

ACTIONS RELATED TO EU'S SOIL POLICY

■ Claudia Olazabal (European Commission, DG Environment)





World Soil Day



European Commission



Actions related to EU's soil policy

Claudia Olazabal, European Commission, DG Environment
Head of Unit Land Use & Management



Inspiration



Actions related to EU's soil policy

Claudia Olazabal, European Commission, DG Environment
Head of Unit Land Use & Management



SOER 2015



THE EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT
STATE AND OUTLOOK 2015

- The **ability of soil to deliver ecosystem services** — in terms of food production, as biodiversity pools and as a regulator of gasses, water and nutrients — is **under increasing pressure**.
- Observed rates of **soil sealing, erosion, contamination and decline in organic matter all reduce soil capability**. Organic carbon stocks in agricultural soil may have been overestimated by 25%.
- A **coherent soil policy at EU level** would provide the framework to coordinate efforts to survey soil status adequately.



Soil Thematic Strategy



- ❖ Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection adopted in September 2006, incl. proposal for a Soil Framework Directive, COM(2006)232
- ❖ Overall objective: protection of **soil functions** and **sustainable use** of soil, based on:
 - ❖ Prevention of soil degradation
 - ❖ Restoration of degraded soils
- ❖ **Four pillars** of which three non-binding
- ❖ To be implemented by MS
- ❖ 2012 Report from the Commission on the implementation of the STS COM(2012)46



Achievements under the Thematic strategy research and monitoring



- *EU-funded research projects*
 - **FP6, FP7, Horizon 2020**
 - *LIFE/LIFE+: 147 projects on Soil Protection*
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/pdf/LIFE%20and%20Soil%20protection.pdf>
 - *Monitoring – soil data collection*
 - **A lot of soil data at national level**
 - **JRC European Soil Data Centre**
 - **LUCAS database**
 - >20,000 soil samples collected in 2009-2012 and analysed (physico-chemicals properties, Heavy Metals)
 - New campaign in 2015
 - **Land cover/land use monitoring: LUCAS, Corine, Copernicus at EU level**
- > However lack of systematic soil monitoring system accross EU and lack of harmonisation**



Soil threats considered



Sealing



Erosion



Compaction



Organic matter decline



Landslides



Contamination

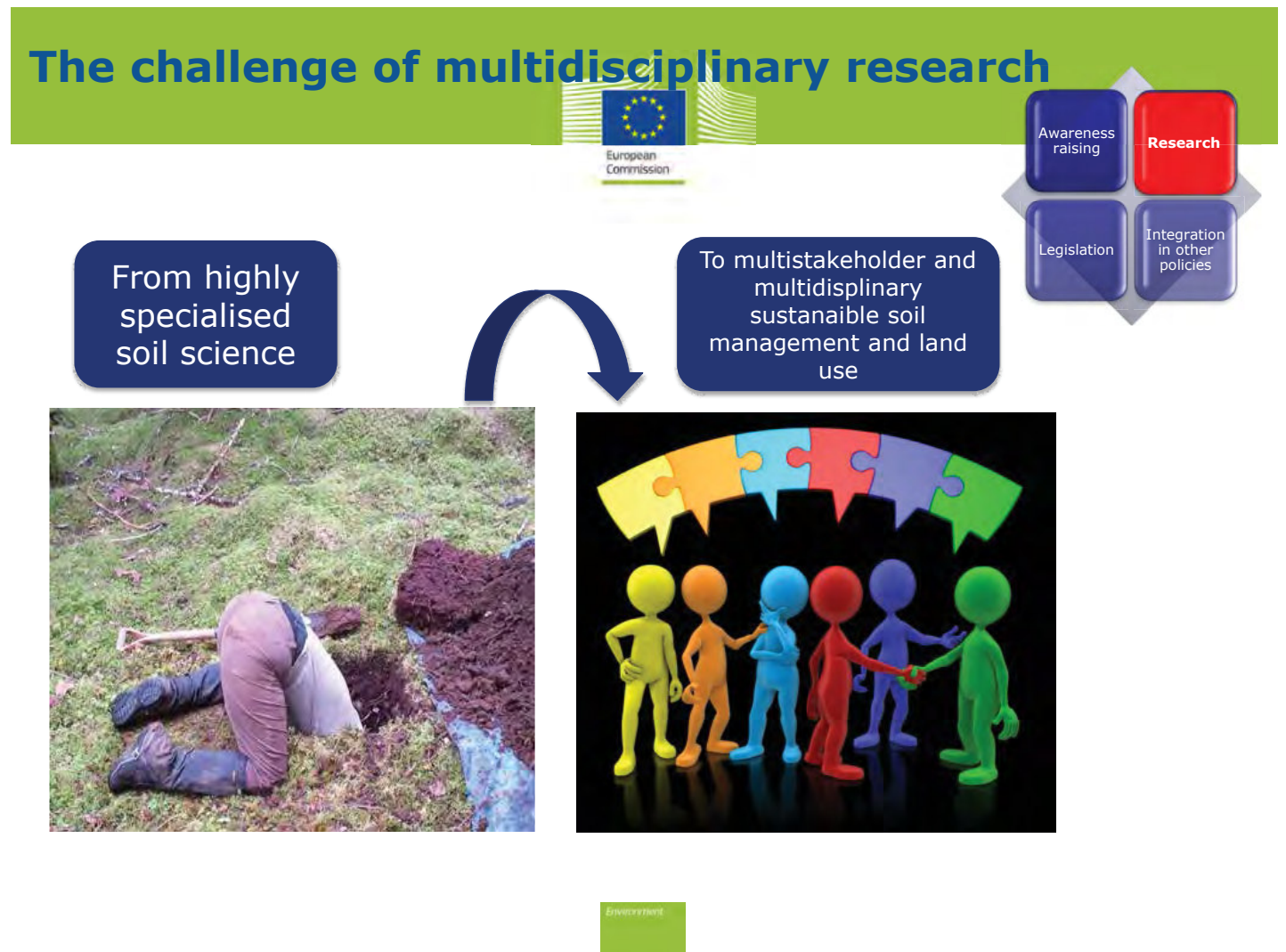
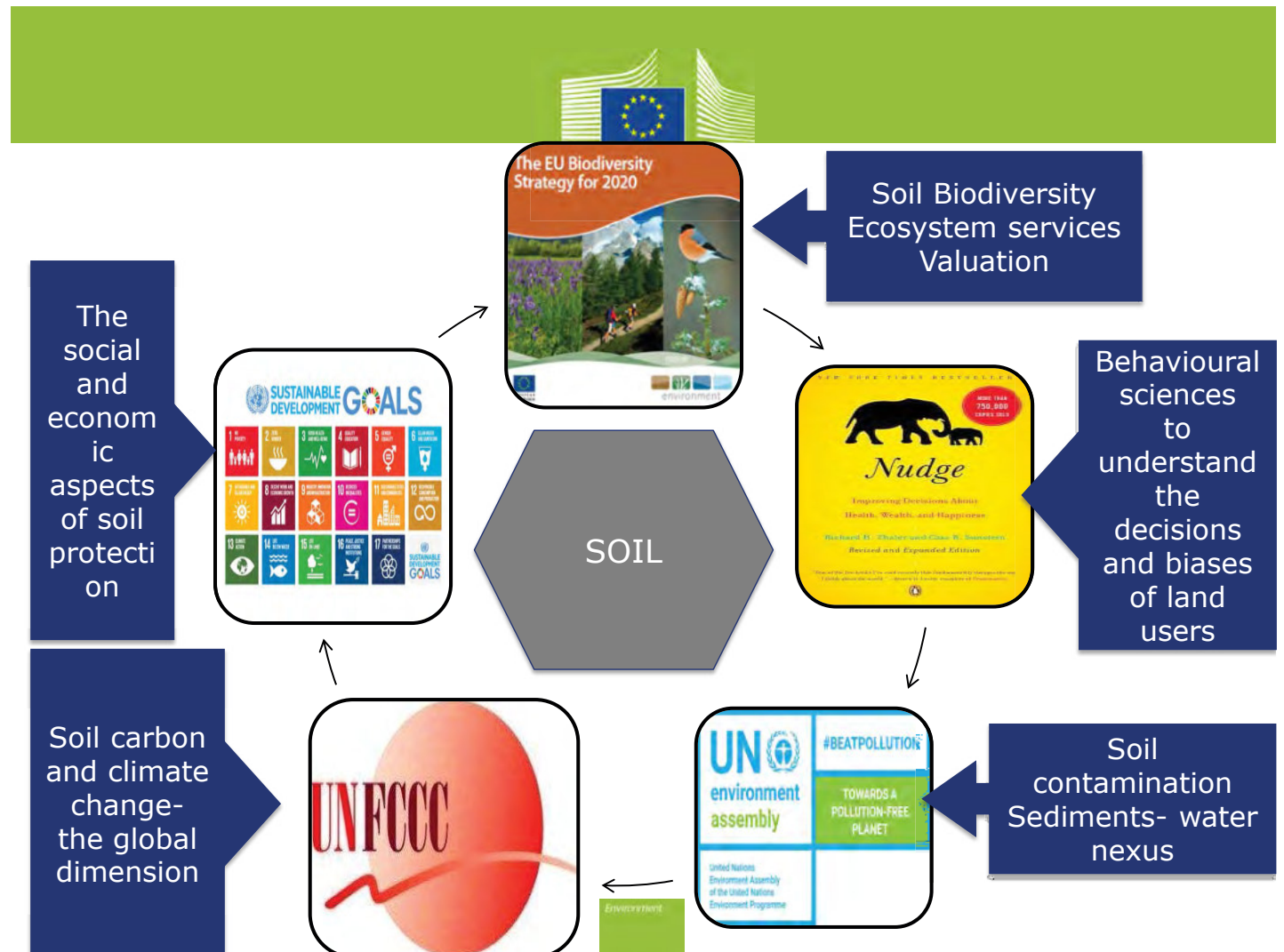


Research gaps for policy making



We need the evidence to shift the political mind- from perceiving soil as static, inert, productive machine to a living complex ecosystem that delivers many functions







SFD and lessons learned

- *SFD proposal withdrawn by the Commission in May 2014 after 8 years of negotiations and blocking minority of 5 MS in the Council (OJ C 153, 21.5.2014, p.3)*
 - **The Commission remains fully committed to the objective of soil protection and would examine how to best achieve this. Any further initiative in this respect would however have to be considered by the next college. (OJ C 163, 28.5.2014, p.15)**
- *Key issues*
 - **Subsidiarity principle**
 - **Soil not recognized as Common good – Private ownership**
 - **Contamination -- issue of orphan sites and costs**
 - **Laand users' concerns –**



7th Environment Action Programme



Objective

- By 2020: "**land is managed sustainably** in the Union, **soil is adequately protected** and the **remediation of contaminated sites is well underway**;"
- This requires, in particular: "increasing efforts to **reduce soil erosion** and **increase soil organic matter**, to **remediate contaminated sites** and to enhance the **integration of land use aspects** into coordinated decision-making involving all relevant levels of government, supported by the **adoption of targets on soil and on land as a resource**, and land planning objectives;"

Commitments

- "The Union and its Member States should also reflect as soon as possible on **how soil quality issues could be addressed using a targeted and proportionate risk-based approach within a binding legal framework. Targets** should also be set for **sustainable land use and soil.**"





Recent activities at EU level

- *Awareness raising and knowledge base*
- *Launch of an EU Expert Group on Soil Protection*
 - **Experts nominated by EU Member States**
 - **Reflexion on how to address 7th EAP commitments on soil**
- *Inventory of soil protection measures in all EU MS*
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/pdf/Soil_inventory_report.pdf
 - **National legislations and non-binding measures + implementation EU policies**
 - **State of play, implementation, gap analysis**
- *Mapping and Assessment of Soil-related Ecosystem Services (MAES) Soil pilot*



**Thank you for your
attention!**

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/index_en.htm

