



EUROPEAN SOIL BUREAU NETWORK

Declaration of the European Soil Bureau Network of the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission in support of the CST scientific style conference of the UNCCD held at COP9 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 22-24 September 2009

The European Soil Bureau Network (ESBN) held its Plenary Annual Meeting in Budapest, Hungary during 14 – 16 September 2009. The membership of our scientific network brings together European soil specialists from 40 countries and is a permanent technical advisory body to the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, providing policy-relevant soil data and information. For over three decades, with the support of national, international organisations and of the European Commission, the ESBN has been documenting the nature, condition and threats to soil resources.

There is increasing understanding that soil resources are critical to sustainable development, especially in the context of climate change. Their extent and condition are foundational to delivering ecosystem services and goods such as food production and security, climate change mitigation including carbon sequestration and renewable energy production, climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation and water and nutrient cycles.

We express our deep concern that the importance of soil is not always properly recognised, despite its paramount importance. Furthermore we wish to highlight the rapid and extensive degradation of soil in many regions and especially in the drylands.

We are convinced that a stronger focus on sustainable land and soil management is imperative if the goals of the UNCCD are to be achieved. In response, we call for the establishment of an International Panel on Land and Soil (IPLS) under the auspices of the UNCCD. In support, we offer our experience and energy to assist the future work of the IPLS.

We send our best wishes for a successful and productive conference.

The ESBN Plenary

