

## Criteria Overview for the DSF Criteria: Soil Quality & Retention

**Strategic Intent:** Soil quality and retention is proactively managed and enhanced to ensure optimum productivity.

**DSF Indicator Metric:** Soil Quality Management Plan developed and implemented.

**About this Criteria:** The criteria considers maintenance and improvement of soil quality and the prevention of soil erosion and maximum environmental benefits through enhanced management practices.

Soil quality includes soil structure, type, water holding capacity and nutrient content. i.e. the physical, chemical and biological properties of the soil. Climate change is increasingly delivering extreme weather events and agricultural practices actioned at the incorrect time can result in soil erosion.

Aspects considered include:

- Quantification of biological quality
- Reviewing farm soil related management practices that can result in reducing quality or increasing the chances of erosion
- Implementation of maintenance and enhancement practices for existing soil structure
- Retention of overall soil and minimizing any soil erosion possibilities
- Improve soil water holding capacity or drainage
- Encourage optimal productivity from the land
- Soil management practices that increase organic matter and carbon content of soils to enhance sequestering potential and the protection of existing soil carbon

A Soil Quality Management plan could also include the requirements for the Soil Nutrients Criteria.

**Interlinkages:** This criteria links closely with the **GHG Emissions, Water and Soil Nutrients Criteria.**