

To

Czesław Adam SIEKIERSKI
Chair of the Committee on
Agriculture and Rural Development

Giovanni LA VIA
Chair of the Committee on the
Environment, Public Health and
Food Safety

Paolo DE CASTRO
S&D Group Coordinator in the
Committee on Agriculture and
Rural Development

Albert DESS
EPP Group Coordinator in the
Committee on Agriculture and
Rural Development

James NICHOLSON
ECR Group Coordinator in the
Committee on Agriculture and
Rural Development

Martin HAEUSLING
GREEN Group Coordinator in the
Committee on Agriculture and
Rural Development

Herbert DORFMANN
Member of the Committee on
Agriculture and Rural Development

Peter JAHR
Member of the Committee on
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Karl-Heinz FLORENZ
Member of the Committee on the
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Food Safety

Elisabetta GARDINI
Member of the Committee on the
Environment, Public Health and
Food Safety

Glenis WILLMOTT
Member of the Committee on the
Environment, Public Health and
Food Safety

Phil HOGAN
European Commissioner designate
for Agriculture and Rural
Development

Karmenu VELLA
European Commissioner Designate
for Environment, Fisheries and
Maritime Affairs

European Parliament

Dear Sir, Dear Madam,

During the 1st European Soil Partnership Meeting that was held in Ispra (Italy) in May 2014, emphasis was placed on the withdrawal of the proposal for a Soil Framework Directive (see Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) - COM(2013) 685 final). The European Commission noted that the proposal had been pending for eight years, during which time no effective action had resulted. So, the Commission in May 2014 decided to withdraw the proposal for a Soil Framework Directive.

Nevertheless, the Seventh Environment Action Programme, which entered into force on January 2014, recognises that soil degradation is a serious challenge. It provides that by 2020 land would be managed sustainably in the European Union, soil adequately protected and the remediation of contaminated sites well underway, and commits the EU and its Member States to an increasing effort to reduce soil erosion, increase soil organic matter content, and to remediate contaminated sites.

We believe that this is not enough and that such commitment must be followed by effective and positive actions to preserve the multi-functionality of soil and its vital role in the environmental equilibrium and human health and welfare.

For these reason we, the Presidents of the European and National Scientific Societies listed below, representing over 10,000 Soil Scientists belonging to European universities, research agencies, government bodies, higher education, science, public non-governmental organizations, and business, are submitting to you the attached petition, counting on your help to maintain and even improve the “Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection”.

PETITION

The Presidents of the European and National Scientific Societies listed below, representing over 10,000 Soil Scientists belonging to European universities, research agencies, government bodies, higher education, science, public non-governmental organizations, and business

hearing

that the 146th FAO Council endorsed the request from the Kingdom of Thailand for the proclamation of the ‘International Year of Soils 2015’ to serve as a platform for raising awareness on the importance of sustainable soil management as the basis for food systems, fuel and fibre production, essential ecosystem functions and better adaptation to climate change for present and future generations.

stressing

the importance of the multi-functionality of soils on environmental equilibria and human health and welfare all over the world;

identified

that the level of degradation of the natural resources, and particularly soils, related to human pressure is becoming increasingly evident in all European countries;















considering

that the REFIT Communication from the European Commission on the withdrawal of the ‘Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection’ (Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) - COM(2013) 685 final; OJ C 153, 2014)

request

the European Parliament and all European Governments and Institutions

to maintain and even improve the ‘Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection,’ developing new environmental policies aimed at favouring the maintenance and improvement of soil functions, such as biomass production, storing, filtering and transforming nutrients and water, hosting the biodiversity pool, acting as a platform, acting as a carbon pool and mitigating climate change, and geological and cultural heritage.

Logo	Society	President (Name and Signature)
	<p>European Society for Soil Conservation</p>	<p>Prof. Carmelo Dazzi</p> 
	<p>European Confederation of Soil Science Societies</p>	<p>Prof. Ahmet R. Mermut</p> 
	<p>European Society for New Methods in Agricultural Research</p>	<p>Prof. Stefano Grego</p> 
<p>Soil System Sciences Division</p> 	<p>European Geoscience Union Division on Soil System Science</p>	<p>Prof. Artemi Cerdà</p> 
 <p>Austrian Soil Science Society</p>	<p>Soil Science Society of AUSTRIA</p>	<p>Prof. Andreas Baumgarten</p> 
	<p>Soil Science Society of BELGIUM</p>	<p>Prof. Karen Vancampenhout Secretary-General of the SSSB</p> 
	<p>Soil Science Society of BULGARIA</p>	<p>Prof. Metodi Teoharov</p> 



Soil Science
Society of
CROATIA

Prof. Milan Poljak



Soil Science
Society of
**CZECH
REPUBLIC**

Prof. Josef Kozak



Soil Science
Society of
DENMARK

Prof. Ole K. Borggaard



Soil Science
Society of
ESTONIA

Prof. Alar Astover



Soil Science
Society of
FINLAND

Prof. Pekka Hänninen



Soil Science
Society of
FRANCE

Prof. Dominique Arrouays



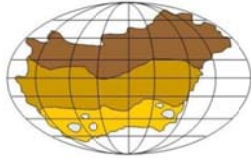
Soil Science
Society of
GERMANY

Prof. Thomas Scholten



Soil Science
Society of
GREECE

Prof. Nick Barbayiannis



Soil Science
Society of
HUNGARY

Prof. Erika Michéli



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Prof. Jonas Volungevičius



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Soil Science
Society of
**UNITED
KINGDOM**

Prof. Phil Haygarth

Many thanks and kind regards

2015
International
Year of Soils

