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EU MISSIONS

SOIL DEAL FOR EUROPE



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Status of the EU mission “A Soil Deal for Europe” – ECOMONDO 7 Nov 2024

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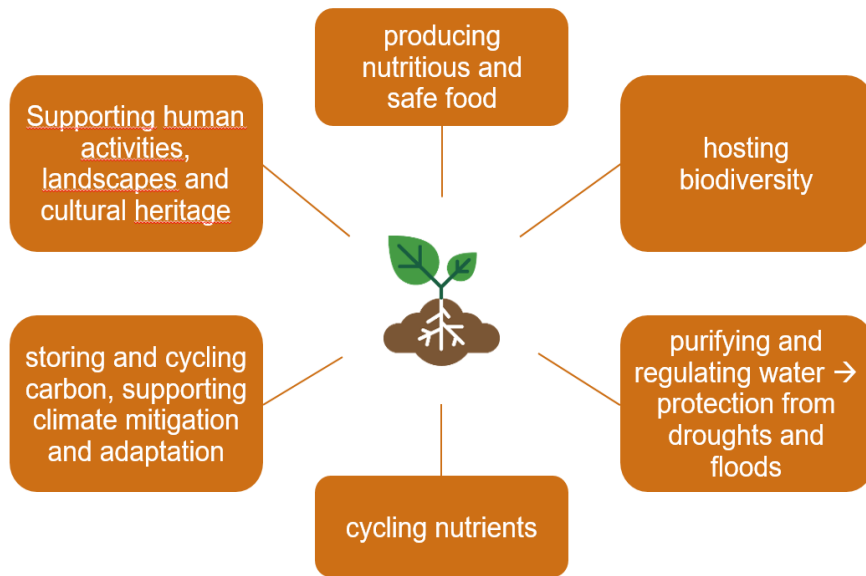
Head of the Mission Secretariat for the
EU Mission “A Soil Deal for Europe”

#EUmissions #HorizonEU #MissionSoil



The Mission Soil: a unique tool to restore and ensure soil health in EU and beyond

Soils support ecosystem services and provide vital functions

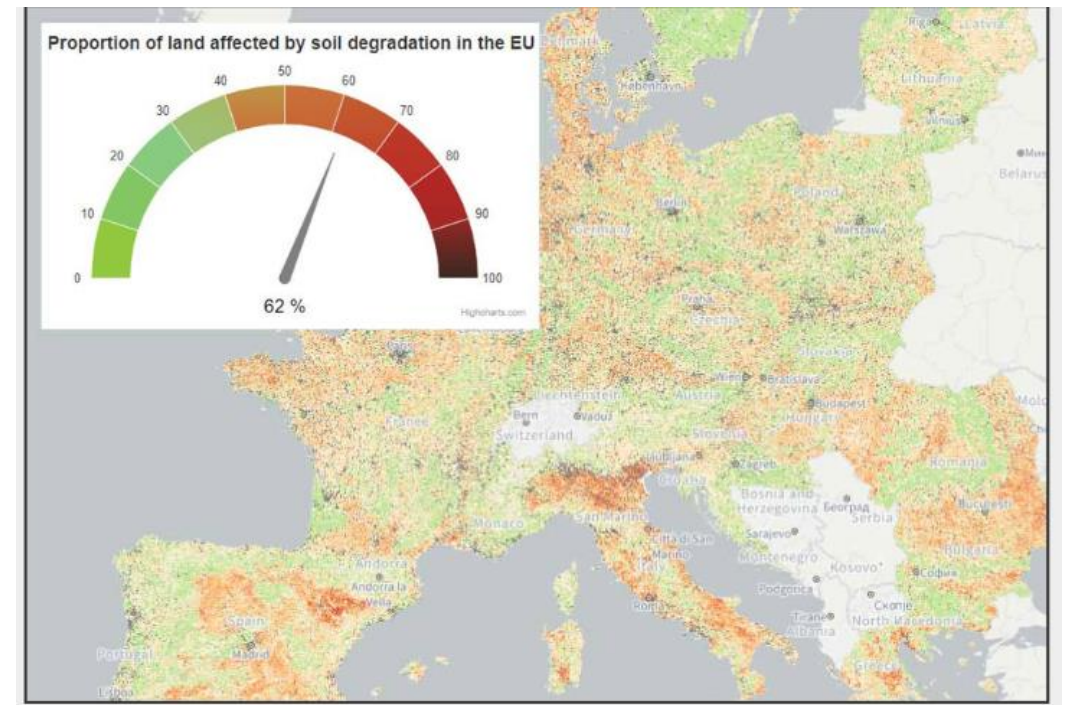


The Mission Soil

A novel **transdisciplinary**, cross-sectoral, **real-life** testing approach to soil management addressing **all land uses**: agriculture, forestry, urban, industrial.

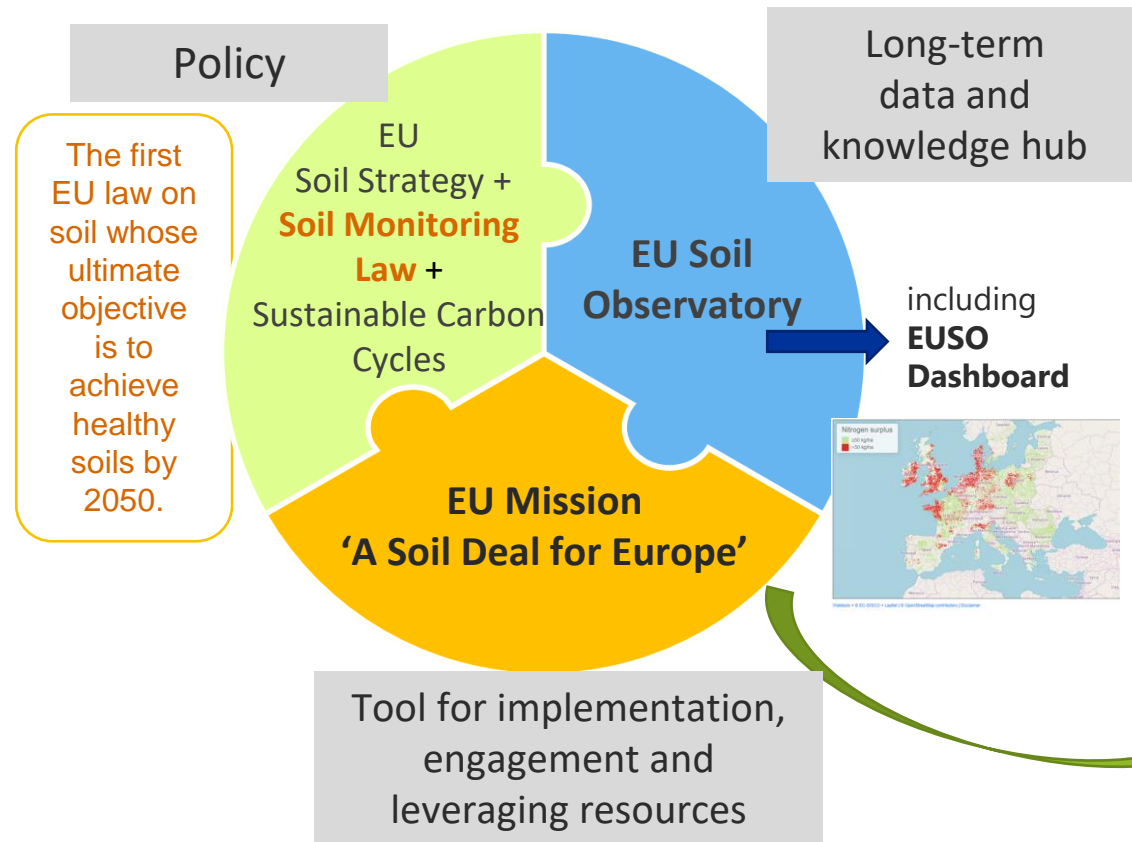
Soils are threatened:

More than 60% of soils in Europe are considered to be **unhealthy** due to current management practices, pollution, urbanisation and the effects of climate change.





Policy context: A robust EU framework for soil health protection and restoration



Challenges

- **Knowledge–practice divide:** Knowledge regarding sustainable soil management is not sufficiently applied in practice
- More knowledge and data needed to address soil health: **biodiversity, contamination** (pesticides, nutrients...), **carbon farming, waste management**.
- **Lack of harmonization of soil monitoring** in the EU.

The Mission Soil provides

- **new knowledge** for the design, implementation evaluation and review of the Soil Monitoring Law
- **funding opportunities** to develop innovative solutions for land managers participating in living labs
- **awareness** raising and knowledge spreading across society



Mission Goal: 100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030

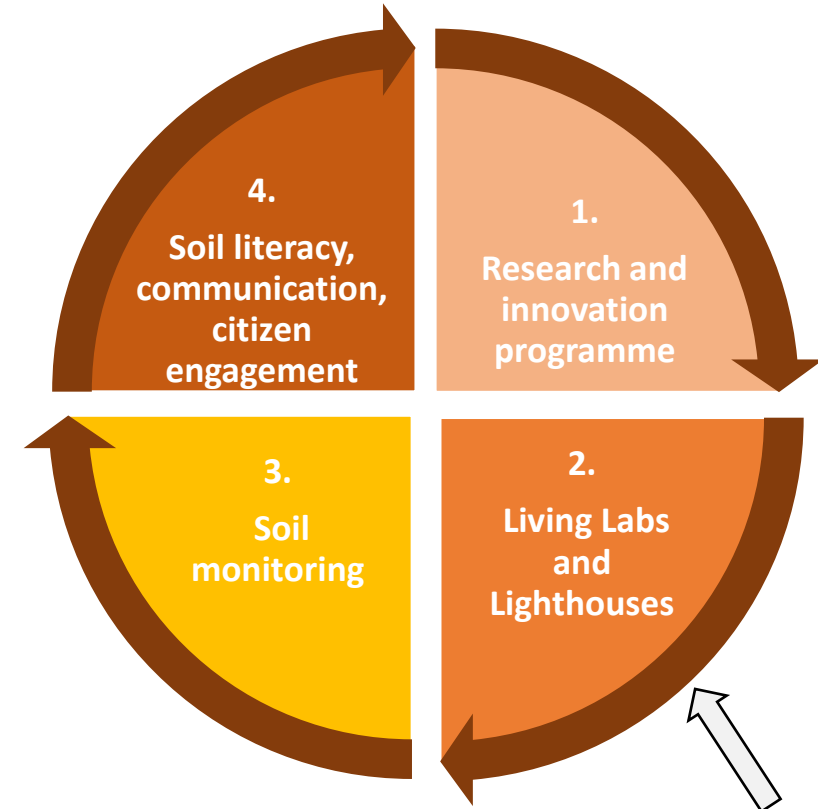
8 Specific objectives:



Each specific objective is backed by **one or more quantified targets** and **measurable indicators**

Objectives apply to **all types of land uses** (agriculture, forestry, urban, natural, industrial) **and for a range of sectors** (e.g. food and beverage, pharmaceutical; decontamination, fertilisers)

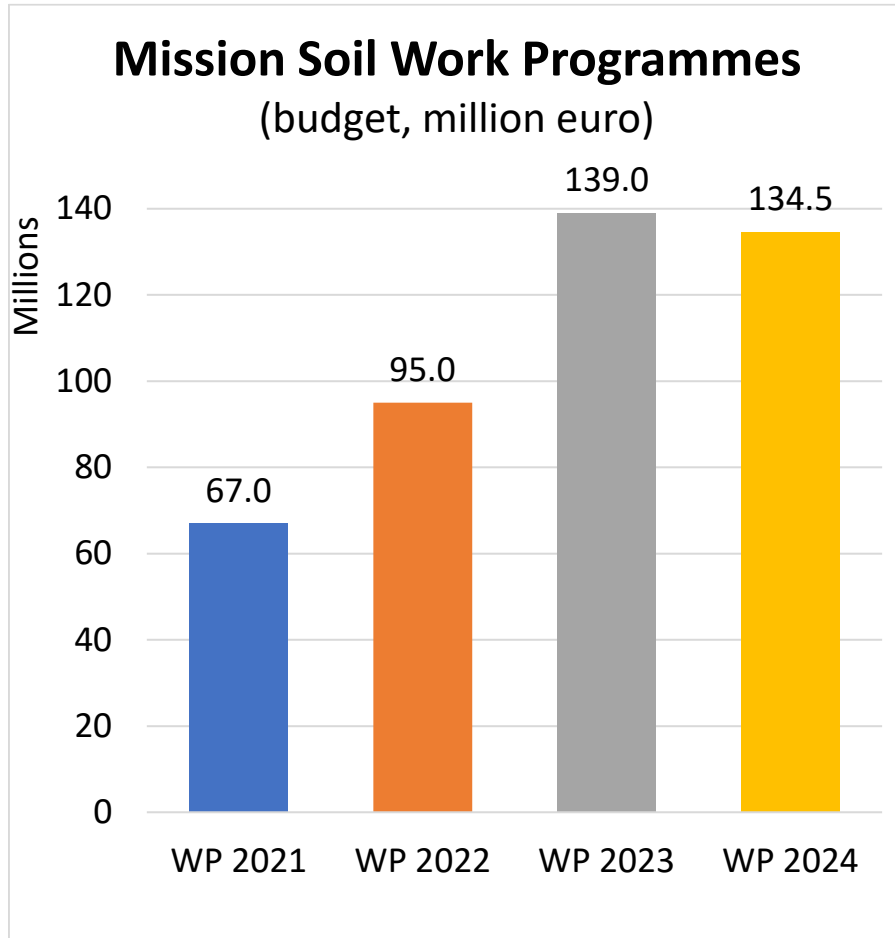
4 Building blocks:



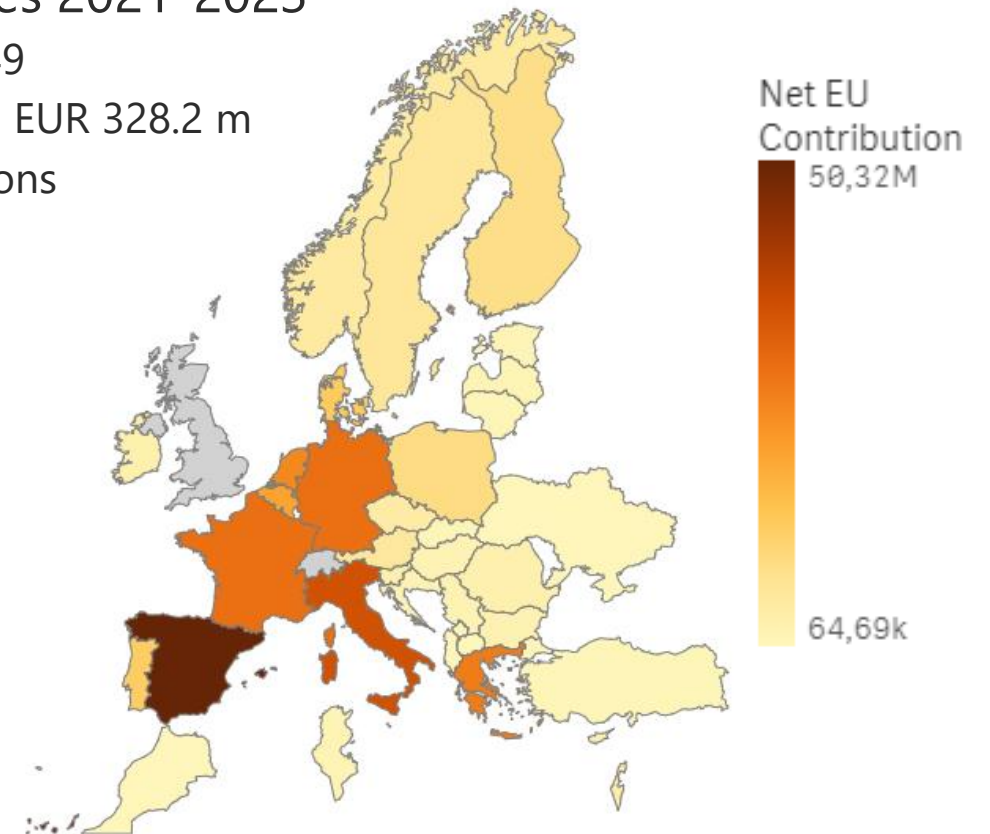
Main vehicle for addressing the diversity of conditions and generating locally adapted solutions



Mission implementation – State of play



- Total investment (WP budget): EUR 435.5 m
- Work Programmes 2021-2023
 - Signed grants: 49
 - EU contribution: EUR 328.2 m
 - 1005 participations





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The Mission Soil projects (1/2)

Carbon farming:



Soil pollution and restoration:



PHISHES



SOILPROM

Soil biodiversity:



Circular economy solutions:



Business models:



Soil health monitoring:



Soil literacy and citizens' engagement:



NBSOIL
Nature-Based Solutions
for Soil Management



Roadmaps for the Mission Soil:



Discovering the subsoil : DeepHorizon





The Mission Soil projects (2/2)

Digital technologies to monitor nutrients and stressors in soil and plants for food safety and nutrition :



Desertification:



Soil-friendly practices in horticulture :



Spatial Planning:



Soil-water:



Living labs:



Support to living labs:





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Insights into initial results and outputs 1/4



NBSOIL

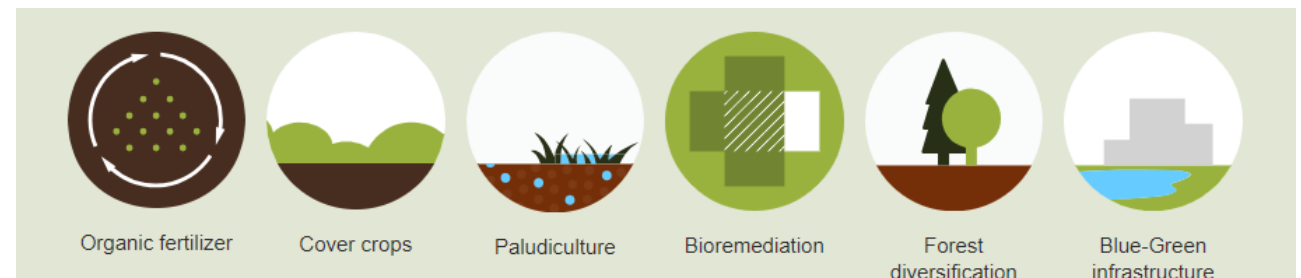
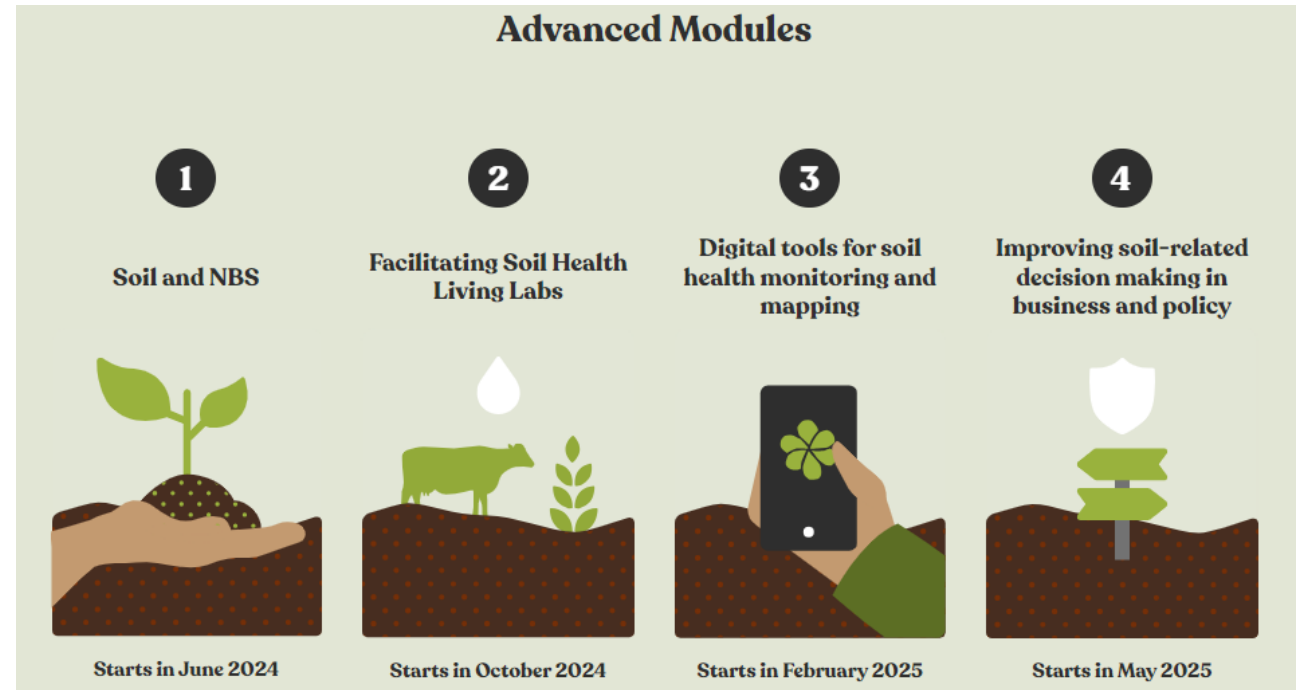
Nature-based Solutions
for Soil Management

Soil Academy launched in June 2024

- **Target:** soil or agricultural advisors (incl. aspiring)
- Online modules, live sessions and practical workshops and demonstration events
- **3 Learning levels** (60h – 240h)
- 7 languages

[Soil Academy Registration | NBSoil](#)

Advanced Modules





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Insights into initial results and outputs 2/4



Soil Stewards training launched in July 2024

- **Target:** civil servants at regional and municipal level that can facilitate dialogues on soil health
- Four modules focusing on soil health assessments, participatory soil governance and regional policy frameworks and fundraising

Registration Soil Stewards training

34 pilot projects dealing with participatory soil governance

- Local and regional level pilots in 13 European countries and 3 non-EU



Podravje Region (Slovenia)



Focus: Soil & regenerative agriculture, Land use: Urban

Good practice: Participatory rehabilitation and revitalization of soil (plans for rehabilitation and revitalisation of abandoned and devalued lands owned by municipalities)

Workshop dates: May 2024

Partner organisation: Regionalna razvojna agencija za Podravje – Maribor (RRA)

[Learn more!](#)

[Pilot case studies \(humus-project.eu\)](https://humus-project.eu)



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100 Living Labs and Lighthouses

+ 1000 testing sites across Europe



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Living labs are a core element of the mission

- › Each LL is composed of a group of 10-20 sites
- › Actors such as farmers, researchers, advisors, SMEs, citizens...
- › Co-design, test, monitor and evaluate solutions to soil health challenges
- › Real-life conditions, long-term set up
- › All types of soils and land uses
- › Projects usually last 4-5 years with 4-5 LLS (EUR 12 m)

First 25 living labs started in 2024

Lighthouses are individual sites, such as a single farm, of exemplary performance to showcase good practices

- › Places for demonstrations, training and communication
- › Practical tools for advisors to best inform soil managers
- › Increase the awareness of the importance of soil





Mission's goal: 100 living labs by 2030

Phase 1 (2021-2023)

Work programme 2021:

Preparatory actions



Work programme 2022:

LL Support Structure



First 25 Mission Soil living labs in 2024



Phase 2 (2024-2026)

Work programme 2024...

Expansion of LL:

Launch of successive calls for expanding the network of LL

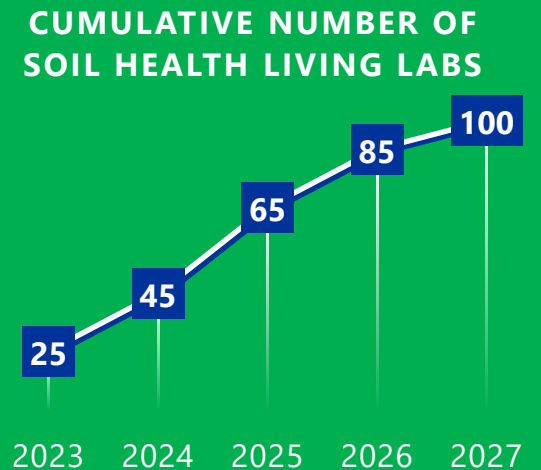
→ Emphasis on wide coverage of geographies, soil health challenges, Mission's objectives and land uses.

Phase 3 (2027 onwards)

Scaling up of LL:

Launch of last calls for setting LL

→ Measures to facilitate the mainstreaming, continuation and sustainability of the LL beyond the Mission timeframe





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Funded LL projects under WP2023 and LL location






iCOSHELLs 

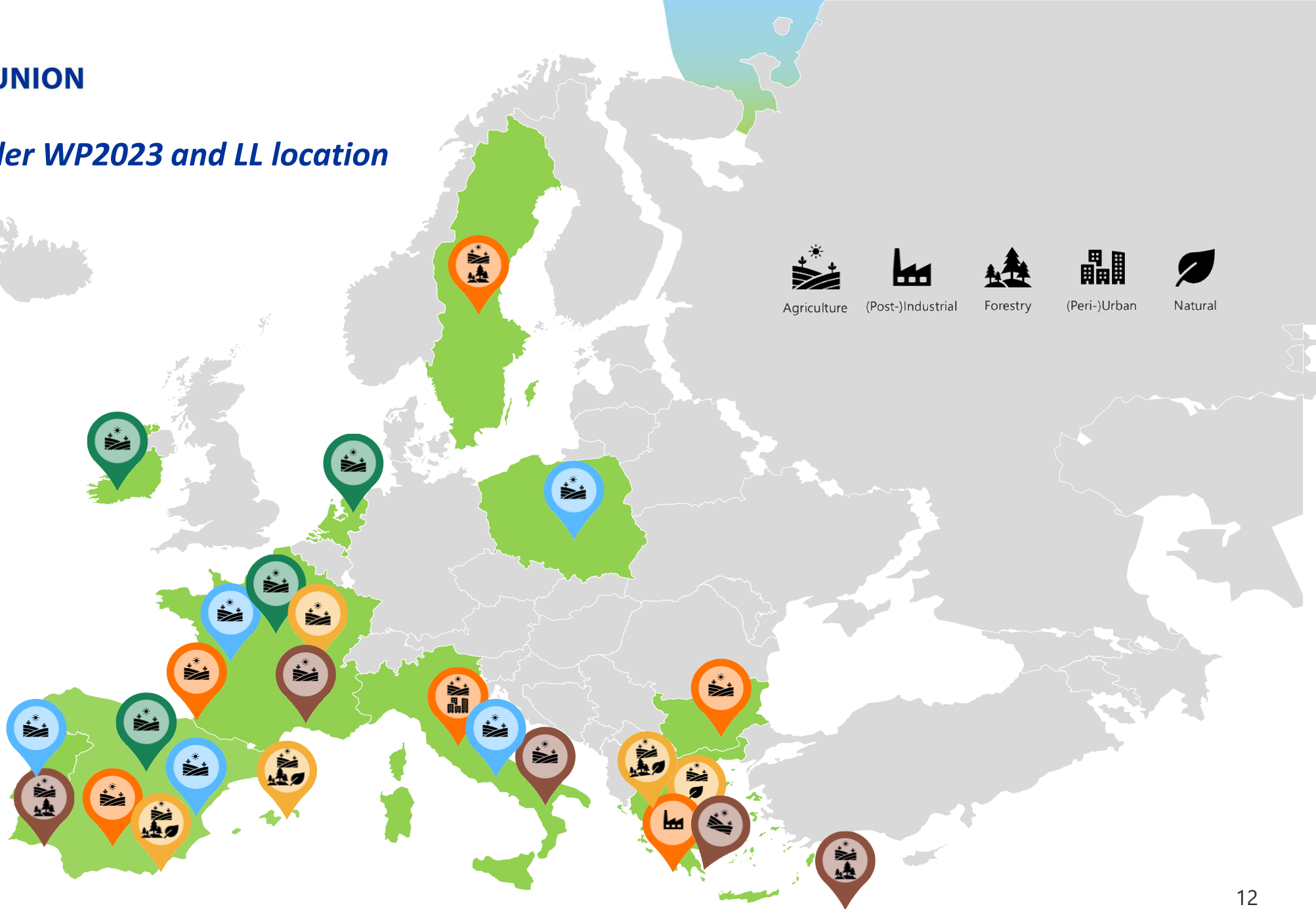
LILAS4SOILS 

LIVINGS4ILL 

GOV4LL 

SOILCRATES 

 Agriculture  (Post-)Industrial  Forestry  (Peri-)Urban  Natural





The first 5 LL projects of the Mission Soil

- iCOSHELLS: Innovative co-creation soil health living labs
- [LILAS4SOILS](#): Fostering carbon farming practices through living labs in the mediterranean and southern EU for the healthy future of European soils
- [LIVINGSOILL](#): Healthy soil to permanent crops living labs
- [GOV4ALL](#): Governance and business models for living labs: rural regeneration hubs for tackling soil health challenges in the mediterranean region
- SOILCRATES: Soil innovation labs: co-regenerating and transforming European soils



- Geographical area: South EU
- Land use type: mainly agriculture with few LLs covering (semi)natural lands or forests
 - permanent crops (olive trees, vineyard)
 - arable lands
 - grasslands
- Target Mission Specific Objectives: soil literacy, structure & biodiversity, carbon stocks, erosion, pollution.



LLs proposals under WP2024

HORIZON-MISS-2024-SOIL-01-01 and HORIZON-MISS-2024-SOIL-01-02

- The HORIZON-MISS-2024-SOIL-01 call was closed on the 8th October 2024.
- The two living lab topics of WP24 received 53% of the total number of proposals submitted in response to this call (137 proposals).

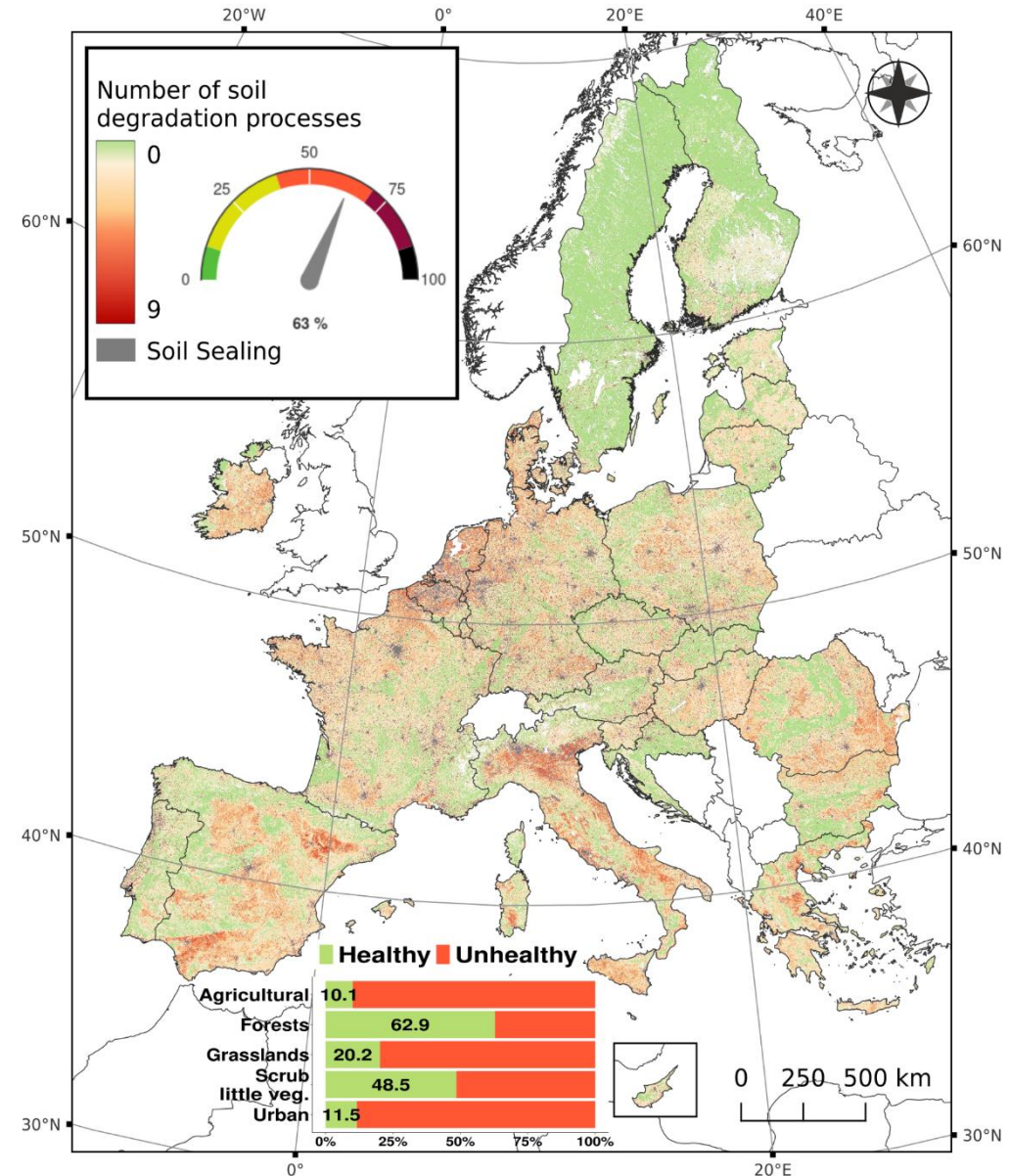
Topic	Number of proposals submitted	Number of eligible proposals	Budget (and grants)
SOIL-01-01 (Bottom-up LLs)	60	53-54	EUR 36 million (3 grants)
SOIL-01-02 (Top-down LLs = urban)	12	11-12	EUR 12 million (1 grant)



Supporting the Soil Monitoring Law

Example: EUSO Dashboard

- The main platform for gathering and disseminating **soil health indicators at EU-level**
- Provides a **spatial visualisation** and defines **thresholds** for unhealthiness
- **19 indicators** are visualised in a comprehensive way
- The dashboard was **launched in March 2023**, and recently updated in June 2024
- Developed by the EU Joint Research Centre with the support of and in collaboration with the Mission Soil



Soil literacy, communication and citizen engagement

European Mission Soil Week 2024

12 -14 Nov 2024, Brussels, BE

- **Keynote** speech
- **Plenary** sessions web streamed
- **Breakout** sessions
- **Field visits**
- **Cluster** meetings

<https://www.europeanmissionsoilweek2024.eu/en>

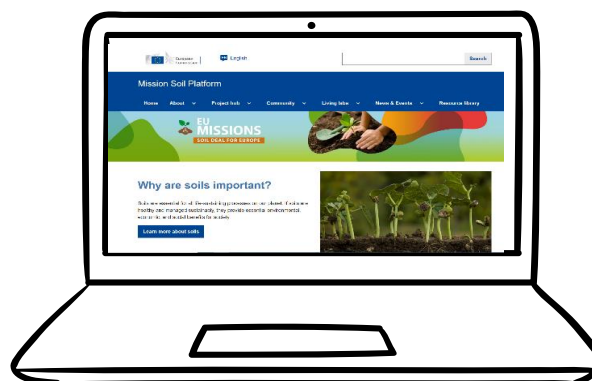


Mission Soil platform

Visit the dedicated website to:

- Discover Mission Soil projects, materials for communication and outreach (newsletters, podcasts, videos..)
- Check who is acting for soil health
- Add your events related to soil

<https://mission-soil-platform.ec.europa.eu/>



Mission Soil Manifesto

Non-legally binding document to formalise stakeholder and citizen **participation** in and **support** to Mission activities and

become part of a community, gain visibility, access to Mission-led knowledge, involve in Mission activities

3.100 signatories and growing...!



Today we launch the #MissionSoil Manifesto.

All organisations and citizens that want to become part of a community of practice that cares for #soil health are invited to sign the manifesto

Sign here: ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runne...

Sign it!





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Map of Manifesto signatories

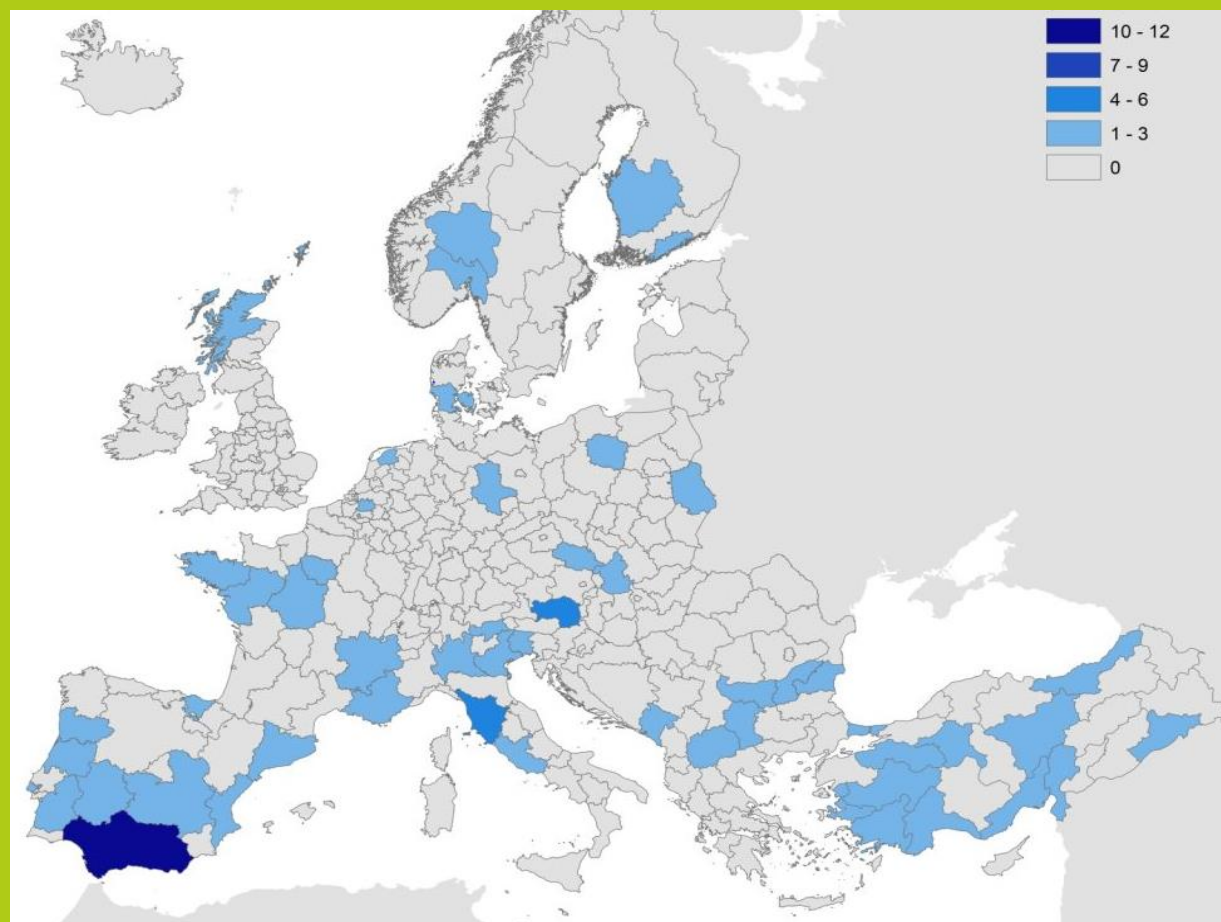
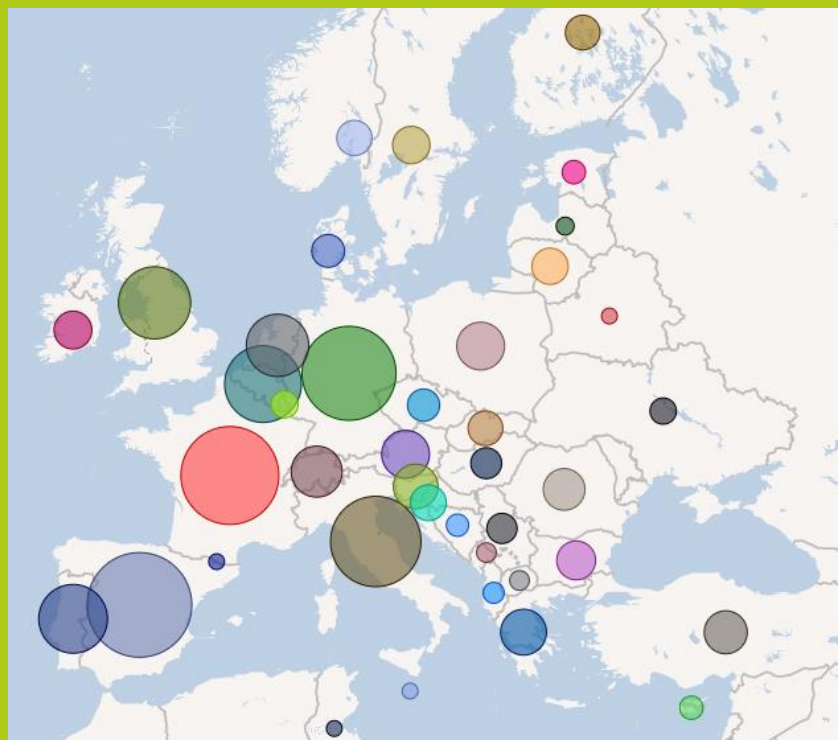


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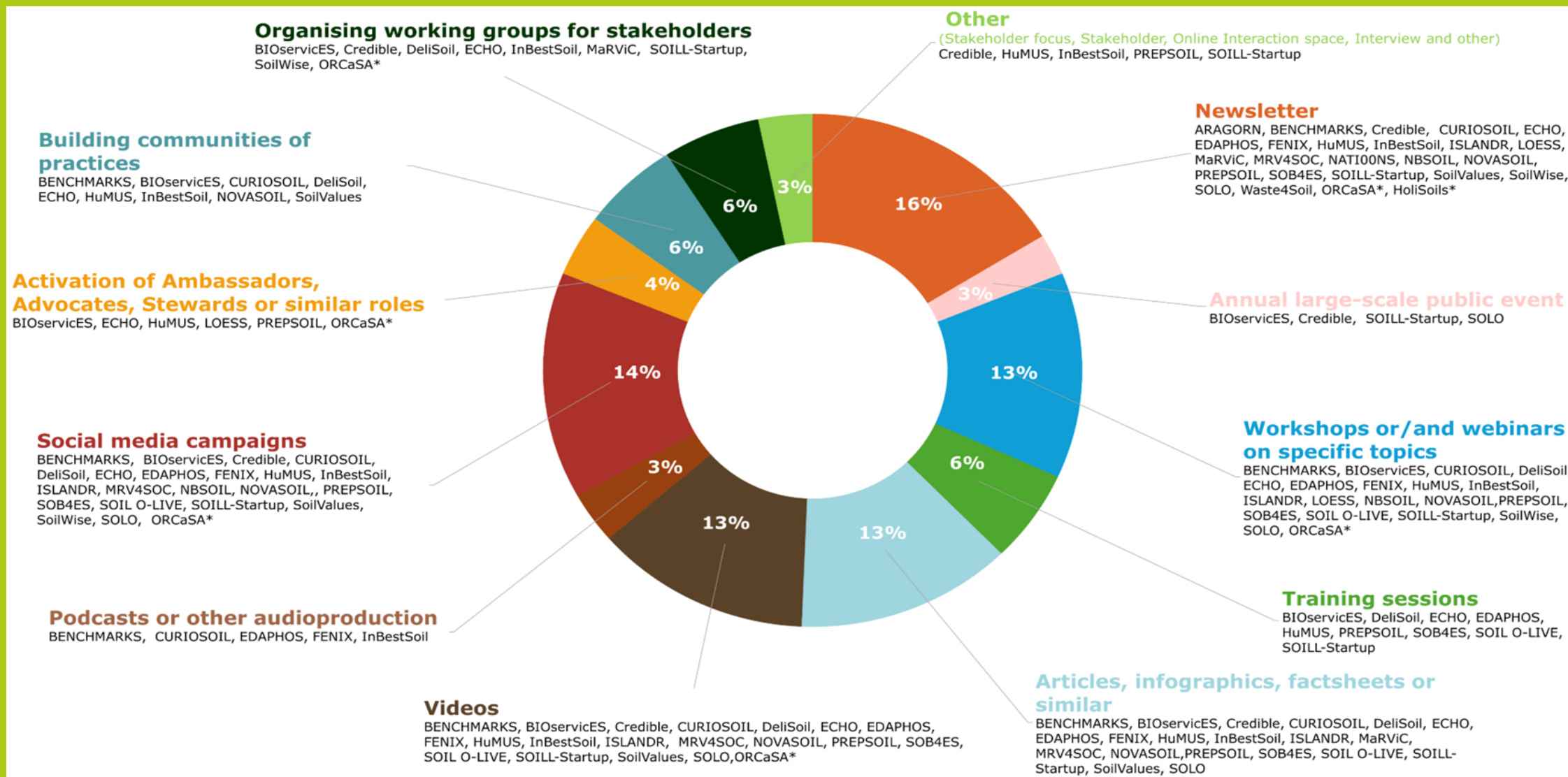
2.500 individuals and 600 legal entities based in EU and outside (private companies, NGOs, research insitutions etc.)

Including more than 70 regional and local authorities and municipalities from EU and outside





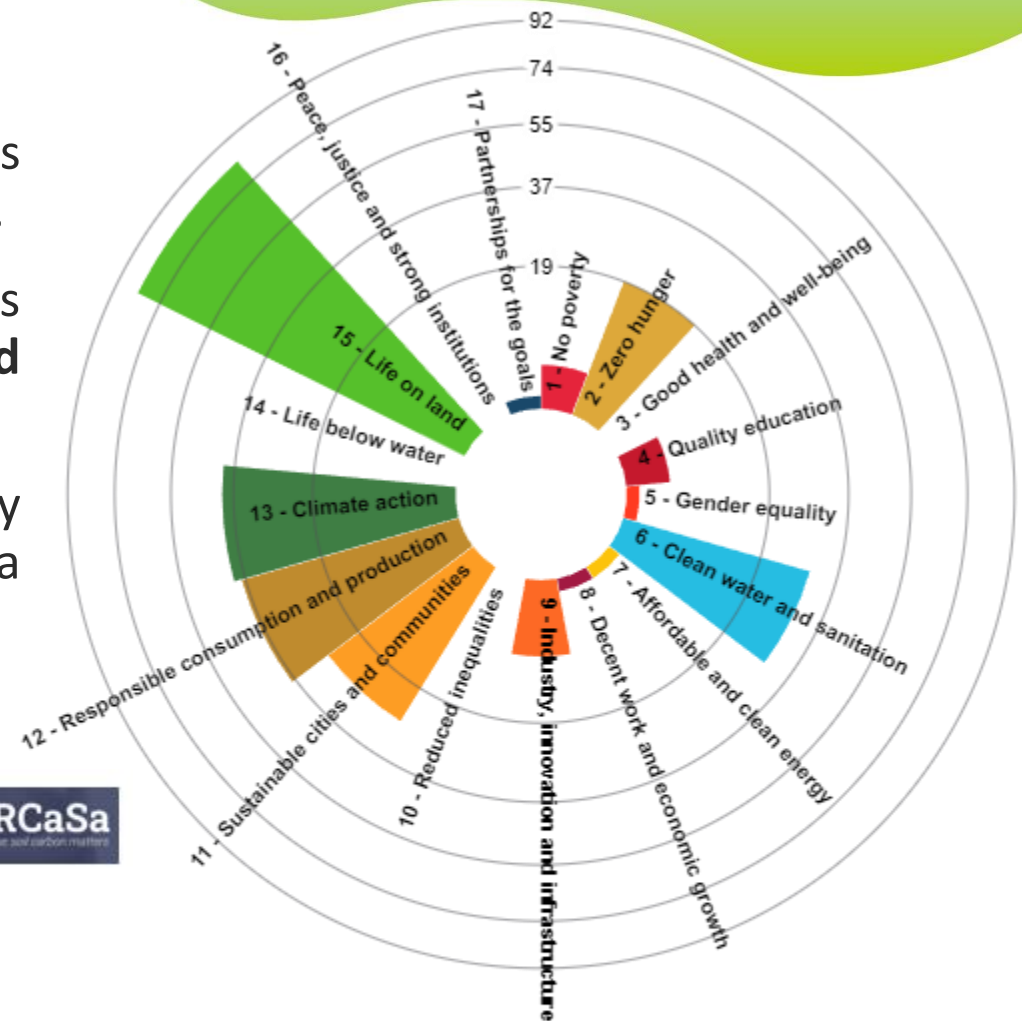
Overview of Mission Soil projects' communication activities





International dimension of the Mission Soil

- **Soil degradation is a global issue.** The Mission supports several EU policies and international commitments and **SDGs**.
- The Mission Soil has the potential to **drive change** towards sustainable land management practices **in Europe and beyond**.
- Participation in calls in general **open to the world** and any proposal can include international partners, albeit under a variety of conditions.



Example of call with specific international scope

- Mission Soil Work Programme 2024 **Topic: 'Assessment of Soil Health in Africa'**



The Mission continues working on:

- **Engagement:** increased awareness and commitment in Member States and regions, beyond R&I circles >> National Soil hubs and mirror groups
 - Living labs: greater involvement of (unusual) stakeholders (farmers...), scale-up solutions, long-term sustainability.
- **Impact:**
 - synergies and complementarities inside the Mission but also with other initiatives (partnerships) and programmes (LIFE, Interreg...),
 - to make results available to end users and policy makers for scaling up and greater impact.
- **Soil monitoring:** integration of relevant soil data resulting from projects under the Mission, FPs, other programmes and collected by Member States.
- **Mobilise a much greater scale of investment** to support and accelerate the transition to healthy soils (investors, lenders, philanthropies...)



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