



FROM SOIL CURE TOWARDS SOIL CARE IN FLANDERS



Flanders
State of
the Art

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WE MAKE
TOMORROW
BEAUTIFUL

OVAM

SOIL CARE = THE ESSENCE AND HEART OF OUR WORK

We have over 30 years of expertise:

- ▶ Prevention of soil contamination
 - Framework for excavated soil (materials)
 - Sector funds
- ▶ Soil investigations on sites with risk activities
- ▶ Soil remediation - 2036 (with additional incentives ex-officio remediation works, co-financing, funds...)
- ▶ Brownfields - blackfields
- ▶ Sites for approach contamination in residential areas
- ▶ Soil certificate
- ▶ Transfer of land

SOIL CARE VIA SOIL CURE – SOME RESULTS

- ▶ >300 000 plots in the Land Information Register
- ▶ >4 600 000 soil certificates issued
- ▶ >48 000 exploratory soil investigations
- ▶ >13 500 descriptive soil investigations
- ▶ >5 900 soil remediation projects
- ▶ >5 500 soil remediation works started and more than 4 000 remediation works completed

SOIL CARE = ADDRESSING NEW AND URGENT CHALLENGES

- ▶ Facing **urgent societal questions and challenges**, also broader than the original scope of the Soil Decree:
 - From our own OVAM practice, e.g. residual pollution management
 - From new challenges, e.g. diffuse contamination, emerging pollutants
 - From our stakeholders, e.g. on the reuse of excavated soil
 - From society, e.g. depavement, brownfields, landfills, relationship with climate change, drought, biodiversity, ecosystem services, circular economy, food security, healthy environment, spatial planning, ...
 - From international fora, e.g. Europe, SDGs

SOIL CARE = BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE

- ▶ Need for a **bridge to the future** in a systemic and proactive way:
 - Building on and strengthening our ambition, our role and policy, starting from our built expertise
 - Embracing new insights
 - Together with partners
 - Towards futureproof policy (2025 – 2050)
 - Towards healthy living soil in healthy living environment !
- ▶ **Aims soil care:**
 - 1) Protect soil quality
 - 2) Sustainable (and even regenerative) soil management
 - 3) Restoration (e.g. remediation) if needed

SOIL CARE = LOOKING AT SOIL THROUGH 'NEW' GLASSES

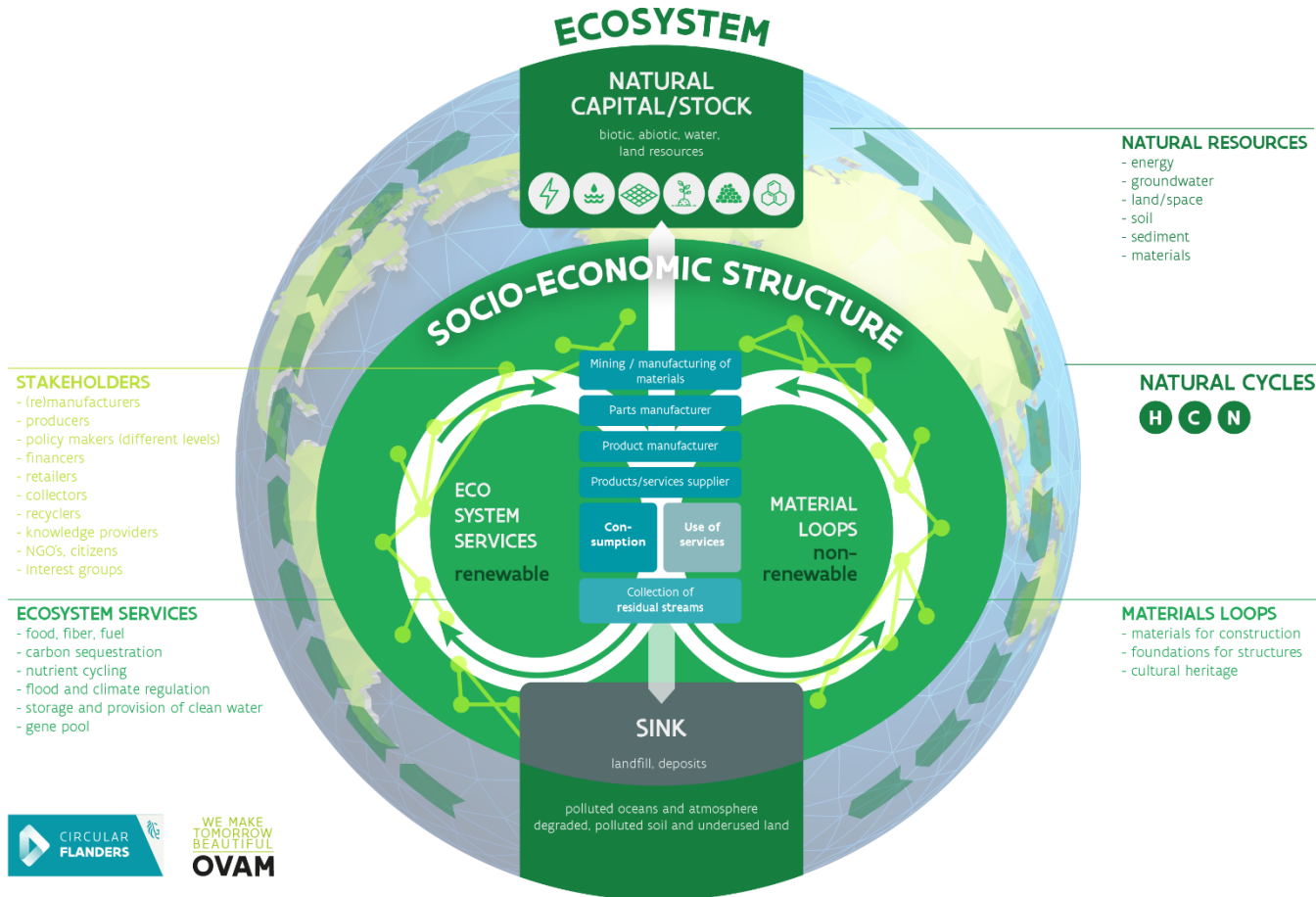
- ▶ A healthy soil is a living ecosystem and provides many crucial services to people and the more-than human environment (+ future generations)
- ▶ A healthy soil is valuable natural capital
- ▶ Soil is a common (*Res communis*) and needs to be treasured by the community (shared responsibility)



SOIL CARE = LOOKING AT GLOBAL CONTEXT

SOIL AND LAND

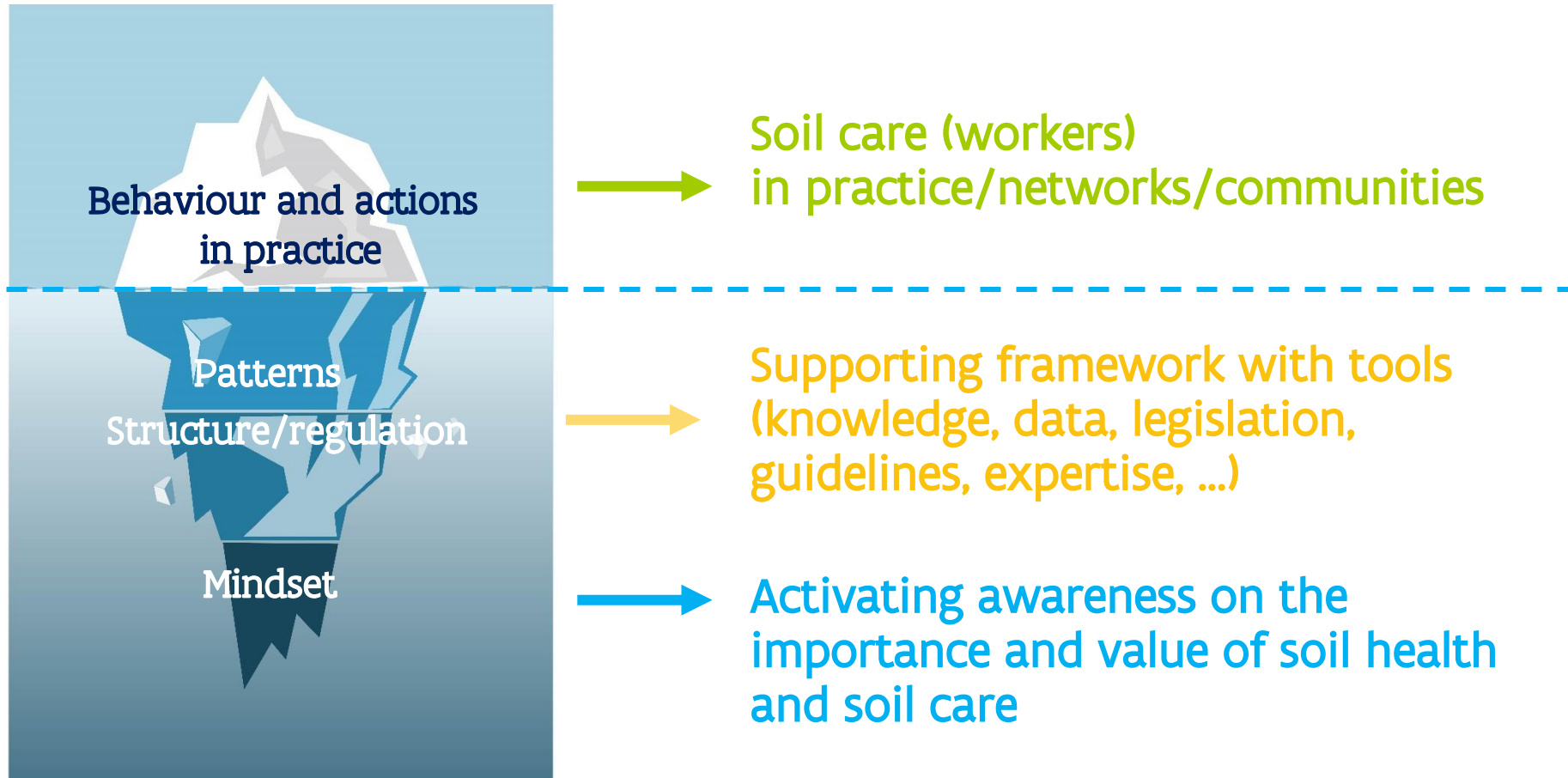
IN THE NATURAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CYCLES



SOIL CARE = VALUE CREATION AND EMBRACING NEW INSIGHTS

- ▶ A healthy soil is crucial for tackling important **societal challenges**, such as climate change, water and food security, a healthy and green living environment, biodiversity, well being...
- ▶ Soil remediation is a minimum objective – Soil care aims to **create more societal value**:
 - From micro-scale (site) to meso-scale (brownfield, landfill) to macro-scale (areabased), linking soil remediation with its surroundings and socio-economic context
 - From focus on chemical soil quality (remediation) towards integral Soil Health (regenerative soil management)
 - Link with spatial planning and land management
 - Importance of data and information management
 - Activating through Soil+Land Stewardship

SOIL CARE = INTEGRATED STRATEGY FOCUSING AT 3 FINALITIES



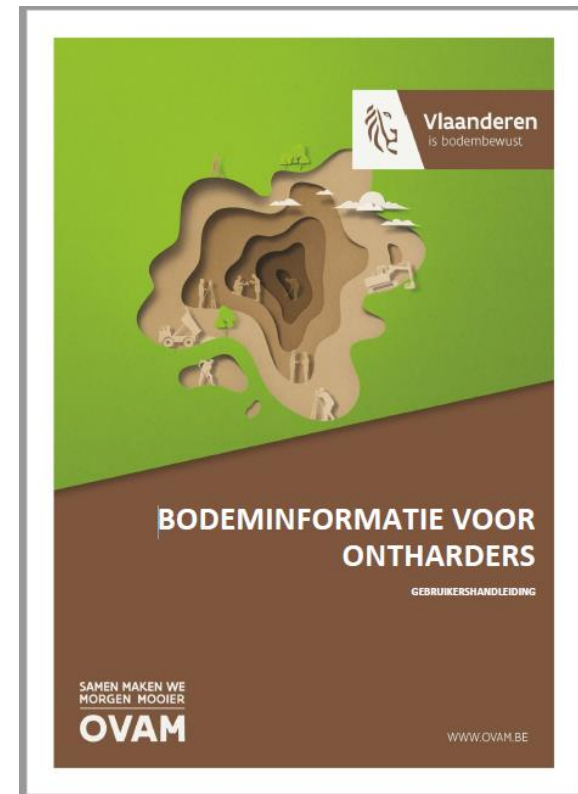
SOIL CARE = COORDINATED APPROACH ON DIFFERENT TOPICS

- ▶ Excavated soil materials
- ▶ Residual contamination
- ▶ Areabased approach
- ▶ Dynamic Landfill Management
- ▶ Diffuse contamination
- ▶ Emerging contaminants
- ▶ Ecosystem services, biodiversity, naturebased solutions
- ▶ Soil+Land Stewardship
- ▶ Value creation in the circular economy
- ▶ Prevention
- ▶ Groundwater management

- ▶ Data and information management
- ▶ Legislation and instruments
- ▶ Partnerships and cocreation
- ▶ Communication and knowledge exchange

SOME CURRENT INITIATIVES TO FOSTER SOIL CARE

- ▶ **Integration of ecosystem services and soil care within the BATNEEC-evaluation for remediation projects**
- ▶ **Legal study on possible legal translations of soil care**
- ▶ **Guidelines for soil management practices and users:**
 - Groundwater management practices
 - Soil information in environmental permits
 - Soil information for depavement
 - Naturebased solutions for the management of soil contamination



SOME CURRENT INITIATIVES TO FOSTER SOIL CARE

- ▶ Knowledge development and policy framework on emerging contaminants, e.g. PFAS
- ▶ Data management and data sharing e.g. in PFAS-viewer on DOV
- ▶ Advice for gardeners “Gezond uit eigen grond”
- ▶ International collaboration on e.g. emerging contaminants (PARC, ENSOR, EmConsoil, CommonForum, BOLL, SedNet, ...)

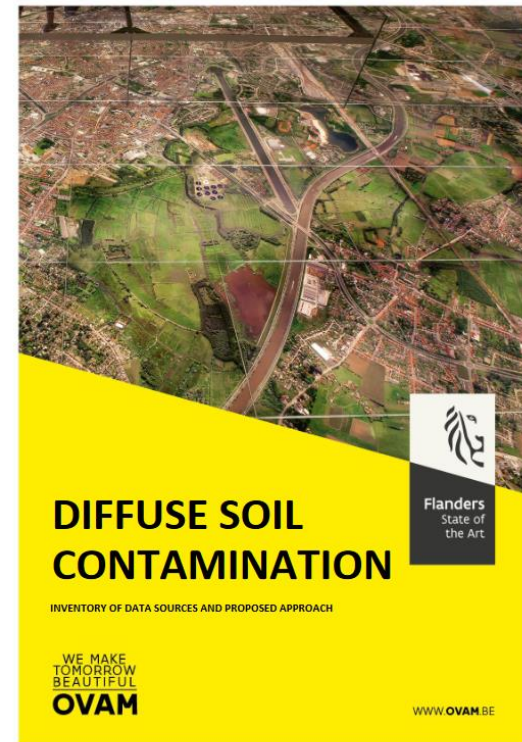


EmConSoil

Challenges for Emerging Soil Contaminant governance network

SOME CURRENT INITIATIVES TO FOSTER SOIL CARE

- ▶ Policy framework on diffuse soil contamination
- ▶ European projects on Dynamic Landfill Management
- ▶ European projects on Naturebased Solutions
- ▶ Exploratory studies together with Port of Antwerp on areabased approach for excavated soil and groundwater management



SOME CURRENT INITIATIVES TO FOSTER SOIL CARE / STEWARDSHIP

► Awareness raising initiatives:

- Stories of soil care workers
- Future scenarios
- Citizen survey
- 'Soil Your Undies' at OVAM

► Cocreation initiatives:

- Stewardship movement
- Grond+Zaken
- Exploration European Living Labs (Soil Mission/Soil Deal)

→ Many more ...



SOIL CARE FOR A LIVING SOIL



**You only take care when you care
And
You only care when you are aware**

- ▶ Not only legislation! Also awareness raising, framework and capacity building, cocreation, ...
- ▶ Together with partners, step by step, towards an ambitious end goal on the horizon. Do you join us?

THANK YOU !!