

Policy brief

on “D.5.3.2. A policy brief about the funding opportunities for sustainable use of salt affected soils (M18-24)”

Working Group 5 (Policy framework for the salinisation management, SUSTAIN COST ACTION-CA22144), 18/09/2025

Executive Summary

Soil salinity is a real problem, the extent of which stakeholders, in some circumstances, are not fully aware of, posing serious threats to rural communities and food security. The most relevant available funds include the following programs: Horizon Europe for research and innovation; LIFE for demonstrating sustainable environmental practices; Interreg for cross-border projects; and other funds such as those from the World Bank, as well as others available from national entities.

1. Introduction and problem statement

Soil salinization affects a large area of hectares worldwide, with consequences for agricultural sustainability due to its impact on productivity (FAO, 2024). The salinization problem requires multidisciplinary approaches that take into account local specificities and stakeholder engagement.

2. Key findings and their implications in terms of policy

There are a range of funds that stakeholders can consider to address soil salinity issues. In addition to those available through programs such as Horizon Europe, LIFE, Interreg, the World Bank, and other national programs, there are instruments from the two pillars of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The CAP has a wide range of policy instruments to promote more

sustainable agriculture, although the issue of soil salinization should be considered more explicitly. On the other hand, there are a set of policy platforms and networks (INSAS, for example) that can be considered as support for initiatives that aim to address the challenges of soil salinity.

3. Policy alternatives/recommendations

It may be important to create a funding roadmap and analyse potential partner interest in proposals, such as Horizon, LIFE and Interreg. Promote grants for preparing these applications and engage international platforms, networks, and organizations, such as FAO, INSAS, and EIP-AGRI, may also be initiatives worth considering.

4. Conclusions

The suggestion presented here is to identify funds of interest to stakeholders, prepare applications for regional/national pilot projects, expand these initiatives into demonstration projects at the European Union level, and then implement them on a global scale.

References

FAO (2024). FAO launches first major global assessment of salt-affected soils in 50 years. FAO Newsroom. Retrieved September 18, 2025, from <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/fao-launches-first-major-global-assessment-of-salt-affected-soils-in-50-years/en>