

**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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**Matthias GROOTE**  
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**Peter LIESE**  
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Member of the Committee on the  
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**Pilar AYUSO**  
Member of the Committee on the  
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**Karl-Heinz FLORENZ**  
Member of the Committee on the  
Environment, Public Health and  
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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 146<sup>th</sup> 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><b>European Society for Soil Conservation</b></p>	<p><b>Prof. Carmelo Dazzi</b></p> 
	<p><b>European Confederation of Soil Science Societies</b></p>	<p><b>Prof. Ahmet R. Mermut</b></p> 
	<p><b>European Society for New Methods in Agricultural Research</b></p>	<p><b>Prof. Stefano Grego</b></p> 
<p>Soil System Sciences Division</p> 	<p><b>European Geoscience Union</b> Division on Soil System Science</p>	<p><b>Prof. Artemi Cerdà</b></p> 
 <p>Austrian Soil Science Society</p>	<p>Soil Science Society of <b>AUSTRIA</b></p>	<p><b>Prof. Andreas Baumgarten</b></p> 
	<p>Soil Science Society of <b>BELGIUM</b></p>	<p><b>Prof. Karen Vancampenhout</b> Secretary-General of the SSSB</p> 
	<p>Soil Science Society of <b>BULGARIA</b></p>	<p><b>Prof. Metodi Teoharov</b></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**



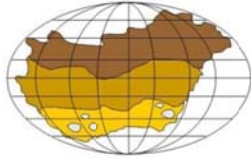
Soil Science  
Society of  
**GERMANY**

**Prof. Thomas Scholten**



Soil Science  
Society of  
**GREECE**

**Prof. Nick Barbayiannis**



Soil Science  
Society of  
**HUNGARY**

**Prof. Erika Michéli**



Soil Science  
Society of  
**ITALY**

**Prof. Nicola Senesi**



Latvijas Augsnes zinātnes biedrība  
**Soil Science Society of Latvia**

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Society of  
**LATVIA**

**Prof. Raimonds Kasparinskis**



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**Prof. Jonas Volungevičius**



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**Prof. Zbigniew Zagorski**



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**Prof. Borut Vrščaj**



Soil Science  
Society of  
**SPAIN**

**Prof. Jaume Porta**



Soil Science  
Society of  
**UNITED  
KINGDOM**

**Prof. Phil Haygarth**

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Many thanks and kind regards

2015  
International  
Year of Soils

