



# NBSOIL

Nature-Based Solutions  
for Soil Management

## D7.10 – Data Management Plan and use of AI 1

Deliverable [7.10]

15.05.2023



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Deliverable [7.10]	[ Data Management Plan and use of AI 1]
<b>Related Work Package</b>	WP7
<b>Deliverable lead</b>	AgriSat
<b>Author(s)</b>	Anna Osann (AgriSat) Elena Pareja-Serrano (AgriSat)
<b>Contact</b>	<a href="mailto:anna.osann@gmail.com">anna.osann@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:elena.pareja@agrisat.es">elena.pareja@agrisat.es</a>
<b>Reviewer</b>	Grzegorz Siebielec (IUNG)
<b>Grant Agreement Number</b>	101091246
<b>Instrument</b>	Horizon Europe Framework Programme
<b>Start date</b>	01 December 2022
<b>Duration</b>	48 months
<b>Type of Delivery (R, DEM, DEC, Other)<sup>1</sup></b>	DMP
<b>Dissemination Level (PU, CO, CI)<sup>2</sup></b>	PU
<b>Date last update</b>	29.05.2023
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://nbsoil.eu">nbsoil.eu</a>

Revision no.	Date	Description	Author(s)
0.1	10.05.2023	Internal review	Elena Pareja-Serrano (AgriSat)
0.2	25.05.2023	Feedback from Partners	
0.3	29.05.2023	Final version	Anna Osann, Elena Pareja-Serrano (AgriSat)

Please cite this deliverable as:

Osann A., Pareja-Serrano E. (2023) Data Management Plan and use of AI 1. D7.10 of the NBSOIL project. Funded under the Grant Agreement 101091246 of the Horizon Europe programme. Document available at: [nbsoil.eu](http://nbsoil.eu).

<sup>1</sup> R=Document, report; DEM=Demonstrator, pilot, prototype; DEC=website, patent filings, videos, etc.; OTHER=other

<sup>2</sup> PU=Public, CO=Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services), CI=Classified



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## List of acronyms

MS – Milestone

WP – Work Package

DMP – Data Management Plan

KER – Key Exploitable Result

FAIR – FAIR principles: Findable, Accesible, Interoperable, and Reusable

DMO – Data Management Officer

NBS – Nature Base Solution

NBSOIL – Nature Based Solutions for Soil Management

IP – Impact Pathway

MOOC – Massive Open Online Course

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# 1 Executive Summary

The present report includes the first version of the Data Management Plan (DMP) of the NBSOIL project that focuses on the application of the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Re-usable) in the process of elaboration, publication, and maintenance of the potential Key Exploitable Results (KER) of the project. FAIR principles are used as reference to ensure the accessibility of KERs, mainly in Open Access, while respecting the property rights of authors and data owners and their persistence after the project. In this way, a general protocol for the application of the FAIR principles has been determined which will be adjusted to the characteristics, development and publication process of each KER.

The guidelines proposed by the GO FAIR platform (“GO FAIR initiative: Make your data & services FAIR,” n.d.) and the template proposed by Guidelines on FAIR Data Management in Horizon 2020 Version 3.0 have been considered for the elaboration of this report. The document includes a brief introduction to the objectives of the NBSOIL project (section 2), a brief description of the key features of the KERs for the application of the FAIR principles (section 3) and of the FAIR principles together with the key actions that need to be addressed to guarantee their implementation (section 4). In addition, aspects of allocation of resources (section 5), data security (section 6) and ethics (section 7) are briefly included.

In this period, a documentation process has been carried out for the proper planning of the publication of the project's products, which are summarised in this report. In addition, a Data Management Officer (DMO) and an independent external ethics advisor have been identified to ensure the application of the proposed protocol to ensure the correct application of the FAIR principles in the process of elaboration, publication and maintenance of the project's KERs. The tasks carried out in every KER will be included in the following versions of the DMP, following the developments and timelines of the project.

# 2 Introduction

Over 60 – 70% of EU soils are estimated to be unhealthy (Orgiazzi et al, 2016), threatening ecosystem services essential to the interrelated challenges of climate change mitigation and adaptation, halting and reverting biodiversity loss, sustainable management of the water and nutrient cycles, preventing disasters such as floods, droughts, and forest fires, and providing timber, fibre, and food for healthy diets and adequate living environments for the population. In this regard, different strategies such as The Farm to Fork, EU 2030 Biodiversity and Soil Mission have set ambitious targets for pesticide (-50%) and fertiliser (-25%) reduction, increase in soil organic carbon (SOC, 0.1 – 0.4 % annual increase), and achieving 75% healthy or improving soils by 2030. Modelling exercises such as Ten Years for Agroecology (TYFA) (Poux and Aubert, 2018) show that would be achievable which considers that EU agriculture could give up synthetic inputs and still provide a healthy diet for all Europeans in spite of a decrease in production by 30%. To catalyse the transition towards sustainable soil management, the Soil Mission relies on increased cooperation and co-creation of solutions among researchers, land managers, soil advisors, the business sector, local authorities, and policymakers which must be aligned with the CAP, EU, and national post-pandemic recovery funds, and the measures taken to mitigate the crisis caused by the invasion of Ukraine.



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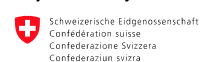
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In this context, NBSOIL project has defined its ambitions to generate impact and contribute to achieving the Soil Health Mission by integrating soil management knowledge and advice. The NBSOIL project develops a blended learning program to train soil advisors in soil health from a holistic point of view, aligned with agroecology through Nature Based Solutions (NBS), fully in line with the IUCN Global Standard for NBS (IUCN, 2020). To this end, NBSOIL consortium has focused their Impact Pathways (IP) building on previous research results and available Open Source technology (Impact Pathway 1 (IP1), providing Soil Health Living Labs facilitators (IP2), making soil monitoring and mapping tech user-friendly and inclusive (IP3) and embedding soil care across all land management and land related decision-making processes (IP4).

For the adequate management of knowledge and of intellectual property, and of other innovation-related activities arising in the project, Task 7.4 "Data Management and AI" within the WP7 "Project Management and Quality assurance" have been foreseen on the NBSOIL project. Task 7.4 is focused on monitoring the implementation of the principles governing intellectual property rights, including policies on publication, storage, persistence, and accessibility, with particular attention to open access policies and FAIR principles which are reported on the Data Management and AI (DMP) document. DMP is defined and maintained by the NBSOIL consortium to appropriately manage the research data generated during the project, and to make sure data and research outputs remain Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR). The current report (Deliverable 7.10) is the first version of the DMP and includes a basic plan of the DMP which will be annually updated in M18 (D7.11), M30 (D7.12), and in M42 (D7.13) as the project progresses.

## 3 Data Summary

The purpose of the data generated is to integrate soil management knowledge and advice to contribute to achieving the Soil Health Mission by developing a blended learning program to train Soil Advisors in soil health by the application of Nature Base Solutions (NBS) from a holistic point of view.

NBSOIL project has a highly multidisciplinary and holistic character, which will make use of currently available soil information and where different data and resources will be generated. All of this information will be cataloged and detailed in successive reviews of this document as the project evolves. Table 1 presents the information generated in the project, i.e., KERs and their main characteristics as described in the Grant Agreement. NBSOIL project has also a strong Open Access ambition and therefore compliance with FAIR principles to ensure accessibility and reusability during and after the project is a key aspect.

**Table 1.** Description of main aspects of NBSOIL's KERs for the definition of the Data Management Plan.

KER	WP	Description
Scientific publications	WP1, All	Text -based research outputs of knowledge based for Soil Health Indices.
SHI online tool	WP2	Libraries for the computation of the Soil Health Index.



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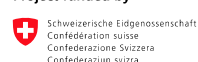
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<b>Handbooks</b>	WP1, WP2, WP4	Text -based research outputs such as the Soil and NBS Handbook and advanced modules of the MOOC will be PDF files between 2 and 10 MB depending on the images included.
<b>Database</b>	WP4 & al	Databases from: Field sampling (field research, field activities and training participants of MOOCs), specifically Numerical data - collected in approx 500 (including 1 per participant on a shared folder) files - less than 1GB per file; sensor data (weather, pH data, physical and chemical and biological indicators; Lab data: soil analysis including Soil Organic Carbon, Nitrogen and Phosphorus content; observational data: Biodiversity - counting of key species such as earthworms, nematodes; data from events and participants; External databases: other data from the European Environment Agency, the JRC, Life projects, UN and FAO databases; Remote sensors, images: satellite imagery data (1 GB/image); spatial multi-baseline data for the comparisons of land-use/landcover in all regions; quantifiable data for the analysis of biodiversity, climate change impacts, disaster risk reduction, food security, and of course, urbanisation-related impacts to the environment; high-resolution drone data (500 MB - 1GB per image); images of details such as soil close up, plants, insects, animals, fruits, etc (10-100Mb/image).
<b>Protocols</b>	WP1	Text -based research outputs of sampling and testing protocols for soil health and biodiversity will be PDF files between 2 and 10 MB depending on the images included.
<b>GIS Tool</b>	WP4	API user-friendly GIS Tool as Data sets repository based on AgrisatWebGis.
<b>ARIES NBSOIL modelling package</b>	WP1	ARIES system, which uses semantics to make data FAIR through purely logical queries, which resolve into observation strategies through machine reasoning and logical inference for interactive modelling.
<b>Marketplace</b>	WP6	Platform, tool adapted and upgraded from TriplePerformance.fr platform using semantic mediawiki: Stop shop for soil health advice, to help on the collaboration among soil advisors, researchers, and managers and stakeholders.
<b>Policy briefs</b>	WP5	Text -based research outputs will be PDF files between 2 and 10 MB depending on the images included.

## 4 FAIR data

In this section, a draft of the actions foreseen for the application of the FAIR principles in the project's KERs publication process is presented. FAIR principles emphasise machine actionability (i.e. the ability of computer



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systems to find, access, interoperate and reuse data without human intervention or with minimal human intervention), as humans are increasingly reliant on computer support to process data as a result of increasing volume, complexity and speed of data creation (“FAIR Principles - GO FAIR,” n.d.). They are thus of particular importance in NBSOIL because they are key aspects to guarantee the exploitation of the project’s KERs in Open Access and their re-use both during and after the project, as well as to ensure the intellectual property of the consortium. This last is of special importance in NBSOIL due to the involvement of multiple actors and knowledge co-creation. For the correct handling of the data by FAIR principles, a general protocol has been defined as described next:

1. Identification of data collection requirements.
2. Definition of the data acquisition protocol and licence for data use.
3. Acquisition and receipt of data and acceptance of the data licence.
4. Normalisation of data to NBSOIL project standards (terminology, concepts, units, ...).
5. Data integration (if process is repeated).
6. Definition of metadata.
7. Publication by obtaining the identifier of the registration service.

In the following, three of the main FAIR principles applicable in the above steps are described: (1) Findable, (2) Accessible, (3) Interoperable, as key aspects for the achievement of the data reusability.

## 4.1 Making data Findable

Findable principle focuses on ensuring that KERs are findable and understandable by both humans and machines and, as far as possible, automatically. Thus, data needs to be accompanied by metadata to which globally unique and persistent identifiers are assigned, avoiding ambiguity in the meaning of the published data, helping others to understand exactly what data mean and properly cite, and helping computers to interpret data in a meaningful way. Globally unique identifiers can be obtained from a registry service using algorithms that ensure the uniqueness of the newly minted identifiers and their persistence in the future. Given the diversity of the typology of KERs, different registry services will be used to adapt to each type of KER. Table 2 presents the registry services and identifiers initially adopted for each KER in the project, which will be updated as the project evolves

**Table 2.** Registry services and identifiers&metadata adopted for every NBSOIL’s KER.

KER	WP	Identifier		Metadata	Language
		Type	Registry service		
Scientific publications	WP1	doi	Scientific journals, Zenodo, Researchgate	Automatically generated	English
SHI computation tool	WP2	url	GitHub	Read me	Phyton



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<b>Handbooks</b>	WP1, WP2, WP4	url/doi	NBSOIL website	Automatically generated	English
<b>Database</b>	All	url	Zenodo, Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition; Interest Group of the Research Data Alliance, JRC's EUSO	Read me	English, EUSO, INSPIRE
<b>Protocols</b>	WP1	url	Protocols.io	-	English
<b>GIS Tool</b>	WP4	url	NBSOIL website	Read me	English, EUSO, INSPIRE
<b>ARIES NBSOILmodelling package</b>	WP1	url	NBSOIL website	Read me	English
<b>Marketplace</b>	WP6	url	Tripleperformance.fr	-	English
<b>Policy briefs</b>	WP5	url/doi	NBSOIL website	-	English

## 4.2 Making data Accessible

Accessibility principle focuses on ensuring that data and metadata can be retrieved from their identifiers and that these identifiers use standardised communication protocols, i.e., open, free, and universally implemented.

In NBSOIL Project, most of the project's KERs will be shared in trusted repositories used to generate the unique identifier with already defined and standardised access protocols, as shown in Table 2. Experimental data will be served online in Zenodo, the OpenAIRE's trusted repository hosted in CERN. In case of using own repositories, such as the GIS Tool, open, free and universally protocols will be designed, which will also follow a multi-browser approach allowing accessibility for desktop and mobile devices across different browsers: Chrome, Firefox, Safari and also mobile versions.

In other hand, NBSOIL is committed to Open Access of project data and research outputs, using Creative Commons and Open Data Commons licences according to the guidelines of the Open Data Foundation and Open Knowledge Foundation. Thus, it is foreseen that licences for the use of the generated data are to be accepted by the partners in order to avoid conflict of interest as well as by third parties such as demo site owners or e-learners. To this end, the coordinator of each KER will be responsible for carrying out this task in collaboration with the Data Management Officer (DMO). In case a KER uses its own protocols, as ARIES and GIS Tool possibly will, it is foreseen that users have to register to authenticate the owner (or contributor) of each dataset. This last will be fundamental after the project.



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The aspects described above will be detailed as the project evolves.

### 4.3 Making data Interoperable

Interoperability principle focuses on ensuring that digital objects are understandable and accessible through standard communication protocols. To this end, digital objects have to be represented using a formal, accessible, shared, and widely applicable language for the adequate representation of the concepts that each object represents and to be easily reusable, both by humans and by machines. To this end, terms and concepts also have to comply with the principles of findability by adopting unique and persistent identifiers.

In NBSOIL project, this step is key for the integration of the data collected during the monitoring of the NBS, the interoperability within the consortium, as well as the integration of external databases. For this purpose, a robust data structure will be designed in coordination with WP4. WP4 will coordinate a database to integrate the description, data and management of pilot cases (pilot parcels) collected in the other WPs. Data integration within a soil health assessment framework to achieve an index-based output for usage of advisor and farmer in monitoring, verification and reporting of soil health advances will be developed in Task 1.5. Standardised communication protocol will be defined, following standards adopted for the project giving priority to worldwide standards such as those adopted in JRC's EUSO. URNs (Unique Resource Names) will be attached to each artefact and semantic annotation will allow findability via logical queries for modelling artefacts.

In addition, an important aspect of the project is the use of existing knowledge. Thus, special attention will be paid to correct cross-referencing (qualified references) as well as other metadata used in ARIES and GIS Tool.

In case of text documentation and metadata, the language used will be English. All KER or parts of KER that may be used by the public will be translated into the official languages of the consortium.

The aspects described above will be detailed as the project evolves.

## 5 Allocation of resources

The allocation of the resources is foreseen to be made on Agrisat servers. Agrisat resources, such as servers, will be available at the disposal of the project.

Braulio Moreno Simarro, member of AGRISAT, has been identified as the Data Management Officer (DMO) who will ensure compliance of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). DMO will work together with dedicated personnel from IUNG-PIB to oversee data quality during the project and to resolve any problem related to the allocation of resources. IUNG-PIB will secure its maintenance after the project. The discussion about the costs of maintenance after the project is expected to be further, possibly in the second half of the project.



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## 6 Data security

To guarantee the security of the information, the necessary measures will be taken to control access and protect all the data collected in the project and stored in the project's information systems, such as the GIS tool. This information must also have the necessary backup copies to ensure compliance with FAIR principles and prevent the loss of information. Special attention should be paid to personal data (e.g., from problem owners and solution providers) which will be protected by technical and procedural means and will not be shared under any circumstances or stored beyond the project's lifetime. Data collected through project surveys will be stored and transmitted in forms without personal identifiers (e.g., aggregated data) through public deliverables and communication materials.

Long-term preservation. ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This same task will coordinate the aspects related to Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI), and Intellectual Property Rights (IP) developed in Task 6.3, taking care of the use of personal data.

## 7 Ethics

The four described Impact Pathways in the NBSOIL project embrace democratisation of knowledge, co-creation of knowledge in open innovation spaces, inclusivity of technology, and embedding soil care in decision-making. This implies a high diversity of data produced and the involvement of multidisciplinary teams, so ensuring compliance with ethical principles from the beginning of the project, as well as frequently updating any additional ethical issues that may emerge in the course of the grant, is key to the proper development of the proposed activities. Basic ethical principles have been described in the Article 14 of the Annotated Model Grant Agreement, and the applicable EU, international, and national laws applicable to the ethical issues identified in the Ethics Summary Report and to any additional ethical issues that may emerge in the course of the grant rigorously following the guidance provided in the European Commission Ethics Self-Assessment Guidelines. The compliance with the aforementioned ethical standards also includes activities developed in non-EU countries. The Non-EU countries involved in NBSOIL (UK and Switzerland) are highly developed countries that share many standards with the EU; however, particular attention will be given to existing and future differences in legislation concerning relevant ethical issues.

To this end, the consortium counts with Benedetta Giovanola, from the University of Macerata (Italy), as an independent external ethics advisor to oversee all activities. Regarding Human and Personal Data, Task 8.2 and Braulio Moreno Simarro member of AGRISAT will be the Data Management Officer (DMO) who ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This same task will coordinate the aspects related to Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI), and Intellectual Property Rights (IP) developed in Task 6.3, taking care of the use of personal data. Finally, AI used in NBSOIL will be developed by BC3- in the framework of the ARIES project, which is aligned with the seven key requirements defined by the EC for trustworthy and human centric artificial intelligence:



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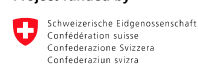
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1. Human agency and supervision.
2. Technical soundness and safety.
3. Privacy and data governance.
4. Transparency.
5. Diversity, non-discrimination and equity.
6. Social and environmental well-being.
7. Accountability To implement these requirements.

In addition, the use of AI will be monitored by the ethics advisor in collaboration with BC3 and the DMO.

## 8 Conclusions

This document will serve to collect, catalog, and manage through best practices the data used within the NBSOIL project. In successive revisions, this catalog and how it will be managed will be specified.

A documentation process has been carried out along this time for the proper planning of the publication of the project's products, which are summarised in this report. In addition, a Data Management Officer and an independent external ethics advisor have been identified to ensure the application of the proposed protocol to ensure the correct application of the FAIR principles in the process of elaboration, publication and maintenance of the project's KERs.

The tasks carried out in every KER will be included in the following versions of the DMP, following the developments and timelines of the project.

## 9 References

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Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency (REA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



**UK Research  
and Innovation**

This work has received funding from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under the UK government's Horizon Europe funding guarantee grant number 10061997.

**Project funded by**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,  
Education and Research: EAER  
State Secretariat for Education,  
Research and Innovation SERI

This work has received funding from the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI).

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