

Policy Recommendations

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Process

- ▶ SmartSOIL results
- ▶ Policy Analysis
- ▶ Internal Discussions
 - Sandra Naumann, Beth Dooley
 - J.E.Olesen, P.J. Kuikman, J.P. Lesschen, P. Smith
- ▶ External Experts

Scope of recommendations

- ▶ Focus on mineral soils in arable systems (permanent grasslands and rich organic soils are excluded)
- ▶ Mitigation is one of overall objectives, not the only focus

Nr. 1: Increase awareness of the role of soil organic carbon in delivering soil quality, soil fertility and multiple ecosystem services among policy makers and promote capacity-building to address the issue in policy

- ▶ Improved capacity and tools enhance implementation
- ▶ Identify and select regionally / locally appropriate solutions (benefits / tradeoffs)

Nr. 2 Support pilot projects and provide incentives to farmers for implementing monitoring schemes / bookkeeping at farm level to monitor their carbon budgets (e.g. Rural Development Programmes, European Innovation Partnership initiatives)

- ▶ Simple carbon balances are powerful tools for farmers and provide insights for decisions
- ▶ Starting point for context specific solutions
- ▶ Awareness-raising and knowledge exchange

Nr 3 Increase the baseline and mandatory requirements for farmers related to soil quality in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

- ▶ Sustaining SOC levels as a priority – prevent losses
- ▶ What is the effect of greening payments and cross compliance, and Pillar 1 on soils and SOC?
- ▶ Underlying principle: Avoid any perverse incentives and further damage to soils and loss of SOM

Nr 4 Improve the Rural Development Programmes so that they address soil quality management in a more coherent and targeted manner, including possible targets and benchmarking for soil protection objectives (in addition to targets related to biodiversity, water, climate change, energy efficiency, air quality, ...)

- ▶ Soil management is often an indirect and limited focus
- ▶ Incentivise soil-focused action that does not have immediate efficiency or cost savings effects for farmers, yet positive public goods effects

Nr 5 Improve the participation of landowners, land managers and other soil stakeholders in the process of designing and implementing RDPs

- ▶ Increased attention to soil-focused issues
- ▶ Increase ownership of the issue and of solutions

Nr 6 Increase cooperation and demonstration opportunities for farmers to exchange experiences to problem-solve around soil quality management, and increase learning among farmers about the importance and benefits of soil organic matter

- ▶ Learning from farmers, experiential learning
- ▶ Test tools and approaches
- ▶ Demonstrate the effects of failure to manage SOM

Today's discussion

- ▶ How to operationalise the recommendations?
- ▶ What would they mean in practice?
 - ▶ **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, **T**ime Bound
- ▶ Recognise the challenges, but focus on how to make progress
- ▶ Revisions & feed into the policy process

Thank you for your attention.

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