

Communiqué

Soil Research, Development and Extension Strategy Implementation Committee meeting - Canberra, May 2015

The Soil RD&E Implementation Committee held its second meeting in Canberra on the 28th of May 2015 with representatives attending from CSIRO, Federal and State agencies, Research and Development Corporations and Universities.

Report from Advocate for Soil Health

Major General John Hartley gave a brief update on the activities of the Advocate for Soil Health. It was noted that the Advocate, Major General Michael Jeffery, would soon be presenting his report to the Prime Minister.

Soil RD&E priorities

The need for well-articulated RD&E priorities to improve effectiveness of co-investment to generate and apply new knowledge is one of the goals of the National Soil Research, Development and Extension Strategy. The Implementation Committee has developed a list of strategic priorities for distribution (see PIRDEF website.) The priorities are not ranked in any particular order nor are they exhaustive. A plain English version of the priorities will also be developed.

Implementation plan

The committee is in the process of updating the Implementation Plan for the Soil RD&E Strategy. A priority area for the committee is knowledge exchange. Project ideas were discussed to support this priority.

International Year of Soils and World Soils Day

The International Year of Soils (2015) and World Soils Day (December 5th) present opportunities for increasing the visibility of soil issues. The Status of the World's Soil Resources Report will be released on December 5th and it will include a regional assessment for the Southwest Pacific with a significant focus on Australia. The launch of this publication (the first global assessment of soil resources) will be hosted by the Global Soil Partnership. The Soil RD&E Implementation Committee will support a range of activities planned for this day.

Annual forum

Each year the Soil RD&E Implementation Committee hosts a forum. In 2015 the forum will focus on investment propositions to coordinate collaborative planning in preparation for funding opportunities and investment across the agencies.

Research priorities

The Government has developed a set of [Science and Research Priorities](#), and corresponding Practical Research Challenges, designed to increase investment in areas of immediate and critical importance to Australia and its place in the world. These priorities and practical challenges are intended to help focus the nation's research effort, and help assure that some public funding for research addresses the most important questions facing the nation and include one on Soil and Water and another on Food.