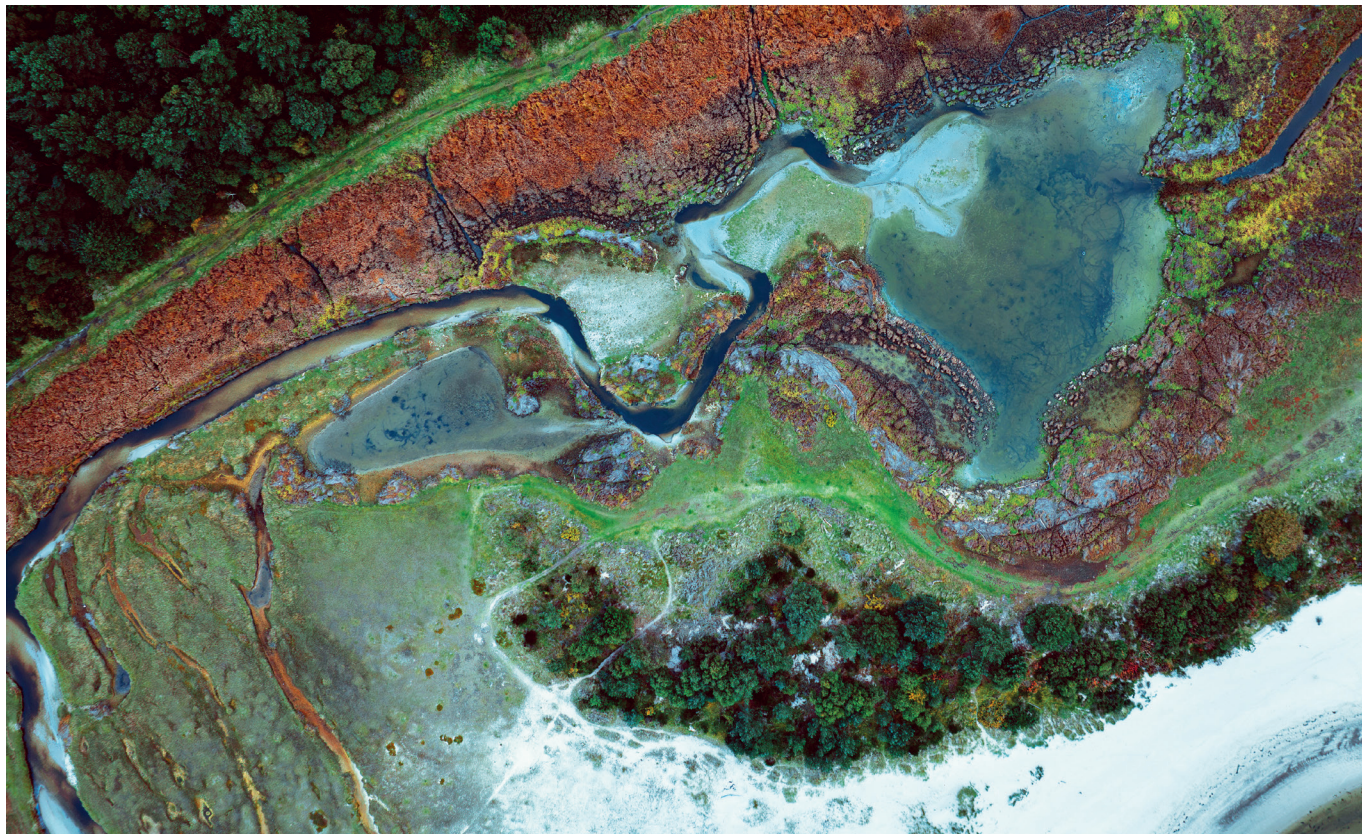


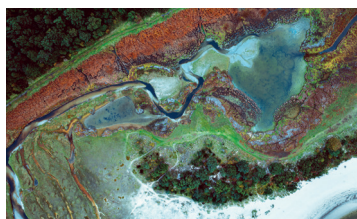


Soil and land in a changing world

The case for business action

September 2026

SOIL AND LAND IN A CHANGING WORLD



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+40

business practices featured

100 to 1,000

years are needed to form
2 to 3 cm of fertile topsoil (FAO)

95%

of our food depends directly
or indirectly on soils (FAO)

+75%

of the earth's land surface
has already been significantly
altered by human activities
(IPBES)

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The case for business action

Work conducted with EPE member companies through its biodiversity commission highlights the growing importance of soil and land-use change in corporate strategies.

Long addressed in a fragmented manner, with approaches varying widely across sectors, soil and land-use issues are now receiving greater attention. Soil and land underpin all economic activities and play a central role in major environmental and economic transitions. Their strategic importance is increasingly being recognised by companies and financial institutions, which are beginning to take action.

Soil and land: vital resources under growing pressures

► Soil provides multiple essential functions

As a **non-renewable resource** on a human timescale, soil is **essential to the functioning of ecosystems, regions, and economic activities**. It performs **multiple functions**: food production and forestry, carbon storage, regulation of the water cycle, maintenance of biodiversity, mitigation of natural hazards, and support for infrastructure and human activities.

► Terrestrial ecosystems face growing pressures

Soil is subject to **increasing pressures**. Agricultural expansion, urbanisation, and the development of industrial and energy infrastructures are **driving up demand for land**. These trends are **accelerating land use change, leading to the conversion of natural ecosystems** and the simplification of landscapes. Beyond these visible transformations, soil is also subject to **more diffuse forms of degradation**: erosion, pollution, compaction, loss of organic matter, salinisation, and a decline in soil biodiversity are all causing lasting damage to its functions.

► Soil is gaining recognition in its own right

Long addressed through **fragmented approaches focused either on land use or on specific pressures**, soil is now **attracting greater attention**. Scientific developments, emerging international frameworks and evolving public policies are contributing to a broader understanding of **soil as a living resource**, whose ecological functions need to be better understood, monitored, preserved and restored.

► Soil and land use are becoming strategic business issues

Soil and land use sit at the nexus of biodiversity, climate, water, food, energy and spatial planning, making them **central to several major environmental and economic transitions**. They **matter to every business**, regardless of sector or location, while growing and sometimes competing demands for land are creating **complex trade-offs**. As a result, **soil and land use issues are becoming increasingly strategic**, requiring **greater integration into decision-making and operations of companies, financial institutions and other economic actors**.

Five key levers for business action

1 Reducing pressures by avoiding and reducing the conversion of natural habitats, land take, pollution and resource use, and by integrating these issues into project design, procurement and supply chains.

2 Transforming practices to regenerate soil and restore ecosystems through renaturation, ecological restoration, technical innovations, Nature-based Solutions (NbS), regenerative agriculture and collaboration across territories and landscapes.

3 Developing fit-for-purpose economic and financial models to support these transformations through new financing,

insurance and risk-sharing mechanisms, the valuation of ecosystem services and public-private cooperation.

4 Measuring, managing and embedding soil and land into decision-making by developing relevant metrics, management and reporting tools, and strengthening skills across teams.

5 Putting soil and land higher on the business and public policy agenda by building knowledge, raising stakeholder awareness, advancing policy and action frameworks, and developing collective initiatives.

Key takeaway: safeguarding soil and rethinking land use requires collective action

The practices across EPE members show that companies have many levers to improve the way soil and land are managed, but also that **isolated action is not enough**. Soil quality, water availability, ecological connectivity and territorial resilience cannot be addressed within the boundaries of individual sites and require **collective action**. This means

working at a broader scale and strengthening cooperation between businesses, local authorities, farmers, financial institutions and land and conservation managers, to better align private initiatives with public policies and build more resilient territories and value chains.

Soil and land use: a window into economic transformations ahead

Soil and land use are increasingly at the centre of complex trade-offs affecting businesses and territories alike. These choices extend far beyond the management of corporate sites and land assets, with implications for sourcing strategies, value chains, investment and spatial planning, against a backdrop of growing resource constraints, climate adaptation, sovereignty concerns and shifting societal expectations. **Companies are directly exposed to these developments, with soil and land use providing a lens on the profound transformations reshaping their operating environment and strategies.**

Against this backdrop, soil and land-use issues call for **more systemic approaches that account for the interdependencies** between biodiversity, climate, water, natural resources and economic development. The strategies being developed today to address soil and land-use issues point to **new ways of defining performance, directing investments, building partnerships and creating value within planetary boundaries.**

Taking action for soil and land: levers and collaboration at every scale

SCALES	EXAMPLES OF BUSINESS ACTIONS	EXAMPLES OF STAKEHOLDERS
 GLOBAL	Supporting ambitious international frameworks	International institutions, investors, NGOs
 VALUE CHAIN	Transforming supply chains and preventing land-use change	Procurement / sourcing teams, customers, suppliers, trade associations, certification bodies, NGOs
 LANDSCAPE	Collaborating to restore ecosystems	Local authorities, farmers, businesses, financial institutions, local associations
 SITE	Avoiding and reducing land take and pollution	Operational teams, environmental consultancies, ecologists
 SOIL	Understanding and monitoring soil condition	Laboratories, researchers
CROSS-CUTTING LEVERS Governance Finance Skills & innovation Dialogue & collaboration		

accenture



AIRFRANCE

Air Liquide

AlixPartners

Amundi
Investment Solutions



ARKEMA



BCG
BOSTON
CONSULTING
GROUP



Capgemini

CARSO



Crédit Mutuel
Alliance Fédérale

Deloitte.



FORVIA
Inspiring mobility

HAVAS



GROUPE
iliad

invivo



LVMH

MARSH

Meridiam
for people and the planet



nexity



Renault
Group



sanofi

Schneider
Electric



SOLVAY

sopra steria



TIKEHAU
CAPITAL



VESUVIUS



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