

EmConSoil network/platform

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EmConSoil
a Multi-stakeholder Network
for Emerging Soil Contaminants

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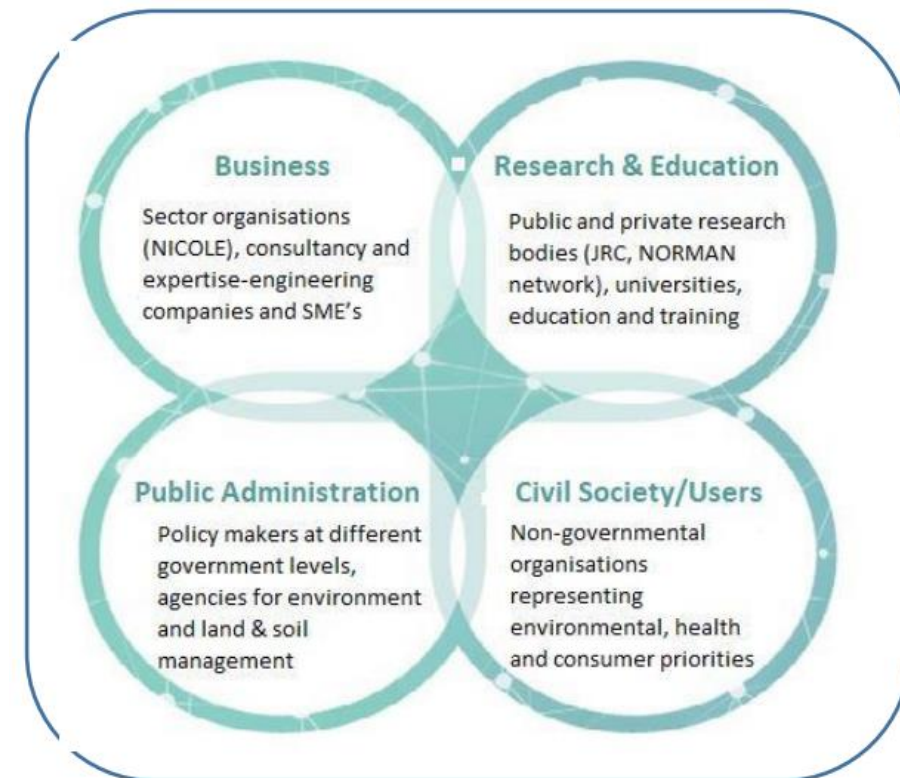
Challenges for Emerging Soil Contaminant governance & policy
Creating a multi-stakeholder network

Many harmful chemicals find their way into the environment, and end up in soils, groundwater and sediments. They are considered as contaminants of emerging concern because they are a threat to human health and ecosystems.

Dealing with the legacy of soil contamination with emerging contaminants poses major challenges for policy makers, scientists, consultancies and problem owners. Adequate governance and management strategies are needed to prevent risks and further spreading of these contaminants and to preserve healthy soils for the future.

Network introduction

- Why? Knowledge sharing and addressing challenges
- When? Established 2019
- What stakeholders does the network represent
- What does the network want to achieve?
 - ‘best practice’
 - ‘level playing field’
 - Scientific interest and improvement



Organisation

- How is the network organised
 - Partners: OVAM-VEB / members: anyone registering on website
 - Fee's: no
 - Available budget for activities: small

Goals and topics

- What are the goals

1 Knowledge generation and technological innovation

- Identifying important knowledge gaps and research questions in relation to policy making (sources, behaviour, toxicity, monitoring data, risk assessment (human health & ecotox), impact on receptors, uncertainty assessment, ...).
- Inventory and monitoring (adhering to and extending LUCAS12 and NORMAN13 aims and ambitions, in relation to (ground)water, air and biota);
- Long and short term effects on soil ecosystems (monitoring to initiate preventive actions);
- Innovative technologies for soil and groundwater remediation, for detection and monitoring, and for data processing and accessibility.

2 Policies, regulations and new governance models

- Defining background levels and threshold values (human health & ecotox based), including methods to deal with combined effects, for risk-based approaches;
- Guidelines on analyses, monitoring, risk assessment, remediation options and technologies;
- Assigning obligations and liabilities, and enforcement (with possible adjustment of existing rules);
- Management systems for excavated soils that take into account emerging contaminants;
- Instruments to finance operations (taking into account reasonableness and fairness);
- Development of novel governance approaches, strategies and policy framework, based on the precautionary principle and sustainability considerations, such as area-oriented solutions (connected with spatial planning), and other holistic solutions.

3 Awareness raising, communication, behavioural and societal changes

- Communication to citizens about risks, measures to reduce risks and prevention;
- Showing externalities and costs related to harmful effects;
- Instruments oriented at behavioural change through education, knowledge sharing and participatory decision making;
- Finding support for social mind-set change and the stewardship principle

Goals and topics

- What are the goals (long or/and short term)
 - **Which topics are on the agenda**
- 1) Promote/improve know-how about emerging substances and their remediation and policy challenges
 - 2) Gather information in a structured way (e.g. wiki-format - newsletters)
 - 3) Bring together expertise from different sectors and stakeholders: webinars - working groups
 - 4) Organise debate - taking a representative stand - weighing in on international policy
 - 5) Academy - international steering groups for studies

Activities

- Which activities developed:



- What is the network proud of: 4 international conferences, web platform and bimonthly newsletter
- What is further needed: outreach, international scaling

Opportunities and gains

- What are the opportunities for collaboration:
 - Making the zero pollution stakeholder platform for soil
 - Expertise sharing with sector (Nicole a.o.), identifying and delineating policy challenges, engaging with problem owners and society
- How to strengthen each other:
 - Offering platform for communication and exchange, through website, workshops, meetings, newsletter
 - Reflecting on policy proposals, perhaps discussing position papers
 - Lighthouses under Soil Mission?