

EuropaBio comments on the new EU soil strategy

April 2021

These comments complement our reply to the public consultation on the new EU soil strategy.

Industrial biotechnology (IB) supports sustainable crop cultivation and soil health while providing an alternative to fossil-fuel derived products. For example, agricultural biostimulants include diverse formulations of substances and microorganisms that complement mineral fertilisers and are applied to plants or soils to improve crop vigour, yields, stress tolerance, and quality. They do so by enhancing plant nutrition and soil health.

Biodegradable and compostable plastics, whether bio-based or conventional, are designed for specific applications and follow specific end-of-life management processes, where they are collected separately and organically recycled with bio-waste. Bio-waste can in turn be used to produce high-quality compost and organic fertiliser that helps restore soil organic carbon and tackle desertification. Land degradation is a recognised problem in Europe with large territories at risk. In this regard, the maintenance and improvement of soil health, with its many associated co-benefits, such as climate resilient agriculture, enhanced biodiversity and carbon farming should be promoted. The key here is to foster, promote, and fund the development of new innovations (e.g. breeding), methodologies (e.g. incorporation of cover crops and expansion of crop rotations) and agricultural practices (move to conservation tillage or no till soil preparation techniques) to increase soil organic matter content. For this reason, the strategy should include the introduction of a monitoring system together with compensation mechanisms based on incentives as well as developing and scaling out mechanisms for soil carbon sequestration (carbon farming).

Please see also:

[EuropaBio Industrial Biotechnology Solutions for Sustainable Agriculture](#)

[EuropaBio Industrial Biotechnology Contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals – Case study on Bioplastics](#)

[EuropaBio Inspired By Life Case study on bio-based and biodegradable plastics](#)

