

AFRICAN SOIL SEMINAR | Nairobi, 30 November 2016

**SOIL RESTORATION FOR ACHIEVING THE 2063 AND 2030 AGENDAS IN AFRICA:  
LINKING GLOBAL AMBITIONS TO LOCAL NEEDS**

**STATEMENT BY THE CO-HOSTS**

**The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Kenya**  
**The Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ethiopia**  
**The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Benin**  
**Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Water resources of Burkina Faso**  
**New Partnership for Africa's Development – NEPAD**

Emphasizing our commitment, the progress made and our plans for further soil restoration in our countries and the region as a whole, we, the Ministers and high representatives, having met at the occasion of the seminar “Soil Restoration for Achieving the 2063 and 2030 Agendas in Africa: Linking Global Ambitions to Local Needs” in Nairobi, call for soil restoration that supports inclusive agricultural growth that focuses on the needs of the poor and food insecure. Specifically, we:

**1.** *Prioritize* the importance of soils and the rehabilitation of degraded soil and land for food and nutritional security, energy security, poverty reduction, adaptation to climate change and sustainable development. Soils have been degraded. Restoring soil health and the rehabilitation of degraded soil resources and land and their sustainable management is crucial for achieving the targets of the 2063 Agenda “The Africa We Want”, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and implementing the commitments of the Paris Declaration.

**2.** *Recall* the Malabo Declaration on “Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods” and its recognition of the quintessence of sustainable management of our land, soil and natural resources for agriculture led development.

**3.** *Welcome* the seminar “Soil Restoration for Achieving the 2063 and 2030 Agendas in Africa: Linking Global Ambitions to Local Needs” as a timely and valuable regional discussion platform on strategies for sustainable soil management and responsible land governance. The results of the seminar are a significant contribution to the further implementation of the Malabo declaration, 2063 and 2030 Agendas and the Paris Climate Agreement.

**4.** *Call for* increased investment in soil rehabilitation in line with the agreement reached in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, acknowledging that smallholders are already investing significantly in agricultural development and the sustainable management of soils. In this context, agribusiness can play a facilitating role for increased incomes and job creation. Evidence shows that the economic returns of investing in sustainable soil rehabilitation are higher than the costs. Investments must be gender and youth sensitive.

5. *Support* the call of the seminar to foster soil restoration through a multi-actor and inter-sectoral approach. This implies including all sorts of knowledge, including traditional and local knowledge, as a necessary mechanism for the follow up and review of the 2063 and 2030 Agendas. Knowledge exchange, sharing of information and lessons learnt, and showcasing promising national and regional soil and land restoration initiatives, such as the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative, Africa Resilient Landscape Initiative and the Great Green Wall Initiative, are key elements for guiding investment agendas. This also means including Parliaments, National Treasuries and other key Government institutions in the design and implementation of soil restoration programmes.

6. *Emphasize* that large-scale soil restoration requires creating the necessary incentives. Whereas the provision of subsidized inputs can play a catalytic role, soil restoration programmes also need to address incentives created by access to land rights and credit and further extension services.

7. *Acknowledge* the pivotal role of the youth in shaping our future. Innovative methods should be encouraged to sustain the interest of the youth in soil restoration. The use of Information and Communication Technologies, vocational training and capacity building in general should be encouraged. This might imply measures of affirmative action.

8. *Encourage* all stakeholders to develop joint actions from this seminar and to explore developing this seminar into a regional platform that carries forth inclusive and participatory exchange across stakeholder groups on sustainable soil management and responsible governance of our land resources.

9. *Encourage* all national, regional and international institutions that hold data and information relevant to sustainable land management to make this information available to a national focal point to ensure better management of information.

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