The LOESS project to boost soil health literacy across Europe: The case of Italy

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The Horizon Europe project LOESS ‘Literacy boost through an Operational Educational Ecosystem of Societal actors on Soil health’ officially started in June 2023 involving twenty partner organizations in fifteen countries across Europe, lead by the WILA Bonn Science Shop. The final goal of the project is to raise awareness on the importance of soil and of its functions and to increase soil literacy across Europe. To do so, the first step of the project activity is designed to map and connect multiple actors in Communities of Practice (CoPs) at the national level, and engage them to provide an overview of the current level of soil related knowledge and teaching programmes and materials, in order to identify the gap between this material and the educational needs amongst different levels of the society (from pupils to students to citizens).

The Italian chapter is led by two university research groups with different expertise (civil and environmental engineering at the University of Brescia on one hand and social sciences at the University of Sassari on the other) and one NGO (Controvento) whose mission is children not-formal education. The Italian CoP, led by the University of Brescia, is composed of 62 members from both the higher education and the research community, as well as from the primary and secondary education levels (teachers and pupils), from the productive sectors (farmers and spatial planners), from the politics world (local administrators) and from the civil society (NGOs and associations).

This contribution presents the activities performed so far, viz the stakeholder mapping, the creation of the CoP and its first meetings and the community-based participatory activity which was organized on the World Soil Day 2023.