

Strategy for the protection and sustainable use of soil

Last updated in April 2012

Latest Developments

Overall assessment of soil developments and impact on golf in Q1 2012:

In Q1 discussions began on re-launching the draft Directive on Soil. Recently there have been reports and studies funded by the European Commission analyzing the importance of preserving EU soil and the Commission has been calling for better data collection. The Commission believes that soil would be better monitored and data would be more effectively collected if there was an EU piece of legislation for all Member States to comply with. The discussions are still at an early stage; however we will monitor the developments on this issue in the coming months.

On 12 February, the European Commission released a Communication to urge Member States to find a compromise on a draft Directive on Soil. The proposal was stopped for many years in the Council due to opposition of several major Member States – Germany, France, UK, Netherlands and Austria. The Commission announced that it will include provisions on soil in the upcoming review of the environmental impact directive.

Link:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/128&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

In February, the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission has issued a report in which it examines the process of deterioration of EU soils. The report highlights the importance of preserving the EU soil and calls for better data collection and further research into the economic and environmental benefits of soil function.

Link: http://eusoiils.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ESDB_Archive/eusoiils_docs/other/EUR25186.pdf

Impact for golf management

- Course management
- Prevent soil degradation

Background

Last updated in January 2012:

Overall assessment of soil developments and impact on golf in Q4 2011:

Even though soil continues to be in grid lock at EU level, as Member States do not want to give up their competence, a report published at the end of 2011 calls for the need of a common soil policy to encourage soil conservation. In addition, DG Environment published a report on the need for better soil management across the EU.

On 11 November, DG Environment published the report 'Soil organic matter management across the EU – best practices, constraints and trade-off'. The report intends to examine the relative contributions of the inputs and outputs of organic carbon and organic matter to and from the soil. By measuring the effect on soil organic matter or on the precursor to soil organic matter, the report also outlines seven selected theoretical scenarios that may occur by 2030. These scenarios are the maintenance of grassland, the use of set-aside, the change from utilized agricultural area to forests, the use of crop residues and straw, the use of manure and compost, the use of forestry residues and the conservation of peatlands. We will monitor the Commission's next steps regarding this report.

Link: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/soil/som_en.htm

On 20 October, the EEB and the German League for Nature and the Environment (DNR) published a report arguing that the advantages of the EU soil legislation compensate the costs. According to the report, the EU soil legislation is fundamental to avoid flood risks and water pollution in neighboring countries. Also, a soil law at EU level is needed as most of the member states do not have a regulation for soil conservation. However, France, Austria, UK and the Netherlands rejected the Directive while Germany is revising its initial opposing position.

Link: <http://www.endseurope.com/27385/green-groups-renew-calls-for-soil-directive>

On 1 June, the Environment Commissioner, Janez Potočnik announced that there will be a conference held on 23-24 September on '*Soil, climate change and biodiversity: where do we stand?*' hosted by the European Commission. The conference will see the participation of scientists and researchers who will report on the latest scientific findings concerning issues such as the amount of carbon stored in European soils, the role agricultural and forestry practices can play in climate change mitigation and biodiversity protection, and the important function that soil biodiversity plays in the ecosystem. Under the title "Soil, climate and biodiversity: synergies and opportunities" a roundtable discussion will gather key policy players from international and European institutions.

The conference will be the occasion to present the study "Soil biodiversity: functions, threats and tools for policy makers" carried out on behalf of the Environment Directorate-General and will launch the European Atlas of Soil Biodiversity being prepared by the Joint Research Centre.



Burson•Marsteller

The conference will inform the debate at European level on the best course of action for supporting the Soil Thematic Strategy and its accompanying legislative proposal adopted by the European Commission in September 2006.

[Soil, climate change and biodiversity: where do we stand?](#)

[Study on "Soil biodiversity: functions, threats and tools for policy makers"](#)

[European Atlas of Soil Biodiversity](#)

[Soil Thematic Strategy](#)

Links

Link to DEFRA website and "Save our Soils" Press Release:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/news/2009/090924b.htm>

[Link to the "Green Week" homepage.](#)

Link to EC Press Release: "Climate change: Commission dishes the dirt on the importance of soil"

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/353&type=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the protection of soil and amending directive 2004/35/ec

Environment: strategy for the protection and sustainable use of soil (amend. direct. 2004/35/EC)

Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection