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PHYTOPATHOLOGICAL  
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Minutes of Working group 2 Strategies and Policies for Soil Protection 24/09/2013 - 15:10

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6	Rocio Gomez Millan	LIFE11 ENV/ES/000505 --BIOXISOIL
7	Graziana Masciandaro	LIFE11 ENV/IT/000113 --BIOREM
8	Maria Fantappie	LIFE08 ENV/IT/000428 -- SOILPRO
9	Theodoros Karyotis	HAOD -Soil Mapping & Classification Inst. of Larissa
10	George Scandalaros	Hellenic Ministry of Rural Development & Food
11	Socrates Famellos	LIFE11 ENV/GR/000942 -- oLIVE-CLIMA

Dr. Costantini made introductory remarks and asked each participant to introduce themselves and state why they are interested in this session.

LIFE projects have a major role in giving the tools to local and regional authorities to be more effective in applying the EU legislation and let it become more effective. In fact, several measures passed by the EU to support farmers' income or to promote sustainability of agriculture have failed, since they were not properly or not at all applied. In addition, there are even EU policies that enhance land degradation. For example, EU laws allow the speculative import of durum wheat from outside the Union, causing the prices of local producers to be un-competitive. Thousands of hectares of cultivated land have been therefore abandoned and let be affected by landslides and water erosion.

Thus the EU can play a real role in saving the environment, but also in destroying the environment. Working with local communities to work with agri-environment is a key goal.

Socrates Famellos – deputy Mayor of Themi and chairman of Anatoliki, a local development agency in Themi, Thessaloniki. The LIFE project So.S. is the implementation of soil strategy in real life. He is not specialized in soil analysis but in the implementation of environmental policies. There is no national authority to implement the results. The same applies for water management. There is no 'Soil' Ministry to manage and administer the soil strategy. We need to connect soil management with water management on the scale of river basins. Maybe also at administration level. The issues of land use, and other sectors beyond agriculture should be included in management policies. If someone wants to create a soil directive it will multiply the problems already caused by the Water Directive. We need to coordinate soil policies or to incorporate the soil aspect in local teams. But don't know the easy way to implement these.

Riccardo Giandrini, Astrale, coordinator of the Soil Study: is a directive necessary? According to the previous speaker, it is not viable. In the whole of Europe there is a need of a simpler directive, a simpler tool. Maybe it should be at the same level as water districts. Too difficult to implement something so heavy. Need a holistic view of soil. Need to find a way to implement new soil regulations.

George Scandalaris, Greek Ministry of Agriculture. Bureaucracy in other countries may even be worse than in Greece. It is difficult to implement water management plans. Even without laws, people look for information and pass it on locally. Locally, people could select what to eat from contaminated soils and what not. As a public servant I would like to have a soil directive but it would be difficult to use it.

Sarah Staeraht, VLM Belgium, LIFE Demeter project.

The implementation of the Nitrates directive and the Water framework directive is measured in parcels next to the farmers. If farmer uses too much nitrogen they can get fined. If they use less organic material (in the form of manure), organic matter in soil is reduced because of the two other directives. Soils are getting therefore getting so weak that the impact is cyclical. Every four years we implement a new strategy of less manure so it whatever is used enters easier into the water due to the fact that the soil is getting weaker.

Rocio Gomez Millan, CIESMas in Madrid. BIOXISOIL

We should work on geology, and hydrology, because all are connected. Two areas – one based on CO<sub>2</sub> power stations, monitoring of ground water. Research unit soil conservation. Need a scientific basis to deal with contamination. Have to include the pH. Low pH has fewer contaminants. Liming is used to increase the pH.

Maria Fantappie from Italy, LIFE SoilPro in Italy and Peloponnese. Has been put into rural development program. Cross compliance. How will it be done in Greece, even without a Soil Directive, to work with incentives mainly? Should we work with penalties or incentives?

Grazia Marsciandaro – LIFE BIOREM . Interested in strategies for soil protection. Main problem is organic matter content of the soil. Important to add new sources of OM to soil but it is important also that it is absorbed and becomes stable in the soil. Can choose

different sources of organic matter, and each one has different impacts. To improve the soil functions when microbial biomass is active, but also indirectly by means of enzymes; biochemical reactions in soil can improve soil fertility. One strategy could be to improve the level of soil organic matter by improving microbial biomass.

Theodore Karyotis Agronomist. Implementation of nitrate directive in Turkey. Participated in SAGE 10 project. There are major differences in climate, farming practices in different countries of the North and South of Europe. The private sector introduced magnesium in central Greece and therefore soil has been destroyed. With the Nitrates directive, we have to pay a penalty to the EC. We need to classify soils and save water. Desertification and soil erosion should be mapped according to high risk with a common methodology. There is a problem with the interpretation of results. Dutch put limit as 20 while Greeks use around 10. Implementation of Water Framework Directive is key.

Angelo Basile, represents group implementing LIFE project .

1. Soil is multifunctional. We are technicians – need to produce something that will reflect multifunctionality. Nitrate directive is not only related to the soil. It is different if you put nitrate from a winter crop, as opposed to other sources. Management of soil in Italy is completely different from other areas. Our strategy should be large but everything should be done locally.
2. Soil awareness and role of extensionists is most important. People do not know what is soil and why it is important. Farmers know that adding sewage sludge or olive production as practiced in the past, but it is not always possible for an extensionist to go into field. Thus the role of internet is important, since one can find the information for yourself and look at different scenarios.

Riccardo Giandrini, Astrale Monitoring team.

One of the main tasks is collecting your feedback on strategies and EU legislation and application. We should shift attention to a more practical approach to a possible future legislation. Land planning is a tool. We need to introduce the soil theme into land planning legislation. The crucial question is to make a more proactive approach, most of all in terms of EU legislation.

Rocio Gomez Millan: There is a problem with soil in Spain as much of the land is privately owned.

**We all agree that soil is a complex system that interacts with other systems, especially water and air. Policy should be integrated, and soil organic carbon are giving us a clue for soil quality. Conflicting policies: not only on European policies but also at the local level. Agriculture/ Environment/ Trade are conflicting. At the local level, one technical body is not collaborating with a body related to forestry or agriculture. Some instrument which forces local policy makers to have an integrated strategy is needed. It is not fair that the penalties in Europe work only at the national and at the farmer levels, also the local administration should be involved.**

Who is responsible for implementing the strategies or policies?

Socrates Famellos: we need to incorporate the soil point of view in land planning.

It is easier to achieve at the local level. Need water and soil management plans to be used in land planning and development planning. This needs to be applied to the whole area.

The problem with municipalities is that they are in dire need of funding. Need to make a regional plan based on soil and water analysis. From what authority should it come the necessity for soil to be a factor?

For contamination one can apply fines. But there is no rule of how much of free land needed in cities.

Question of penalties vs. incentives: should be extended to the regional level. Need to let the regions pay instead of the only the farmer. Rules, and best practice are necessary, but rules must be followed fairly.

Cannot do soil policy without soil maps.

Should choose some specific soil problems common to all countries and create central legislation for this. This is not feasible for all soil threats as acknowledged in the EU soil directive.

Sarah Staeraht Belgium – conference of 17 different countries penalty-incentives issue: It depends on kind of farmer. Big companies worry about their image and can work with labels. Smaller farmers worry about income and need simple steps to make it visible. Some claim that they don't even have extension services. There is a big lack in the chain of knowledge.

Politicians change but researchers stay. The information is important, and they must be informed. This should be the basis for the law.

**Take home messages.**

1. Connect soil with land planning. Include it in an integrated approach which needs to be defined better. Soil is a crucial parameter in planning at the local, regional, and national levels. A practical realization of an integrated approach is needed at all scales.
2. Chain of knowledge – should be the support to such an integrated approach. Information generated by research, soil monitoring, maps, etc. needs to be used by the planners.
3. Bottom up approach is needed due to the local nature of soil problems, and approaches to solving them. Farmers should be involved in the assessment of measures effectiveness.
4. Incentives or penalties? Use both at all different levels. Should not only “punish” the farmer with fines; the regional level should also take responsibility.