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CONTAMINATED LAND MANAGEMENT TOWARDS 2030

EU GREEN DEAL – UPCOMING STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

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ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY AUSTRIA **umweltbundesamt**^U

OUTLINE

- ❑ *COMMON FORUM inputs (up to now)*
 - ❑ *Zero Pollution Action Plan (CF Secretariat; December 2020)*
 - ❑ *new Soil Thematic Strategy (WG SaR; April 2021)*
- ❑ **EU Green Deal – (headline) ambitions**
 - ❑ **a jungle? worrying or integrative boxes?**
 - ❑ **NEW FRAMES!**
- ❑ Where are the **DRIVERS** for Contaminated Land Management towards 2030?

ZERO POLLUTION ACTION PLAN

CF INPUTS (1)

ROADMAP (October 2020)

- ❑ *Zero Pollution Action Plan (CF Secretariat; December 2020)*
- ❑ *new Soil Thematic Strategy (WG SaR; April 2021)*

❑ **EU Green Deal – (headline) ambitions**

- ❑ **a jungle? worrying or integrative boxes?**
- ❑ **NEW FRAMES!**

❑ Where are the **DRIVERS** for Contaminated Land

Management towards 2030?

ZERO POLLUTION ACTION PLAN

CF INPUTS (1) – ROADMAP (October 2020)

GAPS and **CLM challenges** - recognised suitably?

- Distinction between **point source inputs** and **diffuse contaminated areas is fading away** – a need for **new concepts and approaches**?
- ... **differs from prevention** but should complement, which **allow for adaptive contaminated land management and resilient actions**.
- **contaminants of emerging concern** (like PFAS) - effective means (organisational & technical) to remedy or even mitigate pollution?
- **Monitoring and reporting in relation to any pollution** - be it air, water or soil - must be targeted and in a European context **should focus on "severe" problems**.

ZERO POLLUTION ACTION PLAN

CF INPUTS (2) – PUBLIC CONSULTATION (February 2021)

- A **stronger recognition of soil**, which is compared to air and water much more a sink storing and keeping memory of contaminant inputs, would be crucial.
- Soil particles get eroded, such contributing to air and water pollution. Dust as transmitter to air gets well recognised, whereas **sediments** as transmitter to water should be addressed more explicitly.
- importance to provide for a good common understanding
- the **evidence base** we should build on needs to involve **concise quality management**, for guaranteeing **representative and comparable data**, and effective review procedures.

NEW EU SOIL STRATEGY

Public Consultation – do we want to contribute?

DISCUSSION PROCESS

- mandated to: **WG “Soil as a Resource”**
 - **clarification whether CF members feel a joint statement being feasible & meaningful**
 - ✓ discussion process understood as a “learning experience”
 - ✓ identify common denominators and new areas of dialogue in future
 - ✓ to support and team-up across administrative units & levels
 - **2 dedicated meetings**
 - **Statement delivered (positive response / “vibration”)**

NEW EU SOIL STRATEGY Public Consultation (1)

The importance of soil and land – CF:

- fully underlines the importance of soil and land as well as its services, for welfare and wellbeing of European citizens
- supports the EU initiative for a new Soil Strategy and
- considers the argumentation of its importance sufficiently founded.

... most important issues ...

NEW EU SOIL STRATEGY

Public Consultation (2)

... most important issues to consider...

- **Loss of soil functions** by
- **Land use and management** (or stewardship see e.g. www.landstewardship.org) in relation to climate change, mitigation as well as adaptation;
- **Interfaces to Circular Economy** taking account of risks and benefits in managing excavated soils and other materials (e.g. organic materials, fertilisers, soil improvers) recovered on soils
- **a dynamic strategy for all soils and land uses**: industrial, urban land, nature, forest and infrastructure as well as excavated soils.
- to consider soils and land use in a **3D perspective**.
- strategies to **address diffuse contamination by emerging contaminants and substances of very high concern**.

NEW EU SOIL STRATEGY

Public Consultation (3)

invitation: LET'S ESTABLISH A GOOD COMMON UNDERSTANDING!

➤ a preview how mainstreaming into the EU Green Deal might get established, connections to many already existing instruments could be made obvious and thereby open for an **open discourse on key questions**:

- Should instruments for healthy food production be described in the CAP or th STS?
- Should soil biodiversity be part of the Biodiversity Strategy or the Soil Strategy?
- Should the Climate Law describe soil organic carbon quantities and qualities or STS?
- Should a level playing field for carbon credits by soil carbon sequestration be part of STS or Climate policy?
- Should the management and use of excavated soils be part of the Zero Pollution Action Plan, Construction Product Regulation or Soil Strategy?

NEW EU SOIL STRATEGY

Interim information

„Soil Framework Directive“

- Not anymore in for the new STS

NICOLE statement (public consultation)

- ... would have welcomed a Directive, as feeling a need for a “level playing field”

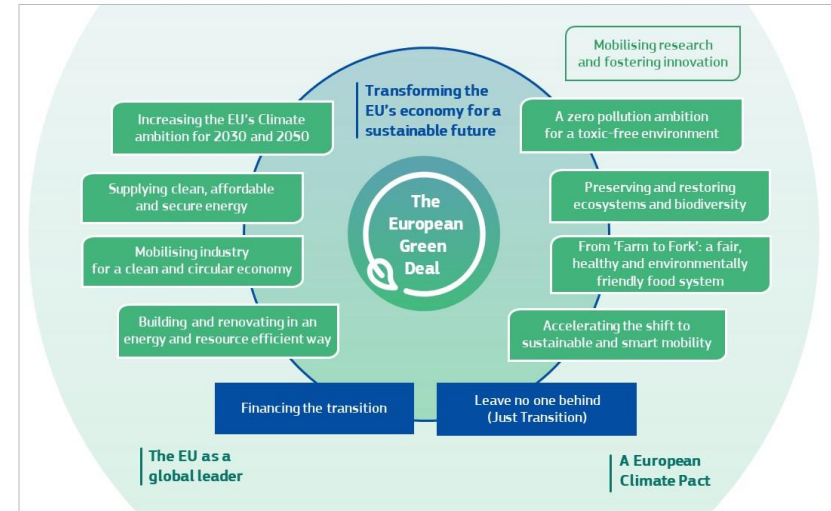
CHANGING FRAMES (2-1)

EU GREEN DEAL (2019)

A UNION THAT STRIVES FOR MORE

Agenda for Europe (2019 – 24)

- reacting on UN SDGs
- a set of deeply transformative policies
- introducing **headline ambitions**
 - *an economy that works for people*
 - *a Europe fit for the digital age*
- ***protecting; stronger in the world; new push for democracy***

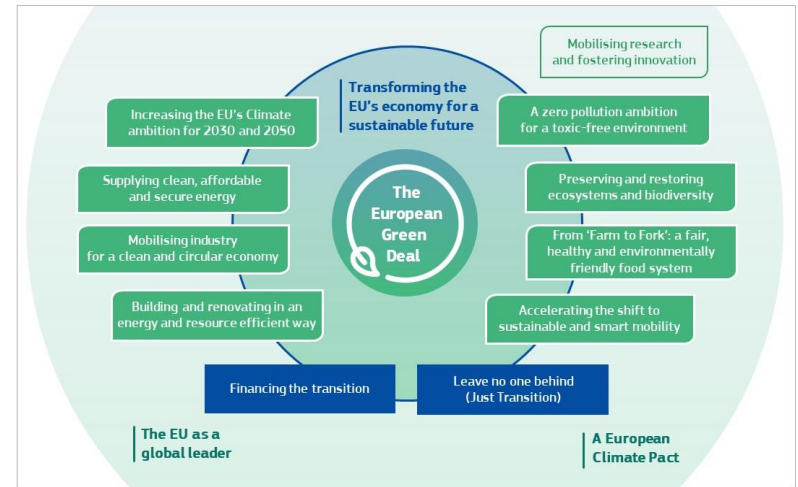


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... THE “WIDER” AMBITIONS

STRIVING FOR ...

- tackling climate and environmental-related challenges
- no net GHG emissions in 2050
- economic growth & resource use decoupled



© Source: European Commission, 2019

UNDERPINS THE NEED FOR ...

... keeping on to enhance efficiency

❖ **Greening Remediation**

- ✓ minimizing the environmental footprint
- ✓ adapting and contributing to CO₂- and energy-saving

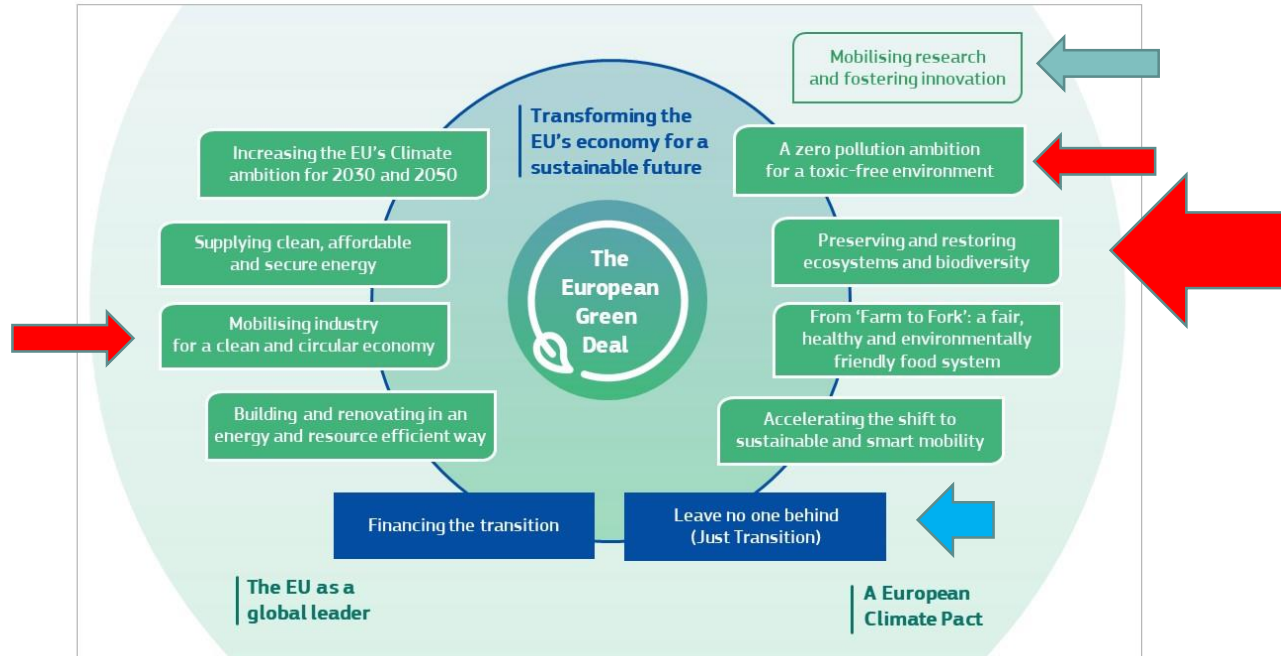
❖ **Practicing Synergies**

- ✓ risk management-recycling-renewables
- ✓ organised at regional scales
- ✓ optimizing engineered solutions & “working with nature”

❖ **Eco-efficient Technologies**

- ✓ not a single technology but a fan/variety of technologies

EU GREEN DEAL – any new content? MAINSTREAMING TO CLM



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EU Green Deal – Mobilising Research

HORIZON EUROPE: Mission Board Soil Health and Food

➤ Final report (September 2020)



European
Commission

Proposed Mission

Caring for soil is caring for life

**Ensure 75% of soils are healthy by 2030
for food, people, nature and climate**

Report of the Mission Board for Soil health and food

At a glance: The mission's support to strategic EU targets which underpin the goal of Healthy Soils for Food, Nature, People and Climate

Food: 25% of organic farms by 2030 (Farm to Fork; EU Nature Restoration); Integrated Nutrient Plans (Biodiversity; Farm to Fork); neutral or positive environmental impact of the food chain (Farm to Fork); Recycling of organic wastes into renewable fertilisers (Farm to Fork);

People: Urban Greening Plans and increased reuse of urban soils (EU Nature Restoration and new Urban Mobility Strategy); 25% of organic farms by 2030 (F2F; EU Nature Restoration);

Nature: Protection of land (Biodiversity); Increased circular use of excavated soils (Biodiversity; EU Nature Restoration; Circular Economy, updated Bioeconomy Strategy); Biodiversity friendly soil (Biodiversity); 10% high diversity Landscape features (EU Nature Restoration); Improved protection and targeting for sensitive receptors (EU Nature Restoration; Zero Pollution; Farm to Fork); Protection of soil (Soil Thematic Strategy)

Climate: Certifying carbon removals (Farm to Fork); ensuring the food chain has neutral or positive environmental impact (Farm to Fork).

HORIZON EUROPE - RECOMMENDATIONS

Mission Board Soil Health and Food

The mission: ... to put Europe on a trajectory to sustainable land and soil management ...

By 2030, at least 75 % of healthy soils in each EU MS

Objective 4: Reduce soil pollution and enhance restoration

➤ Target 4.3:

Doubling of the rate of restoration of polluted sites

HORIZON EUROPE: MAKE IT LIVING

CREATE CONTACT & EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE

“LIVING LABS”

- ❑ A new era for: Inclusiveness, Communication & Participation (!)

“LIGHTHOUSES”

- ❑ Making use of RTD-results & showcasing success (!)

HORIZON EUROPE: WORK PROGRAMME 21/22

SOIL MISSION CALL (1)

HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-01-01: Preparing the ground for healthy soils: building capacities for engagement, outreach and knowledge

Expected outcomes, like e.g.

- Increased networking and knowledge exchange between communities across Europe
- All sectors of societies are enabled for informed decisions regarding soil management
- Virtual, cross-disciplinary communities on soil stewardship

HORIZON EUROPE: WORK PROGRAMME 21/22

SOIL MISSION CALL (2)

HORIZON-MISS-2021-SOIL-01-01: Preparing the ground for healthy soils: building capacities for engagement, outreach and knowledge

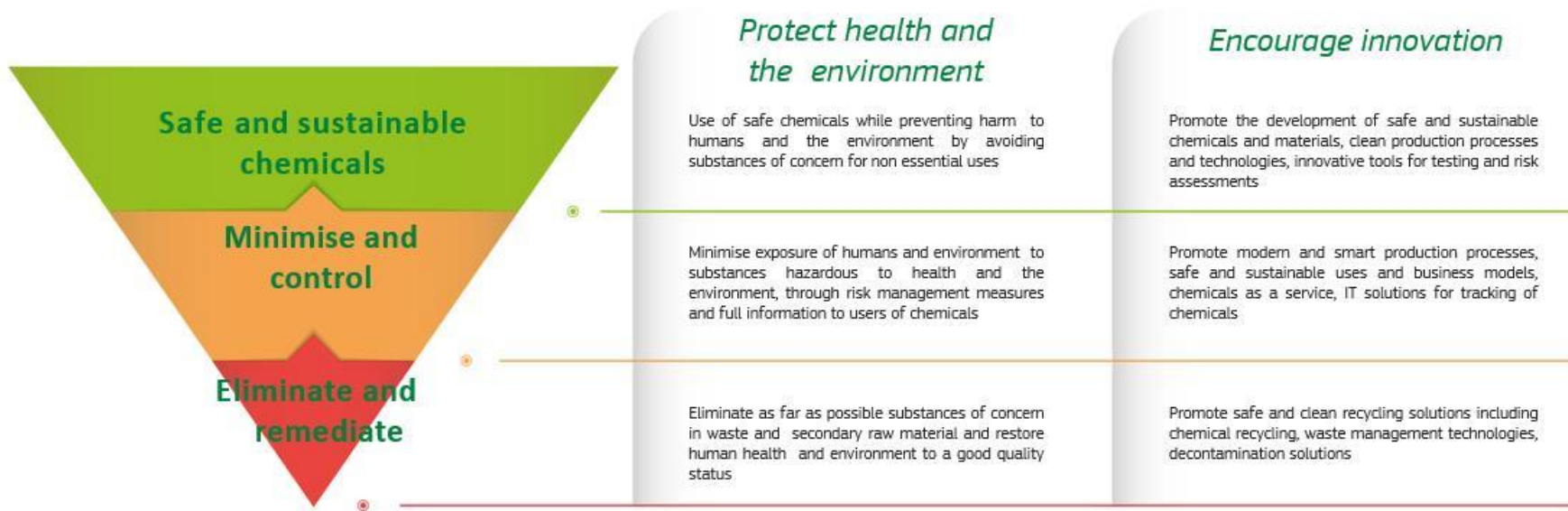
- Coordination and Support Action
- Opening: 22 June 2021, deadline: 20 October 2021
- Indicative Budget: 5.00 m€

EU GREEN DEAL INITIATIVES (1)

ZERO POLLUTION ACTION PLAN (12 May 2021)

- urgent need to bring air, water, and soil pollution down
- pollution in the EU still leads to 1 out of 8 deaths
- setting targets like e.g.
 - to reduce the health impact of air pollution by more than 55%
 - improving soil quality by reducing nutrient losses and chemical pesticides' use by 50%
- ✓ developing an indicator set for preventing and limiting pollution

ZERO POLLUTION HIERARCHY



Reversing the pyramid of action, prioritising the approaches for tackling pollution

© Source: European Commission, 2019

EU GREEN DEAL INITIATIVES (1)

ZERO POLLUTION ACTION PLAN (12 May 2021)

- ***EU Priority watch list for soil contaminants***
- Soil pollution monitoring and outlook
- Promote and facilitate depolluting soils
- Soil Pollution Hub
-

EU GREEN DEAL INITIATIVES (2-1)

EUROPEAN BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

2.2.3 Addressing land take and restoring soil ecosystems

- **new Soil Thematic Strategy (postponed to 3Q/21; no EU Directive)**

2.2.9 Reducing pollution

Biodiversity is suffering from the release of nutrients, chemical pesticides, pharmaceuticals, hazardous chemicals, urban and industrial wastewater, and other waste including litter and plastics. All these pressures must be reduced.

EU GREEN DEAL INITIATIVES (2-2)

EUROPEAN BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

EU Nature Restoration Plan(s):

- legally binding **EU targets for „nature restoration“ to be proposed in 2021**
- **14 key commitments until 2030 (set out by the Strategy already)**

EU NATURE RESTORATION PLAN (1)

Key Commitments by 2030

Legally binding EU nature restoration targets to be proposed in 2021, subject to an impact assessment.

- **By 2030, significant areas of degraded and carbon-rich ecosystems are restored; habitats and species show no deterioration in conservation trends and status; and at least 30% reach favourable conservation status or at least show a positive trend.**
- The decline in pollinators is reversed.
- The risk and use of chemical pesticides is reduced by 50% and the use of more hazardous pesticides is reduced by 50%.
- At least 10% of agricultural area is under high-diversity landscape features.
- At least 25% of agricultural land is under organic farming management, and the uptake of agro-ecological practices is significantly increased.
- Three billion new trees are planted in the EU, in full respect of ecological principles...
-

EU NATURE RESTORATION PLAN (2)

Key Commitments by 2030 (ctd)

Legally binding EU nature restoration targets to be proposed in 2021, subject to an impact assessment.

- ...
- **Significant progress has been made in the remediation of contaminated soil sites.**
 - At least 25,000 km of free-flowing rivers are restored.
 - There is a 50% reduction in the number of Red List species threatened by invasive alien species.
 - The losses of nutrients from fertilisers are reduced by 50%, resulting in the reduction of the use of fertilisers by at least 20%.
- **Cities with at least 20,000 inhabitants have an ambitious Urban Greening Plan.**
 - No chemical pesticides are used in sensitive areas such as EU urban green areas.
 - The negative impacts on sensitive species and habitats, including on the seabed through fishing and extraction activities, are substantially reduced to achieve good environmental status.
 - The by-catch of species is eliminated or reduced to a level that allows species recovery and conservation.

EU GREEN DEAL – OTHER LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS (3)

Strategy „Sustainable Built Environment“ (4Q / 2021)

among other issues addressing,

- Review and evaluation of the Urban Wastewater Directive and Sewage Sludge Directives
- **Evaluation of the Environmental Liability Directive (see „land damage“)**
- **Reviwe of the Industrial Emissions Directive**
- **Review of the waste legislation**

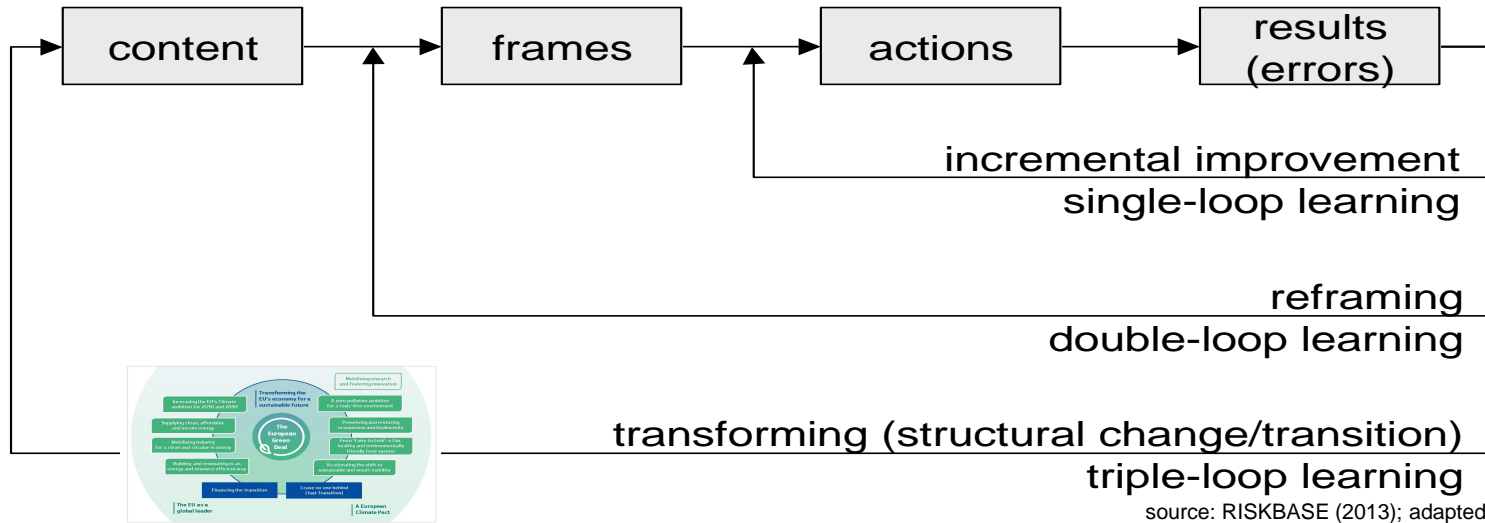
EU GREEN DEAL INITIATIVES (4)

Strategy „Sustainable Built Environment“ (4Q / 2021)

among other issues addressing,

- soil sealing
- **rehabilitation of contaminated brownfields**
- **excavated soil („Guidance for a passport for safe, sustainable and circular use“)**

"EU GREEN DEAL" - AMBITION



VISIONING: Contaminated Land Management 2030

“VITAL SITES & SOILS”: Circular reuse of land & soil is a routine in urban & spatial planning

- **Changing the image** – creating better visibility and encouragement demonstrated by projects (see *Living Labs & Lighthouses*)
- **Risks are made transparent, comprehensible & calculable** (projects are safe, ecological effective and economical viable)
 - accurate information/data*
 - intensive communication*
- **Opportunities are taken**
 - certainty of justice and planning



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***“And just as we have the power to shape culture,
we also have the power to undo the culture,
that does not serve us well.” (Janelle Monáe, 2018)***

CONTACT & INFORMATION

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COMMON FORUM on Contaminated Land in Europe

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ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AUSTRIA
www.umweltbundesamt.at

COMMON FORUM – 2nd Online Conference
● 24 June 2021