



SoilCare Impact Plan

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study site partners and WPL leaders)

October 2019
(updated version)

1. Introduction

Achieving impact is an integral part of any research project. However, impact, should not just be left to chance, it needs to be planned for. This is why the SoilCare project has developed an impact plan.

The development of the plan was a collaborative effort with project partners. During the Plenary meeting in Denmark in June 2018, a session was run with study site partners to identify the key impacts they would like the SoilCare project to achieve. The results of this session informed the development of the first two impact goals identified in the plan. The remaining three impact goals were developed from discussions with other partners, particularly the Workpackage leaders for WP3, WP6, WP7 and WP8.

The framework used for the impact plan was developed by Mark Reed, the WP3 leader, and has been used by many research projects (see <https://www.fasttrackimpact.com/single-post/2019/03/18/Research-impact-planning>). The framework covers the following aspects:

- 1) Impact goals: These are the impacts or benefits from the SoilCare project that can occur beyond the scientific community.
- 2) Target audiences: These are the people or organisations who are affected by or can affect a decision or action related to the SoilCare research. They are the groups or individuals who ultimately are affected, influenced or experience an improvement as a result of the SoilCare research.
- 3) Activities to engage target groups: Engagement activities that are tailored to the different target groups and best suit their needs.
- 4) Indicators of successful engagement: Indicators, including means of measurement, to enable monitoring and reflection on the success or otherwise of engagement activities. This evaluation will enable changes and improvements to be made if necessary
- 5) Indicators of progress towards impact: Indicators, including means of measurement, to enable monitoring and reflection on the progress towards impact. This evaluation will enable changes and improvements to be made if necessary
- 6) Risks to activities and impact: Identification of risks associated with the impact goal and how to mitigate against these risks
- 7) Responsibilities and timing: Who has the specific responsibility for engaging each group or individual stakeholder and what are the timescales for completion.

The plan will be re-visited at various intervals over the remainder of the project, and will incorporate any feedback from the project stakeholders, so that it is as relevant and useful as possible.

SoilCare Impact Planning

Impact goal	Target stakeholders or publics	Reasons for being interested in the project	Activities to engage this target group	Indicators of successful engagement [and means of measurement]	Indicators of progress towards impact [means of measurement]	Risks to activities [and mitigation]	Risks to impact [and mitigation]	Who is responsible?	Timing
1. Provide evidence of the potential to increase profitability of farming through a reduction in inputs and/or increased yields due to improved soil quality and increased resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Arable farming groups -Farmer representatives - Relevant Operational Groups -Intermediaries: -Advisory, brokerage organizations, and NGOs - Industry/supply chain actors -National level relevant institutions and networks concerned with agricultural crops -Key European farming networks – e.g. EISA, ECAF, EAF, EUFRAS 	-Interest in farming practices that increase profitability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Information leaflets about different SICS -Multi-media e.g. videos about SICS -Farmer real life case studies -Demonstration activities - Practical guidance - Social media promotion/discussion on groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Information leaflets and multi-media products produced and well received [numbers downloaded/viewed]. -Attendance at demonstration events [number] -Extent of social media engagement [number of followers] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Implementation of SICS by farmers -Inclusion of SICS in Best Management Guidance [number] -Sharing of info on relevant social media platforms / farmer, policy news etc. [Number of resources shared via social media and different people sharing, number of news articles /press releases] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Limited interest due to short-term focus on maximising income from land [provide evidence of long-term benefits of SICS] -Potential fear around lack of funding to support through initial years of soil / system change and any subsequent yield losses [Clear communication on SICS to policy on need to encourage / incentivise, clear evidence of positive farm system changes to encourage uptake] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No clear evidence of profitability of SICS [Several SICS are tested in each Study Site, so unlikely that none show effect.] -Research finds that there are trade-offs required rather than co- benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study Sites - WP5 - WP8 	Mths 56-60

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2. Provide evidence to environmental organisations and policy-makers of potential to improve soil quality and quality of surface and groundwater resources due to reduced chemical pollution and soil erosion as a result of SICS	-National and regional level policy makers, environment agencies and regulatory bodies -National level relevant institutions and networks concerned with agricultural crops - EU level policy-makers e.g DG for Agriculture and Rural Development, DG Research, DG Environment, DG Climate Action.	-Interest in sustainable and environmentally-friendly farming practices that reduce pollution	-Information leaflets about different SICS -Multi-media e.g. videos about SICS -Demonstration activities - Social media promotion/discussion groups -Policy briefs	-Regular invitations to well-attended meetings [number of invitations and attendance] -Information leaflets and multi-media products produced and well received [personal feedback from target audience] -Policy briefs produced and well received [personal feedback from target audience]	-Implementation of SICS by farmers -Inclusion of SICS in Best Management Guidance [number] - Increased (social) media coverage or use of the SICS terminology in social media/print/policy documents [number] Increase in funding for research on SICS [number of research projects]	-Environmental organisations not convinced of environmental benefits of implementing SICS [clearly presented evidence of benefits to environment]	-No clear evidence of environmental benefits of SICS [Several SICS are tested in each Study Site, so unlikely that none show effect.] -Research finds that there are trade-offs required rather than co-benefits - No policy incentives to promote SICS	-Study sites -WP5 -WP8 -WP7	Mths 56-60

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3. Provide evidence to intermediary, advisory, brokerage organizations, and NGOs and policy-makers on how to minimise and overcome barriers to adoption of SICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Intermediaries: Advisory, brokerage organizations, and NGOs -National level relevant institutions and networks concerned with agricultural crops -Key European farming networks – e.g. EISA, ECAF, EAF, EUFRAS - National and regional level policy makers, environment agencies and regulatory bodies EU level policy-makers e.g DG for Agriculture and Rural Development, DG Research, DG Environment, DG Climate Action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Interest in farming practices that increase profitability. -Interest in sustainable and environmentally-friendly farming practices that reduce pollution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Workshops/ interviews with policy-makers -Information leaflets about barriers and opportunities to adoption of SICS. - SS Country reports containing analysis of how countries might promote SICS adoption -Policy briefs identifying good policy alternatives -SS country reports with analysis of how policies in the study site countries might promote SICS adoption based on D7.1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Regular invitations to well-attended meetings [number of invitations and attendance] -Policy briefs produced and well received [personal feedback from target audience] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Better informed decision-makers able to implement measures to overcome barriers [referenced policy documents & testimonials] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Limited interest due to focus on only increasing yields [provide evidence of links between SICS and farm profitability] -Potential fear around lack of funding to support through initial years of soil / system change and any subsequent yield losses [Clear communication from SICS to policy on need to encourage / incentivise, clear evidence of positive farms system changes to encourage uptake] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No clear evidence of the most important barriers to adoption of SICS [Several SICS are tested in each Study Site, so unlikely no barriers identified.] -Barriers insurmountable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Study sites -WP3 -WP7 -WP8 	Mths 30-60

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4. Provide evidence to policy makers on the opportunities for, relevance of and effects of application of SICS across Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National and regional level policy makers, environment agencies and regulatory bodies -National level relevant institutions, NGOs and networks concerned with agricultural crops, including extension services and industry partners. - EU level policy-makers e.g DG for Agriculture and Rural Development, DG Research, DG Environment, DG Climate Action. - Researchers focusing on regional, national or European assessments or an interest to apply the method in a different context. - Students interested in understanding and improving soil quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Interest in increased uptake of SICS that increase profitability and improve environment (smarter and greener) -Improved understanding of the applicability, relevance and impact of SICS across Europe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Workshops/ meetings/ interviews with policy-makers -Policy briefs -Demonstration of interactive mapping tool at final conference -Future scenario leaflets and videos -Webinar -Journal publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interactive mapping tool produced and well received [feedback form, personal feedback from target audience] - European-wide scenarios produced and well received [feedback form personal feedback from target audience] - Policy briefs produced and well received [feedback form, personal feedback from target audience] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of interactive mapping tool by policy makers [no. of visits] - Increase in funding for research on SICS [number of research projects] - Reports in which the method is reused [number of reports] - Citations to a journal publication based on the work done [number of citations] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Limited interest due lack of awareness of tool [Webinar] - Limited interest in promoting SICS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No clear evidence of profitability of SICS [Several SICS are tested in each Study Site, so unlikely that none show effect.] - No policy incentives to promote SICS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -WP6, -WP7, -WP8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Workshop Dec 2019 - -Webinar Nov 2019 -Final policy conference Mth 60

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5 Provide guidance to policy-makers on soil governance- including policy development and advisory development	-National and regional level policy makers, environment agencies and regulatory bodies - EU level policy-makers e.g DG for Agriculture and Rural Development, DG Research, DG Environment, DG Climate Action.	-Interest in increased uptake of SICS that increase profitability and improve environment (smarter and greener)	Workshops/ meetings/interviews with policy-makers -Policy briefs -Final policy conference	- Policy briefs produced and well received [personal feedback from target audience]	-New measures introduced into national/EU policy [number of measures identified in policy] - Improved advisory services for soil [evidence of training of advisers in SICS]	-Limited interest due to focus on increasing yields (food security)	- Change in policy framework or 'weak' policy framework to support SICS -Limited will to take action on soil policy/push soil policy.	-Study sites -WP7 -WP8	Mths 56-60