



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 26.7.2022  
C(2022) 5460 final*

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Camera Deputaților for its Opinion on the EU Soil Strategy for 2030: Reaping the benefits of healthy soils for people, food, nature and climate {COM(2021) 699 final}.*

*The EU Soil Strategy forms part of a broader package of ambitious measures of the European Green Deal designed to effectively address the interrelated climate, pollution and biodiversity crises and transform the EU into a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy. Soil is, indeed, a key solution for our big challenges.*

*The EU Soil Strategy sets out a framework and concrete measures for protecting, restoring and sustainably using all type of soils and mobilises the necessary societal engagement and financial resources, shared knowledge, sustainable practices and monitoring to reach common objectives.*

*The Commission is particularly pleased that the Camera Deputaților supports the establishment of an appropriate legal framework at Union level to ensure the same level of protection for soil as for water, the marine environment and air. The Commission as well welcomes the recommendations and takes this opportunity to highlight a number of elements.*

*Concerning the need to align the objectives of the EU Soil strategy with those of biodiversity conservation, the Commission considers that both strategies together have synergistic benefits and together are aligned in the response to these interrelated crises. The Soil Strategy is strongly anchored in the EU Biodiversity strategy that acknowledged the importance of soil as a solution and committed to address soil degradation.*

*Mr Ion-Marcel CIOLACU  
President of the Camera Deputaților  
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*As regards maintaining and increasing green areas in urban and peri-urban areas, the Commission would like to point out that the EU Biodiversity Strategy<sup>1</sup> has set actions such as the development of Urban Greening Plans that are expected to contribute to protecting important green areas located near cities and increase their extent. Also, the EU Soil Strategy contributes to this objective through urging Member States to limit land take and to apply the land take hierarchy in land planning; it calls Member States to fix their own ambitious national, regional and local targets to reduce net land take by 2023. Finally, the Nature Restoration Law, adopted by the Commission on 22 June, addresses the problem, as set out in its inception impact assessment<sup>2</sup>, that urban ecosystems, together with large part of forests, croplands and grasslands, are not yet sufficiently protected by existing legislation.*

*The Commission shares the view on the importance of soil literacy and will launch a soil literacy engagement and awareness initiative and integrate the issue of soil degradation under the European common reference framework of sustainability competences. On top of that, the Commission is aware of the importance of knowledge transfer in restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry and rural development programmes<sup>3</sup> priorities are on the same line as your proposal.*

*With regard to the use of Horizon Europe funding to tackle soil degradation and desertification, we would like to draw your attention to the Mission 'A Soil Deal for Europe'. The mission will support Europe's trajectory towards healthy soils by generating the necessary knowledge and by setting up Living Labs as testing grounds for innovations at local level. The Mission will also advance tools and methods for soil monitoring and will promote training, communication and wide societal engagement on soils. Reducing soil degradation and desertification is a specific objective of the mission. The Commission will fully support an integrated and proactive approach by Romania aiming at reaching the objectives and implementing the actions set out in the EU Soil Strategy and in other Green Deal initiatives.*

*In the development of a proposal for a Soil Health Law to achieve good soil health across the EU by 2050, the Commission welcomes the participation of Romania in the Soil Expert Group for debating the options for this legally binding framework.*

*On the Farm sustainability data network (FSDN), the Commission adopted the proposal for an amendment of the basic Regulation (EC) No 1217/2009 on 22 June 2022 for conversion of the Farm accountancy data network (FADN) into the Farm sustainability data network. The basic Regulation sets the framework of the data network, while the concrete variables will be analysed and discussed for possible introduction in the secondary legislation in the coming months: considering their importance, soil related information will be included in this discussion. The first year of data collection with the new framework is foreseen for 2025.*

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<sup>1</sup> [EUR-Lex - 52020DC0380 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Protecting biodiversity: nature restoration targets under EU biodiversity strategy \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Rural development | European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

*The Commission values the Camera Deputaţilor early engagement at this stage of the policy-making process, and will take its Opinion and other contributions received into account when developing further actions and political framework.*

*The Commission hopes that the elements provided in this reply address the issues raised by the Camera Deputaţilor and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue with it in the future.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Maroš Šefčovič  
Vice-President*

*Virginijus Sinkevičius  
Member of the Commission*