



EUROPEAN UNION



# EU MISSIONS

## SOIL DEAL FOR EUROPE

Living labs, KIS, and the need to produce socially relevant soil knowledge



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Anna Krzywoszynska, Mission Board Member  
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#EUmissions #HorizonEU #MissionSoil



Horizon Europe  
R&I Missions

Linking EU's research and innovation to major societal needs;  
with strong visibility and impact

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 as well as relevance for a significant part of the European population and wide range of European citizens.

Horizon Europe defines **5 missions areas**:

Adaptation to  
Climate Change



Cancer



Climate-neutral  
and Smart Cities



Restore our  
Ocean and Waters



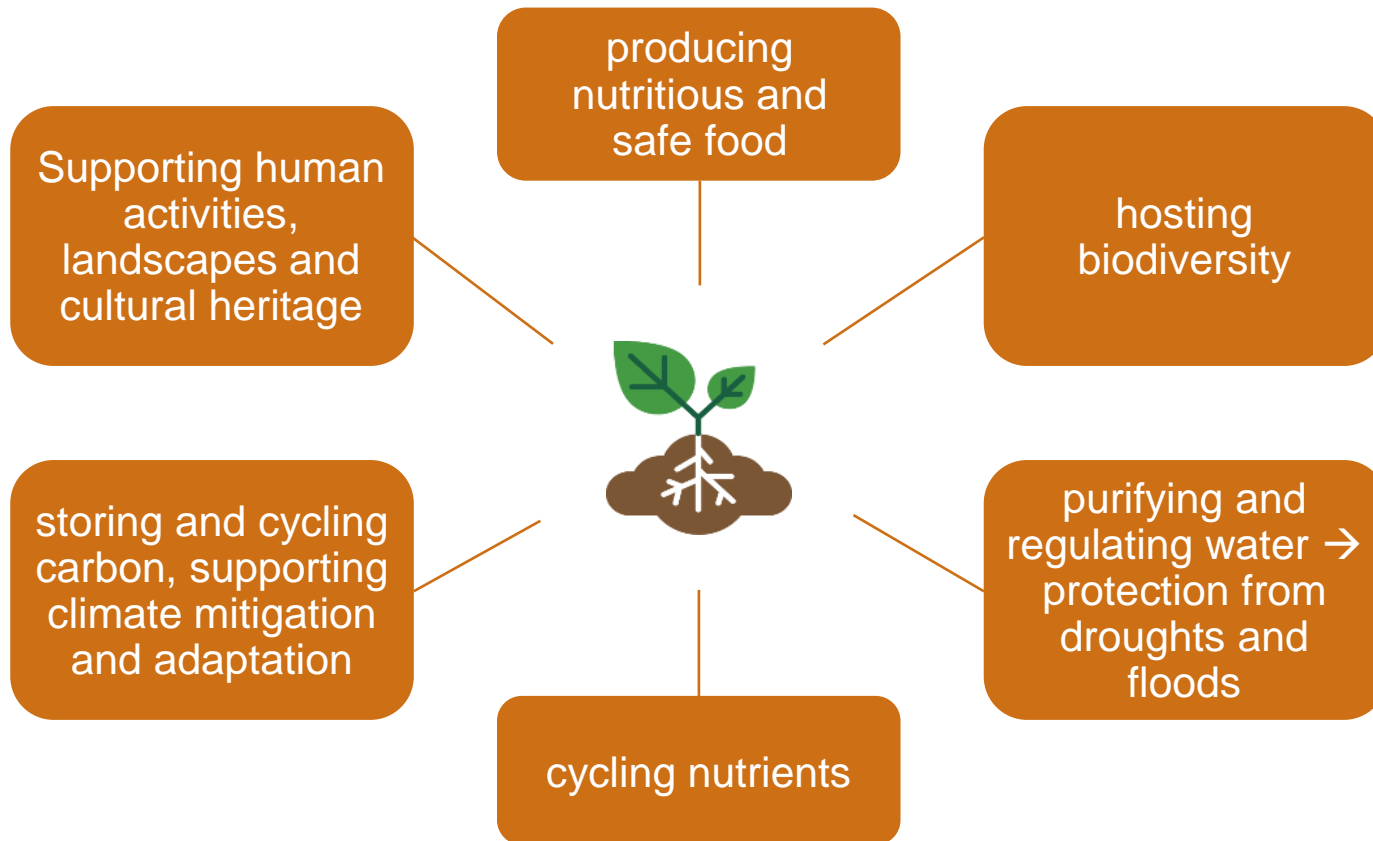
Soil Deal  
for Europe





## Why a EU Mission on soil?

Soils support ecosystem services and provide vital functions:



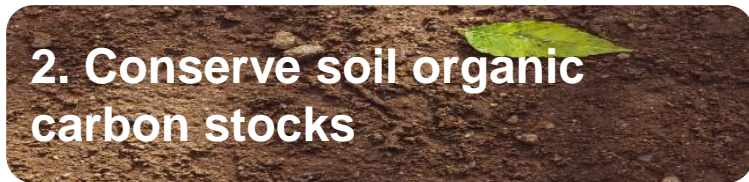
Soils are threatened: more than **60% of soils in Europe are considered to be unhealthy** due to current management practices, pollution, urbanisation and the effects of climate change.

Nature and scale of degradation vary significantly across regions and local settings – there is a need for **locally adapted solutions**



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

## Specific objectives:



## Building blocks:



Objectives apply to all types of land use and all territories and are relevant for a range of sectors.



## The Mission objectives: the social basis of the needed transformation

- Achieving soil sustainability and soil health requires more than just changes to the variables that make up existing relations.
- Transformation of **ways of thinking, values, perceptions, meaning and ways of interacting.**
- This includes associated **institutional, cultural, economic, and political arrangements and power relations.**
- Individual, collective, and structural levels.
- A task for social sciences, humanities, and the arts.





## The importance of transdisciplinarity to the achievement of Mission objectives

- Beyond “speaking truth to power”. Linear approach does not exist and does not work.
- Soil sustainability and soil health: need to understand the relationship with societal, cultural, political and economic dynamics.
- Need to explore how to transform those dynamics so that just sustainability is achieved.
- Transdisciplinarity: working from the onset with the agents of transformation (in social groups, not on social groups).





## Mission will reach out to communities at regional and local level

- The project [PREPSOIL](#) is identifying “soil needs” in **21 contrasting regions**
- **Regional authorities can use this knowledge**
  - when programming funds (Agricultural/Regional)
  - to raise awareness about local/regional soil health challenges
  - to promote the set up of Living Labs addressing specific soil health challenges
- Objective:
 

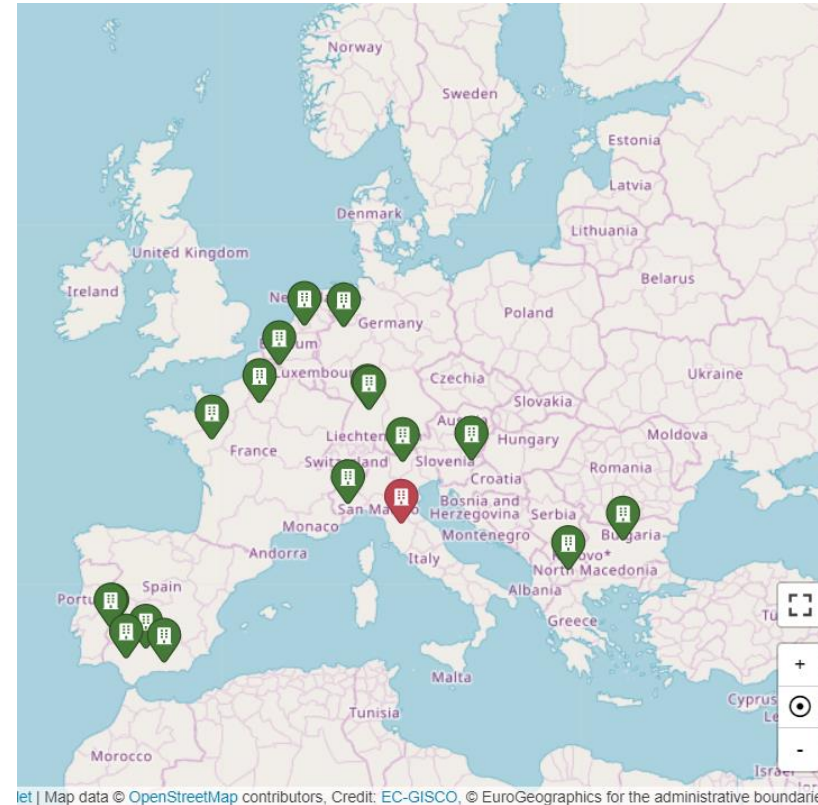
To build a ‘one-stop shop’ with **digital information, resources and engagement tools** for all Mission stakeholders, to increase networking and knowledge exchange **on soil health** between **communities across Europe at the regional/local level.**





## Mission will involve and benefit regions and municipalities

- **HuMUS** project is developing **33 Territorial Management Agreements** for soil health
  - 13 pilot regions / municipalities
  - + 20 additional regions / municipalities will be selected with an open call to be launched before the end of 2023
- Objective: dialogues on soil health at local and regional level between authorities, citizens and stakeholders



NO.	SHORT NAME	LEGAL NAME	COUNTRY
1	ANCI TOSCANA	ASSOCIAZIONE NAZIONALE COMUNI ITALIANI TOSCANA	IT
2	UNIBZ	LIBERA UNIVERSITA DI BOLZANO	IT
3	UNISG	UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI SCIENZE GASTRONOMICHE	IT
4	CAPDL	CHAMBRE REGIONALE D'AGRICULTURE DES PAYS DE LA LOIRE	FR
5	UHOH	UNIVERSITAET HOHENHEIM	DE
6	CTAEX	ASOCIACION EMPRESARIAL DE INVESTIGACION CENTRO TECNOLÓGICO NACIONAL AGROALIMENTARIO EXTREMADURA	ES
7	LBI	STICHTING LOUIS BOLK INSTITUUT	NL
8	AEEU	AGROECOLOGY EUROPE	BE
9	UGR	UNIVERSIDAD DE GRANADA	ES
10	ERSTR	ERNAHRUNGSRAT STADTREGION STUTTGART	DE
11	RAM	REGIONALNO SDRUZENIE NA OBSTINI TSENTRALNA STARA PLANINA	BG
12	FUNDECYT-CP	FUNDACION FUNDECYT - PARQUE CIENTIFICO Y TECNOLÓGICO DE EXTREMADURA	ES
13	AGAPA	AGENCIA DE GESTION AGRARIA Y PESQUERA DE ANDALUCIA	ES
14	SWG RRD	REGIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT STANDINGWORKING GROUP IN SEE	MK
15	RRA	REGIONALNA RAZVOJNA AGENCIJA ZA PODRAVJE - MARIBOR	SI
16	LWK NRW	LANDWIRTSCHAFTSKAMMER NORDRHEIN-WESTFALEN	DE
17	VEG	VEGEPOLYS VALLEY	FR
18	UCO	UNIVERSIDAD DE CORDOBA	ES





# Living Labs and lighthouses to spur place-based innovations across regions

## 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 **co-developed solutions adapted to the local conditions** .
- Each living lab is composed of a group of sites (e.g. farms, forest stands, urban green areas) working together at regional or sub-regional level.

**Lighthouses:** are sites to showcase good practices

## Network of 100 Living labs and lighthouses to be built up gradually and in a bottom-up approach.

**First call for Living Labs published** in Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023: kick-started the creation of more than 20 -25 Living Labs, these comprising more than 200 local testing sites in urban and rural areas.



Phase 1 (2021-2024)

Induction and pilot

Phase 2 (2025-2026)

Gradual expansion

Phase 3 (2027-)

Scaling-up  
and mainstreaming



# Living labs are open innovation arrangements

- Principles

- Co-creation
- With users
- In reality

Creative relations at landscape level

User-centred innovation

Place-based

- Values

- Knowledge
- Business
- Social



Multiple actors with complementary knowledge

Social and behavioural sciences



# Living Labs in the Soil Mission

- A living lab contains a group of sites working together at regional or sub-regional level.
- A project gathers partners from at least 3 member-states or associates countries.
- Involvement of different civil society actors from the start is key.
- Facilitating that e.g. through national Mirror Mission Boards.





## Regions can be part or/and support the creation of Living Labs (LL)

- The Project [Nati00ns](https://www.nati00ns.eu/) is preparing regional and national stakeholders to apply for and implement soil health LLs.
- **Engagement sessions** (in a “roadshow” format) are organized in all Member States and Associated Countries to promote the call, inform and inspire potential applicants.
- Nati00ns also supports applicants with: **coaching sessions, matchmaking opportunities within and across regions, webinars** and a **helpdesk** service.
- Check when this happens in your country!

<https://www.nati00ns.eu/>





# The Mission Soil Manifesto

1. remind the **importance of soils** for people and the planet
2. **acknowledge the status** of soils
3. **recognise the urgency** to act
4. **support the Mission** and its objectives
5. **take action** as policymakers, organisations, or individuals

Join the Mission Soil community!



**+1,700 signatories**  
**15% organisations**

*of which*  
**25% local and regional  
authorities, associations and  
NGOs**

**Sign it!**





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# Thank you!

For further information and questions please contact the Mission Secretariat:

[EU-HORIZON-MISSION-SOIL@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EU-HORIZON-MISSION-SOIL@ec.europa.eu)

## Mission Soil Manifesto

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/mission-soil-manifesto>

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