



REAWG on Soil Management



Soil status in Kosovo, gaps, recommendations and needs that soil partnership should cover

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The importance of sustainable land and soil management at the national level -1

The main challenges for agricultural land-use are as follows:

- Loss of agricultural land due to change of purpose, especially due to the unplanned urban construction,
- The extreme fragmentation of agricultural lands,
- Unfinished land consolidation from 1983 to 1989 and a lack of new consolidation projects,
- Privatization of agricultural lands is carried out without a strategic plan for protecting and sustainable and planned use of agricultural land,
- Lack of information and transparency at the land market,
- Incomplete (up-to-date) data on land ownership, which pose a problem both in the allocation of subsidies and in the impossibility of carrying out the land consolidation process,
- Poor land management system,
- Permanent pollution of agricultural land from various sources of pollution,
- The lack of a nationwide land-use management plan is reflected in unsustainable agricultural land use.



The importance of sustainable land and soil management at the national level - 2

Recommendation:

Based on the current situation, policymakers in Kosovo should take concrete steps toward the implementation of sustainable land management through:

- **Capacity building** at the central and local levels,
- **Implement the legal framework** to effectively reduce the negative effects of soil degradation and the challenges faced by agricultural land through Sustainable Land Management.
- **Establishment of a joint inter-ministerial and inter-institutional body**, through which the responsibilities of all institutions for the use, management and supervision of agricultural land use, should be precisely defined through the concept of Integrated Land Management.
- **Preparation of concrete projects** for remediation of agricultural land degradation as a set of processes caused by human activity.
- **Application of good sustainable land management practices**, according to the models of developed European countries and EU standards.



General assessment of the data available

- **The fundamental lack of data is inherited problem.**
 - Therefore, it is more than necessary that the land inventory project started in Kosovo to be continued and the preparation of land suitability classification to be adopted to FAO methodology.
- **Kosovo Hydrometeorological Institute (KHMI), which operates within the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, does not regularly monitor and assess soil pollution because there is no human capacity**
 - Monitoring is carried out when there is an environmental accident or through a project



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Recommendation:

- **To obtain a clear picture of the land and soil situation in Kosovo in terms of pollution**, detailed studies on agricultural land pollution should be continued in all other municipalities where the study has not been conducted.
- **The local land and soil monitoring system should be kept under scrutiny**, provide data on the land condition, and suggest actions to maintain land functions.
- **The dynamics of monitoring and assessing the state of land use in Kosovo should be applied according to EU policies and standards.** It should focus on prioritizing the integrated approach to land use planning and management. This dynamic should focus on monitoring, documenting and evaluating the spatial model, extent and land cover in Kosovo.

Legal framework for sustainable land and soil management

To create a legal basis for the use, protection and regulation land, the Assembly of Kosovo has approved:

- Law no. 02/L-26 on Agricultural Land - use, protection and regulation of agricultural land
- Law No. 03/L-025 on Environmental Protection – Protection of land (MESP must carry out continuous control and monitoring of the state of the environment and must determine the capacity of the land to fulfil its environmental, economic, social, and cultural functions and should determine land degradation)
- The current legislation and strategic documents in the area of land in Kosovo is not applied at the appropriate level, although they are in line with the laws, strategic documents and agreements of the European Union.

Recommendation:

- **Drafting of a concept document related to Land Protection - Due to the non-implementation of the existing legislation.**
- This concept document should have as objective the regulation of land protection as natural resources of national interest, addressing the systematic monitoring of the condition and quality of land, the application of rehabilitation measures, inspection supervision, etc.
- Based on the concept document and the real assessment of the existing legislation, should be done:
 - Updating of the legislation in force
 - Preparation of the Law on the protection of land from degradation



The main soil degradation processes

- **Use of mineral fertilizers**
- **Use of plant protection products /substances/**
- **Erosion**
- **Soil Organic Carbon**
- **Contamination**
- **Floods**

Linked with:

- **Legislation not applied at the appropriate level**
- **Lack of human resources in the relevant institutions**
- **Lack of knowledge and unprofessional approach**

Indicators

The national list of environmental indicators is determined by the decision of the Minister of MESP and in this list there are two Environmental Indicators for land

- **Change of land use purpose**
- **Erosion**



Capacity assessment of the country to deal with sustainable soil management

- **The main challenge for sustainable management of agricultural land in Kosovo is the lack of human resources in the relevant institutions.**
 - The MESP - lacks human resources to update and complete the legislative framework in order to monitor the implementation of the applicable legislation.
 - The Kosovo Hydrometeorological Institute (KHMI) also lacks human resources for monitoring and assessing soil pollution.
 - MAFRD have lack of staff in the Division for land use, GIS, registers and LPIS, etc.

Recommendation:

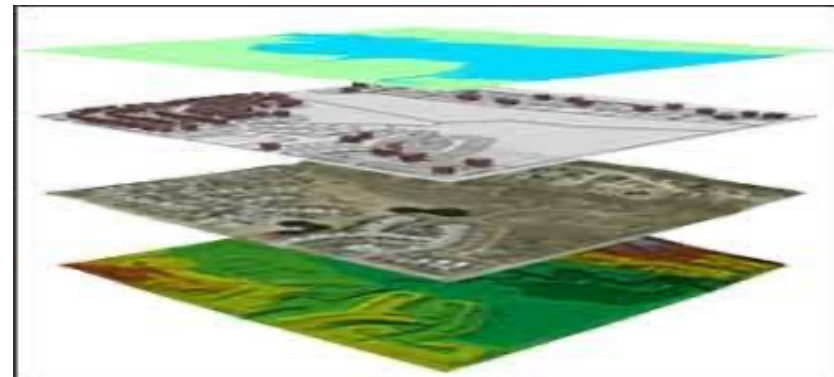
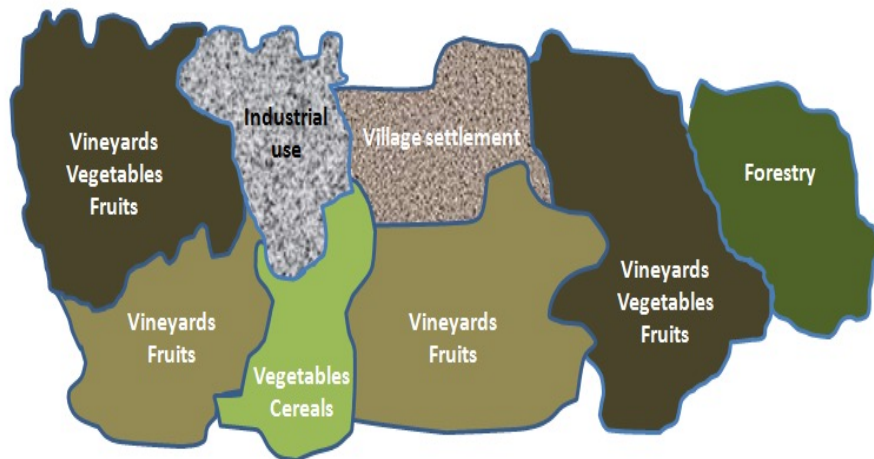
- The relevant institutions must prepare a strategic program to complete the necessary staff, in order to convey and implement the objectives and goals of the legislation in force.



Additional recommendations for the national level

In addition to regular land monitoring at the national level, other processes should be applied that will have a significant impact on agricultural land conservation and sustainable land management, such as:

- **Application of the Integrated Agricultural Land Management process** - is a strategic approach and approach that promotes responsible use of public land and is a unifying inter-industrial, cross-sectoral, inter-ministerial instrument to manage and plan agricultural land properly and reduce losses, degradations, and other consequences of agricultural land that are present in Kosovo.
- **Mandatory application of the Small-scale Agro-Ecological Zoning process at the central and municipal level (low scale)** - Low-level Agro-Ecological Zoning should be conceived as a process of grouping of agricultural lands based on their quality, chemical, physical, mechanical and biological properties of the land for agricultural production in order to predetermine them for agricultural production. This is non-mandatory instrument when preparing Municipal Zoning Maps
- **Establishment of the State Soil Museum** - The museum can serve as a source of communication and awareness of the general public and the community of scientists on the functioning and genesis of those lands and the historical evolutions through which those lands have passed.



Recommendation's for the regional level – soil partnership should cover

Preparation of the program for the digital cadaster of degraded lands with unified indicators and standards for partner countries

Creation of the soil monitoring system at the regional level

- This system should develop indicators and thresholds for soil quality assessments which should be compatible with European Union standards.
- The primary purpose of this system should be to protect the soil from degradation that may be reflected from one country to another and maintain soil quality at the regional level.
- This system should provide cooperation at the regional level through exchanging information and experiences.

To help member countries to complete legislation and strategic documents and harmonization with EU legislative frameworks

- EU Soil Strategy for 2030
- Including of priorities for land/soil from CAP 2023–2027, in line with the Euro-pean Green Deal objectives.

Mentioned objectives in MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE WESTERN BALKAN SOIL PARTNERSHIP (WBSP)





Thank you for attention!