



PRESS RELEASE

Dialogue on soil health at the Parliament of the Republic of Poland

under the name:

Soil health as critical for the health of farms, the health of the society and the health of the homeland

Organized by:
Parliamentary Committee for the Development of Family Farms,
Mateusz Ciasnocha & the European Carbon Farmers

PRESS RELEASE

Co-organizers of the dialogue on soil health – **the Parliamentary Committee for the Development of Family Farms of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Mateusz Ciasnocha and the European Carbon Farmers – inform about the success of the event**, which took place at the Parliament of the Republic of Poland on **Wednesday, 28 June 2023, between 10:30 -13:30 CET in the hybrid formula.**

The meeting, **moderated by MP Jarosław Sachajko**, Chairman of the [Parliamentary Committee for the Development of Family Farms](#), under the name:

Soil health as critical for the health of farms, the health of the society and the health of the homeland

Was well attended across all stakeholder groups – including land users, farmers, foresters, science and educational institutions, agricultural advisory services, citizens, politicians, local government officials and the regulator – delivering on the ambition of increasing the level of soil health awareness among participants, showing the best examples of soil health protection and development and, last, but definitely not least, encouraging stakeholders – especially representatives of the politics – to take action in the area of soil health. **“The meeting was very well attended – both physically at the Sejm and over 60 participants joining us online. What pleases me the most is the great diversity of participants.** We were joined by the representatives of various Ministries, politicians of all options, experts, scientists and, most importantly, soil health practitioners and educators” **comments Chairman Sachajko.**

“The key objective of the dialogue was to promote the [European Mission for Soil Health](#), which, at the invitation of the European Commission – as an active farmer, as well as a person building a bridge between agricultural and climate policy with farmers at the centre – I am pleased to advise in my role as the Advisory Board Member” says Mateusz Ciasnocha – the farmer from Żuławy Wiślane and CEO of the European Carbon Farmers – co-organizer of the meeting.

The most important conclusions and simultaneously the key invitations emerging from the meeting are:

1. **Join the activities of the EU Soil Health Mission**, and in particular by signing the [Soil Health Mission Manifesto](#),
2. **Take part in calls for projects financed from the Mission's budget**, especially those [open until 20 September 2023](#),
3. Politically, we encourage all politicians and government members – both current and future – **to establish and strategically support the Mirror Mission for Soil Health in Poland.**

Dialogue on soil health is not possible without including the perspective of soil stewards front and centre. That is why the June meeting started with presentations of two farmers: **Ms. Zuzanna Szmidel** from the [Farm and Publishing House Regeneratywnie.pl](#), representing smaller farms simultaneously sharing the perspective of a new entrant to farming and **Mr. Marcin Ciok**, a farmer managing over 500 ha farm producing the highest

quality beef. We were also joined by **Mr. Maciej Podyma** from [Fundacja Łąka](#), who spoke about the state of health of urban soils in Poland. **All those sharing their experiences in this section underlined the key role of education as a critical and fundamental factor in the creation, development and protection of soil health, whether we are talking about urban, semiurban or rural areas.**

Soil stewards with their feet firmly on the ground, as well as regularly putting their hands in the soil to check its health, have built a strong foundation for the following section of the dialogue dedicated to understanding the political and legal frameworks of the topic under discussion. The first intervention focused on **explaining the EU Soil Health Mission from the perspective of the European Commission thanks to participation of Mrs. Joanna Stawowy, Member of the Cabinet of the Commissioner of Agriculture of the European Union, Mr. Janusz Wojciechowski, who emphasized and repeated the central invitation of the event: we are – everyone, including those in the government, both present and future – invited to actively engage in activities of the Soil Mission.**

The representative of Commissioner Wojciechowski's Cabinet firstly emphasized the need to create and strategically support the Mirror Mission for Soil Health in Poland. Such a Mission can – and should – be the focal point enabling design and implementation of systemic activities aimed at the protection and development of soil health in Poland, which affect all citizens and all Ministries. **The second invitation is to [sign the Soil Health Manifesto](#). The third invitation is to participate in calls for projects under the Mission, [especially those that are open until 20 September 2023](#).**

With the remarks of **Mr. Tomasz Chruszczow**, [High Level Champion for UN Climate Action – COP24](#), we moved up from the European to the global perspective. Mr. Chruszczow emphasized the key role of proper soil management as closely connected with adaptation and mitigation efforts to climate change. In the remarks, the history of building bridges between the climate process with agriculture was also presented, starting with the [4p1000 Initiative](#), which Poland was the initiator, however its main assumption – increasing the level of organic carbon in the soil by four per mille per year – is not currently achieved at the national level. Building on remarks of Mr. Chruszczow, the representative of the European Carbon Farmers presented a landscape of the soil health activities globally, including: the [Global Soil Partnership](#) of FAO, [CA4SH: Coalition for Soil Health](#), established as part of the [United Nations Food Systems Summit](#) (UN FSS), as well as the aforementioned 4p1000 Initiative.

[Mr. Ambassador Artur Pollok](#), Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland to the agencies of the United Nations in Rome, [honoured the meeting with an official letter](#) in which he presented a coherent picture of initiatives for soil health with that presented by European Carbon Farmers in the June Sejm meeting, **urged for strategic support of the European Soil Health Mission in Poland, including through the creation and strategic support of the Mirror Mission, **as fully consistent with global activities on soil health presented by Mr. Ambassador that the Republic of Poland actively supports.****

The perspective of the meeting returned to the local level with the presentation of **Mr. Krzysztof Pałkowski**, Director of the Department of Agriculture and Environment at the Marshal's Office of the Pomeranian Voivodeship, who presented the role of agriculture as impacting the health of agricultural soil while emphasizing the role of local government as a key body in implementing soil health policy in Poland.

The invitation to join the activities of the EU Soil Mission including a specific invitation to set up a profile on the [networking portal](#) for those interested in participating in the calls under the Soil Mission created by the [NATIOONS Project](#) was presented by **Professor Grzegorz Siebielec** from IUNG: Institute of Soil Science, Fertilization and Cultivation in Puławy.

The presentations were concluded with remarks of **Professor Zbigniew Karaczun**, Associate Professor at the Department of Environmental Protection and Dendrology of the Warsaw University of Life Sciences, who **emphasized the need to proactively build bridges between climate and environmental measures by Polish policymakers and their subsequent promotion at the European level in order to proactively co-create the EU policies in this regard. This call is fully consistent with those articulated in the proposal and appeal for the establishment of the [Working Group for Carbon Neutral and Nature Positive Agriculture](#)** (proposal in Polish accessible [here](#)) presented to – among others – the President and the Prime Minister of Poland in December 2021 by Mateusz Ciasnocha and the European Carbon Farmers.

The task of summarizing the discussion before the opening of the Q&A session was undertaken by **Mateusz Ciasnocha**, who focused his remarks on emphasizing the invitations around which the dialogue was build, specifically:

1. **The need to create a strategy for the reconstruction, development and protection of health of all – agricultural, urban, forest, post-industrial and all other – soils in Poland,**
2. **Achieving this goal by strategically supporting and joining the ongoing and planned activities of the European Mission for Soil Health,**
3. Concrete commitment to achieving the two ambitions outlined above by establishing the **Mirror Soil Health Mission in Poland.**

Ciasnocha extended the invitation with the proposals of **establishing the [Parliamentary Committee Friends of Soil Health](#)** and the [National Soil Advocate](#), drawing inspiration from Australia, with whom he cooperates on a daily basis in this area. The organizer of the event also shared the experience of the State of California in building a bridge between climate and agricultural policy with the farmer at the centre, which he gained during the [YTILI Fellowship](#) funded by the **US Department of State** and implemented by **WorldChicago**. The actions taken by and in the State of California are systemic. Therefore, composed of top-down actions – such as the financing of agricultural programs from the budget of the [State Regulated Emissions Trading Market](#) – and bottom-up – an example is the [CalCAN](#) organization, which monitors and conducts lobbying activities for a systemic approach to creating policy agriculture and climate. Returning to the Polish perspective, **Ciasnocha emphasized that the invitations made during the meeting are not dreams, but are already happening in Poland, as shown by the examples of practitioners present in the dialogue, as well as implementation of the [Horizon Europe-funded MIDAS Project](#), where the European Carbon Farmers are part of the Project Consortium.**

The meeting ended with a rich questions and answers session combined with an active participation of the participants – especially soil health practitioners – both physically present in the Sejm and participating in the meeting via an online connection. **The Minister of Health of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Adam**

Niedzielski, could not be attended the dialogue and sent a [letter](#) to the participants of the meeting. MEP Krzysztof Jurgiel, former Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development in 2005-2006 and 2015-2018, also sent a [letter](#). Finally, Minister Jan Krzysztof Ardanowski, Chairman of the [Council for Agriculture and Rural Areas within the National Development Council under the President of the Republic of Poland](#) and former Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, apologized for the inability to join the event due to participation in another event in Toruń, while ensuring that the next meeting of the Council for Agriculture and Rural Areas will be dedicated to soil health.

The co-organizers of the meeting devoted to soil health – the Parliamentary Committee for the Development of Family Farms of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, Mateusz Ciasnocha and the European Carbon Farmers – would like to express our gratitude to all participants and supporters of the event, which turned out to be a great success. Special thank you go to Mrs. Magdalena Józwiak for her unparalleled work on making the dialogue a success and to the US Department of State, which – through the YTIIL Program Alumni Fund – supported the organization of the event. Last, but definitely not least, we would like to thank all of you – especially representatives of the media – for informing at least one more person about the European Soil Health Mission and encouraging this person to actively join the work of the Mission starting with [signing the Manifesto](#).

RESOURCES

Presentation displayed during the meeting: <https://shorturl.at/nAET2>.

Official photos from the event: <https://shorturl.at/zFOW4>.

The recording of the event is available on the website of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland: <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm9.nsf/transmisje.xsp?unid=77182A80B0999B6CC12589CF003C1C99#>.

All official materials from the meeting are available on the website of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland: <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm9.nsf/agent.xsp?symbol=POSIEDZENIAZESP&Zesp=605>.

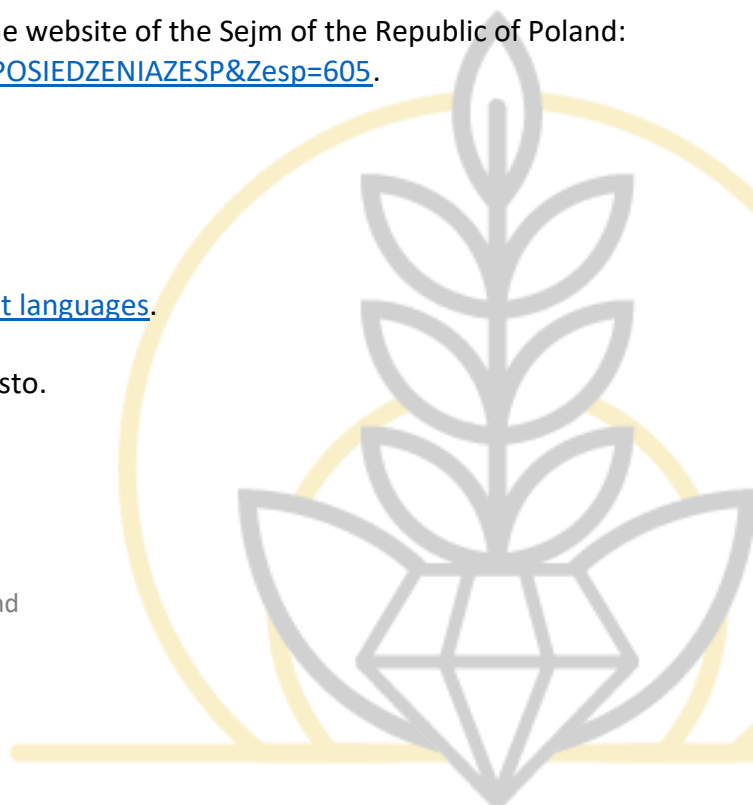
Manifesto of the European Soil Health Mission – [English](#).

Manifesto of the European Soil Health Mission – [Polish](#).

Manifesto of the European Soil Health Mission – [different languages](#).

[Go here to sign](#) the European Soil Health Mission Manifesto.

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