

SOIL AWARENESS AND EDUCATION – DEVELOPING A PAN EUROPEAN APPROACH

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European Soil
Bureau Network

What are we seeking to achieve?

- Compared to water and air, the value of soil is under recognised by society - we believe that this lack of awareness is unsatisfactory. Soil science community must bear some responsibility for it due to lack of effective communication to society at large.
- *“Establish an action plan for the development of measures / programmes / initiatives to raise awareness of the importance of soil across European society (i.e. policy makers, general public, universities, schools, industry, etc.)”*
- Awareness raising may become a legal requirement if the EU Soil Framework Directive gets ratified
- We have to devise new ways of communicating to new audiences and need to stimulate people if we want to encourage soil-based careers

Developments

- Follow up of joint ENSA/WG4 Workshop
- Awareness raising section on EUSOILS portal
- 3rd Meeting of Group – Cranfield University April 2010
- Presence at IUSS World Soils Congress, Brisbane August 2010
- Development of Action Plan for target bodies (EU, MS,...)

Who are we seeking to influence?

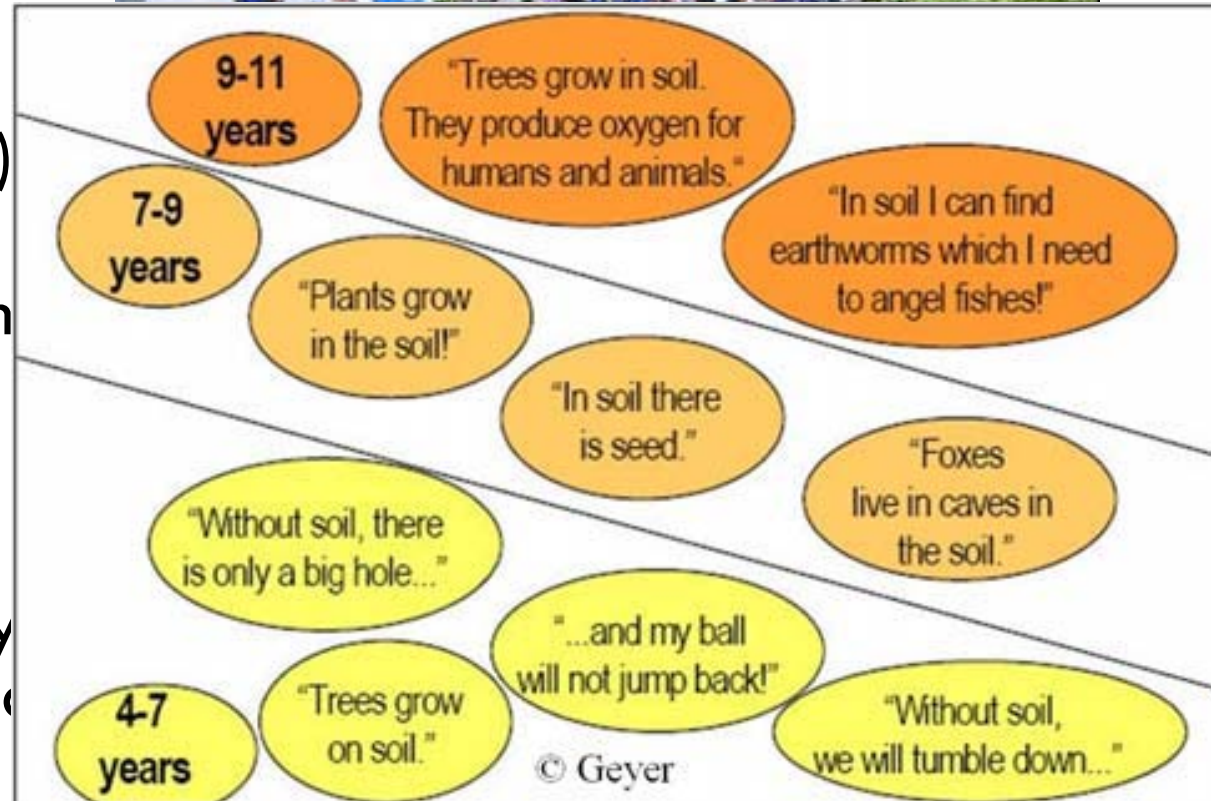
We have identified three broad groupings:

- The education sector
 - By definition, this is primarily young people
- Politicians, policy advisors and associated agencies
 - Groups with 'influence'
 - Soils cut across a large number of policy sectors
- Public
 - Possibly the hardest to reach?

Must remember that the different groups are not divorced from each other

The education sector

- Very diverse community
- Aged 5 (or younger) to 95 (or older)
- Room for a wide range of mechanisms
- Start gently and use fun
- Children can be very imaginative; we need to exploit that



The education sector (& public?)

- That every young person “knows their soil” – adopt a soil
- Provide guidance to schools and develop links to the appropriate national education bodies
- Curricula mapping planning – prospects for EU-wide approach
- Soil pack for every school in Europe!
- Development of support tools – e.g. web systems, soil walks/trails, teaching material
- Travelling soils exhibit
- Centralised portal of material
- Re-stimulate tertiary education sector

The decision making sector

Political level

- Review and rank potential target audiences – how to reach them
- Policy relevant case studies
- Themed workshops with the different DGs/,Ministries

Professional Stakeholders (e.g. farmers, architects, planners, environmental)

- Targeted messages
- Best practice guidelines

Public

- Books, Leaflets, Posters, Websites (multi-lingual)
- European ‘Soil/Dirt’ multimedia / movie

The general public

How to sell soil?

- Books, Leaflets, Posters, Websites (multi-lingual)
- National 'Soil Day' events
- European 'Soil/Dirt' multimedia / movie
- Use of professional marketing agency
- Soil 'figurehead' – David Beckham!!!

The soil science community

Benchmark soil sites

- Produce a catalogue of the key soil landscape units across Europe on basis of selection criteria.
- Harmonized documentation and presentation
- Input into geo-parks concept
- Core of pan-EU soil monitoring network
- Prepare cost-analysis

Communicate your science!

- More to life than peer-review
- Develop local and policy links

The soil science community

Regional Networking and Cooperation

Share resources amongst focus/language groups

- Harmonized documentation and presentation
- Input into geo-parks concept
- Core of pan-EU soil monitoring network
- Prepare cost-analysis

Engage National Soil Science Societies

- Does every SSC have awareness raising programme?

IUSS WORLD CONGRES 2010



- JRC stand highlighted EU activities on awareness raising
- Very positive feedback on presentation in AR/Soil Education Session in Brisbane
- Several 'isolated' initiatives around the world
- AJ, WT and GB attended IUSS Commission 4.4 Business Meeting – not active in past 4 years. Will feed WSBN WG4 outputs to stimulate developments

The BIG IDEA!



Ambitious project having clear pan-European impact

Requiring large-scale funding!!!

- Awareness raising LIFE+bid
- Linkages with other international groups (e.g.UNESCO)