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[Press release](#) | 17.11.2021

Groundbreaking strategy chance to achieve healthy soils

Soil

Today, the European Commission announced a first of its kind strategy for the protection of European soils. The degradation of topsoils poses enormous threats to biodiversity, agriculture, human health and the climate. The European Commission has announced it will propose a Soil Health Law in 2023 to significantly improve the state of soils by 2050 and to protect soils on the same legal basis as air and water.

Bas Eickhout MEP, Greens/EFA Group Vice Chair of the Environment Committee in the European Parliament, comments:

“It’s very welcome that the Commission has come out with this important strategy on soil protection, following calls from the Parliament. Soil protection must no longer be left to the EU Member States alone, which is why it’s welcome that the Commission will come out with a European Soil Health Law. Soils need to be thought of in the same way we approach clean air or safe drinking water. Healthy soils are the basis for life, and their full and legal protection is desperately needed to achieve the EU’s goals on climate change, biodiversity, food security and water protection.

“However, the upcoming CAP will continue to encourage agricultural practices that damage soils. Healthy soils are essential to agriculture and the EU should not muddy the waters between its policies on soil protection and farming. MEPs should vote this CAP down if they are serious about protecting soil, biodiversity, the climate and our health.”

More:

The Soil Strategy announces measures for sustainable soil use, the avoidance of land sealing, a halt to the drainage of peatlands, restoration of contaminated sites and tighter monitoring and reporting obligations for EU countries.

The Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament have long called for legislation to better protect soils in the EU. In [April](#) this year a large majority of MEPs endorsed calls for soil protection.

The final plenary vote on the Common Agricultural Policy is expected to take place on Tuesday 23 November.

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