Views on the protection of soil biodiversity from an industry perspective

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Ultimately, the industry and government views should coalesce together as both sides are trying to use science, risk assessment and risk management to protect soil biodiversity.

When considering agrochemicals one of the key problems for the SETAC Soil workshop in Barcelona (2018) was the linkage of Protection Goals to current risk assessment schemes and available test systems. Quite correctly, Protection Goals in the EU are being developed between the Risk Managers and Member State regulators within a different process.

If we look at a specific Protection Goal definition (e.g. Nienstedt et al.) then even if we fix the attribute to biodiversity and the degree of certainty to high then there is a multitude of other factors across the relevant ecological entity of interest, the magnitude of effect and both the temporal and spatial scales.

We need to develop (or be given) a target for protection before we can develop a programme of work to ensure the protection of soil. Conversely, the scientific community can provide the decision makers with an increased number and an improvement of tools investigating this complex issue.