



Joint

JRC/ESBN/INRA/French Presidency Workshop

***Soil Framework Directive: A real need to protect soil!***

Paris, 19 November 2008

# **Status of the Soil Thematic Strategy**

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# A bit of history...



The **Soil Thematic Strategy** and the proposal for a **Soil Framework Directive** were adopted by the European Commission on 22 September 2006

Why?

- ❖ Soil is practically a **non-renewable** resource
- ❖ It performs **crucial** functions for human activities and ecosystems survival
- ❖ Soils are **increasingly degrading** or **irreversibly lost** across the EU => the Community *acquis* is **not** sufficient

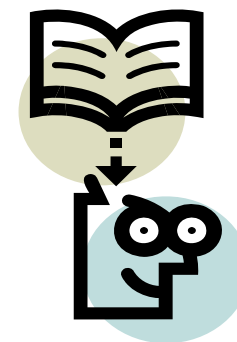


# The content of the Thematic Strategy



## ❖ Communication

COM(2006)231, 22.9.2006



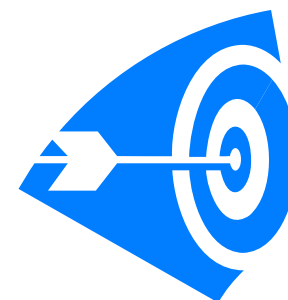
## ❖ Proposal for a Soil Framework Directive

COM(2006)232, 22.9.2006



## ❖ Impact Assessment

SEC(2006)1165 & SEC(2006)620, 22.9.2006





# The Soil Thematic Strategy



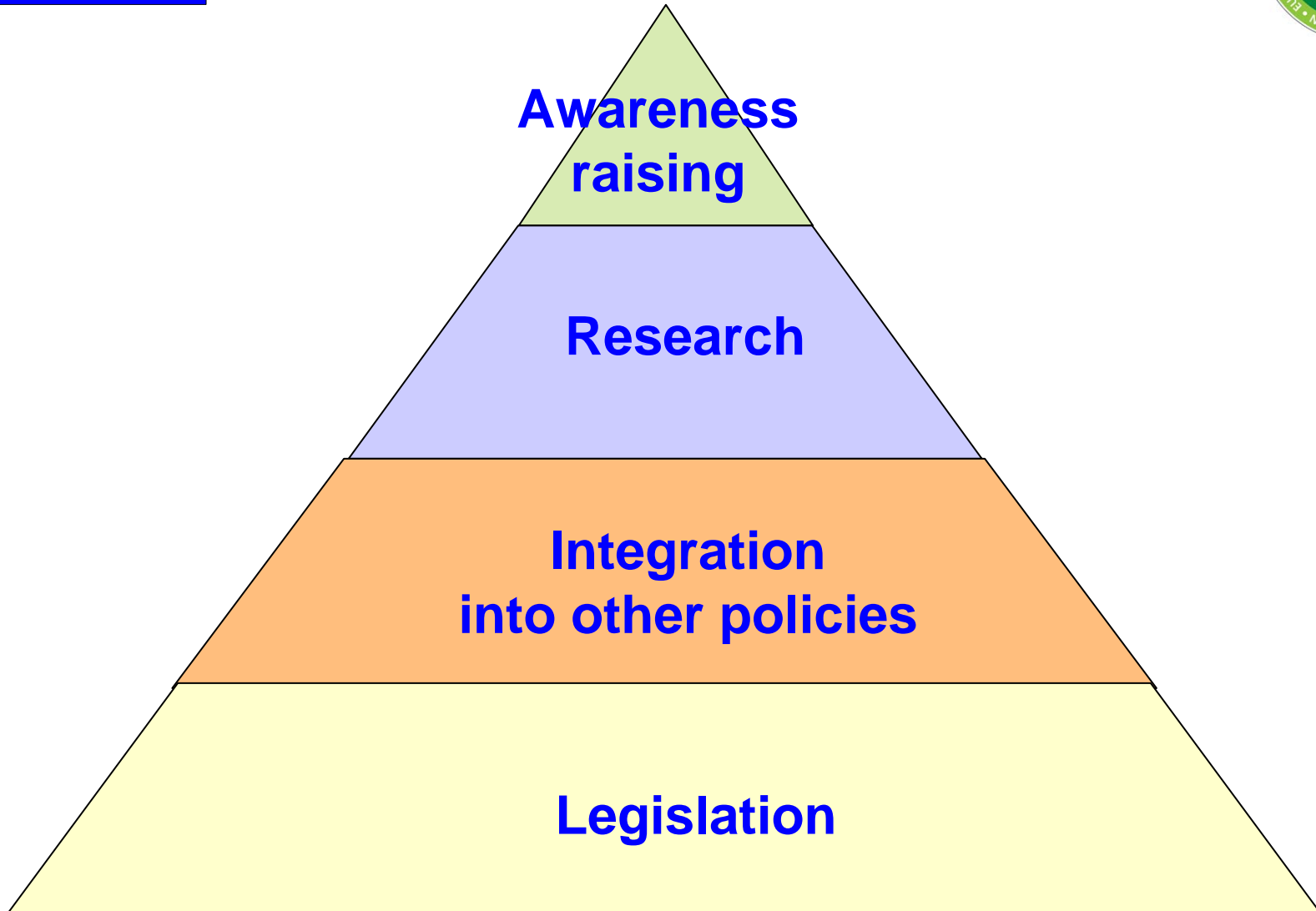
# The Communication



- ❖ Lays down the **objective** of soil policy: the protection of soil functions across the EU
- ❖ Sets out the **four pillars** of EU soil policy
- ❖ Indicates the **next steps** at EU level



# The four pillars of EU soil policy





# The next steps - 1



- ❖ Calls for research projects in FP7 Ongoing
- ❖ Review the Sewage Sludge Directive Due in 2009 (tbc)
- ❖ Review the IPPC Directive COM(2007)843
- ❖ Soil measures in Rural Development Plans for 2007-2013 Done
- ❖ Check soil requirements in GAECs Ongoing ▶
- ❖ Best practices to mitigate negative effects of sealing To be done
- ❖ Common Implementation Strategy for the Soil Framework Directive To be done after SFD adoption



## The next steps - 2



- ❖ Interaction between soil protection and climate change **Conference**  
**12 June 2008**
- ❖ Assess synergies with river basin management plans **After 2009**
- ❖ Assess synergies with the protection of coastal waters **Ongoing**
- ❖ Integration of soil protection aspects in product policy to prevent soil contamination **Ongoing**
- ❖ Complementarity with UNCCD, CBD, Kyoto Protocol and Alpine Convention **Ongoing**





# Soil Thematic Strategy and other policies



Conference  
**Climate change**  
**Can soil make a difference?**



Brussels, 12 June 2008

Chair: Mr Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary, UNCCD

Key Note Speech - Why is soil organic matter so important? – *S. Dimas*

Session I - Soil – the biggest terrestrial carbon pool

- ❖ The projected effects of climate change in Europe - *J.-P. van Ypersele*
- ❖ The role of soil organic matter in the global carbon cycle - *Rattan Lal*

Session II - The evolution of soil carbon stocks

- ❖ UK losses of soil carbon – due to climate change? - *Pat H. Bellamy*
- ❖ Emissions from peat soils - *Jari Liski*
- ❖ Changes in soil organic matter in relation to land use and agricultural practices - *Dominique Arrouays*
- ❖ Emissions due to land use changes in Brazil - *Carlos C. Cerri*



## Session III - How to ensure that soil is part of the solution to climate change?

- ❖ The role of agricultural practices in keeping or increasing soil organic matter - *Pete Smith*
- ❖ Evaluation of the potential of selected measures to reduce carbon emissions and sequester carbon in European soils – *Annette Freibauer*

## Session IV - Panel discussion on the policy implications

- ❖ *Mr Janez Podobnik, Minister of the Environment, Slovenia*
- ❖ *Ms Þórunn Sveinbjarnardóttir, Minister for the Environment, Iceland*
- ❖ *Mr Humberto Rosa, Secretary of State for Environment, Portugal*
- ❖ *Mr Vittorio Prodi, Rapporteur on the Soil Thematic Strategy, EP*
- ❖ *Mr Staffan Nilsson, Rapporteur on the Soil Thematic Strategy, EESC*

Closing remarks – *Jos Delbeke*



# Key messages from the Conference



- ❖ Soil is both **part of the problem** and of the **solution** for climate change
- ❖ **Preserving and restoring existing carbon stocks** (e.g. in grassland and peatland) might be more effective than trying to create new ones
- ❖ The **quantification** of where and how much European soils are losing organic matter must be a **priority** for EU action.
- ❖ Soil degradation, particularly SOM loss, has **transboundary effects**, thus need for common EU legislative framework
- ❖ It is clear that the EU (and the world) has to adapt to climate change
- ❖ Soil has a **crucial role to play** to secure food and other social, economic and environmental services



# More info...



Full report (in English)  
and executive summaries  
(in all EU languages)  
available at

[http://ec.europa.eu/  
environment/soil/conf\\_es.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/conf_es.htm)





# What is in the pipeline



- ❖ Green Paper on **biowaste management**  
*In preparation – due by the end of 2008*
- ❖ White Paper on **adaptation to climate change**  
*In preparation – due in the first half of 2009*
- ❖ Discussions on **LULUCF**  
*Ongoing - should activities under Art. 3.4 of the Kyoto Protocol be mandatory post 2012?*



# Status of negotiations on the proposal for a Soil Framework Directive



# Advisory Bodies



- ❖ **Committee of the Regions (CoR):**  
favourable opinion adopted in  
February 2007
- ❖ **European Economic and Social  
Committee (EESC):**  
favourable opinion adopted in  
April 2007





# European Parliament



- ❖ Resolution of 13 November 2007 on the **Soil Thematic Strategy**:
  - Supports the Commission in its general approach
  - Underlines the importance of climate change mitigation, biodiversity loss and desertification
  
- ❖ First reading of 14 November 2007 on the **Soil Framework Directive**:
  - Adopted with a majority of 2/3 of MEPs
  - Maintains the basic structure of the Commission proposal and its key elements
  - Provides more flexibility for some provisions and strengthens others



# Environment Council - 1



- ❖ Intense discussions during the Portuguese Presidency
- ❖ Substantial changes were introduced in the Presidency compromise texts in the direction of adding **flexibility** and more **margin of manoeuvre** for the Member States



## Environment Council - 2



- ❖ The Council did **not** reach a **political agreement** on 20 December 2007, despite numerous efforts by the Portuguese Presidency:
  - **Blocking minority** formed by DE, FR, UK, NL, AT
  - For reasons of **subsidiarity** (DE, AT, NL) and **proportionality/costs** (UK, FR)
- ❖ The **French Presidency** has restarted the negotiation at technical level



# Thank you for your attention!



<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/index.htm>



# Study on GAEC standards



**Evaluation of soil protection aspects  
in certain programmes of measures  
adopted by Member States**

Cont.No. 07010401/2006/443994/ATA/B1

**Final Report**

23<sup>rd</sup> of November 2007

Evaluation of soil  
protection aspects in  
certain programmes  
of measures adopted  
by Member States

[http://ec.europa.eu/  
environment/soil/  
study1\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/study1_en.htm)

