



EUROPEAN UNION

# EU MISSIONS



## Concrete solutions for our greatest challenges

### A Soil Deal for Europe

DG AGRI F.2

Civil Dialogue Group on CAP and horizontal matters

13 April 2023

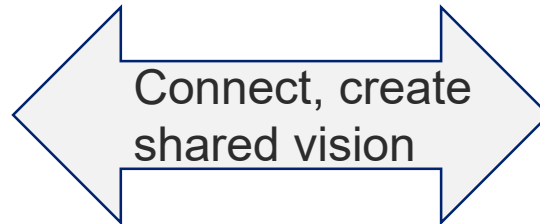
#EUmissions #HorizonEU



# Missions: a new instrument under the R&I programme Horizon Europe (2021 – 2027) to address major societal challenges

A mission is a portfolio of actions across disciplines intended to achieve a **bold and inspirational and measurable goal** within a set timeframe, with **impact** for society and policy making.

Scientific curiosity,  
rationale and mindset



People's needs and  
aspirations



Adaptation to  
Climate Change



Cancer



Climate-neutral  
and Smart Cities



Restore our  
Ocean and Waters



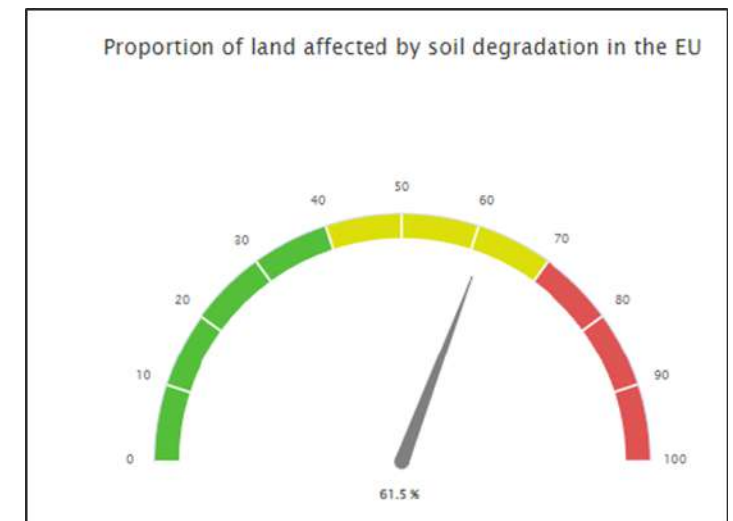
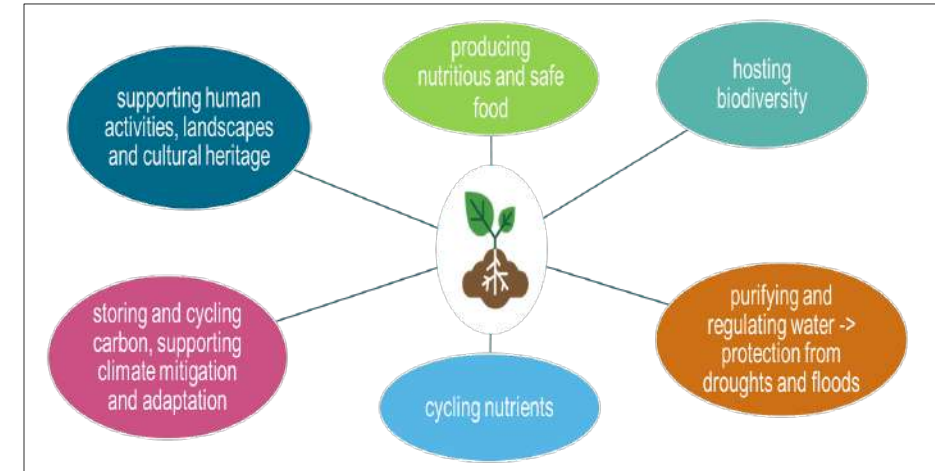
Soil Deal  
for Europe





## The soil mission's starting point

- Healthy soils are the **basis for nutritious and safe food and other vital, interconnected ecosystem services.**
- Mission Board: **60-70% of soils in Europe are unhealthy** due to current management practices, pollution, urbanisation and effects of climate change.
- Knowledge regarding soil management is not sufficiently applied in practices and/or not adapted to local situations.
- Need to focus on **place based innovations** and pathways to address the **knowledge – practice divide.**
- Soil related knowledge, monitoring and policies focus to a large extent on **agricultural soils**. Need to address soil health in **other land uses.**
- **Political and “business” attention increasingly turning to soils** - need to operationalise the concept of “healthy soils”





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## Examples of soil health issues in Europe

**2.8 million** potential **contaminated sites** (only 24% inventoried) posing major health risks

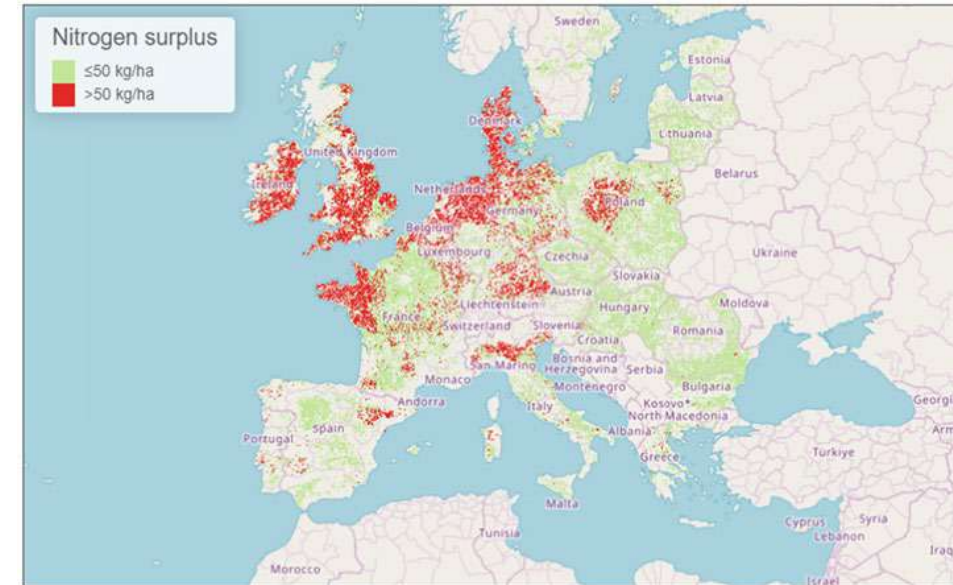
**65-75%** of agricultural soils with nutrient inputs at levels risking **eutrophication of soils and water** and affecting biodiversity

Cropland soils **losing carbon** at a rate of **0.5%** per year;

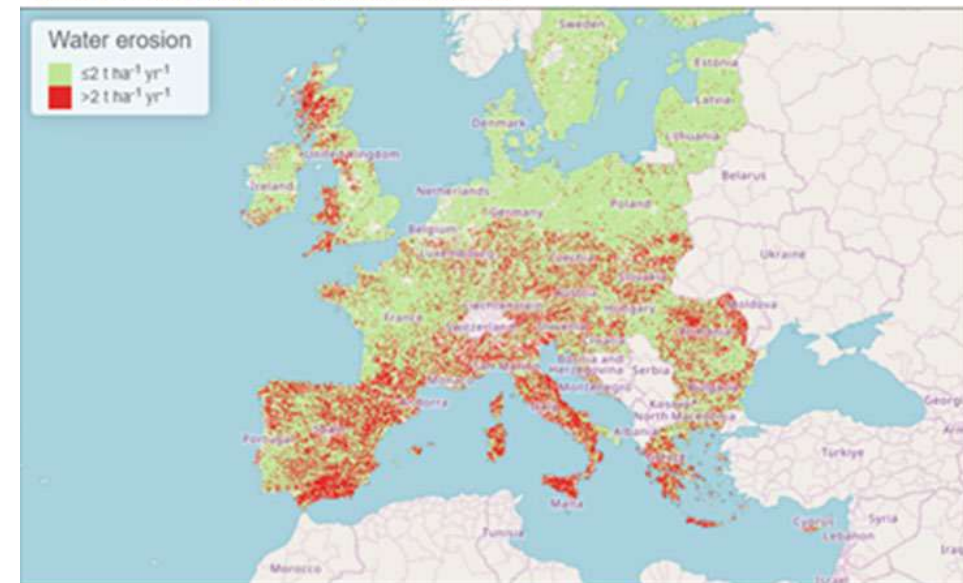
**50%** of peatlands drained and losing carbon – this is contributing to the climate crisis

**24%** of land with **unsustainable water erosion rates**

**25%** of land at High or Very High risk to **desertification** in Southern, Central and Eastern Europe in 2017



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## The Soil Deal mission supports the Green Deal

### Mission part of:

- Farm to Fork Strategy
- EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030
- Climate Adaptation Strategy
- Forest Strategy
- Zero Pollution Action Plan for air, water and soil
- Organic Action Plan
- Long term vision for rural areas
- EU Soil Strategy for 2030 and upcoming Soil health Law
- Communication on sustainable carbon cycles
- Communication “Safeguarding food security and reinforcing the resilience of food systems”
- Communication “Ensuring availability and affordability of fertilisers”

- Mission to meet **GD targets** for the reduction of pesticides, fertilisers, nutrient losses, microplastics and other pollution, GHG emissions, land take, etc.
- Mission as an **enabler for sustainable food systems**





## Goal of the Mission:

# 100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030

### Specific objectives

1. Reduce **desertification**

5. Prevent **erosion**

2. Conserve **soil organic carbon stocks**

6. Improve soil structure to enhance **soil biodiversity**

3. Stop **soil sealing** and increase re-use of **urban soils**

7. Reduce the **EU global footprint on soils**

4. Reduce **soil pollution** and enhance **restoration**

8. Improve **soil literacy** in society

Each specific objective is backed by **one or more quantified targets** and **measurable indicators**.

Objectives apply to **all types of land use** and **all territories**.

### Mission Building blocks

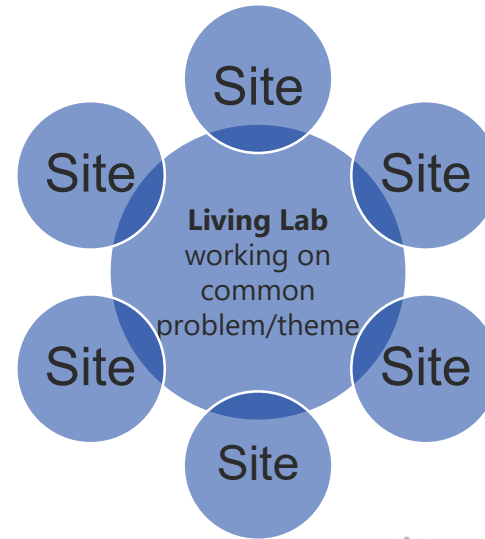




# The Soil Mission living labs and lighthouses

Living labs are a core element of the mission

- They are **real-life sites** in rural or urban areas in which people from **various sectors and backgrounds** experiment and test solutions in a **co-creative** manner.
- Each living lab contains a **group of sites and partners** working together at **regional or sub-regional level**.



... across sectors and land uses

Lighthouses are individual sites of exemplary performance





# Synergies between the Soil Deal Mission and the CAP (1)

## Soil Deal Mission

- Generates knowledge and innovations for sustainable soil and land management.
- Engages with farmers and foresters in Living Labs and Lighthouses to co-create test and demonstrate solutions.
- Disseminates, raises awareness and provides training to enhance “soil literacy”.
- Improves methods for assessing and monitoring soil health.



## Common Agricultural Policy

- EIP AGRI Operational Groups replicate solutions in regions where no living labs and lighthouses are operating.
- Agricultural advisory services support the deployment of best available soil management practices.
- Innovations tested under the mission are up-scaled through investments.
- EIP AGRI network promotes good practices and information on successful mission projects.





## Synergies between Soil Mission and new CAP (2)

- 18 out of 28 CAP Strategic Plans (SPs) make explicit links to the Soil Deal Mission.

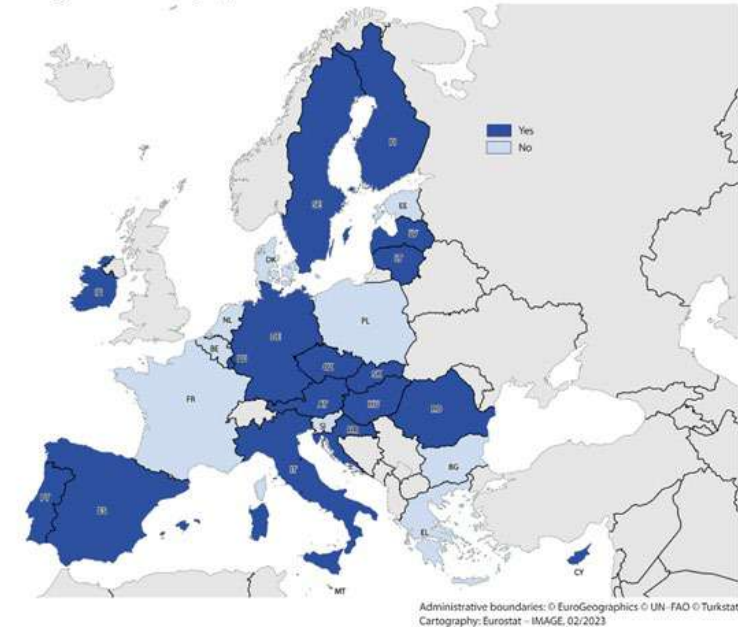
### Examples:

SE: CAP to support EIP Operational Groups to test and demonstrate solutions developed under the Soil Mission

SK: the CAP will support soil monitoring, upskilling of advisors and dissemination of solutions developed under the Soil Mission

- CAP plans foresee to fund about 6500 EIP OGs; about 1000 OGs are expected to target soils
- CAP network and EIP AGRI services run campaigns and carry out actions in support of the Mission.

EU Mission: 'A Soil Deal for Europe' in the CAP Strategic Plans  
Strategic Plans linking up with the Mission





## Examples of actions and achievements “on the ground”

- Start of projects to
  - support the training of specialised **Soil Advisors**
  - create **business models for soil health**
  - develop indicators and methods for **soil health monitoring**
  - promote **carbon farming** and carbon removal certification
  - demonstrate the **link between soil management and food quality**
  - **engage with regions**: about 30 regions will establish Territorial Management Agreements and carrying out soil steward training programmes.
- Identification of “**soil needs**” in about **25 regions**: opportunity for
  - regional authorities to use this information for policies and programming
  - communities to identify priorities for work in Living Labs.



# The emerging landscape of Mission projects

## WP 2021

Topics on e.g.

Soil monitoring and soil health indicators, businesses models for soil health, link between soil health and food quality and safety, engagement of municipalities and regions

Budget: 67 M€

1

## WP 2022

Topics on e.g.

remediation strategies for contaminated sites, soil biodiversity, use of biowaste for soil improvement, carbon farming, soil literacy

Budget: 95 M€

2

## WP 2023

Topics on e.g.

**Living Labs**, spatial planning, horticulture, desertification,  
Opening of call: 17 January '23

Deadline for applications:

**20 September 2023**

Budget: 139 M€

3





# Work Programme 2023 topics of Soil Deal Mission

	Topics
2023-SOIL-01-01	Discovering the subsoil
2023-SOIL-01-02	Soil pollution processes – modelling and inclusion in advanced digital decision-support tools
2023-SOIL-01-03	Onsite digital technologies to monitor nutrients and chemical or biological stressors in soil and plants with relevance for food safety and nutrition
2023-SOIL-01-04	Innovations to prevent and combat desertification
2023-SOIL-01-05	Soil-friendly practices in horticulture, incl. alternative growing media
2023-SOIL-01-06	Soils in spatial planning
2023-SOIL-01-07	Back to earth: bringing communities and citizens closer to soil
2023-SOIL-01-08	<b>Co-creating solutions for soil health in Living Labs</b>
2023-SOIL-01-09	<b>Carbon farming in living labs</b>
2023-CLIMA-OCEAN-SOIL	Integrated approach to increasing landscape water retention capacity at regional scale
2023-OCEAN-SOIL	Approaches and solutions to address nutrient pollution in the landscape-river-sea system in the Mediterranean sea basin





## Soil Mission updates: what's new - what's next in 2023

- Jan' Launch of Mission Implementation Platform
- 22-23 March Jump-start the Soil Mission **Project Cluster event**
- 18 + 20 April Launch of **Soil Mission Manifesto** with ERRIN and the CoR 
- May First edition of quarterly newsletter
- 31 May - 1 June EU Agricultural Research and Innovation Conference
- June Mission website operational
- June Missions' assessment
- 20 September Deadline of call for proposals incl. Living Labs! 
- November Mission Fair (possibly in conjunction with EUSO stakeholder Forum)



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# The new Soil Mission Board



**Iustina Boaja Popescu**  
RO



**Mateusz Ciasnocha**  
PL



**Johan De Fraye**  
BE



**Endre Dobos**  
HU



**Jam Willen Erisman**  
NL



**John Gilliland**  
IE



**Anna Krzywoszynska**  
PL



**Muriel Mambrini**  
FR



**Paloma Melgarejo**  
ES



**Liisa Pietola**  
FI



**Teresa Pinto Correia**  
PT  
**VICE-CHAIR**



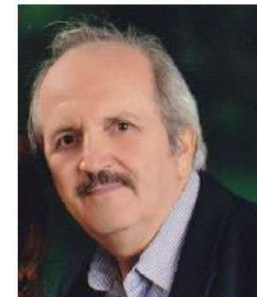
**Jaroslava Sobocka**  
SK



**Cees Veerman**  
NL  
**CHAIR**



**Harry Vereecken**  
DE



**Pandit Zdruli**  
AL



# Examples of communication and outreach activities



250+ co-creation and engagement events since September 2019



Social media campaigns (#MissionSoil on-going)



Several articles, press releases, newsletters, 4 videos, 2 factsheets



2 Podcast episodes



Publications: soil health Results Pack / Report on communication and citizen engagement initiatives in line with Mission Soil



Interactive games for kids and adults, including composting training



Survey sent to **7000+** contacts across Europe and 2500+ contributions received

- [Factsheet Mission A Soil Deal for Europe](#)
- [Factsheet Mission A Soil Deal for Europe - Living Labs](#)
- [Projects results Pack Soil Health](#)
- [Video EU Mission “A Soil Deal for Europe”](#)
- [Video EU Mission ‘A Soil Deal for Europe’, the CAP and carbon farming](#)
- [Podcast episode Food for Europe - Ep. 15 Soils in danger: Europe fights back](#)
- [Social media campaign #MissionSoil: best practices to keep our soils healthy](#)

More resources in **Official webpage Mission A Soil Deal for Europe:**  
<http://ec.europa.eu/mission-soil>

**Funding and tenders portal:** [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-12-missions\\_horizon-2023-2024\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2023-2024/wp-12-missions_horizon-2023-2024_en.pdf)



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Become part of the Soil Mission community

# Thank you!

For further information and questions please contact the mission secretariat:

[AGRI-SOIL-MISSION-BOARD@ec.europa.eu](mailto:AGRI-SOIL-MISSION-BOARD@ec.europa.eu)

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