Soil – our most precious resource?

Professor Anne Glover CBE
Chief Scientific Adviser
to the President of the European Commission
The million Euro question:
Which of these topics is the highest on the political agenda?
Why is SOIL precious?
Soil underpins our planet's life support systems.
Soil provides ecosystem services
Soil plays an important role in the global climate system
Soil is part of our natural heritage – to protect it is an ethical obligation
Soil is also cultural heritage!
Soil is precious because it builds up over millennia...

...but is destroyed in seconds!
Soil impacts on many EU policies (beyond the EU Soil Thematic Strategy) and *vice versa*

- Common Agricultural Policy
- Nitrates Directive
- Water Framework Directive (WFD)
- Blueprint to safeguard Europe's Water Resources
- Habitats Directive
- Biodiversity Strategy 2020
- Forestry Strategy
- EU Climate Change Policy
- Biofuels Directive
- Thematic Strategy on the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources
- European Spatial Development Perspective
- Environmental Impact Assessment Directive
- Urban Waste Water Directive
- Waste Framework Directive
If **SOIL** is so important, why don't we talk about it more?
Most people live in urban environments
We usually don't see soil, even if it is in front of our eyes
Soil doesn't hit the media, unless in emergencies
Soil is dirty, but not sexy
We have to find better ways to talk about the value of soil
The face of innovative soil research

Prof Lorna Dawson,
James Hutton Institute:
Soil forensics
Starting early is important
Tea bag index
http://www.decolab.org/tbi/
Make it easy to understand

Man on the Moon
French Revolution
Columbus arrives in America
Battle of Hastings
Charlemagne crowned
Fall of the Roman Empire

Top soil formed in the last 2000 years
Why does it concern me?
Let's raise awareness for soils!

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