



Implementing a soil framework directive in Italy: a contribution from the Italian scientific societies working in agriculture and forestry

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Soil Thematic Strategy (STS, COM 2006) acknowledge that soil can be considered essentially as a nonrenewable resource and it provides food, biomass, raw materials and many ecosystems functions. STS emphasizes that these functions are often subjected to a series of degradation processes or threats. These include erosion, decline in organic matter, local and diffuse contamination, sealing, compaction, decline in biodiversity, salinisation, floods and landslides. A combination of some of these threats can ultimately lead to desertification, then soil conservation actions are very much required !

Some six years after the adoption of the Soil Thematic Strategy, on 13 February 2012 the European Commission published a policy report on the implementation of the Strategy and ongoing activities (COM(2012) 46). From this report it was rather evident that the road leading to the key issue of producing a Soil Framework Directive it seems still very far and this proposal remains on the EU Council's table.

Such important time delay is rather worrying considering that many soil degradation processes, including soil sealing, do not experience any pause.

In such scenario, the 19 Italian Scientific Societies working in the field of agriculture and forestry and gathered into the AISSA association decided to activate a series of activities (initiator, organizing, technical, steering committees) in order to produce a proposal for a "Soil Framework Directive". This proposal aims to operate on the Italian scenario where soil issues are governed by the interaction of 3 major (plus many other minor) public bodies namely: Ministry of Agriculture (MIPAF), Ministry of Environment (MATTM) and Administrative regions.

AISSA plans to present this proposal to the general public and to politicians sometime in 2013 but it is presented here at EGU 2013 for an open discussion.

With this work AISSA aims also to show that scientific societies have to take onboard the third mission of universities and research bodies as requested by the EU Lisbon strategy.