

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**\*\*** *This document results from the amendment of the Declaration of Intent to establish a Consortium of the "4 per 1000" Initiative put up for signature on 23 September 2016 during the UNFCCC COP 22 in Marrakech and also referred to as the "Marrakech Declaration". This Statement of Intent of the "4 per 1000: Soils for Food Security and Climate" Consortium remains open for signature by all states or organizations as defined in points 12, 13 and 15 thereof, and constitutes the Statement of Intent to be signed to join the "4 per 1000" Initiative.*