

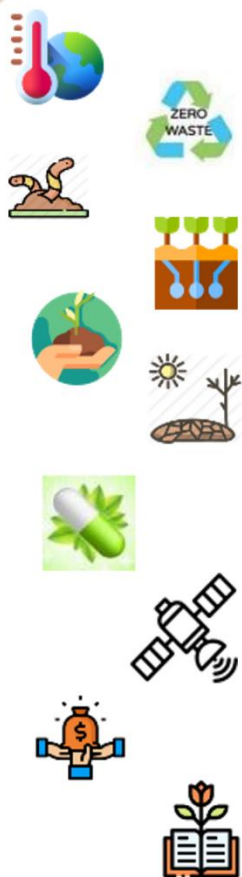


Workshop with the EU Commission on Regenerative Agriculture

Soil health

December 2, 2022

New Soil Strategy COM(2021) 699



- Soil health for **climate change mitigation and adaptation**
- Soil health and **the circular economy**
- Soil biodiversity for **human, animal and plant health**
- Healthy soils for **clean water**
- Making **Sustainable Soil Management (SSM)** the new normal
- Prevent **desertification**
- Prevent **pollution**
- Restore **degraded soil** and remediate **contaminated sites**
- Improve **digital knowledge, monitoring and research** on soil
- Enable the transition to healthy soil
 - **private finance** and **EU funding**
 - **soil literacy** and **societal engagement**



Key actions



Soil organic carbon and water retention

- Increasing 1% soil organic carbon can provide **150.000 litres of water per hectare** (USDA)



Soil health and the circular economy

- Promote the **land take hierarchy** and **ask MS to set targets** for 2030
- Close the nutrient and carbon circle by **safely recycling biowaste**



Soil biodiversity for human, animal and plant health



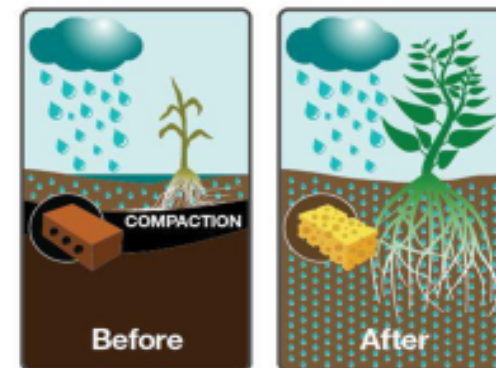
Healthy soils for clean water & healthy aquatic ecosystems

- Improve **soil-sediment-water nexus**; Link also with **land take** and **soil sealing**



Making Sustainable Soil Management (SSM) the new normal

- Set of SSM practices** and criteria to phase out unsustainable practices
- Launch together with MS the **Test Your Soil For Free initiative**
- Promote **sustainable soil management through the CAP** and build a network of practitioners

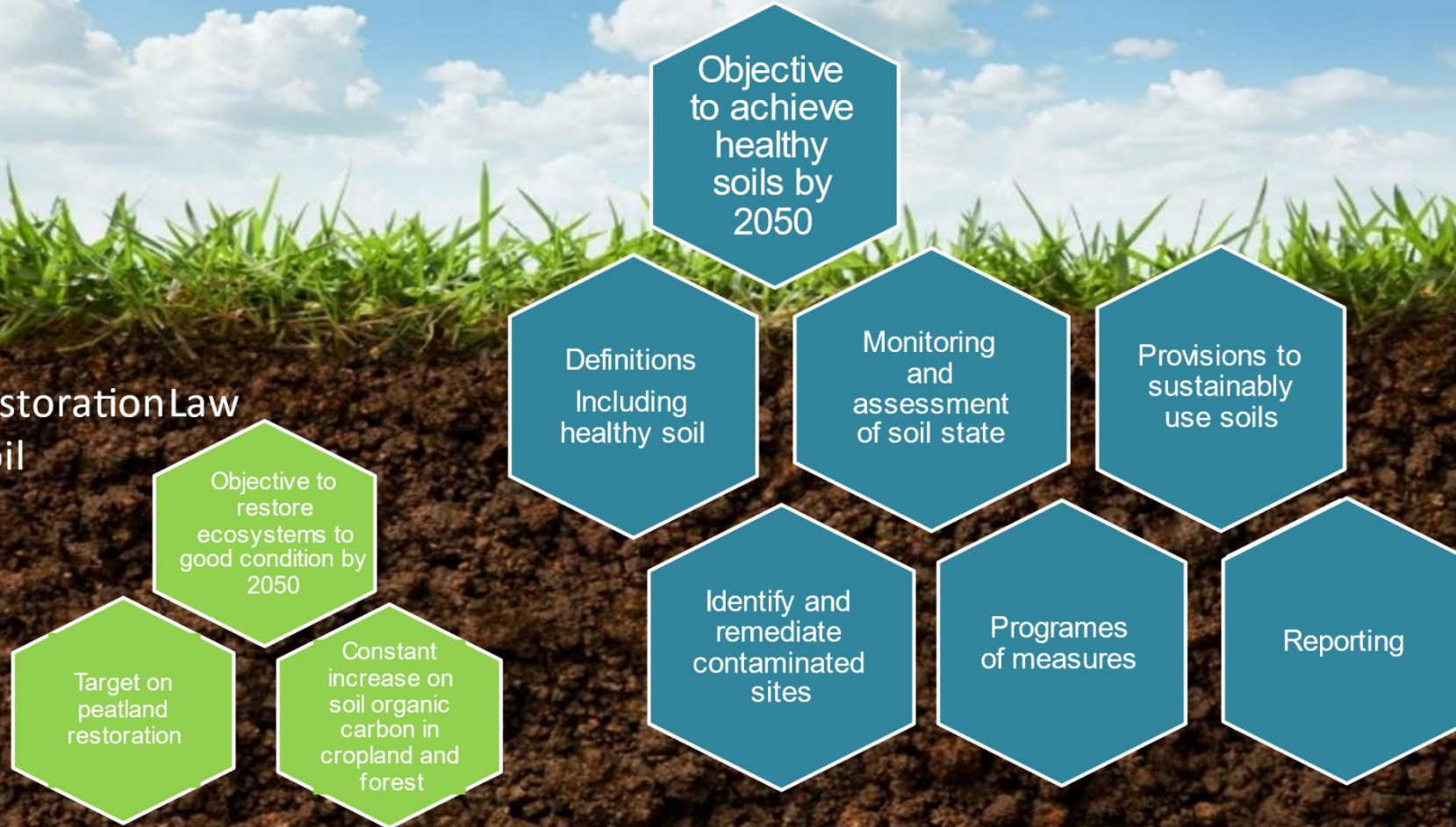


The problem to be addressed

- ❑ 60-70% of soils are « unhealthy » (Soil Mission), due to soil degradation: contamination, compaction, erosion, loss of organic content and soil biodiversity, etc.
- ❑ This means loss of critical ecosystem services (~50b€/y):
 - Loss or contamination of biomass production => risk for food security
 - Loss of CO₂ storage => risk for climate mitigation objectives
 - Degradation of water and nutrient cycling => increased impact of floods and droughts, decreased resilience for climate adaptation, water quality issues, impact on biodiversity
 - Loss of basis for habitats and biodiversity => loss of biodiversity (e.g. wild pollinators)
- ❑ These have also transboundary impacts
- ❑ Outlook (trend): negative (EEA SOER 2020)

Future Soil Health Law

Nature Restoration Law - link to soil



Soil and agriculture

- ❑ Healthy soil = indispensable for quality farming and its value should get recognition
- ❑ Land take and soil sealing = soil is lost for ecosystem services, including agriculture
- ❑ Recovery of degraded soils and contaminated lands (millions of sites across the EU) is a gain
- ❑ A truly regenerative agriculture = maintains and restores soil
- ❑ Knowledge about the soil status and trends is essential to be able to protect and restore

Thank you



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