

History and future plans of **COMMON FORUM**

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COMMON FORUM NETWORK

The ad Hoc start Vienna 1993



The CARACAS concerted action

**Risk Assessment
for
Contaminated Sites
in
Europe**



**Volume 1
Scientific Basis**

Risk Assessment
for
Contaminated Sites
in
Europe



Volume 2
Policy Frameworks



CLARINET

Concerted Action within the Environment & Climate Programme
of the European Commission DG Research,
co-ordinated by the Austrian Federal Environment Agency

“COMMON FORUM”

- **Network of contaminated land policy experts and advisors (since 1994)**
- **Mission:**
 - Being a platform for exchange of knowledge and experiences,
 - Establishing a discussion platform on policy, research, technical and managerial concepts of contaminated land,
 - Being a platform for initiating and following-up of international projects among members,
 - Offering an exchange of expertise to the European Commission and to European networks.

The continuing contaminated land story

- **25 years of contaminated site remediation policy and practice**
 - National contaminated land policies
 - International networks debates
 - » Environment versus spatial planning
 - » Polluters pay or public funds
 - » Soil numbers versus site specific risk assessment
 - » Risk control versus risk management
- **Risk Based Land Management**
- **Contaminated land in the EU soil strategy**
- **The future: system oriented resource management**

Environmental policy

- **Classical**
 - Science-> numerical standards->monitoring-> law -> policy (implementation and enforcement)
 - “End of pipe solutions”, always additional costs
- **Sustainable resource management**
 - Science-> strategic policy-> local management-> management supporting standards en “decision support” systems-> performance monitoring
 - “Eco-efficient approaches” may actually save money

EC communication

“Towards a thematic strategy for soil protection”

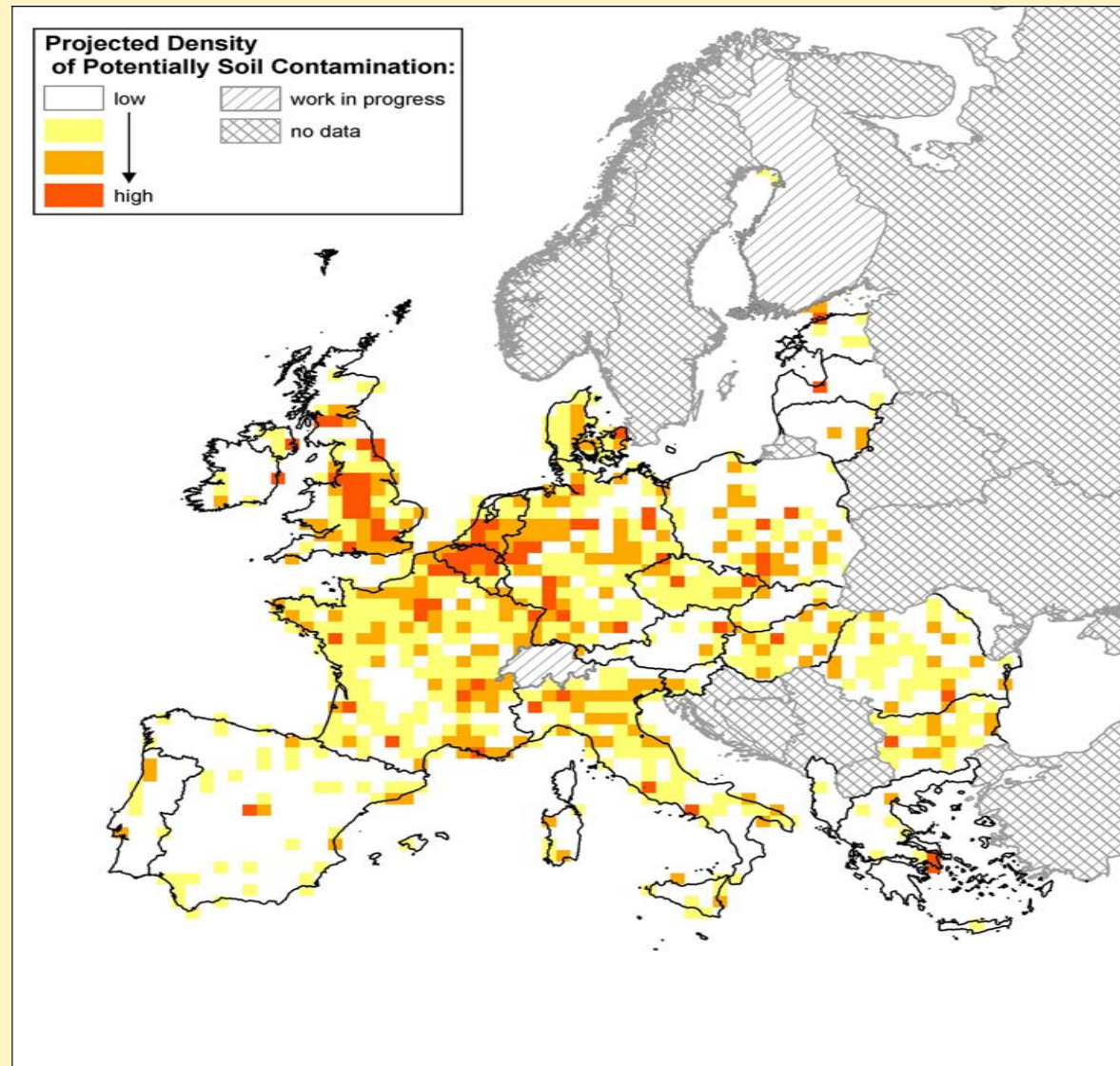
8 Threats

- **Soil Sealing**
- **Contamination**
- **Erosion**
- **Decline in organic matter**
- **Decline in biodiversity**
- **Soil compaction**
- **Salinisation**
- **Floods and landslides**

EUROPE NIGHTTIME LIGHTS



Status of soil contamination



EU Soil policy ?

- **EU Soil policy package planned for december 2005**
 - Soil framework directive
 - Communication about the strategy
 - Extended impact assessment
- **Objectives**
 - Establish COMMON PRINCIPLES,
 - Prevent the THREATS,
 - Preserve SOIL FUNCTIONS,
 - Ensure SUSTAINABLE USE
- **Private ownership - duty of care**
- **Integration of soil aspects in sectoral policies**
- **Working units**
 - RISK AREA for threats like erosion, decline of organic matter, salinisation, compaction, floods and landslide.
 - NATIONAL /REGIONAL approach for other threats like contamination en “sealing”
- **Internet consultation till 26 september**
 - <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/soil/index.htm>

Contamination 1

- **Definition**
 - contamination posing a risk to human health and environment, taking into account current and intended use.
- **List of potential polluting activities**
 - to be established on Community level (Annex to the Directive).
- **Inventory of contaminated sites**
 - to list all contaminated sites by MS, to be regularly updated.
- **National remediation plans**
 - to be established by MS, containing targets, means, and prioritization, to be regularly revised
- **Land status report**
 - will be necessary for land where a potentially soil contaminating activity takes place or has taken place.

Contamination 2

- **Mechanisms to fund remediation of orphan sites**
 - to be established by MS, such as funds or taxes for specific sectors and activities.
- **Harmonization of risk assessment methodologies**
 - to be facilitated by the Commission and to be established if necessary under comitology.
- **Reporting**
 - on inventory of contaminated sites and remediation plans.
- **Modification of IPPC Directive (not now, but at next revision)**
 - Harmonization of “cessation of activities and return to a satisfactory state”
 - Establishment of soil monitoring during activity of IPPC installations

Common
DEFINITION

Common **LIST OF
POTENTIALLY
POLLUTING
ACTIVITIES**

Establish an **INVENTORY** of contaminated sites

Land Status Report

MECHANISM FOR
« ORPHAN SITES »


Establish a **NATIONAL PLAN FOR REMEDIATION**

REPORT

COMMON FORUM issues






- **Common definitions**
 - “contaminated site”
 - “remediation plan”
 - “land status report”
- **Contaminated land inventories**
- **Funding mechanisms for orphan sites.**
- **The relation with prevention of local contamination**
 - IPPC and national approaches.
- **Groundwater directive**
 - an incentive to remediate contaminated land and groundwater without being restricted in the choice of environmentally friendly solutions like monitored natural attenuation.
- **The liability directive**
 - an incentive to promote remediation without getting entangled in complicated legal debates that freeze any progress in this area.
- **The waste directive**
 - relation between excavated soils that can be reused elsewhere.

Many research needs



**Scientific Basis for the
Management of European Soil
Resources**

Research Agenda



**Risk based management
of contamination and
protection of the soil system
in urban environments**

**JOINT Research Agenda
2005**



Concluding remark:

Do not harmonize too much

- **Contaminated land management differs from environmental “anti pollution” policies**
 - Legacies from the past
 - Finite clean up programs versus permanent care in other environmental policies
- **Various stages of completion in EU-MS**
 - Decision making criteria may vary accordingly
- **A complete inventory is not feasible in a reasonable number of years, action cannot wait for inventory based priority setting**
 - Spatial planning becomes the driving force in most clean ups