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

Missions NCPs & SPC Soil WG training on LLs
6 June 2025



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Mission Soil Secretariat - Unit F2 Research and Innovation
DG Agriculture and Rural Development - European Commission

#EUmissions #HorizonEU #MissionSoil



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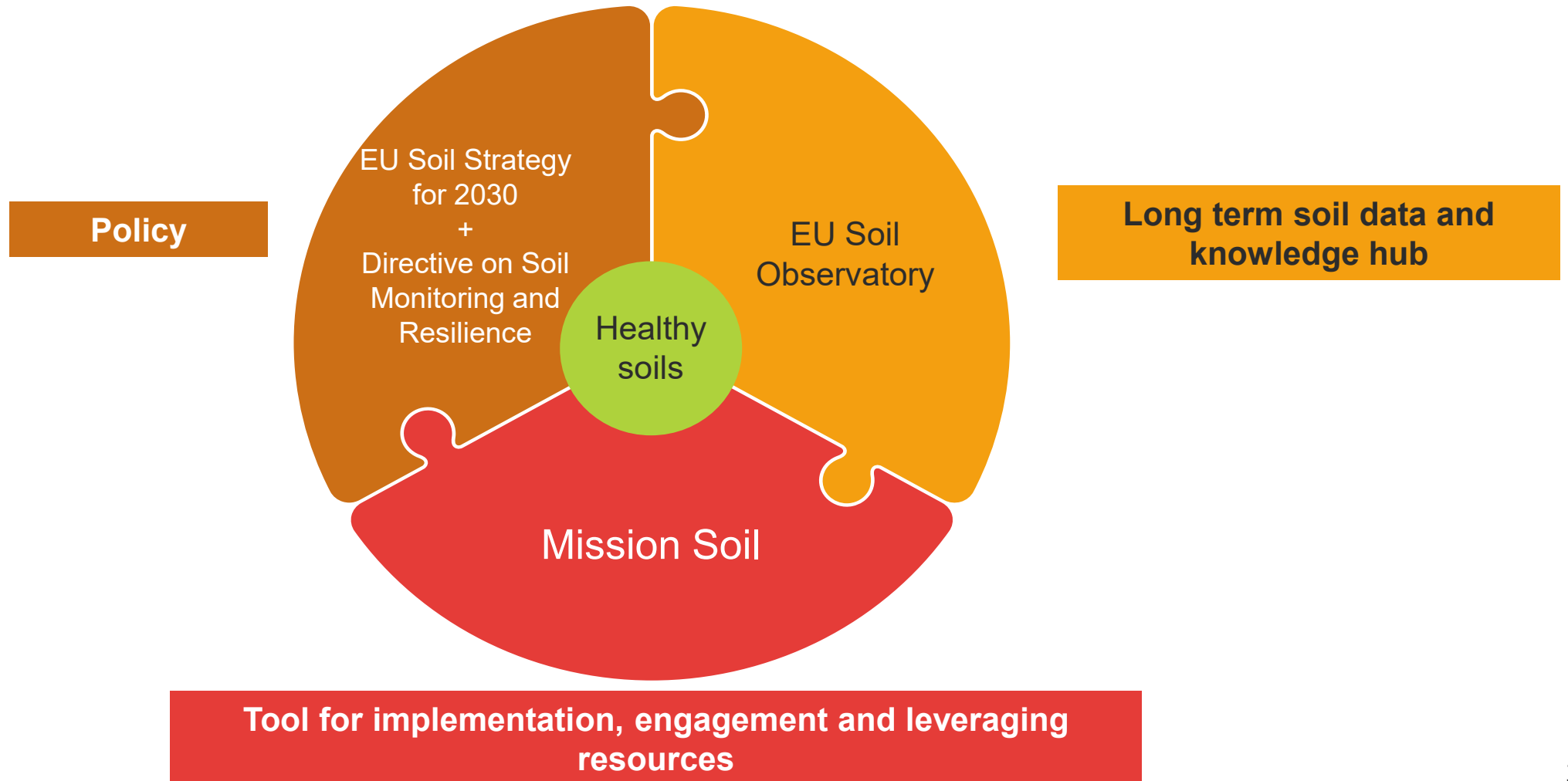
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The Mission Soil state of play



Mission Soil is part of the wider EU strategy for soils





POLICY

A soil-friendly policy framework

- **EU Soil Strategy for 2030** (vision to achieve healthy soils by 2050) & **Soil Monitoring Law** (expected in Q4 2025)
 - Mission supporting SML design and implementation
- **Nature Restoration Law**
 - Soil prominently featured.
 - Mission explicitly mentioned to support the implementation of the restoration targets.
- **Common Agricultural Policy** is the largest source of EU funding for the environment: more than **40 billion Euro** to improve **soil quality**.
 - Mission in most national CAP Strategic Plans.
 - 1,000 Operational Groups links with the Mission and some working on soil health



ATTRACTIVENESS



COMPETITIVENESS & RESILIENCE



SUSTAINABILITY



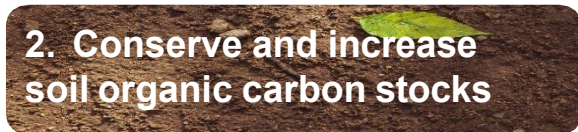
FAIRNESS



THE MISSION SOIL

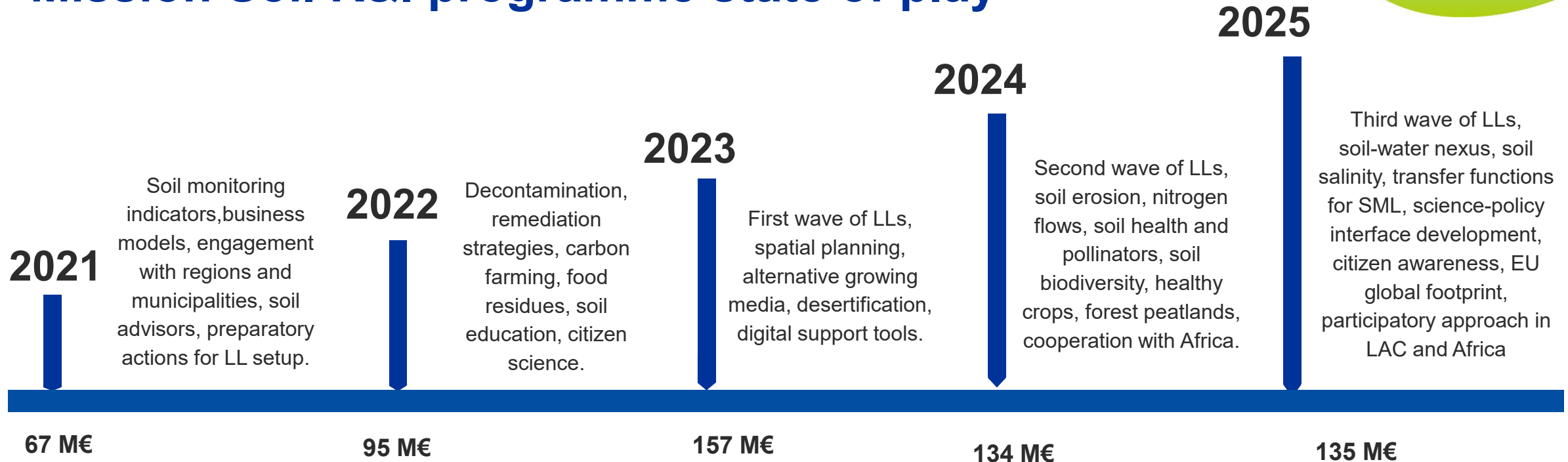
100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030

Specific objectives





Mission Soil R&I programme state of play



Since 2021:

- 350+ proposals evaluated.
- +60 proposals selected, 50 ongoing projects
- €436 million in EU contribution
- +1,300 participations (universities, research organisations, land managers, SMEs, governments, citizens, other stakeholders)
- 3 project clusters facilitating exchange, cooperation among projects (Data and knowledge management, Indicators and monitoring, Communication and stakeholder engagement) +2 new upcoming clusters on: business models and pollution

See all funded projects at the [Mission Soil project hub | Mission Soil Platform](#)

Overview of Mission Soil funded project areas

Circular Economy



Soil literacy, Awareness, Citizen Engagement



Biodiversity



Carbon Farming



Overview of Mission Soil funded project areas

Mission Support



Monitoring and Indicators



MARVIC
MRV for carbon farming



**MRV4SOC
PROJECT**



**AI 4 Soil
Health**

Soil Health
BENCHMARKS



E-SPFdigit



**WHEAT
WATCHER**
DIGITALLY MONITORED SOIL AND CROP HEALTH

Pollution and Restoration



aragorn



TERRASAFE
Cultivating resilience, restoring the earth.



PHISHES



MONALISA



seacure



SOILPROM

Business Models

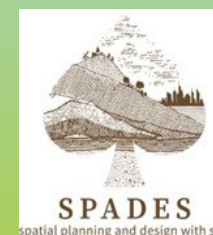


Overview of Mission Soil funded project areas

Living Labs, Preparatory and Support Actions



Territorial Dimension

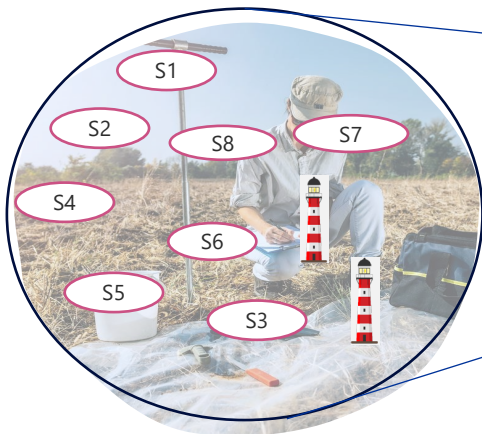




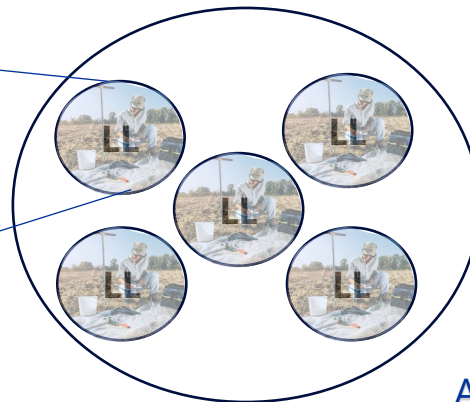
Living labs (LL) & Lighthouses (LH): a core element of the Mission

Living Labs

- **Real-life sites** in rural or urban areas
 - **Co-create solutions** adapted to **local conditions**
 - At regional or subregional level
 - Involve **multiple stakeholder** in co-design, testing, monitoring and evaluation of solutions
 - **Multiple sites:** farms, forest holdings, urban park
- => **User-centred, place-based and transdisciplinary R&I ecosystems**



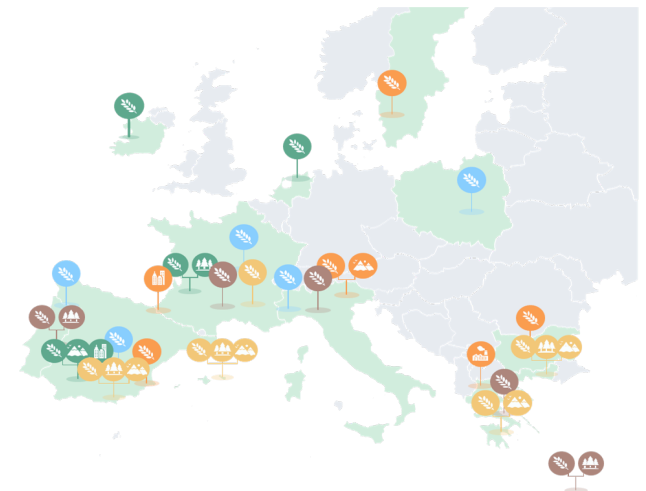
A LL with multiple sites including LHs



A LL project with 5 LLs

Lighthouses

- **Individual sites** showing **exemplary performance** in the implementation of a specific practice.
- **Showcase best practices.**
- Places for **demonstration, training, and communication.**
- Help adoption of sustainable practices by inspiring land users through **peer-to-peer learning**





100 soil health living labs by 2030

More than 1,000 testing sites in all land uses

Phase 3

Scaling up and
mainstreaming
(2027 onwards)

Expected at least + 15 LL

Total = 100 LLs

Phase 2

Gradual expansion
and innovation
(2025-2026)

+20 LLs (WP24)

*Expected + ~ 20 /WP
from WP25 & WP26
= 85 LLs*

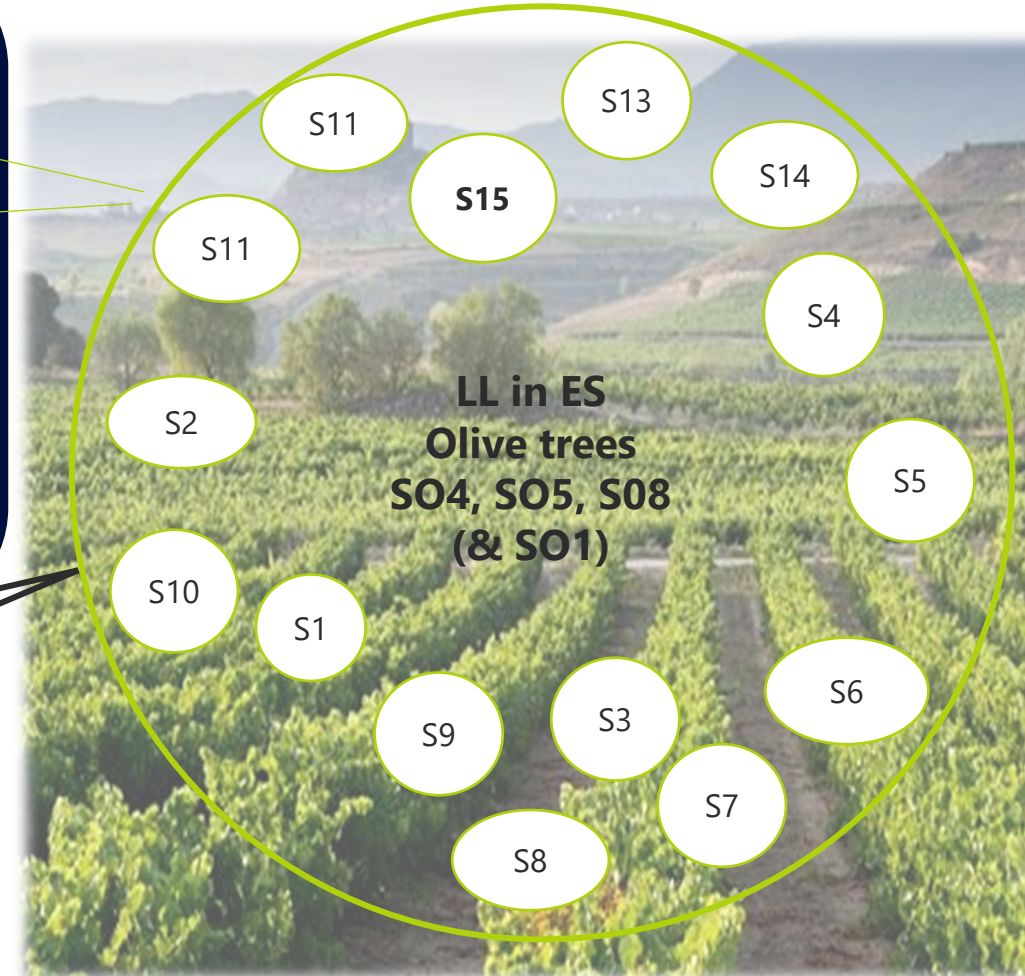
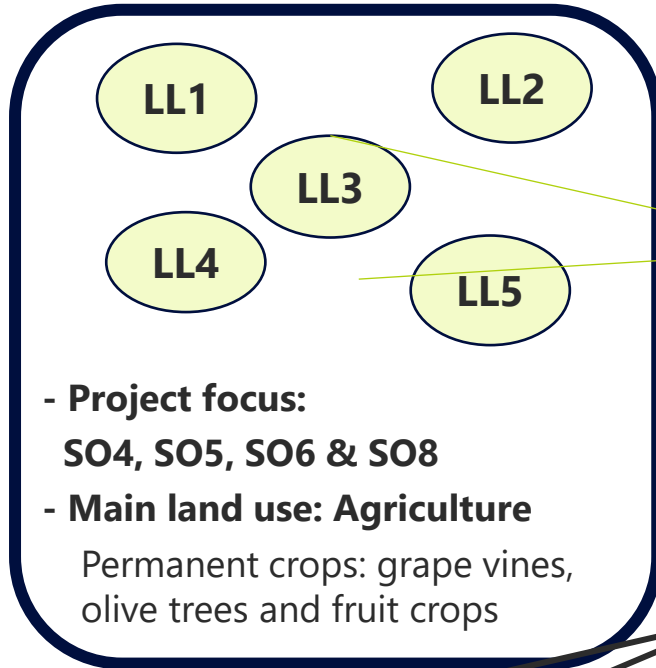
Phase 1

Induction and pilot
(2021-2024)

✓ **First 25 LLs (WP23)**



Examples of a funded LL in the Mediterranean biogeographical region (WP23)



Support from project partners outside the LL on: governance, business models, solutions transferability, monitoring, communication, and engagement

Soil health solutions: Practices to aide organic matter integration; compost, biochar, hydrofilters.

FSTP: To add 2 more **sites** to the existing 15

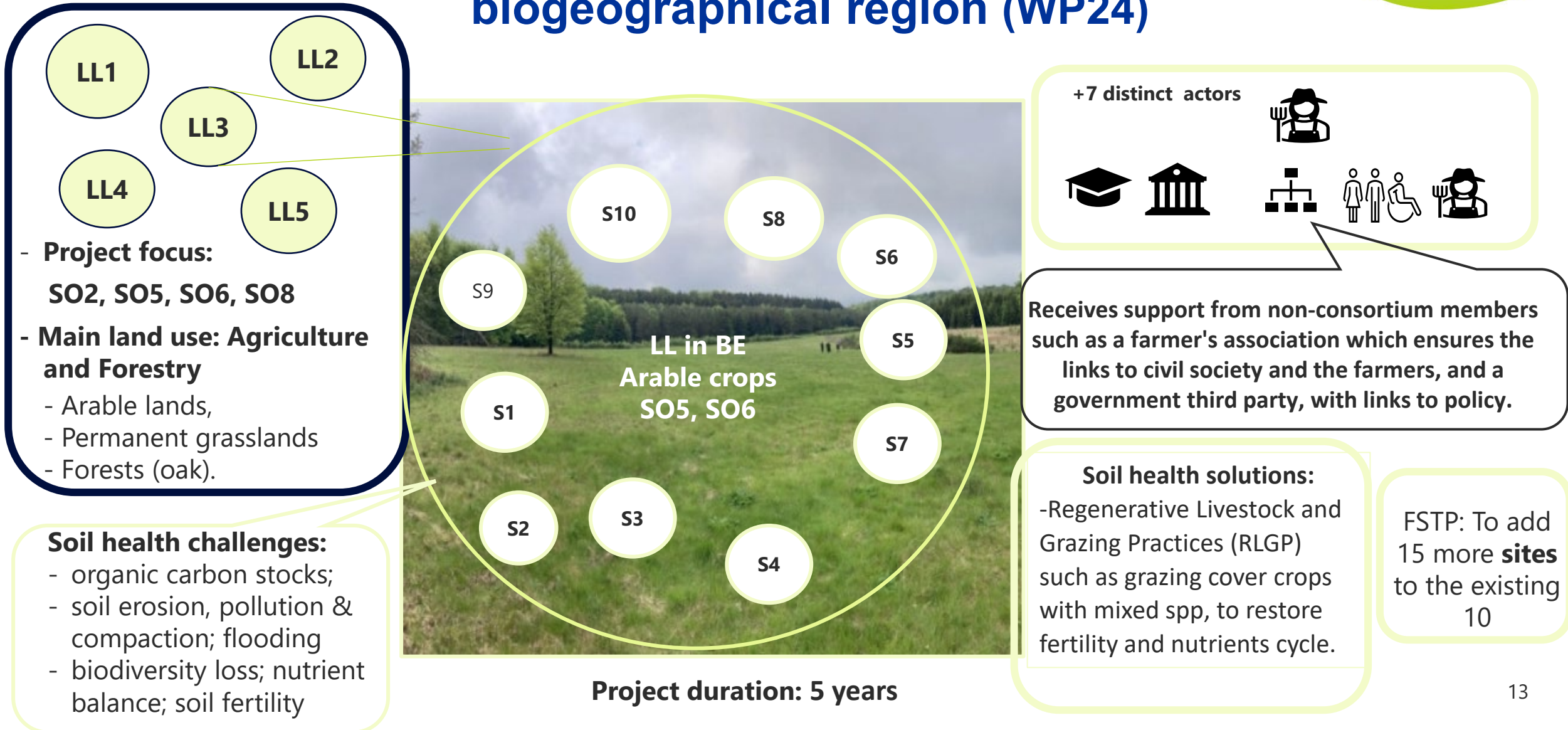
Project duration: 4.5 years

Soil health challenges:

- Steep slopes: erosion
- Conventional ag: pollution
- Biodiversity decline, soil degradation,
- Water scarcity, desertification









Example of a LL to be funded in the Continental biogeographical region (WP24)

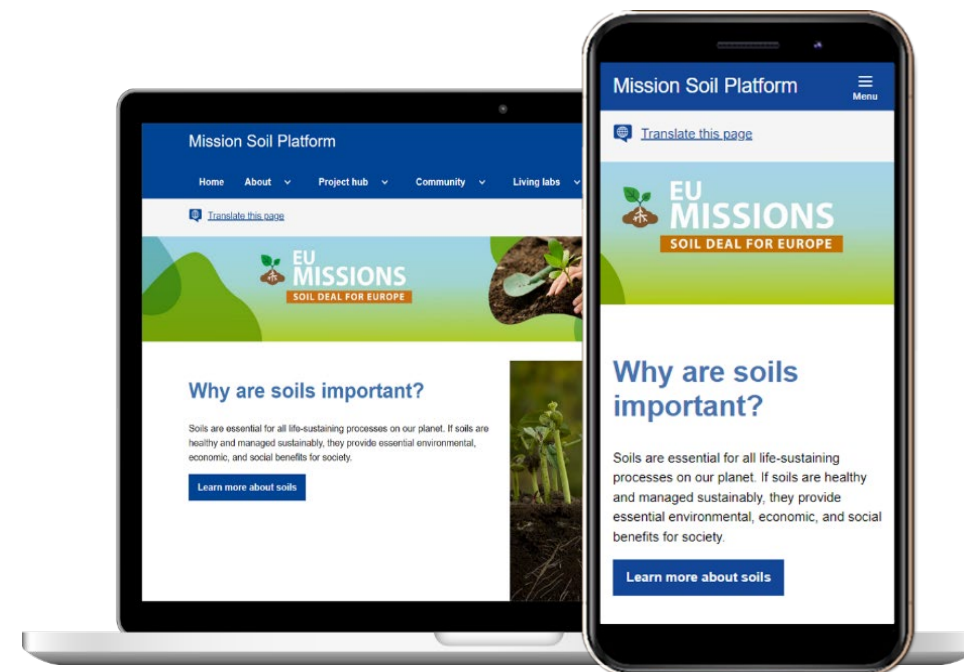




Visit the Mission Soil Platform

mission-soil-platform.ec.europa.eu

-  Learn about the importance of soil and solutions to protect and improve soil health.
-  Explore the Mission, the LL & LH, work programmes, funded projects, including the [Dashboard](#) and [Project Hub](#)
-  Access engaging resources to educate and inform on soil topics, including podcasts and videos.
-  View the latest signatories and updates on the [Mission Soil Manifesto](#)
-  Stay informed on Mission Soil news, projects, and events (communication activities by projects).
-  Subscribe to the Mission Soil newsletter (more than 4000 subscribers).



European Mission Soil Week: Leading the transition towards healthy soils: finance and landscape perspectives

3rd edition co-organised with the Danish Presidency of the Council of the EU

5-6 November 2025, in Denmark at Aarhus University



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Mission Soil living labs under WP25



Mission Soil - Work Programme 2025 (1/2)

Topics for WP25	ToA	Budget (m€)	Nr. of prj
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-01: Living Labs for soil remediation and green redevelopment of brownfields	RIA	12	1
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-02: Social, economic and cultural drivers, and costs of land degradation	RIA	11	2
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-03: Increasing environmental resilience through a better knowledge and management of the soil-water nexus	RIA	6	1
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-04: Developing transfer functions for the Soil Monitoring Law	RIA	6	1
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-05: EU global footprint on soils	RIA	6	1
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-06: Quantifying the impact of farming practices on soil health in arable lands	RIA	6	1
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-07: Improved land suitability for soil health and sustainable biomass production	RIA	6	1
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-08: Support to the operation and further development of soil-health science-policy interfaces [and national soil-health hubs]	CSA	6	1
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-09: Citizen engagement for sustainable land management through local and regional authorities	CSA	5	1
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-10: Network on carbon farming and emissions reductions for agricultural and forest lands	CSA	3	1
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-11: Soil Salinity in Europe: Drivers, indicators, current levels and temporal changes	RIA	6	1



Mission Soil - Work Programme 2025 (2/2)

Topics for WP25	ToA	Budget (m€)	Nr. of projects
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-01-two-stage: Living labs to enhance soil health in Continental, Boreal and Alpine biogeographical regions	RIA	36	3
HORIZON-MISS-2025-05-SOIL-02-two-stage: Broadening the living labs approach for soil health in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)	RIA	12	2

Opening date: **15 May 2025**

Closing dates:

- **Single stage: 30 September 2025**
- **Two-stage: 4 September 2025 (First Stage),
18 February 2026 (Second Stage)**

EU Missions Info Days 2025



The Mission Soil session took place on 22 May 2025

Presentations and recordings available in event webpage:
[Events](#) | [The research and innovation community platform](#)

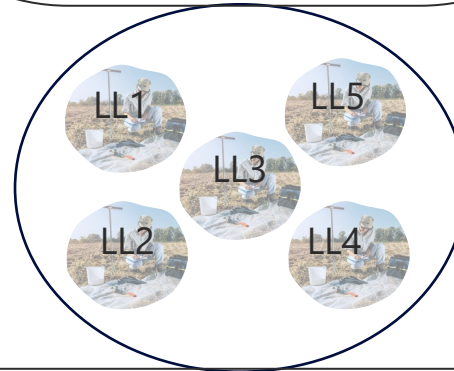
Apply in the Funding and Tenders portal : <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>



Living Labs for soil remediation and green redevelopment of brownfields

- ✓ **Co-design, co-develop and co-implement** locally adapted & innovative **solutions for soil remediation and potential green redevelopment plans**
- ✓ Justify **rationale and mechanism for cooperation** within and across LLs, and contribution to Mission Objective(s).
- ✓ Establish for each LL a **baseline** for the relevant soil **descriptors/indicators** adequate for brownfields, to allow for an **assessment of changes**. Use indicators from the Soil Monitoring Law proposal, and complement with additional indicators if relevant.
- ✓ Demonstrate technical, economical, social, environmental, cultural **viability** of solutions
- ✓ Proposed solutions should be **adapted to the different** environmental, socio-economic and cultural **contexts** in which the LLs are operating

Set up four to five living labs (LL) to propose and assess **innovative solutions** for soil remediation and potential green redevelopment plans in **brownfields** (abandoned areas which contain or may contain a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminants)



Establish an interdisciplinary, participatory and multi-actor approach to look for solutions to **common soil health challenge(s)**.

Kick-start **participatory process** or build on existing ones

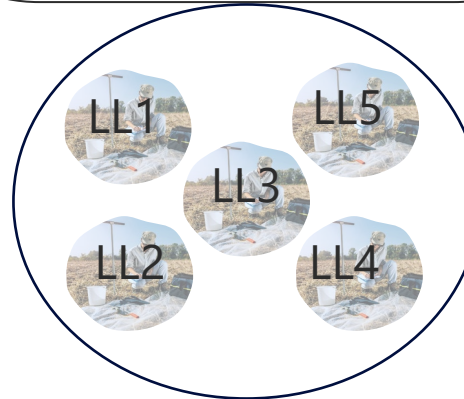
- ✓ Propose strategies to ensure **long-term sustainability** of the established LL beyond HE funding. Work on **business models** and actions involving **public or private funding schemes**.
- ✓ Accommodate **longer timescales** required to establish participatory processes and/or for soils processes to take place.
- ✓ Identify sites that demonstrate high performance and can be converted into LHs.
- Dedicated tasks and appropriate resources to collaborate with **SOILL** and other projects.
- **FSTP** option for small actors active involvement in one or more of the LLs (**max 200K EUR**).
- Proposal **template for applicants** to projects on LL updated



Living labs to enhance soil health in Continental, Boreal and Alpine biogeographical regions

- ✓ **Co-design, co-develop and co-implement** locally adapted & innovative soil health **solutions relevant for the chosen BGR.**
- ✓ Justify **rationale and mechanism for cooperation** within and across LLs, and contribution to Mission Objective(s).
- ✓ Establish for each LL a **baseline** of the soil conditions to allow for an **assessment of changes and monitor soil health improvements**. Use **indicators** from the Soil Monitoring Law *proposal*, and complement with additional indicators if relevant.
- ✓ Demonstrate technical, economical, social, environmental, cultural **viability of solutions**
- ✓ Proposed solutions should be **adapted to the different** environmental, socio-economic and cultural **contexts** in which the LLs are operating

Set up four to five living labs (LL) in the **Continental, Boreal or Alpine biogeographical regions (BGR)**. Indicate which of these BGR is in **focus** and place there the **majority of LL**.



Establish an interdisciplinary, participatory and multi-actor approach to address **common soil health challenge(s)**.

Kick-start **participatory process** or build on existing ones

- ✓ Propose strategies to ensure **long-term sustainability** of the established LL beyond HE funding. Work on **business models** and actions involving **public or private funding schemes**.
- ✓ Accommodate **longer timescales** required to establish participatory processes and/or for soils processes to take place.
- ✓ Identify sites that demonstrate high performance and can be converted into LHs
- Dedicated tasks and appropriate resources to collaborate with **SOILL** and other projects
- **FSTP** option for small actors active involvement in one or more of the LLs (**max 60K EUR**).
- **Proposal template** for applicants updated



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