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EU MISSIONS



Concrete solutions for our greatest challenges

A Soil Deal for Europe: 100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030

Nathalie Sauze-Vandevyver, Mission Manager
Director of Outreach, Research and Geographical Indications
European Commission - DG Agriculture and Rural Development

#EUmissions #HorizonEU

Missions: a new instrument under Horizon Europe to address major societal challenges

Adaptation to
Climate Change



Mission Manager
DG CLIMA

Cancer



Mission Manager
DG RTD

Climate-neutral
and Smart Cities



Mission Manager
DG MOVE

Restore our
Ocean and Waters



Mission Manager
DG MARE

Soil Deal
for Europe



Mission Manager
DG AGRI

Why a mission on soil health?



- Healthy soils are the **basis for nutritious and safe food.**
- Soils deliver **vital, interconnected ecosystem functions**
 - water purification and regulation (protection from droughts and floods)
 - hosting biodiversity
 - nutrient cycling
 - climate mitigation and adaptation
 - range of cultural services
- Soil is a **scarce, non-renewable resource.**
- **Soils are threatened: 60-70% of soils in Europe are considered to be unhealthy** due to current management practices, pollution, urbanisation and the effects of climate change.



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Developing the mission

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Mission Board “Soil health and food”



R&I days 2020

the Mission Board hands over its report “**Caring for soil is caring for life**”



September 2019

R&I days 2019
creation of the Mission Board
Soil health and food

until September 2020

Mission board develops its recommendation for a mission.
More than 60 events to promote and co-create the mission

September 2020

until June 2021

Commission services prepare the **mission implementation plan**

29 Sept 2021

Official launch of the missions through a **Commission Communication**

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
- New EU Soil Strategy

Examples of soil relevant Green Deal Targets

By 2030

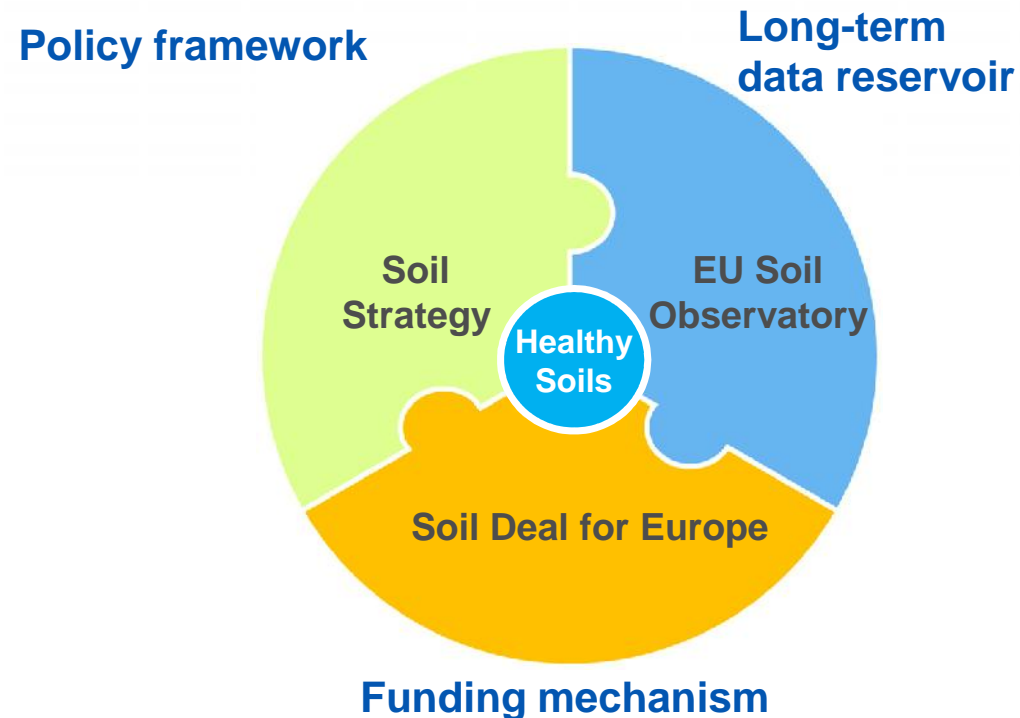
- 25% of land under organic farming
- Reduce the overall use and risk of chemical pesticides by 50% and the use of more hazardous pesticides by 50%
- Reduce fertilizer use by at least 20%
- Reduce nutrient losses by at least 50%
- Reduce by 30% microplastics released into the environment
- Reduce net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 55% compared to 1990 levels.

By 2035

- the EU should aim to reach climate neutrality in the land use, forestry & agriculture sectors

Europe's pathway to healthy soils

New Soil Strategy, European Soil Observatory and Mission together build an **effective framework for soil protection and restoration**



Soils in the new CAP

- Soil management is recognised in the new CAP as an important element to improve farm sustainability in economic and environmental terms:
 - Specific objective 5: **“Foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air”**.
- Higher environmental ambition of the new CAP is channelled e.g. via
 - stronger requirements for conditionality
 - new GAEC 2: preservation of carbon rich soils such as peatlands and wetlands
 - eco-schemes
 - agri-environment-climate measures
 - farm investments
 - Farm Sustainability Tool for Nutrient Management (FaST)



Research and innovation recognised as an enabler for achieving CAP objectives



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Goal of mission “A Soil Deal for Europe”: 100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030

Specific objectives

1. Reduce **desertification**

2. Conserve **soil organic carbon stocks**

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

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

5. Prevent **erosion**

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

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

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**.



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How will the mission be implemented?

Communication, training and advice targeted to different target groups; specialised “soil advisors”

Knowledge, data, technologies and infrastructures to support practices and business models for soil health

Co-implementation of mission by: researchers, land managers, regions, businesses, policy makers, citizens and international partners

Harmonization of soil health monitoring and reporting across Europe; contribution to European Soil Observatory

A comprehensive network of real-life sites for co-creating, testing, demonstrating and upscaling of solutions



Activities under the **four building blocks** to address **soil health** and the **drivers of soil health**

Creation of 100 Living Labs and Lighthouses

- **Living labs** are “real-life” places for experiments and innovation. Each living lab corresponds to a cluster of 10 – 20 sites (e.g. farms) working together at regional or sub-regional level.
- **Lighthouses** are individual places to showcase good practices.
- **The network of living labs** will be gradually established through consecutive Work Programme calls under Horizon Europe.
- **Specific criteria for living labs** are in place to ensure common approach.
- **Engagement with stakeholders** at regional level is essential to
 - create common understanding
 - ensure a balanced coverage of activities in rural and urban areas and across Member States.

Induction and pilot phase
(2021 -> 2025)

Engagement sessions in
each MS to build
ownership and spur
process of building LLs
(WP 2021)

Establishing and running
of the EU coordination
and support structure for
the network of LLs and
LHs (WP 2023)

First wave of living labs
cluster projects - 10 living
labs each year. (WP2023 &
2024)

Expansion and innovation
phase (2025→)

2nd wave of living labs
cluster projects
(WP 2025)

3rd wave of living labs
cluster projects
(WP 2026)

Scaling-up and mainstreaming
phase (2027→)

4th wave of living lab cluster
projects (2027)
Activities that facilitate the
mainstreaming and continuation
and sustainability of the network
(2027)

NUMBER OF SOIL
HEALTH LIVING LABS
(CUMULATED)

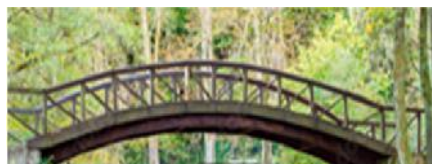


Building synergies between the Soil Deal Mission and the CAP

Activities under mission and the CAP will be closely coordinated and mutually benefit each other.

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.

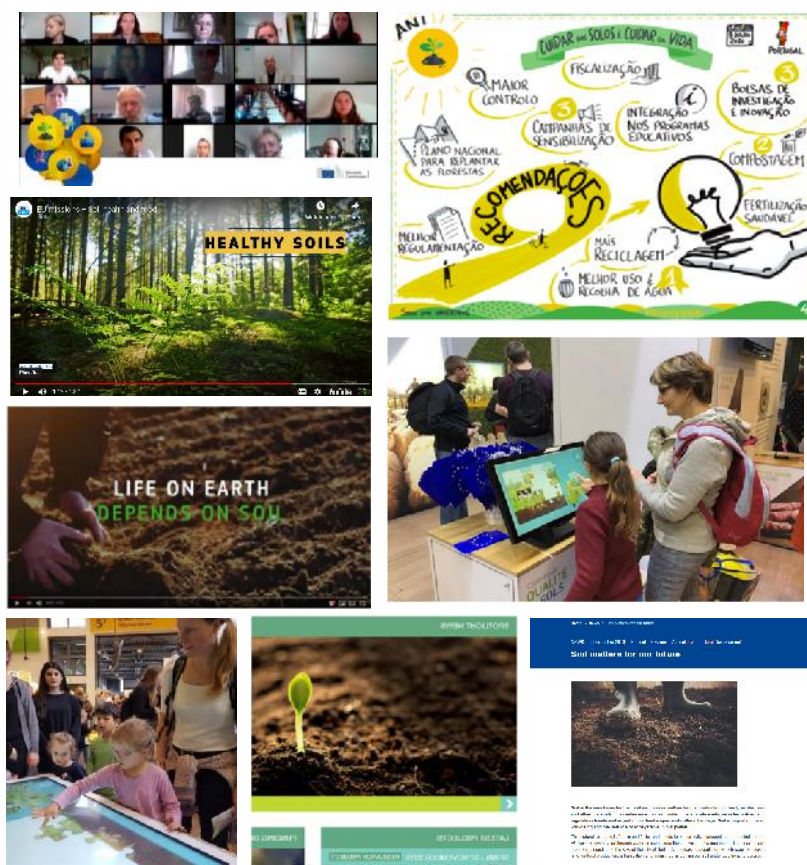


Common Agricultural Policy

- 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.

CAP strategic plans are crucial to build bridges and fully exploit synergies between the Soil Deal Mission and the CAP!

Communication and citizen engagement...



- **200+ co-creation and engagement events** from Sept. '19 – Jan' 22
 - including **2 International fairs** (International Green Week 2020, Salon de l'Agriculture 2020), **EUSO stakeholder forum 2021**, **F2F Conference 2021** (600+ participants), and **global events** (e.g. FAO World Soil Day 3 Dec. 2021, GFFA 2022 session)
 - **Upcoming: Conference in Dubai: European Green Deal and Farm to Fork strategy 19/02**, **Salon d'Agriculture Paris 2022**, **Citizen engagement event organised by French Presidency 21/03**, **R&I days June 2022**
- **2 #EIPAgriSoil campaigns**; new one planned in 2022
- **Articles, press releases, newsletters, social media, videos** (Mission video more than 110,000 views in August 2020) + **new video for World Soil Day 2021**
- **Podcast episode**
- **Soil health results pack**
- **Interactive games for kids**
- **Survey**
 - sent to more than **7000** contacts (EN, FR, DE, PL, CS, PT) and **more than 2500** contributions received

Possible involvement of MEPs



- Highlight soil protection opportunities under the CAP
- Get involved in Mission mirror groups when existing in your Member State
- Participate in national engagement sessions for capacity building and creation of Living Labs
- Communication and promotion of Mission calls and activities

Useful links

- Mission A Soil Deal for Europe webpage - <http://ec.europa.eu/mission-soil>
- Mission A Soil Deal for Europe Implementation Plan https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/eu-mission-soil-deal-europe-implementation-plan_en
- Mission A Soil Deal for Europe factsheet <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/90779d7a-227c-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-232536601>
- Press release –Missions launch: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_21_4747
- EU Missions https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/missions-horizon-europe_en
- Video EU Mission “A Soil Deal for Europe” <https://youtu.be/3hPlZqwwhhM>
- *Behind the Scenes* podcast episode *A blossoming career as a soil keeper* <https://play.acast.com/s/behind-the-scenes-conversations-with-researchers-and-innovat/s02e05-a-blossoming-career-as-a-soil-keeper>
- On a mission to save our soils - the EU’s plan to rebuild the land (Futuris episode, euronews) <https://www.euronews.com/2020/09/21/on-a-mission-to-save-our-soils-the-eu-s-plan-to-rebuild-the-land>



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Thank you!

For further information and questions please contact the mission secretariat:

AGRI-SOIL-MISSION-BOARD@ec.europa.eu

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