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10th January 2024

**Recognition letter for the implementation of the Global Soil Doctors Programme
Land and Water Division, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

Dear Dr Lomelí Vanegas,

I refer to the Global Soil Doctors Programme of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). This programme is a farmer-to-farmer training platform that aims to build farmers' capacity for sustainable soil management, considering the needs of the communities in which it is implemented. The programme also raises the profile of soil as a vital resource, not only for farmers, but also for policy makers, development planners, agricultural extension services, NGOs, the private sector and all other professionals and stakeholders.

In this regard, I would like to take this opportunity to express the appreciation of FAO, and in particular the Land and Water Division I represent, for the successful implementation in Mexico of the Global Soil Doctors Programme, carried out at National Autonomous University of Mexico by the University's Interdisciplinary Soil Studies Programme (PUEIS), coordinated by Dr. Blanca Prado Pano.

PUEIS accepted the challenge to be the national promoter in Mexico and to work in accordance with the principles of the World Soil Charter, in which all FAO members recognise "the need to act more vigorously to reverse the alarming trends of soil degradation and to maintain the healthy soils needed to feed a growing population". The Charter is a normative document adopted by the FAO Conference in 1981 and revised in 2015.

PUEIS' vision of creating cross-sectoral collaborations with academia enabled us to join forces with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRICULTURA) for the successful implementation of the first phase of the Soil Doctors Programme. In the 30 months that the programme has been running in Mexico, FAO recognises and congratulates the PUEIS for the following achievements.

- 32 certified trainers of soil doctors, 10 of whom are members of the public service;
- Coverage in the states of Michoacán, Mexico City, Puebla, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, Morelos, and Sinaloa, to be extended to the whole country;
- Expansion to 320 certified trainers of soil doctors;
- Training of 820 farmers to become certified soil doctors;
- Approximately 4 100 farmers involved in the programme, and
- At least 160 hectares with improved soil management.

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Dr Leonardo Lomelí Vanegas
Rector
National Autonomous University of Mexico
Mexico

These achievements have been made possible thanks to the commitment of the stakeholders involved, in particular, Dr Prado and her team of highly competent and dedicated scientists. It is worth noting that the joint contributions in terms of personnel and resources, both financial and in kind, are estimated at USD 70 000, which represents a small expense compared to the benefits derived from this close collaboration between the Government of Mexico, UNAM and FAO. This investment represents a sustainable and promising bet on the future in terms of developing the capacity of farmers to care for and conserve soil health in Mexico, but with a global impact.

We look forward to further developing the collaboration in terms of geographical coverage and technical content and hope to see the impacts of the programme on the ground. We express the willingness and the need to ensure that the knowledge received through the trainings is applied on the ground, for which FAO is committed to put in place a monitoring system in the country.

Yours sincerely,



Lifeng Li
Director
Land and Water Division
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations