INtegrated Spatial PlannIng, land use and soil management Research AcTION:

Coordination and Support Action

National results: FRANCE

Societal challenges and needs

- For 60 to 70 % of the national actors interviewed, the priority is given to the 3 following societal challenges: Ensure secure supplies for safe drinking water, Contribute to food security and food safety and Ensure efficient use of natural resource.
- Societal challenges such as “contribute to climate change and societal adaptation”, “contribute to a healthy environment", “secure energy supply and distribution” and “reduce raw material and resource consumption” arrived in second importance. But prioritization of some societal challenges is different from a group of NKS to another one.
- The question of soils deserves to be more visible and is transverse in the other challenges. Furthermore, the question of compatibility between challenges was approached: for example, food production vs. water resource protection. The notion of ecosystemics services and critical zone need to appear more explicitly and to be more visible in the actual societal challenges. The objectives of the sustainable development of the United Nations could be used as a reference: such as “protect and restore soils” (obj 15) or “live healthy” (obj 3).
- In France, NKS state that it is more important to focus on soil functions than on soil services, with a need to sensitize civil society to theses soils functions and need of indicators / data depositories to evaluate soil functional type which can’t be generic due to soil diversity in France.

Topics / research needs to be included in the SRA

- FR-1 Allocation of land
- FR-2 Agricultural production and climate
- FR-3 Knowledge on the functions, distribution, and evolution of the soils
- FR-4 Monitoring on soil
- FR-5 Soil functions and services

Experiences regarding the connection of science to policy and practice

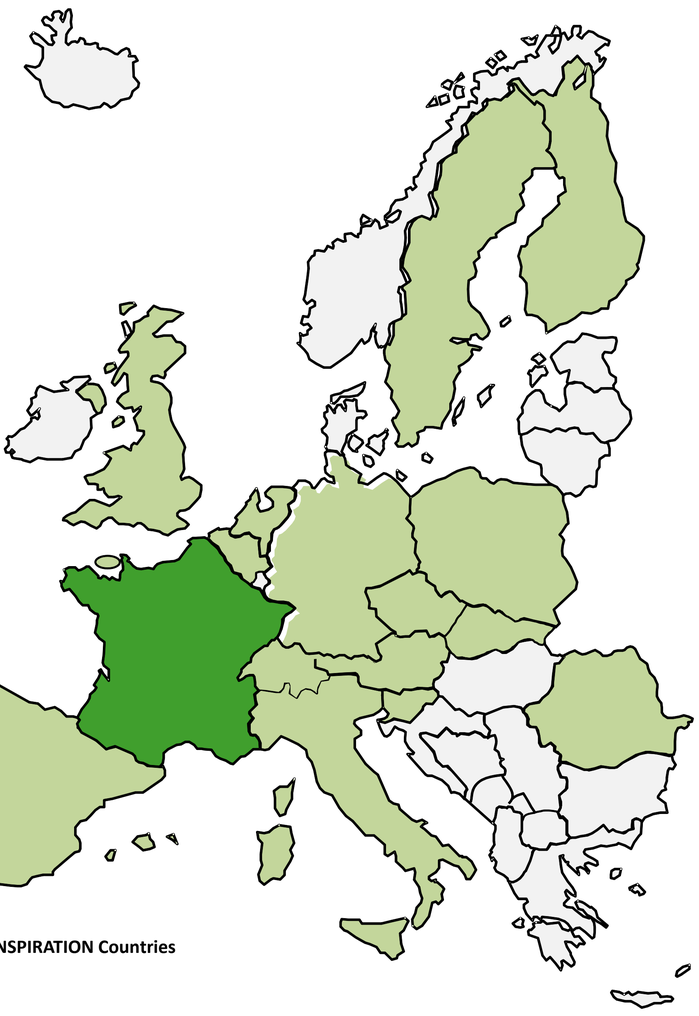
- The improvement of the use of knowledge could be done at 2 levels: (i) the project level by involving the stakeholders (including end-users) over the duration of the project (from the offer until the operational stages), by encouraging the building of multi-actors projects and by strongly associating the civil society, (ii) the level of a program, the creation of networks with multi-actors must be encouraged with the development of information and knowledge management tools in order to facilitate interface between the scientific knowledge, the policies and the civil society (specific tools/organizations).
- Innovative methodologies and funding mechanisms allowing an bottom-up approach must be developed. A particular point relates to the funding of the observation and demonstration sites monitoring on the long-term which must be secured. Places of meetings/debates between the various actors of a territory are necessary in order to lead to a common vision of the soil and to be in agreement with the territory development in the present and the future.

National and transnational funding schemes

- National funding as well as the main European funding schemes, in the opposite to the regional funding, are well-known by national stakeholders
- Among proposals to increase the added-value in R&I and an increased accessibility towards the end-users, the set-up of demonstrators to validate technologies was mainly quoted as well as immersions of researchers in the private companies for a better adequacy between the need in R&I for the companies (short-term) and the capacity of research to answer.
- Themes such as soil-sediment-water system in an integrated approach, interface health-environment, pedogenesis, urban development are not financed at the present time on high scales of technology readiness level.
- Funding of actions to the long-term (higher than 3 years) was stated in a recurring way in particular for the long-term observatories with multidisciplinary research teams.

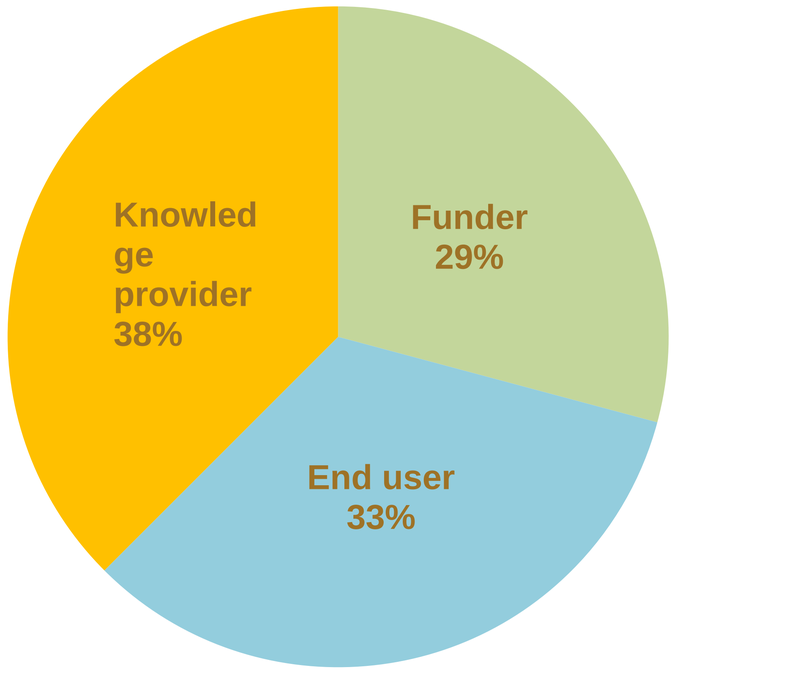
A key message from France:

- Need to create networks to sensibilize civil society to soil functions and establish strong indicators to evaluate theses functions involving all the actors. Imagine new funding scheme for long-term observatories and data collection on the soil-sediment-water system related to ecosystem services, demonstration sites to validate new technologies and facilitate their transfer to end-users.



Background of French Key Stakeholders

- In total, 25 expert interviews were conducted.
- 18 experts participated in the national workshop in Paris on 15th–16th Oct. 2015.



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