

Healthy policies for healthy soil: the Green Deal playing field

10 March, 2022

10.30 -13.00 CET

online

The event is organised by Legambiente Italy and its partners of the SOIL4LIFE project (<https://soil4life.eu>) funded by the European Commission LIFE instrument in partnership with the European Circular Bioeconomy Policy Initiative (www.ecbpi.eu).

Introduction

The new Soil Strategy presented by the European Commission does not only update the measures and targets of actions already taken, but requires a change of vision: Europe must protect its soils and must determine the conditions for keeping soils 'healthy'. This is not the case today: at least two thirds of Europe's soil is not in a healthy condition.

Traditionally, soil has followed the historical course which led to the formation of modern States, the borders of which have until now constituted a limit to EU intervention in the soil sphere, in contrast to other environmental issues such as water or air quality.

However, the founding treaties of the EU refer to the principle of subsidiarity, and subsidiarity requires not a subtraction, but a sharing of responsibilities: in order to ensure long-term food security, to protect the biodiversity that soils host, the ability to manage mineral nutrient cycles and water flows and quality, a shared effort at a European scale is required to combat degradation agents, starting with the management of organic matter, on which the soil's health depends and reaching into soils' ability to prevent the adverse effects of climate change. A European strategy for healthy soils cannot be effective without the definition of targets, and a road map to achieve them.

For this, a steering is needed and it must be carried out by the EU, through regulative instruments that bind all players to comply with the agreed rules, taking into account the roadmap of strategies that depend on soil services: soil health is also in fact central to the development of the circular economy, climate mitigation and adaptation, halting biodiversity loss, stopping pollution, implementing sustainable food systems.

It is no exaggeration to say that soil is both a playground for ecological transition and a natural, basic resource essential for its implementation. However, soil resources in Europe have become dramatically scarce, so much so that Europeans have to rely on soil from third countries even to produce the essential raw materials required by the food processing industry, in many cases contending with the primary needs of indigenous peoples: soil is also a major geopolitical issue.

The implementation of the Soil Strategy is a priority and urgent challenge, and requires a joint effort of which the Healthy Soil Law and the call for shared responsibility of all 27 EU countries must be part.

Program:

Key Note Speakers

Welcome and introduction from Damiano Di Simine Soil4life project, Legambiente

Setting the scene

Frans Timmermans, EC, Vice President

Soil Protection in the European Green Deal (invited to be confirmed)

Martin Hojsik - MEP

Soil protection in the European Parliament debate (invited to be confirmed)

Humberto Delgado-Rosa, Director Biodiversity DG Envi.D

The challenges of the new soil strategy

Nathalie Sauze-Vandevyver, Director, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development

A soil deal for Europe

Panel Contributions and discussion

Lara Fornabaio, Client Earth

Soil between global commitments, EU regulations and national responsibilities

Luca Montanarella, JRC

Soil health: define a set of common indicators for the monitoring of the diversity of European soils

Bram Moeskops, IFOAM

Soil protection in the agroecological transition

Claire Chenu, INRAE/AGROPARIS TECH France, coordinator of the European Joint Programme SOIL. (<https://ejpsoil.eu>)

Celia Nyssens, EEB

Carbon Farming, opportunities and Risks for agriculture and the Circular Economy

Allan Buckwell RISE Foundation

Europe, soil protection and the 2030 Agenda

Conclusions

ECBPI, Sergio Ponsá Salas Director BETA Technological Center, Barcelona

Soil at the heart of the responsible development of the bioeconomy value chains

Click [here](#) to register