

Thematic strategy for soil protection

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The Council took note of the concern raised on several occasions by the Austrian delegation supported by the German, French, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portuguese, Polish and Finnish delegations, pointing out the importance of soil protection to agriculture and forestry and the need to grant Member States sufficient subsidiarity on that issue. The Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish and Finnish delegations took that opportunity to propose the inclusion of soil acidification in the impact assessment as the eighth “threat to soil”.

The Presidency drew the Commission's attention to the need for further discussion of proportionality and subsidiarity.

The Commission took note of the remarks made by those delegations and recalled that the proposed directive provided Member States with the necessary subsidiarity with regard to targets, implementing measures and timetable respectively. It indicated that it would carry out an in-depth analysis of the documentation provided by those Member States concerned by soil acidity in order to determine whether such criteria should be included in the impact assessment provided for in the directive.