



**BENAKI
PHYTOPATHOLOGICAL
INSTITUTE**



SOIL PLATFORM MEETING

BPI, 24 September 2013

Minutes of the working group session

Working Group 1 : "Threats, gaps & technical assessment"

No	PARTICIPANT'S NAME	PROJECT OR BENEFICIARY
1	Maria Doula (coord.)	LIFE11 ENV/GR/000951 -- AgroStrat
2	Thomas Strassburger	DG ENV
3	Gabriella Camarsa	AEIDL
4	Stanislaw Kaniszewski	LIFE10 ENV/PL/000661 --BIOREWIT
5	Jozef Babik	LIFE10 ENV/PL/000661 --BIOREWIT
6	Greet Verlinden	LIFE10 ENV/BE/000699 -- DEMETER
7	Manuel Rodriguez Rastrero	LIFE11 ENV/ES/000505 --BIOXISOIL
8	Jorge Blanco Ballon	DG AGRI
9	Constantinos Kosmas	Agricultural University of Athens (AUA)
10	Mina Karamesouti	Agricultural University of Athens (AUA)
11	Panagiota Vasileiou	Agricultural University of Athens (AUA)
12	Achilleas Theoharis	Hellenic Ministry of Rural Development & Food
13	George Michalopoulos	LIFE09 ENV GR 000302 -- SAGE10
14	Antonis Papadopoulos	Benaki Phytopathological Institute
15	Angelos Tsakirakis	LIFE09 ENV GR 000302 -- SAGE10

Introduction

The workshop was held at Benaki Phytopathological Institute following the introductory presentations of the invited speakers as well as the short presentations of the LIFE projects as scheduled in the soil meeting programme. In the workgroup 1 15 scientists participated as shown in the respective participants list above. The discussion was led by Dr M. Doula being co-chaired in the panel by Dr. A. Papadopoulos and A. Tsakirakis for contribution to the minutes recording process. The discussion which lasted about one (1) hour was concurrently audio-recorded for the purpose of file keeping with the oral consent of all workgroup participants.

Procedure followed

After a short introduction overview by Dr M. Doula highlighting the need for identification and investigation on the threats and gaps associated with the soil issues in general - giving also some examples such as the cases of soil pollution due to agricultural activities and/or derived waste that are not considered to be a threat as should (case of olive mills waste mentioned)- the participants were given some time and asked to write down individually in bullet points format their personal views and opinions on the issue under discussion. A brainstorming process followed during which every participant in turn expressed and explained his/her view. The statements of all participants were directly electronically typed in a table format which was screen projected to the workgroup members so as to be able to confirm the notes and verify the text content of the minutes drafted or comment accordingly. Also during this part the participants had the opportunity to address questions to each other, to comment and discuss the expressed opinions and thus conclude to the final points that were included in the minutes.

Copies of the compiled draft table summarizing the points addressed during the discussion were distributed to all workgroup participants who were asked to refine and thus finalize the conclusions by:

- a) Listing the collected information under categories addressing the main point, the supporting (sub-)keypoints or case examples, remarks etc as well as technical assessment where available and
- b) Excluding or merging related opinions expressed synonymously. It is noted however that scientific technical assessment was not possible to be made at that stage and the participants agreed to provide their input on this after the circulation of the first draft of the minutes (table) to all. The common basis however was accepted to be that the technical assessment itself lies in the provision of answers, solutions or interest for investigation to the questions raised and identified from the participants regarding the threats and gaps and whereas in some cases the supporting key points indicated the assessment approach (see Table below).

Results & Conclusions

no	Proposed threat/gap for soil	Supporting keypoints	Remarks and comments	Technical assessment
1	Political ignorance to the need of protecting resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of policy incentives on environmental protection • Lack of priorities targeting the sustainability of the area 		
2	Gap between research outcomes and agricultural management practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low turnout of projects • Monitoring the implementation of the results is needed • Is political CAP promoting best management for soil (?) 	Will there be enough acceptances of projects?	The respective questions/issues need to be addressed, see also below (technical assessment point no 4)
3	Degradation of the soils			
4	Lack of Good Agricultural Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention capacity of soil for water • Whether the organic matter is positively affecting farming • Whether Organic farming is good for soil management • The nitrogen contamination 	The soil has to be covered all the time	Although practices/technologies have been developed, these have not reached the end users. This could be achieved mainly by the services being activated in-between EU and the end users, meaning governmental and regional authorities. A tool/mechanism should be put in

no	Proposed threat/gap for soil	Supporting keypoints	Remarks and comments	Technical assessment
		related to glasshouse production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nitrogen excess • Cultivation without crop rotation 		force to monitor the extent of adoption by the Member States
5	Lack of data availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers do not always ask for advice on fertilization as should • More soil sampling needed 		Supporting key points also indicate assessment approach
6	Lack of knowledge transfer			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientists and stakeholders should enhance efforts to this direction • A simple and user friendly data base should be developed for governmental/regional/local authorities as well as for farmers/citizens associations