The state soil in Europe 2020

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Land and soil are limited natural resources. Is land sustainably managed, and is the capacity of soils to deliver its services sufficiently maintained? These questions may be answered for policy makers by collecting evidence from scientific studies, as done currently for EEA’s State and Outlook of the European Environment 2020. On that basis, European policies and actions do not seem on track to protect the land and soil resource from degradation. Do we then treat our land wrongly? Is knowledge lacking? Is the priority setting wrong? Are better indicators needed capable to clearly signal where practices harm land and soil, and can this information stimulate incentives and action? Science needs to be sufficiently empirical to provide reliable data about the current and future impact of management and management change. At the same time, the heterogeneity of environmental and socio-economic conditions, which control management decisions, need to be considered. The recent improvement of monitoring and spatial resolution of data combined with modelling may improve the visibility and usability of scientific results.

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