



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



Caring for the Planet starts from the Ground

TOWARDS THE PREVENTION AND REDUCTION OF SOIL POLLUTION AND CONTAMINATION

Side event



# 5th Global Soil Partnership plenary assembly

THURSDAY, 22 JUNE 2017 (9:00-12:00)

SHEIKH ZAYED CENTRE, FAO HEADQUARTERS



RAPPRESENTANZA DIPLOMATICA  
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# 5th GLOBAL SOIL PARTNERSHIP PLENARY ASSEMBLY

Side event

## “Caring for the planet starts from the ground: towards the prevention and reduction of soil pollution and contamination”

The term “soil pollution” refers to the presence of a chemical or substance out of place or present at higher than normal concentrations that has adverse effects on any nontargeted organism. This definition includes the concept of “soil contamination”, which occurs when the concentration of a chemical or substance is higher than would occur naturally but is not necessarily causing harm. Contaminants can enter soils from a variety of sources including agricultural inputs, atmospheric deposition, flood and irrigation water, accidental spills, inappropriate urban waste, and other means. Negative consequences may include plant toxicities and subsequent productivity declines, contamination of water and off-site areas through sediment transport, and increased human and animal health risks through accumulation of contaminants in the food-chain. At the purpose of promoting the practice of sustainable soil management (SSM) as a mean to preserve soil functions and the ecosystem services, the FAO Council endorsed the Voluntary Guidelines

for Sustainable Soil Management (VGSSM) in December 2016. The guidelines address ten soil threats including soil contamination and contribute to the overall achievement of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2015–2030 (particularly, SDGs 2, 3 and 15).

This seminar constitutes the first step towards the implementation of the VGSSM, particularly its chapter on soil contamination. The seminar will review some scientific evidences from different countries and regions as an input for the Global Symposium on Soil Contamination to be organized in 2018. Panelists will discuss a roadmap for the development of knowledge-based guidance on this topic, considering the latest knowledge from soil research, the identification of research gaps, and the translation of knowledge into practical guidance.



# Agenda

## 09:00 - 9:10

Opening by

**Mr. Rene Castro Salazar,**  
Assistant Director General (ADG) of  
Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water  
Department, FAO

Moderator

**Mr. Eduardo Mansur,**  
Director Land and Water Division, FAO

## 09:10 - 09:30

Opening remarks

- **H.E. Pierfrancesco Sacco,**  
Ambassador, Permanent Representative  
of Italy to FAO
- **Ms. Josiane Masson,**  
European Commission

## 09:30 - 09:50

State of the art on soil pollution and  
contamination, and their impacts on  
human well-being and the ecosystem  
services provided by soils,  
**Mr. Luca Montanarella,**  
Chair of the Intergovernmental Technical  
Panel on Soils

## 09:50 - 10:05

Soil pollution and contamination  
in Cuba, a case study,  
**Mr. Olegario Muniz,**  
Instituto de Suelos de Cuba

## 10:05 - 10:20

Soil pollution and contamination  
in the European Union,  
**Ms. Violette Geissen,**  
Wageningen University

## 10:20 - 11:00

The case of Italy: Monitoring criteria  
of soil pollution in relation to food  
production,  
**Ms. Anna Benedetti,**  
Council for Agricultural Research and  
Analysis of Agricultural Economics (CREA)  
Sustainable soil management to reduce  
agricultural inputs: what is the role of  
soil microorganisms?  
**Ms. Raffaella Maria Balestrini,**  
National Research Council (CNR)

Why is soil biodiversity so important in  
keeping soil healthy? A case study in the  
Mediterranean area,  
**Ms. Annamaria Bevivino,**  
Italian National Agency for New  
Technologies, Energy and Sustainable  
Economic Development (ENEA)

## 11:00 - 11:20

What is the way forward on this topic?, FAO

## 11:20 - 11:55

Plenary discussion on soil pollution and  
contamination, and the SDGs

## 11:55 - 12:00

Closure of the event by  
**Mr. Rene Castro Salazar,**  
Assistant Director General (ADG) of  
Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Water  
Department, FAO



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