



Living labs in the EU Mission "A Soil Deal for Europe"

Dr. Matthias Leonhard Maier

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DG Agriculture and Rural Development

Research & Innovation

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Horizon Europe (HE)
R&I Missions

Linking EU's research and innovation to major societal needs, with strong visibility and impact

A **mission** is a portfolio of actions across disciplines intended to achieve a bold and inspirational and measurable **goal** within a set **timeframe**, with **impact** for society and policy making as well as **relevance** for a significant part of the European population and wide range of European citizens.

Horizon Europe defines **5 missions areas**:

Adaptation to
Climate Change



Cancer



Climate-neutral
and Smart Cities



Restore our
Ocean and Waters



Soil Deal
for Europe





"Mission Soil" goal: 100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030

8 Specific Objectives

1. Reduce land degradation, desertification

2. Conserve & increase soil organic carbon stocks

3. Stop soil sealing and increase re-use of urban soils

4. Reduce soil pollution and enhance restoration

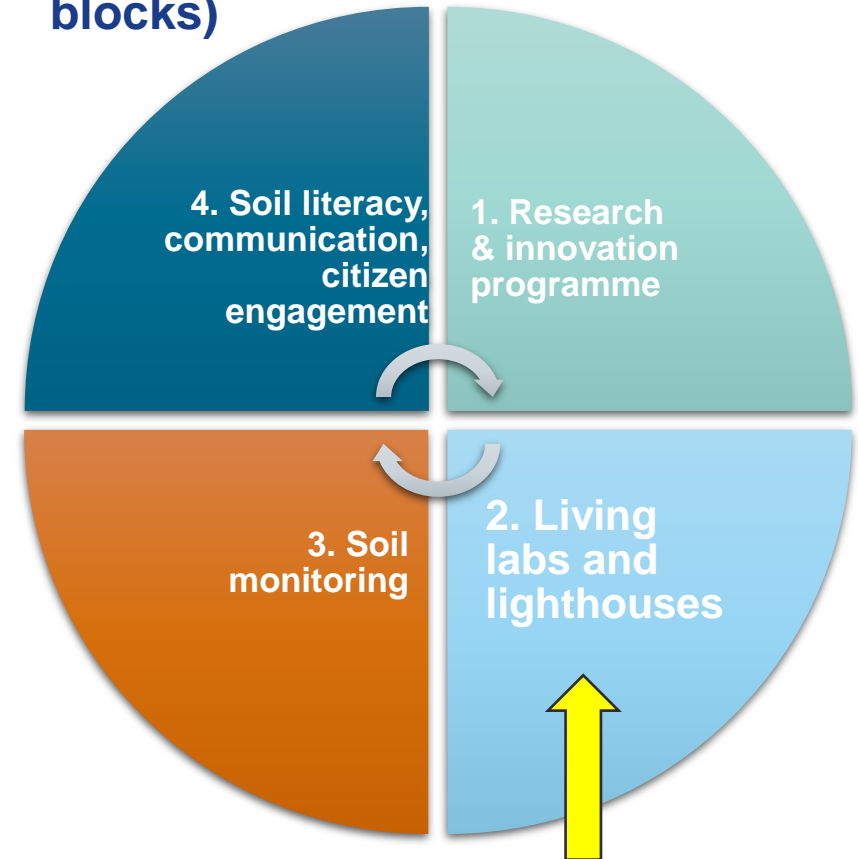
5. Prevent erosion

6. Improve soil structure to enhance soil biodiversity

7. Reduce the EU global footprint on soils

8. Improve soil literacy in society

4 Operational Objectives (building blocks)



Main vehicle for addressing the diversity of conditions and generating locally adapted solutions



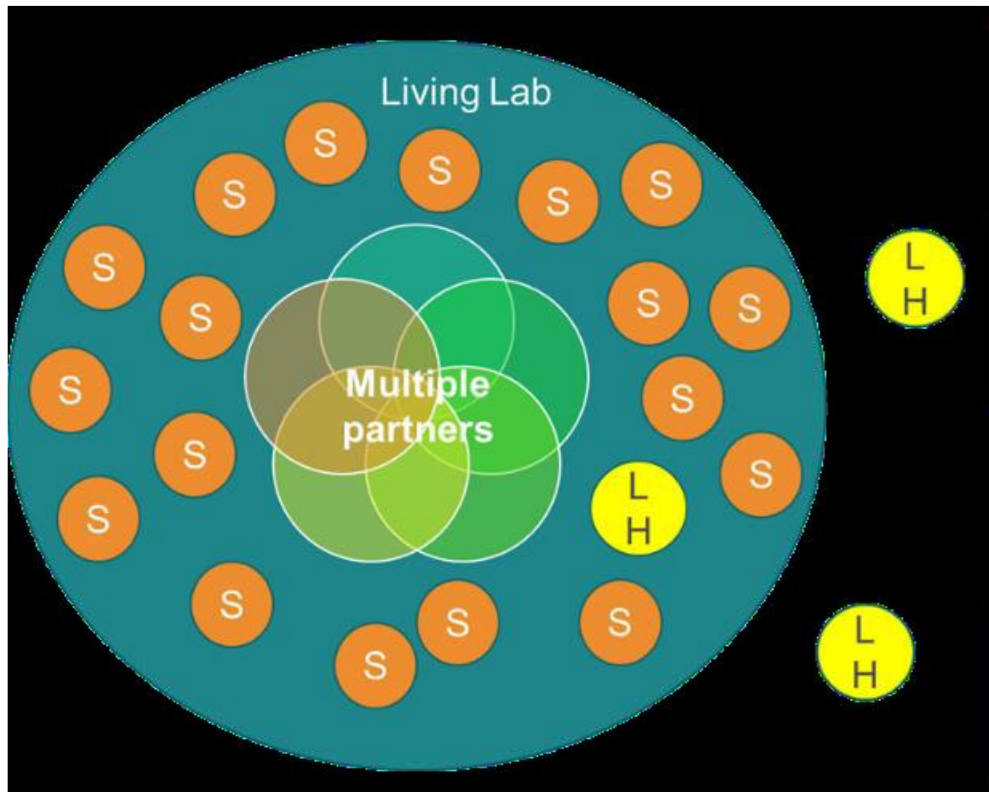
Mission Soil living labs (LL): definition

- “**User-centred, place-based and transdisciplinary** research and innovation ecosystems,
- which involve land **managers, scientists** and **other** relevant partners
- in systemic **research** and **codesign, testing, monitoring** and evaluation of solutions,
- in **real-life** settings,
- to improve their **effectiveness** for soil health and accelerate **adoption.**”

(Mission Implementation Plan, p. 28, building on ENoLL, G20 MACS working group)



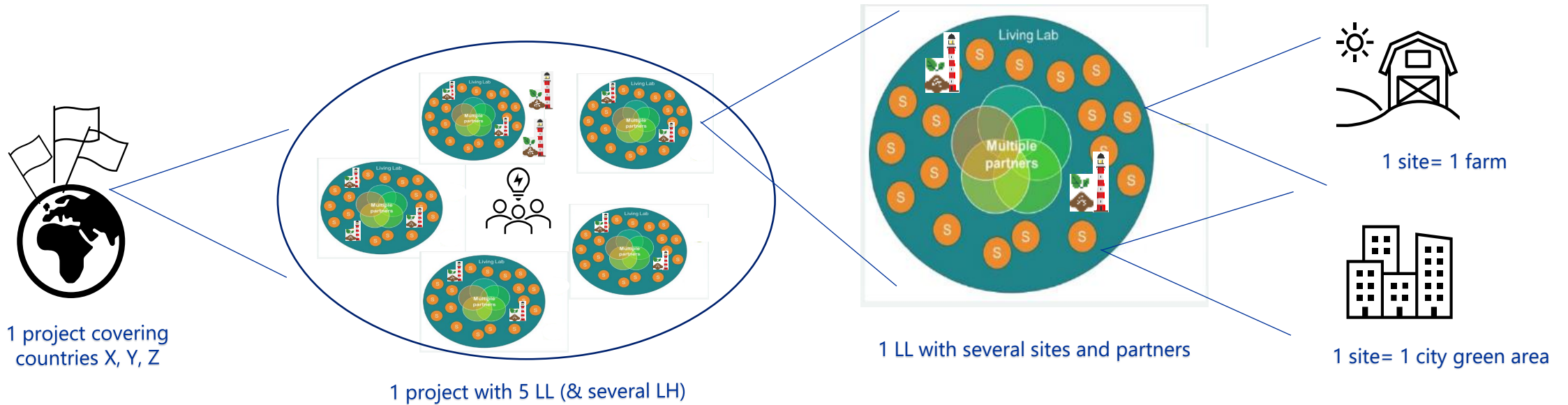
Living labs and lighthouses: scales, activities



	Scale	Activities	Performance in soil health improvement
Living lab	Regional/sub-regional landscape	Coordinate experimentations & partners	In progress at landscape scale
Living lab experimentation site	Local (one farm/forest, one urban site, etc.)	Co-create knowledge and innovations	In progress on the site
Lighthouse	Local (one farm/forest, one urban site.)	Experiment and/or demonstrate	Demonstrated high performance



Typical structure of Mission Soil LL projects





Preparation and support for Mission LL creation and implementation

- **Preparatory actions**
 - [NATI00NS](#) (3M €, 2022-2024): supporting applicants with national engagement events, helpdesk service, matchmaking platform, etc.
 - [PREPSOIL](#) (5M €, 2022-2025): incl. identification of regional soil health needs, incl. for priority actions to be implemented in LL
- LL network **support structure** (2022-2030)
 - Supporting harmonisation of approaches within/across LL (+ LH)
 - Monitoring and assessment → regular reports on developments and outcomes, progress achieved
- **Mission Board LL Working Group** (→ recent [document](#))





First LL calls in Mission Work Programme 2023

- Two topics
 - [Co-creating solutions for soil health in Living Labs](#): bottom-up, all types of land use
 - 36M €, 3 projects
 - [Carbon farming in living labs](#) – 12M €, 1 project
 - Financial support to third parties (optional): cascade funding
- Requirements, tasks
 - Establish at least 4-5 LL per project, in 3+ Member States/HE-Associated Countries
 - Address shared soil health challenge(s), related to Mission specific objective(s)
 - Follow multi-actor approach, involve stakeholders relevant for resp. challenge
 - Establish base line per LL for monitoring, assessment (→ JRC EUSO)
- Call closed 20 September 2023, proposals under evaluation



LL-related approaches and infrastructures

- **Multi-actor approach (MAA)** in EU R&I Framework Programmes
 - Pioneered in agricultural R&I; now extended to other HE parts
 - Practice abstracts required from agricultural/RD, forestry MAA projects
 - Definition, requirements developed further for coming WP
- **EIP-AGRI** (now "Innovation & knowledge exchange" strand of [CAP Network](#))
 - Operational Groups (OG) to be involved in HE MAA projects where relevant
 - Potential for LL to feed into OG work
 - OG to evolve into future LL?

EIP-AGRI bridging research and practice





Partnership Agro-ecology

- To set up a Europe-wide network of agroecology living labs and research infrastructures
- Co-created with, co-funded by Member States, Associated Countries
- Coordinated by Germany (Projekträger Jülich), France (ANR)
- Agroecology Partnership connections with Mission Soil – e.g.:
 - Potentially sharing living labs
 - Coordinated calls; clusters of projects
 - Soil health monitoring and data collection
 - Common policy-related activities
 - Common knowledge hub



Sources of further information and opportunities for engagement

- [EU Missions](#) in Horizon Europe
- Mission Soil [Implementation Plan](#)
- [Mission Soil Platform](#): "one-stop shop" (in the making), incl. project hub, documents, events, newsletter, ...
- [European Mission Soil Week](#), Madrid, 21-23 November 2023 (first in a series of annual events) – plenaries webstreamed
- Mission Soil [Manifesto](#), open for [signature](#) by organisations and individuals
- [EU CAP Network](#) (incl. EIP-AGRI)
- Agroecology Partnership [Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda](#)