

Sustainable soil management to unleash soil biodiversity potential and increase environmental, economic and social well-being

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SUCCESSFUL YEAR 1 CONSORTIUM MEETING FOR THE H2020 SOILGUARD PROJECT



On the 9th and 10th of June 2022, the SOILGUARD consortium held its first in-person consortium-wide meeting in Terrassa and Barcelona, Spain, hosted by Project Coordinator, LEITAT. Throughout these two days, partners from 25 European and international organisations joined together to discuss the progress that has been made over the first year of the project implementation. The meeting also served to identify and address any project-related challenges and pave the way for another successful year ahead.

SOILGUARD's coordinating organisation, LEITAT, began by providing an update on the overall status of the project and the deliverables that had been submitted in the first year. Next, the WP1 (SOILGUARD Network of Knowledge) was discussed. The SOILGUARD Network of Knowledge (SNoK) will be made up of multiple stakeholders and the presence of key members from a wide range of global soil and biodiversity organisations (Global Soil Partnership, Global Soil Biodiversity Initiative, and the Intergovernmental Platform of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services). During this first year, WP1 related work has been focused on creating and validating the SOILGUARD Strategic Plan and defining tailor-made engagement strategies for each of the four Action Groups defining the SNoK. In addition, SOILGUARD has been building the necessary foundations to begin co-creating a conceptual and analytical framework with the potential to become the global standard for future assessments of soil biodiversity status and its contribution to both soil multifunctionality and human well-being.

To validate this Soil Biodiversity and Well-being framework defined in WP1, an innovative experimental design has been set up in order to fill knowledge gaps related to the impacts of land degradation, unsustainable soil management and climate change on the status of soil biodiversity and cascading effects on key ecosystems services, across biomes and global biogeographical regions in

WP2 and WP3. The challenges related to obtaining 220 soil sites to sample across the globe and to set up realistic on-field climate simulations in seven European NUTS-2 regions have been successfully overcome. Soil sampling has been initiated in many of the regions covered by the project.

The soil biodiversity and soil multifunctionality information gathered in WP2 and WP3 during the coming year, will feed WP4, WP5 and WP6, where the Nature's Contributions to People valuation framework has been started to be defined (WP4) and the first evidence chain linking different soil-related variables is starting to be defined (WP5). The whole consortium has highlighted the importance of cross WP action to ensure the correct flow of information from WP1, WP2, and WP3 towards the rest of the WPs.

SOILGUARD's second year promises to be full of exciting results with the final aim to boost societal awareness of the importance of soil biodiversity for future global resilience and sustainability.



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PROJECT COORDINATOR

LEITAT
Salvador Lladó
Principal Investigator
sllado@leitat.org