

The EEA's needs for policy-relevant indicators on contaminated sites

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Second technical workshop on contaminated sites

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EEA mandate

The EEA provides information relevant to policy development according to priorities established in the political agenda, making use of the **best available information**.

To do so:

The EEA is building a '**from national monitoring to European reporting**' framework (MDIAR):

- making use of existing capacities in the Member States;
- developing **indicators** (integration with economic sectors and effective use of limited data and resources).

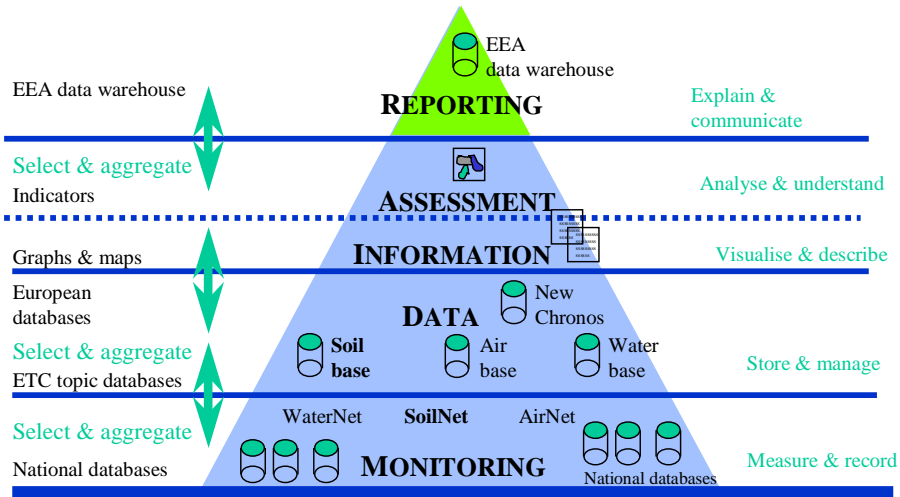
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With reference to soil issues, the overall objective of EEA work is to establish a streamlined and stable system for data gathering and policy-relevant assessment and reporting of soil protection issues and their linkages to other environmental issues in Europe.

FROM NATIONAL MONITORING TO EUROPEAN REPORTING

The EEA framework to provide policy-relevant information



From monitoring to a reporting framework for soil

- Based on an indicator approach
- Based on a political and analytical frameworks (DPSIR and MF/MI approach)
- Defines priorities to make best use of limited resources (agreement with MSs on basic set of relevant indicators)
- Based on the assessment of data availability and the identification of data gaps
- Includes the organisation of data flow from the national level to the European level (EIONET)
- Includes data collection if necessary
- Includes activities and analysis/assessment of data to produce indicators/information
- Presents the results in reports, available to policy-makers and the general public

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To this purpose, the EEA is developing a monitoring and assessment framework for soil, based on the EEA information strategy and the MDAIR chain of activities.

The framework :

- Uses the indicator approach
- Focuses on policy-relevant issues
- Uses analytical tools for integrated assessment
- Contribution from Member States is crucial (data availability, data flow, data collection)
- Results of integrated assessment presented in EEA major reports.

The EEA reporting context

- The five yearly environmental state, trend and outlook reports
= *the EEA tools for strategic environmental planning*
- The regular indicator report
= *the EEA tool for performance review*
- Building blocks

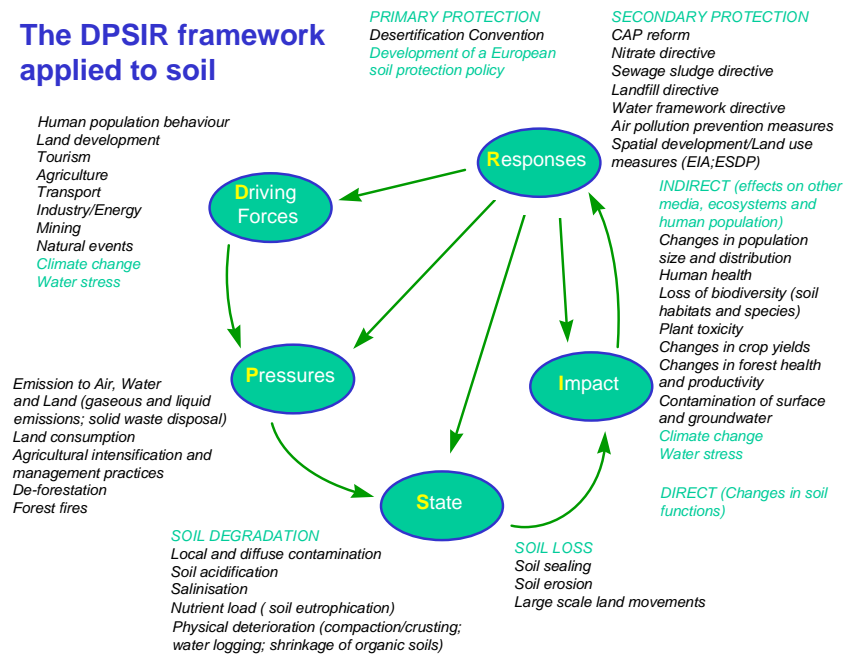


EEA REPORTING ACTIVITIES

- Europe's environment — The second assessment
- EU98 report — Assessment of state and prospective trends
- Regular indicator reports (annually?)
- Transport/environment reporting mechanism
- Building blocks — e.g., 'Air pollution in Europe 1997', Mediterranean report, nutrient report
- Annual EEA–UNEP messages



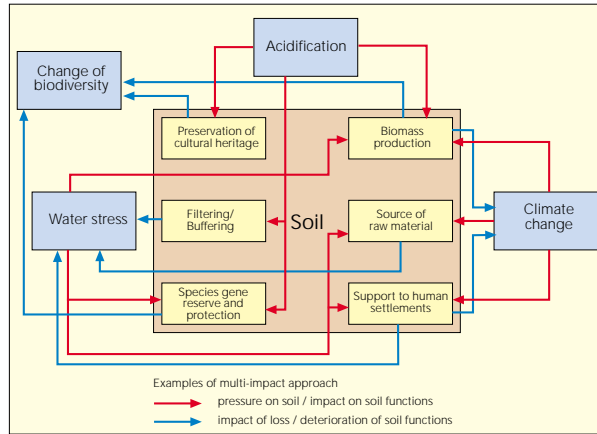
The DPSIR framework applied to soil



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An integrated approach to soil and the environment



Multi-function/multi-impact approach

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Main findings on the state of Europe's soils (EU98)

- Damage to soil from modern human activities is increasing.
- Major driving forces: population growth coupled with urbanisation, agricultural intensification, industrial activities and transport.
- Sealing of soil surfaces due to urbanisation and new infrastructures is the main cause of soil degradation in western and northern Europe.
- Soil loss by erosion is the main cause of soil degradation in the Mediterranean region.
- Soil deterioration by contamination is important in central, western and northern Europe.
- 1 500 000 potentially contaminated sites — 300 000 identified.

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Indicators on contaminated sites included in the EU98 report

- Progress in management of contaminated sites (response indicator)
- Expenditures for clean-up (response indicator)

Data gaps:

- Only possible for selected countries
- Progress limited to site identification (screening and assessment)



Indicators on contaminated sites needed (gaps)

- Driving forces/pressures (**contributors to the problem**)
- State
 - **Type**
 - **Extension**
 - **Severity of contamination**
- Impacts on:
 - **Human health**
 - **Groundwater quality**
 - **Economic impacts etc.**



Indicators on contaminated sites What are the problems?

- Assessment is based on existing data on national inventories (mainly)
- Data are not fully comparable
- Disaggregate information (specify type of contamination to increase comparability)
- Use data from other sources
- Alternative approaches to data collection

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What are the problems?

We base our assessment on existing data, mainly coming from national inventories. Data are not fully comparable, different definitions exist.

A way forward could be to disaggregate information (specify type of contamination) and use data from other sources.

Alternative approaches have been proposed in:

- Data update request for the soil message
- Data collection based on test regions

Are we asking the right questions?

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Are we focussing on the relevant aspects of the problem?

Should we broaden our perspective/view and focus more on state and impacts rather than management aspects (responses)?

The EEA would appreciate if the countries could help in answering those questions and help in further clarifying the issue.