EU MISSIONS
SOIL DEAL FOR EUROPE
Concrete solutions for our greatest challenges

#EUmissions #HorizonEU #MissionSoil
# A Soil Deal for Europe Mission

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Any questions?

To ask a question, please use slido:

- go to www.sli.do
- insert #MISSIONSINFODAY to join the event, and
- then select the ‘room’ of ‘A Soil Deal for Europe’
- Or you can also simply scan the QR Code and select the appropriate room.
- **Upvote** the most interesting questions (please avoid repeating them).
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@HorizonEU

#EUMissions  #HorizonEU  #MissionSoil  #soilhealth
In which country is your organisation based?
A Soil Deal for Europe: 100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030

Nathalie Sauze Vandevyver – Mission Manager, Director of DG AGRI F, European Commission
Peter Wehrheim – Deputy Mission Manager, HoU DG RTD B2, European Commission
Linking EU's research and innovation to major societal needs; with strong visibility and impact

A mission is a portfolio of actions across disciplines intended to achieve a **bold and inspirational and measurable goal** within a set timeframe, with **impact** for society and policy making as well as relevance for a significant part of the European population and wide range of European citizens.

Horizon Europe defines mission characteristics and elements of governance, and **5 missions areas**.

- Adaptation to Climate Change
- Cancer
- Climate-neutral and Smart Cities
- Restore our Ocean and Waters
- Soil Deal for Europe
The European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) is not part of the Specific Programme Implementing HORIZON EUROPE & EIT. Exclusive focus on civil applications.

SPECIFIC PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTING HORIZON EUROPE & EIT:

**Pillar I: EXCELLENT SCIENCE**
- European Research Council
- Marie Skłodowska-Curie
- Research Infrastructures

**Pillar II: GLOBAL CHALLENGES & EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS**
- Health
- Culture, Creativity & Inclusive Society
- Civil Security for Society
- Digital, Industry & Space
- Climate, Energy & Mobility
- Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture & Environment
- Joint Research Centre

**Pillar III: INNOVATIVE EUROPE**
- European Innovation Council
- European Innovation Ecosystems
- European Institute of Innovation & Technology*

**WIDENING PARTICIPATION AND STRENGTHENING THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA**
- Widening participation & spreading excellence
- Reforming & Enhancing the European R&I system

* The European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) is not part of the Specific Programme.
Co-creating the soil mission - from the MB report to the COM

September 2019 until September 2020

The Mission Board “Soil health and food”

Creation of the Mission Board and the Mission Assembly Soil health and food

September 2020 until June 2021

R&I days 2020

The Mission Board hands over its report “Caring for soil is caring for life”

Commission services prepare the mission implementation plan (IP) with the advise of the Mission Board

29 Sept 2021

Official launch of the missions through a Commission Communication
Life on Earth depends on healthy soils

- Healthy soils are the **basis for nutritious and safe food**
- Soils deliver **vital, interconnected ecosystem functions**: water regulation, hosting biodiversity, nutrient cycling, climate mitigation and adaptation, carrying landscapes and cultural services
- **Green Deal Targets** on climate, biodiversity, zero pollution and sustainable food systems depend on healthy soils
- Soil is a **scarce, non-renewable resource**: it takes hundreds of years to generate 1 cm of top soil but only a couple of years or less to destroy it
- **Soils are threatened**: 60-70% of all soils in Europe are unhealthy as due to current management practices, pollution, urbanisation and the effects of climate change
We need to act now

Soils need our attention! EU Examples:

- 2.8 million potential contaminated sites (only 24% inventoried) posing major health risks
- 65-75% of agricultural soils with nutrient inputs at levels risking eutrophication of soils and water and affecting biodiversity
- Cropland soils losing carbon at a rate of 0.5% per year; 50% of peatlands drained and losing carbon – this is contributing to the climate crisis
- 24% of land with unsustainable water erosion rates
- 25% of land at High or Very High risk to desertification in Southern, Central and Eastern Europe in 2017
- The costs associated with soil degradation in the EU exceed 50 billion € per year

The effects of climate change put further pressure on soils and accelerate land degradation!
Added value of mission Soil Deal for Europe

- **Novel approach to R&I**: Combination of R&I activities, local testing grounds, monitoring and training activities in a joined up manner that could not be implemented by individual parts of Horizon Europe or other instruments at EU or Member State level

- **Mobilisation of diverse actors** across EU, Member State and society in ways that would not happen otherwise

- **New Soil Strategy**, European Soil Observatory and Mission together build an **effective framework for soil protection and restoration**
The Soil Deal mission supports the Green Deal

Mission part of:
- Farm to Fork Strategy
- EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030
- Climate Adaptation Strategy
- Forest Strategy
- Zero Pollution Action Plan for air, water and soil
- Organic Action Plan
- Long term vision for rural areas
- New EU Soil Strategy

Examples of soil relevant Green Deal Targets

By 2030
- 25% of land under organic farming
- Reduce the overall use and risk of chemical pesticides by 50% and the use of more hazardous pesticides by 50%
- Reduce fertilizer use by at least 20%
- Reduce nutrient losses by at least 50%
- Reduce by 30% microplastics released into the environment
- Reduce net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 55% compared to 1990 levels.

By 2035
- the EU should aim to reach climate neutrality in the land use, forestry & agriculture sectors
A Soil Deal for Europe – Goal: 100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030

Specific objectives

1. Reduce desertification
2. Conserve soil organic carbon stocks
3. Stop soil sealing and increase re-use of urban soils
4. Reduce soil pollution and enhance restoration
5. Prevent erosion
6. Improve soil structure to enhance soil biodiversity
7. Reduce the EU global footprint on soils
8. Improve soil literacy in society

Each specific objective is backed by one or more quantified targets and measurable indicators. Objectives apply to all types of land use.
How will the mission be implemented?

1. R&I programme
   - Data infrastructures and platforms; knowledge to support management practices, business models, technologies

2. Living labs and lighthouses
   - A network of real-life sites for testing, demonstrating and upscaling of solutions; due attention to balanced representation across regions

3. Soil monitoring

4. Soil literacy, communication citizen engagement

Who will act?

Co-implementation of mission by:
researchers, land managers, regions, businesses, policy makers, citizens and international partners

Communication material, training curricula for different target groups and specialised “soil advisors”

Harmonisation of indicators, measuring and reporting for soil health across Europe; contribution to European Soil Observatory

Activities under the four building blocks to address soil health and drivers of soil health
Creation of 100 Living Labs and Lighthouses

- Living labs are a core element of the mission – it reflects the ambition to “do research in new ways”: participatory, interdisciplinary, intersectoral.

- Living labs (LLs) are “real-life” places for experiments and innovation: each living lab corresponds to a cluster of sites working together at regional or sub-regional level.

- Lighthouses are individual places to showcase good practices. Can be from within or outside LLs.

- Network of living labs to be gradually established through consecutive calls for living labs under the various Work Programmes of Horizon Europe.

- Specific criteria for living labs have been developed under the mission to ensure common approach and comparability of data and experiences.

![Cumulative number of soil health living labs](image)
Communication and engagement… ongoing

- 3 World Soil Day celebrations
- 2 major #EIPAgriSoil campaigns
- Articles, press releases, newsletters, social media, 3 videos (WSD video 2019 more than 30,000 views in less than 24h; Mission video more than 110,000 views in August 2020; WSD video 2021), podcast episode
- 160+ co-creation and engagement events (up to December 2021)
  - including 2 International fairs: International Green Week 2020, Salon de l’Agriculture 2020
- Survey
  - sent to more than 7000 contacts (EN, FR, DE, PL, CS, PT)
  - more than 2500 contributions received
Implementation of the Mission

First call for proposals under the mission in the area of Soil health and food

*Horizon Europe Mission Work-Programme 2021 (deadline 20 October 2021)*

- **Topic** HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-01-01: “Preparing the ground for healthy soils - building capacities for engagement, outreach and knowledge” Action to identify regional “soil needs” and monitoring requirements, map existing living labs and lighthouses and help to create a one-stop shop for soil information.

- Proposals are under evaluation

*Update of Horizon Europe Mission Work Programme 2021:*

- 8 topics open since 22 December 2021
- deadline for submission of proposals: end of March 2022

*Mission Work Programme 2022*

- more substantial number of topics to initiate the mission
- under consultation with Member States
- publication of Work Programme planned for end of April 2022
Useful links

• Mission A Soil Deal for Europe webpage - http://ec.europa.eu/mission-soil


• EU Missions https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/missions-horizon-europe_en

• Video EU Mission “A Soil Deal for Europe” https://youtu.be/3hPIZqwwhhM

• Behind the Scenes podcast episode A blossoming career as a soil keeper https://play.acast.com/s/behind-the-scenes-conversations-with-researchers-and-innovat/s02e05-a-blossoming-career-as-a-soil-keeper

• On a mission to save our soils - the EU’s plan to rebuild the land (Futuris episode, euronews) https://www.euronews.com/2020/09/21/on-a-mission-to-save-our-soils-the-eu-s-plan-to-rebuild-the-land
Thank you!

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#HorizonEU
#MissionSoil
Tell us, in one word, what comes to your mind when you read "100 living labs and lighthouses"
From knowledge gaps to roadmaps on soil mission objectives
Coordination and Support Action

Disclaimer: This presentation is intended to provide a non-comprehensive and feasible overview of the topic; for legally binding information, please, see the Funding and Tender Portal.
POLICY CONTEXT

EU Green Deal and its strategies in particular:
- New Soil Strategy
- Zero pollution action plan
- Biodiversity
- Farm to fork
- Climate adaptation

The European Soil Observatory

EU forestry strategy

Organic Action plan

LTVRA

The CAP

Digital Age

SDG

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Improved understanding of main gaps in our knowledge on soil health

Improved capacities to assess potential trade-offs between the mission objectives

Establishment of dynamic roadmaps to support the development and coordination of a coherent portfolio of R&I and other activities for each mission objectives

Increased capacities to develop, monitor and evaluate the mission’s activities with up-to-date information from mission activities and other programmes
HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-02-01

SCOPE

✓ provide an analysis of drivers of soil health considering different socioeconomic dimensions

✓ take stock, integrate and synthesize existing knowledge and knowledge gaps in relation to the eight specific objectives of the mission

✓ develop roadmaps for each of the mission’s objectives

✓ provide an operational framework to oversee, monitor and assess the mission’s evolving R&I portfolio against the identified objectives and expected outcomes, within the proposed timeframe

✓ Proposals should:
  ✓ Build on available knowledge
  ✓ Involve a range of actors
  ✓ Consider IoT and AI
  ✓ Address trade-offs across roadmaps

INDICATIVE BUDGET

5 mln EUR per project
(5 mln EUR in total)

IMPORTANT!

Build upon existing national and European resources:

- Horizon Results Platform
- EIP AGRI
- EUSO

Project duration minimum of 4 to 5 years
POLICY CONTEXT

- Monitoring the state of soils and changes in soil properties over time is crucial to assess the effectiveness of policy and management measures;
- Currently, only a few countries in Europe have active soil monitoring programmes in place;
- In general, data for soil health are not sufficiently harmonized;
- Need to develop robust soil health indicators and to harmonize measurement and reporting of soil health.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Progress towards more widely accepted and quantifiable definition of soil health;
- Improved capacities for soil health monitoring and for assessing the effects of management practices and policy measures;
- Support to policy development and the creation of incentives for sustainable soil management through increased evidence on the link between soil health, soil functions and the support to ecosystem services.

In the long term: results may support a harmonised soil monitoring and reporting in Europe.
SCOPE

✓ Test the eight indicators proposed in the mission implementation plan for their suitability to measure the status and changes in soil health – also in relation to progress towards the mission’s specific objectives;

✓ identify alternative indicators where the ones proposed do not prove to be appropriate. The indicators recommended should be measurable, realistic (e.g. easy to use in particular for farmers and foresters, urban planners), unambiguous and scalable;

✓ identify proxies for soil health, which are “easier” to monitor or more reactive to change. These "next generation indicators" could be based on observable land use and soil management rather than direct measurements of soil properties;

✓ demonstrate the link between the proposed soil indicators, soil functions and ecosystems services supported by soils.
SCOPE

- Harmonize and benchmark the proposed indicators for a range of soil types, land uses and climate zones in the EU and Associated Countries and define the acceptable limits or thresholds;
- Update indicators as a result of feedback following monitoring campaigns or data inputs;
- Develop recommendations for an integrated sampling framework to support upcoming LUCAS campaign (2025/2026) and policy implementation;
- Support the development of a Soil Health Dashboard under the EU Soil Observatory.

INDICATIVE BUDGET

12 mln EUR per project (12 mln EUR in total)

IMPORTANT!

Make use of Copernicus and/or Galileo/EGNOS
Close cooperation with the JRC, the European Environmental Agency and the project EJP Soil
EU’s Joint Research Centre (JRC) can participate in consortia
EU MISSIONS

SOIL DEAL FOR EUROPE

HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-02-03

Linking soil health to nutritional and safe food
Research and Innovation Actions

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Disclaimer: This presentation is intended to provide a non-comprehensive and feasible overview of the topic; for legally binding information, please, see the Funding and Tender Portal.
EU Green Deal and its strategies in particular:
- New Soil Strategy
- Farm to fork
- Zero pollution action plan
- Biodiversity
- Climate adaptation

The European Soil Observatory

EU FOOD 2030 initiative

Organic Action plan

The CAP

Digital Age

Sustainable Development Goals

Improved understanding of the soil health and food nexus to promote the development of a coherent portfolio of food systems R&I activities in line with the FOOD 2030 initiative.

Further understanding of the interlinkages between farming practices, soil health and four food quality dimensions: nutritional composition, tastiness, safety, technological property.

Engaged stakeholders throughout the food system, increased public awareness and business interest on the connection of soil health and food quality, via interactive learning/experimentation through living labs throughout Europe.
**HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-02-03**

**SCOPE**

- Further develop and strengthen legitimacy and robustness of the link soil - food quality through an engaged European interdisciplinary community of scientists

- Develop easy to measure key performance indicators (KPIs) that elicit the connection between soil health, and food quality.

- List the potential mechanisms for improved food nutritional quality through soil health

- Proposals should:
  - Build on available knowledge
  - Involve a range of actors
  - Address trade-offs

**INDICATIVE BUDGET**

7 mln EUR per project (7 mln EUR in total)

**IMPORTANT!**

Build upon existing national and European resources:
- Horizon Results Platform
- EIT Food initiatives

Project duration minimum of 4 to 5 years
Social, economic and cultural factors driving land management and land degradation

Research and Innovation Action

Disclaimer: This presentation is intended to provide a non-comprehensive and feasible overview of the topic; for legally binding information, please, see the Funding and Tender Portal.
POLICY CONTEXT

- 60-70% of EU soils are considered unhealthy
- Soil degradation is prevalent and extensive in the EU territory
- Cost associated to land degradation estimated in excess of €50 bio in the EU per year.
- Avoiding soil degradation and fostering soil health is for a large part conditional upon the land management practices implemented by land managers.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Increased evidence on the main factors driving land management and land degradation as a basis for actions by policy makers, land managers and other stakeholders;
- Availability of a toolbox for policy solutions to shape conditions and promote practices that are conducive to better soil health and avoid land degradation;
- Enhanced capacities for risk assessment and risk management through increased awareness and knowledge on hotspots of land degradation, in particular in Europe.
HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-02-04

**SCOPE**

- study the role of various factors in soil health and land degradation: (1) economic factors; (2) social factors, (3) cultural aspects;
- identify the most important aspects that drive land management and land degradation with a view to elaborate integrated approaches, policies and strategies contributing to lifting the constraints impeding soil health recovery and land improvement and enable sustainable land management;
- develop and test (interactive) tools to assess risks as well as identify and visualise hotspots of land degradation across Europe;
- provide testing grounds for the demonstration of solutions in response to specific types of land degradation

**INDICATIVE BUDGET**

5 mln EUR per project
(10 mln EUR in total)

**IMPORTANT!**

Take account diversity of land uses; work in interdisciplinary manner and involve SSH; include a task to collaborate with other project; take due account of potential of digital technologies; international cooperation is encouraged
Questions ?

#MISSIONSINFODAY
What is your field of expertise?
(i.e. soil science, agriculture, social sciences, etc.)

#MISSIONSINFODAY
Healthy soils provide a range of vital ecosystem services. Often however, these services are not accounted for in the decision-making of land managers;

environmental, social and economic risks and consequences of land degradation are increasingly recognised;

need to develop incentives for making sustainable soil management profitable and investing in soil health.

increased awareness about the value of investing in soil health and its various co-benefits for society;

increased opportunities for investments in soil health across value chains;

novel opportunities for developing and diversifying income for land managers;

enhanced cooperation and new partnerships across different sectors;

emergence of new value chains and products based on sustainable soil practices

consumers taking more informed decisions.
SCOPE

✓ Provide a detailed **analysis of existing models** (in Europe and beyond) for creating incentives for soil health, such as for
  o sustainable soil management (across various land uses)
  o products based on practices promoting soil health
  o consumption and certification practices conducive to soil health
  o the reuse of land
  o sustainable soil management in the context of the EU Taxonomy Regulation and the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation;

✓ **showcase particularly “good examples”** (from Europe and beyond):
  o investments in soil health and other types of incentives
  o “innovators” that lead the transition towards sustainable soil practices

✓ **co-design with stakeholders new models** for promoting soil health;

✓ provide **testing grounds for soil business cases** and identify avenues for scaling up action.
SCOPE

- develop a comprehensive toolbox of incentives incl. recommendations on innovative ways of blending finance streams and policy measures.
  - Tools shall be tailored to the needs of various stakeholders and address the delivery of various ecosystem services (e.g. carbon capture, clean water, biodiversity) and land uses (e.g. agriculture, forestry, urban areas);
- provide recommendations for policy measures at EU and national levels to support business models for soil health;
- establish communities of practice/roundtables for environmentally and socially responsible soil health “investors”;
- develop material and carry out promotion events or campaigns to raise awareness regarding opportunities for soil investments.

INDICATIVE BUDGET

5 mln EUR per project
(10 mln EUR in total)

IMPORTANT!

Multi-actor approach

Build on existing studies for carbon farming

Explore the potential of digital technologies
Engage with and activate municipalities and regions to protect and restore soil health.

Coordination and Support Action

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HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-02-06

**POLICY CONTEXT**

- EU Green Deal
- European Commission’s commitment to democracy and equality
- Mission “A Soil Deal for Europe” objective 8

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

- increased and more **structured dialogue** at regional and local levels involving stakeholders and citizens leading to co-creation of solutions
- **increased awareness and understanding** of the value of soils and soil health challenges and their drivers
- increased **cooperation between public and private actors**, co-implementing solutions for soil health
- effective exchange of experiences between municipalities and regions across Europe, in view of making **best use of opportunities provided by European Funds**
SCOPE

- support municipalities and regions to identify, mobilise and engage a critical mass of stakeholders and citizens to step up the protection and restoration of soil health
- explore with regional and local authorities opportunities for making better use of EU financial instruments for sustainable soil management
- enable and support municipalities and regions to co-design strategies and actions for the protection and restoration of soil health with citizens
- develop and implement effective participatory processes which stimulate an extensive dialogue on soil and land related activities at local and regional
HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-02-06

SCOPE

- enhance **knowledge sharing** among municipalities and regions
- strengthen inclusive and extensive European networks of municipalities and regions for pursuing citizen-identified soil related objectives
- increase the capacity of these networks to contribute to meeting the objectives and targets of the soil Mission
- include a task to collaborate with the other projects funded under this topic to ensure complementarities, synergies and clear communication to stakeholders around the open calls for third party funding

INDICATIVE BUDGET

EUR 3.30 mln per project  
(EUR 10 mln in total)

IMPORTANT!

- Multi-Actor Approach - associate regional and local authorities from an early stage
- Seek for a balanced representation of regions across the EU and Associated Countries
- Beneficiaries may provide financial support to third parties (up to EUR 60 000)
National engagement sessions and support to the establishment of soil health living labs

Coordination and Support Action

HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-02-07

Disclaimer: This presentation is intended to provide a non-comprehensive and feasible overview of the topic; for legally binding information, please, see the Funding and Tender Portal.
The Mission ‘A Soil Deal for Europe’ and in particular its target to set up 100 soil health living labs by 2027.

The EU Green Deal and in particular the its new Soil Strategy for 2030, and the Farm to Fork strategy

The Long Term Vision for Rural Areas

The Common Agricultural Policy

SDGs

A common understanding of the concept of soil health living labs, and the most pressing soil health challenges;

Enhanced awareness and skills of potential applicants on how to setup and run a living lab and improved access to capacity building material;

A high-quality, collaborative and multi-actor consortia in place, to prepare and support relevant actors expected to take part in future living labs, bringing them together in joint proposals within each living lab area and across borders to create transnational clusters of living labs.
**SCOPE**

Organize **national engagement sessions** to:

- Build ownership of the **soil mission’s objectives** as well as the definitions, concept and criteria for soil health living labs and lighthouses;

- Raise awareness on key **soil health challenges** identified in the different regions and steer a conversation on **where to set up the 1st living labs** in each country;

- Provide key information and **capacity building material** on the living lab approach and how to start and run living labs;

- Provide **coaching sessions** to potential applicants to start testing and improving their ideas;

- Identify potential applicants and facilitate matchmaking between applicants in various countries to support the creation of **transnational proposals** for living labs.

**INDICATIVE BUDGET**

3 mln EUR per project (3 mln EUR in total)

**IMPORTANT!**

- Multi-actor and co-creation approach.
- Build on previous projects: H2020 SMS, HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-01-01.
- Engage with relevant innovation networks: EIP-AGRI, EIT.
Next generation soil advisors
Coordination and Support Action

Disclaimer: This presentation is intended to provide a non-comprehensive and feasible overview of the topic; for legally binding information, please, see the Funding and Tender Portal.
POLICY CONTEXT

- European Green Deal and its strategies such as Farm to Fork, Biodiversity Strategy and Soil Strategy
- Soil Deal Mission Objectives

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Advisory services are strengthened to provide impartial advice on soils and their sustainable management
- New forms of advice are tested and established
- Land managers and other practitioners have increased opportunities for access to knowledge and for exchange of experiences
- The farming sector is better equipped to contribute to meeting targets from the Farm to Fork Strategy and the new EU Soil Strategy
- More interactive and effective agricultural and forestry knowledge and innovation systems are in place
- Local/regional authorities are in a position to integrate considerations on soil health into spatial planning and decision-making
HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-02-08

SCOPE

✓ identify, map, and connect the main actors relevant to the development, acquisition, exchange and application of knowledge to improve soil health related practices

✓ screen existing educational resources and tools applicable to the various aspects of land management and the prevention of soil degradation

✓ develop, test and share best practices on curricula, tools and methods to strengthen the skills and competences of soil advisors

✓ create testing grounds for new forms of soil advice and (digital) tools, peer-to-peer knowledge exchange and practitioner-driven experimentation, in particular on the management of nutrients, soil organic carbon and biodiversity

✓ develop a comprehensive toolbox of resources for the training of soil advisors and their interactions with land managers

✓ propose strategies (including financial models) to sustain and update training outputs and tools developed and compiled throughout the project

INDICATIVE BUDGET

5 mln EUR per project
(5 mln EUR in total)

IMPORTANT!

Multi-actor approach

Make use of opportunities provided by EIP AGRI, national AKIS and the EUSO

Take into account results of relevant H2020 projects
Questions ?

#MISSIONSINFODAY
Sli.do Poll

Which topic was more interesting for you?

#MISSIONSINFODAY