

SHAPING THE EU MISSION »A SOIL DEAL FOR EUROPE«

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SOIL MISSION SUPPORT addresses all soil and land use-related problem situations, including agriculture, forestry, natural land, infrastructure areas, urban and industrial land use.



Early in the year 2021, the European Commission launched the Mission »A Soil Deal for Europe« as part of the seven-year Horizon Europe research programme. It aims to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030 by means of targeted and practice-oriented research and innovation (R&I), broad monitoring of soils throughout the EU, establishing 100 living labs and lighthouses in the coming years and targeted campaigns for raising awareness on the importance of soils for our society and future generations as well as major threats to them. The SOIL MISSION SUPPORT project, scientifically coordinated by ZALF, supports the formation of this Soil Mission during the first two years and prepares the ground for future activities.

SOIL MISSION SUPPORT roots its works on co-creation together with actors and stakeholders from all relevant soil and land use sectors and policy fields, including agriculture, forestry, natural land, infrastructure areas, urban and industrial land use. To ensure a systemic overview of all relevant soil and land-related topics, a systemic research framework was developed in form of a knowledge matrix. The knowledge matrix combines »what needs to be addressed« (societal challenges) with a holistic pathway for »how to address it« (knowledge types).

The project includes an extensive mapping and analysis of existing R&I knowledge and infrastructures within soil and land management in order to define both the state of the art and the opportunities for action. Through numerous workshops

The Horizon Europe Mission »A Soil Deal for Europe« aims to lead an EU-wide transition towards healthy soils and sustainable soil and land management by 2030. It will be based on an ambitious research and innovation programme, extensive soil monitoring, co-development of good practical solutions in living labs and lighthouses, and broad campaigns for raising awareness on the vital importance of soils. The SOIL MISSION SUPPORT Project helps with the formation of the EU Soil Mission through analysing the state of the art, co-creating a research and innovation roadmap together with actors and stakeholders, and creating an online platform for continuous roadmapping.

and surveys, the project engages a broad set of actors and stakeholders covering all European regions. The stakeholder engagement helps to identify the practitioners' specific needs in order to be able to swiftly implement sustainable soil and land management on a broad scale. Comparing the knowledge stock with the stakeholder needs, R&I gaps are identified and an integrated R&I roadmap on soil systems and sustainable land management is developed in order to provide R&I topics and priority areas to the Soil Mission.

SOIL MISSION SUPPORT will ensure that its work carries on throughout the Horizon Europe programme and beyond. Therefore, an active co-design platform for R&I roadmapping will be created. After the end of the SOIL MISSION SUPPORT project, this platform will be continued and maintained by the newly launched European Soil Observatory (EUSO).

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