



EUROPEAN UNION

# EU MISSIONS



## Concrete solutions for our greatest challenges

### A Soil Deal for Europe: 100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030

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**#EUmissions #HorizonEU**



# Five EU missions adopted in September 2021 – 2 years of intense preparations

Adaptation to  
Climate Change

Cancer

Climate-neutral  
and Smart Cities

Restore our  
Ocean and Waters

Soil Deal  
for Europe



- A new role for research and innovation
- An all-in approach: cut across the boundaries of policies, programmes and different levels of governance
- A new relationship with citizens
- A substantial financial envelope under the EU research programme HE: 1-2 billion Euros 2021-27



## Why a mission on soil health?



- Healthy soils are the **basis for nutritious and safe food.**
- Soils deliver **vital, interconnected ecosystem functions**
  - water purification and regulation (protection from droughts and floods)
  - hosting biodiversity
  - nutrient cycling
  - climate mitigation and adaptation
  - range of cultural services
- Soil is a **scarce, non-renewable resource.**
- **Soils are threatened: 60-70% of soils in Europe are considered to be unhealthy** due to current management practices, pollution, urbanisation and the effects of climate change.

# The Soil Deal mission supports the Green Deal

## Mission part of:

- Farm to Fork Strategy
- EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030
- Climate Adaptation Strategy
- Forest Strategy
- Zero Pollution Action Plan for air, water and soil
- Organic Action Plan
- Long term vision for rural areas
- New EU Soil Strategy

## Examples of soil relevant Green Deal Targets

### By 2030

- 25% of land under organic farming
- Reduce the overall use and risk of chemical pesticides by 50% and the use of more hazardous pesticides by 50%
- Reduce fertilizer use by at least 20%
- Reduce nutrient losses by at least 50%
- Reduce by 30% microplastics released into the environment
- Reduce net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 55% compared to 1990 levels.

### By 2035

- the EU should aim to reach climate neutrality in the land use, forestry & agriculture sectors



# Goal of mission “A Soil Deal for Europe”: 100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030

## Specific objectives

1. Reduce desertification

2. Conserve soil organic carbon stocks

3. Stop soil sealing and increase re-use of urban soils

4. Reduce soil pollution and enhance restoration

5. Prevent erosion

6. Improve soil structure to enhance soil biodiversity

7. Reduce the EU global footprint on soils

8. Improve soil literacy in society



Each specific objective is backed by **one or more quantified targets** and **measurable indicators**. Objectives apply to **all types of land use**.



# How will the mission be implemented?

Communication, training and advise targeted to different target groups; specialised “soil advisors”



**4. Soil literacy, communication citizen engagement**

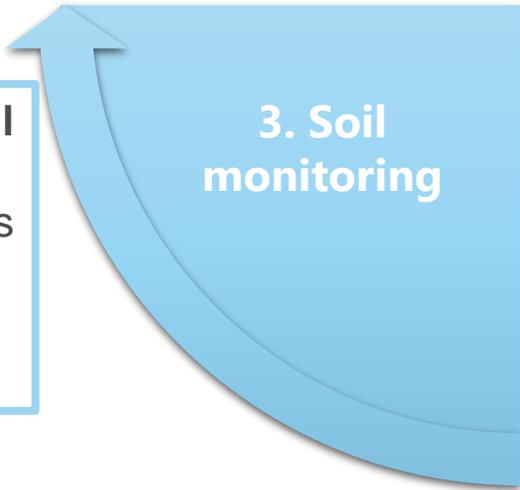


**1. R&I programme**

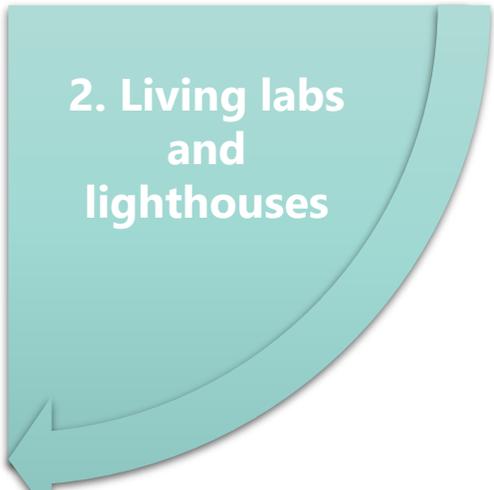
Knowledge, data, technologies and infrastructures to support practices and business models for soil health

**Co-implementation of mission by:** researchers, land managers, regions, businesses, policy makers, citizens and international partners

Harmonization of soil health monitoring and reporting across Europe; contribution to European Soil Observatory



**3. Soil monitoring**



**2. Living labs and lighthouses**

A comprehensive network of real-life sites for co-creating, testing, demonstrating and upscaling of solutions

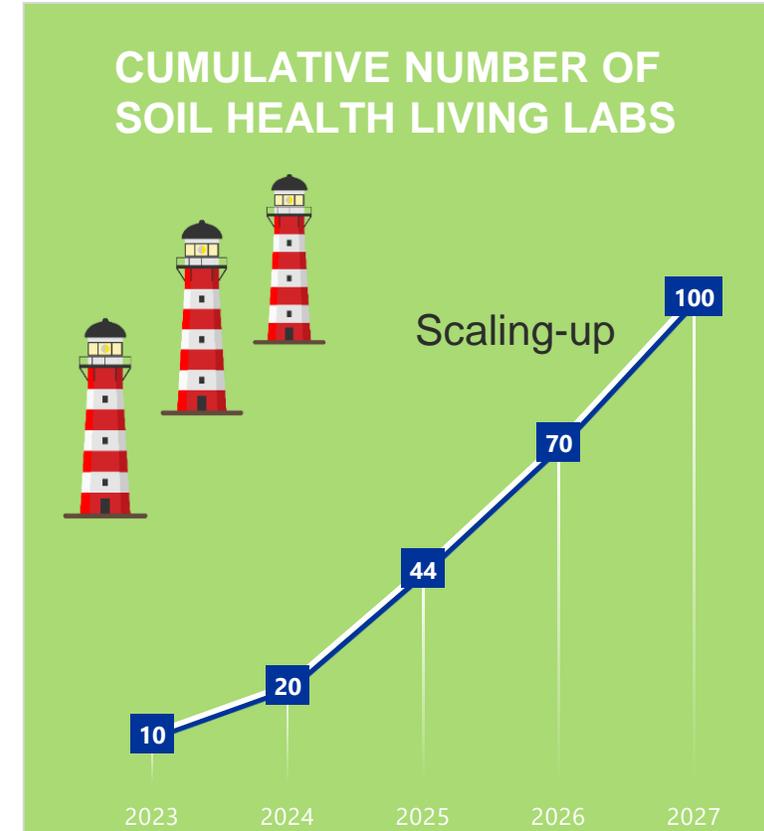


Activities under the **four building blocks** to address **soil health** and the **drivers of soil health**



## Creation of 100 Living Labs and Lighthouses

- **Living labs are a core element of the mission.** They are “real-life” places for experiments and innovation.
- Each living lab corresponds to a cluster of 10 – 20 sites (e.g. farms) working together at regional or sub-regional level.
- **Lighthouses** are individual places to showcase good practices.
- **The network of living labs** will be gradually established through consecutive calls under the R&I programme Horizon Europe.
- Specific criteria for living labs have been developed under the mission to ensure **common approach and comparability of data and experiences.**
- Engagement with stakeholders at regional level is essential to ensure a balanced coverage of activities
  - in rural and urban areas
  - across all Member States





## International cooperation

- Channelled through the R&I and monitoring building block.
- Capitalise on exiting initiatives and partnerships – including the FAO Global Soil Partnership
- Activities upcoming under the EU’s research programme Horizon Europe:
  - International research consortium on soil carbon sequestration
  - International cooperation on remediation strategies, methods and financial models for decontamination and reuse of land in urban and rural areas





## Useful links

- **Mission website:** [EU Mission: A Soil Deal for Europe | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/mission-soil/)
- **Mission implementation plan:** [Implementation Plans for the EU Missions | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/mission-soil/implementation-plans/)
- **Video on the Mission on Soil health and food** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53bbzE2lpKc&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53bbzE2lpKc&feature=emb_logo)
- **EU mission Caring for soil is caring for life (Mission Board report)** <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/4ebd2586-fc85-11ea-b44f-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-159637857>
- **Mission report handover to the European Commission (EU R&I Days 2020)** <https://youtu.be/oAG5-CQIOoc>
- **Soil mission session (EU R&I Days 2020)** <https://research-innovation-days-conference.online/hubs/mission>
- **On a mission to save our soils - the EU's plan to rebuild the land (Futuris episode, euronews)** <https://www.euronews.com/2020/09/21/on-a-mission-to-save-our-soils-the-eu-s-plan-to-rebuild-the-land>



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# Thank you!



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