

Overview

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Dear colleagues,

What to expect in 2021?

In the light of the EU Green Deal initiatives, the European Commission is in the preparation phase for the new EU Soil Strategy, the Action Plan Towards Zero Pollution in air, water and soil and the Sustainable Built Environment Strategy with possible inputs from the public and experts and followed by COMMON FORUM.

UNEP is in the process of preparing a guidance on POP contaminated sites under the Stockholm Convention for submission to COP-10.

Eurosoil 2021 Geneva has decided to transform the physical into an online congress from 23-27 August 2021.

Let's see what else 2021 will bring! Hoping for back-to-back meetings soon

Martha and Dietmar

NEXT CF MEETING IN SWITZERLAND

**COMMON FORUM Springtime meeting
23 - 25 June 2021
Neuchâtel (Switzerland)**



Since the meeting is planned as a hybrid meeting - online participation will be possible as well.

A ReLASC-CF Minamata back-to-back Workshop will be tentatively held on 22 June 2021.

Any further developments around the pandemic in Europe will be closely followed involving a change to a complete online-meeting if necessary. Accordingly please block the announced dates anyway!

The final decision whether a physical meeting is feasible and appropriate will be taken and communicated latest by 15 April 2021.

NEWS FROM EUROPEAN COMMISSION – EEA – JRC

Commission consultation on new EU Soil Strategy

The European Commission has launched an [online public consultation](#) on the development of the new EU Soil Strategy. This is the last of a set of public consultations on different ecosystems delivering on the specific commitments in the [EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030](#).

The aim of the new EU Soil Strategy will be to address soil- and land-related issues in a comprehensive way and to help achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030, one of the key targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It will look into how to protect soil fertility, reduce erosion and increase soil organic matter. The strategy will consider challenges such as identifying contaminated sites, restoring degraded soils, defining the conditions for their good ecological status and improving the monitoring of soil quality.

Based on [the Roadmap on a new Soil Strategy](#), the consultation seeks stakeholders' input on challenges and opportunities regarding our land and soils ecosystems which deliver valuable services such as the provision of food, energy and raw materials, carbon sequestration, water purification and infiltration, nutrient regulation, pest control and recreation.

Deadline for the public consultation is 27 April 2021. The New Soil Strategy is foreseen for the second quarter 2021, aiming at July 2021 for adoption.

[Link](#)

EU Action Plan Towards Zero Pollution Ambition for air, water and soil

Already by October 2020 the consultation on the specific roadmap terminated. Inputs in the role as General Secretary of COMMON FORUM were provided.

Until 10 February 2021 the public consultation phase was open – all citizens and the wider community of stakeholders were welcome to express their views, more specifically those affected by pollution and by the rules that aim to limit it. The consultation follows a series of questions divided to 3 parts, the 2nd invites all citizens for their views, the 3rd is the experts section.

To access more information please click [HERE](#).

Soil Mission: Consultation on management practices which can deliver significant improvements to soil health

The EU Mission Board for Soil Health and Food is seeking examples of evidence of management practices which can deliver significant improvements to soil health over the short, medium and long term.

The information submitted will be used to test how far the proposed objectives of the Soil Health and Food Mission can be achieved through the expansion of already tested management practices and where there remains an innovation gap. These need to be specifically focussed on observed change in the 8 soil health indicators identified by the mission.

For further information on the mission and the 8 soil indicators please see the mission proposal [here](#).

The Mission Board is looking for information specifically through 4 topics:

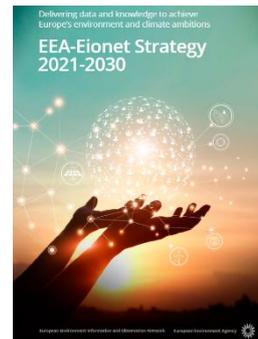
- [Farmland](#)

- [Forestry](#)
- [Peatland](#)
- [Nature Land](#)

In each of the documents above, there is a table to complete with any evidence available. Contributions can be sent to the Mission Secretariat: AGRI-SOIL-MISSION-BOARD@ec.europa.eu before/by Friday 5th March.

EEA-Eionet Strategy 2021-2030: delivering data and knowledge to achieve Europe's environment and climate ambitions

Over the coming decade, the environmental and climate challenges Europe will be facing call for systemic responses as well a full implementation of policies and a full integration of sustainability objectives into socio-economic policies. Public awareness leading to more sustainable choices and global coordination will also be essential. The EEA-Eionet Strategy aims to provide the data and the knowledge needed to tackle these challenges.



[Link](#)

European Soil Data Centre (ESDAC) - Newsletter

ESDAC Newsletter No.127 (January-February 2021) - https://esdac.jrc.ec.europa.eu/public_path/newsletter/202101.pdf

NEWS FROM COUNTRIES / INITIATIVES

Bioavailability of Contaminants in Soil: Considerations for Human Health Risk Assessment

Risk-based cleanup goals are often calculated assuming that chemicals present in soil are absorbed by humans as efficiently as the chemicals dosed during the toxicity tests used to determine regulatory toxicity values (such as the Reference Dose or Cancer Slope Factor). This assumption can result in inaccurate exposure estimates and associated risks for some contaminated sites because the amount of a chemical absorbed (the chemical's bioavailability) from contaminated soil can be a fraction of the total amount present. Properly accounting for soil-chemical interactions on the bioavailability of chemicals from soil can lead to more accurate estimates of exposures to soil contaminants and improve risk assessments by decreasing uncertainty.

The basis for this training course is the ITRC guidance: Bioavailability of Contaminants in Soil: Considerations for Human Health Risk Assessment (BCS-1). This guidance describes the general concepts of the bioavailability of contaminants in soil, reviews the state of the science, and discusses how to incorporate bioavailability into the human health risk assessment process. This guidance addresses lead, arsenic, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) because evaluating bioavailability is better understood for these chemicals than for others, particularly for the incidental ingestion of soil.

The seminar is available for download including the instructors' notes.

[Link](#)

A GIS-based automated procedure to assess disused areas - Identification methods and regeneration opportunities

Francini, M., Margiotta, N., Palermo, A., & Viapiana, M. F. (2020). *TeMA - Journal of Land Use, Mobility and Environment*, 13(3), 309-328. <https://doi.org/10.6092/1970-9870/7039>

Regeneration of disused sites represents a significant opportunity. The scientific interest in their redevelopment possibilities has grown considerably in recent years. Despite this, a shared definition of disused sites which goes beyond that of brownfields and allows recognition the size of the problem on a transnational scale is still lacking. This study provides an overview of the main definitions provided by scientific literature and on this basis, it proposes a parametric definition of functionally disused areas.

Subsequently, a GIS-based operational tool able to map functionally disused areas through a progressive screening of the local territory is introduced. The proposed methodology is tested on two Italian municipalities. It is the first step of a research aimed at defining a wider process able to assess the possibility of converting disused areas into multifunctional or monofunctional “smart” districts. They could be, indeed, characterized by a mixed use – contributing to soil consumption reduction – or by a single use – “social infrastructures” – linked to the needs that emerged as result of Covid 19 pandemic. This assessment process, hence, could support urban planning both at ordinary and emergency phase, allowing to identify in very short time areas where temporary facilities could be installed.

[Link](#)

Cleaning of oil-polluted bottom sediments of the boreal lake, Samotlor oil field, North-Russia: case report

Frank, Y.A., D.S. Vorobiev, O.E. Merzlyakov, F.R. Sataev, A.A. Trifonov, E.O. Kopylov, K.V. Stryuk, E.A. Kalinovskaya S.V. Gronskiy, O.V. Chibrikov, V.V. Perminova, Y.V. Branevskiy, S.P. Kulizhskiy, and T.S. Hunter | *Water Science & Technology* 82(12): 3062-3073(2020)

Small lakes in areas of intensive crude oil production may be susceptible to oil pollution arising from accidental spills and leaks, eventually leading to the pollution of bottom sediments. Effective cleaning of aquatic bottom sediments remains a challenge. Flotation is a potentially simple and reliable approach for the cleanup of bottom sediments without their excavation from the water body. A flotation-based technology using specially designed airlift plants was tested to remove crude oil from the bottom sediments of a boreal lake. The sediments are dominated by peat and are unevenly polluted. The average total oil concentration was reduced from 111 g/kg to 1.99 g/kg during the 1.5-month field test. Secondary water contamination was minimal; the content of oil hydrocarbons in the water after the project was completed did not exceed 0.09 ± 0.04 mg/l.

[Link](#)

CRC CARE newsletter – subscription

The Australian Cooperative Research Centre for Contamination Assessment and Remediation of the Environment (CRC CARE) is an independent organisation that performs research, develops technologies and provides policy guidance for assessing, cleaning up and preventing contamination of soil, water and air.

Subscribing to the occasional CRC CARE newsletter is possible through:
<https://www.crccare.com/subscribe-to-crc-care1>.

Brownfields and Land Revitalization Program Impacts

Office of Land and Emergency Management, EPA-560-F-20-187, December 2020

A four-page fact sheet describes the impacts of EPA's Brownfields and Land Revitalization Program, which invests in communities across the nation, often providing the initial seed money that encourages brownfields reuse and attracts leveraging. The fact sheet summarizes how the program can assist communities and provides data that document program accomplishments.

[Link](#)

EUGRIS CORNER

New documents on EUGRIS, the platform for European contaminated soil and water information. Resources, events projects and news items added on EUGRIS can be viewed at: www.eugris.info/whatsnew.asp. Then select the appropriate month and year for the updates in which you are interested. However, here is a selection of new additions to EUGRIS in 2020 prepared by Paul Bardos (**r3 Environmental Technology Ltd**) for COMMON FORUM members.

- [Eugris news February, 2021](#)
- [Eugris news January, 2021](#)

NEWS FROM UN

Stockholm Convention - Guidance on the management of contaminated sites

Like within the Minamata Convention, there is a process ongoing for developing/updating a guidance on contaminated sites under the Stockholm Convention. The first enhanced draft documents were made available by the end of 2020 "Draft guidance on BAT and BEP for the identification, management, and remediation of POP contaminated sites".

The drafts is structured into nine thematic modules and was established by voluntary contributions and work in cooperation of two contaminated land management experts, stemming from Europe (The Netherlands and Australia). The Experts involved to the respective working group on BAT and BEP, work under the Stockholm Convention and provide for a strong background in chemical policy and pollution prevention, were invited to comment.

The COMMON FORUM Secretariat commented on selected modules, e.g. in particular on policy, legislation, inventory development and financing remediation. In particular until end of January 2021. During the upcoming weeks the initial draft guidance will be finalized for submission to COP-10 (by mid-March 2021); at COP-10 (scheduled for July 2021), where involved parties will be invited to review, provide comments and feedback on the initial draft guidance. Later on a public commenting period to be organized post COP-10 shall take place.

NEWS FROM FAO – GSP

SoiLEX - Soil related legal instruments and soil governance

[SoiLEX](#) is a global database that aims to facilitate access to information on existing legal instruments on soil protection and prevention of soil degradation. The legal and policy instruments can be searched by country profiles or by soil-related keywords.



The information provided by the database allows users to have the complete document as well as a detailed summary of its content, focusing mainly on the purpose and specific objectives of the instrument. [Link](#)

The platform is managed by the Global Soil Partnership within the FAO Land and Water Division. The website features 14 keywords related to soil protection (conservation, restoration, quality, monitoring and 10 soil threats) and contains more than 1.700 documents from 175 countries. The platform received the information contained in FAOLEX and the EU Soil Wiki which has been validated by the GSP focal points through a questionnaire with 82 responses. A constant update of the SoiLEX database on the basis of national responses is possible [here](#).

A webinar on Soil governance took place on 13 January 2021. The recording of the webinar can be found [here](#).

ISO INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR STANDARDISAZION

Proposal 2 New ISO-TC 190: "Impact assessment" and "Sampling" under voting (until February 16, 2021)

ISO TC 190 launched new projects for developing 2 new topics as ISO standards, which are currently at the CD-stage (Committee draft):

- ISO/CD 24212 "Remediation techniques applied at contaminated sites"
 - (elaborated by ISO/TC 190/SC 7/WG 10 "impact assessment")
- ISO/CD 18400-301 "Soil quality — Sampling — Part 301: Sampling and measuring of volatiles in soil quality field investigations"
 - (elaborated by ISO/TC 190/SC 7/WG 13 "sampling")

At the time being both standards are under consultation for getting approved to be circulated as draft standards (ISO/DIS). At ISO-level voting started on 22 December 2020 and will terminate by 16 March 2021.

At the long run and at the final stage of voting both standards are foreseen to undergo the parallel voting procedure to check and clarify acceptance as European standards.

PFAS CORNER

Interim Guidance on Destroying and Disposing of Certain PFAS and PFAS-Containing Materials That Are Not Consumer Products

On December 18, 2020, EPA released for public comment new interim guidance that will help protect the public from exposure to these emerging chemicals of concern. Specifically, the new interim guidance outlines the current state of the science on techniques and treatments that may be used to destroy or dispose of PFAS and PFAS-containing materials from non-consumer products, including aqueous film-forming foam (for firefighting).

This interim guidance will be available for public comment until February 22, 2021.

[Link](#)

Identifying and Managing Aqueous Film Forming Foam-Derived Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances in the Environment

Leeson, A., T. Thompson, H.F. Stroo, R.H. Anderson, J. Speicher, M.A. Mills, J. Willey, C. Coyle, R. Ghosh, C. Lebron, and C. Pattonk.

Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry 40(1):24-36(2021)

This paper provides an overview of research and development efforts to date by SERDP and ESTCP related to analytical advancements, fate and transport, ecological risks, and remedial strategies to assist in managing aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF)-impacted sites. The projects aim to measure PFAS in the environment, characterize AFFF-associated sources of PFAS, understand PFAS fate and behaviour in the environment, assess the risk to ecological receptors, develop in situ and ex situ treatment technologies for groundwater, treat soils and investigation-derived wastes, and examine the ecotoxicity of PFAS-free fire suppression formulations.

[Link](#)

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances in the Air Particles of Asia: Levels, Seasonality, and Size-Dependent Distribution

Lin, H., S. Taniyasu, E. Yamazaki, S. Wei, X. Wang, N. Gai, J.H. Kim, H. Eun, P.K.S. Lam, N. Yamashita | Environmental Science & Technology 54(22):14182-14191(2020)

Information regarding the size-dependent distribution of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in atmospheric particulate matter (PM) is very limited. In this study, 248 size-specific particulate matter (PM) samples collected from nine Asian cities were analyzed for 34 PFAS. Of the 34 investigated PFAS, PFOA and PFOS were the major compounds. Hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid, an emerging PFAS, was quantified in PM for the first time, with concentrations ranging from less than 0.086 to 21.5 pg/m³. Spatially PFOA and PFOS were the predominant compounds in China, while precursors, emerging PFAS, and short-chain PFAS dominated in India, Japan, and South Korea, respectively. A size-dependent distribution investigation showed that most PFAS were predominantly affiliated in fine particles, while PFOS and its alternatives tended to attach on coarser particles. PFOS distributed on specific sizes exhibited seasonal and regional dependency, while no such patterns were observed for PFOA.

[Link](#)

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances in Dust Collected from Residential Homes and Fire Stations in North America

Hall, S.M., S. Patton, M. Petreas, S. Zhang, A.L. Phillips, K. Hoffman, and H.M. Stapleton. Environmental Science & Technology 54(22):14558-14567(2020)

Research has focused on PFAS exposure via drinking water and diet, and fewer studies have focused on exposure in the indoor environment. Researchers collected dust samples from 184 homes in North Carolina and 49 fire stations across the U.S. and Canada to analyze for PFAS. FTOHs and diPAPs were the most prevalent PFAS in both fire station and house dust samples, with medians of ~100 ng/g dust or greater. PFOS, PFOA, PFHxS, PFNA, and 6:2 diPAP were significantly higher in dust from fire stations, and 8:2 FTOH was significantly higher in homes. When comparing results to earlier published values, PFAA levels in residential dust appeared to decrease over time, particularly PFOA and PFOS. Results highlight a need to better understand what factors contribute to PFAS levels in dust and how much dust contributes to overall human PFAS exposure.

[Link](#)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Eurosoil 2021 Geneva is going virtual

The Eurosoil 2021 Organising Committee has decided to transform the physical 2021 congress into an online congress from 23-27 August 2021.

[Link](#)

AquaConSoil in 2021 – Webinar series

AquaConSoil offers a series of webinars and other digital activities, starting on January 19, 2021 with interesting keynote speakers and interactive sessions throughout the year leading up to the digital focus week between June 14 -18, 2021. Sessions will last for 60 minutes and are scheduled during lunch breaks and/or at the end of the day.

The next keynote is scheduled for 16 March, 2021: “Sustainable remediation technologies in the context of societal challenges” - Carlos Pachon (US EPA)

Sign up via this [link](#)

[See all announcements on COMMON FORUM website](#)